

A Land of Contrasts

Experience Japan

The wonderful riddle of contemporary Japan is how whole-heartedly it has embraced all things modern—all the while retaining the customs of times past. This is truly a land of contrasts: from the bright lights and chaos of Tokyo to the elegance and history of UNESCO-protected Kyoto. As cyclists, we have sought out the most serene and picturesque pockets. On the Noto Peninsula, epic rides feature country roads and fishing villages. Elsewhere, we'll soak in mountain hot springs, visit centuries-old temples, experience the time-honoured tea ceremony, and marvel at meticulously tended gardens.

THE B&R DIFFERENCE

"The perfect trip if someone is looking for fantastic cycling, with Asian exoticism. It is the best of everything rolled into one...The final night with the Geisha is an astounding, once in a lifetime experience..."

Owen Billes, Japan Biking 2008

WHY TRAVEL WITH B&R?

For the uninitiated, Japan can be a bewildering place, and finding your way without local help, impossible. We literally have spent months driving all the possible routes along your journey to provide you with the best cross section of natural beauty, cultural attractions and just plain fantastic riding.

Other questions?

Call us at 800 678 1147

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the journey

Days 1 & 2

Tokyo to the Noto Peninsula

OUR FIRST DAY IS ALL ABOUT CONTRASTS. FROM THE frenetic pace and masses of Tokyo we catch the one-hour flight to Noto Airport in the heart of the rustic Noto Peninsula. Our bikes will be waiting outside the arrivals gate and we will immediately set off to discover one of the last traditional regions in Japan. The landscape is typically Japanese: rugged coastline, rice paddies, and towns and farmland occupying most flat stretches. Today's ride will cross from the middle of the peninsula to the northern coast and features characteristic scenes of thatched-roof houses and intimate shrines. After lunch in a unique setting we return to the coast where you can choose between driving to our hotel in Wajima for extra hot-bath (onsen) time, or riding the rest of the way. Dinner tonight will be in the hotel on a menu made from fresh, local ingredients from the land and sea; the "strict" dress code requires your traditional yukata (kimono).

Day two promises to be one of the great riding days of any B&R trip. We leave the hotel and visit the asaichi, or morning market, a well-known gathering point in the centre of Wajima. Everything is available, from lacquerware and sake to fresh fish brought in that morning to vegetables from a local garden. The highlight of the market is the fish mongers—usually women—dressed in rubber boots and aprons and persistently hawking their catch. You are certain to feel a long way from the flash and polish of Tokyo. Leaving town, we ride along the scenic coast to a special meal of soba (buckwheat noodles) and tofu, the likes of which we're

sure you've never tasted! After lunch, we will amble over to Sojiji Temple for an introduction to Japanese Buddhism, which will help us begin to understand the subtle differences between this religion and Shintoism. Throughout the trip we will pass numerous shrines and temples, and we hope to give you the tools to distinguish the unique characteristics of each style. Following our tranquil visit to Sojiji we will go by bus or bike to learn more about the incredible processes involved in making Wajima's famous lacquerware. Dinner tonight will be in town at a local izakaya—a Japanese tapas bar.

HOTEL

Notonosho Ryokan, Wajima

It's not just lacquerware that attracts people to Wajima; wonderful hot springs and quintessential countryside also attract visitors. Notonosho, our lodgings just outside of town, is a 20-room inn and its atmosphere is a great representation of the Japanese aesthetic. Rooms are spacious and all feature tatami mat floors and futon beds. The inn boasts of having the most alkaline water in Japan, and a long soak in the tub will leave your skin feeling silky-smooth.

THE BIKING

Day 1: A 46 km (29 mi.) ride through rural and coastal landscapes with several 2-3 km climbs; option to extend the ride an additional 10 km (6 mi.).

Day 2: A 43 km (27 mi.) ride along scenic coastal roads linking small farming towns in isolated valleys, with several climbs before a long descent to a valley before lunch. In the afternoon, a short but challenging ride to Sojiji Temple. For those looking for more riding, a 30 km (19 mi.) option with a long hill climb is available after the temple visit.

