

SPIRIT OF JAPAN

25 th May – 3rd June 2022,,

Trip Highlights : Walking the sacred Kumano Kodo | Mount Koya & Kurama | Kyoto | Temples | Tea | Meditation | Sushi Making | Forest Bathing |

<p>24 May TUES</p>	<p>Depart from your home country!</p> <p>Everyone needs to arrive in Osaka Kansai airport on the 25th of May.</p>	
<p>25 May WED'</p>	<p>Osaka Kansai Airport</p> <p>Transfer by shared shuttle taxi to our hotel in Kyoto.</p> <p>Afternoon walking tour of Kyoto (2pm-5pm)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gion and Pontocho area walking (Geisha district) <p>Gion is an area of stunning temples, maiko meeting places and local eateries that are perfect for to start our tour!</p> <div data-bbox="256 1562 967 1801" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Meals: Lunch and Dinner at own cost</p>	<p>Daiwa Roynet Hotel Kyoto Eki Mae</p>

26 May

THURS'

Kyoto Full-day Tour

Breakfast at our hotel.

Private guided tour of Kyoto using chartered coach.

Meet guide at hotel lobby at 9am.

Tour highlights:

- Golden Pavilion
- Ryoanji (Zen Temple) home to one of Japan's famous rock gardens



- Tea Ceremony
- Saihoji Temple* (if permission granted)

Saihoji Temple (Moss Garden) – Special permission is needed to enter the temple. It's a World heritage site and has about 120 varieties of Moss in the gardens. It was once Prince Shotoku's villa and is now converted into a Zen Temple.

***Moss garden and sutra writing**

Back to the Hotel for overnight.

Meals: Lunch and Dinner at own cost

Daiwa Roynet
Hotel Kyoto Eki
Mae

27 May
FRIDAY

Kyoto-Kurama-Kyoto

Breakfast at our hotel

Day trip to Kurama using public transportation

Meet assistant at hotel lobby 8.30am.

Depart Kyoto Station 09.06 am

Arrive Demachiyanagi station 09.30 am

Hike on Mount Kurama will take 2-3 hours

Return to Kyoto around 6pm using local transportation

Train tickets included

Kurama Visit

Mount Kurama is in northern Kyoto, connected by a five-kilometre forested trail around the mountain that is popular with tourists; taking around two and a half to three hours to complete at a leisurely pace. The area has been well-visited for centuries as a place of pilgrimage to its various holy sites.

Kurama Temple located on the mountains has a history from the year 770, and each season the temple shows visitors a different face. Whether you take the cable car or hike up the mountain, you're surrounded by verdant mountain forests where you may be able to spot some of the local wildlife. The temple's main hall offers a gorgeous view out over the surrounding mountains. Mt. Kurama is believed to be the birthplace of reiki.

Tengu, long-nosed or beaked creatures believed to be the guardians of the mountain and can be found as statues, art, and goods in the village and in the temple complex.



Meals: Lunch and Dinner at own cost

Daiwa Roynet
Hotel Kyoto Eki
Mae

<p>28 May SAT'</p>	<p>Stop at Byodoin Temple and Uji Town.</p> <p>Breakfast at our hotel</p> <p>Transfer to Mount Koya by coach via Uji town</p> <p>Depart hotel 9.00 Arrive Uji at 9.30 am</p> <p>Byodo-in is a temple with great Buddhist architecture and garden. It was initially built as a countryside villa of a powerful politician Fujiwara no Michinaga. His son then converted this into a temple and made a special hall which was named "Phoenix hall" because of its shape and two Phoenix statues. The hall is now featured in the back of the Japanese ten-yen coin.</p> <p>Byodo-in temple is a 10–15-minute walk from the Uji town famous for Green Tea. We will visit one of the tea houses and learn how to brew a perfect cup of tea and try some of the Green Tea Flavoured soba noodles in Uji town.</p> <p>Depart Uji 11.00am Arrive Koya San 1.30pm</p> <p>2-hour Walking Tour of Koyo San 2.30- 4.30pm</p> <p>Meditation experience (subject to availability)</p> <p>Overnight in temple lodging, Vegetarian dinner included.</p> <div data-bbox="261 1087 1159 1339">  </div> <p>Mount Koya – One of the holiest destinations.</p> <p>Mount Koya is the centre of Shingon Buddhism and a Buddhist retreat. It's a great opportunity to experience an overnight stay in a temple, try <i>shyojin ryori – Vegetarian temple meal-</i> as well as a meditative early morning prayer session held by a temple monk.</p>	<p>Sekishoin Temple</p> <p>(Rooms with private toilets and baths)</p>
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Meals: Lunch at own cost

