



# JEWELS OF JAPAN

EXPERIENCES IN THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

KONNICHIWA!

Japan is a land of contrasts and beauty, no matter the season. Whether you are an adventurous foodie, outdoor explorer or cultural enthusiast, this diverse country has a

unique experience for every type of traveler. Hunt for flavorful cuisine in seaside villages, catch the sun rising over Mount Fuji, observe snow monkeys in their natural habitat, and feel small amidst historic temples and towering bamboo groves. Wherever you are inspired to visit, we have a portfolio of travel brands to expertly match you with, from hotels to tours to cruises. As always, we look forward to hearing from you.



## TRY “REAL” RAMEN IN FUKUOKA, JAPAN

WHERE TO STAY: GRAND HYATT FUKUOKA

Traditional tonkotsu (or Hakata-style) ramen is the most famous culinary export out of the relaxed, seaside village of Fukuoka, Japan. Out of all types of ramen (excluding the instant ramen packages of college days), the difference is in the heavier broth- milky in consistency, golden in color, and always made with savory boiled pork bones. Tempted? From Grand Hyatt Fukuoka, take a 25-minute stroll to the famous Mengekijo Genei restaurant, where the chef-owner has spent an entire year formulating a ramen without MSG and the delicious noodles are made in-house daily. While in town, a 50-minute train will take you to Yanagawa, where you can cruise through the city on a traditional donkobune (donko boat) like a gondola in Venice. If you’re still hungry, try grilled eel, a



Yanagawa specialty.

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## CLIMB MOUNT FUJI FOR THE SUNRISE

WHERE TO STAY: MANDARIN ORIENTAL TOKYO

Naturally, some of the best views of Japan's tallest peak are from the top floors of one of the city's tallest skyscrapers, home to Mandarin Oriental Tokyo. If you venture to climb the volcanic peak that is Mount Fuji, a two hour transfer from the hotel will take you about halfway up the mountain to Fuji Subaru Line 5th Station, where you'll begin your 5-7 hour ascent up Yoshida trail. (This is the most popular route, as the sun rises on this side and the station is best developed). If you dream of watching the sun rise from the peak of Mount Fuji, the safest option is to spend the night in a cabin halfway through and begin hiking again in the very early hours of the morning. Afterward, head back to your hotel for an ethereal spa treatment as you gaze at the sacred mountain you've conquered.

**Private Perks: Complimentary upgrade, resort credits, daily breakfast and more.**

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### HIT THE HOT SPRINGS AND SLOPES OF NAGANO

WHERE TO STAY: SUMIYOSIYA, RYOKAN SAKAYA, OR KIRIYA RYOKAN

With most of the tallest mountains in Japan, the region of Nagano is an epic wonderland of snow activities- it even once hosted the Winter Olympics. We suggest following an afternoon at the highly rated Nozawa Onsen Snow Resort with a healing dip in one of the nearby hot springs, which made Onsen famous long before its ideal skiing. In fact, the surrounding area includes several upscale 4-star hotels with their own unique hot spring experiences. Visit at the beginning of the year to catch the Nozawa Onsen Fire Festival, held annually on January 15th since 1863. If you are feeling more snow monkey than snow bunny, head to Jigokudani Monkey Park, about 45 minutes south, to catch a

glimpse of the wild but social monkeys bathing in a natural hot spring.

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## FIND YOUR ZEN MOMENT IN KYOTO WHERE TO STAY: THE RITZ-CARLTON KYOTO

Visitors retreat to Kyoto for its lush, tranquil ambience and cultural depth. If you believe where you stay is just as important as where you go, The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto is the perfect backdrop. Perched on the tranquil Kamogawa river and inspired by the design of traditional Japanese ryokans (inns), this five-star property has won serious design and traveler's choice awards. Take advantage of being at the center of Kyoto's best activities, like biking through Arashimay's majestic bamboo forest (one of the world's prettiest groves), standing in awe of historic temples, visiting the nearby Nishiki Market for Japanese street food and artisan crafts, and of course, snapping a photo of the famed gates of the Fushimi Inari Taisha shrine, pictured above.

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