

# Wild Earth Travel

*Small Ships, Big Adventures*

**wildearth-travel.com**

**info@wildearth-travel.com**

## TIMELESS JAPAN - CULTURAL TREASURES & ANCIENT WONDERS

Join us for this comprehensive exploration of Japan which is a marvellous balance of ancient castles, serenely beautiful gardens, opulent temples and shrines combined with beautiful natural landscapes. Like all well planned itineraries we have included some of the best known highlights, but equally will also take you to some places where relatively few foreign tourists set foot. So many of Japan's treasures are accessible from the coast and our twelve night cruise allows you to immerse yourself in the myth and mystique of these ancient lands whilst returning each evening to the peace and comfort of the all-suite MS Island Sky.

During our voyage we will be able to see a variety of cultures, natural wonders and architectural styles. Amongst the many highlights will be our visit to Kyoto including the breathtaking Golden Pavilion, and the beautiful iconic gardens of Ritsurin and Koraku-en, both of which date back to the Edo Period. We will also discover the shrines and pagodas of Miyajima and the 17th century Matsue Castle, one of only a dozen original castles in Japan. For the natural world enthusiasts we will visit the Mount Fuji National Park and see the ancient pilgrimage trails at Kumano and, for those who prefer a historical perspective, we will visit the Peace Memorial at Hiroshima and South Korea's World Heritage Site of Gyeongju with its abundance of archaeological sites.

All of this will be achieved with great ease in the company of just over 100 fellow, like-minded passengers. In addition, helping us understand all we will see and experience will be our

expert Guest Speaker and Japanese guides who will sail with us on board the MS Island Sky and will add immeasurably to your enjoyment and understanding of this captivating country.



ng country.

### ITINERARY

**Day 1** London to Tokyo, Japan.

Fly today by scheduled flight to Tokyo.

**Day 2** Tokyo.

Arrive this afternoon and transfer to our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the day and evening are at leisure.

**Day 3** Tokyo to Kanazawa.

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After breakfast in the hotel, a morning city tour will include the Meiji Shrine and Sensoji Temple. Continue to the train station to join our bullet train to Kanazawa where, on arrival, we transfer to the MS Island Sky. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner as we moor overnight.

## Day 4 Kanazawa.

Kanazawa is a thriving centre of the arts, long known for its lacquer ware, outstanding collectable pottery of the Kutani style, gold leaf workmanship, delicate hand painting of silk for kimonos and Noh theatre dramas. The narrow and winding cobblestone streets have a quaint photogenic charm with old fashioned streetlamps and wooden lattice windows hiding elegant restaurants and craft galleries. Around each bend is a traditional house, museum, art gallery, craft shop, historic samurai residence and even a geisha house to explore. The fascinating open-air market displays a vast variety of items from flowers to fish and local handicrafts. Next to the Kanazawa Castle ruins, we will visit one of Japan's premier highlights, the famed Kenroku-en Garden, ranked among the country's top three gardens.

## Day 5 Kyoto.

From our berth in Maizuru, we drive inland to Kyoto, Japan's former historic capital and Emperor's home for nearly 1,000 years. Our full day tour begins with a visit to the bamboo forest before continuing to the World Heritage Site of Tenryu-ji Temple, ranked first amongst the city's five great Zen Temples. After lunch we continue to the Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion), which was built as a retirement villa for the Shogun and converted into a Buddhist Temple after his death. Built on the edge of a tranquil pond with the second and third stories covered in gold leaf we can walk through the peaceful gardens and marvel at the reflection in the still waters. Alternatively, spend the morning at the quaint fishing village of Ine, famous for its "funaya" boat houses which line the bay. Enjoy a walk through the village and a boat tour in the bay for the picturesque views from the sea.

## Day 6 Matsue.

From the port of Sakaiminato we visit Matsue, the 'town of water,' which nestles between a scenic lake and a large lagoon. We will visit the cultural

attractions of the town including the 17th century Matsue Castle before enjoying a boat ride on the local canals. After lunch on board maybe spend the afternoon at leisure or visit the Adachi Museum of Art which is set in a beautiful natural environment and well known for both its superb Japanese gardens and its collection of contemporary Japanese paintings, comprising approximately 1,500 of the country's most highly regarded paintings produced after the Meiji period.

## Day 7 Hagi.

Hagi was a minor fishing port until Mori Terumoto fortified it in 1604 and it was Mori Samurai that helped spark off the anti-Tokugawa revolt in the mid-19th century. Today it is better known for its traditional pottery making traditions. This morning we will explore the Teramachi District with its temples and shrines, the Jokamachi District, where we find the old samurai houses and also take time to explore Hagi Castle, Shizuki Park and Tokoji Temple. Return to the vessel for lunch and this afternoon is free to relax or perhaps travel to the outskirts of the city to visit the Yoshika Taibi Memorial Museum. The museum is dedicated to a large collection of Hagi-yaki pottery which was highly prized in the Edo Period as wares for tea ceremonies.

