

Essential Kanazawa

Kanazawa is a must for lovers of Japanese culture, history and architecture. Much of ancient samurai houses and geisha districts have been beautifully preserved because the area has escaped major natural disasters and war damage.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- A visit to Kenrokuen Garden, Japan’s most iconic landscape gardens.
- Head to the Nagamachi Samurai District for an insight into samurai life.
- Stroll through the picturesque, well-preserved Higashi-Chaya geisha district.



ITINERARY

Day	Activities	Stay
Day 1	Kanazawa Visit Oyama Jinja Shrine, Kanazawa Noh Musuem, D.T. Suzuki Museum and 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa.	Kanazawa
Day 2	Kanazawa Visit Namagachi Samurai District, Omicho Market, Kenrokuen Garden, Kanazawa Castle Park, Higashi Chaya District.	

Day 1

11:00 Arrive at Kanazawa Station and drop off luggage at hotel.



15 minutes

1

14:00 Oyama Jinja Shrine [尾山神社]

A Shinto shrine dedicated to Maeda Toshiie, the founder of the Kaga domain (present-day Ishikawa and around), and his wife. The shrine's three-storied *shinmon* gate was designed to blend Japanese and Chinese architectural styles with Western touches such as stained glass.



10 minutes

2

14:30 Kanazawa Noh Museum [金沢能楽美術館]

Noh (a major form of classic Japanese musical drama) has been promoted among people in Ishikawa since Edo period. Immerse yourself in the world of Noh by trying on masks and costumes and playing musical instruments.



10 minutes

3

15:10 D.T. Suzuki Museum [鈴木大拙館]

This museum is dedicated to the life and ideas of Daisetz Suzuki, a prominent Buddhist philosopher who was born in Kanazawa and popularized Zen in the West. Take time for thoughtful meditation in the three idyllic landscaped gardens, which include a glassy pond for self-reflection.



10 minutes

4

16:00 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa [金沢21世紀美術館]

This progressive museum situated in the center of Kanazawa is quite popular among the locals and tourists alike with the unique exhibits and installations. The outdoor exhibits and surrounding lawns make the museum grounds feel akin to a family park.



Stay in Kanazawa



Column

The hidden nightlife of Kanazawa – local's favorite drinking quarter

Kanazawa's elegant and sophisticated cultures fascinate travelers around the world. Foodies enjoy premium culinary delights it offers - multi-course Kaiseki dinner at a century-old Ryotei (Japanese traditional fine dining) and best sushi carefully prepared by a legendary master chef. Well, this is just the stage face of the city -

Just like other cities in Japan – Golden Gai in Tokyo and Hozenji Yokocho in Osaka – Kanazawa has its own back-alley drinking quarters which have been favored by the locals for decades. In the back of Katamachi, the commercial center of the city, there are a couple of streets lined with Izakaya pubs and bars with 'Showa' (the period between 1926 and 1989, referred to 'Golden Age' when Japan experienced the dramatic economic growth) nostalgia still alive.

Shintenchi, literally meaning 'New World', started to flourish some seventy years ago with 65 small businesses - small restaurants, sushi bars and coffee shops. Still today, local office workers and students are flocking to this district to party at karaoke bars and shop at a record shop and a vintage clothing store.



In the end of the Shintenchi street, you will come across an even more retro lane just like a movie set. In Chuo-Mishokugai, literally meaning 'central gourmet street', merely two-meter-tall hall-in-the-wall establishments, which once used be mobile stalls, are standing side by side.



All the taverns and bars in these areas are rustic and reasonably priced, yet serve the best quality local dishes of the season. More than anything, most of them have less than 10 counter seats, which enables you to enjoy casual chats with regular customers.

Do not be afraid and take an adventure even if you do not know a lot of Japanese. Warm and friendly drinkers will welcome you and help make the best memory in Japan!

Day 2

5

10:00 Nagamachi Samurai District [長町武家屋敷]

Nagamachi is a well-preserved neighborhood of samurai houses. The cobblestone streets and tiled earthen walls are characteristic of wealthier samurai districts in Kanazawa. One highlight is the Nomura Residence. Enjoy its inner garden with tranquil streams and a miniature waterfall.



