



YOUR TRAVEL TICKET

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Endless Travel

Endless Travel — Turning your some days into today's. Located at 28265 Highway 74. Open Monday through Friday, 9 am to 5 pm and weekends by appointment. As always, please feel free to contact us the next time you are ready to take your next adventure. Call 303.674.6616 or visit endlesstravelagent.com

You step out of the causeway into the arrivals terminal of Narita International Airport, and your surroundings are much like any other arrivals terminal anywhere in the world. Yet something is a bit different here—an immaculate bathroom, a profusion of signage gently pushing you in the right direction while subtly training you on etiquette, and the palpable politeness of every interaction before you even exit customs into the main lobby. At the time, you pass off these observations as it's been a long flight and you're eager to get along into Tokyo to start your adventure. Yet, as you are met by your driver and walk outside, you take note of the multitude of pristinely maintained vehicles. Your ride into the city is smooth and comfortable and you ease into the sense that you are in store for a very special trip.

tainly doesn't hurt to explore some of its attractive options further afield and beat the seasonal crowds in Tokyo and Kyoto.

Our local partners, InsideJapan Tours, offer just this opportunity to those traveling with them. All of their trip designers have

“...you are in store for a very special trip.”

lived and worked in Japan, mostly in outlying communities, rich with local craft, experiences and, of course, regional cuisine. And depending on your preferred style of travel, they have something for every traveler.

One of the signature small group tours that we love here at Endless Travel is the Rural Japan Explorer—a fantastic blend of Japan's highlights in Kyoto and Hiroshima as well as a real deep dive into rural Tottori, Shimane and Yamaguchi prefectures along the Japan Sea; an area little-traveled by international visitors. With one of their bilingual, native, English-speaking tour leaders by your side, you'll become immersed into the communities you are visiting including

favorite locations and recommendations along the way. Featured on the trip are Mt. Mitoku, Misasa Onsen, the Oki Islands, Matsue and Hagi.

First out of Kyoto, you'll visit Mt. Mitoku. The path leading up to the temples takes you up many stone stairs to the main temple, “Hondo,” which is surrounded by thousand-year-old cedar trees. The old pilgrimage route begins here, first crossing a beautiful red bridge before continuing up the mountain. The route takes in a liana (vine) and a chain climb, just as it did for the pilgrims hundreds of years ago. From the mountain ridges and the platforms of the higher temples,



Misasa Onsen in spring

On the surface, you're expecting to have a memorable experience in a developed nation with a long, rich culture, highly developed arts, and plenty of iconic sights to see. However, what are the things you will remember most? The attention to detail, Japan's hospitality to visitors, and the personal interactions you have when you get off the beaten path! The best thing about Japan is that you don't have to travel to the remote reaches of the country to find this. It is around every corner, down every sideway and a part of every interaction you have. That said, with Japan's gaining popularity on the world stage, it cer-

the beautiful valley containing the Mitoku River, flanked by lush vegetation, opens up and takes your breath away.

Next up is Misasa Onsen, dating back more than 850 years. Local legend says that a samurai warrior encountered an old white wolf one day. Although he raised his bow to shoot the wolf, he decided to spare its life. That night, a powerful spirit appeared in the warrior's dreams and told him the location of a local hot spring in appreciation of sparing the life of the wolf. After that, the hot spring was said to have “life-saving properties” and would heal villagers' illnesses.

Perhaps the highlight of the whole trip is your next stop on the Oki Islands. These isolated islands have been a vital link between Japan and the Asian continent, as well as for trading ships around Japan. Emperors and nobles have also been exiled to Oki. This interesting past has created many unique Oki cultural traditions and shrine festivals. The local people are very proud of their beautiful island

areas in Japan, you'll make a stop in Hagi, a small seaside treasure tucked away in the north of Yamaguchi prefecture on the Japan seacoast. The quiet, white-walled streets in the old castle town, gardens dotted with Natsumikan orange trees, tranquil Kikugahama beach and picturesque surroundings give Hagi a relaxed pace of life. You'll have the chance to explore the town on foot, admiring the remarkably well-preserved samurai district, visiting some old samurai residences and strolling through the white-



The drastic landscape of the Oki Islands

walled streets to get a taste of how life must have been for this world-famous warrior class.

This is just the tip of the iceberg of endless possibilities available to you on a trip to Japan. And if a small group tour is not your style, InsideJapan Tours and Endless Travel are happy to customize an equally exciting and off the beaten path self-guided or fully-escorted adventure for you based around your interests and passions. From the very start, Japan seeps into your soul, and at every step of the way, you'll find a new discovery both old and new, so call Endless



The timeless streets of Hagi

Travel when you are ready to start your planning of Japan at its best!

home and always give visitors a warm welcome. Take a step back in time to meet the people, enjoy the scenery and relax in Oki. Explore and experience these special islands for yourself.

Before returning to the more renowned