Japan: Classic to Contemporary

KYOTO – MT KOYA – OKAYAMA – NAOSHIMA

with Ann MacArthur
9–25 May 2013 (17 days)
Ann MacArthur has been a Japanophile since her first karate lessons at age sixteen. She lived in Japan for a total of seven years, is fluent in Japanese language and holds a senior qualification in the Japanese tea ceremony.

As Senior Coordinator of Asian Programs at the Art Gallery of NSW she runs the Arts of Asia course and produces an extensive range of public events including religious ceremonies, Asian music concerts and community festivals.

Japan: Classic to Contemporary

An intriguing mixture of classical and contemporary, Japan will enthral you with its rich culture and natural beauty. Begin with a full week in the historic imperial capital, Kyoto, filled with ancient temples, gardens and museums. Continue to the mystical and misty mountains of Mount Koya, centre of Shingon Buddhism. Stay in beautiful temple lodgings known as shukubo with the opportunity to attend the early morning prayers.

From Okayama, discover the off-the-beaten-track treasures of Takahashi and Takamatsu before finishing on the island of Naoshima, staying at the Adao Ando designed Benesse House hotel.

The Benesse Art Site showcases the inherently Japanese aesthetic of the collaboration between nature and art, which is beautifully exhibited all over the island.

At a glance

- Take an in-depth look at Kyoto
- Explore mystical Mt Koya staying at traditional temple lodgings
- See the off-the-beaten-track treasures of Takahashi and Takamatsu
- Stay at the Adao Ando designed Benesse House Hotel and discover the Benesse Art Site
- Visit local artists’ studios in Kyoto and the studio of Kazz Fujiwara
**Itinerary**

**Thu 9 May 2013**
Depart Australia
Depart Australia in the evening on Cathay Pacific flights via Hong Kong to Osaka/Kansai airport. Overnight in flight.

**Fri 10 May**
Arrive Osaka – Kyoto
Arrive Kansai airport in the morning. After clearing customs and immigration formalities, transfer to Kyoto (approx. 110 KM/2hrs). Afternoon at leisure before a welcome briefing and dinner with Ann MacArthur.

**Sat 11 May**
Begin your exploration of Kyoto with a visit the elegant Nijo-jo Castle, built by the first Tokugawa Shogun, a striking example of the splendid decoration and luxury of the Momoyama period (1587–1615). Continue to the Kyoto Handicrafts Centre. After lunch, visit Ryoan-ji Temple that houses the most famous Zen rock garden before visiting Kinkaku-ji, the Golden Pavilion, built in 1397 as a villa for Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu.

**Sun 12 May**
Morning at leisure. Afternoon visit to the Gion District, Kyoto’s best-known Geisha quarter. Attend a tea service followed by a performance at the Gion Corner art centre. The show introduces you to several traditional Japanese arts including ikebana, bunraku, Kyogen comic plays and dances performed by real maiko. Dinner at a local restaurant.

**Mon 13 May**
Morning visit to the Kyoto National Museum which house sculptures and paintings from surrounding temple collections, then continue to Sanjusangendo, a uniquely shaped long hall rebuilt in 1251 to house its central image of the armed Goddess Kannon, surrounded by 1,000 gilt bronze images of Kannon. After lunch, walk up to Kiyomizu Temple. The magnificent 17th century temple with its extraordinary verandah projecting over the cliff side, offers panoramic views of Kyoto.

**Tue 14 May**
Morning visit to the Miho Museum nestled within a 247 acre mountainous nature reserve which houses the Shumei Family Collection of rare treasures from the ancient world and traditional Japanese art. After lunch (at own expense), continue on to Shigaraki Village to view their famous ceramics.

**Wed 15 May**
Start the day with a visit to the Hosomi Museum, a small and exquisite private collection of Japanese art. Continue to the Heian Shrine which was built relatively recently in 1895 on the occasion of the 1,100th anniversary of the Heian Capital foundation. It is dedicated to the first and last emperors that reigned from Kyoto, Emperor Kammu and Emperor Komei. A nice garden is located behind the shrine’s main buildings.

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**Mt Koya (Koyasan) history**

Koyasan is home to an active monastic center founded twelve centuries ago by the priest Kukai (posthumously known as Kobo Daishi) for the study and practice of Esoteric Buddhism. It is the headquarters of the Koyasan sect of Shingon Buddhism, a faith with a wide following throughout Japan. Situated on a small plain at the top of Mount Koya is the sacred area known as the Danjo Garan, a complex of temples, halls, pagodas and Buddhist statuary that welcome visitors to this serene and hallowed place. Surrounded by a thick forest of massive cedars, the area known as Okuno-in, or the Inner Sanctuary, is the setting for a vast cemetery that features the mausolea of numerous famous Japanese, including that of the samurai ruler Toyotomi Hideyoshi (or Taiko Hideyoshi) as well as memorials to the spirits of soldiers killed in the Pacific War.
Thu 16 May

Kyoto

Ann MacArthur will organise visits to local artists’ studios relating to the Kamisaka Sekka exhibition (August 2012) at the Art Gallery of NSW.

