

Japanese Shores

From **7/4/2021**
to **18/4/2021**

Ship: **LE LAPEROUSE**

From **Otaru, Hokkaido**
to **Osaka**



PONANT takes you to the heart of the **Land of the Rising Sun** to discover its many traditions and emblematic sites.

In **Otaru**, you will board for a **12-day cruise** that promises exceptional discoveries as you visit places such as Hiroshima and our new port of call in **Ogi**.

First of all, you will discover the northern point of the **island of Honshu**. You will then sail to **Ogi**, on the small **island of Sado**, renowned for its magnificent coastline, **wild landscapes** and rich history, which blends maritime and artistic traditions with vestiges of the gold rush.

An essential part of your trip will be the stop in **Kanazawa**. From there, you will be able to visit **Shirakawa-go** and **Gokayama**. These villages are UNESCO World Heritage Sites particularly famous for their traditional houses in the *gassho-zukuri style*.

From **Sakaiminato**, you will set off to discover medieval Japan and the **ancient dwellings of the samurai**, who built lavish homes and castles.

Then you will sail to **South Korea**, a small peninsula that juts out into the Sea of Japan, and discover **Busan**, South Korea's second city. A place of great contrasts, Busan offers a spectacular view over its port, as well as over the ancient district of Chalgachi.

You will call at **Miyajima**, the gateway to the majestic **Itsukushima Shinto Shrine**, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, whose entrance is guarded by a magnificent vermilion Torii.

You will disembark in **Osaka**, a modern, forward-looking city, in the heart of the Japanese archipelago.



The information in this document is valid as of 11/8/2020

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

OTARU, HOKKAIDO

Embarkation 7/4/2021 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 7/4/2021 at 18h00

Boasting an outstanding setting of natural beauty, bordered by the Sea of Japan on one side and Mt Tengu on the other, **Otaru** is a lively harbour town. This old industrial capital has kept from its past glory **buildings in 19th-century brick** as well as its **canals**, formerly the main means of transportation. They give this Japanese town a striking appearance, especially when covered in snow. Magnificent **vistas** abound - it's up to you to put them in order of preference. **Shukutsu Observatory**, overlooking out over the vast Bay of Ishikari, is just one of them.

AT SEA

Arrival 8/4/2021

Departure 8/4/2021

During your day at sea, make the most of the many services and activities on board. Treat yourself to a moment of relaxation in the spa or stay in shape in the fitness centre. Depending on the season, let yourself be tempted by the swimming pool or a spot of sunbathing. This day without a port of call will also be an opportunity to enjoy the conferences or shows proposed on board, to do some shopping in the boutique or to meet the PONANT photographers in their dedicated space. As for lovers of the open sea, they will be able to visit the ship's upper deck to admire the spectacle of the waves and perhaps be lucky enough to observe marine species. A truly enchanted interlude, combining comfort, rest and entertainment.

AOMORI

Arrival 9/4/2021 early morning

Departure 9/4/2021 early morning

The ultra-modern port city of **Aomori**, in the far north of Japan's main island of **Honshu**, stretches around Mutsu Bay and is the gateway to the Aomori prefecture's many stunning natural attractions. Every summer it hosts the colourful **Nebuta Festival**, one of the country's most popular events, and a custom that has lasted well over 300 years. A few kilometres from the city centre is the fascinating **Sannai Maruyama** site, where you can see ruins of one of Japan's oldest settlements. Further afield, Towada-Hachimantai National Park, near the southern border, has hot springs, autumn foliage in Oirase Gorge, skiing at **Mount Hakkōda** and lava domes around Lake Towada.

NOSHIRO

Arrival 9/4/2021 late afternoon

Departure 9/4/2021 early evening

Located in the north-west of Honshu Island, **Noshiro** is a pleasant, modern stopover, ideal for getting a view of contemporary Japanese life. You can stroll around its gardens, in particular **Energium Park** which shelters an

arboretum and a museum dedicated to the town's famous kites. **Kazenomatsubura** forest offers many walking opportunities along the little paths among the trees. You can also see some very lovely temples here, or do some cycling along the **river Yoneshiro**.

OGI, NIIGATA

Arrival 10/4/2021 midday

Departure 10/4/2021 early evening

The small town of **Ogi** on **Sado Island**, its south coast is best-known for its *staraibune*, small round boats that were originally used for harvesting seaweed and shells. You can take a trip in one at Ogi Port and nearby Yajima and Kyojima. **Shukunegi** village, about four kilometres from Ogi, is a fascinating place to visit some of the houses in the former shipbuilding centre were built with wood salvaged from boats. Other points of interest include Sado History Museum and the old gold mines; and every year the island hosts Earth Celebration, a music festival.

KANAZAWA

Arrival 11/4/2021 early morning

Departure 11/4/2021 late afternoon

Located on the island of Honshu and bathed by the waters of the Sea of Japan, **Kanazawa** is a port marked by history. Under the predominance of the Maeda clan in the Meiji era, the city came under multiple political and cultural influences that shaped its landscape. Throughout the town, you'll discover many signs of its rich past: Kanazawa Castle, **Kenroku-en**, one of the most beautiful and famous gardens in Japan, and the old geisha district, Higashi-Chayagai. **Ōmicho Ichiba market** in the town centre is well worth a visit, **particularly for freshly cooked seafood**.

