Cruise Details

Name:	Circumnavigation of Japan: Icons, Traditions & Coastal Discovery
Reference:	SCENIC121A200329-1
Operator:	Scenic Ocean Cruises
Cruise Type:	Ocean
Cruise Rating:	Ultra Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Eclipse II
Regions:	Asia
Departs On:	20 Mar 29
Departs From:	Osaka
Arrives On:	05 Apr 29
Arrives At:	Osaka
Cruise Nights:	16
Total Vacation Days:	17

Itinerary

Day 1: Osaka (Japan)

Welcome to Osaka, Japan's vibrant culinary capital and gateway to the treasures of the Kansai region. A city of contrasts, Osaka seamlessly blends the grandeur of its 16th-century castle with a dynamic street food scene that pulses through neighbourhoods like Dotonbori and Shinsekai. Nearby, the ancient capitals of Kyoto and Nara beckon with serene temples, sacred deer parks and centuries of imperial history.

Your voyage begins with a warm greeting by the Captain and crew as you step on board Scenic Eclipse II, your ultra-luxury Scenic Discovery Yacht. Sip on a glass of Champagne as you explore your luxurious suite, then join fellow guests at the Sky Bar to toast the start of a remarkable voyage around Japan.

As evening falls, choose from a range of distinct culinary experiences, before settling into an evening of thoughtfully curated entertainment. Please book your flight to arrive into Osaka prior to 02:00 PM.

Arrives On: 20 Mar 29

Day 2: Imabari (Japan)

Discover Imabari, a maritime city on the island of Shikoku and the eastern gateway to the Shimanami Kaido, one of the world's most celebrated cycling and walking routes, linking a chain of small islands across the Seto Inland Sea via a series of graceful bridges. The city itself is steeped in heritage, home to a reconstructed castle with sweeping moat views, a distinguished shipbuilding tradition and a thriving towel-making industry renowned for its exceptional craftsmanship.

Wander the charming streets where local workshops have perfected the art of imabari towels, using the region's naturally soft water to produce textiles of remarkable quality. Along the waterfront, fishing boats and ferry terminals underscore the city's enduring connection to the sea, whilst nearby islands invite exploration of quiet beaches, citrus groves and panoramic coastal trails.

This evening, savour the flavours of Asia at Koko's Asian Fusion, where expertly crafted dishes from the Sushi & Saké Bar @ Koko’s or the vibrant Night Market @ Koko’s+ menu provide a refined counterpoint to your day spent in Japanese culture.

Arrives On: 21 Mar 29

Day 3: Itsukushima (Japan)

Begin the morning at Miyajima, one of Japan's most revered and photographed islands. The World Heritage-listed Itsukushima Shrine, with its iconic vermillion torii gate appearing to float upon the water at high tide, has drawn pilgrims and travellers for centuries. Beyond the shrine, forested hillsides rise steeply, home to friendly wild deer that wander freely among visitors, whilst traditional streets offer local specialities including momiji manju, the island's signature maple-leaf-shaped cakes.

This afternoon, Scenic Eclipse II repositions to Hiroshima, a city defined by resilience and renewal. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial and surrounding park invite quiet reflection, whilst Hiroshima Castle and the tranquil Shukkeien Garden reveal layers of older tradition and refined landscape design. Tree-lined avenues, riverside paths and lively neighbourhoods round out an afternoon that balances remembrance with the energy of contemporary city life.

Arrives On: 22 Mar 29

Day 3: Hiroshima (Japan)

Arrives On: 22 Mar 29

Day 4: Shimonoseki (Japan)

Located at the western tip of Honshu, Shimonoseki commands the narrow Kanmon Strait, where the waters of the Seto Inland Sea meet the Sea of Japan. This storied port city is famed throughout the country as the capital of fugu, the prized and carefully prepared pufferfish,

with the bustling Karato Fish Market offering a vivid introduction to the region's seafood traditions.