Fri 17 May

Kyoto – Nara – Mt Koya

Depart Kyoto after breakfast and travel to Mt Koya. En route, stop in Nara for a visit to the Kasuga Shrine, hidden deep in the woods of the Nara Deer Park, and famous for its myriad of stone lanterns and its sacred deer, which are messengers of its Shinto Deities. Kasuga was founded in 768 as the tutelary shrine of the aristocratic Fujiwara family and comprises of a classic form of Shinto architecture.

Continue to Todai-ji, one of the world’s great wooden structures dating back to the 8th century. Amongst the many Buddhist images housed at Todai-ji is the Great Buddha, reputedly the largest bronze image in the world.

After lunch explore the Nara National Museum, where the collection includes exquisite early Japanese art and artefacts and many treasures of surrounding temples dating back to the Nara (645–794) and Heian (794–1185) periods. Arrive in Mt Koya in the afternoon and settle into the temple lodgings, your home for the next two nights.

Sat 18 May

Mt Koya

Rise early if you wish to attend the morning prayers.

After breakfast, explore Mt Koya (Koyasan), the centre of Shingon Buddhism, an important Buddhist sect which was introduced to Japan in 805 by Kobo Daishi (also known as Kukai), one of Japan’s most significant religious figures.

Kobo Daishi began construction on the original Garan temple complex in 826 after wandering the country for years in search of a suitable place to base his religion. Since then over one hundred temples have sprung up along the streets of Koyasan. The most important among them are Kongobuji, the head temple of Shingon Buddhism, and Okunoin, the site of Kobo Daishi’s mausoleum.

The mausoleum is surrounded by an atmospheric and immense graveyard, set amongst giant cedar trees with many fanciful gravestones, including a monument erected by a pesticide company to commemorate all its insect victims.

Sun 19 May

Mt Koya – Okayama

Morning at leisure in Mt Koya. In the afternoon travel by coach from Mt. Koya to Okayama.

Mon 20 May

Okayama

Your exploration of Okayama begins with a visit to the Korakuen garden, one of the three most famous landscape gardens in Japan, located just beside Okayama Castle, which can be seen from the garden as ‘borrowed scenery’.

Cross the Asahi River by footbridge to Okayama Castle. Also known as ‘crow castle’ due to its black exterior, Okayama Castle was built in 1597 in the style of the Azuchi-Momoyama Period. The original castle was destroyed in the last year of World War II, but a reconstruction was made in 1966.

In the afternoon, travel over the Seto Ohashi Bridge to Takamatsu on the island of Shikoku in the Inland Sea. Visit the Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum and Studio.
Isamu Noguchi was one of the most important sculptors of his time. He was a protean artist who, in addition to his sculpture, designed and created conceptual projects, landscaped environments, earthworks, gardens, plazas, stage sets, furniture and lighting fixtures.

The collection includes 150 sculptures, many of which are still unfinished.

**Tue 21 May**
**Okayama**
Drive to the small city of Takahashi located in the mountains to the north of Okayama for a visit to the Raikyu-ji temple, a Zen temple of the Rinzai sect that dates back to 1504.

After lunch, continue to Bizen pottery area and the studio of Kazz Fujiwara. Bizen is chunky, warm, earthy pottery from Okayama Prefecture with a history dating back to the 12th century.

The artist is Kazz Fujiwara, the third generation of arguably the most famous lineage of Japanese Bizen potters — both Kazz’s father, Yu Fujiwara and grandfather Kei Fujiwara were Japanese Living National Treasures.

**Wed 22 May**
**Okayama – Naoshima Island**
Transfer by coach and ferry to Naoshima Island, home to the Benesse Art Site. It combines Benesse House (a symphony of nature, art, and architecture), the Art House Project (which weaves threads of everyday home life with the substantial strands of history), and Chichu Art Museum, a fresh reinterpretation of the potential of art museums.

Explore the Art House Project, which started in 1998 in Naoshima’s Honmura district. The Art House Project takes empty houses scattered about residential areas, and turns the spaces themselves into works of art, weaving in the history and memories of the period when the houses were homes. Meetings between visitors to the island and the island’s people in places where they go about their daily lives also provide occasions for a variety of interesting encounters.

**Thu 23 May**
**Naoshima Island**
In the morning take the ferry to the Inujima Art Project Seirensho is a museum that preserves and reuses the remains of a copper refinery on the island. The project embraces the concept of a recycling-based society as a model for a new type of regional revitalisation through industrial heritage, architecture, art, and the environment.

Return to Naoshima Island and enjoy free time before a tour of the Benesse House Museum. The museum is an imposing structure open to the outside world, and visitors can sense the presence of nature even inside the building. One of the pleasures of visiting Benesse House is unexpectedly encountering works of art, not only within the walls of the museum but also while strolling around the grounds, enjoying the abundant natural beauty of the Inland Sea region.

Tonight enjoy a farewell dinner with Ann MacArthur and fellow art lovers.

**Fri 24 May**
**Naoshima Island – Depart Osaka**
Transfer from Naoshima Island to Kansai International Airport. Late afternoon departure on Cathay Pacific to Australia via Hong Kong. Overnight in flight.

