

Japanese Design: Study Tour
May 29 – June 9

Organizer: All Japan Tours
Curated and Hosted by Daniella Ohad
Registration will open: February 1st, 2023

Please join us for a private study tour, a journey into the private world of contemporary Japanese design. We will discover the world of *kogei*, the traditional crafts of Japan, as they are being revisited and practiced today by some of the country's most notable artists. This tour is open ONLY to those with a passion for design and decorative arts and for learning their contemporary identity.

The study tour is concentrated on visits in private studios of artists working in clay, paper, metal, fibers, lacquer, and bamboo. They typically concentrated in villages and towns which traditionally employ those crafts. Such as the City of Beppu, national recognized for the craft of bamboo, where it has been practiced for centuries; or Mino City where Washi paper originated in the 8th century and where Japan's leading paper artists work. All the artists we will be visiting have taken the crafts they learned from their families or in schools into new horizons.

None of these studios is open to the public and they tend to be very small. Therefore, our tour is limited to 8 people plus a translator. Please note that in 7 out of the 11 nights, we are going to stay in upscale Ryokans, traditional Japanese inns which typically feature tatami-matted accommodations. The restaurants in those inns and in many other locations are traditional as well, with sitting on tatami matt.

In addition to art studios, we will be visiting two special architecture destinations, which I believe are important to understand the Japanese story. Both listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the Imperial Villa of Katsura, and the villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama in the remote Shogawa Rivers Valley. On Sunday in Kyoto, we will have half day free during which our driver and guide will offer free visits to the temples of Kyoto to those interested (it is not a part of the itinerary).

We are going to meet in Kanazawa on May 29th at 6:30 for our kick-off dinner in Kanazawa's best omakase restaurant (check-in at the Hotel at 3:00 pm). You can arrive to Kanazawa via the Bullet Train from Tokyo and the hotel is situated at the train station (takes just under 2.5 to 4 hours, depending on the train you select). We are going to conclude the tour at Oita Airport on June 9th around 11:00 am. Please note that you will have to purchase a flight ticket from Oita Airport to the place you are going to fly to.

REQUIREMENTS Fully Vaccinated (at least three vaccines); No smoking. We are going to have 18-seater mini bus that accommodates 15 large luggage.

The Tour includes: 10 days of private visits; 11 nights of lodging accommodations; 11 breakfasts; 8 lunches; 7 dinners; full transportation, including one train ride from Okayama Station to Kokura).