Other questions?
Contact us 800 678 1147
info@butterfield.com



Day 3 Wajima to Wakura

This morning our route will take us through the centre of the peninsula all the way to the east coast for another quiet ride through fishing villages that retain their timeless charm. Along the way, you might not see another person for miles on end, and when you do, the local denizens will stare in wonder at the strange crew in the blue helmets. Our lunch will be at a quintessential Japanese country inn, before we continue our route oceanside as the fishermen head out on the seas to drop their nets. At ride's end we will shuttle from a sailors' shrine to our next hotel. Dinner will be a fun and festive Suki-yaki party, with famous Noto-gyu (beef) as the highlight.

HOTEL

Tadaya Ryokan, Wakura Onsen

Set in the hot spring town of Wakura Onsen, Tadaya perches over the Sea of Japan and attracts Japanese from all over the country to bathe in its famous hot springs. Tadaya's spacious bathhouse features indoor and outdoor hot spring baths, and even individual ceramic bathing pots which overlook the sea! After a soak, enjoy a beautiful sunset from the window of your spacious room.

THE BIKING

Day 3: A 54 km (34 mi.) inland ride over varied terrain with several 2-3 km climbs and long stretches of flat and slightly downhill riding, including a delightful stretch along the coast. Midway, we'll stop for lunch at a small country inn.



Day 4 Cultured Kanazawa

After a brief drive, we begin another day of epic riding on Noto Island, a popular holiday stop for those staying at the nearby hot spring resorts. As we head along the coast we can look across the straits to the mainland where we biked yesterday. The island route weaves its way along the coast and occasionally ducks inland. After crossing a long modern bridge to the mainland, we begin our tour through rice country and some prosperous villages. We'll finish our ride at a lovely park and from there, our bus will whisk us to Kanazawa where we'll have lunch at the fabulous 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art. After lunch, you can explore the museum exhibitions and Kanazawa's shopping and samurai districts at your leisure. For dinner, you are free to choose among Kanazawa's myriad dining options. We can suggest some great Japanese fare, or you might choose to "go Western" and try the cheese plate at our favourite Italian trattoria.

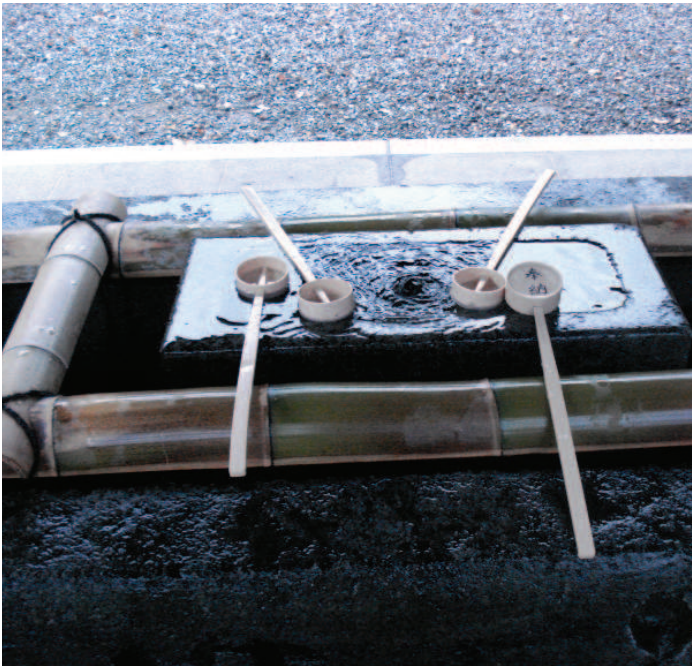
HOTEL

Excel Hotel Tokyu, Kanazawa

A break from the tatami mats and futons, the Excel is a comfortable four-star property that offers modern Western-style rooms (and beds!), and is located within easy walking distance of the city's shopping, restaurant and historic districts.

THE ACTIVITY

Day 4: 50 km (31 mi.) of riding along coastal roads and through rolling hills. Lacking a long hill climb, today's cycling is a little easier than the previous days'.



