



BIKEASIA

Adventure Cycling Specialists

2nd Floor, 42 Guihua Lu, Yangshuo, Guilin, Guangxi, 541900 PR China.
Tel & Fax +86 (0) 773 882 6521
www.bikeasia.com

Hong Kong Company Reg. 866049

Tokyo Unleashed Tokyo, Japan

Day		Meals inc	Km cycled
1	Tokyo - Arrival Day with some drinks, some smiles and some karaoke	D	
2	Spend the day amongst the gathering youth in Yoyogi Park before seeing the seedy side of Tokyo at night.	B, D	10 (optional)
3	Sumo stable visit and city bike ride	B, L	35
4	Breakfast at Tsukiji market visit and visit Akihabara 'electronics town'	B	
5	City bike ride and capsule hotel stay	B, L	50
6	Free day to explore the many options, have more time on the bike or roam the streets. We cook our own dinner on a boat in Tokyo Bay.	B, D	60 (optional)
7	Make our own lunch of Edo soba noddles. Hit the town for our final night.	B, L	
8	Departure Day	B	

Tokyo is worth a week. It is without doubt one of the most amazing cities in the world. From a sleepy coastal town in the early 16th century, it became one of the largest cities in the world within a century. Now only a few countries can claim economic output which exceeds that of this metropolis. This fun, comprehensive and 'little bit different' itinerary will help *unleash* all that is modern Tokyo by allowing you to discover the best of Old Edo and her 'downtown' area, as well as all the highlights of New Tokyo, by foot and – of course – by bike. This week includes guided rides and walks of some of the many unique and different areas which are scattered around Tokyo and that help tell her story, as well as some free time to do any extra activities based on your interests and preferences. Highlights include Sake houses, Kabuki Theatre, Sony technology, the world's largest fish market, tea ceremony, stunning Japanese gardens, Ginza shopping, Sumo training, cooking your own dinner and Neon jungles. Tokyo is a fusion of both ancient and modern worlds... and on a bike is the best way to see it!

Day 1 – Saturday, Tokyo (Asakusa)

This is arrival day and you are free to explore the many areas of Tokyo before our scheduled group meeting. There will be information at the local inn (ryokan) to let you know where to go for the group meeting and after we'll head out for some dinner with a local flavour and a chance to wander an eclectic market or let go of your desire to be a rock star and visit a karaoke box – Tokyo style.

Dinner

Day 2 – Sunday, Tokyo (Harajuku, Shinjuku)

After a local breakfast at our ryokan and an intro to the Japanese language, we spend the day exploring the Sunday youth culture of Harajuku and Shibuya as many fringe groups assemble near Yoyogi Park to meet and have fun. There is the chance to rent a bike for free and ride around the nearby Meiji Shrine, the most visited Shinto Monument in Tokyo. We then head for a night tour of the seedy side of Shinjuku – the infamous Kabuki cho and its many interesting nooks and crannies.

Breakfast, Dinner

Day 3 – Monday, Tokyo (Ryogoku, Ginza, Odaiba)

Visit a Sumo stable to watch the tough morning training session and visit the Sumo Museum. A 'best of old Edo' Urban landscape bike tour (35 kms) taking in the 16th century moat-surrounded Palace Gardens, the famous Ginza district (home of the Sony Building and National Kabuki Theatre), checking out Tokyo Bay and a former Shogunate Garden.

Breakfast, Lunch

Day 4 – Tuesday, Tokyo (Tsukiji, Akihabara)

We have an early morning planned at the world's largest (by weight and turnover) market – Tsukiji. The city within a city. We are treated to a great sushi breakfast by a family who have been serving great fresh seafood to the markets workers and clients for over 300 years. We then move into the old downtown area of Akihabara which is now home to 'electronics town' district of new Tokyo. Home of the new wave of Japanese 'otaku' or geek!

