Slip Back in Time

Thatched-roof houses dot the picturesque countryside of central Japan. Visiting Takayama, Shirakawago and Kanazawa makes one feel as though they’ve travelled back in time to an age where cityscapes were lined with traditional facades, craftsmen perfected their skills in textiles and lacquerware, and samurai residences sat grandly in the capital city of a powerful domain!

Set amongst gorgeous natural landscapes in the very center of Japan is Gifu Prefecture, a place steeped in tradition. Blessed with beautifully preserved castle towns, many and varied hot spring districts, and unique festivals that have lived on through the centuries, Gifu transports you back in time to the Japan of old.

Its traditional crafts rank among Japan’s very best, and its four seasons offer distinct and yet equally marvelous views that will soothe your soul and leave you wanting more!
TRADITIONAL JAPAN

Sample Itinerary:

Day 1 • Nagoya - Tajimi - Yaotsu - Gifu
Transfer to Nagoya from Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka or other cities by bullet train where you will start this trip. You will be transferred to Tajimi for visiting “KOBEIGAMA”, a historic kiln awarded “2 Stars” by the Michelin Green Guide Japan, founded in 1804 by the 1st Kobei Kato. The crafts gallery exhibits works of the 5th, 6th, and 7th generation Kobei masters. Their works of art, which show off their unique style of tradition-meets-innovation, are a wonder to behold! The 6th generation head of the house was designated a Living National Treasure for his distinguished works of art, so you should not miss these displays!

You will then transfer to Yaotsu town for visiting “CHIUNE SUGIHARA MEMORIAL HALL”, a memorial hall dedicated to the virtues of morality and peace. Chiune Sugihara was a man who, during the Second World War, saved the lives of roughly 6,000 Jewish refugees by directly disobeying orders and issuing transit visas that would allow them to flee their country. Take a moment to learn about the life of Mr. Sugihara in this museum dedicated to his memory, which stands among the thriving nature of the prefecture he was born in.

This evening, you will stay at Japanese Style Inn (Ryokan) in Nagaragawa Hot Springs.
You may also enjoy “UKAI FISHING AT THE NIGHT ON THE RIVER” during the summer season between mid of May and mid of October.

Day 2 • Gifu - Seki/Mino - Gero Hot Springs
Morning visit “GIFU CASTLE”. Standing atop Mt. Kinka, Gifu Castle was the home base of one of Japan’s major military commanders, Nobunaga Oda, and was said to be unassailable. Don’t miss the large selection of Japanese armor and swords exhibited inside the castle.
You will be transferred to the city of Seki where you can watch a live demonstration of Japanese sword forging at “TRADITIONAL SWORDSMAITH MUSEUM”. Seki City is one of the most well-known and highly regarded blade-producing areas in the world. To this day, Japanese swords continue to be produced by swordsmiths in the traditional forging style that has been passed down for centuries.

Afternoon transfer to Mino city for visiting “MINO WASHI AKARI ART GALLERY”, a stimulating feast of lights for the eyes and soul! Enjoy these soft and heart-warming “Akari” works of art, made using traditional Mino Washi paper.
This evening, you will stay at Japanese Style Inn (Ryokan) in Gero Hot Springs.

Day 3 • Gero Hot Springs - Takayama
Morning transfer to Takayama, a traditional and beautifully preserved old town, where you can explore various spots such as Historical Districts, Arts, Architectures, Folklore Culture & Local Favorite Cuisines. Especially, at the time of Cherry blossoms and colorful fall season, you may also have great chances to see Takayama Festival, one of the best famous festivities in Japan.

Day 4 • Takayama - Shirakawago - Kanazawa
You will start this day for visiting Morning Market. Then, you will transfer to the village of Shiragawago, UNESCO World Heritage site where you will see traditional “Gassho-zukuri” farmhouses, some of which are standing more than 250 years since they were built.
The architectural style of “Gassho-zukuri” was developed over many generations and is designed to withstand the large amounts of heavy snow that falls in the region during winter.
You will transfer to Kanazawa in the late afternoon for extended stay and more experiences you can enjoy.

Traditional Crafts of Gifu: The expertise and pride of the craftsmen

**Seki Cutlery**
The cutlery of Seki has a long history that dates back about 780 years ago. Having all essential elements for sword making, Seki had prospered as one of Japan’s major sword production areas. The history and tradition were passed down to the present day, and Seki is known as the largest cutlery production area in Japan for high quality knives and scissors today.

**Mino Washi Paper**
Mino Washi was born of the rich natural environment and the wisdom and ingenuity of the local people. Recently, a wider variety of products including placemats, lamps, and accessories are being manufactured. In 2014, the technique of tissue papermaking by hand was added to UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list, and Mino Washi is attracting the attention internationally.

**Woodcraft**
With forest occupying more than 80% of the land, Gifu’s abundant resources and wealth of unique craftsmanship has resulted in a variety of wood products being produced in the region. Traditional techniques have been passed down through generations resulting in advanced carpentry skills that are used to make a wide range of wooden products today, from the finger-jointed masu boxes of Ogaki to the furniture of the Hida region.

For more information, please contact us!

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