

2024 November Vol.1

New Open

1. Unparalleled Privacy and Luxury in the Sumo Neighborhood at YUURO Bath-Living Hotel Ryogoku, Opens December 1, Tokyo



YUURO Bath-Living Hotel Ryogoku will be a new, exclusive retreat-style accommodation that caters to only one group per day, offering luxurious privacy in the middle of the metropolis of Tokyo. As reflected in its name, the hotel emphasizes the concepts of "bath" and "living," which can be appreciated with its unique design that seamlessly unites the two in one space. Whether you are with your family, special someone, or alone, the beautiful hotel provides a relaxing hideaway within the city. Located just a 5-minute walk from JR Ryogoku Station, the sumo neighborhood of Tokyo, YUURO Bath-Living Hotel Ryogoku is the perfect base to explore this traditional Japanese sport. If you're lucky, you might even spot wrestlers strolling through the area!

[YUURO Bath-living Hotel Ryogoku](#)

Festival and Event

2. Appreciate the Beauty of an 18th-Century Scroll Painting by Jakuchu on Display for the First Time, Until January 19, Kyoto



©Fukuda Art Museum

Ito Jakuchu is a famous 18th-century painter who is particularly known for his captivating pieces depicting flora and fauna. One of his works, a scroll called "Kaso Zukan" (Fruits and Vegetables), had been held in a private collection in Europe for many years, but just last year was acquired by the Fukuda Art Museum and returned to Jakuchu's birthplace of Kyoto. Painted around 240 years ago, this is the first time that this piece opens to the public, allowing visitors to marvel at his ethereal portrayal of fruits and vegetables. Along with this rare scroll, around 30 other pieces painted by Jakuchu throughout his career also are on display, giving thorough insight into the artist. The Fukuda Art Museum is located in the Arashiyama area of Kyoto, right by other iconic landmarks such as Togetsukyo Bridge and the Arashiyama Bamboo Grove, so after appreciating the astounding artworks of the famous Japanese painter in celebration of the museum's 5th anniversary, do not forget to explore the area's other wonders as well!

[Ito Jakuchu's Extremely Rare Exhibition](#)

Festival and Event

3. Savor Delectable Seasonal Spiny Lobster at a Local Festival, November 24, Tokushima



©Kaiyo Town

One of the things the town of Kaiyo in Tokushima Prefecture is known for is its "ise ebi" (spiny lobster), which is famous for its succulent meat filled with umami. Prized as an autumn delicacy, fishing for ise ebi begins in September, and the Kaiyo Ise Ebi Festival that showcases the beloved seafood will be held on November 24, which is part of the Kaiyo Ise Ebi Fair which lasts to December 24. The festival takes place near the coast, a 15-minute walk away from Shishikui Station, with several stalls and local restaurants serving mouthwatering dishes with ise ebi as the star of the show. If you decide to stay at one of the participating "ryokan" inns during the fair, you will be provided with a generous dinner with ise ebi! There is no better way to enjoy ise ebi than when it is in season and freshly caught! Reservations are required to enjoy the spiny lobster dishes at the ryokan stays during the fair.

[Kaiyo Ise Ebi \(Spiny Lobster\) Fair](#)

Seasonal Topic

4. See Thousands of Cranes Collectively Take to the Skies, Kagoshima



Photo by Izumi city

Cranes are a sacred bird in Japan, considered a symbol of good luck and longevity. During the winter, thousands of cranes migrate from Siberia to wait out the cold season. Over 10,000 of them gather in the city of Izumi in Kagoshima Prefecture, which is famous for being a major wintering spot for these cranes. Said to host the largest number of cranes and greatest variety in Japan, Izumi's cultural and ecological significance has even gotten it nationally designated as a Natural Monument. While cranes have been seen here from November to March in recent years, December to January is the peak time, showcasing a scenery typical of winter. The sheer number of cranes that gather here is astounding, and they can be seen "dancing" with their wings and pecking around for food throughout the day. But the breathtaking scene that cannot be missed is the moment they collectively flap their wings to take to the skies while fantastically illuminated by the golden light of the rising sun. Many bird watchers from around the world flock to catch this elusive sight and are also treated with other birds such as the Black-faced Spoonbill and Daurian jackdaw. Additionally, an Observation Center offers insights into the world of cranes.

