

# Japan Travel News

## Japan National Tourist Organization

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### Yokoso! Japan Weeks

The Japanese Government have designated 5-20 February 2005, Yokoso! Japan Weeks. During this period a saturation campaign will be conducted in Japan and abroad to improve recognition of Japan as an enjoyable, affordable and convenient tourist destination and to raise the profile of the Visit Japan Campaign.

Yokoso! Japan Week activities will include special low-cost tours for passengers in transit. The tours will depart from Narita and Kansai Airports and will target in-coming passengers and airline crews. From Narita Airport there will be half-day morning and afternoon tours costing from Y500-Y1,000 (£2.60 - £5.20). The tours will cover various themes, such as Sake Tasting, Japanese Gardens & Tea, Handcrafts, Shopping and Historical Ruins. From Kansai Airport there will be a shuttle bus service to an outlet mall that sells designer goods at reduced prices. The shuttle bus services is free if participants show a Yokoso! Japan Weeks pamphlet. These pamphlets will be distributed onboard JAL and ANA inbound flights to Narita and Kansai Airports. The tours aim to give participants a small taste of what Japan has to offer to tempt them back for a longer visit. To participate in these tours simply go to the JTB counter in Narita Airport Terminal 2 or the tours desk inside Kansai airport terminal building.

Other Yokoso! Japan Weeks activities include displays of National Treasures and Cultural Properties that are rarely opened to the public. For example, restricted areas of Nara's Todai-ji Temple and Kyoto's Byodo-in Temple. Plus, free trials of e-NAVI, a unique system that provides information and translating functions to help visitors to Japan by way of PDAs, which are loaned to participants during their time in Japan free of charge.

Narita tour brochures can be requested by emailing [kylie@jnto.co.uk](mailto:kylie@jnto.co.uk)

For more information about Yokoso! Japan Weeks please visit [www.jnto.go.jp/yjw/eng/](http://www.jnto.go.jp/yjw/eng/)



### Centrair Opens 17 February

Central Japan International Airport (Centrair) is an island airport off the coast of Tokoname City, a suburb of Nagoya in Aichi Prefecture. As an international airport planned to operate 24 hours a day, it will play a major role in linking central Japan with the rest of the world.

Facilities include a relaxation zone, complete with spas, nap spaces, massage and treatment services; a local speciality zone, where souvenirs from central Japan are sold; The Observatory restaurant and an observation deck with panoramic views of Ise Bay and aeroplane take-offs and landings. There will be a large indoor garden and natural energy will be effectively used with skylights providing natural light for interior spaces. It will even be possible for wedding ceremonies to be held in the garden!

The new airport will be very useful for business travellers who deal with large Japanese companies as many businesses have their head offices or factories in the region. For example, Toyota, Brother, Suzuki, Epson, Yamaha, Honda, Sanyo, Denso, Sony and Sharp.

The airport is just 28 minutes from Nagoya by rail or about 40 minutes by road. For European travellers there will be direct flights to Centrair from Paris and Frankfurt, travellers from other European departure points can get connecting flights from Tokyo or Osaka.

For more information please visit:  
[www.centrair.jp](http://www.centrair.jp)

# SIGHTSEEING NEWS

## New Art Museums in Japan

Recently a number of impressive art museums have opened in Japan in striking modern buildings.

### National Museum of Arts, Osaka

The new home of The National Museum of Art is a completely underground facility in the western section of Osaka's Nakanoshima district. The new museum, while continuing to pursue its original goal of presenting contemporary art, will introduce an even wider range of foreign and domestic art trends. [www.nmao.go.jp](http://www.nmao.go.jp)

### Chichu Art Museum, Benesse Island, Naoshima

Opened in 2004, the museum, managed by Naoshima Fukutake Art Museum Foundation, is located on the south side of Naoshima, an island of the Inland Sea of Japan. The artworks of Claude Monet, Walter De Maria and James Turrell are installed permanently within the building that Tadao Ando designed. [www.chichu.jp/e/](http://www.chichu.jp/e/)



National Museum of Arts, Osaka



21st Century Museum of Contemporary Arts, Kanazawa

### 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Arts, Kanazawa

Circular in form, with a diameter of 112.5 meters, the building has no front or back, leaving it free to be explored from all directions. The museum aims to introduce recent creative developments from Japan and abroad which it considers indicative of the evolution of artistic thought worldwide since 1980.

[www.kanazawa21.jp](http://www.kanazawa21.jp)

## New Japan & Tokyo Guides

Rough Guide have just published new editions of their Japan and Tokyo guides.

Features of the Japan guide include:

- \* Comprehensive coverage of all the sights, from Tokyo's neon streets to the picturesque villages of Central Honshu and the pristine beaches of Okinawa.

- \* Candid reviews of the best hotels, bars, clubs and shops, and tips on exploring Japan's unique cuisine.

- \* Practical advice on getting around the country by train, and tips on hiking, skiing and diving.

- \* In-depth features on all things Japanese, from temple architecture to pop culture and the environment.

- \* Full-colour photographs and over 100 maps.

*On sale at all major book stores and on amazon.com*



## Tokyo Tourist Information Centre to Open 365 days a Year!

From 1st February, 2005 the Tokyo Tourist Information Centre (TIC) will be open 9:00-17:00 every day of the year. The TIC has free brochures and maps for travel all over Japan and knowledgeable staff to answer Japan travel-related questions.

Tokyo TIC

10th floor, Tokyo Kotsu Kaikain Building, 2-10-1, Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0006 (a 2-minute walk from Yurakucho Station)

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● **Important notice: We Are Moving** ●  
● In February we will be moving our office from ●  
● the 5th floor of Heathcoat House down to the ●  
● 1st floor. All of our contact telephone numbers ●  
● will remain the same. The exact date for the ●  
● move is not yet set, so if you visit us in Febru- ●  
● ary please confirm with reception what floor we ●  
● are on. ●  
●.....