HOTEL

Kayotei Ryokan, Yamanaka

A traditional family-owned inn of 10 rooms, the exquisite Kayotei sets the standard for Japanese ryokans. The inn is set amidst natural forest preserved in its original state by Mr. Kamiguchi, the innkeeper, and the hospitality is warm, charming, and unobtrusive. Flower arrangements, fine furniture, and the owner's personal collection of fine antiques contribute to the intimate atmosphere. A study in Japanese minimalism, the elegant hot spring overlooks the forest and provides the perfect place for meditation.

THE ACTIVITY

Day 5: city walking, followed by a 35 km [22 mi.] loop bike ride, including a gentle climb of 15 km [9 mi.].

Day 6: A 36 km [22 mi.] ride with an option for an additional 32 km [20 mi.] extension that includes the hardest climb of the trip. After lunch, there is the option to do a casual 3 km [2 mi.] walk through Kakusenkei Gorge in the afternoon.

Days 5 & 6 Mountain Hot Springs

This morning, we take a break from our bikes and set out on foot to explore more of Kanazawa. Like Kyoto, the city was spared from bombing during the war and is home to beautifully preserved geisha and samurai districts. Above the city lies the sublime Kenrokuen, widely regarded as one of Japan's three greatest gardens. Kenrokuen means "combining six features" – vastness, solemnity, careful arrangement, venerability, coolness and scenic charm—and we'll get a deeper sense of that on our guided tour of the garden. Afterwards, we will call in at a nearby private tea house. There, the charming Mrs. Nishida will share her love of the tea ceremony, formally known as cha-no-yu, the way of tea. She will instruct us on this venerable ritual (and make us a darn good cup of tea!), after which our bus will take us to our ryokan to meet our bikes and embark on a fantastic loop ride. Tonight, we step out to dine at one of the local restaurants in Yamanaka, with chef Takahashi-san serving up his regional specialties.

The next day, we have a short drive to the beginning of our ride. Today's route goes through the mountains and brings us to the amazing mountain temple of an esoteric sect of Buddhism. After exploring the temple, we will ride back to the ryokan for a delicious Japanese barbecue lunch. After lunch, the options are legion: explore the local shops in Yamanaka; walk up the marvelous 3-km gorge below the town; relax in the onsen and get a shiatsu massage; or simply read a book in the peaceful surroundings of the hotel. The town is filled with shops displaying lacquerware, as well as famous Kutani-yaki, a famously colourful pottery from the region. For dinner, you can get romantic over a fine repast served in the privacy of your own room by a personal attendant.

Other questions?

Contact us 800 678 1147
info@butterfield.com

Day 7 The Hills of Kyoto

Our final full day sees us bidding a reluctant farewell to Kayotei as we depart for Kyoto. After one last morning dip, we drive south to begin our final day's ride. A short morning pedal brings us to the magnificent Miho museum, designed by world-renowned architect I.M. Pei. Although this museum houses a noteworthy private collection, the main attraction is the ultra-modern architecture and pristine natural setting of the structure itself. Lunch will be in the museum café, after which we'll ride a bit more before the end-of-day shuttle into Kyoto. With its world-famous gardens and geisha, 17 UNESCO World Heritage sites and 1,500 other temples and shrines, the city is the unrivaled centre of Japan's culture and religion. Tonight, we will enjoy a final night worthy of the locale.

HOTEL

Westin Miyako, Kyoto

Ideally located a short walk from many of Kyoto's main attractions and the first choice of visiting dignitaries, the Miyako has recently been renovated and is once again the city's premier hotel. Whether you are staying on in Kyoto, travelling to other areas of Japan, or departing for home, the extremely helpful Miyako staff will readily assist with all arrangements. Our rooms afford panoramic views over the city and are appointed with the latest modern conveniences.

THE BIKING

A 25 km (17 mi) ride in the predominantly hilly terrain around the Miho museum.

Day 8 Sayonara

After breakfast, departure is at your leisure, but we recommend spending at least two more days in Kyoto. For an insider's perspective on this remarkable city, join B&R's two-night Kyoto post-trip. Details are at the back of this itinerary.



