



Hawaii Tours, LLC

P. O. Box 31038, Honolulu, Hawaii 96820

Phone: (808) 551-6621

E-Mail: ellen@emhawaiiitours.com

2020 Sado Island-Niigata Tour

November 8-19 (advance brochure)

- Escort: Ellen Matsumoto, EM Hawaii Tours
- 12 day tour: 1 night O'Daiba (Tokyo) & Gunma, 2 nights Sado Island & Niigata, 1 night Nagano, 1 night Mt. Fuji, 2 nights Tokyo (Ikebukuro)
- Transportation: chartered private motor coach throughout this tour
- Daily services of a professional English-speaking guide
- Meals: 10 breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 5 dinners
- Optional lunch and evening meals: optional meals will provide an opportunity to enjoy your choice of specialty and unique meals.
- Optional travel protection policy available through Travel Insured International to protect you with possible last-minute trip cancellation, trip interruption, trip delay (flight delays/flight cancellation), emergency accident & sickness medical expense, etc. Group trip protection premium is not based on a person's age.
- ❖ Tour Cost
 - Group Package to be announced very soon
 - Exchange rate based on: to be announced
 - United Airlines Premier Members: call to inquire for individual flight itinerary to qualify for Premier Status qualifications

Flight Itinerary

- Sun, 11/8, Sun, HNL/NRT, UA #903, 10:20 a.m./1:25 p.m. (arrival 11/9)
- Thu, 11/19, Mon, NRT/HNL, UA #902, 6:55 p.m./7:20 a.m. (arrival 11/19)

DAY 01, Sun, Nov 8: HNL-Narita (Tokyo)--Upon arrival at **Honolulu International Airport** check in for our flight. We will board our international flight to **Narita International Airport** and will lose a day after crossing the International Date Line.

DAY 02, Mon, Nov 9: Tokyo-Gunma—Upon arrival, we will proceed through Immigration and Customs formalities. We will claim our luggage and meet our English-speaking guide, board our motor coach, and

proceed to Odaiba, site of the 2020 Japan Summer Olympics. Enjoy an optional evening meal. Restaurants and shops are within walking distance to Aqua City, DiverCity, Decks and Venus Fort. The Rainbow Bridge, the Odaiba Statue of Liberty, and the Unicorn Gundam Statue provides excellent photo opportunities. The **2020 Olympic Symbol** of five interlocking rings was installed at **Odaiba Marine Park** on January 17 which is within walking distance from our hotel. Accommodations: Grand Nikko Tokyo Daiba

DAY 3, Tue, Nov 10: Tokyo-Gunma

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. Our English-speaking guide will meet us for our travel to **Gunma Prefecture**, a landlocked prefecture in the **Kanto Region**. We will visit **Konnyaku Park** and see the konnyaku making process, enjoy a **Konnyaku buffet lunch** with a variety of seasonings and dishes. Konnyaku is made from 90% of Konnyaku potatoes (part of the taro plant family) grown in Gunma Prefecture. A variety of konnyaku will be available for purchase. Enjoy the foot baths before our departure. We will visit **Daruma No Furusato Daimonya** in **Takasaki City**, a factory known for handmade Daruma considered a lucky charm to make wishes come true. The Daruma dolls are hand painted with a brush, a 200 year tradition handed down from generation after generation. Gunma is the birthplace of the Daruma. The Daruma comes in a variety of colors: red—luck & good fortune; purple—health & longevity; yellow & green—wealth & prosperity; white—love & harmony; black—protection against bad spirit & luck; blue & turquoise—accomplishment at work & school; pink—LOVE! We will visit the town of **Kusatsu** and the **Kusatsu Onsen**, one of Japan's most famous hot spring resorts with high quality hot spring water known to cure every illness but lovesickness! Enjoy the **Netsuno-yu, Yumomi show**. The Yumomi water stirring process stirs the water at about 52 degrees from 47-48 degrees. Enjoy a **hosted dinner** at our hotel. Accommodations: Yorokobi no yado Takamatsu

DAY 4, Wed, Nov 11: Gunma-Sado Island

Enjoy a hosted breakfast. Relax and enjoy a scenic morning travel to Niigata Prefecture. We will visit **Yahiko Shrine**, in the village of **Yahiko, Nishikanbara District**. The **Yahiko-ginja Shrine** is a signature architectural symbol of Japan, home to the **Shida-no-Otachi**, the longest sword, and a **nationally-designated Important Cultural Property**. The entrance to the shrine has a 98.5 feet high tori gate. A popular spot of the shrine is **Omoi Karui no Ishi** (Heavy/Light Rock). When you lift the rock while making a wish, your wish will come true if the rock feels light. If the rock feels heavy, it will be difficult for your wish to come true. This afternoon we will board our ferry from **Niigata Port** to Sado Island, off the coast of Niigata Prefecture and the sixth largest island in Japan. Sado Island was a place of exile for political wrong doing. Three people sent to exile were the former **Emperor Juntoku**, the Buddhist monk **Nichiren** and the founder of Noh, **Zeami Motokiyo**. **Sado Island** is home to the endangered **Japanese Ibis (toki)** that was once extinct but was reintroduced to the island due to a successful breeding program. Enjoy a **hosted evening meal** at our hotel. Our hotel faces the **Sea of Japan**. Accommodations: Hotel Oosado

