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2024 SAMURAI MUSASHI TOUR#10

Himeji / Tasuno / Fukuyama / Bizen/ Kurushima Strait / Oshima / Kokura /Kuamamoto and more

DATE:

26 Sep (Thu) 2024 — 8 Oct (Tue) 2024

INCLUDED:

11 Nights / 12 Days • 30 Meals
(Daily Breakfasts, 9 Lunches, 10 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu
English-Speaking Local Guide
All Land Tour transportation
Hotel Accommodation
All support of your baggage
Souvenir boxes (included pack in a box)
Heartwarming Service

ITINERARY:

Day 1: Thu. Sep 26 – HONOLULU: Depart Honolulu

Enjoy your journey through the skies and prepare for the wonderful adventure that awaits you in Japan.

Day 2: Fri. Sep 27 – HOTEL NIKKO KANSAI AIRPORT

Welcome to Japan! After arriving at **Kansai Intl Airport**. After completing immigration procedures, we check into our hotel connecting to the Airport. Put your feet up, relax, and get ready to follow in the footsteps of **Miyamoto Musashi**.

Day 3: Sat. Sep 28 – POPPY SPRINGS RESORT & SPA(Onsen)

Departing from the hotel, we will make our way to Tatsuno, famous in Japan for producing delicious somen noodles. At the **Ibonoito Somen Museum** we'll learn about, watch artisans making, and then sample somen noodles, which have been enjoyed in Japan for hundreds of years. Once you've built up an appetite exploring, next stop is **Musashi no Sato (Village)**, an area dedicated to the life and memory of the legendary samurai swordsman, philosopher, and author Miyamoto Musashi (1584~1645). There are plenty of discoveries to be made on the trails here, the birthplace of Japan's most famous swordsman. After a day filled with exploration and discovery, we'll head to our hotel. Unwind in the soothing hot springs, a perfect opportunity to relax and prepare for the adventures that await us tomorrow.

Note: Certainly, if the timing aligns, we may have the opportunity to engage in a special conversation about Miyamoto Musashi with a master instructor from the Niten Ichi-ryu school as a special guest at the Musashi Dojo

Day 4: Sun. Sep 29 – FUKUYAMA NEW CASTLE HOTEL

In the morning, we'll make a stop to see **Bizenyaki (Bizen ware)**. Known as the first of Japan's "Six Ancient Kilns", it is traditional pottery made with techniques originating in the Heian period (794–1185), and has a unique earthy color because of the high iron content of the clay it is made from. Moving on from clay to steel, We will make our way to the **Bizen Osafune Touken no Sato (Sword Museum)**. The Osafune region has been producing Japanese swords since the Kamakura period (1185–1333). The museum boasts a permanent collection of 40 swords and a functioning forge and sword studio where you can witness skilled swordsmiths at work. The cherished sword used by **Sasaki Kojiro** in his duel against Miyamoto Musashi is officially named **Bizen Osafune Nagamitsu**. After these enriching experiences, we'll return to the hotel in Fukuyama. It's a chance to unwind, recharge, and prepare for the adventures that await us tomorrow.

Optional: After check-in, the guide will take a walk around the **Fukuyama Castle** and neighborhood.

Day 5: Mon. Sep 30 – HIROSHIMA AIRPORT HOTEL

After a good night's sleep, we'll set out for a relaxing drive along the **Shimanami Kaido highway** connecting the Japanese islands of Honshu and Kyushu, offering spectacular views of the islands of the Seto Inland Sea and the sea itself as it crosses over them. In the morning, we'll visit the **Oyamazumi Shrine** on the island of Omishima. Bestowed with the title of "Protector Shrine of Japan" in 927, the shrine has amassed a large collection of armor and weapons, offerings made by many generations of warriors who hoped for divine protection in battle. Many of these offerings are now considered National Treasures by Japan, and are on display in the shrine's museum. Upon reaching the end of the road, we will board a boat to embark on the **Uzushio Viewing Cruise**, a unique opportunity to view the tidal whirlpools created by the powerful tides of the **Kurushima Strait**. After enjoying our day out, we will go back to the hotel for check-in, relax and get ready for the next day.

Day 6: Tue. Oct 1 – GRAND PRINCE HOTEL HIROSHIMA

This morning, we will have the opportunity to enjoy seasonal **Fruit picking**, with grapes and apples being the fruits in season during this time of year.

Afterward, we'll immerse ourselves in Japanese culture at the **Hakubotan Sake Brewery in Saijo**. Inside the brewery, you can indulge in sake tasting and purchase sake products. Additionally, you can explore traditional sake-brewing equipment showcased in the brewery shop. It's worth noting that Saijo's brewing buildings were recognized as symbols of Japan's 20th-century heritage in 2017. After enjoying our day out, we will go back to the hotel for check-in, relax and get ready for the next day.