Other questions?
Contact us 800 678 1147
info@butterfield.com

fun in the (land of the rising) sun

By **Anthony Weersing**

Where does the road lead? It can often take you to new worlds and new discoveries. Travelling new roads to exotic locales reignites that life affirming sense of wonder. It's a feeling we've all had, but it's harder to experience when we move in familiar circles.

Personally, few places can rival the wonders of Japan. The first Asian nation to become fully developed, here one finds more than elsewhere a bewitching array of contrasts: the ancient world mixed up in the modern one; environments both natural and contrived; the profound and the profane. Here, a woman in kimono chats on a mobile phone; there, a wild-haired, leather-bound youth bows in obeisance. Japan can be as slick and sleek as the latest electronic gizmo or gleaming glass monument, but it's also as organic and elemental as a perfectly imperfect tea bowl or a moss garden.

The sources of amazement are myriad, but the warmth of the people has always been an outstanding feature of travelling in Japan. And as for cuisine, the attention to detail for which the Japanese are famous is not lost on those who get to sit down to the spectacle of a multi-course *kaiseki* meal!

Other questions?
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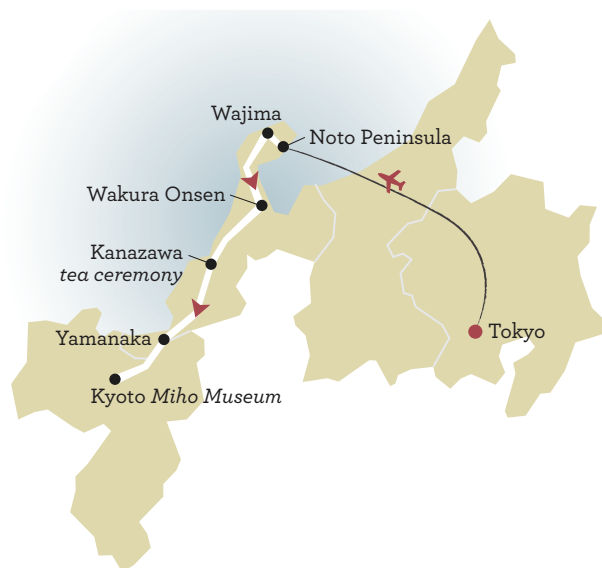


I have been fortunate enough to encounter many such sublime scenes in my travels here, and I found that, while in under Japan's spell, I got to glimpse life at a deeper level. With this in mind, I was inspired to build a trip around the Noto Peninsula that would offer the opportunity for others to experience some of the rarely-seen marvels of this country as I have. I hope you get the chance to see it as I have. And if our paths cross, we'll raise a glass together for a toast and a hearty "*Kampai!*"

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Anthony Weersing

Raised on the West Coast, Anthony's heart lies across the Pacific in Japan. In addition to authoring several articles and a pair of travel books, Anthony's pre-B&R life was spent studying political science and traditional Japanese woodworking, working as an office manager in Nepal and serving as an editor in New Zealand. His personal connection to Japan is deepened with every new traveller he opens it up to. "These people have travelled the world and have seen the best of many other countries," he says. "When they gush about Japan's countryside, cuisine and contrasts, I take it as a validation for the years I've spent in thrall to the same things."



the details

2010 Dates

May 12 - 19
May 26 - Jun 2
Sep 30 - Oct 7

Duration

8 days / 7 nights

Start

Tokyo
Grand Hyatt at
Roppongi Hills
Early morning

Finish

Kyoto
Westin Miyako
At your leisure

2010 Price

US\$ 9,495
(\$1,200 Single
Supplement)

LEVEL OF ACTIVITY

This trip is rated Moderate to Challenging.

The daily distances range from 25-50+ km (16-31 mi.) with longer options on several days. Most rides have several climbs of 2-4 km, some gradual and some steep, but the B&R van will be there should you need a little boost. The routes have very little traffic as we often travel on roads not frequented by the local population. Road quality is excellent. Of our trips outside Europe, this one offers some of the purest and most beautiful biking.