29 May
SUN

Koya san → Tanabe

It's possible to join the morning prayers at the temple around 5:30am. After a vegetarian breakfast we are transferred by chartered coach to Takijiri.

Depart Koya san at 8:30am.

Arrive in Tanabe at 11:00am

Orientation and lunch at the Kumano Kodo visitor centre. Lunch at own cost locally.

Start walk Takijiri to Takahara around **1pm** (3.9 KM approx. 2.5 hours)

Overnight stay in Takahara

Dinner included at hotel.

The Kumano has been thought to be the mythical 'holy ground where gods dwell'. During the Heian period (794 - 1185), the Imperial household and court made the 30-to-40-day arduous journey from the ancient capital of Kyoto to this remote area, in search of heaven on earth. It is here that Kumano Sanzan, the three grand shrines (Hongu Taisha, Nachi Taisha and Hayatama Taisha) and Nachisan Seiganto-ji Temple, were established.

Kiri no Sato

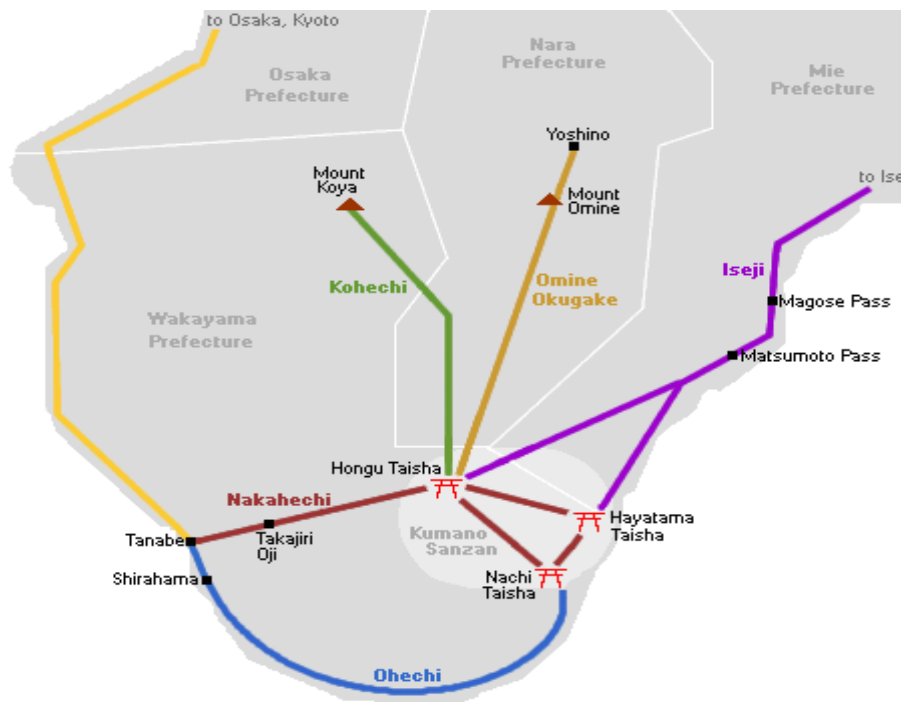
Takahara lodge

(7 Twins

Mix of Western and Japanese style rooms

ensuite toilet and shared baths)

We will start the Nakahechi trail. The Nakahechi Route is the main route that links the three Grand Shrines of Kumano. It has rich historical, cultural, and spiritual atmosphere.





