

## **More than Clay – A Japanese Ceramic Tour**

**Tokyo – Nagoya – Kyoto – Fukuoka – Oita – Tokyo**

**(13 nights 14 days)**

### **Customizable Sample Itinerary For Your Clients**

Ceramics in Japan dates back from the Jomon indigenous period over 10,000 years ago and is considered the oldest in the world. It is no wonder that pottery has permeated many facets of society, from table wares to tea pots, and from flower vases to ritual objects.

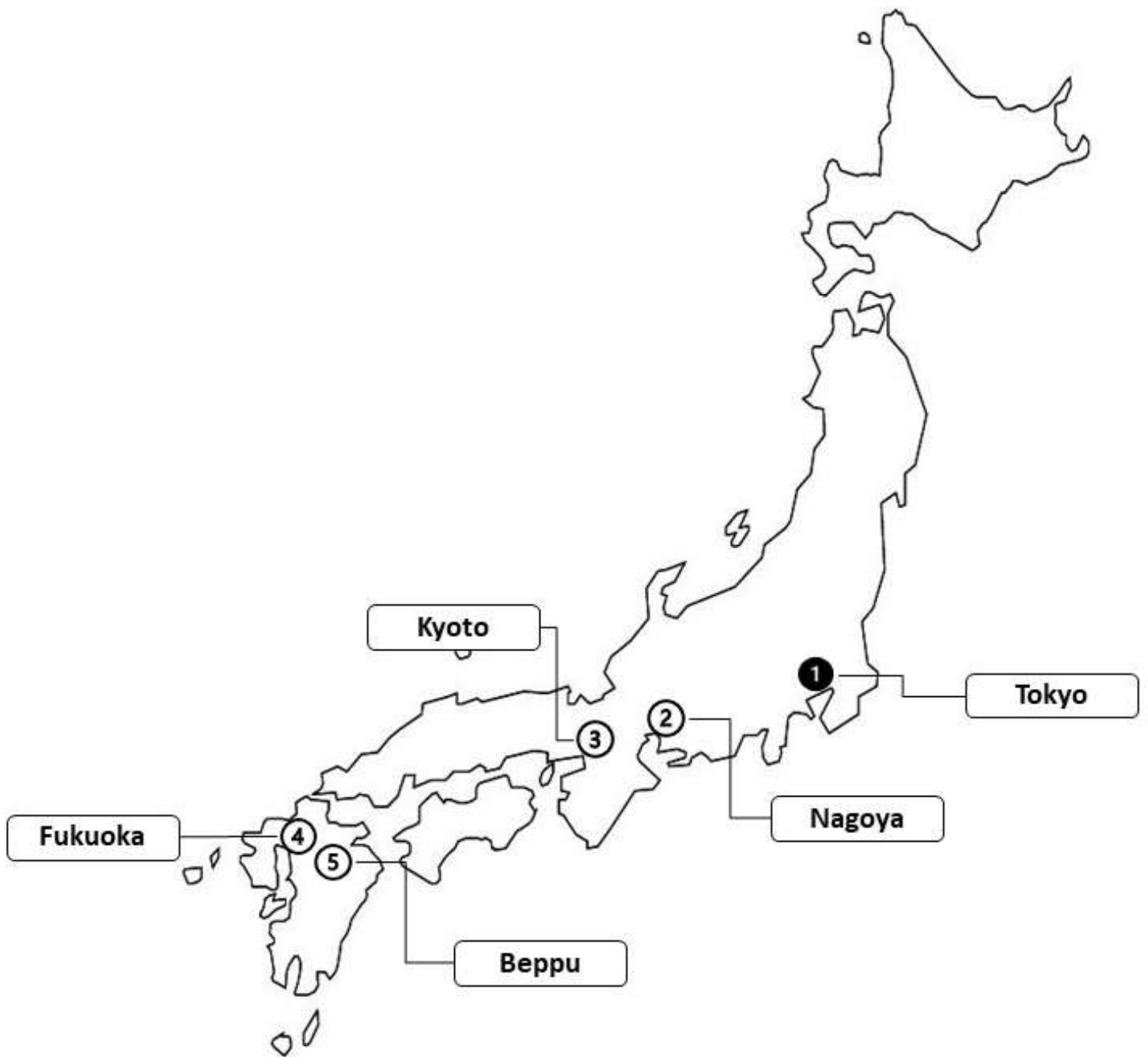
Suitable for adults and older children with a real passion for clay, this itinerary is a deep dive into the world of Japanese ceramics. You will travel through the Southern part of Honshu and the North of Kyushu, discovering each region's own speciality and history, through private-guided visits of kilns & museums & selected hands-on experiences.