**Sat 25 May**
**Arrive Australia**
Morning arrival in Australia.
Tour Prices

Per person, twin-share  AUD 9,750
Single supplement (single room)*  AUD 1,990
Single supplement (double room for single use)*  AUD 2,500
Reduction without international airfare  AUD 1,200
Business class surcharge  on request
Deposit (per person)  AUD 500
Final payment due  08 March 2013

* Single travellers may request to share. Please advise at time of booking.

Most hotels in Japan have single rooms which are smaller rooms with a single bed and private facilities. The single supplement is based on a single room.

If you wish to have more room we offer a second single supplement for a double room for sole use.

Tour code  AG1304

Visas

Australian passport-holders do not require a tourist visa for Japan.

Tour prices include

• Accommodation in centrally located 4-star hotels with private facilities and daily breakfast
• Two nights in temple lodgings at Mt Koya known as shukubo
• Meals as per itinerary (L=Lunch, D=Dinner) including special Welcome and Farewell meals. Wines with dinners.
• Return economy class airfares Australia – Hong Kong – Osaka (Kansai) – Hong Kong – Australia on Cathay Pacific (20kg luggage allowance)
• Taxes and fuel surcharges (as at 01 June 2012)
• Transfers on arrival and departure if travelling on group flights
• Comprehensive sightseeing, visits to galleries and attractions including entrance fees as per itinerary
• Lectures and talks with your tour leader throughout
• Gratuities for local guides and drivers
• Hotel porterage (1 piece per person).

Tour price does not include

• Transfers on arrival/departure if not travelling on group flights
• Drinks with lunches
• Items of a personal nature, including telephone, laundry, taxis etc.
• Airport and railway station porterage
• Travel insurance

Your hotels ★★★★★

Kyoto – Hotel Monterey Kyoto
Mt Koya – Rengejo-in temple lodgings
Okayama – Kokusai Hotel
Naoshima – Benesse House

N.B. Hotel of a similar standard may be substituted.
How to Book
Complete, sign and return the Booking Form available from Renaissance Tours with your deposit.

Deposit/Final Payments
Your deposit is due at the time of booking and is used to pay hotel, airline, performance tickets and/or other deposits. It is non-refundable in the event of your cancellation.

Final payment is due 60 days before departure. Failure to make the final payment by the due date may result in cancellation of your booking and loss of deposit.

Payments are accepted in cash and by cheque, bank transfer, American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa. A 3% service charge applies for payment by American Express and Diners Club.

Cancellation & Refunds
a) Cancellation by You – Cancellation charges will be applied as shown below, calculated from the day written notification is received by Renaissance Tours. In addition to cancellation fees for tours operated by Renaissance Tours as shown below, airlines, hotels and other third parties may impose up to 100% cancellation charges.

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<th>Days Before Departure</th>
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<td>60 days or more</td>
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The above cancellation charges include applicable GST.

In addition to the above, cancellation charges may apply for additional arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours, such as air tickets, hotels and travel insurance premium. If the reason for cancellation is covered by the insurance policy, you may be able to reclaim these charges.

b) Cancellation by Us – We reserve the right to cancel a tour for any reason (such as failure to reach minimum tour participant numbers). Except for force majeure, we will not cancel a tour less than 60 days before departure. No further compensation will be paid in the event of cancellation by Renaissance Tours. A full refund of monies paid for tour costs will be the full extent of our liability.

Cancellation and/or amendment fees may apply for additional travel arrangements booked by Renaissance Tours.

Passports, Visas and Vaccinations
All travellers must be in possession of a valid passport – most countries require a 6-month validity from your date of entry or exit. For some countries (e.g. China, Vietnam, India, Russia), visas are included in the tour cost and will be arranged by Renaissance Tours prior to travel. For other countries, it is your responsibility to ensure you have the appropriate visa(s).

You are also responsible for obtaining all necessary inoculations and preventative medicines as may be required for the duration of the tour.

Travel Insurance
It is a condition of travel that you are covered by comprehensive travel insurance for international tours. Your travel insurance can be arranged by Renaissance Tours.

Fitness and Participation
For the overall benefit of the group, all tour members must possess a moderate level of mobility, including the ability to:

- negotiate airports and railway stations without wheelchair assistance
- use combined shower/bath facilities (it is impossible to guarantee walk-in shower facilities)
- undertake walking tour of 2–3 hours duration, including using stairs, walking over cobblestones and other uneven surfaces
- stand for long periods in museums and other sites
- embark/disembark coaches, trains and other methods of transportation without assistance
- handle your own luggage

If you (or we) have any doubts about your ability to participate in your chosen tour, you may be required to have a doctor’s appraisal. This would require a doctor to read the itinerary of your chosen tour and provide you with a written confirmation of your ability to participate.

Terms & Conditions
You can find the full terms & conditions on the Renaissance Tours booking form. They can also be found at www.renaissancetours.com.au or we would be happy to post you a copy on request.

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Naoshima Island

Noguchi Museum, Okayama
Your travel agent is

Art Gallery Society of New South Wales
Art Gallery Road, The Domain
Sydney NSW 2000
w www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/member