

Kyoto Hike

13-24 October, 2010

Join Asian Studies professor Livia Kohn on a wonderful hike to the temples and mountains of Kyoto, Japan. Enjoy beautiful scenery, spectacular foliage, delicious food, and ubiquitous hot tubs while learning first-hand about Japanese culture, religion, and lifestyle.

Wd, 10/13 Depart the U.S.

Th, 10/14 Arrive at Kansai International Airport, transfer to Kyoto. Stay at a traditional Japanese inn near the train station. Have a welcome snack and relax.

Fr, 10/15 City temples. Begin your day with yoga and qigong. Then have breakfast and set out to get oriented and enjoy the temples in the city. Take a bus to Gion, then walk to Yasaka Shrine, the major Shinto sanctuary in the city. From here meander slowly through a gorgeous traditional neighborhood, perusing numerous souvenir, cookie, and pickle shops on the way. Reach Kiyomizu Temple, a veritable jewel of Buddhist architecture and worship. After visiting the temple, have lunch in a local restaurant, then descend toward the southwest, passing Otani Temple, dedicated to Shinran, the founder of Jodo shinshu Buddhism. Back on city streets, look through some antique and pottery shops before returning home. Maybe step into a traditional bath or *sentō* on the way. Dinner on your own.

Sa, 10/16 Mount Hiei. After qigong and breakfast, enjoy a bus ride to Yase, a riverside resort north of the city. From there take a cable car up to Mount Hiei, headquarters of the Tendai sect. Walk around the back of the mountain, enjoying the views and marveling at a modern ski slope. Visit the temple, then have Japanese noodles—temple-style—in the souvenir shop. After lunch hike back down to Kyoto, about 3 hours, through many different landscapes and passing various shrines and temples. On the way back, stop at Tanuki dani, a Buddhist-Shinto mix that specializes in car blessings. In the city, enjoy a turn-around sushi or other local specialty on your own.

Su, 10/17 Tea and fox day. Visit the headquarters of Japanese tea growing, southwest of Kyoto. Begin the trip by taking a train south to Uji. Enjoy the scenic river and visit Byodoin, the Fujiwara villa that was made into a Pure Land temple and miraculously survived centuries of neglect. Have lots of tea samples. Take a local train to the Fushimi Inari and have lunch at a local restaurant. Then visit the Fox Shrine, dedicated to the messenger of the rice goddess and a major protector of businesses. Climb to a great overlook of the city, passing through tunnels of orange Shinto gates on the way. After a very short hike down, visit Tofuku ji, a major center of Zen Buddhism. Return to the hotel from here and enjoy a quiet dinner on your own.

Mo, 10/18 Spa day. Go by bus to Demachi Yanagi station at the confluence of the two rivers, then take a little local train to Kibune guchi in the northern mountains. Walk leisurely along a

bubbling river to Kibune with its famous shrine, then enter the mountains and hike for about 45 minutes to Kurama Temple. Enjoy lunch at the temple with its great view. Descend to Kurama village, and take the shuttle to the open-air hot springs for a languid spa experience. Return to Demachi by the same little train, then have the option to explore the northwestern temples, such as Daitokuji, Kinkakuji, and Ryoanji, on the way home.

Tu, 10/19 FREE. A good chance to connect with local friends, visit museums, rent bikes to cycle along the river, or go on an exciting excursion on your own. Suggestions include Nara and Tenri (old capital and center of a major new religion), Hino Museum (phenomenal Ian Pei architecture), Ohara (scenic village with gorgeous temples north of Kyoto), the Kyoto Handicraft Center (extensive shopping opportunities), or Kanze kaikan (Noh Theater).

Wd, 10/20 Mount Daimoji. Take a bus to Kinkakuji, the Silver Pavilion. Meander through the shopping alley leading to the temple, then visit this jewel of Kyoto architecture. Afterwards hike up behind the temple to the bonfire site "daimoji" on the mountain. Have a box lunch while enjoying the absolutely amazing view of the city. Hike up a bit more to the top, then walk along the mountain ridge, enjoying views in all directions. Rest at a group of benches, then slowly descend to end up in the Nanzenji area, a bustling hub of Zen temples. Visit one or the other of the temples and from there either walk over to Heian jingu and the wonderful gardens there or spend some time taking a leisurely stroll along Philosopher's Walk. Return by bus.

Th, 10/21 Market day. Visit the crafts, antiques, and flea market at Toji Temple, southwest of Kyoto Station. Walk over to the temple, enjoy the market, have lunch at one of the many stalls, and shop, shop, shop. Don't forget to see the temple itself, which houses the headquarters of a major branch of Shingon Buddhism. Return to the hotel to store your treasures, then pick one of several afternoon activities: walk over to Sanjusangendo and the Kyoto Museum; or take a bus to any other of the many temples in the city. This is also a good time to visit Katsura Rikyu, the detached palace in the southwest of the city. Special permits are required, for which you can apply online (no fee).

Fr, 10/22 Festival day. After breakfast pack everything up and move to the another part of the city for two nights' stay in a Buddhist temple. Settle in and enjoy the setting. Then go to the Imperial Palace and join the crowds to watch Jidai Matsuri (Festival of the Ages), a parade of people dressed in costumes of various ages. Have a leisurely lunch in a local restaurant. On the way back visit Nijo Castle, the local residence of the Tokugawa shoguns and marvel at their architecture and design. Maybe stop at a fancy local bath, or visit a local market.

Sa, 10/23 The western mountains. After qigong and breakfast, by train to the western mountains, alighting at Hozukyo, a bridge over a cascading river. Walk leisurely along the river, then along a side stream to the picturesque village of Kiyotaki nestled dreamily in the mountain-side. Have lunch in a local eatery, then walk further through the woods to scenic Arashiyama with its numerous shops and temples. Browse at leisure and return by train. Take a hot bath and go out to enjoy a joint farewell dinner.

Su, 10/24 Return to U.S., or stay on individually.

Price: \$ 1450 per person, including hotel, daily breakfast and most lunches, transfers, bus/train fares, and entrance fees. (Price increase due to exchange rate: 1 US\$ = ¥90 versus ¥109 last time.)

Deadlines: Down payment of US\$ 500 due March 1, 2010 (full refund until July 1; 50% until September 1). Remainder (US\$ 950) due September 1, 2010.

Sign up: Make check out to "Livia Kohn" and mail to P.O. Box 609, Dunedin, FL 34697.

Europeans: Go to www.paypal.com and send \$520 (including fees) to daoconf@gmail.com, marking it clearly as for Kyoto Hike. You can bring the remainder in cash (in Euros) to Kyoto to avoid more fees.

Suggested Guidebooks:

Governor Mosher, *Kyoto: A Contemplative Guide* (all-time favorite!)

Lonely Planet, *Kyoto* (very practical, with good maps)

Diane Durston, *Old Kyoto* (guide to traditional shops and crafts places)

Iyer Pico, *The Lady and the Monk* (narrative account of one year as a foreigner in Kyoto)

Boye DeMente, *Japan Made Easy* (guide to behavioral conventions in Japan)

Untangling My Chopsticks (on the practicalities of Japanese life)

For more details and to register, contact **Livia Kohn:** liviakohn@gmail.com or call 727-501-6915.