## Your itinerary at a Glance

Date	Program	Accommodation
Day – 1	Arrival in Tokyo	Mandarin Oriental Tokyo
Day – 2	Tokyo	Mandarin Oriental Tokyo
Day – 3	Tokyo – Day Trip to Mashiko	Mandarin Oriental Tokyo
Day – 4	Move to Nagoya	Nagoya Marriott Associa Hotel
Day – 5	Nagoya – Day Trip to Seto & Tajimi	Nagoya Marriott Associa Hotel
Day – 6	Move to Kyoto	The Ritz–Carlton, Kyoto
Day – 7	Kyoto	The Ritz–Carlton, Kyoto
Day – 8	Kyoto – Day Trip to Shiga	The Ritz–Carlton, Kyoto
Day – 9	Move to Fukuoka	Grand Hyatt Fukuoka
Day – 10	Day Trip to Saga	Grand Hyatt Fukuoka
Day – 11	Move to Oita	ANA Intercontinental Beppu
Day – 12	Oita	ANA Intercontinental Beppu
Day – 13	Return to Tokyo	Mandarin Oriental Tokyo
Day – 14	Departure	–

Your Travel Map



## Potteries Styles you will encounter on the trip

Date	Prefecture	Name of the Pottery	
Day 3	Tochigi	Mashiko	
Day 4	Aichi	Tokoname	
Day 5		Seto	
		Mino	
Day 7	Kyoto	Kiyomizu	
Day 8	Shiga	Shigaraki	
Day 10	Saga	Arita	
Day 11	Fukuoka	Koishihara	
	Oita	Onta	
Day 12		Usuki	

## Detailed itinerary

### Day – 1, Narita International Airport to Tokyo

After arriving at **Narita International Airport** and completing immigration formalities, you will be greeted by your **English Speaking Chauffeur** at the arrival gate and transfer in a private vehicle to the hotel.



### Mandarin Oriental Tokyo



Upon arrival at Mandarin Oriental Tokyo, you will be overwhelmed by the dramatic first impression. The extraordinary lobby surrounded by glass and the futuristic luxury of the interiors illustrates the hotel's defining style; extreme comfort whilst reflecting Japan's characteristics.

### Overnight at Mandarin Oriental Tokyo

## Day – 2, Tokyo

At 9:00am, meet with your **English Speaking Guide** in the hotel lobby and leave for Tokyo excursion by Private Chartered Car.

You will first visit the **Imperial Palace**, the celebrated residence of Japan's imperial family. Located on the former site of the Edo Castle, the huge park area is surrounded by moats and massive stone walls. *(Only the area you can visit without prior permission)*



Your guide will show you the small streets of **Asakusa**, one of Tokyo's oldest and well-preserved districts where you can still feel the presence of Ancient Japan.



**Walk along the Nakamise dori street**, dating back to the Edo period when the temple's neighbours were given special right to open their shops in the approach to the temple and arrive at the **Sensoji Temple**, with its huge lantern.



Move to **The Japan Folk Crafts Museum** which is a must-see in Tokyo. Not only due to the crafts it houses but the buildings themselves which have been recently renovated to their original glory. The Japan Folk Crafts Museum is of Mingei style completed in 1936 built by carpenters from Tochigi prefecture. Ceramics, dyed and woven textiles, wood and lacquer, stone and bamboo are treasures that lie in the museum. All part of the over 17,000 piece collection.



Followed by **Toguri Museum of Art** – The Toguri Museum of Art is not the kind of place one stumbles across. it's the kind of place you'd only find if you already knew about it. Still, it's a real gem of a place if you have even the slightest vestige of interest in Asian ceramics.

By 17:00, return to the hotel

**Overnight at Mandarin Oriental Tokyo**

### Day – 3, Tokyo – Day Trip to Mashiko

At **8:00am**, meet with your **English Speaking Guide** and transfer to **Mashiko**, surrounded by gentle hills and fields, is north of Tokyo.

It is well known both at home and abroad as the production center of **Mashiko-yaki ceramic ware**. The rustic, sturdy pottery features rich brown and black glazes. Most of it functions as tableware, such as rice bowls, plates, cups, and vases.

First, you can visit **Mashiko Museum of Ceramic Art / Ceramic Art Messe Mashiko** to know the history of Mashiko-yaki. Also you can see the art pieces of Mashiko-yaki from artists including a living national treasure.



Then transfer to **Shoji Hamada Memorial Mashiko Sankokan Museum** – The museum is dedicated to the late, great 20th century ceramic master **Shoji Hamada**.



