



FREE PLANNER · SPRING 2027

JAPAN IN CHERRY BLOSSOM SEASON

Your Japan *spring* planner.

Everything our travellers ask us before a March or April trip to Japan, on four pages. When the blossoms open, what you need to enter, what drives the cost, how to get around, and a 14-day route to start from.

Planned by the Catterfly team in Basel, with local experts in Japan and our app with you on the road.

When the *blossoms* open

Cherry blossoms move north through Japan from late March. Full bloom lasts about a week in each city, so we plan the route to follow it.

Tokyo

First bloom mid to late March. Full bloom usually in the last week of March.

Kyoto and Osaka

Full bloom usually around the start of April.

Hokkaido

Much later, usually late April into early May.

For 2026 the official forecast put full bloom at 28 March in Tokyo, 1 April in Kyoto and 28 April in Sapporo. Dates shift each year with the weather, and the forecast for 2027 comes out in early spring.

Book early

Spring break and sakura weeks are the busiest of the year. Most of our travellers book 4 to 6 months ahead, so October to January is the time to plan a March or April trip.

Avoid Golden Week

Japan's own holiday week runs from about 29 April to 5 May. Trains and hotels are full and prices are high. Late April before it, or May after it, is calmer.

Visa and *entry*

PASSPORT

WHAT YOU NEED FOR A HOLIDAY

USA, UK, Switzerland and most EU countries

No visa needed for a short tourist stay, usually up to 90 days. Your passport must be valid for the whole stay.

India

A tourist visa is needed before you fly. Japan runs an eVisa for residents of India, and paper applications go through the visa centres. Allow at least 2 to 3 weeks.

Everyone

Fill in Visit Japan Web before you fly and keep the QR codes on your phone for immigration and customs.

Rules change, so always check the Japanese embassy website for your country before you book. Japan is raising its departure tax and visa fees in 2026, and plans an online pre-travel authorisation (JESTA) for visa-free visitors from around 2028. We include the latest rules in your trip plan.

What drives the *cost*

Season

Sakura weeks are the most expensive time to visit. Hotels in Tokyo and Kyoto can cost much more than in May or June.

Where you sleep

Business hotels, boutique hotels and ryokans with dinner are very different budgets. Most travellers mix two or three styles.

How you travel

A rail pass, single tickets or private transfers. For families and seniors, a few private transfers save a lot of energy.

How many bases

Fewer hotel changes means less packing and fewer transfers. We often suggest one base fewer than people plan.

Ask us for a quote and we will price your route with real hotel rates for your dates.

Getting *around*

Japan Rail Pass

From 1 October 2026 a 7-day pass costs ¥53,000 and a 14-day pass ¥84,000 per adult (ordinary class). It only pays off with several long trips, so we check your exact route first.

IC card

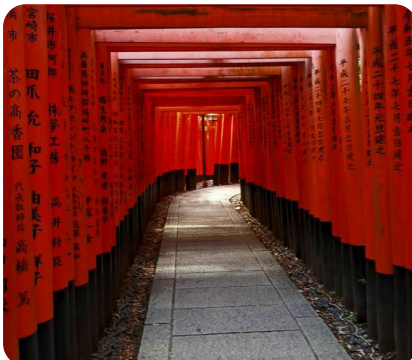
Suica or ICOCA on your phone for metros, buses and convenience stores. Tap in, tap out.

Luggage forwarding

Takkyubin sends your big bags to the next hotel, usually overnight, so you ride the Shinkansen with a day bag.

Data

An eSIM or pocket WiFi, sorted before you land, so maps and the Catterfly app work from the airport.



A 14-day *spring* route

The Grand Japan Odyssey, timed for the bloom. We can shorten it to 9 or 12 days, or slow it down.

STOP	NIGHTS	SPRING HIGHLIGHTS
Tokyo	4	Ueno Park and Chidorigafuchi moat in bloom, Asakusa, Shibuya, a day trip to Nikko
Hakone	1	Onsen night, Lake Ashi cruise and Mt. Fuji views
Kyoto	4	Philosopher's Path, Maruyama Park, Arashiyama, Fushimi Inari and Nara's deer
Miyajima	1	Himeji Castle on the way, the floating torii at sunset
Kanazawa	2	Hiroshima on the way, Kenrokuen Garden, the samurai and geisha districts
Shirakawa-go	1	A night in the thatched farmhouse village
Takayama	1	Old town, sake breweries and the morning market, then back to Tokyo

Travelling as a family?

We add Tokyo Disney, Universal Studios in Osaka, a samurai workshop in Kyoto and slower days.

A college or student group?

We plan campus visits, museums and clear daily timings for large groups.

Ready to plan your spring in Japan?

Share your dates and who is coming. A Japan expert replies with a route and a quote within 48 hours.

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Read the full detail in our [ultimate guide to Japan travel](#).