Beyond the waterfront, the historic Chofu district preserves the atmosphere of the feudal era, with samurai residences, moss-covered temple grounds and quiet lanes that evoke an earlier Japan. The Kanmon Strait itself is spanned by an undersea pedestrian tunnel, linking Honshu to Kyushu, and the surrounding parklands offer sweeping views of ships navigating this busy maritime passage.

Return on board this evening for a cocktail at the Scenic Lounge Bar, where over 130 whiskies await, or choose from the expertly crafted menu at Elements, featuring Italian, steak and seafood prepared with locally sourced ingredients.

Arrives On: 23 Mar 29

Day 5: Busan (South Korea)

Cross the Korea Strait to discover Busan, South Korea's dynamic coastal metropolis. Stretched along a dramatic shoreline of beaches, cliffs and wooded hillsides, the city reveals a distinctive character quite unlike any Japanese port on this voyage. The bustling Jagalchi Fish Market, one of the largest in Asia, hums with energy as vendors display the morning's catch, whilst nearby Gamcheon Culture Village cascades down a hillside in a mosaic of pastel-coloured houses and street art.

Along the coast, Haedong Yonggungsa Temple overlooks the East Sea from a striking clifftop setting, its ornate architecture framed by coastal pines and the steady movement of the sea. Historic Beomeosa Temple, set in the forested slopes of Mount Geumjeongsan, offers a more contemplative setting, with its ancient halls nestled among towering trees and mountain streams.

Arrives On: 24 Mar 29

Day 6: Sakaiminato (Japan)

After a morning at sea, arrive at Sakaiminato on the coast of western Honshu, a charming fishing port that serves as the gateway to a region of quiet beauty and cultural depth. Nearby

Matsue, the capital of Shimane Prefecture, is home to one of Japan's few remaining original castles, its dark, brooding keep reflected in the surrounding moat. The city's literary heritage is closely tied to Lafcadio Hearn, the 19th-century writer who found inspiration in its ghost stories and local traditions.

A short journey to Daikonshima reveals Yuushien Garden, celebrated for its extraordinary seasonal peony displays, with hundreds of varieties blooming across immaculately landscaped grounds that overlook a tranquil lagoon. Sakaiminato itself is known for its playful connection to manga culture, with character statues lining the streets near the harbour.

Arrives On: 25 Mar 29

Day 7: Kanazawa (Japan)

Kanazawa is one of Japan's most beautifully preserved castle towns, a city that escaped wartime destruction and retains an extraordinary concentration of Edo-era heritage. At its heart lies Kenrokuen, ranked among the country's three finest landscape gardens, where meticulously pruned pines, winding streams and seasonal blooms create a composition of timeless elegance.

The Higashi Chaya district transports visitors to the world of the geisha, with graceful wooden tea houses lining cobblestone lanes, whilst the lively Omicho Market teems with fresh seafood, local produce and artisan crafts. Beyond the city, the World Heritage-listed village of Shirakawa-go preserves a mountain hamlet of steep-roofed farmhouses, their distinctive thatched gassho-zukuri architecture a testament to generations of rural ingenuity.

Arrives On: 26 Mar 29

Day 8: Sado (Japan)

Venture to Sado Island, a rugged and richly storied island set in the Sea of Japan off the coast of Niigata. Once a place of exile for disgraced aristocrats and a centre of gold mining that fuelled the Tokugawa shogunate, Sado carries layers of history that few Japanese destinations can match. The island's gold and silver mines, which operated for nearly four centuries, have been recognised for their historical significance and remain among Sado's most compelling landmarks.

Beyond its mining heritage, Sado is celebrated for its traditional performing arts, including the thunderous Ondeko drumming and the refined movements of Noh theatre, which flourished here during the island's years as a cultural crossroads. Dramatic coastal scenery unfolds along rocky headlands, hidden coves and rice terraces that cascade to the sea, whilst the island's slower pace of life offers a welcome contrast to the busier mainland.