On display are his masterworks, older pieces and Hamada's own private collection of ceramic works from around the world. The museum, the artist's home and studio, is worth a visit alone.



In Mashiko, you can try making your own pottery by using a pottery wheel!



Back to the hotel in Tokyo by 18:00

**Overnight at Mandarin Oriental Tokyo**

### Day – 4, Move to Nagoya

By 8:30am, check out the hotel and transfer to **Tokyo Station** with **English Speaking Chauffeur**.

**[Suggested Schedule]** : Bullet Train Nozomi # 215 / Tokyo 9:21 – 10:56 Nagoya



Upon arrival at **Nagoya Station**, you will be greeted by **English Speaking Guide** and transfer to **Tokoname** where you can find one of the oldest pottery history in Japan.

Once you arrive there, you can first visit **Noborigama** (climbing Kiln) which is the biggest kiln still existing in Japan.



Then you can visit **Space Tokonabe** where you can find different kinds of teapot – you can find the old manufacturing equipment's there.



Passing by **Dokan-zaka** (slope with earthen pipe), you will visit **Takita Residence** – Takita Family did a shipping business so you can find traditional lifestyle of local people here.

By 17:00, return to Nagoya city for check in.

#### **Nagoya Marriott Associa Hotel**



Supreme relaxation and international hospitality await you at the **Nagoya Marriott Associa Hotel**, conveniently located above Nagoya Station. Since J.W. Marriott founded the company in 1927, Marriott Hotels have welcomed successive generations of guests with warm hospitality and high-quality service. The Nagoya Marriott Associa Hotel would now like to extend that same invitation to you.

#### **Overnight at Nagoya Marriott Associa Hotel**

### Day – 5, Nagoya – Day Trip to Seto & Tajimi

At 9:00am, meet your **English Speaking Guide** and transfer to **Seto & Tajimi Area** where the home town of famous ceramics in Japan.

First, visit **Aichi Prefectural Ceramic Museum** – This museum was established to preserve cultural assets and to promote the pottery and porcelain of the region.



Over two hundred pieces of pottery and porcelain have been designated as prefectural assets; these are from all over the world and the region. Modern pottery and porcelain and clay images of Korean dogs are on display. A workshop and tearoom are also open to visitors.

And you can also visit **Seto Blue & White Ceramic Center** where you can find a history and culture of Seto including Seto Sometsuke techniques.



Then take a leisurely stroll along with the **old town**. Historically a main street where carts and craftsmen went by, its walls are lined in geometric patterns and old kiln tools are artistically placed in the walls and foundations. Here, you can experience the distinct character of this pottery town.





Transfer to **Mino City** to continue discover the beauty of Japanese ceramics.

**Mino-yaki** 's high-fired wares are produced in the Seto and Mino areas of Gifu Prefecture and originated in the late 16th century. There are four Mino styles (Shino, Oribe, Setoguro and Ki seto) and they relate almost exclusively to the tea ceremony.

You will visit **Kobei Gama** – the oldest kiln in town and their museum has great collections of not only the olden time's Mino-yaki, also Persian Ceramics.



In the area, there are many kilns to visit so you can enjoy stroll around to learn more!

By **18:00**, return to the hotel

**Overnight at Nagoya Marriott Associa Hotel**



### Day – 6, Move to Kyoto

By 11:00am, check out the hotel and meet with **English Speaking Station Assistant** to walk to **Nagoya Station**.

**[Suggested Schedule]** : Bullet Train Nozomi # 85 / Nagoya 11:32 – 12:06 Kyoto



Upon arrival at **Kyoto Station**, you will be greeted by **English Speaking Guide** and leave for excursion.

Start at the **Tenryu-ji Temple**. This famous Zen Buddhist temple is the head temple of the Tenryu-ji branch of Rinzai Zen sect and part of World Cultural Heritage monuments. It has an excellent garden with a pond stroll that was laid out by a garden designer of genius.



From here, take a relaxing stroll around the **Bamboo Forests**, designated as one of the three most beautiful bamboo forests in Japan. Here, the sound of the leaves rustling in the wind is nice to listen to and gives a peaceful atmosphere.

Move onto the Golden Pavilion **Kinkakuji** temple, originally built in 1397 to serve as a retirement villa for Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, whose grandson used the temple as the inspiration for the Silver Pavilion Ginkakuji temple.



