



**venture**  
events • expeditions • adventures

**Japan is a dynamic, modern society with a culture built on tradition and within of an ancient land.**

**Our focus is on contact with local people, getting out into the countryside, visiting temples and shrines, traveling on interesting modes of transport, learning ancient traditions, sampling incredible cuisine, staying in local-style guesthouses and immersing ourselves in everything that defines Japan.**

**You'll find Japan to be a surprisingly adventurous destination with so much to discover and experience.**

# Energised Japan

**Discover and experience a unique destination**

## **At a glance:**

### **1. Highlights**

- **Meditation sessions with Zen Monks**
- **Karate and Aikido sessions with a black belt master**
- **Traditional shiatsu massage**
- **Sumo stable visit**
- **Coaching and analysis of fitness and techniques**
- **Conquering Mt Fuji**
- **Sea kayaking through fluorescent plankton**
- **Mini triathlon near Kamakura**
- **Cook your own dinner cruise on Tokyo Bay.**



### **2. The experience**

- **Learn about the history and culture of this fascinating country as you cycle and run through the capital, meet our resident experts who will teach you about the physical and mental discipline required to master karate, aikido, zazen meditation and sumo. Learn more about Shiatsu massage as our masseuse loosens your muscles and enjoy an amazing sea kayak amongst fluorescent plankton. And of course let's not forget the ascent of Mt Fuji, Japan's highest and most holy peak and a morning spent watching the sun rise after walking all the way from the bottom along the oldest pilgrimage route up the mountain.**

Welcome to Venture :

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## Itinerary – Summary:

### Days 1–3: Tokyo

- Explore this dynamic city on bike and foot as we combine sightseeing with learning more about our bodies, fitness routines and nutrition. We take part in Zazen sessions to focus our minds and bodies and learn more about the discipline involved in the traditional Japanese martial arts of karate and aikido. A visit to a sumo stable teaches us more about this unique sport and we learn about the wrestlers lives, diet and training schedule. Sessions of shiatsu massage help loosen tight muscles and energize us for the week ahead.

### Day 4–5: Mount Fuji

- We follow the oldest pilgrimage route up the sacred mountain and spend some time learning about the significant of Mt Fuji as well as the flora and fauna found on its lower reaches. Hiking up to 3,000m we spend a night in a mountain hut before waking early to hike to the summit for sunrise. On the way down the mountain we pick up mountain bikes then white water rafts to make the most of the adventure options available in this fantastic area.

### Day 6: Izu

- Long popular as a holiday destination, Izu is a mecca for outdoor adventurers and we make the most of our time here by starting the day with a stretch and a swim in the ocean. After a hearty breakfast we hike along a ridge with spectacular views of the peninsula's coastline before riding mountain bikes through rice fields and rural hamlets. The evening is spent on sea kayaks as we follow the illuminated plankton back to the hotel for our luscious seafood barbeque.

### Day 7: Tokyo via Kamakura

- Kamakura was the site of Japan's first shogunate capital in the 12th century and it is here where we hold our final challenge, a mini triathlon. We spend our final night dinner together on a boat cruising Tokyo Bay as we cook up our own dinner of Monjayaki, a Tokyo specialty.

### Day 8: Tokyo

- One final shiatsu massage and a discussion about the past week, lessons learnt and how you can apply it to your everyday life before we say our final sayonnaras.

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### Detailed Itinerary:

