





Japan Discovery Cruise
17 Days
Fully Hosted
03 May – 19 May 2027

ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS:

- Tokyo Tower
- Himeji Castle, Kobe
- Hirome Market, Kochi
- Hiroshima
- Beppu
- Ryūkyū Dance Performance, Okinawa
- Miyako Island & Makiyama Observatory
- Keelung (Taipei)
- Kagoshima & Chiran Peace Museum
- Paper Lantern Crafting Workshop

INCLUDES:

- **Private single rooms** in Classic Plus accommodation
- **13 Nights MSC Cruise** in private Deluxe Interior Cabin with premium drinks package
- **Meals** as per itinerary - 16 Breakfasts, 10 Lunches, 15 Dinners
- **Sightseeing** tours and transfers by private coach
- Local Driver / Guide in Tokyo
- **Solo Connections Tour Host** – travels from Brisbane
- English Speaking **Cruise Director**
- Port Fees, Cruise Taxes, Onboard Cruise Service Charges, Tipping/Gratuities for Tokyo Guide/Driver

EXCLUDES:

- Compulsory Travel Insurance
- Flights
- Any tours or meals other than mentioned above or in the itinerary
- Items of a personal nature i.e. Additional meals or tipping/gratuities not mentioned above, hotel mini bar, laundry, drinks, phone calls, etc

From \$17,885* per person
Cruise upgrades available, prices show at end of itinerary

Terms and Conditions apply. Price is per person, Sole Use and subject to availability. Price is in AUD and correct as of 28th August 2026. Classic Plus accommodation is considered 3-to-4-star hotels and MSC Cruise based on single Deluxe Interior cabin. Tour requires minimum number of passengers to depart. Prices may fluctuate if surcharges, fees, taxes or currencies change. Solo Connections is constantly striving to improve our itineraries and inclusions. If such improvements can be made, or unforeseen circumstances beyond our control make changes necessary, we reserve the right at any time to vary itineraries and to substitute inclusions of equal value. Further booking conditions apply, please check all prices, availability and other information with your travel agent at time of or before booking. Package cancellation fees apply. Denise Marie Falsay trading as Solo Connections. ATAS Accredited A11424. ABN 92 582 582 996



Day 1 – Monday 3 May 2027
Arrive Tokyo

This morning those passengers travelling from Brisbane will meet with the Tour Host at Brisbane International Airport for the flight to Tokyo. Interstate passengers will meet the host and group at Tokyo Airport or the hotel.

This evening, we arrive at Tokyo Narita International Airport, where we are welcomed in the arrivals hall by our local guide. Once the group has assembled, we board our private coach for the journey to central Tokyo.

During our transfer, you can relax after the flight and enjoy your first glimpses of Japan. As we travel towards the capital, the scenery gradually changes from the landscapes surrounding Narita to Tokyo's impressive skyline, lively neighbourhoods and striking modern architecture.

Upon arrival we check into our hotel, situated in a vibrant, central neighbourhood with direct access to Roppongi-itchome Station and within easy reach of restaurants, shops and local conveniences.

The remainder of the evening is yours to relax and settle into your accommodation.

Accommodation: Villa Fontaine Grand Tokyo Roppongi – 3.5 Star - or similar (1 night)

Please check with reservations before booking your flight. There will only be one group arrival transfer.

Day 2 – Tuesday 4 May 2027
Tokyo Sightseeing & Ship Embarkation

B-L-D

After breakfast at the hotel, we begin our sightseeing tour showcasing Tokyo's modern landmarks and impressive city views.

Our first highlight is **Tokyo Tower**, one of the capital's most recognisable landmarks. Inspired by the Eiffel Tower and painted in distinctive red and white, it has been an enduring symbol of Tokyo since 1958. We join the Top Deck Tour and travel to the upper observation deck, where we enjoy sweeping views across the vast cityscape. On a clear day, you may even catch a distant glimpse of Mount Fuji.

We then enjoy a **Welcome Lunch** together at a local restaurant, where we have an opportunity to sample Japanese cuisine before continuing to Odaiba. This futuristic waterfront district is set on a man-made island in Tokyo Bay and is known for its contemporary architecture, entertainment precincts and expansive harbour views.

