

# *Celebration* · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

## 16 Day Japan Unmasked – Art, History & Culture



**ESCORTED ITINERARY – PRE-SET DATES – NON-FLEXIBLE INCLUSIONS**

## A Celebrity Escorted Tour

**Detailed Itinerary:** Included meals are shown with the letters B, L and D. 11485DBL

### *Friday May 10: Arrive Tokyo*

The tour commences in the Tokyo hotel this evening. Your tour leader, Kathleen Olive will meet you in the lobby before a light dinner in the hotel. Overnight Tokyo (D)

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

**678-500-9548**

# Celebration

## · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

### *Saturday May 11: Tokyo*

Our touring commences with a visit to the National Museum in Ueno park which contains a large collection of Japanese artwork, cultural items and historical artefacts from ancient times to the 19th century. We continue to the Edo period garden of Koishikawa Korakuen built in the Tokyo residence of the ruling Tokugawa family. As with most traditional Japanese gardens, Korakuen seeks to reproduce famous landscapes in miniature using ponds, stones, trees and man-made hills to replicate Japanese scenery. After a welcome lunch in a Japanese restaurant, we visit the colourful and popular Sensoji Temple in Asakusa, one of Tokyo's oldest neighbourhoods. Overnight Tokyo (B, L)

### *Sunday May 12: Harajuku*

This morning we head to the vibrant and fashionable suburb of Harajuku where our first stop is the Nezu Museum to see its large collection of calligraphy, painting, bamboo, sculpture, ceramics and textiles. We also visit the Ota Memorial Museum of Art to view its fantastic collection of Ukiyo-e woodblock print and painting masterpieces by renowned artists such as Hokusai, Hiroshige and Utamaro. A stroll through trendy Takeshita street uncovers the many fashion boutiques and costume shops frequented by Japan's teen subculture, while walking back along Omotesando is more akin to the Champs-Élysées. After lunch, we visit the Meiji Shrine, a Shinto haven of peace and tranquillity in the bustling city and dedicated to the reformist Emperor Meiji who led the end of feudalisation and the modernisation and westernisation of Japan. Overnight Tokyo (B, L)

### *Monday May 13: Roppongi*

Today we head to Roppongi to visit the Mori Art Museum which presents innovative exhibitions of modern art. The museum's 52nd floor location atop the Mori Tower also affords us wonderful views of Tokyo and beyond with the possibility of seeing Mt Fuji if the weather is clear. We may head to the Ginza district this afternoon to wander through the boutique shops and glamorous department stores. This evening we have dinner in a pub style *Izakaya* restaurant. Overnight Tokyo (B, D)

### *Tuesday May 14: To Kanazawa*

From Tokyo station, we take Japan's newest bullet train west to Kanazawa, packing only hand luggage for the next two nights. Your large suitcase will be transported by road to meet you in Hiroshima. During the Edo period, it was the second largest feudal seat after Tokyo's Tokugawa clan. The city, like Kyoto, was left untouched by air raids during World War II and the old sections remain largely intact. This afternoon we explore the Higashi Chaya tea house and entertainment district. A Chaya is a teahouse where guests are entertained by geisha who perform song and dance on traditional instruments. We also visit the samurai district with its

# Celebration

## · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

narrow lanes, remaining wood houses and water canals. We stop at the Nomura house, a restored samurai residence displaying artefacts from the samurai era. Enjoy a multi-course traditional *kaiseki* dinner this evening, prepared with fresh local ingredients aligned to the season and a good opportunity to try some local sake. Overnight Kanazawa (B, D)

### *Wednesday May 15: Kenrokuen*

This morning we visit Kenrokuen, considered one of Japan's most beautiful gardens and designed using the six essential attributes that make a perfect garden; spaciousness, seclusion, artificiality, antiquity, abundant water and broad views. Located next to Kanazawa Castle, the garden would have served as the outer garden for the castle and the flowering trees are chosen to provide differing aspects according to the season. We visit the castle which was the seat of the powerful Maeda clan. The castle has burnt down several times with only two storehouses and the gate surviving the most recent fire of 1881. A project to reconstruct sections of the castle is ongoing. Overnight Kanazawa (B)

