
Bike Tour Adventures in Japan

Our 2025 cycling tour to Japan offers a dynamic road trip cycling from one town to another in fully escorted, small group led by English speaking guide. Our tour is 7 days and 6 night plus travel to and from Japan. It is designed to allow a short break from Australia and takes the Easter and ANZAC Day public holidays.



The tour has been carefully planned and has been based on the idea of experiencing interesting aspects of Japanese culture while we ride. This tour has a particular focus on high quality meals but also incorporates temples, culture, nature, onsens, life in rural Japan and exercise. We will be biking through less travelled areas in the rural mountain region north of Tokyo. Our route takes us through wonderful scenery and enables us to experience traditional Japanese culture and food along the way. We will be visiting historic towns and will be staying at long established hotels and ryokans (traditional Japanese inns) with relaxing onsens. We are hoping that you will discover the heart of Japan on this epic ride.

Take in the spectacular scenery of mountains, high country and rural farmland and villages (some still using thatch on their roofs) as you ride through Japan's beautiful central alps. Our food will focus on eating high quality Japanese foods, staying in hand picked Japanese ryokans (traditional inns) and relaxing after the days' ride in hot natural spring onsens. Some of the food that we will be trying will include keiseki dinners which feature dozens of dishes incorporating local produce, seasonal ingredients and regional specialties. Some of the unique dishes will include shabu-shabu and sukiyaki using the finest Nasu wagyu beef. In the Nasu mountains we will eat fresh river fish which will be grilled, sautéed or prepared as sashimi. We will also be tasting locally produced cheeses, ice creams and home made soba noodles and tempura. We will be riding through many areas where these food are grown or made. North of Tokyo is called the Kanto region and is known as the rice bowl of Tokyo. Rice = sake = many famous brands to taste. We will also be serendipitously cycling past a craft brewery, and finally, we will have the opportunity to taste the surprising local wine.



Bill will be travelling and riding with you but it will also include an English speaking Japanese guide on the cycling days. Our riding will be fully supported with luggage transfers, mechanical support and backup vans. We do not recommend bringing your own bike as they can be difficult to carry on Japan's busy public transport system. The tour includes the cost of bike hire (road bikes or e-hybrid bikes).



Temple, Mountain Forest and Food Tour

Where: Nikko to Nasu

When: April 2025

Duration: 7 days 6 nights. The riding component is 6 days and 5 nights.

Riding level: Moderate. Cycling 30-70 km/day.

Tour start and finish: Tokyo Haneda airport.

In this foodie's bike tour, you will experience some of the wide variety of great food that Japan has to offer. You will visit historic towns and stay at long-established hotels and ryokans (traditional inns), most of which have been welcoming guests for generations. We have chosen only great traditional ryokans which are committed to serving high quality meals (tried and tested).



The region that we are cycling through is the Nikko region in the central alps north of Tokyo. Nikko has long been a sacred land of Shugen-do (mountain asceticism) and is the place where Ieyasu Tokugawa was laid to rest (Tokugawa is the first Shogun of the Edo Shogunate). For hundreds of years Nikko has been a pilgrimage destination for Samurai. Nikko is a feast of attractions including the World Heritage area of the Toshogu Shrines. Japanese have a well known saying “see Nikko before you die”.

Day 1 Sunday April 20: Travel to Tokyo

There are 2 main airports in Tokyo, Haneda and Narita. Both are connected by efficient and regular train services. Aim for flights landing at Haneda airport as it is close to the city. Narita is a long way out of Tokyo and as some flights arrive at night it may take another couple of hours to get into downtown Tokyo. Where possible Bill will meet you at Haneda airport. We will then travel to our Tokyo hotel (hotel to be confirmed). As we anticipate that people will be arriving on different flights and airlines throughout the day, no formal activities have been organised for today. Feel free to explore the area around our hotel before we meet for dinner and a welcome drink. *D*



Day 2 Monday April 21: Tokyo to Nasu

This morning we will have short orientation tour around Tokyo travelling on the subway and visiting an observational tower and some of Tokyo's famous suburbs. At the end of the tour we will have a casual lunch before returning to the hotel to collect our luggage and heading to the railway station for our travel to Nasushiobara by shinkansen, Japan's



super express trains (about 70 minutes travel time). We will be met by our Japanese cycling guide and travel to their office to collect our hire bikes and have them fitted.

Once we all have our bikes sorted, we travel to our onsen ryokan (a Japanese traditional inn with a hot spring) in Nasu where we will stay for the next 2 nights. Dinner will be at the ryokan and will be a traditional Kaiseki meal (lots of small dishes of seasonal vegetables, fish, local specialties, Japanese pickles and rice). *B/L/D*

Day 3 Tuesday April 22: Ride around Nasu [Cycle 70km]

Today is a day for exploring Nasu, Japan's northern gourmet and biking resort! Nasu has established itself as a royal resort since aristocrats built summerhouses and ranches here about 100 years ago. Even the Emperor has a summerhouse here (called "Goyotei"). Feeding the rich and famous has resulted in Nasu having some of the finest food producers in Japan.

Our riding starts at the ryokan before heading into the surrounding countryside. We travel through rice fields and onto the foothills of the surrounding mountains. We will have beautiful mountain views as we ride. We will make a number of stops including visiting an ancient shrine, the ruins of an old castle and a hidden serene bamboo forest. The food eating highlight of the day will be a multi course lunch at a local farmer's house. Lunch will be made from fresh local ingredients. We eat Japanese style at a low table sitting on cushions on the tatami mats. The lunch will be many small courses accompanied by rice and Japanese tea. Our biking continues after lunch so don't hold back in eating another course.