DAY 05, Thu, Nov 12: Sado Island

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. This morning we will enjoy a full day at **Sado Island**. Weather permitting, we will experience the **TaraiBune (Tub Boat)** at **Ogi Port** area. The TaraiBune boats are more stable than other boats in the waters and it was easier to maneuver. The TaraiBune boats are used to fish turban shell, abalone and seaweed. We will tour the **Shukunegi Village Area** with narrow alleys, wooden houses and canals. The boards for the wooden houses were taken from old boats. The Village is a National Important Preservation Area for Traditional Buildings and Architecture. We will visit **Sado Rekishi Densetsukan** with full-size robots that tells the history and legends of Sado. This afternoon we will visit the **Osado Skyline**. At the highest point, you will be able to look over the entire island. This is an area known for its red leaves in autumn. Enjoy a **hosted dinner**. Accommodations: Hotel Oosado

DAY 06, Sat, Nov 14: Sado Island-Niigata City

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. We will visit the **Sado Kinzan Gold Mine** which was the most productive mine in Japan consisting of gold, smaller amounts of silver and copper. The gold mine was a source of funding for the **Tokugawa Shogunate**. You will be able to walk through the mining tunnels. Mining operations ended in 1989. We will visit **Shiozu no Sato**, an inn overlooking **Mano Bay**. You will have an opportunity to make your own soba for lunch. Soba will include a mixture of buckwheat flour and water and must be kneaded, rolled flat and cut thinly into strips. We will visit **Toki Forrest Park** to see the national icon of the **Crested Ibis** (or toki). The Crested Ibis was once declared extinct in Japan but due to the success of a new breeding program, the toki is now being released into the wild since 2008. Prior to the new program, the last native bird died in 2003. The Crested Ibis were donated by China. A Toki Fureai Plaza (enclosure) has a toki family on display. The Crested Ibis is a symbol of **Niigata**. We will once again return to **Ryotsu Port** and transfer to **Niigata Port**. Accommodations: ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel

DAY 07, Sat, Nov 14: Niigata

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. This morning we will visit the **Niigata Senbei Okoku** and make your senbei using flavorful powders, pounding the rice, then kneading in the powder. Soy sauce, salt and other flavorings will also be added. Your senbei will be packed in an inflatable bag. You are able to purchase special limited-edition snacks that are only available at this location. Senbei Okoku means *the kingdom of rice crackers*. We will visit the **Northern Culture Museum**, once the residence of a wealthy farming family. The museum contains over 6,000 antiques from Japan, China and Korea. Weather permitting, you may see the autumn leaves in the museum's romantic gardens. In other seasons, there are cherry blossoms, lotuses and a blanket of white during winter. You will have an opportunity to experience the 150-year old method of pounding mochi. For quick production, the Ito family developed a technique called **three-pounder method**. We will stop in at a local restaurant for an optional lunch. We will visit the **Niigata Furusato Village** known for Niigata specialties. The **Waky-Waku Farm** has jams and juice, there's a local confectionary and Japanese tea shops, souvenir corner, Niigata Sake, rice crackers, Tsubame-Sanjo tableware (world renown brand), Koshihikari and other brands of rice, Yasuda Yogurt and Gelato, soft serve ice cream, etc. We will tour the **Imayotsukasa Sake Brewery** established in 1767 with free tastings. This brewery uses high-quality **Niigata Rice** for all of their sake (with the exception of one) and exclusively brews with Niigata mountain water of **Suganatake**, famous and delicious water around Japan. Accommodations: ANA Crowne Paza Hotel Niigata