Breakfast

Day 5 – Wednesday, Tokyo (Meguro, Hamamatsucho)

Another great day on the bike learning some secret spots that show Tokyo transforming from a small village in late 15th century to be the biggest city in the world 100 years later. We have a nice city ride of around 50 kms that takes in the wonderful Museum of Photography and finishes with some sake tasting. Tonight we partake in the wonderfully unique experience of a night in a capsule hotel.

Breakfast, Lunch

Day 6 – Thursday, Tokyo (free day)

You have the chance to enjoy a free day in and around Tokyo. With so much to do we think it is only fair we let you explore things that take your fancy; whether it is Japanese gardens, J-pop culture, martial arts, more time on the bike or a day trip seeing the amazing sights of Kamakura or Nikko, we can help you make best use of this time. We meet back at our ryokan to go out on Tokyo Bay for an all you can eat (and all you can drink ;-) evening of Monja, a cuisine reserved for Tokyoites only. You will have a chance to cook your own version of this savoury pancake on a hot plate right on your table!

Dinner

Day 7 – Friday, Tokyo (Oshiage, Iriya)

Today we have a day in Japanese antiquity by studying some calligraphy, making our own lunch of soba noodles at a 300 year old restaurant from which some of the country's best noodle makers graduate and trying our hand at a tea ceremony.

We will finish with some fine food in one of the more happening parts of town and see where the night takes us – bright lights, good food and – of course – karaoke.

Breakfast

Day 8 – Saturday, Tokyo

Today is departure day. You are free to leave at any time on this day.

Inclusions

All accommodation
Meals (3 Dinner, 2 Lunch, 5 Breakfast)
Bike hire and tour (2 days)
Tsukiji market visit
Calligraphy lesson
Tea ceremony
Sumo stable visit
City subway pass (2 days)

Bike Asia Travel style

We think cycling through a region for the first time with a group of like-minded people is a great way to travel in Asia. Our aim is to provide you with the opportunity to meet new people, learn about new cultures, experience different landscapes and most all to have some fun. Cycling is a major part of our trips – they are cycle tours after all. We have designed our trips so that they are accessible to people with a reasonable level of fitness. Different trips will require varying degrees of physical ability. Each trip dossier has specific details on terrain, cycling conditions, distances covered each day and an altitude profile. All of our trips are fully supported, so should you want or need to take a rest, there will be a seat for you and a place to put your bike. Our trips are also designed to allow you the opportunities and time to appreciate the environment, scenery and culture around you, and to participate in any activities that may be on offer.

Ethical travel

An integral part of travelling is to have a positive impact on the country that you are visiting. On this trip there are a number of things you can do to have a positive impact on the communities that we visit.

Dress – parts of Japan are still quite conservative. In rural areas and temples overly revealing clothing is considered offensive. You should make an effort to dress more conservatively in these situations. Walking around a village in bike shorts is not appropriate so if you wish to cycle in just bike shorts you should have something with you on the bike to put on over the top (eg long, loose shorts or a skirt/sarong). When visiting temples shorts are acceptable providing they cover the knee. Singlet tops are not acceptable in temples.

Phrase Book - A highly memorable part of your travels will be the local people you meet. In the tourist areas some people will speak English but away from these areas you should learn a few words of Japanese. We will teach you some of the basics but if you want to really interact we recommend bringing a phrase book.

Group size

Maximum 12
Minimum 4

Accommodation

The sleeping arrangements are for twin-share so if you are a single traveller you will be paired up with someone of the same sex. This ensures that whether you are travelling solo or with friends, everyone is paying the same rate. We will be staying in a mixture of local style accommodation. We choose hotels/inns that are comfortable, conveniently located places which are chosen for their character and ambience.

Bikes

Bikes are included in the trip cost. We use good quality mountain bikes that are more than adequate.

