



## Educational Tours

Capital: Tokyo  
Dialing code: 81  
Language: Japanese  
Population: 127 million  
Drives on the: Left



## JAPAN INFORMATION

### *Travel documents*

U.S. citizens traveling to Japan must have a passport valid for six months after their expected return date. No entry visas are required for U.S. citizens. Please check [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) to confirm passport validity requirements prior to your tour. Citizens of all other countries should contact their appropriate embassies to find out what specific documentation is required for them to travel.

### *Tour Director/drivers*

You will have a bilingual Tour Director for the duration of your tour. Your Tour Director will inform you before departure if they will be picking you up at the airport or if a transfer Tour Director will meet you there. You will have multiple bus drivers while on tour, so please consider bus driver tipping on a daily basis.

### *Vaccinations and health precautions*

For information on necessary vaccinations we recommend that you visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or consult your physician for the most updated information.

### *Tipping*

It's customary to tip your Tour Directors and bus drivers as a token of appreciation at the end of the tour. We recommend:

- \$6 per person per day for the Tour Director
- \$3 per person per day for the bus driver

We recommend using U.S. dollars for tipping as it is difficult to cash traveler's checks or Visa gift cards. We suggest you deposit the tip money into your bank account and withdraw it at the end of the tour, then present it to your Tour Director and bus driver in tip envelopes provided by EF.

## *Currency*

Japan's currency is called Yen. Getting Yen in Japan can be difficult since many ATMs do not accept foreign cards and traveler's checks are not easy to exchange. We recommend that you exchange money at your bank or the airport before your departure to Japan. Once in Japan, ATMs located in convenience stores or post offices will accept major cards. These ATMs are available throughout the major cities you will visit, so ask your Tour Director to direct you to a bank that will work. Be sure to inform your local bank of your travel plans prior to your departure and ensure that your debit or credit card and pin number will work in Japan. Visit [xe.com](http://xe.com) for more currency information.

## *Transportation*

Travel within Japan will be by modern, air-conditioned buses. Long transfers will be broken up with rest stops and stops of cultural interest along the way. You will travel on a bullet train during your tour to Japan at least once. Travelers should be prepared with a small backpack that should contain overnight clothes that they can only take on the train. All luggage will be sent by bus.

## *Accommodations*

Hotels are generally small business-style hotels with modern amenities like elevators, air conditioning and television, but the rooms are often small. Many groups will stay at a Ryokan, which is a traditional Japanese-style hotel. Travelers will sleep on a traditional Japanese style futon (mattresses on the floor) on a tatami mat (straw mat). When staying in a ryokan, students under the age of 20 will share rooms with around five people of the same gender. Adults will not room with more than two people per room (unless requested). For other hotels, students under the age of 20 will share rooms with two or three other travelers of the same gender in rooms that contain single or shared double beds, or a combination of the two. Students will occasionally be asked to share a double bed. If your group is paired up with another EF group, students may share rooms with those travelers. Adults will share twin rooms with other adults of the same gender, and may also share a room with adults from another EF group. Groups might not be roomed next to each other and might be on different floors.

## *Phones and Internet*

The mobile network in Japan works on a different system than the rest of the world. Only 3G handsets with roaming enabled will work. You can rent a SIM card in Japan to use with your phone, but your phone will need to be unlocked. Please note that the SIM has to be returned and is not pre-paid. International phone cards are also easy to buy and your Tour Director can help you find places to buy them. If you plan to use your personal cell phone on tour, contact your wireless provider to see what fees you may incur. Free wireless internet is available in most hotels, however you may have to go to the lobby of the hotel to access this as it may not be available in your hotel room.

## *Local food*

Tap water is considered safe to drink in Japan, however bottled water is widely available for \$2-\$3. It is inadvisable to buy food from street vendors. Breakfasts on tour will be buffet style and will have an Asian style offering of noodles, soup, etc., as well as a Western style offering such as toast, eggs, etc. Dinners will either be served family style (in the middle of the table for all to share) or you will receive your own portion. A small dessert may be included, however Japanese meals do not traditionally include starters or desserts. Options are available for vegetarians or travelers with allergies.

## *Weather*

The spring and autumn seasons in Japan have mild temperatures and clear skies. Midwinter can be cold (20 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit), while the summer months are hot and humid, with an average in the high 80s. Please remind your travelers to drink lots of water during the summer months. Please check [weather.com](http://weather.com) for your destinations and travel periods.

## *Packing*

Typical dress in Japan is similar to what one might expect in most European and American cities, although you might see a few women dressed in traditional kimonos. A good pair of walking shoes is highly recommended. Keep in mind that you have to remove your shoes to enter most Japanese homes, shrines and temples, so clean socks are also recommended.