## Day 8 Ulsan, South Korea.

Crossing over to South Korea we embark on a full day excursion to magnificent Gyeongju, a World Heritage Site, which is often described as the world's finest open-air museum embracing ancient Korean history and Buddhist culture. As the ancient capital of the Shilla Dynasty, Gyeongju's cultural heritage dates back to the first millennium. Today, as we stroll through some of the hundreds of excavated monuments, temples, tombs and pagodas, there will be time to explore the National Museum with its exceptional collection of finely worked gold jewellery, metal weapons and distinctive pottery. At lunchtime, we will sample Korean delicacies and enjoy a cultural performance of traditional dance.

## Day 9 Kitakyushu, Japan.

After a morning at sea, we arrive into the city of Kitakyushu, located on the island of Kyushu. Here we will visit the Kokura Castle, which was originally built in 1602 but rebuilt in 1959 and is surrounded by a beautiful Japanese Garden. From here we will stop at the Moji Port Retro Area which is home to a

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number of historic buildings from the 19th century. The port was designated a special trade port due to its proximity to China and flourished with financial institutions and merchant companies. The architecture is a mix including western style buildings which always come as a bit of a surprise. There will also be the chance to visit the TOTO Museum which showcases the companies' products, the most famous being its electronic toilets which are hard to miss when visiting Japan, and Japan's passion and drive for electronics.

## Day 10 Hiroshima & Miyajima.

Arrive this morning in Hiroshima for our visit to the compelling Peace Memorial Park. The park is dotted with memorials, including the Cenotaph which contains the names of all the known victims of the atomic bomb and the permanently lit "Flame of Peace". Just outside the park, the Atomic Bomb Dome is a haunting reminder of the destructive forces that were unleashed on the city being one of the few original buildings to survive. In the museum we will see photos, videos and victim's personal effects relating to the bomb. Over lunch we sail to Miyajima. Considered one of Japan's top scenic wonders, Miyajima provides a picture postcard vista of the scarlet Torii gate, the giant camphor wood gates at the entrance to the Shinto Shrine. We will use the vessel's Zodiacs to go ashore and explore the Itsukushima Jinja Shrine, founded in the 6th century and dedicated to three sea goddesses.

## Day 11 Koraku-en & Kurashiki.

From the port of Uno-Ko we will visit one of Japan's most famed gardens, Koraku-en, which translates as "Garden of pleasure after". This 17th century formal garden has 28 acres of walking trails, ponds, plum and cherry trees. After a Japanese lunch in a local restaurant, we will continue to Kurashiki where we explore the old merchant quarter and its fine 17th century wooden warehouses painted white with traditional black tiles, along a canal framed with weeping willows and filled with koi. There is also a chance to visit the Ohara Museum of Art which includes rare works by Matisse, Picasso and Renoir as well as collections from Japan's Mingei movement including ceramics by Hamada Shoji.

## Day 12 Takamatsu.

Arrive this morning in Takamatsu, located on Shikoku Island on the northern shores of the Seto Inland Sea. This morning we visit the small town of Kinashi

which has a rich history of producing bonsai for 250 years. We will explore the town, visit a Bonsai nursery and make our way to Ritsurin Garden, recognised as one of the most beautiful in Japan and built by feudal lords in the early Edo Period. With a backdrop against the wooded Mount Shiun, we will wander along the paths of this historic landscape garden dotted with ponds, historic trees and pavilions. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure exploring Takamatsu town.

## Day 13 Kumano.

From our berth in Shingu we explore the southern part of the Kii Peninsula, known since ancient times as Kumano, which was famous as a hiding place for gods and spirits of the departed. Since then, people have come to worship at the Three Grand Shrines of Kumano and the Kumano Kodo pilgrimage routes were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004. Today we will visit Nachi Taisha which sits alongside the 6th century Buddhist temple Seigantoji and afterwards we can see some of the trails of the pilgrimage routes before ending at the Nachi no Taki waterfall which at 133 metres is the largest single-tiered waterfall in Japan.

## Day 14 Shimizu for Mount Fuji.

With a commanding view of Mount Fuji, the Port of Shimizu is considered one of the most beautiful harbours in Japan. Our day will be spent learning more about this iconic symbol of Japan. At the Mount Fuji World Heritage Centre we will see exhibits revealing how the mountain formed and the way humans have interacted with it through the ages before enjoying the views from the observation deck. See the Fujisan Sengen shrine, originally built over 1,000 years ago to worship the spirits of Mount Fuji and provide spiritual offerings to reduce the number of volcanic eruptions. Later we visit the Nihondaira Outlook located in a national park with panoramic views of Suruga Bay and Mount Fuji. Take the aerial ropeway up the mountain to the Kunozan Toshogu shrine dedicated to Tokugawa Ieyasu who is credited with bringing peace to Japan in the 17th century after a long period of civil war.