Arrives On: 27 Mar 29

Day 9: Niigata (Japan)

Discover Niigata, a prosperous port city on Honshu's Sea of Japan coast, renowned for producing some of the country's finest rice and, by extension, its most celebrated saké. The Niigata region is home to an extraordinary concentration of saké breweries, many with histories stretching back generations, where master brewers draw on pure mountain water and locally grown Koshihikari rice to craft beverages of exceptional quality.

The city's historic port quarter reflects centuries of maritime trade, with handsome merchant residences and warehouses that speak to Niigata's importance as a gateway between Japan and the Asian mainland. Fertile plains stretch inland, their patchwork of rice paddies providing the foundation of the region's agricultural identity, whilst the nearby coastline offers quiet stretches of sand and views across the sea toward Sado Island.

This evening, perhaps enjoy contemporary French fine dining at Lumière+, where each dish is paired with an exquisite selection of Champagne.

Arrives On: 28 Mar 29

Day 11: Aomori (Japan)

Arrive in Aomori, the northernmost city on Honshu, where the landscapes take on a wilder, more dramatic character. This is a region of deep cultural heritage, celebrated for the spectacular Nebuta Festival and its towering illuminated floats, and for apple orchards that produce some of Japan's most prized fruit. While the festival takes place in August, the city's waterfront Nebuta Museum brings the festival to life year-round, with full-scale floats on display in a striking contemporary building.

Beyond the city, the Shirakami Mountains, a World Heritage-listed site, preserve one of the last remaining virgin beech forests in East Asia. Closer at hand, Hirosaki Castle presides over extensive grounds that are among the most celebrated cherry blossom viewing spots in all of Japan, with thousands of sakura trees creating a breathtaking canopy of pink and white during the spring season. The surrounding moat, carpeted with fallen petals, is one of the country's most iconic seasonal images.

Arrives On: 30 Mar 29

Day 12: Hakodate (Japan)

Cross the Tsugaru Strait to Hakodate, a port city at the southern tip of Hokkaido with a distinctive cosmopolitan heritage. Among the first Japanese cities to open to international trade in the mid-19th century, Hakodate retains a fascinating blend of Western and Japanese architectural influences, particularly in the Motomachi district, where European-style churches, former consulates and elegant merchant houses line hillside streets overlooking the harbour.

The star-shaped Fort Goryokaku, Japan's first Western-style citadel, is beautifully set amidst parkland that transforms into a sea of cherry blossoms each spring. The sweeping panorama from Mount Hakodate is considered one of Japan's three finest vistas, with the city's twinkling lights tracing the narrow isthmus between two bays as evening falls. The bustling morning market near the waterfront is a feast for the senses, with vendors offering the freshest Hokkaido seafood, from glistening uni to succulent crab.

Arrives On: 31 Mar 29

Day 13: Miyako, Iwate (Japan)

Turning south along the Pacific coast, arrive at Miyako, gateway to the dramatic Sanriku coastline. This stretch of northeastern Japan is defined by its raw, untamed beauty, where rugged cliffs plunge into the ocean and forested headlands frame sheltered bays of remarkable clarity. Jodogahama Beach, with its striking white rock formations and emerald waters, has been admired for centuries and remains one of the Tohoku region's most captivating coastal landscapes.

The surrounding coastline reveals a succession of sea caves, natural arches and wave-sculpted promontories, shaped over millennia by the powerful Pacific currents. Miyako's resilient fishing communities maintain a deep connection to the sea, and the area's maritime traditions continue to define daily life along these shores.

Arrives On: 01 Apr 29

Day 14: Oarai (Japan)

Discover Oarai, a seaside town on the Ibaraki coast where spiritual tradition meets natural splendour. The Oarai Isosaki Shrine, perched dramatically on rocky outcrops above the Pacific, features a torii gate that rises directly from the sea, creating a striking tableau at sunrise as waves crash around its base. This sacred site has drawn visitors for centuries, its ocean setting imbuing it with a sense of elemental power.

