

Trek Japan – NEW For 2026



ACTIVITY

Trek

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel

CHALLENGE FACTORS

Terrain

DURATION:

11 days

GRADE



Three-quarters of Japan’s terrain is mountainous and heavily forested, yet we generally know more about its unique culture and food than its natural beauty ... this trek aims to change that!

From Bandai’s volcanic mountains and stunning multi-coloured lakes, to the Nikko Mountains - where our highest point (2578m) rewards our efforts with 360-degree views - to the lower slopes of Japan’s iconic mountain, Mount Fuji. Four mountains in five days ... a perfect challenge with no high altitudes.

En-route we immerse ourselves in the culture, from bento boxes and bathing in *onsen* (hot springs), to time in fast-paced Tokyo, a historic Edo post town, and the serene Toshogu Shrine. An unforgettable combination of cultural discovery and mountain trekking in a country on many bucket-lists – not to be missed!

Watch this space for our Kyoto extension option coming soon!

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Depart London for Tokyo

Day 2: Arrive Tokyo

We arrive in Tokyo and transfer to our hotel. Enjoy the busy street-scenes – a great introduction to this fast-paced modern city. We have time to relax before heading out together for dinner in a local restaurant. Night hotel.

(Lunch not included if not in-flight)

Day 3: Tokyo – Bandai; Goshikinuma Trail

An early start sees us heading to the station, where we experience the efficiency of Japan's train network! On board, we'll enjoy a classic *ekiben* meal – a station bento box which typically showcases local ingredients and flavours, and is an authentic part of Japanese train travel. We travel north through the countryside to Koriyama station, where our waiting bus takes us via Aizu-Wakamatsu, one of Japan's most historic castle towns, steeped in samurai heritage. We enjoy lunch near Aizu's Tsuruga Castle, before heading towards the mountains of the Bandai region. This afternoon we enjoy a short but beautiful walk along Goshikinuma Nature Trail, which passes through forest and along a series of multi-coloured lakes formed by volcanic activity. The colours are created by different minerals in the water, and depending on conditions can vary from deep blue to turquoise, green and even red. It's a great afternoon walk to stretch our legs, get accustomed to the scenery and climate, and whet our appetites for the days to come. Tonight, you can relax in the hotel's hot springs, and enjoy a traditional *kaiseki* dinner. Night hotel.

Travel approx. 3-4 hours; Trek approx. 2-3 hours

Day 4: Trek Mount Adatara

Our goal today is the summit of Mount Adatara (1700m). One of Japan's '100 famous mountains,' Adatara is an active volcano, its slopes marked by hot springs and steam vents. An early start takes us the short distance to our start-point, at roughly 1000m elevation, and we head uphill over slopes popular with skiers in the winter months, before a relatively gentle ascent through quiet forest and fields of wildflowers. As we gain height, we are treated to ever-expanding views across to Mount Azuma, Lake Inawashiro, and Mount Bandai. Along the ridge, we enjoy views over Numa-no-taira, a white volcanic basin with fumaroles giving off the distinctive smell of sulphur. This contrast between the white crater, the surrounding vegetation, and (if we're lucky) blue skies, make for a remarkable landscape. We continue to the summit, which affords fantastic views over the highlands. We descend via Adatara's ropeway (cable-car), which offers fantastic views over the forests. Night hotel.

Trek approx. 5-7 hours; height gain approx. 700m

Day 5: Trek Mount Bandai

Mount Bandai, also on the '100 famous mountains' list, forms our challenge today. A recognisable landmark of the region, Bandai appears as a perfect conical shape from most directions. Another early breakfast sees us driving to our northern trailhead (840m), where we see Bandai's scarred side, testament to the huge eruption of 1888. This eruption changed the landscape around Bandai, forming many of the surrounding lakes. Our trail leads us steadily uphill through forest rich in birdlife, before reaching the huge erupted wall. The path then becomes steeper, but the views over the surrounding landscape of peaks, forest and lakes keep us motivated. After a final steep push via Kobo Spring, we reach the summit (1816m), after ascending almost 1000m in elevation! Feeling rightly proud of our efforts, we soak up the panoramic views across Lake Inawashiro, Japan's fourth-largest lake, and the surrounding mountains, including Adatara. We descend by a different route, via Lake Dounuma, enjoying different views and vegetation, and head back to our accommodation to relax. Night hotel.