After lunch we climb into the mountain forests again. For energy we will stop at a dairy farm to try their renowned cheesecake with a chaser of ice cream made using rice flour. We ride back to our accommodation where you can enjoy an onsen before dinner. *B/L/D*.

Day 4 Wednesday April 23: Nasu to Shirobawa [Cycle 50km]

From our onsen hotel in Nasu day 4 starts with a small hill challenge but you will be rewarded with a suspension bridge to ride over. The suspension bridge spans a clear rapid-flowing mountain stream. The route takes us up and down the hills via a small path that travels alongside terraced rice paddies which should be a vibrant green in late spring. Today we also ride through what many claim to be the most beautiful village in Japan as well as a number of small tranquil villages before arriving at our lunch stop. Today's lunch has us stopping at an old wooden restaurant to try their fresh soba noodles and a tempura of seasonal vegetables.



After lunch we ride through a beautiful valley alongside a river. We stop for a short picturesque hike to visit a waterfall. Our afternoon energy snack will have us stopping at a Japanese confectionary store to taste their famous Onsen Manju (a sweet rice cake). Every day on our Japan riding tour we pass by many shrines, statues of deities and temples. This afternoon we will stop at an old shrine featuring a magnificent giant cedar tree. Japan has 2 official religions, Shinto (a spiritual nature based religion) and Buddhism. It is said that Japanese people are born into the less austere Shinto religion, but transition to a stronger focus on Buddhism as they age as Buddhism believes in the afterlife - a clear advantage over Shintoism. *B/L/D*



Day 5 Thursday April 24: Shiobara to Nikko [Cycle 70km]

Today we are riding through some beautiful countryside. Today we take in a few stops too. Firstly we take a hike through Ryuokyo Gorge. Throughout the day we will be riding past shrines and other historical places. A highlight of the day is riding through the Nikko Cedar Avenue. This is an ancient road from the days of the Samurai and it is surrounded by 400 year old giant cedar trees. The shrines and icons that you will see along the way



will recreate an atmosphere of the ancient religious pilgrimage to Nikko. After the Cedar Path, you will be passing through rural villages at the base of the mountains which run parallel to the Kinu River.

Tonight we stay at the Nikko Kanaya Hotel. The Nikko Kanya was established in 1893 and is an elegant and classic resort hotel (the oldest in Japan). Nikko is a very special place made famous by its World Heritage shrines and temples. The shrines in Nikko are possibly the most stunning in Japan and the mountain forest

setting make a trip to Nikko very memorable. The Toshogu shrine is the spiritual resting place of Tokugawa Iyasu, the founder and first shogun of the Tokugawa shogunate (1603-1867). Our hotel is located in Nikko National Park adjacent to these World Heritage sites.

Dinner tonight is at your leisure and your own expense. There are plenty of restaurant options nearby or recharge with an early night. *B/L*.

Day 6 Friday April 25: Nikko to Lake Chuzenji [Cycle 30km]

This morning we take a walk around Nikko Toshugu and surrounding World Heritage Area. You will be walking on an ancient pilgrimage pathway with tranquil scenery of staircase through tall cedar forest, moss covered stones, shrines and meditation statues. This area is sacred place sacred to the Japanese and relates to the origin of Nikko.



After lunch we depart from Nikko Kanaya Hotel to the Chuzenji Kanaya Hotel via the Iroha-zaka hill with many switchbacks and unforgettable scenery. Lake Chuzenji is Japan's highest natural lake. The landscape is surrounded by volcanic mountains, the highest is Mt Nantai (2,500m) and is a sacred place reserved for where the Gods worship. There is a 25km hiking trail around the lake, even walking part of this trail would be rewarding. Kegon Waterfall is where the river exits the lake. The fall plummets 100m and is one of the most well known cascades in Japan. Lake Chuzenji and the waterfall is said to look like a dragon's head. You may need the assistance of some sake to reach this epiphany. Tonight we stay at our lakeside hotel with onsen. *B/L/D*.

Day 7 Saturday April 26: Tour completion and travel back to Tokyo

After having breakfast, use the hotel transfer service to travel to Tobu Nikko station and travel on to Tokyo for Saturday evening departures to Australia for arrival Sunday morning April 27. *B*

Tour cost

AU\$6,900*

Single supplement AU\$450

*minimum numbers apply

Equipment

A support vehicle will follow us for the entire tour. There is no need to carry anything but a few personal items (water, camera, jacket and a small amount of money. The support vehicle also doubles as the mechanical workshop in case some adjustments are needed for your bike en route.

The included bikes will be high performance full carbon road bikes (Cannondale Synapse Carbon Disc) and high quality e-hybrid bikes (TREK or MIYATA).

What's included

1. 6 nights hand picked accommodation on a twin share basis
2. 7 breakfasts and 5 dinners (1x dinner is not included)
3. Rental bike (e-hybrid bike or road bike)
4. Australian tour leader and Japanese tour guide (during the bike ride)
5. Support van to carry gear and provide mechanical support.
6. Luggage transfer during riding days.
7. Bike mounted GPS navigation system with pre-installed tour routes.
8. Small group size, maximum of 12 riders + staff.
9. Snacks, fruit and water during ride.
10. Insurance for the ride.
11. Entry to all ticketed places identified on the itinerary.

**What's not included**

1. Air fares to Tokyo, Japan
2. Personal riding gear (clothes, helmet, shoes, gloves, water bottle) and if you have favourite pedals bring them too.
3. Alcohol.
4. Incidental drinks, coffee and snacks
5. Bike courier transfers to and from the ride start/finish to the airport (if you bring your own bike).

