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JAPAN EXPRESS: GOLDEN ROUTE AND MORE!

Japan is an archipelago made up of a large number of big and small islands. They all offer an abundance of unique experiences for tourists. In 2019, Japan received 1,75,900 Indian travelers. For the first time travelers, Golden route [Basic] is the most common tourist circuit. Golden Route [Basic] will take you to the three cities tour - Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka. To discover more about Golden Route [Basic], visit: <https://www.japan.travel/en/in/itineraries/golden-route/>

Depending upon travelers taste and schedule, can add more places to the Golden route [Basic]. All of these neighboring places enjoy four distinct seasons, natural landscape, heritage sites, local food, colorful culture and traditions. These new prefectures and cities will surely leave you in awe. Few shortlisted options, to add while you are on golden route in Japan, are as below:

KANAGAWA PREFECTURE:

Kanagawa prefecture is a coastal prefecture, located south-west of Tokyo. Kanagawa is a popular getaway destination from Tokyo due to its proximity and the second most busiest prefecture of Japan after Tokyo. Kanagawa prefecture is better known by its famous capital "Yokohama" city. Yokohama Station is directly connected to Tokyo station and takes less than 40 mins. Prefecture offers some great and unique experiences for a weekend getaway from Tokyo City, though few days are required to completely enjoy the highlights of Kanagawa prefecture. Popular tourist spots to start with are Minato Mirai 21 (MM21) and china town in Yokohama, Yokohama Hakkeijima Sea Paradise, Kotoku-in temple located in Kamakura, Hakone, Odawara, etc.



Minatomirai, Kanagawa

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/kanto/kanagawa/>

SAITAMA PREFECTURE:

Saitama borders Tokyo on the Northern side and its easy to reach via well-connected rail and road transportation network. Because of its close distance to Tokyo, it is an established urban area and preferred tourist spot for many foreigner travelers. Saitama prefecture's capital is named as the Saitama city itself. The northern and Western part of Saitama prefecture is abundant with nature, especially the Chichibu region, known for its many mountains and temples. The Nagatoro Valley is renowned for its beautiful scenery and whitewater rafting. Kawagoe is an old town which is filled up with historical buildings including shrines, restaurants and souvenir shops, and visiting Kawagoe is definitely one of the best things to do in Saitama. Other top places includes but not limited to The Metropolitan Area Outer Underground Discharge Channel (a hidden gem in Saitama), Bonsai Museum, Railway Museum and sake breweries tour, etc.

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/kanto/saitama/>



Chichibu-shi, Hitujiyama
Park, Saitama

SHIZUOKA PREFECTURE:

Shizuoka is famous for natural landscape, south west of Tokyo. It's easily reachable by bullet train from Central Tokyo within an hour's time. It is famous for beaches, highland resorts, onsen surrounded by nature, marine sport activities, etc. Izu is also a popular day trip destination from Tokyo, but it takes at least a few days to enjoy it fully. Atami and Ito are two popular resort towns and Atami is a gateway to Izu-peninsula. Taking the Shinkansen from Tokyo Station is the quickest way of getting to Atami and is included in the JR Pass. Atami is famous for bay cruises, illuminated waterfront and year-round fireworks displays, there are plenty of reasons to visit. Ito, a neighboring town is also a famous relaxing resort town.

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/tokai/shizuoka/>



Shizuoka

AICHI PREFECTURE:

Adding Aichi prefecture to the travel list on the Golden route is an easy stop over between Tokyo and Kyoto.

Aichi is the biggest city in the Chubu region of Japan. Manufacturing is the main industry as the world-famous company Toyota has its headquarters in Aichi. The beautiful Nagoya Castle is an iconic landmark in Nagoya city, capital of Aichi prefecture. Along with Nagoya Castle, Inuyama Castle is a famous historical spot and oldest surviving castle of Japan. Recently opened Ghibli Park, brings some of the most beloved characters and scenes from the studio's animations to life inside Aichi Earth Expo Memorial Park.

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/tokai/aichi/>



Ghibli Park, Aichi

MIE PREFECTURE:

Mie prefecture is situated close to the center of Japan and easily reachable from major metropolis cities.

It takes approximately 3 hours to reach Tsu City (the Prefectural capital of Mie) from Tokyo, 90 minutes from Osaka and 50 minutes from Nagoya. Mie Prefecture has a rich and varied natural landscape with many attractions. It has plains, basin areas and mountainous regions.



Nabana no Sato, Mie

Ise-Shima is one of the top spots to experience Japan's connection to spirituality. Ise Jingu shrine has history and tradition dating back to the ancient times and it is a place of great natural beauty, including islands of various sizes. Mie Prefecture is one of the top spots for many tourists, which offers many tourist destinations, including Kumano-Kodo, theme parks like Nagashima Spaland, Ninja experience, etc. For a live and close ninja experience, head to Iga city, Mie prefecture which is a quiet town which embraces the ninja culture and history to the fullest. In 2004, the Kumano-Kodo, an ancient route of Kumano, was registered as a World Heritage Site as the spiritual site and pilgrimage route of the Kii Mountains. Nabana no Sato Illumination - a family-oriented illuminated theme park with over millions of LED's, located in Kuwana City. It can also be easily reachable from Nagoya City of Aichi Prefecture, in around 40 mins, as it is a must visit during winter illuminations season. Undoubtedly, it is one of the favorite's picturesque spots.

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/tokai/mie/>

HYOGO PREFECTURE:

Hyogo prefecture borders with Osaka and Kyoto, located in the Kansai region of west central Japan. Kobe is the capital city of Hyogo prefecture. Kobe, Hyogo is a busy port, with an international, cosmopolitan feel due to its Chinatown and historic western-style houses in Kitano-cho. Kobe is a fun city with a number of interesting museums and places of entertainment including the man made islands of Port Island and Rokko Island. Himeji Castle, Hyogo is spectacular castle. Himeji is one of Japan's original castles and a UNESCO heritage site.

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/kansai/hyogo/>

NARA PREFECTURE:

Nara prefecture is rich with natural beauty, charming townscapes and National Treasures, Nara is less than an hour by train from Kyoto and Osaka, and easily accessible from Tokyo. This ancient city is home to three World Heritage sites, comprising historic monuments of ancient Nara, Buddhist monuments in the Horyuji Area, and Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range. Nara Park, spread over 660 hectares, is one of the must-see areas in Nara City. It is renowned for its free-roaming deer and feeding the deer is an attraction. Nara park has many temples, shrines, cultural events and illuminations around the year.

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/kansai/nara/>

WAKAYAMA PREFECTURE:

Wakayama prefecture is the spiritual heartland of Japan, where nature and spiritual enlightenment interplay.

The main route is known as the Nakahechi route which stretches across the peninsula from Tanabe City to Shingu City. The Kumano Sanzan, the three grand shrines of Kumano and Nachisan Seiganto-ji Temple, were established in this sacred region. Numerous subsidiary shrines known as Oji shrines which are the places for rest, purification rites and prayer for pilgrims. Kumano area

is also a paradise for lovers of the great outdoors. Some of the famous activities are: River cruise, Nachi waterfall, Nachi Fire festival, kayaking and camping, Log Rafting, Whale watching, Doro-kyo Gorge is particularly spectacular in Spring when cherry blossoms are out, and again in the Autumn when the leaves change color.

<https://www.japan.travel/en/destinations/kansai/wakayama/>

About Japan National Tourism Organization:

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JNTO Website: <https://www.japan.travel/en/in/>

FB page: <https://www.facebook.com/VisitJapan.India>

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