



Treasures of Kyushu 2011

Daily Itinerary

Our newest 11-day Japan cycling adventure, explores the stunning coastal and mountain landscapes of Kyushu offering world class cycling routes. This tour provides a level of challenge with both altitude gain and distance, set in spectacular settings. Combine that with onsens, fresh local seafood cuisine, and a rich cultural history, you will see why Japan is becoming a popular cycling destination!

Day 1 Meeting in Yufuin

We meet at our hotel in Yufuin, located in a central part of Oita. There are regular airport shuttles departing from Fukuoka airport, which takes 2 hours to Yufuin. It is a popular hot spring resort with the traditional Japanese onsen culture well reserved. Situated close to Beppu, Japan's largest onsen source, Yufuin has remained tranquil without being exposed to mass tourism. There are a number of small inns, art museums, galleries and coffee shops that mingle together in Yufuin, giving the area an attractive atmosphere. **Accommodation: Ryokan/Ensuite/Onsen (D)**

Cycling distance: 0km

Day 2 Day Cycling in Yufuin

The most prominent features of this town are Mt Yufu and paddy fields neatly laid out in the basin. Today's cycling allows us to see the whole Yufuin town and give us an opportunity to get familiar with twisting roads in Kyushu villages. We visit Lake Kinrin-ko and the lakeside tea house to taste the best quality green tea and Japanese sweets.

Accommodation: Ryokan/Ensuite (B, D)

Cycling distance: 50km/31 miles Altitude gain: 800m/2630ft

Day 3 Yufuin to Aso

Today is hilly but a rewarding day! We cycle on a narrow winding old road to the first mountain pass then onto 'Yamanami highway' which is one of the top 100 scenic roads in Japan. From the road, we can see an active steaming volcano. After overcoming the second mountain pass on the edge of the caldera of Mt Aso, we free wheel to a quiet old Onsen town on the caldera of Mt Aso. Tonight's accommodation has a natural outdoor Onsen, and traditional Japanese cuisine. **Accommodation: Ryokan/Ensuite/Onsen (B, D)**

Cycling distance: 80km/50 miles Altitude gain: 1400m/4600ft

Day 4 Aso to Kumamoto

We start with a visit to Shinto Aso shrine where local farmers pray for their harvest to the god of the mountain. After leaving the sacred gate from the shrine, we cycle up to the top of Mt Aso, the largest active volcano in Japan. This ride is quite a climb up hill to the summit, however as you are surrounded by beautiful caldera mountain ranges and breathe taking views of Mt Aso, you are oblivious to the hardwork! We observe the steaming crater from the top, and cycle down to Kumamoto city. Here we can enjoy the city night life, bars, night clubs and maybe even some karaoke! **Accommodation: Hotel/Ensuite (B)**

Cycling distance: 68km/42 miles Altitude gain: 1000m/3280ft

Day 5 Rest day - Kumamoto to Amakusa

One of the most beautiful Japanese war time castles is Kumamoto-jo, which we visit in the morning. The castle was built in 1607 and is famous for the architecture and the



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notable stone walls. After a leisurely lunch in Kumamoto, we leave the city by van and have a restful afternoon travelling to Amakusa, located in the southwestern part of Kumamoto. Kami-shima and Shimo-shima islands are the two major islands in the area, there are also 120 other islands varying in size, which all belong to Unzen-Amakusa National Park. We stay at a seaside hotel in a small island off Kami-shima, facing ever calm Yatsushiro Sea.

Accommodation: Hotel/Onsen/Toilet only - no shower (B, D)

Cycling distance: 0km

Day 6 Amakusa to Kushikino

We enjoy the next Amakusa island ride while crossing bridges designed only for walkers and cyclists. Cycling along the coast with a view of beautifully calm inland sea brings you to the end of the road, and then you will enjoy a comfortable half hour ferry ride to the next island. We then get back on the saddle and keep cycling on the island, transferring by train to a fishermen's town Kushikino, which is the biggest port in Japan for blue fin tuna. Maguro ramen (noodles) is a local specialty!

Accommodation: Hotel/Ensuite/Onsen (B)

Cycling distance: 90km/56miles Ferry: 0.5hr Train: 1.5hr Altitude gain: 800m/2630ft

Day 7 Kushikino to Makurazaki

This morning we leave Kushikino and ride along a cyclepath spreading along the coast for 25km's. Relax and cruise on the cycling path with cool sea breeze on the sand dunes. After 50km's of flat riding, the mountain pass will burn some calories and build your appetite for this evening's dinner. We finish at Makurazaki town, famous for its Shochu "Satsuma-Shiranami" origins. Shochu is a distilled alcohol beverage native to Japan, the ones produced in this area are distilled from sweet potatoes. On our way to visit the 100 year old brewery and are able to taste several kinds of excellent Shochu.

