

Wattletree Garden Tours

# Spring Flower Festivals of Japan

## April 2023



*Explore Japan from Fukuoka - Hiroshima - Matsue - Kyoto - Nagoya - Lake Motosuka to Tokyo. Visit Japan's best spring flower festivals including Azaleas, Wisterias, Paeony, Phlox, Nemophila in some truly scenic locations.*

*Culture—Cuisine—Gardens*



**Join Brian Sams  
& Wattletree Garden Tours**  
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### Tour highlights

- Wisteria festival
- Azalea festival
- Great hotels
- Great local guide
- Paeony Festival
- Nemophila festival
- Traditional Japanese hotel stay
- Most meals, all entry, all transport, all tipping
- Phlox Festival
- Japanese culture
- Bullet train
- Japanese hospitality

We have planned this tour to coincide with some amazing spring festivals that happen every year throughout Japan. Every festival is in a fabulous location. Some are out of the way in traditional towns, or with Mt Fuji as the backdrop, while others are in rural settings. This tour will take us on a great sightseeing journey of this wonderful country. We hope you decide to join us!

**Brian Sams is a Toowoomba based horticulturist involved in running gardening workshops, consultation and of course leading garden based tours. Brian has been leading garden tours overseas and within Australia since 2006. Why? He loves it!**

### Day 1 Friday April 21 – Sydney, Australia to Fukuoka meals in flight

Today we fly from Sydney to Fukuoka via Tokyo with Qantas airlines QF0025 departs at 20.55.

### Day 2 Saturday April 22 – arrive in Fukuoka B, L

Arrive in Tokyo and connect with our flight to Fukuoka with Japan Airlines. We will then meet our guide and then do an orientation of the city before checking into our hotel. Welcome lunch included.

*Hotel Rihga Royal Hotel or similar for 2 nights.*

### Day 3 Sunday April 23 – Fukuoka B, L, D

Today we will visit the interesting traditional Ohori Japanese garden and park area as well as the Fukuoka Castle. We will explore the city from the water with a harbour cruise. Both lunch and dinner will be in local restaurants.

### Day 4 Monday April 24 – Fukuoka to Hiroshima B, D

Today we depart Fukuoka to travel to Hiroshima. On the way we will stop to visit the wonderful Kawachi Wisteria Garden. The wisteria should be in full flower when we visit including the famous wisteria tunnel. Our hotel tonight is located right near the famous Peace Park in Hiroshima. Dinner tonight will be in the hotel.

*ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel or similar for 2 nights.*

### Day 5 Tuesday April 25 – Hiroshima B

A day to explore Hiroshima. We will visit the Peace Park and Peace museum just near the hotel as well as ground zero near the Atomic dome. Next is the peaceful Shukkeien gardens, one of my favourite Japanese gardens, where the azaleas should be in full flower. We will also visit a quiet local shrine, Mitaki Deri, set in a small valley in Hiroshima that has become a personal favourite. It has peace, a lovely location with cool shady trees, waterfalls and a real sense of place. We will also have free time for shopping and a free evening to explore the local restaurants.

### Day 6 Wednesday April 26 – Hiroshima to Matsue B, D

Today we take the scenic journey across Japan to Matsue where we will visit the Matsue castle and the historic Samurai house which is in the grounds. We will also take some time to walk on the famous Shiomi Nawate (canal area) to see some beautiful traditional homes and gardens. Dinner will be in the rather beautiful hotel tonight. *Matsue Hotel Ichibata or similar for 2 nights.*

### Day 7 Thursday April 27 – Matsue B, L, D

Today we visit 2 superb gardens. The first is the Yushien garden which is famous for its annual Paeony festival which should be in full swing when we are there and the second is the perfectly manicured Adachi Museum of Arts Garden (pictured left). We will have lunch in a local restaurant and dinner is included in the hotel.





**Day 8 Friday April 28 – Matsue to Himeji to Kyoto B, D**

We leave Matsue to travel to Himeji castle which has been recently restored. It is surrounded by lovely gardens and next door is the Koko-en garden which should have Azaleas in flower when we arrive. Later we will continue to the historic city of Kyoto also known as the garden capital of Japan. Dinner is included in a local restaurant.

*New Miyako Hotel or similar for 3 nights*

**Day 9 Saturday April 29 – Kyoto B**

Today we have a day to explore the highlights of Kyoto including the wonderful Kinkakuji temple, more commonly known as the Golden Pavilion, the Silver Pavilion and the famous Zen rock garden at Ryoanji temple. We will also make a visit to the Kiyomizu-dera temple which has great views over Kyoto.

**Day 10 Sunday April 30 – Kyoto to Nara return B, L, D**

Today we will visit the historic town of Nara. There are many historic and scenic areas to visit and we will focus on the world famous Todai-ji Hall and huge Buddha, Nara park to feed the deer and the interesting shrine - Kasuga Taisha. We will also visit the Paeony garden at Hasedera before returning to Kyoto.

