

Southern Japan Cycle Hiroshima to Nagasaki



Trip dates

2027

18 - 27 April
12 - 21 May
12 - 21 September
1 - 10 November

Tour price

Per person for double/twin: JPY 685,000

Single supplement + JPY 88,000

Early Booking Offer: A limited number of places are available on each departure with a 5% discount on the tour price. See website for full details.

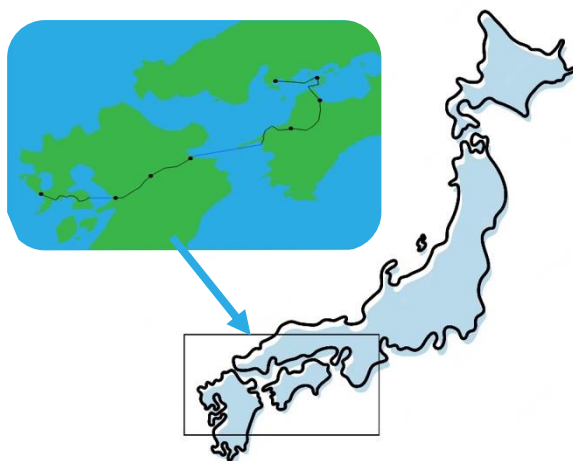
Highlights

- ✦ Traverse the islands of the Seto Inland Sea over incredible bridges and through ancient fishing villages
- ✦ Ride through stunning Shikoku over mountain passes and alongside emerald green rivers
- ✦ Ferry to Kyushu and cycle coast to coast, climbing volcanoes and crossing beautiful plateaus
- ✦ Finish an epic days cycling with a soak in a natural hot spring and an amazing meal at our great range of accommodation
- ✦ Spend a night in Kumamoto city overlooking its magnificent feudal castle
- ✦ Start and finish the tour in the diverse and vibrant cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The trip

Join us as we cycle across the beautiful islands and bridges of the inland sea, through deep river valleys in Shikoku and over the volcanic highlands of Kyushu on this epic adventure in Japan!

A fully supported road cycling tour designed to give you amazing experiences both on and off the bike. This tour offers some big days in the saddle on some of Japan's best cycling roads, with great options for riders who don't want to cycle the whole route.



Trip duration: 10 days/9 nights

Grade: Level 3/5

(Moderate to challenging)

Accommodation: 9 nights in premium Japanese and Western style accommodation

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Grading: Level 3/5

This tour is graded level 3. The route is challenging at times but very rewarding. We will take on some epic climbs and descents but still have time to enjoy cultural stops on the way. Riders are able to cycle comfortably for 4-6 hours or around 80km/50miles per day. The tour is fully supported and if at any stage you feel like having a rest from cycling you will be able to ride in the support vehicle.

Important notes:

Getting to and from: You will need to arrive in Hiroshima by the afternoon of day 1 of the tour. Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki are easily accessible by air or bullet train.

Single travellers: If you are travelling alone, we will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender. However, if we are not able to find you a rooming partner by 60 days prior to the trip departure date, you will be required to pay a single supplement for the trip

Tour inclusions

- ✦ 9 nights in a variety of premium hotels and traditional high quality Japanese ryokan
- ✦ 8 amazing dinners and 9 delicious breakfasts.
- ✦ Support vehicle and full mechanical support.
- ✦ 3-4 local guides depending on group size.
- ✦ GPX files for each day.
- ✦ 3 Ferry trips.
- ✦ Tasty and nutritious drinks, snacks and treats to keep you fuelled for the ride.

What's not included?

- Arrival and departure airport transfers, including any bike transfers to the hotel
- All lunches (budget JPY ¥1500 per day)
- Cycle hire
- Travel insurance – Please arrange your own

Hire Bikes

We offer a fleet of high-quality Specialized and Giant bikes for this tour, including carbon road bikes, e-bikes, and hybrid options to suit a range of riding styles and preferences.

Prices per bike for the duration of the tour:

Hybrid/Cross Bike:	¥30000
Carbon Road Bike:	¥77000
E-Bike:	¥77000



Detailed Itinerary: (Please note this itinerary is subject to adjustment)

Day 1: Meet and greet in Hiroshima

Distance 0km

Meet your guides and fellow guests in the afternoon at our hotel in Hiroshima, close to the station. Afternoon debrief and bike setup. Later we head out for an evening meal where we get to know each other and eat a local speciality, Okonomiyaki – a delicious Japanese savoury pancake.

Meals included: D

Day 2: Island hopping – Hiroshima to Ikuchi Island.

Distance: upto 65km/400m

We start our adventure with a short drive out of the city to Kure where we begin our ride onto the Tobishima Kaido, a network of bridges crossing the small islands of the Seto Inland Sea. Here we cycle on magical coastal roads through small fishing villages where you feel you have travelled back in time. We stop in at historic Mitarai for lunch and a walk around the old town and later take a look around Oyamazumi shrine, famous for its unique collection of samurai swords. Today is a fantastic ride and a great way to start the tour. We finish the day on Ikuchi island with a sunset view and a glass of local sake at our lovely accommodation.