Accommodation: Ryokan/Ensuite/Onsen (B)

Cycling distance: 76km/47miles Altitude gain: 840m/2760ft

Day 8 Makurazaki to Ibusuki

From Makurazaki, we cycle up to a hill where vast green tea farms are laid out. Fresh scents from tea leaves will give you refreshed feeling throughout the farm ride. The road around the beautiful cone shaped Mt Kaimon brings you to a quiet ride with ocean views. We break at a natural sand Onsen on the beach. Put your whole body in the sand that has been warmed by geothermal activity! Relax in the sand, while you listen to the sound of waves, an unforgettable moment on the trip.

Accommodation: Hotel/Onsen/Toilet only - no shower (B,D)

Cycling distance: 58km/36miles Altitude gain: 650m/2130ft

Day 9 Ibusuki to Yakushima Island - Rest Day

This morning we take an 80 minute jet ferry from Ibusuki leading us to the final destination, Yakushima Island, a World Heritage Site since 1993. As one of the wettest places in Japan, it is home to the thick Yakusugi forest and deep valleys with crystal clear flowing water. This day is a free day, however the half day hike in Yakusugi forest is highly recommended. **Accommodation: Hotel/Ensuite/Onsen (B,D)**

Cycling distance: 0km



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Day 10 Yakushima Island

Cycling around Yakushima Island is a great finish to the trip. Along the way we visit a local citrus juice factory, a farmer's market sampling local produce. We break at a natural Onsen on the rocky beach. When we reach the Western side of the Island we have an opportunity to meet wild Japanese monkeys and deer. We break on the beautiful white sandy beaches and finish our ride at a Hotel with an Onsen.

Accommodation: Hotel/Ensuite/Onsen (B,D)

Cycling distance: 100km Altitude gain: 1440m/4720ft

Day 11 Transport to Ferry Port or Airport

The tour finishes after breakfast today. The hotel has a courtesy airport shuttle service which, takes about 30mins to Yakushima Airport. There are daily flights from Yakushima to Osaka Itami (ITM) with Japan Airlines. **(B)**

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

Included in trip cost

- 10 breakfasts and 7 evening meals
- All water and snack food whilst cycling
- English speaking guide and mechanic
- Support vehicles
- Accommodation as detailed on a twin share basis
- Bike rental
- Helmets by request only
- Bike tools and spare parts
- All train and ferry transport listed in the itinerary

Not included

- Airfare and airport transfer
- 11 lunches and 3 evening meals
- Optional hiking in Yakushima Island
- Entry to Kumamoto Castle
- Personal expenses
- Drinks with included meals
- Gratitude



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Kyoto Extension Tour

We offer an option to extend your trip to Kyoto, the former capital of Japan, where there remain many temples and shrines. If you are taking this option we suggest you arrange your flights from Yakushima Airport (KUM) to Osaka Itami Airport (ITM) on **Day 11**. For detailed instruction on how to get from Itami Airport to Kyoto please read the tour info document. Your Kyoto guide will meet you at the hotel on the next morning.

The cost of Kyoto extension is **NZ\$970** per person, which includes

- 2 nights accommodation at Hotel Unizo (on twin/double share basis)
- Lunch
- A full day guided cycle tour
- Rental bike

Day 12 Optional Kyoto extension

Japan's former capital, Kyoto, is still a major centre for religion, culture, and...cycling! Kyoto's riverside cycling paths, back alleys lined with traditional houses and shops, and peaceful hillside temples make it the perfect destination to explore by bicycle. This guided extension tour takes you from bustling central Kyoto across town to a dedicated cycling path along the Katsura river. Cycle past community gardens and baseball fields to the outlying district of Arashiyama, famous for its bamboo forests and the wooden bridge of Togetsukyo. From there, continue on past the shores of Ozawa pond to seek enlightenment at the centuries-old rock garden in the Zen temple of Ryoanji. Pedal on to marvel at Kinkakuji Temple, also known as the Golden Pavilion, then coast back into town by way of the Kamo river, stopping on the way for a foot bath and cup of green tea.

Accommodation: Hotel/Ensuite (B, L)

Cycling distances - 50km

Day 13 Extension finishes in Kyoto

The extension tour finishes after breakfast today. You may wish to go souvenir shopping or explore the town further on your own in Kyoto before you leave the country. Seek more information from your Kyoto guide for details about crafts centre, bike shops etc. We suggest you take a bus from Kyoto Station to Osaka Kansai airport as the easiest travel mode. **(B)**