### *Thursday May 16: To Hiroshima*

Today we board a limited express thunderbird train to Osaka before changing to the bullet train to Hiroshima. On arrival, we check in before touring Japan's most haunting and significant memorial, the Atomic Bomb Dome. The former industrial promotion hall was closest to the hypocentre of the nuclear bomb and along with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum serves as a stark reminder of the horrors of war. This evening for dinner we try the local speciality, *Okonomiyaki*, a type of pancake filled with vegetables and seafood or pork. Overnight Hiroshima (B, D)

### *Friday May 17: Miyajima*

We travel the short distance by train and ferry to Miyajima, famous for the large torii gate that appears to float on the water at high tide. The gate symbolises the entrance to Ito no Shima Shrine, a site sacred to both Shintoism and Buddhism. The shrine, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is a large complex of hall and pathways built on stilts so that commoners could visit without defiling the island with their footprints. We also ascend Mt Misen, travelling above the autumn foliage by cable car. There is free time to enjoy a lunch of the local oysters, a speciality of the island, before we return to Hiroshima this afternoon. Overnight Hiroshima (B)

### *Saturday May 18: To Kyoto*

We board the bullet train to Kyoto, travelling only with our hand luggage as the large suitcases will once again be transported by road. On arrival, we visit the Kiyomizu Temple complex built entirely without using nails. The temple was first constructed in 798 but the present-day building

# Celebration · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

is a re-construction from 1633. The main hall has a large veranda that juts out over the hillside and commands an excellent view of the city. From here it is a gentle walk down the hill through the shops and teahouses of the Higashiyama district. This evening we have dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight Kyoto (B, D)

## *Sunday May 19: Golden Temple*

This morning we head to the spectacular Kinkakuji, Golden Pavilion. It is difficult to believe the temple was razed to the ground in 1950 by a crazed young monk whose story was told in celebrated novelist Yukio Mishima's *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. A short distance from Kinkakuji we stop for some quiet contemplation at Ryoanji temple, the finest example of a Zen rock garden in Kyoto. After lunch we visit the Daitokuji temple complex and its two dozen sub temples and their associated Zen gardens. The complex grew into a centre for Tea Ceremony associated with the master practitioner, Sen-no Rikyu in the 15th-century. Overnight Kyoto (B)

## *Monday May 20: Art in Kyoto*

We head to Fushimi Inari Shrine in the south of Kyoto. Famous for its thousands of vermilion gates leading up the wooded paths, the shrine is dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice. The shrine is decorated with statues of foxes which are Inari's messenger. Returning to the city we visit Sanjusangendo, Japan's longest wooden structure housing 1001 statues of Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy. This afternoon we visit the National Museum to see the collection of archaeological relics, sculptures, ceramics and costumes. We have dinner tonight in one of the many restaurants in the atmospheric Pontocho dining strip. (B, D)

## *Tuesday May 21: Silver Temple*

Today we visit Ginkakuji, the Temple of the Silver Pavilion. Original plans to cover the main structure in silver foil like the Golden Pavilion were never realised and the building is now covered in black lacquer. The wooded grounds covered in mosses feature a sand garden with a carefully structured sand mountain designed to resemble Mt Fuji. Outside the temple is the Philosophers Path, where we enjoy a pleasant stroll alongside the canal lined with flowering plants, bushes and trees. After lunch in Gion we partake in the traditional Japanese tea ceremony. (B, L)

## *Wednesday May 22: Arashiyama*

Today we venture outside of Kyoto to Arashiyama and the world class 14th-century Zen garden at Tenryuji against the backdrop of the Arashiyama mountains. Outside the temple grounds is the Sagano Bamboo Grove, forming a canopy over the footpath. This has become one of the most photographed sites in Japan. After lunch in the town and time to investigate some of the

# Celebration · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

local handicrafts, we board a scenic train journey that takes us through the bamboo forests and along the Hozugawa River before returning to Kyoto. Overnight Kyoto (B, L)

