

RECOMMENDATIONS for KYOTO TRIP

Be prepared to step back in time several hundred years. Remember that 300 years ago, when many of the Temples in Kyoto were striving, there was no United States of America. In the 11th and 12th centuries, when many of the Kyoto Temples were founded, Europe was in the Dark Ages. And some of the Temples date back to the 8th century. We would like you to experience something of what Japanese life was like in the past.

We ask you to leave your technology and American lifestyle at home during this journey. We also ask you to experience the Buddhist way of thinking – drop all expectations and do not judge everything with your current lifestyle. We ask you to have an open mind. Avoid making comparisons. Simply experience things for the way they are.

ACCOMODATIONS

We will be visiting a city named Kyoto

2 syllables: *kyo + to*, pronounced *kyo + toh*,
(not 3 as in *key + oh + toh*; or as in Philly, *key + oh + doh*)
just as Tokyo has only 2 syllables, *to + kyo*, not *toh + key + oh*!

We will be staying in a traditional Japanese country inn called a *ryokan*.

2 syllables: *ryo + kan*, pronounced *row + con*,
although that is a Japanese R that has an L sound,
and the y is still in there

We will be sleeping in a traditional Japanese setting,
including rooms with *tatami* mats
and sleeping on *futon*, cushions on the floor

We will be bathing in a traditional Japanese bath called *o-furo*

We will be eating a traditional *sukiyaki* dinner at the *ryokan* on the first night
Dress in the blue and white robe called *ukata*, supplied by the Ryokan
after bathing in the *o-furo*

Do not come to dinner in your sweat pants, please!

TRAVEL TO

We will be travelling to Kyoto as a group.

Please be at the station before the appointed departure time.
If you miss the train you will not be able to go to Koto
unless you purchase your own ticket.

TRAVEL BACK

We will be travelling back from Kyoto separately. You have an open-ended coupon that has to be exchanged for a seat on a particular train. Go to the ticket office and get your ticket.

If you wish to keep your *Shinkansen* ticket as a souvenir, do not put the ticket through the ticket machine at your final destination (it will eat your ticket), but rather, give it to the ticket window person and have them stamp it.

EATING

We will eat two Kyoto style dinners at the *ryokan* in Ohara
nabe (fish or vegetarian meals are available)
sukiyaki (meat cooked at the table)

plus two breakfasts at the *ryokan*
your choice of Japanese or American

These meals are part of the lodging cost and are paid for by TUJ.

Lunches will happen 'on the road'.

You are responsible for paying for these.

These can include anything from

soba at temples (try *nishin soba* – with marinated herring, or

battera – pressed *sushi* with special *saba* (mackerel) or other fish

matcha – powered green tea (used in the traditional tea ceremony)

okonomiyaki – a seafood or meat 'pancake' (associated with *Hiroshima*)

We may also be able to have either of two amazing lunches,

one a tofu lunch outside at a Buddhist Garden next to Nanzen-ji,

another a Buddhist vegetarian lunch in amazing red bowls at Daitoku-ji.

These are optional and will cost about ¥3500.

But both are unique experiences and well worth the cost.

Please be open minded with the food, as many things will be new to you

don't outthink yourself – just taste it and enjoy it, rather than saying,

"Oh I don't like that" before you have even tried it.

try out the philosophy

"I'll try anything twice, because if I didn't like it the first time

I was probably doing it wrong."

Please do say, "I don't like tofu".

If you have never eaten tofu in Japan, you have not yet tasted it.

If you have eaten tofu in Tokyo, you should still try it in Kyoto,
it is different.

Please refrain from comparing this food with American food.

appreciate it for what it is – there is usually no equivalent in America.

and please do not embarrass us by ordering 'Coke with you sushi'

we did not come halfway around the world to eat at McDonalds
or drink Starbucks coffee

BATHING

Japanese tend to bathe in the evening before dinner. They come home from work

hot and sweaty. It is nice to return to the *ryokan* earlier than dinner time

and bathe and then come to dinner wearing your *ukata* (Japanese robe

provided by the *ryokan*). Please follow this procedure on the night we have

our *Sukiyaki* dinner at the *ryokan*.

We will be bathing in a traditional Japanese bath called *ofuro*

Bathing Etiquette:

sit on a small stool outside of the bathtub and

soap yourself up and wash yourself down

rinse off by either pouring a bucket with water over yourself, or –

with the shower spray (less authentic)

You do not wash in the bathtub!

then, after you are clean, get into the hot bath

sit and relax your muscles for about 5 minutes

Don't be shy – share the bath as Japanese do at the public bath houses.

Please don't say, "Oh, I prefer to take showers rather than a bath".

If you think this way, you are missing the point.

Soap and shampoo, and toothbrushes are supplied, as well as towels.

Hang your towels on the small drying racks after your bath so they will be
dry for use in the morning.

DRESSING

pack light – we will only be gone for three days and two nights

and we will have to schlep our bags to and from the train station

wear light clothing – it will be hot

wear sunscreen if you have sensitive skin

wear very supportive running shoes – we will walk for hours non-stop

do not wear brand new shoes, a broken in pair will serve you better
bring some Band-Aids just in case you develop a blister
consider bringing an Ace Bandage just in case you strain an ankle
(someone does every year)

shoe etiquette:

outside street shoes should never touch the carpeted floor of the *ryokan*
the surfaces outside are considered very dirty (because they are) and
this dirt should not be carried into the home
Americans tend to think that feet and socks are disgusting,
but the Japanese think the street surface is far worse.
red slippers will be provided for all to wear inside the *ryokan*
the red slippers never touch the *tatami* mats in your bedrooms
special slippers live in the toilet rooms and
your red slippers should never enter their territory either

MONEY

cash your travelers checks before you leave for Kyoto.
getting money from a bank will take an hour
we are budgeted for 4 groups in 4 taxis.
If anyone breaks off from their group they will have to pay their own cab fare.

TOURING

be aware that you are part of a group, and place its needs before your own
please stay relatively together to avoid unnecessary delays
there is a balance between seeing as many of the interesting sites as
possible, and
staying at each place long enough to appreciate its beauty and historical
relevance

be on time

don't stay up too late or drink too much
you will be waking up early. Breakfast is at 8AM.
Realize that time is irrelevant because you are now living in a time frame
that is reverse of your usual life. There is no functional difference between
waking up at 7 PM or 9 PM. Do not think, "I cannot wake up early because
I am a night person". Seven hours of sleep should suffice, no matter when
it starts or ends.

you might want to research the city before we go
so you have some idea of what to expect.

POLITENESS

ask permission before taking pictures of people
say, "*Shashin o tote ii desca?*"
pronounced *sha + shin + oh + tow + tay + ee + des + ka*
bow to everyone and say "*oki ni*", meaning "thank you" in the Kyoto dialect,
pronounced *oh + key + nee* (all syllables have the same weight)
please be quiet and try to talk quietly between yourselves
Remember that you represent the United States of America, and Temple
University, and your actions reflect on your *sensei* (teachers).
Honor is a big thing in Japan.

Have a good time. You will see (and eat) many amazing things in Kyoto! Remember that
this is not your summer vacation but part of an educational field trip. Have fun but
be responsible. This trip (and the rest of your life) is a matter of balance between
discipline and freeness. You have hired us to teach you something, but teaching
does not necessarily imply learning – that is your task. Do your job so we can do
ours.