Trek approx. 6-7 hours; height gain approx. 976m

Day 6: Bandai – Ouchi-juku – Nikko

We leave the hotel that's hosted us for the past three nights, and head south by bus towards Nikko. We break our journey at Ouchi-juku, a former Edo-period post town. Its well-preserved thatched houses and historic atmosphere make this a lovely place to wander. Continuing our drive, we come to Nikko, where we visit the vast Toshogu Shrine, part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. As we enter we can marvel at the sacred red Shinkyo Bridge – a photogenic spot among the green mountain landscapes. Toshogu Shrine is known for its lavishly-decorated, ornate carved buildings; most famous is the 'see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil' monkeys on one of the temples. After time to explore, a short drive brings us to our accommodation, a cosy ryokan (traditional inn) outside the city, just a few minutes' walk from one of the beautiful lakes in this mountainous area. Night ryokan.

Travel approx. 4 hours

Day 7: Trek Mount Nikko-Shirane

Our biggest trekking day today! At 2578m, Mount Nikko-Shirane is the highest peak north of the Kanto region, and the highest point of our trek. Our ryokan lies close to the trailhead, and we'll set off around sunrise. Our trail winds up through beautiful woodland and alpine meadows, and passes a small lake. There are some steeper sections, and some more exposed ridges as we emerge from forest and ascend towards the summit. From the top, we have 360-degree views over the mountains and forests that make up the Nikko National Park, and down to Lake Chujenzi; if you're lucky enough to have a very clear day, you may even see Mount Fuji and the Southern Alps. After time to soak up the views, we head back downhill and return to our lovely accommodation. Night ryokan.

Trek approx. 6-8 hours; height gain approx. 840m

Day 8: Nikko – Mount Fuji – Lake Kawaguchi

Another early start for the scenic drive from Nikko south towards Mount Fuji. Outside of the hot summer months, hiking to the summit is not permitted, but the lower slopes are beautiful whatever the season. After arriving at Fifth Station (2300m), we have time to get some lunch and a look around the varied souvenir and snack shops. We then hike a circular route through the alpine vegetation. Fifth Station is on the tree-line, so at points there are wonderful views across the Five Lakes region below, and up to Fuji's summit. The bucket-list experience of exploring this iconic mountain is a fantastic way to round off our trek. We then drive to our hotel near Lake Kawaguchi, second-largest of the Fuji Five Lakes and very scenic – not least because of those famous views across to Mount Fuji. Night hotel.

(Lunch not included)

Travel approx. 5 hours; Trek approx. 4 hours

Day 9: Lake Kawaguchi – Tokyo

We head back to Tokyo, and have the rest of the day free to explore. We stay in the Asakusa neighbourhood, known for its blend of old and modern Tokyo, where the most well-known landmark is Sensoji Temple, Tokyo's oldest temple. Its imposing entrance, Kaminarimon Gate, features a massive red lantern almost 4m tall, and is a popular meeting-point. Later, we gather together for an evening to celebrate the week's achievements, and head out for a farewell hot pot dinner. Night hotel.

(Lunch not included)

Travel approx. 2 hours

Day 10: Depart Tokyo

Depending on our departure time, we may have some free time to shop or explore further, before returning to the airport for our international flight home.