Day 7: Wed. Oct 2 – MARISSA RESORT (Onsen)

In the morning, we will visit **Itsukushima Shrine**, a place that held great reverence from the first samurai to be appointed as "Dajō-daijin", or Grand Minister, by the imperial court, Taira no Kiyomori.

Itsukushima Shrine, situated on **Miyajima Island** in the Seto Inland Sea, is truly unique. The island itself is the primary object of worship, and the shrine's structures are built above the water.

Our next stop is the iconic **Kintai Bridge** in Iwakuni. Originally built in 1672, and named for its resemblance to a kimono sash, its five arches form a living piece of history. The bridge is a perfect vantage point to see Japan's famous orange and red fall leaves on a nearby hill. We'll then move on to visit a nearby **statue of Sasaki Kojiro**, a master swordsman and rival of Miyamoto Musashi, remembered throughout Japan for his toughness and guile. After enjoying our day out we will head to **Suo-Oshima Island**, a large island in the Seto Inland Sea and sister island of Kauai. At the hotel you will be able to enjoy a hot spring bath and breathtaking scenery.

Note: For those who wish, there is an option to relax at the hotel in the morning, and you can then join the group when they return from Miyajima Island.

Day 8: Thu. Oct 3 – JR KYUSHU STATION HOTEL KOKURA

The first part of our day will be spent exploring the **Museum of Japanese Emigration to Hawaii**. The museum has many exhibits exploring the lives and telling the stories of the thousands of Japanese who emigrated to Hawaii from Suo-Oshima following the Meiji Restoration in 1868. The Museum is built in the house of a man who returned to Japan from Hawaii in 1928. Then head to the **city of Yanai** in Yamaguchi prefecture. Yanai is a charming seaside city, famous for its old white-colored buildings, goldfish-shaped lanterns, and thick and sweet Kanro soy sauce. Speaking of which, our next stop will be the **Kanro Soy Sauce Factory**, located in the same building since 1830, where we will learn about the history and labor-intensive process of making soy sauce. The factory sells a variety of soy sauces and ceramic soy sauce dispensers decorated with a picture of Yanai's famous goldfish.

After enjoying our day out we will go back to the hotel. After check-in, the guide will take the group for a walk around the neighborhood.

Day 9: Fri. Oct 4 – JR KYUSHU STATION HOTEL KOKURA

In the morning we'll take a ferry to land at **Ganryujima Island**, where the legendary swordsmen Miyamoto Musashi and Sasaki Kojiro had their fateful duel in 1612. The island was originally called Funajima owing to its boat-like shape, but was later renamed in honor of the Ganryu school of kenjutsu founded by Sasaki Kojiro.

Ganryu kenjutsu was unfortunately lost to time, but will forever live on in the name of Ganryujima. Heading back from Ganryujima, we'll visit the lively **Karato Fish Market**, which sells every kind of fresh fish and sashimi imaginable. Be sure to check out the fugu (blowfish) vending machines on the first floor.

Head up to the second floor to sample some fresh seafood at the restaurants and take in an excellent view of the entire market. After enjoying our day out we will go back to the hotel.

Note: We will offer optional tours for those interested. These may include **shopping in the area near the station**, visiting **Kokura Castle**, and experiencing the nostalgic atmosphere of the **Tanga Ichiba Market**, where you can feel like you've stepped back in time to old Japan.

Day 10: Sat. Oct 5 – HOTEL SEKIA RESORT & SPA (Onsen)

This morning, we will have the pleasure of indulging in high-quality **Yame tea**. With a history spanning 600 years, Yame tea is renowned for its exceptional tea-making craftsmanship. Teas like Yame Traditional Hon Gyokuro, considered world-class, have gained popularity as rare and renowned teas due to their exquisite quality.

After enjoying the tea, we will make our way to the **Nori factory shop** in the Ariake Sea area, known for its high-quality nori (seaweed). The Ariake Sea boasts one of the world's largest tidal ranges and benefits from the rich mineral nutrients flowing in from numerous rivers. These factors contribute to the production of exceptional seaweed in the region. After a day filled with exploration and discovery, we'll head to our hotel, Unwind in the soothing hot springs, a perfect opportunity to relax and prepare for the adventures that await us tomorrow.

Day 11: Sun. Oct 6 – HOTEL NIKKO KUMAMOTO

The first place we will visit today is **Reigando Cave**, situated on the grounds of the Unganzenji Temple. This cave is famous as the location where Miyamoto Musashi spent the last two years of his life and where he authored his masterpiece, **The Book of Five Rings**. Additionally, there is a spring where you can drink the same water that Miyamoto Musashi did hundreds of years ago.