#### Days 1–3: Tokyo

- After our meeting at noon on day one we start our energised experience with a stretch on the lawn of the Imperial Detached Palace to warm up your muscles after your international flight. We then jog around the Imperial Palace and learn more about the history of this area. When Tokyo (or Edo as it was then called) was established as the Shogun's capital in 1603 he built his fortress here. The original castle has been destroyed but the area has been the Imperial Palace since the Emperor moved his residence from Kyoto after the restoration of Imperial power in 1868.
- You will each have an assessment by an expert trainer who will evaluate your performance on a number of fitness tests and talk about your fitness goals before taking a break and experiencing a traditional Japanese shiatsu massage. This ancient art uses only light pressure of the fingers and hands to stimulate and rebalance internal energy lines. The evening takes us to Shinjuku, one of Tokyo's largest nightlife centers where we will explore the infamous Kabukicho before having a drink at the Park Hyatt bar (where Lost in Translation was filmed) and looking over the sea of Tokyo's lights stretching into the distance. After a day of focus on our bodies we open our minds to the skills and disciplines the learning and practicing of the writing system we see around us opens up and learn our names in an ancient form of calligraphy and how this writing system began over 2,000 years ago.
- Waking refreshed on day 2 we go to the first of our zazen sessions to learn more about the spirituality and discipline of meditation as well as learn more about the Zen monks' lifestyle and diet. To meditate we sit with crossed legs (or full lotus position if you can manage it!) with our backs straight and hands in our lap. Taking deep breaths we clear our mind of thoughts and relax our minds. It takes a bit of practice but once you have learnt how to do it you can continue the practice in your everyday life.
- Next up is a martial arts workshop where we will learn more about karate and aikido from our instructor. Both martial arts developed without weapons (the word Karate in Japanese literally means "empty hand") and they are concerned not only with the practical application but also the spiritual training that is required. Aikido uses the force and the power of your opponent against them and so is more about skill than pure strength.
- We do another running workshop before learning more about Shiatsu. The late afternoon is spent riding one of the many traffic free cycle paths to explore the city's various scenic and historically significant parks, gardens, shrines and temples. We also use our stops to practice some energizing circuit skills involving pulling, throwing, pushing, and lunging using your own body weight or that of a partner.
- On day 3 we continue our Zazen and martial arts practice before going to a sumo stable to watch the big guys train. There's a lot more to Sumo than pure size and we learn about the diet, training, faith, work ethic, lifestyle and rituals of this little understood sport. The lifestyle of the wrestlers is strictly regimented and the rituals of the Shinto religion influence many aspects of the sport.
- For lunch we will cook a traditional meal and learn about the influence food has had on the physical characteristics of the average Japanese person. Our teacher is a successful writer and cooking school owner who will also give you some simple recipes and discuss their introduction into your weekly training and lifestyle at home.
- In the afternoon we take another cycling and running tour of the city to learn more about the history, culture and people of Japan. During the shogun's era the area we pass through was home to many samurais and we learn more about the lifestyle of these enigmatic warriors who placed as much focus on their mastery of tea ceremony as on their sword skills. Their philosophy was one of both mental and physical discipline to become a complete warrior. We end the day at one of the city's surprisingly pleasant beaches and enjoy the challenge of some circuits in the sand, again working in pairs or challenging ourselves.

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## Detailed Itinerary:

### Days 4–5: Mt Fuji

- We do another Zazen session followed by a martial arts workshop before leaving the capital city for our ascent of Mt Fuji. Before starting the climb we learn more about the best ways to maintain energy and get the most out of your days, not only on this trip but in life in general, as a parent, a worker or an athlete.
- We travel to the Fuji-Hakone National Park (2 hours), home to Japan's tallest and most sacred mountain, Mt Fuji. Long considered the abode of the gods of the native Shinto religion, Mt Fuji has been a pilgrimage route for centuries (the first recorded ascent was by a monk in the 7th century) and we follow the oldest pilgrimage route all the way from the shrine at the bottom. Sengenjinja Shrine is where monks and pilgrims over the centuries have prayed for their safe return, long before our comfortable hiking trail was completed and we make an offering asking for protection. As we walk through the cedar forests on the lower reaches of the mountain we will learn about some of the flora and fauna of the area. Today we climb from 500 meters above sea level to our mountain hut accommodation at around 3,000 meters.
- After spending our night in a mountain Hut we rise around 3am to get to the summit for sunrise. Joining us are other hikers who are all as excited as we are to have the chance to see the sun rise above a sea of clouds from Japan's highest point. After a descent to the fifth station on the other side of the mountain we pick up special mountain bikes to cut our way through some forest 4WD tracks on the lower reaches of the mountain. Dropping off the bikes we pick up boats and raft the Fuji River's white waters with the 3,776m mountain we just conquered as a backdrop.
- We transfer to our lodging on the Izu Peninsula for a good night's sleep. With its wasabi farms and natural spring fed onsen towns Izu has long been a favourite for locals and international travellers in the know. Onsens are an important part of Japanese culture and we learn more about their properties and importance to the Japanese long life expectancy through the ages before having a pre dinner soak to soothe sore muscles.

