



Tour price includes:

- Airfare from Honolulu to Japan Roundtrip
- Ground transportation as indicated by itinerary
- Admission as indicated by itinerary
- Daily Breakfast and Seven Dinners
- Hotel Accommodations
- Tour Escort



Tohoku Sakura



April 20 - May 2, 2010

Price: \$4200.00 per person
(based on double occupancy)

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April 20 (Tue) Honolulu - Tokyo

An early morning flight takes us to Japan.

April 21 (Wed) Tokyo

We arrive in the afternoon and after passing through customs and immigrations head into town for the night.

April 22 (Thu) Tokyo - Higashiyama Onsen

We begin our journey to Tohoku today. Our first stop will be to **Yacho no mori Flower Garden**, where we hope to see Shibazakura. This is a type of pink moss that resembles cherry blossoms. When in bloom it creates the image of a carpet of sakura. From there we will go to **Morinji Temple**, which figures prominently in the Japanese folktale, "Bunbuku Chagama".

April 23 (Fri) Higashiyama Onsen

In the morning, we will head off to visit **Miharu no Takizakura**. This tree is over a thousand years old and is quite large. From there we will head to **Hanamiyama Park**, a park that was planted by a single man over many years, which now yields the many beautiful blossoms now found here. Next we will go to **Lake Inawashiro**, the third largest fresh water lake in Japan. Our last stop will be the **Hideo Noguchi Memorial Museum**. This is the boyhood home of Hideo Noguchi, the man whose face can now be found on the one thousand yen note. Born in the late 19th century, Noguchi suffered serious burns as a child. This incident inspired him to become a doctor and in his adult years was instrumental in the working on syphilis and yellow fever.

April 24 (Sat) Higashiyama Onsen - Sendai

We journey northward today heading for the city of Sendai. Our first stop today will be **Tsuruga Castle**. Originally known as Aizuwakamatsu Castle it was built in 1384 and has been the seat of power for the area ever since. The current building was constructed in 1965 and houses a modern museum about the castle and its history. Then we will head to the **Aizu Sake History Museum**. Aizu is noted for its cold weather, pure water, and high quality rice, which are all important ingredients for high quality sake. Here we will get to see the history of sake in the region and may pick up some examples. Our next stop

will be to **Iimoriyama**, where 19 members of the Byakkotai committed suicide during the Boshin War. There is a memorial honoring their sacrifice and is held in high regard. From there we head to Tou no hetsuri, a beautiful cliff face, sculpted by thousands of years of erosion. Our last stop will be **Ouchiyo**, a set of well preserved buildings from the Edo period that served as shops, inns, and restaurants.

April 25 (Sun) Yonezawa Excursion

Our first stop of the day will be **Mt. Zao** to see **Okama**, a lake that is in a volcanic crater that is in the shape of an iron pot. Then we will go to a **kokeshi doll museum**. Kokeshi dolls originally came from the Tohoku area. Then we head to **Yonezawa City**, the ancestral of the Uesugi clan. Once we return to Sendai, we will head to **Sendai Castle**, while the castle itself is in ruins, we will find the city museum here as well as a statue of the castle's builder, Date Masamune.

April 26 (Mon) Sendai - Kisenuma

Today we head to the small town of **Matsushima**, famous for its bay filled with 250 islands covered in pine trees. When we arrive, we will hop on a ferry and enjoy a cruise around the bay. It is considered one of Japan's top three sites. When we return to shore, we will go to **Zuiganji**, the Date family temple. Originally built in the 800's, the temple has beautiful architecture and art work collected over the centuries. Our last stop will be the **Matsushima Music Box Museum**. In addition to its own collection, the museum now includes the collection from the Belgium National Music Box Museum. It also includes one of the largest music boxes in the world with over 619 pipes, drums, trumpets, and xylophones.

April 27 (Tue) Kisenuma - Tsunagi Onsen

We leave the City of Trees to continue our journey north. Along the way we will stop in Hiraizumi to visit **Chusonji**. Today, Chusonji is all that remains of its glory days. In particular, the Konjiki-do, is a magnificent reminder with its golden walls now kept entirely sealed in a glass and concrete case. Our next stop will be to **Genbikei**, a scenic gorge, where we may also find some delicious dango. We will also be stopping in Kitakami to visit **Tenshochi Park** to see its magnificent sakura display.

April 28 (Wed) Tsunagi Onsen

Our first stop of the day will be **Senshu Park**, which is on the grounds of the Satake Clan's castle ruins. The park has over 800 sakura trees. From there we go to **Lake Tazawa**, Japan's deepest lake. It is said that the lake never freezes during winter because of the two lovers who live at the bottom of the lake or because of its depth, either one. Our last stop will be to **Kakunodate Bukeyashiki**, an area where Edo period samurai homes are preserved.

April 29 (Thu) Tsunagi Onsen - Hirosaki

This morning our first stop will be **Hirosaki Castle**. Built in the 17th century, this castle is famous across Japan for its cherry blossoms. We next take a cruise on **Lake Towada**, Japan's largest caldera lake. We will then end the day with a visit to **Oirase Stream**, which flows out of Lake Towada. It is noted for its picturesque setting.

April 30 (Fri) Hirosaki - Tokyo

Our last day in Tohoku, we set out over the **Jogakura Bridge** that spans the Jogakura ravine. From the bridge, you can see the magnificent view of the surrounding area. Next we will go to **Setchu Kogun Sonan Memorial Museum**. This museum commemorates a disastrous military exercise at the start of the 20th century, when a Japanese unit was caught in a blizzard. Of the 210 soldiers who started the exercise, only eleven survived. The museum is housed in one of the unit's old barracks. From there we head to **Nebuta no Sato Museum**. Nebuta are depictions of famous warriors on giant sheets of paper that are turned into large lantern floats. The Aomori Nebuta is one of the three famous parade festivals in Japan. Our last stop before we head to Tokyo is **Aomori Ichiba**, where we can do a little last minute shopping.

May 1 (Sat) Free Day

This is a free day in Tokyo, where you may relax, explore the city, and do as you please. Your escort will be on hand to assist you with getting to where you might want to go.

May 2 (Sun) Tokyo - Hawaii

Our flight leaves in the early evening so the morning is free to relax or do any last minute shopping. We will leave the hotel in the afternoon for the airport.