



Nakasendo and the Kiso Valley

Available Jan to Nov | 10 days

- Day 1** **Sunday 21 October.** Arrive in Nagoya (your arrangements) and check into our hotel. Meet in the hotel bar at 5.30pm to discuss the next day's arrangements. Optional dinner together at a local restaurant (own cost).
- Day 2** **Monday 22 October.** Today we each pack into our rucksack a change of clothes for overnight as our rucksacks will be transferred from Nagoya to our inn online on Day 3. After breakfast, we travel by train first to Inuyama, where we make a brief stop to visit one of only twelve original remaining castles in Japan. We then travel on to Mito where we have lunch. From Mito we start our 12 kilometre walk on the Nakasendo trail to Mtsukuba. We walk through woodland and rolling countryside, often on narrow pathways. Some sections of the path retain the original "shibubara" or stone paving. The path climbs steadily uphill towards Mtsukuba. Along the way, and if open, we stop at a French cafe tucked into the mountainside for afternoon tea. In Mtsukuba we stay overnight at a historical inn which has been operating continuously since the 17th century. The inn was rebuilt after a fire in the 1850s and still retains its mud walls, wooden pillars, paper screens and earth floor in the entrance foyer. Breakfast and dinner included.
- Day 3** **Tuesday 23 October.** Today's walk from Mtsukuba to Ito is formerly the old post town of Ito is one of our longer walks at 21 kilometres. We follow a path that is over 1000 years old in places and again we walk along sections of shibubara, including a section that has only recently been rediscovered. About 26 hours from Mtsukuba the trail passes through the quiet well preserved post town of Otsu where a sacred cedar tree, thought to be 1000 years old, can be seen. In the afternoon we walk a very old section of the route known as the Ito-Itano (the Ito-Itano pass) and we are rewarded with lovely views. The undulating path follows along the ridge tops before we descend into the town of Ito.
- After arriving in Ito we visit the Mitozaki Pot Museum which exhibits clay & prints. Here we have the opportunity to create our own prints based on traditional prints of the Nakasendo. After the museum, we walk to our nearby traditional inn accommodation for the evening. Breakfast and dinner included.
- Day 4** **Wednesday 24 October.** Before breakfast we leave our rucksacks in reception ready for sending ahead to our accommodation tonight. We leave Ito passing the remaining buildings of Otsu (a small town) and walk to Nakatsugawa, another old post town, where we have lunch at a local restaurant. Afternoon the morning walk is quite gentle and undulating. From Nakatsugawa the path climbs uphill out of town to the next post town of Otsu. Beyond Otsu our route needs to be taken on a very attractive but slippery stretch of shibubara not far from our inn for the evening. Today we walk approximately 17 kilometres. Breakfast and dinner included.