You are of course welcome to bring your own bike. Keep in mind though, that you'll need to be able to maintain it. If you are unsure we recommend that you speak to your local bike shop about what parts to bring. Travelling on public transport in Japan with a bicycle can pose difficulties as some trains are restricted and the bike must be in a bike bag. Unless you are combining this tour with our *Islands, Mountains and Monasteries* tour, it is generally more convenient not to bring a bike.

Food

Food is a very important part of any travel experience and Japan is no exception. Most of the meals on this trip are included in the trip cost, with a few exceptions like free days. To see which meals are included, read the inclusions list or the itinerary. Vegetarians and vegans are well catered for and should you have any other dietary restrictions, you just need to inform us. Many of our meals will be local food and at local eateries: noodles, pickled vegetables and fruit for breakfast, noodles, pancakes filled with vegetables, seafood or fish cooked on a hot plate in front of you for lunch and an assortment of sushi, California rolls, tofu, soup, vegetables (deep fried in a light batter and served with a dressing) for dinner. Snack food like fruit, biscuits, cakes and nuts will be available for our break stops on cycling days with coffee, tea and hot chocolate. There are always convenience stores where you can buy chocolate, sandwiches and lollies if you need a sugar fix.

Money

You will need to bring money on the trip to pay for the following; some meals, drinks, activities in the free time, departure tax and of course shopping. We suggest you utilise a variety of methods for payment. There are:

ATMs where you can use your cards - Maestro, Cirrus, Visa and MasterCard

Designated banks where all currencies and traveller's cheques can be changed. The amount you bring is going to depend on how much you plan to spend. To give you an indication of prices

Beer JPY 300 – JPY 1000

Dinner at local restaurant JPY 800

Dinner at foreign restaurant JPY 4500

Bottle of water (small) JPY 150

We also recommend that you bring US \$100 in emergency funds, to be used when circumstances beyond the control of Bike Asia necessitate a change in itinerary.

The Japanese currency is the Japanese Yen (JPY). Exchange rates at the time of writing are;

1 AUD = 99

1 USD = 119

1 EUR = 161
1 GBP = 238
1 CAD = 106
1 NZD = 89

Insurance

Obtaining your own travel insurance is required in order to participate on a Bike Asia trip. It will need to include a minimum coverage of medical expenses with emergency evacuation. Your group leader will need to see a copy of your insurance at the group meeting on the first day.

Some recommended insurance companies are;
World Nomads;

www.worldnomads.com

Covermore;

<http://www.covermore.com>

Joining point instructions

You will need to arrive at the starting point hotel in time for the group meeting, which will be held on the evening of day 1. The hotel is located in the centre of the city, with twin-share rooms, private bathrooms, hot water and television and 24 hour reception. Make sure you print these trip notes before you depart. The hotel address is in Japanese. They will be useful for asking directions or taking taxis. A taxi from the airport to the hotel would cost in the region of \$300 USD so we suggest you take the train! The simplest and cheapest option is to take the train then subway. See directions below. The hotel address is:

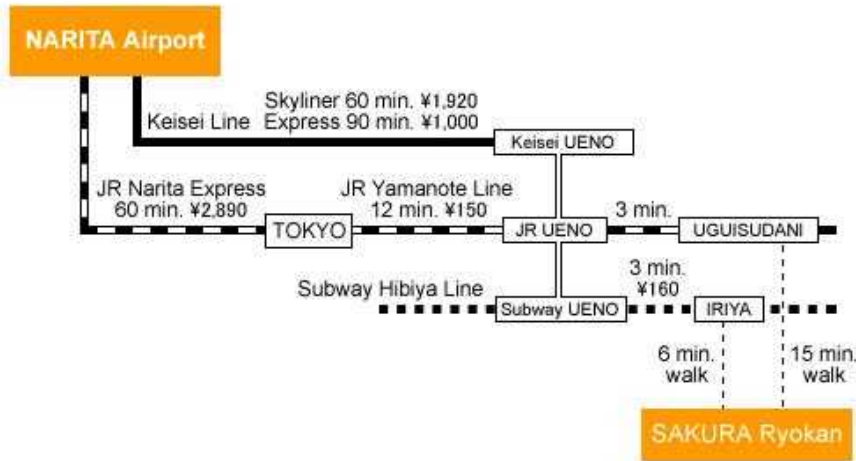
Sakura Ryokan
2-6-2, Iriya, Taito-ku, Tokyo, Japan
Tel: +81 3 3876 8118