Here, we visit **Odaiba's Statue of Liberty**, a smaller replica of the famous New York monument and one of the district's most popular photographic landmarks. From the waterfront promenade, we enjoy excellent views across **Tokyo Bay** towards the city skyline and elegant **Rainbow Bridge**. We take time to stroll along the promenade and admire this impressive suspension bridge connecting Odaiba with central Tokyo.

Following our sightseeing, we travel to the Tokyo International Cruise Terminal. Upon arrival, we complete the embarkation formalities and board **MSC Bellissima**, ready to begin our cruise through Japan, Okinawa and Taiwan.

Cruise Ship: MSC Bellissima - 3.5 Star (13 nights)



Day 3 – Wednesday 5 May 2027
Sea Day

B-L-D

Today, we enjoy a relaxing day at sea as we sail towards **Kobe**.

This is the perfect opportunity for you to familiarise yourself with the ship that will be our home throughout the cruise. Take time to explore its restaurants, lounges and entertainment venues, join one of the organised onboard activities* or simply relax on deck and enjoy the ocean views.

Tonight, we arrive in **Kobe**, one of Japan's most important and cosmopolitan port cities. Located on Honshu Island between the Rokkō Mountains and Osaka Bay, Kobe is home to approximately 1.5 million people and has long played a significant role in trade between Japan and the wider world. When Kobe opened to international commerce during the 19th century, foreign merchants and their families settled in the city. Their influence remains visible in the elegant Western-style residences of the historic Kitano district, creating a distinctive blend of Japanese and European heritage.

With the ship remaining in port overnight, you may wish to admire Kobe's illuminated waterfront from the deck or experience the city's evening atmosphere ashore. Harbourland and Meriken Park are particularly attractive after dark, when the port skyline and waterfront landmarks are beautifully illuminated.

**spa treatments and some other ship activities may incur additional costs which are at own expense and paid directly to the ship.*

Day 4 – Thursday 6 May 2027

B-L-D

Kobe - Shore Excursion - UNESCO World Heritage Site: Himeji Castle & Engyōji Temple Tour

Today, we travel by coach from Kobe to magnificent **Himeji Castle**, a UNESCO World Heritage site dating from the 14th century.

Known as the "White Heron Castle" for its graceful white exterior, it is one of Japan's finest surviving feudal castles. We explore the impressive complex of towers, gates, defensive passageways and historic buildings before enjoying **lunch at a local restaurant**.

We then continue to **Mount Shosha** and ascend the forested mountainside by **cable car**. At the summit, we visit the atmospheric **Engyōji Temple** complex, founded more than a thousand years ago. We follow the tree-lined path through Niomon Gate to Maniden Hall, dramatically constructed on pillars overlooking the forest.

After a memorable day of history, culture and beautiful mountain scenery, we return to Kobe and reboard the ship before departure.

Please note: This excursion operates on our second day in Kobe and involves uneven surfaces and numerous steps. It is unsuitable for guests with limited mobility.



Day 5 – Friday 7 May 2027

B-D

Kochi – Shore Excursion - Katsurahama Beach and Hirome Market

Today, our cruise takes us to **Kochi**, located in the prefecture of the same name on the island of Shikoku.

Two of Kochi's must-sees are on the itinerary of this half-day excursion, the first of which being Katsurahama Beach, a no-swim zone on the shores of the North Pacific Ocean and scenic stretch of Pacific coastline surrounded by pine trees and colourful pebbles. Although swimming is prohibited, you can enjoy the coastal views and see the statue of **Sakamoto Ryōma**, a Kochi-born samurai who played an important role in ending Japan's feudal era.

We then continue to lively **Hirome Market**, home to approximately 60 food stalls, shops and casual dining venues. Here, we have time to explore the market and perhaps sample Kochi's celebrated speciality, *katsuo no warayaki tataki* skipjack tuna seared over a blazing straw fire. Following our visit, we return to the ship.