(Lunch and Dinner not included if not in-flight)

Day 11: Arrive UK

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London to Tokyo
- All known airline taxes
- All transport and transfers as part of itinerary
- All accommodation in hotels on a twin-share basis
- All meals except where specified
- Discover Adventure crew (number dependent on group size)
- Local mountain guide
- Local support and back-up equipment
- Entrance to any sites visited as part of the itinerary
- **We offset 100% of the carbon emissions from your trip, including flights booked with us**

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Travel insurance
- Any meals specified 'not included' in the itinerary
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks, including tips for the local guides / support crew
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions or activities
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

GRADE | YELLOW

All our trips are designed to provide a challenge. Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **YELLOW** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors. Trip duration, accommodation and living conditions are also taken into account. Some sections will feel more challenging than others, but the grade reflects the overall trip. Unusual weather conditions can also have a significant impact.

The Accommodation icon indicates the living conditions while trekking/cycling. While there are usually several factors that present a challenge, the Challenge icon indicates the trip's most challenging element, for most people.

[Trip grading explained](#)

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DETAILED INFORMATION

Leaders & Trip Support

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure leaders. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader. Usually leaders are based in the UK or other English-speaking countries and lead for us regularly throughout the year in many different countries. In some instances, trips are led by in-country guides with a wealth of knowledge about the region; they have been trained by us to provide the level of support expected on a Discover Adventure trip.

Trip Doctor

An expedition doctor or medic accompanies the group (dependent on group size.) Their role is to look after the well-being of the whole group and deal with any medical incidents. They help the crew to ensure the trip runs smoothly, and encourage you when things get tough. The total number of crew looking after you will depend on the final size of your group.

Local Support Crew

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, assisted by drivers, porters, cooks and other support staff, depending

on the type of trip. Local guides know the area well, and are a great source of knowledge about local lifestyles. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely. In some destinations we work together as a team with local guides to help set up or break camp, or prepare meals. Your leader will arrange a collection of tips for the local support crew at the end of your trek, and you will be provided with a guideline amount in advance. Tipping is not obligatory, but once you see how hard they work on your behalf you will be happy to donate something!

Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with appropriate communication devices (eg phones, radios), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary, should local conditions dictate. Pre-trip administration - such as medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

Flight Information

Group flights usually leave from London Heathrow or Gatwick on scheduled airlines and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd under ATOL licence 5636. By travelling with Discover Adventure you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

Your journey may involve a transit en route; details of route and flight times will be confirmed several months before departure. We do not always use the same airline for each destination; if you wish to know the probable carrier and flight times, please call for details. You will usually receive confirmed flight details several months before departure. Our itineraries are always based on current flight schedules and are therefore subject to change by the airline. If you prefer to book your own flights please ask us for a land-only cost.

Accommodation

Accommodation varies from tourist-class hotels to traditional ryokans (inn), where just staying the night is likely to become a cultural highlight of your trip. Some of our overnight stays feature *onsen* (hot springs), which is another wonderful cultural experience. Accommodation facilities vary, but are generally very good with friendly hosts.

Roomshare Arrangements

Our trips are sold on a shared accommodation basis, usually twin-share. Occasionally we may use hostel-style accommodation.

You can tell us if you are travelling with someone else on the trip when you book or within your passenger portal, and we will do all we can to accommodate this request. It is important that both people complete the room share request on their bookings. For customers booking and travelling together, including same-sex couples, a double bed can be requested if available.

If you're not familiar with anyone in the group, rest assured, we always pair you with someone of the same gender (as per the information you provided when booking, or passport markers), and a similar age where possible. We're actively

working to improve our system's gender restrictions to be more inclusive, and we've recently made significant strides in this area. If you identify differently from the gender marker on your passport and would like to discuss this before booking, please feel free to reach out to us.

Single Supplements

In most standard hotels, we can usually offer a limited number of single rooms. This is upon request, on a first-come, first-served basis, and additional charges apply. In more communal accommodation, single rooms are rarely an option. We do not charge a single supplement if you are a solo traveller in a shared room.

Food & Dietary Requirements

The food provided is plentiful, often local in style and freshly-cooked, and will give you plenty of energy. Sometimes we enjoy a buffet-style lunch-stop, other times we might have packed lunches. On some trips we stop at small local restaurants. Dinners are generally eaten at our accommodation each evening. In some regions there may be less variety than you are used to, and in others fresh meat or produce can be harder to come by. Any meals not included are listed in the itinerary and are generally on travel / free days, giving you the opportunity to explore and try other culinary experiences! There is always something to suit different budgets.

Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Please do not expect as much variety as you would have access to at home – we may be in very rural or remote areas, or among people of a different culture who may not understand your requirements, however willing they are to help. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat we strongly recommend you bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.

Luggage

For much of the trekking time, you will stay in the same accommodation and your main luggage therefore stays there. Where night-stops change, your luggage is transported for you, usually by vehicle. Space is often limited, so keep your luggage as small and practical as possible. You should also bring a small daypack to carry for items needed during the day as you will not have access to your main luggage until the evening.

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Challenge Grading

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[Trip grading explained](#)

Fitness Levels

This is designed to be a challenge, and it is vital that you train sufficiently for it. We will supply you with a thorough training guide once you have registered. We expect all participants to train hard in advance, but we respect everyone's limits and do not expect everyone to maintain the same pace. Inadequate training is likely to have an impact not just on your chances of completing the challenge, but enjoying it too - and we want you to have the time of your life!

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience, fitness and ability as well as all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. If you have concerns about your fitness or if you have reduced mobility please do contact us for a confidential chat about whether this challenge is appropriate for you.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners may find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

Terrain

You will be trekking from valleys and lake-shores, to mountain slopes. Paths can be narrow through forest. Above the tree-line the terrain is more rocky, exposed and barren. Paths are generally well-maintained but may be rough underfoot in places, and slippery after rain. There are steep sections, and possible light scrambling, though providing you are fit and mobile, this should pose no problem. The full mountain days are achievable to all trekkers, but involve between 700-1000m of ascent and descent, so should not be underestimated! A travel day gives you time to recover between trekking regions, and with a maximum elevation of 2578m, we would not expect altitude to impact on your efforts.

Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the [FCO's advice](#) on entry requirements for your destination to be sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you with all necessary information 6 weeks prior to departure to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check the [NaTHNaC Travel Health Pro](#) website for further details. You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click [here](#).

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

Cancelling your booking

In the unfortunate circumstance that you need to cancel your booking, we would ask that you notify us in writing either by email or post. Your cancellation will be considered effective from the date the notice is received. Registration, administration and amendment fees are non refundable and, depending on your payment option and how close it is to your challenge departure date, you may be liable for a cancellation charge.

Full details of all cancellation charges may be found in the Terms and Conditions of booking.

Group Size

Your booking is part of a group challenge, and the tour costs and fundraising targets listed on our website are based on a minimum number of participants which is shown on the challenge. Our typical groups run with approximately 15-25 participants; however you may find your group is smaller or larger than this.

We will confirm at least 12 weeks prior to departure that your challenge is guaranteed to run. Occasionally it may be possible to still run the challenge with less than the minimum numbers, subject to a small group supplement. If we think a small group supplement may be necessary, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible, usually 5 months before your departure date.

Minimum numbers and groups sizes may vary on Bespoke Charity challenges. If you are booked onto a bespoke challenge please contact your charity for full details.

Passenger Portal

We have a Passenger Portal which will give you more details of the challenge itself. It also enables you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).

CHALLENGE EXTENSIONS



EXPLORE KYOTO

Kyoto – the residence of the emperor and the country’s capital for over 1000 years – is often described as the heart of Japan’s culture. Famed for its striking temples and traditional old buildings, geishas and tea-shops, it’s a great place to explore.

Our adventure starts with the iconic bullet train, speeding from Tokyo through beautiful countryside to Kyoto. Then, after a guided tour to introduce some of the highlights and familiarise you with the city, you’re free to explore as you choose –

amble alongside the Kamo River, head up into the wooded hills dotted with shrines, or shop the markets and covered arcades ... there are plenty of delights to discover.

Make the most of this opportunity to experience more of Japan's unique culture after your trek!



Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 12 Mar 2026, and the challenge is subject to change.