## Day 15 Yokohama.

Disembark in Yokohama this morning and explore this historic port which after the Edo Period of self-isolation grew from a small fishing village to a major city. We will visit Harbour View Park, known for its roses and views of the city and Yokohama Bay Bridge, stroll through the beautiful Sankeien Garden and see

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the largest China Town in Japan. After lunch in a local restaurant we transfer to Tokyo and check into our hotel for an overnight stay. The remainder of the afternoon and evening are at leisure.

**Day 16 Tokyo to London.**

After breakfast in the hotel we transfer to the airport for our scheduled flight to London.

**Please note:**

Itineraries are subject to change.

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## YOUR SHIP: ISLAND SKY

<b>YOUR SHIP:</b>	<b>Island Sky</b>
<b>VESSEL TYPE:</b>	<b>Luxury Small Ship</b>
<b>LENGTH:</b>	<b>90 metres</b>
<b>PASSENGER CAPACITY:</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>BUILT/REFURBISHED:</b>	<b>1992 / 2010 / 2017</b>

The MS Island Sky offers an intimate and luxurious cruising experience, designed for travelers who appreciate peace, high-quality service, and a relaxed atmosphere. The ship features elegant public spaces, including a main lounge for daily briefings and talks, The Club with a pianist and a 24-hour tea and coffee station, and a well-stocked library with internet access. Guests can enjoy al fresco dining on the Lido Deck, a walk-around promenade for scenic views, and a top-deck observation area ideal for relaxation and wildlife spotting. The ship also includes a small hair salon, a doctor on board, and a lift serving all decks for added convenience. Complimentary satellite Wi-Fi is available, though signal strength may vary.

Accommodations include 59 spacious and well-appointed suites, all with outside views, seating areas, and en-suite bathrooms. Some suites offer private balconies or sliding glass doors for enhanced ocean views. Amenities include a mini-fridge, flat-screen TV, Molton Brown toiletries, air-conditioning, and a safe. The Island Suite boasts an extended balcony, complimentary minibar, and laundry service. Dining is a refined yet relaxed affair, with an emphasis on fresh, locally sourced ingredients and a single open seating. Guests

can enjoy buffet-style breakfasts, a la carte lunches and dinners, daily afternoon tea, and included wines. The ship's culinary team creates exceptional meals, often incorporating local specialties, while the friendly staff ensures a welcoming and social dining experience.

Life onboard is serene, focusing on enriching experiences rather than organized entertainment. Guests can enjoy informative talks, port briefings, and casual evening music rather than large-scale shows or games. The ship is equipped with modern safety and navigation technology, including roll stabilizers for a smooth journey. The atmosphere is akin to a private yacht or boutique hotel, where like-minded travelers can immerse themselves in nature, history, and culture.



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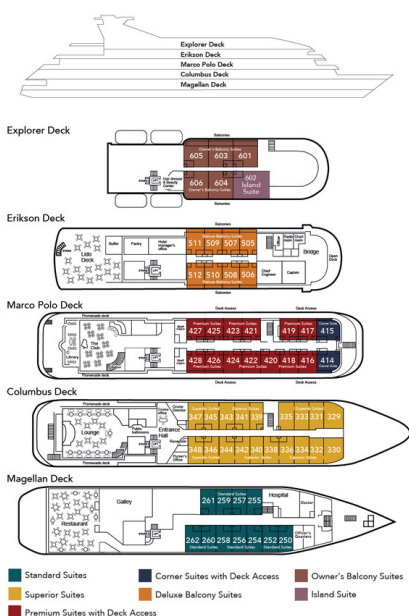
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## INSIDE YOUR SHIP



Columbus Deck Superior Single



Columbus Deck Superior Suite



Erikson Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite



Explorer Deck Island Suite



Explorer Deck Owner's Balcony Suite



Magellan Deck Standard Single



Magellan Deck Standard Suite



Marco Polo Deck Corner Suite



Marco Polo Deck Premium Suite



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## PRICING

**26-May-2026 to 10-Jun-2026**

<b>Magellan Deck Standard Suite</b>	<b>10495 GBP pp</b>
<b>Columbus Deck Superior Suite</b>	<b>10895 GBP pp</b>
<b>Marco Polo Deck Premium Suite</b>	<b>11195 GBP pp</b>
<b>Marco Polo Deck Corner Suite</b>	<b>11595 GBP pp</b>
<b>Magellan Deck Standard Single</b>	<b>12495 GBP pp</b>
<b>Erikson Deck Deluxe Balcony Suite</b>	<b>12795 GBP pp</b>
<b>Columbus Deck Superior Single</b>	<b>12895 GBP pp</b>
<b>Explorer Deck Owner's Balcony Suite</b>	<b>13295 GBP pp</b>
<b>Explorer Deck Island Suite</b>	<b>13995 GBP pp</b>

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