Inland, the Ibaraki countryside reveals a gentler landscape of wooded valleys and flowing rivers. Fukuroda Falls, one of Japan's three great waterfalls, cascades over a series of rocky tiers surrounded by dense forest that blazes with colour in autumn and frames the tumbling water in fresh green during spring. The region's quieter character offers a contemplative pause between the dramatic coastlines further north and the iconic vistas that lie ahead.

Arrives On: 02 Apr 29

Day 15: Shimizu (Japan)

Shimizu offers one of the most celebrated vistas in all of Japan: the commanding presence of Mount Fuji, its symmetrical snow-capped cone rising above Suruga Bay in a scene that has inspired artists and poets for centuries. On clear days, the sacred mountain dominates the horizon with a majesty that transcends every photograph.

Ashore, the Nihondaira plateau provides an elevated vantage point encompassing Mount Fuji, the bay and the surrounding tea plantations that carpet the hillsides in vivid green. Nearby, the ornate Kunozan Toshogu Shrine, a forerunner to the more famous Nikko shrine, honours Tokugawa Ieyasu and stands resplendent with lacquered woodwork and gilded detailing amid forested slopes. Further afield, the World Heritage-listed Shiraito Falls presents a curtain of delicate cascades fed by snowmelt filtering through ancient lava, creating an ethereal scene of mist and light.

Return to Scenic Eclipse II and unwind with a cocktail at the Sky Bar on Deck 10 with panoramic sea vistas, or step into the thermal loungers of Senses Spa to recharge after your day ashore.

Arrives On: 03 Apr 29

Day 16: Toba (Japan)

Arrive in Toba, a quiet port city on the Shima Peninsula that holds an outsized place in Japanese cultural history. It was here, in the sheltered waters of Ago Bay, that Mikimoto Kokichi pioneered the technique of cultivating pearls in the late 19th century, transforming a local fishing tradition into a global industry. The legacy of pearl cultivation remains woven into the fabric of the city, and the traditions of the ama, the free-diving women who have harvested shellfish and seaweed along these shores for over two thousand years, endure as a living connection to the region's maritime past.

Nearby, the Ise Grand Shrine, Japan's most sacred Shinto site,

stands in a forest of towering ancient cryptomeria trees. Rebuilt every 20 years in an unbroken cycle of renewal stretching back centuries, the shrine complex embodies the essence of Japanese spiritual tradition. The forested slopes of Mount Asama and the surrounding pilgrimage trails offer a contemplative counterpoint to the coastal pleasures of Toba.

This evening, perhaps enjoy one final dinner at Lumière+, where contemporary French fine dining is paired with an exquisite selection of Champagne, or celebrate your journey with the tantalising street-food inspired dishes at Night Market @ Koko's+.

Arrives On: 04 Apr 29

Day 17: Osaka (Japan)

Today, it is time to farewell Scenic Eclipse II after 17 remarkable days on board. Be sure to fit in one last indulgent breakfast at the Yacht Club or ask your butler to deliver coffee to your suite so you can take your time packing. Then disembark in Osaka, carrying with you memories of an unforgettable Discovery Voyage around Japan during its most magical season. Please book your flight to depart out of Osaka after 12:00 PM. #Spa treatments and services at additional cost. Daily activities may be subject to change; please consult your Daily Wonder for updates.
+All drinks on board, including those stocked in your mini bar, are included, except for a very small number of rare, fine and vintage wines, Champagnes and spirits. Specialty restaurants require a reservation, enquire on board.
^Experiences on board our two helicopters and submersible are at additional cost, subject to regulatory approval, availability, weight restrictions, medical approval and weather conditions.
~Kayak and stand-up paddleboard not available in all locations. Helicopter and submersible not in operation in Japan. The itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons. As such, Scenic cannot guarantee the voyage will operate unaltered from the itinerary stated above. Please refer to our terms and conditions for further information. Hotels are indicative and subject to change.

Arrives On: 05 Apr 29

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