

USEFUL WEBSITES

www.hyperdia.com
www.no1travel.com
www.statravel.co.jp
<http://www.geocities.com/TheTropics/Cove/5750/local.html#overnight2>
<http://jetholidayinfo.pbworks.com/>
<http://www.iace.co.jp/english/tokyo/>
<http://www.hittravel.co.jp>
www.asiarooms.com

Travel as a JET

TIPS ON PLANNING THE BEST TRIPS WHILE IN JAPAN

PLANNING AND PREPARATION

- * **NENKYU** - Work out your nenkyu (paid leave) with your supervisor. The number of travel days differs in each prefecture and contracting body.
- * **RE-ENTRY PERMIT** - Get your re-entry permit at the immigration office in your prefecture. Do this before school begins as you would have to take time off to do it otherwise. Single re-entry ¥3000; multiple ¥6000.
- * Book tickets as early as possible. The earlier you book, the cheaper the tickets.
- * **RESEARCH**. Decide the kind of vacation you want (e.g. backpacking vs. relaxing on a beach) and where you want to go. Do you need a visa? Are there travel restrictions for your nationality? Do your homework!

WHEN TO TRAVEL

Weekend trips: Make the most of a perfect opportunity for a weekend getaway. South Korea is a good weekend destination

School Vacations: Christmas, Easter (Spring), Summer.

National Holidays and 3 Day Weekends: No nenkyu required and there are MANY national holidays in Nihon! Next three day weekendis in September- start Planning

Golden Week : A string of national holidays in Japan (generally 4-5 consecutive days off). Plan EARLY for cheaper tickets. NOTE that travel at this time can be more expensive.

HOW TO GET THERE

DOMESTIC

PLANES: You can either call a travel agent to help you or do it on your own. ANA & JAL Discount Domestic Flights (<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2364.html>), Advance Purchase Discounts; Bargain Fares; ANA *Tabiwan!*, etc.

TRAINS/BUSES

JR Seishun 18 Kippu (Youth 18 Ticket – any age is OK!): seasonal unlimited use of JR trains (except Shinkansen) for 5 days (<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2362.html> for applicable dates!)

Overnight Bus/Train

Discount Airlines – SkyMark, Skynet, AirDo, and Starflyer
Ferries (Okinawa, Osaka, Tokyo, Hokkaido, etc.)

INTERNATIONAL- Call a travel agent or do it your own. Book early for cheap tickets.

PLANES: www.No1travel.com, www.statravel.co.jp, www.iace.co.jp/english/tokyo/; Budget airlines.

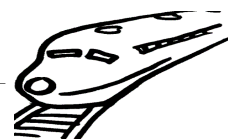
FERRIES: Ferry to Shanghai and Pusan from Osaka.

TRAINS/BUSES: Travel from Mongolia to Russia on the TransSiberian Express. Cross into Malaysia from Singapore on the scenic bus ride. This is where Research comes in.

TOP DESTINATIONS and TRAVEL SEASONS

DOMESTIC TRAVEL

Trains, Planes and Automobiles, and, well there's carpooling, too-



Cool Cities:

Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Kanazawa, Toyama
Sapporo, Kyoto

A good start is to take a weekend trip to visit the big cities in your region.

e.g. Hokuriku Region – Fukui, Toyama, Kanazawa, Niigata etc. Kansai Region - Kyoto, Otsu, Osaka, Nara, Kobe, etc.

Festivals: Japan celebrates with festivals (matsuri)! Go online to plan for the big ones, and ask around about local ones. Join the fun!

Sapporo's Snow Festival

Hanami (Cherry Blossom Viewing - Spring)

Takayama Festival (April/October);

Naked Man Festival (Early February)

Penis Festival

Vagina Festival

Hanabi Fireworks Festivals (Summer) - Sea of Japan regions generally boast the best.

Lantern Festivals (Late Summer)

Kyoto's Gion Matsuri (Early Summer - July)

Phoenix Festival – Fukui (August)

WHERE TO STAY

DOMESTIC

Budget Travelers – CouchSurfing (FREE) Youth Hostels; Capsule Hotels – Cheap!! (Women have to search for capsule hotels that will accommodate them, though!) Internet cafés, movie theaters, 24-hour shopping areas, lounges, karaoke, and spas – Who says you need to stay in a hotel for the night? In big cities like Tokyo, you can keep yourself entertained.

Ryokan – Traditional Japanese inns.

Business Hotels – Basic Amenities, but nothing fancy (At Toyoko Inn Free internet and Breakfast inc. for around ¥6000)

Love Hotels – Pay by the hour or for the night! The better the hotel & theme, the more expensive!

Buddhist Temple Lodging (Shukubo) – An experience in and of itself!

For more accommodation details, check out <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2025.html>, www.asiarooms.com, and www.rakuten.co.jp (Japanese only) for decent hotels at reasonable online rates.

INTERNATIONAL

Budget Travelers:
Youth Hostels, CouchSurfing (www.couchsurfing.com) (usually less private but you get the community atmosphere and meet random people.)

Boutique Hotels: Nice hotels, excellent service, usually cheaper than the luxury chains. Good service, great price. Just google boutique "hotels in (name of country)" www.asiarooms.com - hotels ranked by peers. Customer comments as well. Hotels also post special online rates here.

NOTES

INTERNATIONAL

South Korea - The Seoul of Asia. Lots of art and good food.

Hong Kong - Where Asians speak English.

Singapore - A top party destination. Top clubs and high end shopping. Artsy too.

Malaysia - One word: PETRONAS TOWERS (Well, two words.) When else can you see some of the tallest towers in the world?

Indonesia - BALI anyone?

Vietnam - Serenity, good shopping, warm people.

Cambodia - Rich in history. Fresh pineapples!

Thailand - Beach, beach, beach! And awesome temples too!

Guam - Still in the US...Sort of...

India - Ever ridden a camel? Or an elephant?

Mongolia - Why not? If it was good enough for Genghis...It's a bit more expensive but worth it!

Europe - TransSiberian Express!!!

Australia - It's fun Down Under!

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Checklist

- Nenkyu approved if necessary
- Re-entry permit
- Tickets booked and confirmed
- VISAS
- CASH (During the new year holidays japanese ATMs close!!!)
- Number of your consulate or the one you should report to in the country where you will visit (in case of coup, arrest, etc.)
- Security check-approved clothing – no hats, no keys, fewer pockets, etc.