Please note: This tour by coach includes moderate walking. You will need to climb some stairs to reach the Sakamoto Ryōma statue and observation point which is unsuitable for guests of limited mobility. Please wear comfortable shoes and dress according to the weather conditions. Views are subject to favourable weather conditions.

Day 6 – Saturday 8 May 2027

B-D

Hiroshima – Shore Excursion – Hiroshima City in Half a Day

Today, we explore **Hiroshima's** historic heritage and contemporary character on a half-day sightseeing tour.

A short coach journey takes us to **Hiroshima Castle**, originally constructed in the 16th century and later rebuilt following its destruction in 1945. During our guided visit to the castle grounds, we learn about its feudal history and its important role in the development of Hiroshima while viewing the castle's impressive exterior.

We also visit the peaceful **Hiroshima Gokoku Shrine** before continuing to **Shukkeien Garden**. Established in 1620, its name means "shrunk-scenery garden," reflecting its miniature representations of mountains, valleys and lakes. Here, we have time to wander among the picturesque ponds, graceful bridges, traditional teahouses and beautifully landscaped grounds.

Our final stop is **Hondori Shopping Street**, Hiroshima's lively pedestrian arcade. Here, you have free time to browse the shops, observe local life or sample regional specialities before we return to the ship.

Please note: This tour by coach includes moderate walking. You may need to climb some stairs. This tour is unsuitable for guests with limited mobility. Please wear comfortable shoes and dress according to the weather conditions.



Day 7 – Sunday 9 May 2027

B-D

Beppu – Shore Excursion – to be finalised

Today, we arrive in **Beppu**, one of Japan's most celebrated hot-spring destinations, famous for the clouds of mineral-rich steam rising across the city.

Our shore excursion (**Still to be Finalised**) is likely to include the spectacular **Hells of Beppu**, a collection of colourful geothermal pools created by intense volcanic activity. We may see the brilliant cobalt waters of **Umi Jigoku**, the deep-red pool of **Chinoike Jigoku**, and steaming mud pools and bubbling hot springs that are unsuitable for bathing but fascinating to observe. Our tour may also include a viewpoint overlooking Beppu Bay, a visit to a traditional hot-spring district or an opportunity to sample food cooked naturally using geothermal steam before we return to the ship.

Day 8 – Monday 10 May 2027

B-L-D

Sea Day

Today, we enjoy a relaxing day at sea as we sail towards the **Okinawa Islands**. You can unwind beside one of the pools, indulge in a spa treatment* or maintain your fitness routine at the gym or during a yoga session.

Throughout the day, you can browse the ship's shops, attend a live performance or take part in the many activities available on board. You can also enjoy an impressive selection of dining options, ranging from international cuisine and casual buffets to speciality restaurants.

Tonight, perhaps try your luck at the casino or settle in and enjoy an entertaining evening show.

**spa treatments and some other ship activities may incur additional costs which are at own expense and paid directly to the ship.*

Day 9 – Tuesday 11 May 2027

B-L-D

Okinawa – Shore Excursion – Traditional Ryukyu dance Performance

Today, we arrive in **Naha**, the capital of Okinawa and the historic heart of the former Ryūkyū Kingdom. On our half-day shore excursion, we immerse ourselves in Okinawa's distinctive culture and heritage.

Our first stop is a local **distillery**, where we learn how *awamori*, Okinawa's traditional rice spirit, is produced using methods passed down through generations. Following the tour, we enjoy a tasting of this distinctive drink, known for its rich and mellow flavour.

We then continue to a traditional **Ryūkyū dance performance**, accompanied by an authentic **Okinawan lunch**. Once performed at the royal court to welcome visiting dignitaries, the elegant dances, colourful costumes and traditional music offer a fascinating insight into the heritage of the former Ryūkyū Kingdom.

Our final stop is lively **Kokusai-dori**, Naha's main shopping and entertainment street. Here, you have approximately one hour to browse the boutiques, department stores and souvenir shops or visit one of the many cafés and restaurants before we return to the ship.



Day 10 – Wednesday 12 May 2027

B-L-D

Miyako Island – Shore Excursion – Miyakojima Scenic Highlights Tour

Today, we arrive at beautiful **Miyako Island**, renowned for its pristine beaches, clear turquoise waters and colourful coral reefs.

