



Just as spring in Japan is associated with cherry blossom viewing, autumn is the season for watching the trees turn beautiful shades of red, gold and yellow. "Momiji-gari" is the custom of making an excursion with friends, family or coworkers to see the leaves changing colors and perhaps have a picnic. Although it varies with latitude and yearly weather changes, the Autumn Foliage (Koyo) season generally lasts from October to November.

Here are some of the more famous "Momijigari" spots:

Lake Towada (Tohoku-Northern Japan)

♣ Best viewing spots & best time to go:

Take a boat tour on the lake, or stroll along the bank from Katsura ga hama (Otome Statue) to Gozen ga hama - Mid October

♣ Access:

2 hr. 55 min. on JR bus "Mizuumi" from Aomori Station or 2 hr. 15 min. on bus "Towadako" from Morioka Station

More info:

<http://www.jnto.go.jp>

Nikko (North of Tokyo)

♣ Best viewing spots & best time to go:

Chuzenjiko Lake - Mid to late October; Ryuzu no Taki Waterfall - Mid to late October.

♣ Access:

1 hr. 50 min. from Asakusa Station to Tobu Nikko Station



More info:

<http://www.nikko-jp.org>

Hakone (Near Mt.Fuji)

♣ Best viewing spots & best time to go:

Gora Park and the Hakone Art Museum - Early November; boat tours on Lake Ashi - Mid November

♣ Access:

40 min. by Shinkansen to Odawara Station, then 15 min. on the Tozan Tetsudo Line to Hakone Yumoto Station. Or, Odakyu Rail offers many different types of day passes to the region.

For details, see

<http://www.odakyu.jp>

More info on Hakone:

<http://www.hakone.or.jp>

Arashiyama (Northwest of Kyoto)

♣ Best viewing spots & best time to go:

Togetsukyo Bridge, Hokyoin Temple, Rokuoin Temple - Mid November (Autumn Leaf Festival November 12)



♣ Access:

Saga - Arashiyama Station, 20 min. by train from Kyoto Station

More info:

<http://www.pref.kyoto.jp>

Koyasan (Mt. Koya, south of Osaka)

♣ Best viewing spots & best time to go:

Danjo Garan (The central complex and main area of Koyasan) - Early November

♣ Access:

Ropeway up the mountain from Gokurakubashi Station, 1 hr. 20 min. from Osaka's Nankai Nanba Station

More info:

<http://www.koya.org>

Momijidani Park (Miyajima Island, near Hiroshima)

♣ Best time to go:

Mid November (Momiji (Maple) Festival November 17-23)

♣ Access:

26 min. by train from Hiroshima Station to Miyajima-guchi Station, a 10 min. ferry ride to the island, then a 20 min. walk to the park (near Misen primeval forest)

More info:

<http://www.hiroshima-cdas.or.jp>

Please log onto JNTO's website for more in depth coverage of autumn foliage in Japan

<http://www.jnto.go.jp>

"My Journey" Best 100 Trips for Discovering Japan

Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs gathered ideas from travelers and professionals and carefully selected 100 of the best trips that showcase Japan's history and culture. The top 10 trips can be seen here

<http://www.mext.go.jp>

Prime Minister Koizumi himself has taken a few of these trips himself; to hear about his travels, see

<http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/m-magazine/backnumber/2006/0525.html>

or

<http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/m-magazine/backnumber/2006/0615.html>

Accommodations in Japan

Japan Abounds in Accommodations:

Western-style business and luxury hotels, traditional Japanese style accommodations and also the one and only "Capsule Hotel" which varies greatly in terms of price and style. From the unique Ryokan (Japanese style Inn) to the monk - trainingstyle "Shukubo" temple lodging, all offer the experience of a lifetime. For details on each type of accommodation, log on to:



Western-style Hotels

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/arrange/accomodations/links.html>

Business Hotels (City Hotels)

<http://www.jcha.or.jp/english>

Japanese Ryokan (Japan Ryokan Association)

http://www.ryokan.or.jp/index_en.html

Japanese Inn Group (Budget Ryokan)

<http://www.jpinn.com/>

Welcome Inn Reservation Center (Inexpensive Accommodations)

<http://www.itcj.jp/>

Japan Youth Hostel Association

<http://www.jyh.or.jp/english/index.html>

Minshuku (Japanese Bed & Breakfast)

<http://www.minshuku.co.jp/english/etop.html>

Shukubo (Temple Lodging)

http://www.shukubo.jp/eng/05_syukubo.html

News from Japan



Tokyo Marathon 2007

The 1st Tokyo Marathon is scheduled to be held on February 18 (Sunday), 2007; registration has been open since June 18, 2006. The 2007 Tokyo Marathon expects to draw 25,000 athletes for the Marathon and 5,000 athlete entrants for the 10km Race.

For details, visit

http://www.tokyo42195.org/outline_e.html

Multilingual Bus Tour in Hokkaido

JTB (Japan Travel Bureau) is offering a "Multilingual motor-coach tour" in 4 different languages - English, Chinese, Korean & Japanese - provided by wireless receivers. The 1st of these tours to be offered, the "Furano & Biei Audio Guided Tour," runs every Friday & Saturday from July 1st to September 30, 2006.

