

Wattletree Garden Tours

Spring Flower Festivals of Japan

April 2024



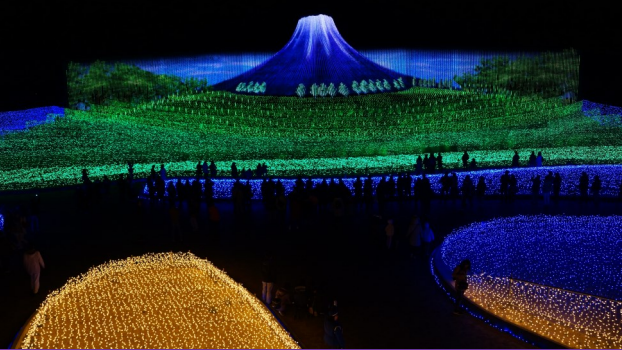
Explore Japan from Fukuoka - Hiroshima - Matsue - Kyoto - Nagoya - Lake Kawaguchi near Mt Fuji to Tokyo. Visit Japan's best spring flower festivals including Azaleas, Wisterias, Paeony, Phlox in some truly scenic locations.

Culture—Cuisine—Gardens



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

- Wisteria festival
- Paeony Festival
- Phlox Festival
- Azalea festival
- Miyajima Island
- Japanese culture
- Great hotels
- Traditional Japanese hotel stay
- Bullet train
- Great local guide
- Most meals, all entry, all transport, all tipping
- 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 Tuesday April 23 – Australia to Tokyo meals in flight

Today we fly from Brisbane to Tokyo. Upon arrival meet our guide and transfer to our hotel.
Tokyo Dome hotel or similar for 3 nights

Day 2 Wednesday April 24 – Tokyo sightseeing 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. We will then head back to our hotel for a free night.

Day 3 Thursday April 25 – Tokyo B, L

We head out of Tokyo today to firstly visit the Shiofune Kannon Temple which is home to the amazing Azalea festival. We will have lunch in this area in a local restaurant before our next visit to 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! We will have a somewhat belated welcome dinner in the hotel restaurant tonight.

Day 4 Friday April 26 – Tokyo to Fukuoka to Kokura B, L, D

This morning we will catch a morning flight to Fukuoka. Upon arrival we will visit the interesting traditional Ohori Japanese garden and park area. We will then have lunch in the local area in a restaurant before heading to our hotel in Kokura. Dinner will be in our hotel tonight.

Hotel Rihga Royal Hotel or similar for 2 nights.

Day 5 Saturday April 27 – Kokura area B

First visit today is the wonderful Kawachi Wisteria Garden. The wisteria should be in full flower when we visit including the famous wisteria tunnel. Next we will go into the older part of Kokura for some free time to wander and buy lunch in one of the many restaurants. Later head back to the hotel before meeting later for a guided walk to the shopping streets near our hotel and the Kokura castle. Dinner is your choice in one of the many restaurants along the way.



Day 6 Sunday April 28 – Kokura to Hiroshima B, L, D

We will depart Kokura and travel the interesting drive to Hiroshima with a stop along the way for refreshments. Upon arrival in Hiroshima we will have an Okonomiyaki lunch in a traditional small style restaurant. After lunch we will visit the Peace Park and Peace museum 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. Dinner tonight is in our hotel.

ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel or similar for 2 nights.



Day 7 Monday April 29 – Itsukushima Island visit B,

Today we will journey to Itsukushima Island (also known as Miyajima island) to visit the famous Tori gate and shrines as well as ride the cable car to look out over the bay islands towards Hiroshima. Some free time to shop and taste some of the local produce will also be a highlight. Later meet to catch the ferry back to the mainland and on to Hiroshima for a free evening.

Day 8 Tuesday April 30 – Hiroshima to Matsue B, D

First up today we will 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. Next we will take the scenic journey across Japan to Matsue with a lunch stop along the way. Upon arrival we will visit the Matsue castle and some of the local area before checking into our lakeside hotel. Dinner will be in the rather beautiful hotel tonight.

Matsue Hotel Ichibata or similar for 2 nights.

Day 9 Wednesday May 1 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 the most beautiful local restaurant in the Yushien Garden. Dinner is included in the hotel.

Day 10 Thursday May 2 – Matsue to Himeji to Kyoto B, D

We leave Matsue to travel to Himeji castle which as been recently restored. It is surrounded by lovely gardens and next door is the Kokoen 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 11 Friday May 3 – 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 12 Saturday May 4 – Kyoto to Nara return B, L

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 for a free evening.

Day 13 Sunday May 5 – 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 14 Monday May 6 – Nagoya to Lake Kawaguci B, D

Today we catch a mid morning bullet train to Mishima before continuing to Lake Kawaguci. The bullet train will carry us over 240km in a little over an hour. We will have a chance to have lunch either at the train station or on our 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.

Koraku Onyado Fuji Ginken or similar for 2 nights

Day 15 Tuesday May 7 – Lake Kawaguci 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. Lunch stop today is in the Oshino Village area. Later we will undertake a lake cruise on Lake Kawaguci. Our farewell dinner will be in our hotel tonight.

Day 16 Wednesday May 8 – Lake Kawaguci to Tokyo B, D

After a later start we will drive back to Tokyo with a lunch stop along the way before visiting the Ueno Park Paeony festival and some other Tokyo city sights. Later we will have dinner in the airport before our overnight flight to Brisbane.

Day 17 Thursday May 9 – Arrive in Australia, meals in flight

We arrive home today.

Quality matters!

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

Tour price	
Full tour including land and all airfares per person twin share	\$10995
Land only price (but including internal flight)	\$9495
Tour deposit—deductible from final tour price	\$500
Single supplement	\$3250

Important dates

1. Deposit – Payable asap to secure a place as seats are limited, please complete booking form.
2. Final payment 120 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 insurance—recommended for all travelers. Please discuss if you need help to organize.

Full terms and conditions are on the booking form.



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