桜旅館
東京都台東区入谷2-6-2

1. From Narita International Airport to Iriya station:

We suggest that you take the KEISEI SKYLINER train from the airport and get off at the final stop, UENO.

Follow the signs to the subway and get on the Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line in the direction of KITA-SENJU and get off at the FIRST stop at IRIYA.



2. From Iriya Station to SAKURA Ryokan:

From Iriya station take EXIT No.1 or 2 and walk 6 minutes along KOTOTOI ST towards ASAKUSA.

At the traffic light just past the SEVEN ELEVEN take the diagonal street to the left. Sakura Ryokan is located 80 meters down this road on the left hand side.



Fitness

This trip is accessible to everyone. Cycling distances are up to 50/60km in one day, but all routes are flat.

Cycling conditions

The cycling terrain is all sealed surfaces, with some sections of the trip on cycling paths! On the roads we will encounter few cars, but you still need to be constantly alert for vehicles.

Health

In order to make the most of your holiday, you need to be as healthy as possible! For a list of vaccinations we recommend that you seek advice at a travel clinic at least six weeks prior to departure. Our group leader will have Senior's Level first aid training and will travel with a first-aid kit, however it is also recommended that individual travellers have a basic first aid kit with any personal medical requirements. Our group leader is not authorised, for legal reasons, to administer any kind of drugs including pain relief tablets, antibiotics etc so be sure to pack a supply of your favourite pain-killers. Pharmacy products vary in different countries and you may not be able to buy products that are widely available at home. Include the following: plasters, dressings, bandage, calamine lotion (a must for soothing sunburn), oral re-hydration treatment (in case of bouts of diarrhoea), insect repellent, insect sting relief, eye drops, moisturiser and lip balm for the dry weather, antiseptic cream and antiseptic wipes.

For more information on travel health, you can click on the links below:

Australia;

<http://www.tmvc.com.au/>

United States

<http://www.cdc.gov/page.do>

United Kingdom

<http://www.travelhealth.co.uk/>

Lonely Planet

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/health/>

Visas

Most participants will need to obtain a Japanese visa, either through a travel agent or directly from the Japanese embassy/consulate. For the latest information, see your travel agent.

Luggage/Packing list (guide only)

We advise against using a hard shell suitcase for this trip. A soft backpack would be the most suitable, and the easiest to transfer in/out of the trucks in the morning and evening. Keep in mind when you are packing that often our local crew are lifting our bags everyday so try to pack as lightly as possible. Please check our climate charts to assess your clothing requirements, or contact us if you are unsure.

Personal	Travel	Bicycle
<ul style="list-style-type: none">ÿ Long trousersÿ Shortsÿ Shirtsÿ Warm jacketÿ Jumperÿ Hatÿ Sandals/light shoesÿ Swimming Costumeÿ Sunglassesÿ Light rain coatÿ Toiletriesÿ Tamponsÿ Small towelÿ Sunscreenÿ First aid kitÿ Mosquito repellentÿ Camera and filmÿ Contact solutionÿ Eye dropsÿ Gloves/scarf	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ÿ Passport with 6 months validity and spare pagesÿ Passport photoÿ Travel insurance detailsÿ Flight ticketsÿ Money/ travellers checks/cash/credit cardÿ Guide/phrase bookÿ Money pouchÿ Medication (i.e.; cold tablets, headache tablets, sleeping tablets)ÿ Main/day packÿ Alarm clock	<ul style="list-style-type: none">ÿ Something to carry your personal belongings in while cycling, eg. daypack, bum bag, handlebar bag.ÿ Helmetÿ Cycling glovesÿ Water bottle/bladderÿ Bike shorts with something to put on over the top when off the bike.ÿ Light wind-proof jacket for cyclingÿ Cycle shoesÿ Gel-seat