Log on to:

<http://www.jtbgmt.com/sunrisetour/agent/>

Koyasan (Mt. Koya) Audio Guide Rental Service

The Koyasan Tourist Association is now renting out audio guides to travelers who visit this World Heritage Site. The Audio Guide is available in English, French, Chinese, Korean & Japanese. For details on the rental service,

Log on to:

http://www.shukubo.jp/eng/10_audio.html

Access to Koyasan and Discount Pass

Nankai Railways provides easy access to Koyasan. It takes about 1 hr. and 20 min. from Osaka's "Nankai Namba" Station to Koyasan on the limited express train "Koya," (1 hr. 40 min. on a normal express train) after which it is just a five minute cable car ride up the mountain.

Nankai Railways offers a convenient discount pass, the "Koyasan Free Service," which includes

a round-trip train ride from Osaka's Namba Station to Koyasan, free bus rides within Koyasan, discounted admission to temples & other sites, and discount coupons for buying souvenirs. The price for adults is 2,780 yen (a savings over the regular fare of 3,350 yen). On the limited express train, the "Koyasan Free Service" costs 4,000 yen (17% off the regular fare of 4,870 yen). For detailed information on Mt. Koya,

Log on to:

<http://www.koya.org/eng/>

Hotel Updates



Hotel New Otani Tokyo

Offering a "@ Your Choice" stay plan from July 1 - September 30, 2006. Special rates are 23,500 yen for one person / 27,000 yen for two persons per night. That is about 25% off the published rates.

*At Your Choice Rates: select one from the following choices:

- 1) Breakfast through Room Service
 - 2) 1 cigar and 2 drinks at Bar Capri (Lobby Level in Main Bldg.)
 - 3) Lunch at designated restaurant (SATSUKI, Garden Lounge, Trader Vic's or KATO's Dining & Bar)
 - 4) Free access to Golden Spa (Gym, Sauna & Indoor Pool / one-time admission only per day).
- For reservations, please access to "NO" for Apollo and Sabre or "MC" for Worldspan.

Hotel New Otani Osaka

is offering a "Business Value Package" through December 31, 2006. Save more than 40% off the rack rate at 20,000 yen for one person / 26,000 yen for two persons per night. For reservations, please access to "LW" to find out more details. Both special offers are 10% commissionable to travel agencies who provide their IATA number upon making reservations. For further details and reservations, you may also contact 1-800-421-8795.

Akasaka Excel Hotel Tokyu

The Akasaka Excel Hotel Tokyu is offering a Summer Long Stay Promotion through September 30, 2006. Rates are from 12,000 yen for single rooms / 15,000 yen for twin rooms.

** A minimum 4-night stay is required for this special rate.



Nagoya Tokyu Hotel is also offering a "2006 Summer Promotion" till September 30, 2006. Rates are 14,000 yen / 18,000 yen for standard twin / double rooms and 22,000 yen / 30,000 yen for executive twin/double rooms. For details and reservations, contact Tokyu Hotels' reservation center N. America at 1-800-42-TOKYU (86598) or e-mail reservation@tokyuhotelsjapan.com

Prince Hotels

Prince Hotels are offering a special "2006 Summer Plan" on several of the Prince Hotel Properties. Discounts are offered through various dates as follows:

Akasaka Prince Hotel: through September 30, 2006.

Shinagawa Prince Hotel: through September 10, 2006.

Takanawa Prince Hotel-Sakura Tower, New Takanawa Prince Hotel and Takanawa Prince Hotel: through September 17, 2006.

For details and reservations, contact 1-800-542-8686.

Intrepid Travel is offering an exciting small group adventure "Japan Basix-9 days from Tokyo." The tour takes participants to the most popular destinations around Tokyo: Tokyo, Nikko, Hakone and Kamakura. They will stay in Japanese Inns (Ryokan), travel on numerous trains, ferries and buses, explore on foot, and visit Tokyo, Japan's dynamic modern capital, the sacred city of Nikko with its many temples and shrines, Hakone National Park, and Kamakura, providing a window to times past. All this for just US \$1190 per person (plus local payment of 11,000 yen cash-approximately US \$100)

(Trip Code JRB)

<http://www.intrepidtravel.com/trip.php?code=JRB>

"Lost Japan-14 days Tokyo to Kyoto" Combining history with culture, panoramic mountains with deep gorges and sushi with sake, Intrepid Travel also offers this "Basix" package which takes travelers to experience all things Japanese and visit some of the more rural regions of Japan, such as the Iya Valley, one of Japan's "hidden regions" and the remote island of Ojika which is inhabited mostly by fishermen. In contrast, dynamic Tokyo and the delightful city of Kyoto allow travelers to lose themselves in the streets, shrines and gardens and soak up the atmosphere. The Tour costs US \$1870 per person (plus local payment of 22,000 yen cash-approximately US \$200). Travelers must arrive with a 14-day Japan Rail (JR) pass.

(Trip Code JRL)

<http://www.intrepidtravel.com/trip.php?code=JRL>

For details & reservations, log on to

<http://www.intrepidtravel.com>

or call toll free at 1-866-847-8192



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