## *Thursday May 23: Nara*

We travel to Nara, Japan's first permanent capital and second only to Kyoto in cultural significance with World Heritage status. We visit Todaiji, constructed in 752 as the main temple of all provincial Buddhist shrines in Japan. The main hall houses the 15-metre-tall bronze statue of Buddha (Daibutsu). We also visit the Kasuga Taisha, dedicated to the protection of the city and built by the powerful Fujiwara clan who ruled during the Nara and Heian periods. We return to Kyoto where the afternoon and evening are at leisure. (B, L)

## *Friday May 24: Free day*

Today is at leisure to simply relax, shop or enjoy the many attractions of Kyoto not covered on the tour. We recommend a visit to Nishiki markets and a wander through the basement food halls of the local department stores. We gather for a farewell dinner in a local restaurant this evening. (B, D)

## *Saturday May 25: Depart*

The tour concludes after breakfast. Transfers have been arranged to either Kansai or Itami airports in Osaka for passengers booking their flights through Academy Travel. (B)

---



## Celebrity Host: Dr Kathleen Olive

Has a PhD in Italian Studies, speaks fluent Italian and lectures on the art, history and culture of Europe. Kathleen has an outstanding knowledge of Italy.

Dr Kathleen Olive is a literary and cultural historian with close to 15 years' experience leading tours to Italy, Spain, France, Turkey, Japan and the United States. She has a strong personal interest in the visual arts, interior design, fashion history and contemporary fiction.

# Celebration · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

Kathleen holds a BA with first class Honours and a PhD, both from the Department of Italian Studies at the University of Sydney. For a number of years she worked as a lecturer at the University of Sydney and the University of Technology, Sydney, teaching Italian language, literature and history. Kathleen continues to teach, as a national lecturer for the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (ADFAS), and in adult education courses in Sydney. In 2015, her edition of the Codex Rustici (a 15th-century commonplace book that Kathleen worked on with Nerida Newbigin, for her doctoral studies and for publication) was presented to Pope Francis on his first official visit to Florence.

Kathleen's historical and artistic knowledge stretches from the Middle Ages through to the early 20th century. In Italy she has led numerous tours focusing on the medieval and Renaissance periods. In Spain she has a particular concentration on the "Convivencia" of Islamic, Christian and Jewish cultures in the south, and on the medieval pilgrimage routes of the north. Her tours of the USA's north-east have focused on American collectors and their Gilded Age reinventions of European glory days, and in Japan she is particularly interested in contemporary design, from fashion to architecture. Kathleen speaks fluent Italian, is conversant in Spanish and understands French.

Kathleen was first involved on a tour to Italy in 2003 and it sparked her passion for on-the-spot communication of art and history. Since 2010 she has worked exclusively for Academy Travel, leading 6 tours a year. She has designed a number of our popular tours, from the Florence residential, to surveys of the courts of Renaissance Italy and of central Italy's villas and gardens, as well as "twin city" tours to Palermo and Naples and to Florence and Rome. Closer to home, Kathleen is leading Academy Travel's inaugural tour to Japan and our popular tours to Tasmania.

We asked Kathleen, what do you enjoy most about leading a group tour?

*"I really enjoy travelling with groups who share interests in the history, culture and even food of a destination. It means that those personal connections are there right from the beginning, just waiting to be made."*

*"There's nothing I enjoy more than finding out the particular interests of my fellow travellers – an artist, a dish they love eating, their memories of a particular place – and finding a way to make an experience happen for them. That might mean recommending a particular wine bar, directing them to a museum that features artists they already like, or suggesting the best time of day for a view over a town. It's so satisfying to be involved in making these kinds of memories for people."*

*"Many of the people I travel with comment on my passion for the places I visit. It's not just that I know my names and dates – it's that I really enjoy bringing out the connections between history and art, for example, or between landscape and food. I never grow tired of injecting this kind of life into 'dry' academic knowledge."*

# Celebration

· ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

## End of services.

**\*\* It is recommended that you consider adding additional days to your custom itinerary, in order to have a more comprehensive visit in each of the destinations contained within the itinerary. This trip is a highlights trip and will only give you a brief overview of each destination.**

**Ready to plan your journey? Contact us today ! 678-500-9548**

**Schedule Your Creative Planning Session Now!**