10 minutes

6

11:00 Omicho Market [近江町市場]

Omicho Market has been the largest fresh food market in Kanazawa since the Edo period. Its busy network of covered streets holds over 180 stall and restaurants that sell fresh seafood, vegetables, fruit, and many other local products.



(Lunch: Omicho Market)



10 minutes

7

12:30 Kanazawa Castle Park [金沢城公園]

Kanazawa Castle was home to the Maeda family during their rule of the Kaga domain. Some buildings including Kahoku-mon Gate and Gyokusen'inmaru Garden have been faithfully renovated.

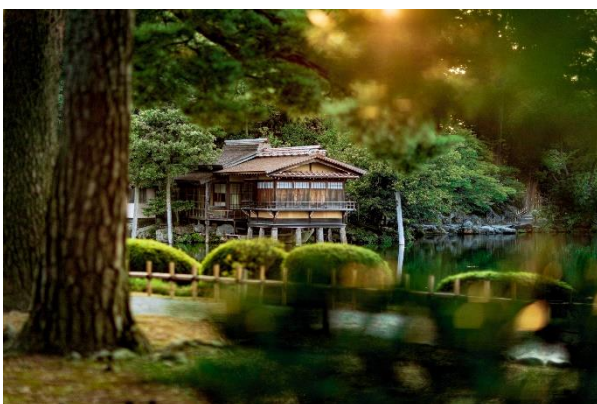


5 minutes

8

13:30 Kenrokuen Garden [兼六園]

Kenrokuen was constructed by feudal lords of Kaga clan as the outer garden of Kanazawa Castle. The garden's appearance changes dramatically every season, with cherry blossoms in spring and Yukizuri (a set of ropes to protect trees from the region's heavy snowfall) in winter.



9

14:30 Seisonkaku Villa [成翼閣]

A large villa on the edge of Kenrokuen Garden built by the 13th lord of the Kaga domain for his mother. The villa's architectural style blends traditional Japanese elements with Western touches that were coming into fashion at the end of the Edo period.



10 minutes

10

15:10 Kaga-Yuzen Kimono Center [加賀友禅会館]

The small museum dedicated to Kaga-Yuzen, a high-end silk dyeing technique characterized by five basic colors and intricate designs. The center displays Kaga-Yuzen kimono made by notable artisans and houses a workshop where craftsmen demonstrate the dyeing process.



15 minutes

or



5 minutes

11

16:00 Higashi Chaya District [ひがし茶屋街]

The district's traditional buildings and lattice-work windows retain the atmosphere of their 200-year history. Today, many of these buildings function as cafes, restaurants, sweet shops and craft shops, but some are still geisha teahouses. Two traditional teahouses, 'Shima' and 'Kaikaro', are open to public.



ITINERARY

9 days & 8 nights

Day	Activities	Stay
Day 1	Tokyo Arrive at Tokyo Airport	Tokyo
Day 2	Tokyo Visit Asakusa Kannon Temple, Tokyo National Museum, the Imperial East Garden and Meiji Shrine	Tokyo
Day 3	Full day excursion to Fuji-Hankone-Izu National Park	Tokyo
Day 4	Kanazawa Depart by shinkansen (bullet train) to Kanazawa. Visit Oyama Jinja Shrine, Kanazawa Noh Musuem, D.T. Suzuki Museum and 21 st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa.	Kanazawa
Day 5	Kanazawa Visit Namagachi Samurai District, Omicho Market, Kenrokuen Garden, Kanazawa Castle Park, Higashi Chaya District.	Kanazawa
Day 6-7	Kyoto Travel by express train to Kyoto. Visit Nijo Castle, Nishiki Market, Kiyomizu Temple, Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavillion) and Ryoanji Temple.	Kyoto
Day 8	Full day excursion to Hiroshima	Kyoto
Day 9	Transfer to Osaka Airport and board a flight back home	