Following our visit to Reigando Cave, we will proceed to the **Shimada Art Museum**. Here, we will have the opportunity to admire artworks related to Miyamoto Musashi. If our timing is fortunate, we may be able to view portraits of Miyamoto Musashi or ink paintings created by the legendary swordsman himself. After enjoying our day out, we will go back to the hotel for check-in, relax and get ready for the next day.

Day 12: Mon. Oct 7 – HOTEL NIKKO KUMAMOTO

In the morning, we will start with a visit to **Musashizuka Park**, where we will conduct the **Ohakamairi**, marking the culmination of our journey following in the footsteps of Miyamoto Musashi. Musashizuka Park is considered one of the possible burial sites of Miyamoto Musashi. According to legend, Musashi requested to be buried upright in his armor, ensuring the protection of the Hosokawa clan even in death. This park is strongly believed to be his actual resting place, given its location along the road that the Hosokawa clan would have taken on their journey to Edo (Tokyo). After paying our respects at Musashizuka Park, we will proceed to **Suizenji Jojuen Garden**. This garden is believed to have its origins in a teahouse built by Hosokawa Tadaoki. It is renowned for its meticulously maintained lush green lawns, which are a truly captivating sight. The garden also features a stunning Japanese-style garden that is sure to enchant your senses. Following that, our next destination will be **Sakuranobaba Josaien**. Situated beneath the majestic **Kumamoto Castle**, this cultural and culinary hub recreates the atmosphere of a samurai castle town, providing a window into the rich cultural and culinary traditions of Kumamoto. **(Lunch and dinner will be at your own expense.)** Tip: Indeed, there are many accounts suggesting that Miyamoto Musashi was invited to Kumamoto by Hosokawa Tadaoki, a samurai who became the lord of Higo Kumamoto Castle after his time at Kokura Castle. Musashi was welcomed to Kumamoto with exceptional treatment, and this version of events is widely accepted.

Day 13: Tue. Oct 8 – FUKUOKA to HONOLULU

At checkout time the guide will come to tape and tie-up the boxes and take the baggage to the airport. After check-in we will head to Fukuoka Airport and board flight # to Honolulu. We will arrive at Honolulu in the same morning. **(Lunch and dinner will be at your own expense.)**

----- **Remarks**

*Please sign up **As soon as possible to HOLD your space!**

*Full Payment is due on Aug 1, 2024

*Tour Cost: based on 25-35 maximum full paying tour members:

*Final Tour Cost will depend on the yen rate, taxes & fuel surcharges.

*Exchange rate: Price based @ 130 -135 JPY (\$1.00 USD) **

*The tour price is based on double occupancy and a minimum group size of 25 passengers. Fare adjustment may apply for groups of 25 or under.

*The rate is based on tariffs and exchange rates effective 12/31/2023.

*Tour fare is subject to change according to any airfare increase, additional fuel surcharges and fluctuation of the rate of exchange between U.S. and foreign currency.

*In the event of revaluation, the land portion of the tour price may be adjusted prior to your final statement.

COST OF LAND TOUR:

TWIN/ TRIPLE OCCUPANCY: \$5,050.00 per person

SINGLE OCCUPANCY (4 single rooms only) \$5,450.00 per person

PLUS AIRFARE \$1,800.00 (*ESTIMATED AIRFARE***)**

NOTE:

Children under 7 years old will receive a 50% discount on the travel fare when traveling. Children under 12 years old will receive a 30% discount on the travel fare when traveling. In both cases mentioned above, if an extra bed is required, it will be charged at the regular rate.

TOUR COST INCLUDES:

11 Nights Hotel accommodations

Daily Breakfasts, 9 Lunches, and 10 Dinners

Admission Fees, Pre-luncheon get-together, Local experienced tour guide from RNL TOURS, LLC

RESERVATIONS & DEPOSITS:

Reservations should be made as soon as possible by filling out the application form and sending a deposit of \$200.00 per person. Reservations are based on a first come first serve basis. Returned check fee of \$25.00 per check.

TRAVEL INSURANCE:

To protect against cancellation charges, optional travel insurance is recommended and is available through RNL Tours, LLC. Rates are subject to change. Coverage and rates for travel insurance may vary by state. For more information, please call our office or email us.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

45 days prior to departure – Full refund

44-30 days prior: 50% cancel fee of the tour price, per person charge

29-15 days prior: 75% cancel fee of the tour price, per person charge

14 days prior or less: 100% cancel fee of the tour price, per person, no refund.

GENERAL CONDITIONS TOUR INCLUDES:

Hotel accommodations, transfers, and sightseeing. Adjustments will be made if there is an increase in fuel surcharges and any fluctuation in exchange rates between US Dollars and Japanese Yen.