Meals included: B,D

Day 3: Over the bridges: The Shimanami Kaido

Distance: upto 73km/600m

The Shimanami Kaido has become world-famous in the cycling community, and for good reason. The bridges we ride across today are all unique feats of engineering, offering superb views of the inland sea and islands. Challenge yourself with a climb up Mt. Kiro – a short but steep ascent to an observation deck, where 360-degree views await; you'll be glad you did it! After thoroughly exploring the beautiful islands, today's ride culminates with the incredible 4km-long Kurushima Bridge, leading us onto Shikoku Island where we will spend the next few days.

Meals included: B,D

Day 4: Into the mountains : The UFO Line

Distance: upto 113km/1450m

The UFO line climbs western Japan's biggest mountain, Mt Ishizuchi and is one of Shikoku's most scenic roads with views across the ranges to the pacific coast. Epic climb and descent followed by lunch in the beautiful Omogo gorge. Then more riding through emerald, green river valleys finishing the days ride in Uchiko town, a hidden gem in Shikoku with its traditional feel and preservation district, this is as authentic as it gets. We finish the day with a great meal at a fantastic local restaurant.

Meals included: B,D

Day 5: A rest day in Uchiko

Distance: Various ride options

We have some great optional activities for you to choose from today including some excellent ride options, a visit and hands on experience at a Japanese washi paper factory and a Kimono fitting experience. These activities are selected to provide a deeper appreciation of Japanese culture and offer some very unique experiences. Whether you choose to relax and unwind or partake in one or more of the optional activities, we guarantee you'll have a great day. In the evening, we will re-group for our evening meal at a local 'izakaya' – a Japanese pub...

Meals included: B, D

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Day 6: Uchiko to Beppu

Distance: upto 50km/300m

Today is a connecting day as we journey from Shikoku to Kyushu, the southernmost of the main islands. With an easy and scenic cycle followed by a beautiful ferry ride it's a very enjoyable day. As we bid farewell to Uchiko, we cycle through picturesque farmland to the Hiji river, which guides us to the coast. Continuing southward, we arrive at the port town of Yawatahama. Surrounded by mountains adorned with terraced orange orchards, Yawatahama provides a splendid backdrop as we set sail across the inland sea to Beppu. Renowned for its abundance of hot springs, steamy Beppu is a great place to finish the day with a soak in the hotel's onsen and prepare yourself for a couple of big days to come!

Meals included: B,D

Day 7: Beppu to Aso

Distance: upto 110km/2000m

Today's ride is an epic journey and it's one that many Japanese road cyclists have on their bucket lists. For those who prefer not to tackle the entire route, we have some great options available.

We start with a short drive to get us out of the city streets and then follow a little known but awesome route over the hill to charming Yufuin town. Morning coffee with a view and continue our ride upto the Kuju plateau where we stop for a farmhouse lunch before taking on the Makinoto pass, a 12km climb taking us to our high point of the day. From here it's downhill all the way (almost) into the awe inspiring Aso caldera, one of the planets largest volcanic craters. Our night will be spent in another fantastic Ryokan.

Meals included: B,D

Day 8: Aso to Kumamoto

Distance: upto 72km/1500m

Starting from our lodging we have a 10km warm up on the flat before embarking on the ascent of Mt Aso, a 12km climb to the top where we stop for a tea or coffee at the fantastic Aso café, enjoying the views of the steaming volcano. From here it's a long and sweeping descent down to lunch. For some this may be enough riding for the day and a good point to jump into the van. For those who are keen for more, we ride over the Jizo pass on Kennys road, named after multi-world GP motorbike champ Kenny Roberts as it was his favourite road in Japan!

We finish the day in Kumamoto city at our accommodation overlooking the magnificent Kumamoto castle. From here it's a short walk into the old town where you will find plenty of great restaurants. Dinner is at your own discretion tonight, but if you are inclined feel free to join us for a shared meal at a local restaurant.

Meals included: B

Day 9: Kumamoto to Nagasaki

Distance: 28km/400m or 41km/1100m

Our final day of the tour starts with a short ferry crossing to the Nagasaki Peninsula. The bay here is dominated by Mt Unzen, a formidable-looking volcano that rises 1,500m out of the sea. From the coast, we take on our final big climb of the tour, scaling the mountain to reach the hot spring town of Unzen. Here we'll take some time to explore the famous Unzen Hells, a dramatic volcanic landscape of steaming vents and bubbling hot springs.

From Unzen, we continue onto the Nitta Pass loop - a fantastic road that winds around the mountain, offering incredible views across the peninsula and bay.

From here, we ride a terrific descent through terraced rice fields and ancient villages before finishing our ride at the beach! We'll load the bikes and make our way into Nagasaki, where you'll have some time to explore before we meet for celebratory drinks and our final meal of the tour.

Meals included: B,D

Day 10: Farewell Sayonara!

Distance: 0km

Today's breakfast is at our hotel and from here it's time to say farewell. Your guides will be around all morning to help with any logistical issues.

Meals included: B

FAQ: Here are some common questions we get asked.

How do I get to and from the start and finish of this tour? Where should I fly into?