DAY 08, Sun, Nov 15: Niigata-Nagano

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. We will proceed to **Joetsu-Miyoko** located in southern **Niigata Prefecture**. Joetsu-Miyoko slogan is *Discover the Unknown Japan*. This area is known for producing the famous **koshihikari rice**, the best rice in all of Japan and this applies to the best sake as well. **Joetsu-Miyoko is the birthplace of skiing in Japan**. There are many hot springs in this area. We will board the **Setsugekkka Sightseeing Train** at the **Joetsu-Miyoko Train Station**. The Setsugekka has the largest windows for excellent viewing of the picturesque sights such as rice farms, mountains, the ocean and rural life. Enjoy a **French cuisine created by a Michelin Guide-recognized chef awarded with two stars**. The Setsugekka will make several stops that provides an opportunity to purchase souvenirs near the train stations. We will reboard our coach at **Itoigawa Station** and proceed to **NTA Farm** known for their apples. The apples in Nagano are grown in fertile soil and with mineral-rich water. The apple season is from September to November and several of the apples are only found in Japan. Hopefully the **Japanese Shinano Gold** will be available, a yellow-gold skinned apple with a crisp texture and sweet, sub-acid flavor. This is a medium to large-sized apple and are at its best from mid-October to late-November. The Nagano Prefecture is located in the **Chubu region of Honshu**. **Nagano** is the capital and largest city of this Prefecture. The Japanese Alps are located in this Prefecture. Nagano City hosted the **1998 Winter Olympics** and the **1998 Winter Paralympics**. Accommodations: Hotel Metropolitan Nagano

DAY 09, Mon, Nov 16: Nagano-Mt. Fuji

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. We will visit Nagano's **Zenkoji Temple** founded in the 7th century. The first Buddhist statue

to be brought into Japan is stored at this temple. Buddhism was first introduced to Japan in the 6th century. A copy of the statue is shown to the public every six years for a few weeks and the next event is scheduled in 2021. The original statue is hidden. We will proceed to the **Mt. Fuji World Heritage Center** in the city of **Fujinomiya**, designated as a **UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site** in June 2013. There are three buildings to this World Heritage Center—the West, North and Exhibition Buildings. The Exhibition Building is designed as an inverted image of Mt. Fuji and reflects in the large pool filled with spring water from the mountains. The wall of Mt. Fuji is made up of almost 8,000 pieces of Fuji Hinoki, a Japanese cypress that grows at the foot of Mt. Fuji. Enjoy a **hosted buffet dinner**. This is your last opportunity to relax and enjoy a refreshing soak in a hot springs while gazing at Mt. Fuji. Are you aware Mt. Fuji has many faces throughout the year--Crimson Fuji, Red Fuji, Blue Fuji, Diamond Fuji. Accommodations: Highland Resort Hotel & Spa is located in the Mt. Fuji resort area.

NOTE: November-May are usually the best months to view Mt Fuji, either in the early mornings and/or late afternoons.

Day 10, Tue, Nov 17: Mt. Fuji-Tokyo

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. This morning we will visit a 5th **station of Mt. Fuji** before we proceed to Tokyo. Pending weather conditions, we are hoping for a great morning to view the majestic Mt. Fuji. Mt. Fuji's climbing season is from July 10-September 10 when the shuttle buses operate to designated parking lots further down the mountain and train stations. We will visit the **Tsukiji Outer Market** known as "**Food Town.**" Affordable takuan, shiitake, konbu, and a vendor that sells the Tawashi Brush! The tawashi brush is made from kelp palm fiber and is a great vegetable brush and as a scrub brush for pots and pan (works great on cast iron too). Fresh sashimi and sushi rice bowls are fresh and delivered directly from **Toyosu Market**. Accommodations: Hotel Metropolitan at Ikebukuro

DAY 11, Wed, Nov 18: Tokyo

Enjoy a hosted breakfast. A last-day shopping trip is planned for souvenirs and last minute favorites. Our first stop is **Shimajima**, the **Asakusabashi Flagship Store**. Shimajima has more than 100,000 items that not only includes Japanese stationery, erasable ballpoint pens that have good quality, regular and erasable

highlighters, wrapping products, ribbons, adhesive tapes, kitchen goods, tableware, hygiene and cleaning supplies, scissors (purse sized as well as regular sized scissors), stationery for the younger folks, variety of gift bags, etc. Our next shopping stop is **Ameyokocho** in **Ueno**. Ameyoko was once the black market following WWII. **Niki no Kashi** is a favorite store among Hawaii's shoppers. There are two Niki stores across from each other, a vendor that provides Hokkaido dried scallops, a shop that sells nori, konbu, kampyo, etc. If time permits we will schedule shopping at **Daiso** at **Arcakit Kinshicho**. This is a huge Daiso store. Enjoy a **hosted dinner** at our hotel. Accommodations: Metropolitan Hotel at Ikebukuro

DAY 12, Thu, Nov. 19: Tokyo-Narita

Enjoy a **hosted breakfast**. This is your last opportunity to shop for snack items you may want to snack on during our return flight to Honolulu. We will leave the hotel and provide time for you to dine and shop at the airport shops.

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\$300 deposit per person required to confirm your reservation