AIR TRANSPORTATION:

Air service within tours is included except for people buying the land portion only.

Airfare inclusive rates are based on advanced purchase and may be subject to certain airline restrictions and penalties.

Adjustments will be made if there is any increase on taxes.

PASSPORTS:

All clients are reminded that a valid passport is necessary in all cases.

The cost of obtaining these documents will be the responsibility of the traveler.

The organizer assumes no responsibility whatsoever, should a client, for any reason be refused entry into any particular country, and the subsequent costs entailed will have to be met by the traveler in accordance with obligations that the organizer has in virtue of the contracts held with third parties. Passport must be valid within 6 months at time of departure. A photocopy of your passport is required for all tours.

IF THE TOUR OPERATOR CANCELS:

Should RNL Tours, LLC. cancel a departure for any reason, your money will be fully refunded.

CHANGES IN ITINERARIES:

RNL Tours, LLC. will make every effort to operate all tours as disclosed in this document. However, circumstances may arise which would require an adjustment to the tour. We will however do all that is possible to avoid such changes, but we must reserve the right to make such modifications if they are determined to be necessary

RESPONSIBILITY:

This travel agency and/or its agents, sub-agents, sub-offices and affiliates act only as agents for the owners and contractors providing means of transportation or other services and all tickets and/or vouchers are issued subject to any terms and conditions under which such means of transportation or other services were offered or provided. The issuance and acceptance of such tickets and/or vouchers shall be deemed to be consent to the further conditions that this travel agency, its agents, sub-agents, sub-offices and affiliates shall not become liable or responsible in any way in connections with such means of transportation or other services, or for any loss, injury or damages arising from the default of a tour operator/carrier, lost/damaged baggage, trip cancellation, bad weather, natural disaster or other acts of God. We reserve the right to cancel any tour 45 days or more prior to departure date. All rates in this brochure/itinerary are subject to change without notice.

APPLICATION FORM

2024 SAMURAI MUSASHI TOUR#10

26 Sep (Thu) 2024 — 8 Oct (Tue) 2024

TOUR Number or Tour Name: 2024 SAMURAI MUSASHI TOUR#10

PLEASE TYPE or PRINT: (Name as it appears on passport)

Mr. Mrs./Ms. _____

Last First Middle Name

Address _____

Street City State Zip code

Home Phone #: _____ Cell Phone #: _____

Occupation: _____ Birth Date: _____

Passport No.: _____ Issue Date: _____ Expiration: _____

E-mail address: _____

In case of emergency, contact: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone: _____

Rooming: Single ____ Twin(1/2 beds) ____ Triple(3 beds) ____ **Please Circle 1 or 2 Beds**

Requested roommate(s): _____

I am also signing up for:

Mr. / Mrs. / Ms. _____

Occupation: _____ Birth Date: _____

Passport No.: _____ Issue Date: _____ Expiration: _____

***** Please send a copy of your passport!**

Meal Request: Things you cannot eat or Allergic: (Please indicate: Mr. or Mrs. or Both) Sashimi:

____ Fish: ____ Shellfish: ____ Raw Seafood: ____ Other: ____ Other: ____ Pork:

____ Meat: ____ Chicken: ____ Dairy Items: ____ Nuts: ____ Low Sodium: ____ Detail

Description of Items: _____

Sign up First Come First Serve Full Payment is due on **Aug 1, 2024**, Adjustments will be made if there is any increase in taxes, fuel surcharges, and fluctuation in exchange rates. Tour Cost: based on **25-35** full paying tour members: **

Exchange rate: Price based @ 130 -135 Japan Yen per U.S. dollars**

TWIN / TRIPLE: \$5,050.00 per person _____ SINGLE: \$5,450.00 per person _____

Please make checks payable to RNL TOURS, LLC.

A deposit of **\$200.00** per person is required to "Hold" reservation. Credit Card Payment only for the air portion.

Airlines Information: Own Air: _____ Going with Group: _____ Extending Stay: _____

Charging Air: Yes ____ No: ____ **Seating Request:** _____ **Traveling with:** _____

Charge Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____ Name on Card: _____

NAME on Mileage Card: _____ / _____

Mileage Numbers: JAL: _____ HA: _____ **GLOBAL #** _____ **TSA** _____

Mileage Numbers: JAL: _____ HA: _____ **GLOBAL #** _____ **TSA** _____

Bus Seating: Motion Sickness ____ Rotate: ____ No Rotate ____ **Wheelchair:** _____

Would you like to purchase travel insurance? Yes: ____ No: ____ (further information please call the office) I/We the undersigned have read carefully and understand the General Conditions pertaining to the above stated tour and agree to these conditions. All information will remain confidential.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____