GRAND HYATT TOKYO

www.tokyo.grand.hyatt.com

This famous landmark is a blend between high-tech contemporary and refined Japanese traditional. The Grand Hyatt is in the very heart of "what's happening". It is located in the heart of Roppongi, one of Tokyo's centres for business, commerce and entertainment. It is within easy access of the two large airports in Tokyo and is a minute's walk from Roppongi subway station.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All accommodation
- All breakfasts, 7 lunches and 6 dinners, including wine, beer and sake
- Services of B&R guide(s) and support vehicle
- All special events, private tours, guest experts and entrance fees
- Use of a road or hybrid bicycle, with helmet
- Detailed maps, route suggestions and water bottle
- All transportation from rendezvous to drop-off, including van support, bus transfers and internal flights
- All baggage transportation
- All gratuities for baggage, porters and hotel service including internal flight(s)

MORE INFO

Tips for Japan:

On your B&R trip you be immersed in authentic Japanese culture. This means you can pack light—you will spend three nights wearing traditional yukatas (Japanese style bathrobes). Another tip is to visit a bank machine in Tokyo before your trip commences if you plan on making any purchases along the way. Japan has a cash-based economy and transactions are largely done in yen.

Other questions?
Contact us 800 678 1147
info@butterfield.com



your next steps

At Butterfield & Robinson, the guiding starts while you're still at home. We make sure you know everything you need to know before you've even left your living room.

READY TO BOOK?

- Call or email a Travel Advisor (or your travel agent) with any remaining questions, and to reserve your space.
1-800-678-1147 / info@butterfield.com
- Reserve your flights to and from the region.
- Book your night before hotel.
- Make sure your passport is up to date.
- Enquire after travel insurance.

Once you are confirmed on a B&R trip, you will receive a Confirmation Package that contains tons of information to help you prepare for your trip. Then, about a month before you leave, we will send you a list of your fellow travellers, final rendezvous instructions and your hotel contact numbers.

YOUR BIKE

We pride ourselves on having the very best equipment for each activity and locale, maintained by expert staff and custom tweaked just for you. Visit us at www.butterfield.com/ourbikes to learn about our biking equipment and see pictures of what you'll be riding. And don't forget that we will modify your bike to accommodate most special gear requests. Just ask.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about your B&R experience—big, small or downright quirky—please call a Travel Advisor. We are always happy to help.

EXTENDING YOUR TRIP

We highly recommend that you arrive in Tokyo at least a day before your trip begins. Tokyo is wonderful and worth no less than a day's visit. This is a city of contrasts, where one minute you are being pushed along with a sea of people on one of the frenetic main streets to the next minute where you are strolling along the tranquil small backstreets. Explore Tokyo for its electric buzz and fast pace or duck into one of the many shrines and temples for some quiet contemplation and relaxation. We also encourage you to join our 3-day post trip to Kyoto (details are on the following page).

STAY IN TOUCH!

Sign up to receive [The Slow Road](#) our bi-weekly newsletter full of travel news, unique offers and B&R insider info.

Weather: Kyoto

month	high	low
Jan/Feb	48	34
Mar/Apr	67	39
May/Jun	81	57
Jul/Aug	97	73
Sep/Oct	83	56
Nov/Dec	62	37

Other questions?
Contact us 800 678 1147
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Kyoto post-trip

KYOTO IS THE FLORENCE OF ASIA, A CITY OF HUMAN proportions crammed with a stunning wealth of cultural and historical patrimony. UNESCO recognizes 17(!) heritage sites among the over 1,500 Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines that float like islands in the bustling city. Elsewhere, nestled amid the maze of eclectic restaurants and tea houses of the business district, are countless boutique shops showcasing the exquisite detail and colours of Kyoto's traditional handicrafts, such as Japanese paper (*washi*), knives, dyed fabrics, and myriad others. And we haven't even mentioned the markets, luxury-good shops, and nightlife that animate the city. Our two days in Kyoto will ensure that your visit is as zen as possible—avoiding line-ups and traffic, and using the limited time to discover and explore the city's best.

