Cruise Details

Name:	Unknown Japan And South Korea: In A Realm Full Of Mysteries
Reference:	HAPAGSPI2809
Operator:	Hapag-Lloyd Cruises
Cruise Type:	Ocean
Cruise Rating:	Expedition
Ship:	HANSEATIC spirit
Regions:	Asia
Departs On:	08 Jun 28
Departs From:	Keelung (Chilung)
Arrives On:	27 Jun 28
Arrives At:	Sapporo
Cruise Nights:	19
Total Vacation Days:	20

Itinerary

Day 1: Keelung (Chilung) (Taiwan)

Arrives On: 08 Jun 28

Day 3: Naha, Okinawa (Japan)

The very special way of life in Okinawa combines exoticism, tradition and a warm welcome. The Japanese prefecture consists of around 160 islands, only 49 of which are inhabited. The relaxed way of life, also known as “Okinawa Time”, creates a special atmosphere and is the secret to the long lifespan of many of its inhabitants – Ogimi, a village on the main island, is home to many centenarians. Naha, the capital of Okinawa, is the gateway to the islands and offers cultural highlights including Shuri Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Shinto Naminoue Shrine overlooks Naminoue Beach, offering an amazing view over the sea and another place to appreciate the unique charm of the island.

Arrives On: 10 Jun 28

Day 4: Okinoerabu (Japan)

Okinoerabu-Shima is largely undiscovered by tourism. Join us on a journey of discovery where deep-blue waters, coral reefs and pristine beaches meet an iconic limestone cave system: Originally formed from coral, the island is now home to some of the largest limestone caves in Japan. Tour the sights on your own or on a walking tour – let your experts on board inspire you with the special geological features of the island. And so your time in paradise becomes an excursion into the diversity of the Pacific region.

Arrives On: 11 Jun 28

Day 5: Amami Ōshima (Japan)

Explore the bright subtropical character of Amami-Oshima. Fruit plantations and sandy beaches surround crystal-blue bays with a Japanese South Seas flair, providing an inviting spot for relaxation. Swimming, snorkelling or other watersports: how will you spend your time in paradise? Those thirsty for knowledge may be interested in the 1,300-year-old history of Oshima Tsumugi silk, which is produced here. It has been used for centuries to make kimonos.

Arrives On: 12 Jun 28

Day 6: Yakushima (Japan)

A lush landscape awaits on Yakushima. As you approach the island, you will see from the many open deck areas on board the ship why the mountains here are known as the “Alps on the ocean”. There are eight mountain peaks on the island, reaching up to 1,900 m (6,234 ft) above sea level. At the foot of the mountains are mossy forests of Japanese cedars, which are estimated to be several thousand years old. The area is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and looks particularly enigmatic when the mist hangs over the rhododendrons, mosses and lichens.

Arrives On: 13 Jun 28

Day 7: Uwajima (Japan)

Great natural wonders and cultural treasures also characterise the smallest of Japan’s main islands, Shikoku. Surrounded by mountain ranges, a historic castle in the coastal town of Uwajima will transport you back to the Edo period. Explore cultural Uwajima* in the footsteps of the Date clan who once ruled the area. On the outskirts of the city, Tenshaen, a classic 19th-century Japanese landscape garden with ponds, pavilions and pine trees, invites visitors to pause and reflect. The region around Uwajima is one of the most important growing areas for mikans, the popular Japanese mandarine – sweet and juicy.

Arrives On: 14 Jun 28

Day 8: Beppu, Kyushu Island, Oita (Japan)

During lectures and talks on board, your experts will also talk about Japan's location on a geological fracture zone of four tectonic plates. The resulting hydrothermal activity is, amongst other things, the basis for the onsen baths with healing hot springs. The spa city of Beppu demonstrates how bathing rituals shape Japanese culture. There are more than 2,000 of these healing baths in Japan, which is hardly surprising for a country in which almost every mountain is a volcano. Onsen are a great place to relax and unwind and enjoy their healing properties. Even the samurai asked for support from the deities while bathing in an onsen. Immerse yourself in this relaxing tradition.

Arrives On: 15 Jun 28

Day 9: Miyako Islands (Japan)

The picturesque coastline of the sacred island of Miyajima has inspired both art and literature. On an independent shore visit, discover its allure and one of Japan's famous landmarks: the Itsukushima Shrine, one of the most photographed places in the country and a symbol of the ancient veneration of nature characteristic of Shintoism. At high tide, its 16 m (52 ft) high Torii, a red gate made of camphor wood, reflects in the water and appears to float there. There are over a hundred thousand Shinto shrines in Japan and this one is not only the most famous, but also one of the most beautiful.

Arrives On: 16 Jun 28

Day 9: Hiroshima (Japan)

Make the most of your evening in Hiroshima and explore Nagarekawa district with its izakayas, bars and small restaurants. Or take a walk to the illuminated Peace Memorial Park. If you like typical Japanese entertainment, you can also end the evening with karaoke.

Arrives On: 16 Jun 28

Day 10: Hiroshima (Japan)

Hiroshima symbolises a very eventful period in modern history – your exploration of the area will be shaped by memorials. Tracing the tragic events of 1945 will take you to the Peace Memorial Park, designed by star architect Kenzo Tange. Together with your experts on board, who will provide a commentary for your visit, experience Hiroshima as an impressive place of historic reflection, as well as a symbol of hope and new beginnings. Hiroshima Castle, also known as Rijo, will take you back to times long past. It is a perfect example of Japanese architecture in the traditional pagoda style and its museum tells the story of the samurai. With its variety of miniature landscapes, the Shukkeien Garden displays Japanese landscape gardening as an art form: pause for a while at the tea houses and Koi carp ponds to find inner peace and serenity.