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## Detailed Itinerary:

### Day 6: Izu

- After a solid night's sleep we have a morning stretch on the beach before eating a healthy breakfast which uses the many fresh fruits and vegetables of the area to make a delicious traditional Japanese breakfast. After a short break we take a swim in the sea to assess skills and give extra swimming tips for those who want it as part of ongoing training or stroke improvement.
- We transfer up to the Peninsula's highest point for more stretching and a bush walk along a ridge with stunning views of the sea and along the rugged coastline that Izu is famous for. To get the blood pumping again we pick up our mountain bikes for a twisting ride down to sea level through the area's lovely fertile farmland and get a feel for the agricultural life that generations of farmers have enjoyed. Rice is very important in Japan as it traditionally provided around 80% of the calorie intake of the average person. Highly respected (the Japanese attach an honorific prefix when talking about it), rice is considered important to the Shinto religion and sake (made from rice), rice and rice cakes are common offerings at shrines.
- Off the bikes and on to sea kayaks we do a skills and safety session in a protected bay before heading out along the coast as the day becomes evening. In the darkness of night the area is famous for illuminated plankton which dazzles and lights our way. Our resident expert will explain about the different varieties of deep sea fish the pacific currents bring here and the different properties of each. With 20% of the world's seafood eaten on the main island of Japan, the styles and methods of cooking, steaming, boiling, and of course, eating raw, are worth learning direct from a local and back at the ryokan we indulge in a fantastic seafood buffet. After dinner we have a talk from an expert working on different sources of alternative energy that Japanese companies like Sony and Mitsubishi are researching in an effort to address the world's energy issues.

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## Detailed Itinerary:

### Day 7: Izu to Tokyo via Kamakura

- There are lots of options for activities before breakfast today – hone your martial arts skills with a final session with a sensei, stretch your limbs with some yoga, go for a walk along the beach or head out for an ocean swim.
- A short transfer (1 hour) takes us to Kamakura, the site of Japan's first shogunate capital in the 12th century. It is here where we hold our final challenge, a mini triathlon. After a 1 km swim in the ocean we jump on bikes for a coastal ride 35km along the Miura Peninsula with its great views and amazing rock formations, and finish with a 10 km run over the very hills that helped protect the then capital from invasion.
- Another short transfer (1 hour) has us back in Tokyo where the adventure began. We spend our final night dinner together on a boat cruising Tokyo Bay as we cook up our own dinner of Monjayaki. Though similar to okonomiyaki, or Japanese pancake, Monjayaki is a Tokyo specialty which has long been popular in the Shitamachi (down town) areas. The lights of the city reflect off the water as we reminisce about the fantastic achievements of the past week.

### Day 8: Tokyo

- One final shiatsu massage before you go home after a hard but rewarding week. We chat about your progress, new ideas to take back home and Japanese influences you can use everyday in your training and routines.

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## Notes for climbers on Mt Fuji:

- Alert your guide if you have any difficulty.
- The weather on the summit can deteriorate in a matter of minutes, with thick mist reducing visibility to 3m. Rainstorms and wind up to 120km/h can occur at times. Please hold the rope, which will lead you to safety.
- If you are separated from your guide or lose sight of the trail, **STOP IMMEDIATELY**, stay where you are and blow your whistle to attract attention. **PLEASE DO NOT TRY TO FIND YOUR WAY OUT.**
- When climbing the summit please make sure that you carry with you the following things:
  - ➔ wear warm enough clothes.
  - ➔ a torch/flashlight (and spare batteries).
  - ➔ a rain coat.
  - ➔ some energy food and water.
  - ➔ a whistle.
- To avoid altitude sickness please tackle the mountain at a slow pace, make frequent breaks and drink plenty of water. If you do not allow your body sufficient time to adjust to increases in altitude you may experience altitude sickness. Symptoms can include headache, dizziness and nausea.
- The completion of the climb to the summit is subject to weather conditions, your fitness and appropriate clothing. Your guide's decision is final and should be respected at all times.

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### Fast facts

Grade:  
Advanced Level  
Private Groups:  
Private group options are available for this trip  
Singles:  
A single supplement is available for this trip\*  
Leader:  
Expert local leader  
\*Ask our staff for more information

### Trip dates. 2013

TBC

### Trip cost

TBC

### Options & supplements

TBC

### Important note

These trip notes represent the most current information for this itinerary, and may supersede any information in the current brochure, including but not limited to the itinerary and price. The itinerary should be seen as a guide only. This itinerary may change at any time due to inclement weather, forces of nature and other circumstances beyond our control.

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## What's Included:

This is a list of included activities on this trip. All other activities are optional and at your own expense. For a list of optional activities and sightseeing available on this trip, see the optional activities section below. If you choose not to participate in the included activities on this itinerary, the cost will not be refunded.

### Meal Inclusions

- TBC

### Transport

- Train, Bus

### Accommodation

- Hotel accommodation

### Optional Activities

- TBC

### Physical Rating

- You are required to carry your pack on and off trains/buses and up hotel steps.
- This itinerary is an active itinerary and requires a high level of fitness.