[Japan's No. 1 wintering ground for cranes](#)

Special Experience

5. Learn All About an Iconic Japanese Whisky with a Distillery Tour, Hokkaido



©The Nikka Whisky Distilling

Taketsuru Masataka, known as the "father of Japanese whisky," studied whisky distillation in Scotland before bringing his knowledge back to his home of Japan. He later created the Nikka Whisky brand, setting up its first distillation center in the town of Yoichi in Hokkaido. Its significant contributions to the Japanese whisky production industry have gotten several

facilities, including the Visitor Center and Kiln Tower, designated as Important Cultural Properties. The distillery holds tours (prior reservation required), where visitors can learn about the distillation process and the history of the Nikka Whisky brand—especially relevant as Japanese whisky is becoming more and more popular around the world—as well as partake in a tasting at the end. The grounds are also home to a museum, which goes in-depth into the Nikka label and whisky production through detailed exhibits and even a tasting bar. Visitors can also enjoy the gift shop and restaurant, which not only offers beverages made with Nikka Whisky but also serves British and Scottish cuisine, featuring local ingredients from Hokkaido.

[YOICHI DISTILLERY TOUR](#)

Special Experience

6. Make Your Own Fude Calligraphy Brush with a Master Craftsman, Hiroshima



©Hata Bunshindou

Hata Bunshindou is a long-established “fude” (calligraphy brush) maker in Hiroshima Prefecture that has been making Kawajiri brushes, a local traditional craft, for almost 100 years and is now run by the 3rd master and his son. These exceptionally skilled craftsmen, with deep expertise in selecting the finest raw materials like animal hairs, pay painstaking attention to every detail of the brush-making process. Each step is done in-house, and the brushes from Hata Bunshindou are regarded so highly that they have even been presented to the Imperial Family of Japan. Hata Bunshindou has opened its doors to those who want to try their hand at the intricate craft of brush-making with an experience that includes a lecture and making your own brush. There are two plans available, either 60 minutes or 90 minutes, and materials are provided. The experience, overseen by the 4th master, offers an incredible opportunity to witness a craft and workmanship so exquisite they have become nationally respected.

[Experience Bunshindou's fude making](#)

Special Experience

7. Try Your Hand at a Centuries-Old Traditional Lacquer Craft Technique, Iwate



©Ochiya

"Urushinuri" is a traditional technique that has been used in Japan since ancient times to craft beautiful lacquerware. "Urushi" (the sap of the lacquer tree) is so representative of Japan that it is sometimes even called "Japan" in certain translations. "Hidehira-nuri" is a style from Iwate Prefecture with a history that dates back to the 12th century. Said to have been developed by Kyoto craftsmen who were invited to the region to produce lacquerware, and it is known for its lavish use of lacquer and gold. Ochiya is a company that was founded in the 19th century and specializes in Hidehira-nuri, and it holds urushi workshops for those who are interested in trying the craft. You can choose from a variety of items that include chopsticks and dishes to create your own one-of-a-kind piece of lacquerware. Do not miss the opportunity to learn about the fascinating background of this beloved craft firsthand from a master.

[Ochiya Urushi Lacquer Experience](#)

(Please note that the website uses machine translation, so there may be some inaccuracies. The official company name is Ochiya.)

Special Experience

8. Experience Samurai Spirit and Countryside Culinary Delights with a Luxurious Tour Through the Kuma Valley, Kumamoto



©Council For Tourism Advancement in Hitoyoshi-Kuma

The picturesque Kuma Valley, located in Kumamoto Prefecture, is home to breathtaking natural views and long-standing traditions that have been nurtured by the locals for generations. On this luxurious 3-day tour, the rich tapestry of the Sagara clan's 700-year legacy unfolds before you. Immerse yourself in the origins of "shochu," Japan's time-honored distilled spirit, as you traverse the Kuma Valley on an e-bike. Along the way, pause to savor exquisite local delicacies at a tea farm and an artisanal tofu factory. After the days of exploring and feasting, you will get to rest at a top-quality "ryokan" inn where you will be met with the utmost hospitality. Relax while soaking in your own private "onsen" hot spring, sipping shochu liquor with a generous dinner, and unwinding in the impeccably designed rooms. This peaceful ending perfectly captures the charm of the Japanese countryside, making it a trip to remember.