TAKIJIRI TO TAKAHARA 3.9 KM approx. 2.5hrs. The Kumano Kodo trail head starts behind Takijiri Oji, where the boundaries of the sacred mountains starts. We will visit the Kumano Kodo Kan Pilgrim Centre where our guide will give you an introduction to the Pilgrim route.

There is a steep climb to Takahara village where we will stay overnight.

Proceed to Kumano in the morning.



Meals: Lunch at own cost

<p>30 May MON</p>	<p>Takahara → Chikatsuyu</p> <p>Breakfast at hotel.</p> <p>Our luggage will be transferred to Chikatsuyu.</p> <p>Depart hotel at 9am.</p> <p>Walk from Takahara to Chikatsuyu-oji (9 km, 5~6 hrs)</p> <p>Today's trail will continue through the forest to the east and will finish in Chikatsuyu Village along the Hiki-gawa river.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Chikatsuyu Village Chikatsuyu Village</p> <p>Lunch Box provided and picnic lunch on the way.</p> <p>Arrive at Minshuku by 6pm. Dinner included at minshuku.</p>	<p>Minshuku Chikatsuyu</p> <p>(7 twins Japanese style rooms with shared toilet and bath)</p>
<p>31 May TUES'</p>	<p>Chikatsuya – Yunomine Onsen</p> <p>Breakfast at Minshuku. Our luggage will be transferred to the Yunomine Onsen. Packed lunch will be provided today. We meet our guide at our accommodation and take the public bus from Chikatsuyu-oji to Doyukawa-Bashi (pay 420 yen locally)</p> <p>The walk from Doyukawabashi bustop to Kumano Hongu Taisha is 17 km and will take us around 7-9 hours) . We will take a local bus transfer to the onsen along with our guide. (Bus tickets included)</p> <p>16.58 Dep Hongu Taisha-mae 17.11 Arrive Shimoyunomine</p> <p>Overnight stay.</p> <p>Dinner own choice and cost</p> <p>This Intermediate walk is a shortened option for those wishing to walk as much as possible on the Kumano Kodo between Chikatsuyu / Nonaka (Tsugizakura-oji) area to Kumano Hongu Taisha in one day.</p> <p>Hosshinmon-oji is one of the most important sites on the Kumano Kodo trail. This is the outermost entrance in to Kumano Hongu Taisha. "Hosshin" means "spiritual awakening" or "aspiration to enlightenment" and "mon" means "gate". Passage through this gate was a</p>	<p>Ryokan Yunomine- so</p> <p>(7 twin Japanese style room with en-suite toilet and shared bath)</p>

transformational rite marking initiatory death and rebirth in the Pure Land paradise.

The trail will take us through villages, forests and panoramic views to Kumano Hongu Taisha



Hosshinmon-oji



Kumano Hongu Taisha

We will stay at Yunomine onsen hot spring village. Relax in a hot spring bath and try out the local Japanese cuisine.



01 Jun
WED'

Yunomine Onsen → Katsuura

Breakfast at our accommodation. Our luggage will be transferred to Katsuura. Our guide will meet us at our accommodation. Taxi transfer from your ryokan at 9.30 to arrive at the boat pier by 10.00am Packed lunch.

Today we will experience the Kumano River which was used for the pilgrim route from Kumano Hong Taisha to Kumano Hayatama Taisha in Shingu. We will travel in a traditional wooden flat bottom boat and take in the spiritual landscapes of Kumano.



Kumano gawa river



Local cuisine

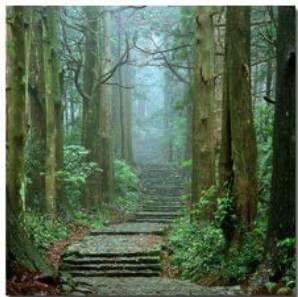


Katsuura Gyoen
(7 twin standard Japanese style room with en-suite toilet and bath)

If time permits, we will walk from Daimon-zaka to Kumano Nachi Taisha (total ~2.5 km, ~2 hrs)

Last day of the Kumano Kodo trail! You will start off at Daimon-zaka, which is an impressive cobblestone staircase slope which runs from the base of the valley to Kumano Nachi Taisha, Seiganto-ji and Nachi waterfall. It is lined with centuries old Japanese cedars (cryptomeria), camphor trees and bamboo groves. Daimon-zaka means "large gate slope" referring to a gate that once stood nearby.