SAKAIMINATO

Arrival 12/4/2021 early morning

Departure 12/4/2021 late afternoon

Located on the south-west coast of Honshu Island, the busy fishing port of Sakaiminato celebrates the comic writer and artist **Shigeru Mizuki**, who was born here. As well as a museum a dedicated tourist route leads through streets and squares that feature **134 bronze statues** representing his beloved characters. This isn't the only thing Sakaiminato has to offer; try some local seafood specialities and enjoy the stunning views of **Mt Daisen** and the Yumigahama peninsula.

BUSAN

Arrival 13/4/2021 midday

Departure 13/4/2021 evening

With around four million inhabitants, **Busan** is the second largest metropolis on South Korea, after Seoul. This dynamic harbour city, located in the south-east, surrounded by the warm waters of the Sea of Japan, benefits from a

mild, pleasant climate. You'll find delightful simply to stroll around the **lively streets** and explore the city's outstanding cultural heritage of art galleries, museums, and Buddhist sites, such as the **Haedong Yonggungsa temple**, which elegantly sits on the waterfront. Rich too in magnificent beaches and superlative natural landscapes, Busan's peaceful atmosphere will win you over, as will its inhabitants, whom you'll have the pleasure of meeting.

KARATSU

Arrival 14/4/2021 early morning

Departure 14/4/2021 late afternoon

Karatsu Bay is edged with long sandy beaches and a huge pine forest that was planted over 350 years ago to protect the coast from the winds and tides of the Genkai Sea. From the top of the donjon of **Karatsu Castle** or **Mount Kagami**, you will be able to admire magnificent panoramas. In the north of the Higashi-Matsuura Peninsula, the waves have eroded the lava plateau and carved a magnificent natural site, the **seven Nanatsugama Caves**, out of the basalt. The city of Karatsu is famous for the quality of its **pottery**, which is influenced by the craftsmanship of nearby Korea. Very fine pieces are displayed in the city's galleries and at Karatsu Castle, alongside magnificent **samurai armour**.

BEPPU, OITA

Arrival 15/4/2021 early morning

Departure 15/4/2021 evening

A favourite destination for the Japanese, Beppu is now famous throughout the Japanese archipelago thanks to its onsen – volcanic hot springs in which people immerse themselves to relax with family or friends. From Beppu, you will set off to discover a lush, peaceful valley in which sit 60 majestic stone Buddhas carved out of the cliff face between the 12th and 14th centuries. Exuding a soothing air of serenity, the Mangetsuji site seems to have drifted off to sleep in the heart of a dense bamboo forest surrounded by rice fields. Recognised as a National Treasure of Japan, this set of sacred sculptures offers travellers a unique, wonderful experience.

HIROSHIMA

Arrival 16/4/2021 early morning

Departure 16/4/2021 midday

Visiting **Hiroshima** is a moving experience. The town spreads along **Honshu Island**, along the inside coasts of Seto. While firmly focused on the future, Hiroshima doesn't forget its past, and a visit to the **Peace Memorial Park** and **Genbaku Dome** is a must. You'll enjoy the city's **modern, cosmopolitan atmosphere and effervescent nightlife** just as much as the peaceful stillness of its natural parkland areas such as splendid Shukkei-en, the town's historic garden.

MIYAJIMA ISLAND

Arrival 16/4/2021 early afternoon

Departure 16/4/2021 evening

At the heart of the Inland Sea, Miyajima, the “island sanctuary” will reveal its treasures. In the background you will see the Shinto Grand Sanctuary, whose entrance is guarded by a magnificent vermilion “Torii”. Considered to be one of the most beautiful sites in the Japanese islands, you will be transported by the unique character and the serenity of this sacred site.

TAKAMATSU

Arrival 17/4/2021 early morning

Departure 17/4/2021 evening

A former fortified city, ruled over by the Matsudaira clan from the Tamamo castle with its seawater moats, the city is home to one of the most beautiful classic gardens in Japan, the Ritsurin. It was created by the barons of the city at the start of the Edo period, during which time gardening became a profession in its own right. Its landscape incorporates Mount Shiun in the background, an example of what is known as the shakkei technique, which uses the surrounding landscapes to increase the beauty of the gardens.

OSAKA

Arrival 18/4/2021 early morning

Disembarkation 18/4/2021 at 06h00

Like its big sister Tokyo, Osaka is the product of ancestral traditions and amazing **technological innovations**. And despite its size, its location on the Pacific Ocean give it a sense of **serenity**. The main historic landmark is the 16th-century **Osaka Castle**, which stands proud in the midst of majestic skyscrapers. The lively streets of Dotomburi and the bizarre Shinsekai district attract thousands of locals and visitors. A multitude of restaurants offer menus full of regional specialities: *takoyaki*, made with octopus, and other succulent dishes such as *kushikatsu* kebabs.