Arrives On: 17 Jun 28

Day 12: Busan (South Korea)

Mysterious, remote and little-known: in South Korea, you will enter a fascinating realm. In the “Land of Morning Calm”, at the south-eastern tip of the Korean Peninsula, the city of Busan conjures up the many faces of Asia. Here, traditional ceremonies and historic temples still have their place alongside more modern aspects. A trip on the Sky Capsule, a four-seater elevated rail carriage, offers impressive views of Busan’s coastline and hills. The city is also the starting point for discovering the relics of the old Silla dynasty and sacred sites in the form of colourfully embellished temples. Get a sense of the Koreans’ close relationship with nature along the dramatic coastline with its small suspension bridges. You can also satisfy your hunger for adventure with insights into the traditional lifestyle and local cuisine, including the Korean “fire meat” bulgogi.

Arrives On: 19 Jun 28

Day 13: Fukuoka (Japan)

In lively Fukuoka, you can experience the fast pace of Japanese civilisation, whose origins date back to 300 BC. The authentic atmosphere is particularly apparent at the rustic Yatai street stalls, where locals slurp ramen and swap recipes. Fukuoka is an attractive city with modern highlights including the enormous Canal City shopping and entertainment centre, which has an artificial canal flowing through it. Cultural and historic gems like the Dazaifu Temple stand as testament to the city’s importance in the seventh century, when it was the political and cultural centre of Kyushu Island. The history of the Futsukaichi Onsen hot springs go back just as far and still today offer a great place for a relaxing bath.

Arrives On: 20 Jun 28

Day 14: Oki Islands (Japan)

In the middle of the Sea of Japan, far away from the tourist trails, lies the archipelago of the Oki Islands – rugged, unspoilt and rich in ancient traditions. The unique geology has formed a unique ecosystem with red rock formations and green vegetation. Small villages preserve local craftsmanship, Shinto shrines and ancient fishing traditions. Hiking trails, dramatic cliffs and hidden coves offer insights into nature and the lives of the inhabitants. On the islands, you can feel a deep connection between people and the landscape – a remote region full of charm, tranquillity and authenticity.

Arrives On: 21 Jun 28

Day 15: Maizuru (Japan)

Maizuru, with its charming red brick buildings, opens the doors to a world full of history – your experts on board will become passionate narrators as they shed light on the various chapters of Japan’s past. Former naval buildings and numerous museums reflect the importance of the port

during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904/05 and the city's development into a naval base. Here, your understanding of the Far Eastern world of faith will also unfold like a "crane spreading its wings", which is what the name Maizuru means. The city is the perfect starting point for visiting the spiritual centre of the country: Kyoto* – the old imperial city with countless temples and lavishly decorated shrines is a highlight of this cruise.

Arrives On: 22 Jun 28

Day 16: Kanazawa (Japan)

Kanazawa is famous for is gold leaf production, which has been perfected here over the centuries. The skill required to process the precious metal into wafer-thin sheets has earned the city an international reputation as the "gold leaf capital". The architecture and cultural history of the town have a glitter of their own. In the traditional geisha district, you can visit many of the well-preserved tea houses from the Edo period, where geishas once entertained their guests. Another district offers an insight into the lifestyle of the samurai, with historic houses, traditional Japanese gardens, tatami mats and original furniture. By contrast, the famous Kenrokuen Garden perfectly combines spaciousness and seclusion, artistry and tradition, coolness and harmony.

Arrives On: 23 Jun 28

Day 17: Sado (Japan)

In Japan, fishing is considered a male domain, but on Sado Island, women have carved out a niche for themselves in the fishing industry: they fish from flat, round, wooden barrel boats – a unique cultural heritage. With the increasing mechanisation of fishing, the number of women fishing from these barrel boats has fallen sharply. Nevertheless, efforts are being made to preserve this unique tradition and pass it on to future generations.

Arrives On: 24 Jun 28

Day 18: Akita (Japan)

As in many regions of Japan, the samurai caste was once an important part of society in Akita Prefecture – the samurai were feudal rulers and warriors known for their loyalty and military service. The city of Akita is an invitation for you to explore the old samurai district of Kakunodate with its traditional architecture. The Akita, an ancient Japanese dog breed, is said to have been the samurai's faithful companion. In 1931, it was declared a national treasure by Emperor Hirohito. The Akita Museum of Art is a more modern creation: the iconic building with a free-standing staircase and triangular skylight was designed by the renowned architect Tadao Ando.

Arrives On: 25 Jun 28

Day 19: Hakodate (Japan)

At the south-eastern tip of Japan's second-largest and northernmost main island, Hokkaido, lies the city of Hakodate, dominated by its local mountain at 335 m (1,099 ft) above sea level. From its summit or from the Goryokaku Tower, you can enjoy beautiful views of the city with its famous star-shaped fortress. Hakodate was one of the first Japanese ports to open to foreign ships in 1854. This led to the development of the historic Motomachi district, with its 19th-century buildings in the European style. Also of architectural interest is the Future University Hakodate designed by Tokyo architect Riken Yamamoto: with features from 1970s structuralism, the building is a successful example of the high-tech style made famous by Norman Foster.

Arrives On: 26 Jun 28

Day 20: Sapporo (Japan)

Arrives On: 27 Jun 28

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.
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