The actual staircase is about 600 meters long with 267 stairs.



Daimon Zaka slope



Nachi Falls

Overnight in Katsuura. Enjoy the hot springs and sea food!

Breakfast at accommodation.

Our luggage will be transferred to Katsuura.

Packed lunch provided for this day.

Meet guide at our accommodation.

TAXI TRANSFER FROM RYOKAN YUNOMINESO TO MICHINO-EKI KUMANO-GAWA (Boat Pier)

Depart: Yunomine onsen 9:30

Arrive: Boat Pier 10:00

Today we enjoy a 1.5hr Kumano River traditional boat tour.

1pm- Visit Kumano Hayatama Taisha.

Walk to Daimonzaka 30-minute walk. Arrive in Daimonzaka around 2pm.

Chartered taxi transfer from Shingu to Nachi Taisha (30-minute drive)

Arrive in Nachi Taisha around 3pm.

Visit Kumano Nachi Taisha, Seiganto-Ji & Nachi Falla

Transfer by local bus with guide from Nachi san to Katsuura.

Bus tickets included

Approx. 40-minute bus journey.

Arrive at the ryokan around 6pm.

Enjoy Dinner and hot springs at our ryokan.

02 Jun
THUR'

Katsuura → Osaka

Breakfast at our ryokan.


Take taxi or local bus to Kii- Katsuura station.

Pay locally (No guide or assistant)

15 minutes' walk from our ryokan to station.

Transfer to Shin Osaka by train.

Osaka Excel
Hotel

	<p>11:48 Dep: Kii-Katsuura station 15:50 Arr: Shin-Osaka</p> <p>We will be met by an English-speaking assistant at Shin- Osaka station. Transfer by local train to Osaka. Our assistant will help us check-in at the hotel and then escort us by local train to the Sushi making venue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sushi making experience in Osaka up to 2 hours. Free at leisure in the evening. Overnight at the hotel. <p>Meals: Lunch and any additional meals (exclude sushi we make) and drinks ordered during dinner at our own cost.</p> 	
03 Jun	<p>Osaka → Osaka Kansai Airport</p> <p>Breakfast at our hotel. Airport bus tickets will be provided for our transfer to Osaka Kansai Airport.</p>	

Tour Price: USD 4,700 / AED 17,250 per person on twin and triple share basis. Based on 12 clients.

Tour Price includes:

- 9 nights' accommodation as per itinerary
- Daily tour guides and transfers as per itinerary
- Activities as per the itinerary
- Authentic Tea Ceremony in Kyoto
- All local bus and train tickets unless otherwise stated.
- Sushi making experience

Tour Price Excludes:

- International Flights
- Travel Insurance
- Any PCR / Covid-related tests
- Meals which are not stated in the itinerary (highlighted in yellow)

- Guide Tips

PAYMENT TERMS

10% non-refundable deposit at time of confirmation of borders being re-opened.

If we are unable to travel due to travel borders being shut, we will re arrange the trip for a future travel date and move the deposit paid to the new travel dates. The Deposit is non-refundable. We can only re arrange.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations are subject to the following penalties of the full trip price:

10% non-refundable deposit due at the time of confirmation

45-31 days prior to arrival: 75% penalty

30 days or less prior to arrival: 100% penalty

NEXT STEPS

1. Arrange a call / zoom / skype with Julie if it's your first trip with Mountain High
2. Request and complete the booking form, make a 10 % deposit and send along a copy of the passport you will be travelling on. The balance payment is due on the 1st April 2022.
3. Start getting fit - walk everywhere and take the stairs instead of the elevator !
4. Book your flights and arrange travel insurance to include cancel for any reason cover

Please send all questions and correspondence to Julie & April
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