Hiroshima and Nagasaki are both well connected to Japan's major cities. Hiroshima is on the Sanyo Shinkansen (bullet train) line, with direct services from cities including Osaka and Tokyo. Nagasaki is connected to the Shinkansen network via the Nishi Kyushu Shinkansen, with a transfer at Takeo-Onsen for services towards Fukuoka and the rest of Japan.

Both cities also have airports with regular domestic flights, making it easy to continue your travels before or after the tour.

What kind of bikes do you hire?

We offer a range of high-quality Specialized rental bikes to suit different riding styles and abilities, including carbon road bikes, hybrid/cross bikes and electric bikes. For more details and photos, please check the [bike rental section on our website](#).

If I bring my own bike, how can I get it to the start of the tour?

If your bike is packed in a bag or box, you can take it on most Japanese train services, including the Shinkansen (bullet train). However, a seat reservation with extra luggage space is required, and handling the bike on busy trains can be challenging.

An alternative is to use one of Japan's reliable courier services, which can transport your bike from airport to hotel, or hotel to hotel. This can be a much easier option, especially if you're traveling with other luggage.

If you're planning to bring your own bike, we're happy to help with advice or recommend courier options—just let us know!

What is Japanese style accommodation?

Japanese-style accommodation, known as a *ryokan*, features traditional elements such as tatami mat flooring and futon mattresses that are laid out each night for sleeping. Rooms are typically minimalist and serene, reflecting Japanese aesthetics.

Many ryokan also include shared bathing areas or onsens (hot spring baths), which guests are welcome to use. You'll also be provided with a *yukata*—a casual cotton robe—that you can wear to dinner, breakfast, and while relaxing around the property.

The ryokan we use are of a very high standard, have private bathrooms, and also offer rooms with Western-style beds. If you have a preference, feel free to let us know and we'll do our best to accommodate it.

What is an onsen?

'Onsen' refers to natural hot springs, typically in the context of a public spa. Some of the regions we traverse on this tour are famous for onsen and many of the places we stay have one that you can use. In Japan bathing is ingrained into the culture and can be a real highlight of a trip here, especially a cycling one. Public baths are segregated by gender and swimsuits are not worn. For those who aren't keen, all our accommodation options have a private shower.



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Will we get chance to explore Hiroshima and Nagasaki on this itinerary?

There is some time but not a lot. We would recommend allowing a day either side of the itinerary to properly explore these two fantastic cities. Both the peace parks and atomic bomb museums are incredibly moving and well worth visiting, and from the world famous torii gate of Miyajima in Hiroshima to Nagasaki's Glover Gardens and Chinatown there is plenty to see and do.

How are the roads for cycling?

The roads we ride on this tour are great cycling roads. Quiet, very few cars and silky-smooth bitumen. The climbs are generally a pleasant gradient of 5-6% and the corners are built in a way that the downhill is super fun. A standard road or gravel bike works well for this trip. Road/gravel/E-Bikes with 25-40mm tyres and are all suitable for this tour. For road bikes we recommend having compact gearing with a low gear for the long climbs.

Japan drives on the left and drivers are incredibly courteous to cyclists.

I'm worried about the climbing. What are the options?

The climbs on this tour are very well graded, often shady and very little traffic. Of course, we want to encourage you to ride as much as possible, but it is always an option to jump in the van. We want you to ride at your own pace without any pressure and once the guides have assessed your ability, they'll be able to advise on any sections to skip or get you up the road with a head start. E-bikes can also be a great option.

I'm not a cyclist but my partner is. Can I join the tour?

Yes of course! While this is a cycling tour it's still a fantastic trip even without the riding. The great thing about Japan is there is always a beautiful shrine or temple to explore, a local market to peruse or a short hike to do. There will also be opportunity on some days to check into the hotel early and unwind in the spa.

What kind of food do we eat on tour?

Japanese cuisine has an incredible variety of fish, meat and vegetarian dishes and there is opportunity to sample many different kinds on this trip. At the hotels we stay at, dinner and breakfast are often buffet style. This is great because it allows you to try lots of different dishes and avoid the ones you don't like.

What is the best time of year to visit?

We run this tour in both the spring and autumn. Both seasons are extremely beautiful and perfect for cycling. Expect cooler temps in early April, especially up in the mountains. Average day time temps between 16 – 20 degrees Celsius (60 – 68F). In May and October/November it is a little warmer with temps often in the mid 20's (68-75F). To decide which season is best we suggest you come multiple times and let us what you think! We love cycling here all year round.

Yokoso! Welcome to We Ride Japan!

We Ride Japan was founded by Will and Tamie Turner in 2023. After meeting in Japan in 2005 they spent 2 years travelling the world on bicycles before settling in New Zealand. In 2020 they returned to Japan to embark on a new adventure. Through their work and life experiences in both the cycle and tourism industries, and their current work in regional tourism development in Japan, Will and Tami offer professional well-planned and unique itineraries. Our goal is to give our guests once in a lifetime experiences in the country we love. Small groups, local guides and the spirit of adventure is what we're all about.

Thanks for your interest! We look forward to hosting you!