[LUXURIOUS ITINERARIES IN THE KUMA VALLEY](#)

Special Experience

9. Experience Snow Fun and Luxury with an Exclusive Winter Ranch Tour, Hokkaido



©MASANORI NITO

Naitai Highland Ranch in the town of Kamishihoro in Hokkaido boasts an area of around 1,700 hectares, making it the largest public ranch in Japan. Although it is normally closed for the winter, with this experience, you will have this snowy wonderland all to yourself. A guide will take you to the summit with a 4WD vehicle, where you will then get to enjoy the pure-white scenery as you snowshoe and snowmobile through the snow-covered hills and trees. Afterward, you will get to relax and warm up in a glamping tent as you chow down on a scrumptious meal featuring Tokachi Naitai wagyu beef, known for its refreshing melt-in-the-mouth texture and elegant flavor, and other locally sourced ingredients. Not to mention delicious pairings with local liquors! With both snow-filled fun and luxury, this tour is a great way to experience the wonders of Hokkaido in the wintertime.

[Naitai Highland Farm Snow Safari & Wagyu Glamping Tour](#)

10. Travel an Ancient Pilgrimage Route to Sacred Sites, Shikoku



©ShikokuCameraClub

The Shikoku 88 Temple Pilgrimage (also known as "Ohenro") is a 1,200-year-old route that winds through Shikoku—one of Japan's four main islands with four prefectures— connecting 88 sacred sites associated with the legendary Buddhist monk Kobo Daishi (Kukai). By following in his footsteps, pilgrims seek to cleanse their hearts of worldly desires and move closer to enlightenment. Nowadays, anyone can embark on this journey, and although the actual trip is 1,400 km long and weaves through all four prefectures in Shikoku, you are free to travel as much as you are able to. With this 6-day tour shown in the link below, you will be taken through lush natural sceneries as you make 19 stops at temples, villages, and more. Between each stop, you will be able to refuel with rejuvenating interactions with the locals and delicious delicacies such as udon and soba noodles. To add an extra level of authenticity to the experience, you will also get to spend a night in a temple, with other accommodations including traditional-style lodgings. The Ohenro offers an incredible way to experience Japanese culture and spirituality, ensuring it becomes an unforgettable memory from your trip.

[The Shikoku 88 Temple Pilgrimage](#)

[Discover more Shikoku](#)

Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai

Exciting Events Coming to Expo 2025!



Less than five months until the opening of Expo 2025 in Osaka, Kansai, Japan, construction is progressing steadily at the Yumeshima Expo Site. Along with pavilion updates, numerous events are being announced, showcasing Japan's rich cultural heritage such as ikebana, kabuki, and fireworks, with more to be revealed.

[Information on Events During the Expo | Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan Official Website](#)

The "Japan Fireworks Expo" will highlight the artistry of Japan's world-class pyrotechnics, and the unique charm of Japanese firework displays, a deeply rooted cultural tradition.

Japan Fireworks Expo

Dates: April 26 (Sat), May 31 (Sat), June 28 (Sat), July 21 (Mon), July 23 (Wed), August 23 (Sat), September 27 (Sat), October 8 (Wed)

Location: Yumeshima Island, Osaka

Expo 2025 will also offer the chance to experience cultures from around the world. Here are some of the exciting events announced:

• Vienna Boys Choir Concert [Republic of Austria]

Date: May 23 | Location: Expo National Day Hall

Experience the world-renowned Vienna Boys Choir in concert.

• Zimbabwe Business Forum [Republic of Zimbabwe]

Date: July 16 | Location: Expo National Day Hall

Industry experts and government representatives will discuss tourism, trade, and investment opportunities in Zimbabwe, including economic policies and incentives.

• Hola Flash Mob [Republic of Moldova]

Date: August 31 | Location: Pop-up Stage North, East, and West

Talented Moldovan dancers will perform a lively hora dance, sharing their cultural charm with audiences.

If you're planning a visit to Expo 2025, consider aligning it with one of these incredible events!

For more information, download the latest edition of our 8-page brochure from the JNTO Expo website. This concise summary covers all aspects of the Expo and was released in September:

<https://www.japan.travel/en/expo2025/>

(See Digital Brochures)

Notes:

- The above details are correct as of the time of publication, and are subject to change.
- Item 4,6 are based on information from JNTO Partners.

If you'd like to download photos and videos of Japan's tourist attractions, please visit the [Japan Online Media Center \(JOMC\)](#)

For media inquiries, including requests to use photographs, please contact the JNTO Press at media_inquiry@jnto.go.jp



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