On our shore excursion, we discover the island's spectacular natural beauty, beginning at **Makiyama Observatory**, where we enjoy panoramic views across Irabu Bridge and the surrounding turquoise waters.

We then continue to **Toriike Pond**, two interconnected limestone sinkholes known for their striking blue water and lush natural setting. Our next stop is peaceful **Sawada no Hama**, a distinctive beach dotted with large boulders and surrounded by shallow, clear water.

At a local restaurant, we enjoy a traditional **Ryukyu Japanese set meal** prepared with fresh regional ingredients. After lunch, we visit **Ryugu Observatory**, which offers magnificent views across the emerald sea and nearby islands.

Our final stop is **Yonaha Maehama Beach**, considered one of Japan's most beautiful beaches. Here, we have time to admire its soft white sand, crystal-clear water and peaceful tropical scenery before we return to the ship.

Please note: This tour by coach includes moderate walking. You may need to climb some stairs. This tour is unsuitable for guests with limited mobility. Please wear comfortable shoes and dress according to the weather conditions.

Day 11 – Thursday 13 May 2027

B-D

Keelung – Shore Excursion – to be finalised

Today, we arrive in **Keelung**, the gateway to Taipei, Taiwan's dynamic capital and centre of government, culture and commerce. Here, we experience a fascinating blend of Chinese and Japanese influences, ancient traditions and contemporary city life.

Shore Excursion – To Be Finalised

Our shore excursion is likely to include **Taipei 101**, the city's most recognisable landmark. Inspired by the shape of bamboo, this 101-storey tower rises more than 500 metres above the Xinyi district. We may also visit **Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall**, an imposing white building crowned by a blue octagonal roof. The hall is reached by 89 steps, representing each year of the former leader's life, and stands within beautifully landscaped gardens alongside the National Theatre and National Concert Hall.

Another likely inclusion is the **National Palace Museum**, home to one of the world's most significant collections of Chinese art and historical treasures. Its vast collection spans thousands of years and includes ancient bronzes, ceramics, jade, calligraphy and paintings, offering you a remarkable insight into Chinese history and culture before we return to the ship.



Day 12 – Friday 14 May 2027
Sea Day

B-L-D

Today, we enjoy a relaxing day at sea. You can unwind beside one of the pools, indulge in a spa* treatment, maintain your fitness routine at the gym or join a yoga session.

Throughout the day, you can browse the ship's shops, attend a live performance or take part in the many activities available on board. You can also enjoy an impressive selection of dining options, ranging from international cuisine and casual buffets to speciality restaurants.

Tonight, perhaps try your luck at the casino or settle in and enjoy an entertaining evening show.

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Day 13 – Saturday 15 May 2027

B-D

Kagoshima – Shore Excursion – Explore Chiran Districts & it's Treasures

Today, we arrive in **Kagoshima**, a welcoming city in southern Japan known for its mild climate, attractive waterfront and dramatic volcanic scenery. Dominating the landscape is **Sakurajima**, one of Japan's most active volcanoes, rising majestically across the bay. The city is often called the Naples of Japan because of its warm climate, coastal setting and proximity to an active volcano. During our visit, you may witness clouds of volcanic ash rising from Sakurajima, creating an unforgettable backdrop to our day in Kagoshima.

On today's shore excursion, we journey through the countryside of southern Kyushu to **Chiran**, a beautifully preserved samurai district featuring historic residences and gardens dating back approximately 250 years. During our **guided walk**, we explore a tranquil 700-metre-long street lined with traditional homes, stone walls and carefully clipped hedges. With wooded hills forming a picturesque backdrop, the district offers an authentic glimpse into life during Japan's feudal era.

We then visit the **Chiran Peace Museum**, located on the site of a former military airbase used by kamikaze pilots during the final stages of the Pacific War. Through photographs, letters, personal possessions and aircraft displays, we learn about the young pilots, the circumstances they faced and the devastating human cost of war. The museum offers a moving message about remembrance and the importance of lasting peace.