# TOUR NEWS

## New Tours to Japan from Ireland

In response to very positive feedback from clients who went on special World Cup trips to Japan in 2002, CanAmerica, the USA and Canada specialists, have started tours to Japan. Discover Holidays, is their new long haul division that will run tours to Japan and other long haul destinations which all offer wonderful, often unique, holiday experiences.

The Discover Holiday Japan tours are perfect for first time visitors to Japan. The *Discover Tokyo* package includes flights and six nights accommodation in a 3, 4 or 5 star hotel, half day sightseeing tour of Tokyo and a day excursion to Mt. Fuji & Hakone and return flights from Dublin or Cork.

The 10-day *Discover Tokyo & Kyoto* package includes 6 nights accommodation in Tokyo and 4 nights in Kyoto, return flights from Dublin or Cork, plus a half day sightseeing tour in Tokyo; a day excursion to Mt. Fuji and Hakone; a full day sightseeing tour of Kyoto and Nara; and bullet train service between Tokyo and Kyoto.

For more information please contact:

T: 01 - 8720444

E: [info@discoverholidays.ie](mailto:info@discoverholidays.ie)

[www.discoverholidays.ie](http://www.discoverholidays.ie)

## Silk Road and Beyond Starts Tours to Japan

Established in 1965, Silk Road & Beyond have many years of experience in offering quality holidays. The company originally specialised in the Middle East, but have since expanded out to destinations in Asia as well. They aim to offer journeys that will long be remembered, much more than just a holiday, but a total travel experience. In their 2005-2006 brochure they have added two dedicated Japan tours, plus a combined Korea and Japan tour. *Inside Japan* is a 10-day introductory tour of Japan, including the main sights of Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Osaka and more.

*Journey Through Japan* is a 14-day comprehensive tour of Japan, taking in the main cities of Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima, as well as including visits deep into the Japanese countryside where you can stay at an onsen or hot spring resort and venture into the Japan Alps. Both tours are private tours with departures available daily. The Japan and Korea tour, *Images of the Far East*, explores the very best of the fascinating and historic countries.

For more information please contact:

T: 020 7371 3131

E: [sales@silkroadandbeyond.co.uk](mailto:sales@silkroadandbeyond.co.uk)

[www.silkroadandbeyond.co.uk](http://www.silkroadandbeyond.co.uk)

The first world expo of the 21st century, Aichi Expo will be held for 185 days from 25 March - 25 September. The theme of the expo is "Nature's Wisdom". One of the more unique highlights of the Expo will be a woolly mammoth that was excavated from Siberia in 2004. It is the most intact mammoth head uncovered in centuries! The Expo will also introduce leading-edge technology developed in order to end practices that wreck irreparable damage to the environment. Such as, next-generation urban transport systems and robots. There are 127 countries participating in the Expo and each will have their own country pavilion and performances.

A number of UK tour operators will be offering trips to Aichi Expo, including:

\* AsiaFare [www.asia-fare.co.uk](http://www.asia-fare.co.uk)

\* Audley Travel [www.audleytravel.com](http://www.audleytravel.com)

\* Inside Japan Tours

[www.insidejapantours.com](http://www.insidejapantours.com)

\* JTB Sunrise [www.jtb.co.jp/sunrisetour/](http://www.jtb.co.jp/sunrisetour/)

\* Jaltour [www.jaltour.co.uk](http://www.jaltour.co.uk)

\* Thomas Cook [www.thomascooktours.com](http://www.thomascooktours.com)

## Expo 2005 Aichi Japan



More information about Aichi Expo is available on the official website [www.expo2005.com](http://www.expo2005.com)

The official website for the British Pavilion is [www.my-earth.org.uk](http://www.my-earth.org.uk)

# A pril/MayCalendar

## A pril

**10th - 17th**      *Kamakura Matsuri, Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture*

Horseback archery, a parade of portable shrines and sacred dances at Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gu Shrine.

**14th & 15th**      *Takayama Matsuri, Hie Shrine, Takayama, Gifu Prefecture*

This festival, said to date back to the 15th century, is held twice a year in spring and autumn. In the spring festival there are 11 lavishly-decorated parade floats. The floats are decorated with lacquered wood, embossed and engraved metal, richly-patterned cloth and some are equipped with clockwork marionettes to entertain the crowd. The parade also includes folk musicians, dragon dancers and hundreds of townspeople wearing traditional costumes.

For those who can't make it to Takayama at festival time, it is possible to see the festival's beautiful floats throughout the year at the Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall.



## May

**8th - 22nd**      *Grand Sumo Tournament - The May Tournament, Kokugikan Tokyo*

Visit [www.sumo.or.jp/eng/](http://www.sumo.or.jp/eng/) for dates and other information about the 2005 sumo tournaments.



**15th**      *Aoi Matsuri, Shimogamo and Kamigamo Shrines, Kyoto*

This festival features a magnificent pageant colourfully reproducing the Imperial procession that paid homage to the shrines in ancient days.

**Golden Week**  
**29 April to 5 May 2005**

Golden Week is a collection of four national holidays within seven days. Combined with weekends, Golden Week becomes one of Japan's three busiest holiday seasons, the others being New Year and the Obon week. Foreign visitors are advised to avoid travelling to Japan during the Golden Week as airports, trains, sightseeing spots become very crowded. Also, accommodation tends to book out well in advance.

The four national holidays are:

29 April - Greenery Day

3 May - Constitution Memorial Day

4 May - "Between Day" - according to Japanese law, if two national holidays are separated by just one day, the day in "between" becomes a national holiday.

5 May - Children's Day

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