By 17:00, transfer to the hotel for check in

### The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto



The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto sits serenely on the banks of the Kamogawa river, in a prime location with expansive views of the famous Higashiyama Sanju-Roppo (36-mountain range). The hotel is also close to Kyoto's famous downtown districts such as Gion, Kawaramachi and Pontocho streets, convenient locations for both sightseeing and business. Here, you can experience quality time that is only available in the world's finest hotels, in a luxurious space that is steeped in the ancient traditions and culture of Kyoto.

### **Overnight at The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto**

## Day – 7, Kyoto

At **9:00am**, meet with your **English Speaking Guide** to leave for full day discovery in Kyoto!

First, you will visit **Kiyomizu-dera Temple** where you can also see the city of Kyoto. With its magnificent views of the city from its main hall attracting visitors throughout Japan, Kiyomizu-dera Temple was originally founded in 798. The common Japanese idiom “jumping from the veranda of Kiyomizu Temple” means that they are about to undertake some particularly bold or daring adventure.



Then transfer to an atelier where you can see the whole process of creating Kyo-yaki ceramics.





Move to TOKINOHA Ceramic Studio, a unique interactive venue, where the adjoining studio and shop provide exclusive experiences. Here, you can also enjoy a unique experience of “rakuyaki”.



Choose your favorite body designed by our craftsmen and apply your chosen glazing. Place the pottery inside the **Raku-ware kiln** and retrieve it after 10 minutes using fire tongs. The finished piece can be taken home on the same day. It is a special treat to be able to take home the piece of pottery you have just made.

Transfer to **Kawai Kanjiro's House** – he was one of the most celebrated potters of the 20th century. He was also a champion of folk crafts (mingei) and helped to establish the mingei movement. His house now serves as his memorial and exhibits his works. His pottery, wood carvings, writings, brush paintings, as well as the furniture he designed and used, are all on display. The architecture was designed by Kanjiro himself based on the ancient homes found in the Hida Takayama region.



Return to the hotel by 17:00

**Overnight at The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto**

**Day – 8, Kyoto – Day Trio to Shigaraki**

At **9:00am**, leave a hotel by private chartered vehicle, to visit **Shigaraki** in Shiga Prefecture, with your **Private English Speaking Guide**.



**Shigaraki kiln** is known as one of 'The Six Old Kilns' in Japan. Of these, Shigaraki is best known for its "WABI" or "SABI" pottery, used in the Sen-no-Rikku tea ceremony. More than 1250 years ago, when Shomu emperor built Shigaraki palace, its roofs or store fixtures were burned in Shigaraki. It is an origin of Shigaraki pottery.

First, you will visit **Traditional Crafts Center of Shigaraki** where you can learn the history of Shigaraki.



Transfer to **Okuda Chozaemon Gama** in **Shigaraki Toge Village**. You are free to view their kiln which uses clay from the nearby mountain.





Then move by car to **Sagawa Art Museum** – also known as floating museum, it features three separate halls and one of them focuses on the ceramic master, Kichizaemon Raku.



Enjoy both the view, nature, architecture, and beautiful collections of ceramics, in one amazing place.

By 17:00, return to the hotel

**Overnight at The Ritz–Carlton, Kyoto**

### Day – 9, Move to Fukuoka

By 12:00 noon, check out and meet with **English Speaking Driver** to transfer to **Kyoto Station**.

**[Suggested Schedule]** : Bullet Train Nozomi #25 / Kyoto 12:46 – 15:30 Hakata



Upon arrival at **Hakata Station**, you will be greeted by **English Speaking Station Assistant** and transferred to a private chartered car and move to the hotel.

Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure, exploring the Hakata district, the heart of Fukuoka. There are many interesting stores, bars and restaurants to discover in this lively area.

### Grand Hyatt Fukuoka



The luxury 5-star hotel Grand Hyatt Fukuoka is located in the Hakata district, in the heart of Fukuoka city, Japan. The hotel is situated between Hakata station, the central station and Tenjin, the city's business and entertainment centre; it is also just 5 km from Fukuoka International Airport. It is not only the ideal destination itself, but also a convenient base for excursions in the northern Kyushu area.

### **Overnight at Grand Hyatt Fukuoka**

## Day – 10, Fukuoka – Day Trip to Saga

At 9:00am, meet with your **English Speaking Guide** and leave for Arita by private chartered car.

First transfer to **Gen-emon Klin** – The characteristic styles of Gen-emon kiln, which are highly regarded both in Japan and abroad, can be seen in its present products. One can see the simple, but free and easy style of Early Imari, plus the brilliant and dignified style of Exported Imari, which requires skillful brushwork.