Before returning to the ship, we stop at local shops, where you have free time to browse regional products and souvenirs. Our reflective excursion concludes with the coach journey back to Kagoshima Port.

Please note: This tour by coach includes moderate walking. You may need to climb some stairs which is unsuitable for guests of limited mobility. Please wear comfortable shoes and dress according to the weather conditions. Views are subject to favourable weather conditions.



Day 14 – Sunday 16 May 2027
Sea Day

B-L-D

Today, we enjoy a relaxing day at sea. You can unwind beside one of the pools, indulge in a spa* treatment, maintain your fitness routine at the gym or join a yoga session.

Throughout the day, you can browse the ship's shops, attend a live performance or take part in the many activities available on board. You can also enjoy an impressive selection of dining options, ranging from international cuisine and casual buffets to speciality restaurants.

Tonight, perhaps try your luck at the casino or settle in and enjoy an entertaining evening show.

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Day 15 – Monday 17 May 2027
Tokyo

B-L-D

Today, we arrive back in Tokyo and disembark **MSC Bellissima** at the Tokyo International Cruise Terminal. Here, we meet our local guide and board our private coach for a day of sightseeing.

We begin at **Sensōji Temple in Asakusa**, Tokyo's oldest and one of its most celebrated Buddhist temples. Entering through the impressive **Kaminarimon Gate**, you can admire its enormous red lantern before we continue along Nakamise Shopping Street. This historic pedestrian lane is lined with stalls selling traditional sweets, handicrafts and distinctive Japanese souvenirs.

After **lunch at a local restaurant**, we visit spacious **Ueno Park**, one of Tokyo's most important cultural precincts. Within the park, we explore **Ueno Toshogu Shrine**, an ornate Shinto shrine dedicated to Tokugawa Ieyasu. Here, you can admire its richly decorated golden buildings, stone lanterns and peaceful garden setting.

At the conclusion of our tour, we transfer to the **Villa Fontaine Grand Tokyo Roppongi** or similar and check in.

Tonight, we come together for dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation: Villa Fontaine Grand Tokyo Roppongi – 3.5 Star - or similar (2 nights)



Day 16 – Tuesday 18 May 2027
Tokyo

B-L-D

After breakfast at the hotel, we meet our local guide in the lobby and board our private coach for another day of sightseeing in Tokyo.

We begin at **Imperial Palace Plaza**, an expansive public area beside the residence of Japan's Imperial Family. Here, you can admire the palace grounds, historic stone walls, traditional guardhouses and the **famous Nijubashi Bridge**, one of Tokyo's most photographed landmarks.

We then take part in a traditional **paper lantern crafting workshop**. During this hands-on cultural experience, we learn about the artistry behind Japanese lanterns, and you will create your own personalised piece to take home as a special souvenir.

Lunch is served at a local restaurant, where we experience the atmosphere and flavours of historic Edo. Afterwards, we return to our hotel, and the remainder of the afternoon is yours to relax, browse the nearby shops or continue exploring Tokyo independently.

Tonight, we gather at the hotel for a special **Farewell Dinner** and reflect on the memorable experiences we have shared throughout our journey.

Day 17 – Wednesday 19 May 2027
Tokyo

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After breakfast at the hotel, the day is yours to enjoy **Tokyo at leisure**. You may wish to complete some last-minute shopping, revisit a favourite neighbourhood or simply relax at the hotel before our late checkout and coach transfer to Narita International Airport, bringing our memorable journey through Japan and Taiwan to a close.

Please check with reservations before booking your flight. There will only be one group departure transfer.

For information on Cruise Cabin Upgrades please refer to following page.



MSC 13 Night Japan Cruise Map



Cruise Cabin Options

Deluxe Interior Cabin IR2 – Decks 11 - 14

Included in the tour cost



Junior Oceanview Obstructed View Cabin 00* – Deck 8

Upgrade cost: Additional \$710



** image for MSC Bellissima unavailable. This image is from MSC Magnifica*

Deluxe Balcony Cabin BR1 – Decks 8 - 10

Upgrade cost: Additional \$2,639