Pre/post trip accommodation

If you would like us to organise some extra nights accommodation either before or after the trip at our starting or finishing point hotel, just let us know when you book the trip. Prices are;

Start /end point hotel

City	Hotel name	Cost p/person-single	Cost p/person-twin
Tokyo	Sakura	60 USD	60 USD

Tipping

Tipping is not compulsory in Japan. It is meant to be a reward for good service.

Safety

Our cycling tour leader has the authority to change or cancel all or part of this trip if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. This decision would not be taken lightly, and where possible it would be made in consultation with our local crew, local operator and Bike Asia management. Your leader will be present on all included activities, staying at all the same hotels, guesthouses and of course cycling with you. During free time, should you choose to participate in any optional activities that are not part of our itinerary, please note that we cannot give any representations or guarantees about the safety of the activity, the standard of the operators running them or the equipment that they use.

In the group meeting, the cycling leader will run a session on cycling safety. Whilst some travellers will have years of touring experience, for others, this might be their first cycling trip ever. We need to cater for a range of abilities and experience and it is in everyone's interest to learn about the particulars of cycling in this region from someone who has already done it. It goes without saying that by running and participating in a cycling trip, both parties accept an inherent level of risk. However, we take the safety of our passengers very seriously and we ask that you cycle in a safe and responsible manner and that you look out for the well-being of your fellow travellers. Cycling helmets must be worn by all cyclists at all times whilst cycling.

Most national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest information before departure. The links for some major travel advisories and updates are listed below;

Australia;

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au>

Britain;

<http://www.fco.gov.uk>

Canada;

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/consular_home-en.asp

New Zealand;

<http://www.mfat.govt.nz/travel/>

United States;

<http://travel.state.gov>

We recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling in the cities, for the safe keeping of your passport, money, credit cards and traveller's cheques. Utilise the hotel/guesthouse safety boxes or safe once you arrive.

Communication

Internet, phone, mail, video conferencing, wi-fi - communication is not going to be an issue in this country. You should leave your family or friends the Bike Asia contact details. Our office staff will be able to get in touch with us in an emergency.

Group Leader

Our leaders are passionate about Asia and cycling...phew! They love what they do and take their job seriously. They will make every effort to ensure you have a safe, enjoyable trip with as much fun as possible. They bring many qualities and skills to this role, knowledge of group cycling, safety, management and liaising between you and the local crew. In working for us, they have made a commitment to learning as much about the culture, language and customs of Japan as possible, and they are happy to share any of this knowledge with you. However, please keep in mind that they are not local and will not know everything.

Rules

We don't have many, but the ones we do have are important. We always abide by the laws of the country that we are travelling through. This means you are not to use any illegal drugs or use prostitutes. Any passenger who does either will be asked to leave the trip immediately.

Feedback

After you have completed the trip, we want to know what you thought about it. This is important to us, as it is through your feedback that we monitor our trips and make improvements for the future. Log on to our website and click on the feedback link. It will take you a minimum of 3 minutes, or should you feel like writing in more detail, then a little longer. If you fill in the feedback form, we'll give you an automatic 5% discount on any of our trips in any other region.

Photos

We are always looking for good photos of the regions we travel through. If you have some that you would like to send us, we would love to have a look.

Newsletter

Our quarterly email newsletter has information on events happening in Asia, travel stories, cycling stuff, last-minute deals on our trips, travel tips and more. If you would like to subscribe, just go to our homepage and click on the link to subscribe. Your email address will be kept confidential.