Transfer to **Tombai** , famous for its walls which are made of plastered with scrap wood and firebrick remains, used to build the kilns. It is frequent to see big ginkgo trees in the alleys from Izumiyama neighborhood to Arita Pottery Museum.



In Arita, you can experience painting on porcelain!

Move on to **The Kyushu Ceramic Museum** – It is art museum where is specialized in ceramic ware. Including ceramics of Hizen area, ceramics of the various places in Kyushu, work of modern ceramic art writer collect and are displayed. Above all, Kambara collection that attracted Old Imari and Shibata collection that gathered Arita ware making of the Edo era are unmissable. In addition, there are 25 bells made of Meissen porcelain outdoors, and beautiful tone directs time of healing only in town of ceramic ware.



By 18:00, return to the hotel in Fukuoka

### Overnight at Grand Hyatt Fukuoka

### Day – 11, Move to Oita

By 9:00am, check out the hotel and meet with **English Speaking Guide** and heading off to Oita.

On the way, you will make a brief stop at **Toho village, home of Koishihara pottery**. This style fuses practicality and beauty. Several glazing techniques create a simple and warm characteristic of a “dish offering life”. Many potteries in Koishihara aim at perpetuating the heritage of tradition carefully yet develop new styles of their own.





Transfer to **Onta Village** is one of the most unique places to discover in all Japan – and that's not just in terms of its ceramics! Since the opening of the kiln 300 years ago, Onta-yaki pottery has established its simple yet tasteful style with history. In the villages hidden in the mountains of Hita City, ten kilns still operate with the same procedure and produce the pottery pieces which are mostly used in casual, everyday settings.



By 17:00, transfer to the hotel for check in

#### **ANA InterContinental Beppu Resort & Spa**



Escaping the busyness of everyday life, ANA InterContinental Beppu Resort & Spa introduces a rare combination of Japan's hot spring heritage and international, world-class experience. Trend-setting restaurants and bars will make you want to try more of Chef's unique blend of seasonal creations, spacious rooms and suites with breathtaking views will leave you in awe and the inviting infinity pool, Beppu hot spring water and rejuvenating spa treatments will sooth your body and soul.

#### **Overnight at ANA Intercontinental Beppu Resort & Spa**



## Day – 12, Oita

At 9:00am, meet with **English Speaking Guide** and leave for excursion by Private Chartered Car.

First, visit Beppu's most famous attraction is the '**hells**' or **Jigoku**, a collection of hot springs where the water bubbles forth from underground, often with unusual results. The hells are in two groups – seven at Kannawa, over 4km northwest of Beppu station, and two more several kilometers away. You will be strolling around these Jigoku to see the difference.



Then transfer to **Usuki area** (about 40mins) and see the **Usuki Stone Buddhas** designated as national treasures. These beautiful statues are estimated to have been created around the late Heian Period (794–1185). They are carved from highly workable, soft, volcanic rock from nearby Mount Aso. However, the relatively soft material, in combination with high moisture levels in the area, make these masterpieces susceptible to erosion. Great efforts are made to preserve them, including shelters that have been built to shield them from the elements of nature.



A little further, is a short walking trail passing through a small and quiet bamboo forest. Enjoy the calming sound of wind in the trees.

In the afternoon, you can learn about **Usukiyaki** – Originally starting in the later years of the Edo period (around 200 years ago) as a pottery managed by the government of the Usuki domain where four families of potters were summoned to Usuki to create Usukiyaki. However after around ten years of prosperity, the pottery went into decline, and eventually ceased operations.



In 2015, the culture has been reinstalled in Usuki area. Usukiyaki has been created based on the concept that “a dish is a frame for the food that is served on it. So with rich culinary culture and environment, Usukiyaki is now back to their life and hoping to be loved by the world.

Here, you can have another Hands-on Experience and create another piece of art, by yourself.



By 17:00, return to the hotel

**Overnight at ANA Intercontinental Beppu Resort & Spa**

### Day – 13, Return to Tokyo

By 11:00am, check out the hotel and meet with **Japanese Speaking Chauffeur** to transfer to **Oita Airport**.

**[Suggested Schedule]** : ANA 2494 / Oita 12:35 – 14:05 Haneda

Upon arrival at **Haneda Airport**, you will be welcomed by **English Speaking Airport Assistant** and transferred to Private Chartered Car.

After check-in, enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure in Tokyo.

### **Overnight at Mandarin Oriental Tokyo**

### Day – 14, Departure

Check out the hotel and meet with **English Speaking Chauffeur** in the lobby and transferred to **Narita International Airport** in a private chartered car.



**\*\*\* END OF YOUR JAPAN JOURNEY \*\*\***