**Day 11 Monday May 1 – Kyoto to Nagoya B, D**

This morning we will visit the Bamboo forest and the lovely Okochi Sanso Villa. This villa is set in the hills overlooking Kyoto and is beautiful. We will have some time for lunch in this area before we depart for a 2 hour drive to the wonderful Nabana No Sato garden near Nagoya. This garden has the largest light show installation that I have ever seen set throughout the spectacular show gardens. We will have time to see the gardens in daylight including the stunning Begonia house. We will then have dinner as the light fades and then explore the gardens with the illumination show in full swing. Later we will travel into Nagoya to our hotel.

*Nagoya JR Gate Tower Hotel or similar for 1 night*

**Day 12 Tuesday May 2 – Nagoya to Lake Motosuko B, D**

Today we catch a mid morning bullet train to Mishima before continuing to Lake Motosuko. The bullet train will carry us over 240km in a little over an hour. We will have a chance to have lunch at the station before a visit to Mt Fuji to station 5. We will then travel to our traditional Japanese style hotel. This hotel should be a great experience with traditional rooms and local traditions. A traditional dinner is included.

*Motosu View Hotel or similar for 2 nights*

**Day 13 Wednesday May 3 – Lake Motosuko B, D**

We are in the heart of Mt Fuji territory today so hopefully the weather gods will be kind and we can get some great views from the Fuji Shiba-sakura festival (Moss Phlox festival pictured front cover) that we will visit. Expect to see colourful carpets of phlox manicured to frame Fuji san. Later will undertake a lake cruise on Lake Motosuko. Dinner will be in our hotel tonight.

**Day 14 Thursday May 4 – Lake Motosuko to Tokyo B, D**

We plan a relaxed start to the day before travelling via coach to the Shiofune Kannon Temple which is home to the amazing Azalea festival (see picture above with colourful pavilion). Later journey around 80km to our centrally located hotel in Tokyo. Dinner will be in a local restaurant.

*Tokyo Dome hotel or similar for 3 nights*

**Day 15 Friday May 5 – Tokyo B, L, D**

Today's highlights around Tokyo include a visit to a local Bonsai garden, a trip up the panoramic Skytree Tower, the Kaminari Gate and Sensoji temple area for shopping and people watching.

**Day 16 Saturday May 6 – Tokyo B, L**

We head out of Tokyo today to firstly visit the Hitachi seaside park north of Tokyo. This is famous for its blue flowered fields of Nemophila that create an incredible floral sight (see picture on right). We will have lunch in this area in a local restaurant. Our next stop is the Ashikaga Flower park most famous for gigantic displays of Wisteria. Wisteria trees, Wisteria tunnels, Wisteria pergolas, wisteria fans and wisteria pots. Should be in full flower and likely to be very popular!

**Day 17 Sunday May 7 – Tokyo to Australia B, D and meals in flight**

After a later start we will visit the Ueno Park Paeony festival and the wonderful Shinjuku park area and a few other surprise sites around Tokyo before a farewell dinner. We will then transfer to the airport for our evening direct flight from Haneda to Brisbane.

**Day 18 Monday May 8 – Arrive in Brisbane, Australia meals in flight**

We arrive home today currently scheduled to arrive at 07.30 on QF0062. (subject to change)



### Quality matters!

- ⇒ Comfortable modern hotels
- ⇒ Experienced tour guides
- ⇒ We always s have a wonderful, friendly & fun group to travel with!

<b>Tour price</b>	
<b>Full tour including land and all airfares per person twin share - ex Sydney return Brisbane (please call to discuss other departure points)</b>	<b>\$9995</b>
<b>Tour deposit—deductible from final tour price</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Single supplement</b>	<b>\$2150</b>

### Important dates

1. Deposit – Payable asap to secure a place as seats are limited, please complete booking form.
2. Final payment 60 days before departure

### The tour prices includes:

- Beautiful hotel accommodation
- Exclusive coach travel, bullet train and all airfares
- All tipping for national guides and drivers
- Entry to all sightseeing, national parks and gardens as detailed in itinerary
- Quality meals listed in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- English speaking guides and accompanied all the way with Australian garden guide – Brian Sams
- Taxes where appropriate (but subject to change based on prevailing rates)
- Airport transfers (for whole group only—other arrangements to be made as required)

### The tour price excludes:

- All items not stated as included
- Travel to Sydney at the tour start
- Travel insurance—recommended for all travelers. Please discuss if you need help to organize.

**Full terms and conditions are on the booking form.**

**Important note—the tour departs from Sydney and returns to Brisbane. Other arrangements by negotiation!**



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