

Japan Travel News

Japan National Tourist Organization

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August - September 2005

PR Manager: Kylie Clark

Bargain Tours for Stop Over Passengers in Japan

Stopping over in Japan on route to Australia is a cheap and easy way to visit Japan. It is an exciting alternative for those who have previously visited the more traditional Asian stop over destinations of Hong Kong, Singapore and Bangkok. Stopping over in Tokyo or Osaka does not lengthen the journey. The flight time from London to Sydney via Tokyo is only 21 hours and 20 minutes, which is the same as via Bangkok or Hong Kong. Having a stop over in Japan enables travellers to get more from their holiday by experiencing the unique culture of Japan before or after relaxing in Australia.

Flights from the UK to Australia via Japan are available with Japan Airlines (JAL) and with British Airways/QANTAS. Flights to Australia via Japan are also available from other European countries on JAL.

Passengers transiting or stopping over at Narita, Central Japan and Kansai International Airports between September 2005 and March 2006 will have the opportunity to participate in newly introduced transit tours to help them make the most of their short time in Japan. The tours are available from an amazing 200 yen, which is about £1 or €1.50.

Eisa at Thames Festival

The Mayor's Thames Festival will this year be welcoming 34 performers representing the Eisa Festival of Okinawa. "Eisa" is a wildly energetic Okinawan dance using drums. It is breath taking stuff; loud, energetic and highly synchronised.

The eisa performances will take place at various locations and times during the festival on Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th September.

For more information please visit
www.thamesfestival.org



Boso Vilage, one of the many transit tours available

A variety of great value tours have been developed to give transit and stop over passengers a chance to experience traditional Japanese culture, sample delicious Japanese cuisine, relax in natural hot springs, visit car manufacturing plants, see local festivals and more - there really is something for everyone. Full-day, three-hour and four-hour tours are available.

For more information please visit
www.jnto.go.jp/transit

JNTO Has Moved

Please be aware that JNTO has moved from the fifth to the first floor of Heathcoat House. Our contact details remain the same:

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Heathcoat House
20 Savile Row
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Tel for media & trade: +44 (0)20 7734 6870
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Airline & Tour News

Learn Japanese on Virgin Atlantic

Passengers on Virgin Atlantic can now study up on Japanese when flying on Virgin's popular route between London and Tokyo. In June, Virgin Atlantic introduced a Japanese language course to the airline's award winning inflight entertainment system v:port. The airline has teamed up with Univerb to offer the course, which teaches passengers to understand and speak a new language. The course is available for Japanese speakers wanting to learn English and for English speakers wanting to learn Japanese.

Katie Marks, Programming Coordinator for Virgin Atlantic's Onboard Media said, "We are very excited to offer our passengers the opportunity to learn Japanese. We are sure they will find using the Univerb service both educational and fun. Passengers can learn basic phrases or can brush up on fluent conversation, which is perfect for business or leisure travellers."

For more information please visit
www.virginatlantic.com

ANA Expands Business Class

ANA has expanded the New Style Club ANA (business class) cabin on its daily London Heathrow to Tokyo-Narita service, in response to the growing demand for business travel to Japan.

Fourteen extra seats have been added to the New Style Club ANA cabin bringing the total to 75. New Style CLUB ANA caters to the needs and tastes of the business traveller allowing them the freedom to relax, enjoy entertainment, sleep, do work or enjoy fine dining. New Style Club ANA boasts fully flat easy sleeper seats for relaxing and also an ideal business environment with each seat featuring a universal power port and A4 laptop storage pocket. In Club ANA guests can choose the type of meal - full-course or snack - and style, Japanese or Western. Other features include a stroll-up bar.

Passengers in every class on ANA may also enjoy a full Audio Video On Demand (AVOD) entertainment system with a choice of 64 movies, video and audio channels.

For more information please visit
www.anaskyweb.com or
call +44 (0)870-837-8866



Autumn Tours with InsideJapan Tours

Autumn with its clear skies and warm days is a lovely time to visit Japan. As the heat and humidity of the summer recedes the cities spark with renewed energy whereas out in the country the rice harvest begins set against a backdrop of blazing reds, oranges and yellows from the turning leaves of Japan's densely forested mountains. In 2005 and 2006 InsideJapan Tours have six fantastic tour itineraries to bring to you Japan in all its Autumnal splendour, including their brand new Hidden Japan tour.

For further details please visit
www.insidejapantours.com
or call +44 (0)870 746 1044

An Eastern Odyssey

16 nights visiting Japan, China, Hong Kong,
Thailand and the temples of Angkor
from £1499

The Travel Collection have put together an amazing trip for those wanting to discover the Orient: Japan, traditional and modern; the scenic beauty of southern China; the ancient wonders of Cambodia and the vibrant cities of Bangkok and Hong Kong. Speed past Mount Fuji on a 'bullet train'; cruise the Li River through spectacular Chinese countryside; explore the wondrous Angkor Wat.

Highlights in Japan include:

Kyoto: Take the philosopher's walk, a path between Ginkakuji temple and Nanzenji temple passing shrines, temples and teashops.

Tokyo: Play with the latest hi tech equipment at Tokyo's Sony Centre, located in the upmarket shopping district of Ginza.

For full details and bookings please visit
www.travelcollection.co.uk or call 01306 744300

James Bond 007 Museum Opens in Japan

The world's first permanent museum devoted entirely to James Bond has opened on a small island in Japan. The museum is on Naoshima island, the setting for a major part of Raymond Benson's 2002 Bond novel, *The Man With the Red Tattoo*.