Day 1 Everything's Zen

On our first morning, we exit the lobby to pass quickly through a practically unnoticed pedestrian tunnel, soon to be surrounded by serenity and sights. Who knew it was just around the corner? Our first stop is Nanzen-ji, a Zen temple that is one of the best examples of its kind in Kyoto. From here, it's a short walk to the start of the *tetsugaku-no-michi* ("philosophers' walk") and, after a short stroll along this famous walkway, we will meander around the visiting temples and shrines that line it. We will lunch at an atmospheric restaurant that features Kyoto's noted seasonal cuisine, known as *kyo-ryori*. After

a quick stop at the hotel, we again depart on foot. What a location! Heading south along the hill, this walk winds through the temples, shrines, and cemeteries that make the Higashiyama district of Kyoto so famous. The walk culminates with a visit to one of Kyoto's most famous sites: Kiyomizu-dera. This magnificent wooden temple floats on the slope of a mountain, supported by a superstructure of pillars that contain no nails!

HOTEL

Westin Miyako, Kyoto

Ideally located a short walk from many of Kyoto's main attractions and the first choice of visiting dignitaries, the Miyako has recently been renovated and is once again the city's premier hotel. Whether you are staying on in Kyoto, travelling to other areas of Japan, or departing for home, the extremely helpful Miyako staff will readily assist with all arrangements. Our rooms afford panoramic views over the city and are appointed with the latest modern conveniences.

THE WALKING

5 km (3 mi.) of urban walking in the morning; 6 km (4 mi.) or urban and trail walking after lunch.

Other questions?

Contact us 800 678 1147
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Day 2 Learning the Arts

Today, we will tour around Arashiyama, in the western precincts of the city. At Tenryūji, another of Kyoto's main Zen temples, a master gardener will give us an exclusive tour through the gardens and buildings of a magnificent sub-temple. A short walk from there, we will enter an idyllic bamboo forest to the amazing villa of one of the stars of Japanese cinema. Moving along the base of the hills, we pass other temples on our way to another hidden gem. What draws us to this temple is a cache of fanciful Buddhist statues arranged in a secluded setting. A lunch cruise up to the mouth of the Hozu Gorge caps off our explorations of Arashiyama. On our way back to the hotel, we will get to experience kodo, the way of incense, something few foreigners have experienced, let alone heard of. Like the tea ceremony, it was a favourite pastime of Japanese nobility, and it continues to exemplify the subtle refinement of Japanese art. With some downtime back at the hotel to reflect on the day's immersion, we later finish off our Kyoto stay with a sleek and chic dinner event in true B&R style. Get those newly-purchased, finely-crafted chopsticks ready!

THE WALKING

8 km (5 mi.) of urban walking.



Day 3 Sayonara

After breakfast, we say goodbye to Kyoto and make our separate ways. If you are heading home immediately, your guide can help you arrange transportation to the airport.



Other questions?
Contact us 800 678 1147
info@butterfield.com



the details

2010 Dates

Apr 25 - 27

May 19 - 21

Oct 7 - 9

Duration

3 days / 2 nights

Start

Kyoto

Westin Miyako

Early morning

Finish

Kyoto

Westin Miyako

After breakfast

2010 Price

US\$ 1,995

(\$300 Single

Supplement)

LEVEL OF ACTIVITY

This trip is rated Easygoing.

Aside from one afternoon of trail walking, most of our time is spent winding our way through the best streets of Kyoto.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All hotel accommodation
- All breakfasts, two lunches and one dinner, including wine
- Services of a B&R guide, our local guide and support vehicle
- All special events, private tours, guest experts and entrance fees
- All transportation from rendezvous to drop-off
- All baggage transportation
- All gratuities for baggage, porters and hotel service



Other questions?
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The itinerary information may vary slightly for your specific departure as we continuously research and develop each trip. Inclement weather may also necessitate minor alterations. © 2009 Butterfield & Robinson Management Services Inc. Revised October 9, 2009.