

A JOURNEY THROUGH RURAL JAPAN

6 DAYS / 5 NIGHTS



I. HIGHLIGHTS

- Witness snow monkeys relaxing in hot springs amidst the serene landscapes of Yamanouchi, a charming rural area of Japan.
- Explore Matsumoto Castle, one of Japan's original castles, and delve into the Edo-era treasures of Takayama's preserved Old Town.
- Experience the rural splendor of Shirakawa-go, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and wander through its picturesque thatched-roof farmhouses.
- Delight in the serene beauty of Kenrokuen Garden in Kanazawa, ranked as one of Japan's top three gardens, offering a peaceful retreat amidst lush greenery and tranquil water features.

II. ITINERARY

DAY 1

Nature's Embrace: Yamanouchi's Charm

Meet your guide either at Nagano Station. You'll journey to Yamanouchi via public transit. Upon arrival, you can explore the renowned Snow Monkey Park, where adorable snow monkeys soak in the natural hot springs. The best sightings are often on chilly or snowy days when they seek warmth in the baths. Following your park visit, unwind at your hotel's onsen, sans monkeys, and relish a traditional kaiseki dinner.

DAY 2

Matsumoto Majesty: Castle Wonders

Embark on a trip to Matsumoto Castle, famously known as the Black Crow Castle, one of Japan's twelve original castles. Conclude your day at the Japan Ukiyo-e Museum, showcasing captivating ukiyo-e art from the Edo period.

Note: Your main luggage will be couriered to Kanazawa. Please prepare essentials for two nights in a compact bag.

DAY 3

Takayama Time Travel: Edo Treasures

Begin your day by walking to Matsumoto Station and catching a highway bus to Takayama, where your guide awaits. Explore the charming Old Town, evocative of Japan's Edo Period, followed by a visit to the Kusakabe Heritage House, an exquisite example of Edo-era architecture. Experience Takayama's traditional ambiance at the Takayama Yatai Kaikan, featuring life-sized festival floats and instruments.

DAY 4

Rural Splendor: Shirakawa go's Charms

Continue your Takayama exploration with a visit to the Takayama Morning Market, offering local delicacies. Then, delve into history at Takayama Jinya, a former government office. In the afternoon, venture to the UNESCO-listed Shirakawa-go, known for its picturesque thatched-roof farmhouses. Wander through Ogimachi Village, visit the Shiroyama Viewpoint, and explore the Gassho-zukuri Minkaen outdoor museum. Finally, the journey to Kanazawa via highway bus.

DAY 5

Kanazawa Serenity: Kenrokuen Delights

Explore Kanazawa with a guided tour using public transit. Begin at the majestic Kenrokuen Garden, followed by a visit to Myoryuji Temple, nicknamed the "Ninja Temple" for its hidden defenses. Explore the Nagamachi Samurai District and the Nomura family residence, then discover the art of Kaga Yuzen at the Traditional Industry Center. Optional experiences include a Gold Leaf Craft Workshop and a visit to the Kutani Pottery Kilns.

DAY 6

Departure

After breakfast, your tour concludes. Depart at your leisure for your next destination.

-END OF SERVICES-

Tour extensions: pre-tour or post-tour extensions are available, which would include accommodation and private transfers, please speak to Focus Asia travel consultant for further details.