Naoshima is mostly known as a center for modern art, being the location of the elite Benesse House Art Museum designed by renowned architect Tadao Ando, which is also a luxury hotel. Guests can actually stay in the hotel, walk out of their rooms, and find themselves in a museum that houses works by artists such as Jackson Pollock, David Hockney, Andy Warhol, and many others from around the world. Raymond Benson used this museum as the location for the climax of the novel.

The museum aims to present Naoshima as a Bond location on a national scale, introduce visitors to the story of *The Man With the Red Tattoo* and other James Bond 007 novels, feature information on Benson and the other successive authors who have contributed to the legacy of 007, and exhibit material and memorabilia related to the novels and films.

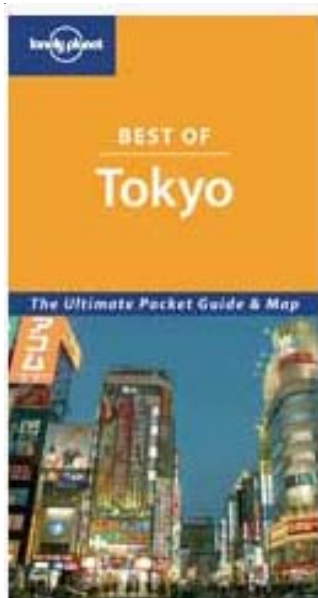


Raymond Benson at the opening of 007 The Man with the Red Tattoo Museum, Naoshima, Japan

Since the novel's release Kagawa Prefecture (the prefecture where Naoshima is located) and a number of other organizations have been working together to promote the film adaptation of the novel in a move to revitalize Naoshima and the wider Seto Inland Sea region. More information about their plight and the role of Naoshima in *The Man With the Red Tattoo* can be found here www.007japan.org

For information about Benesse Art Museum & Hotel please visit www.naoshima-is.co.jp

Lonely Planet Best of Tokyo



This handy pocket-sized travel guide includes the best of Tokyo's landmarks and must-see sights, restaurants, accommodations, and entertainment options for the traveller with limited time. Best of Tokyo puts the whole city in your pocket.

FIND YOUR WAY - with easy-to-use fold-out maps.

GET THE MOST FOR YOUR YEN - select shopping and eating picks take you straight to the city's best restaurants, classy boutiques and quirky shops. Looking for the perfect *yukata* (cotton kimonos)?

This information rich guide has it covered!

STAY IN STYLE with Tokyo's most discerning accommodation options - from high-class hotels to exquisite ryokan.

PARTY 'TIL DAWN with the locals - insider knowledge on the best bars, clubs and live music.

EXPLORE the galleries of Aoyama, old world of Shitamachi and sea spray of Odaiba on comprehensive walking tours.

www.lonelyplanet.com

EAT -JAPAN 2005 Celebrating the Food, Drink & Culture of Japan

Eat-Japan 2005 is a festival consisting of a series of events aimed at generating public interest in Japanese food and culture, which developed directly out of hugely successful 'The Original Sushi Competition', a unique recipe competition now entering its 4th year.

The four events of Eat-Japan 2005 are:

* **The Original Sushi Competition 2005**

15 July - October - Annual sushi recipe competition

* **The Photogenic Sushi Competition**

15 July - October - Photo contest on the subject of people eating sushi.

* **A Prize Draw 1** - 31 August

Questionnaire-based prize draw

* **Lucky Scratch Card 1** - 31 September

'Scratch Card'-based prize draw and free book offer

The events offer great numbers of Japan-related prizes, ranging from restaurant vouchers to three pairs of round-trip tickets to Japan, which, as well as encouraging entries, aim to help the public to get to know Japan better. For the latest festival and prize information, please visit the official website:

www.eat-japan.com

October/November Events

October

8-10th Naha Festival and Giant Tug-of-War, Naha City Okinawa

A three-day extravaganza of parades, dances and fireworks. See demonstrations of Okinawan culture, including dance, music, arts and crafts, food, drinks, and the world's largest tug-of-war. The tug-of-war's history dates back to the 1600's, with its roots in a religious ritual that took place to pray for a successful crop the following year. The giant rope, which is 186 meters long and 1.56 meters wide weighing over 40 tons, has been certified by the Guinness Book of Records as the largest in the world. The tug-of-war takes place on 9th October. www.ocvb.or.jp



9th & 10th Takayama Matsuri of Hachiman Shrine, Takayama

This is known as one of the three most famous and unique festivals in Japan. Hundreds of people wearing the ceremonial dress of palace guards parade down the narrow streets of Takayama pulling 11 giant floats. Superb craftsmanship is evident in the dolls that ride the ornate floats that are paraded through this well-preserved ancient town. The streetlights are turned off, and the floats are pulled through town bathed in the rays of 100 paper lanterns. www.hida.jp

17th Autumn Festival of Toshogu Shrine, Nikko

Men, women and children parade in this festival, dressed as fully armed samurai warriors, archers, spearmen, riflemen, Shinto priests, shrine maidens, musicians, townspeople and even those in lion masks. www.nikko-jp.org/english

November

3rd Daimyo Gyoretsu or Samurai Procession, Yumoto Spa, Hakone

This re-enactment of a feudal lord procession travels around the circumference of the area surrounding the main onsen of Hakone, a course that is approximately 6 kilometres and takes 5 and a half hours to complete. In total, approximately 170 people take part in this Edo Period re-creation. In addition to the Daimyo Gyoretsu, the parade also features marching bands, the Odawara-teppotai (a display of Edo Period firearms), dance performances of approximately 200 geishas, and many others. www.kankou.hakone.kanagawa.jp

15th Shichi-gosan or Children's Shrine Visiting Day, throughout Japan

Shichi-go-san literally means "seven-five-three", and children of these three ages, all dressed in their best, are taken to the shrines by their parents to express their thanks to the tutelary deities for their good health and to pray for future blessings.

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