

# *Autumn colours of Japan*

## *With Jane Blundell*

*(8th November - 21st November 2025)*

### **Day 1 / TOKYO (8<sup>th</sup>) FREE DAY**

Please book flight to Tokyo, where you will be met and transported to our hotel.

For those of you arriving earlier, you will receive transport details and suggestions for your extra days in Tokyo.

Free day to explore this vibrant city where temples, palaces, tea pavilions and manicured gardens wait to be discovered amongst the neon lights. This is a city of extremes, an intoxicating blend of ancient and modern culture, with many contemporary galleries.

Celebration Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant. **(D)**

### **Day 2 / TOKYO (9<sup>th</sup>)**

Meiji Shrine, an oasis in the heart of the city, is surrounded by hundreds of stunning autumn trees. We will also visit Nezu Museum with its collection of Japanese art hidden throughout the garden. In the afternoon, we will visit **Asakusa**, Tokyo's Old Town, with its abundance of street food stalls. Harajuku Street and Harajuku are vibrant areas well known for shopping and street fashion. **(B)**

### **Day 3 / KAWAGUCHI LAKE (10<sup>th</sup>)**

Today we travel to the Fuji Five Lakes area, enjoying a scenic coach journey (/1hr 30m), stopping in Oshino Hakkai, famous for its eight crystal clear spring ponds. This tranquil atmosphere makes it a perfect morning painting spot. In the afternoon, a spa with its hot springs and therapeutic massages is the perfect spot to end your day **(B, D)**



#### **Day 4 / KAWAGUCHI LAKE (11<sup>th</sup>)**

This morning we will spend time painting on the shoreline of Lake Kawaguchi which offers some of the finest views of Mount Fuji, reflected in the lake, as well as heading into a park with its many pagodas backdropped by Mt. Fuji.

The **Kawaguchiko Art Museum**, with its fabulous café, is filled with wonderful paintings and photos of Mt Fuji and a display of exquisite kimonos by Kubota Itchiku, (1917-2003) who devoted his life to mastering silk dyeing technique.

**Afternoon critique. (B)**

#### **Day 5 / KANAZAWA (12<sup>th</sup>) FREE DAY**

After an early breakfast, we begin our journey to Kanazawa. The journey time is about 3.5 hours. Kanazawa's array of cultural attractions makes it the must-see destination of the Hokuriku region. Best known for **Kenroku-en**, a castle garden dating from the 17th century, it also boasts beautifully preserved samurai and geisha districts, temples, a wealth of museums and a wonderful market.

The **Higashi-chaya district**, Japan's most famous geisha town, is fabulous to wander through in the early evening when we dine out at a local restaurant, specializing in Kaga Yuzen dishes. **(B, D)**

#### **Day 6 / KANAZAWA (13<sup>th</sup>)**

**Kenrokuen** garden is stunning in the autumn colours and is one of the three great gardens of Japan. After the tranquility of the gardens, we will head to **Omicho** Fresh Food Market for some urban sketching (and tasting!) before visiting **Nomura Samurai House**, with its tea-ceremony room and interior courtyard garden.

**(B)**



### **Day 7 / KANAZAWA (14<sup>th</sup>)**

This morning, our private coach will collect us for the scenic drive around the foot of **Mount Hakusan**. Korogi wooden bridge at the start of **Kakusenki Gorge** is an artist's delight in Autumn! The **Natadera Temple** with its rock formations and beautiful trees resplendent in autumn colours, create an atmosphere of serenity.

In the afternoon, we will visit **Yamanaka Onsen**, home to traditional bath houses and traditional ryokans with their red latticework. **Yamanka** is also well-known for its exquisite lacquerware and delicious croquettes!

Dinner at a restaurant well-known for its kaiseki cuisine The river is a lovely atmospheric spot for an evening stroll in Kanazawa. **(B, D)**

### **Day 8/ TAKAYAMA (15<sup>th</sup>)**

Depart hotel for Takayama, a lovely traditional mountain village full of painting subjects. **Sanmachi Suji district** and **Hida Furukawa** offer beautifully preserved houses and sake breweries. After lunch, we will visit **Kutani Yaki Pottery** kiln to see traditional designs of the vividly coloured Kutani Ware porcelain. **(B)**

### **Day 9/ TAKAYAMA (16<sup>th</sup>)**

**Ainokura**, and **Shirakawa-go** are traditional, thatched UNESCO villages, surrounded by mountains. Omigachi castle offers a superb panoramic view of Shirakawa -go nestled in the valley. An early evening spa at one of the town's onsens or an evening stroll along the lantern- illuminated Miyagawa River, is the perfect way to end your day.

**Afternoon critique.** Takayama is well-known for its Hide Beef speciality **(B, D)**

### **Day 10 / KYOTO (17<sup>th</sup>) FREE DAY**

After breakfast, we set off on our scenic journey to beautiful Kyoto. (3.5 hours)

Afternoon at leisure in Kyoto to settle in and wander around these quaint streets.

An evening stroll through Marayuma Park is a must! **(B)**





### **Day 11 / KYOTO (18<sup>th</sup>)**

During our time in Kyoto we have planned a mix of quick sketches and contemplative painting time at a few of Kyoto's choices of seventeen World Heritage sites. The meandering laneways are filled with small specialist shops, cafes and temples.

**The Golden Pavilion**, a UNESCO site, is one of Japan's most picturesque spots. **Shirakawa Minami-dori** and **Pontocho Alley** are considered the most beautiful streets in Kyoto with traditional wooden tea houses visited by geishas in colourful kimonos. **Sannen Zaka** and **Ninen Zaka** are wonderful spots to paint and sketch with their cobbled laneways and traditional architecture. At night, the area of **Gion**, is full of atmosphere and a fabulous location for our group dinner! **(B, D)**

### **Day 12 /KYOTO (19<sup>th</sup>)**

**Arashiyama Bamboo Forest** is a mystical and magical spot to paint.

Lunch at Arashiyama Restaurant on the river before heading to the nearby **Tenryuji Zen Temple** with one of the finest gardens in Kyoto with its wonderful mountain views.

Tenryuji Temple was built in 1339 by the ruling shogun and is one of the most important temples in Kyoto and a world heritage site. **Okochi Sanso Villa** tea house is the perfect spot for afternoon tea and to perhaps take the opportunity to dress in a kimono for a photo session, followed by a night cap in **Pontocho Alley**. **(B, L)**

### **Day 13/ KYOTO (20<sup>th</sup>)**

This morning we take a walk along **The Philosopher's Path** with wonderful spots to stop, reflect, sketch and paint. In the afternoon, **Fushimi Inari Shrine**, with its fabulous vermilion torii gates, makes a dynamic subject. **Afternoon critique**.

Dinner at a Kaiseki Restaurant enjoying a multi-course farewell banquet! **(B, D)**

### **Day 14/ DEPARTURE (21<sup>st</sup>)**

Transfer to **Osaka Airport**. Please book your return flight from **Osaka International Airport**. Alternatively, there is a bullet train (3.5 hrs) from Osaka to Tokyo or you may wish to stay in Osaka for a few days to enjoy its sites and fabulous street food. **(B)**



