

Travel Together

with Fellow Quilters

to Japan & International Quilt Week Yokohama 2009

Kyoto ~ Takayama ~ Yokohama ~ Tokyo

November 05-15, 2009

Included in your tour:

All hotels
All dinners and breakfasts beginning the first full day in Kyoto
All group tours and activities
All group motorcoach & train transportation in Japan
All airport transfers and luggage handling when arriving Kansai Airport Nov. 6th and departing Tokyo on Nov. 15th
Entrance to Quilt Week Yokohama
Quilting class at Quilt Week Yokohama
Show & Tell with Keiko Takahashi and local quilt school students
Kabuki-Za theatre performance
Escorted by a Traveling Together professional & Mariko Akizuki, interpreter
Lots of fabric shopping, sightseeing and more!



Your invitation from Traveling Together...After many trips to Japan, we are anxious to return and invite you to come along! Not only will we shop for fabric, attend Quilt Yokohama 2009 and meet with local quilters, but you will have a chance to experience four very different cities. We will be at latitude similar to Los Angeles and the days should be crisp and cool. This is when the leaves are changing, making a colorful background at each of the places we visit. We will have a professional interpreter with us for the entire tour and as an added bonus, she is a quilter! What more could you ask for? Take a look at this exciting itinerary and sign up soon, as this is a small group and space is limited!

Let the journey begin!

Barbara Spohn
Traveling Together

Your Interpreter, MARIKO AKIZUKI

Mariko Akizuki is a Japanese quilter and lived in the United States for 11 years. During her stay in the US, she first encountered quilting and at present, teaches her own quilt group "Quilters' Workshop." Her works have been published in Quilts Japan, Patchwork Tsushin and others. One of Mariko's quilts was chosen by the Japan Handicraft Instructors' Association as one of the 100 quilts by Japanese and foreign quilters and travels to various locations. She is also an interpreter and translator and has interpreted for many American and Japanese quilt artists as well as other well known persons including Ivan Lendl, the famous tennis player! She has also translated many quilt related articles and books. She is a lovely and knowledgeable woman! You will have time to get to know her, as she accompanies us on all of our quilting tours.

Tour Itinerary:

November 5, Thursday

If coming from North America, you will need to arrange your flight to depart today in order to arrive Kansai International Airport on Friday, November 6.

November 6, Friday

Mariko will be at the airport to greet you and transfer you to the Kyoto Royal Hotel. We will be right in the center of the city for our four-night stay in Kyoto, a hotel we use for all of our Japan tours. This is the only night that dinner will not be included, as most flights will arrive late in the day and you will have been served meals on your flight.



November 7, Saturday

Our visit to Kyoto will combine the past and the present. In the morning we will have a sightseeing **TOUR OF KYOTO** and our first step into the unique culture of the Japanese. We'll see the most exquisite and most authentic Japanese-style garden in the world plus the celebrated Golden Pavilion; Nijo Castle, the Kyoto residence of the Tokugawa Shogun built in 1603, and the Higashi Honganji Temple, a popular and active Buddhist Temple having two giant wooden structures. The tour will end at the **KYOTO HANDICRAFT CENTER** where you will be able to see demonstrations of traditional arts and crafts such as doll making, woodblock printing and cloisonné making. The shopping here is tax-free and they will ship your purchases home! In the afternoon, we'll explore the area around our hotel and include some **FABRIC SHOPPING!**

November 8, Sunday

This morning we board a train that will take us to the city of Nara, 23 miles south of Kyoto. In 710 AD the Japanese built their first true city, where artists, scholars, and statesmen began to develop a civilization that survives in its essentials to the present day. On the **TOUR OF NARA**, you will see the Kasuga Shrine, the most famous and beautiful shrine in Nara and Koufuku Temple and its National Treasures Museum. No visit to Nara would be complete without seeing the Great Buddha in the Todaiji Temple, the world's largest wooden building. Before returning to Kyoto we'll make a stop at Deer Park where more than 1,000 tame deer roam freely in the verdant 1,250 acres of peaceful parkland. There will be time to have your lunch and wander through the local arcade prior to boarding our train for the return to Kyoto.



KEIKO TAKAHASHI ~ Keiko is one of the few contemporary quiltmakers in Japan. She established her Kyoto quilt school in 1979, followed by other schools in Toyko, Osaka, and Kobe. Her quilts have been awarded at the International Quilt Exhibition ('92) and the Quilt Expo IV ('94). In addition to being chosen as one of the 100 leading quilters in the world by the Japan Handicraft Instructors' Association, Keiko has juried and judged at major Japanese quilting shows.

November 9, Monday

This morning we will visit a home that is typical to Kyoto and to this area of Japan. Although the home itself is typical, it is very unique in that it has antique Yuzen kimonos made into screens. The home is the residence of the owner of **KODAI YUZEN EN** (Yuzen dyeing), which is the process of hand-painting silk fabrics, used for kimono. You will have a chance to try your hand at dyeing your own handkerchief, bureau scarf, etc., along with visiting the museum and shopping in their wonderful store. **KEIKO TAKAHASHI** and her students will be meeting us this afternoon for **SHOW & TELL**, with traditional tea and cakes. Show and Tell is an activity all quilters love, including the Japanese. They will be looking forward to seeing some of our quilting, so be sure to bring a small sample of your work to show and pictures of any of your quilts that would be too large to bring along. Meeting with local people is always a highlight of any tour and the opportunity to meet Keiko and see her magnificent work is always an added bonus on our quilting tours!



November 10, Tuesday

Pack your small carry-on for our overnight adventure up to the **JAPAN ALPS!** You will need a small overnight bag that you can handle while walking and getting on and off the trains. Your one main suitcase will be shipped from the Kyoto Royal directly to the Marriott Courtyard Tokyo Ginza Hotel. The train ride takes us to the heart of the Hida Mountains to the tranquil town of **TAKAYAMA**, which has held on to its old-fashioned charm and is no doubt the reason so many artists have made their homes there. The delight of Takayama is that the entire town is something of a museum piece...it's the perfect place to indulge in those fantasies of old Japan that industrial over-development elsewhere in the country doesn't accommodate. We'll be picked up at the Takayama station and be whisked off to our Ryokan... an authentic Japanese-style hotel where we'll have a traditional style Japanese dinner and stay the night.

RYOKAN... Japanese-Style Hotel A Ryokan is an authentic Japanese-style hotel where tradition is still observed. At the entrance, you will be welcomed in the Japanese way and ushered in. You must take off your shoes and wear slippers when entering a Ryokan and you should remove even the slippers before stepping on the Tatami floor of your room. A Ryokan also provides guests with Yukata, a kimono-like outer garment similar to our dressing gown. Staying at a Ryokan is an unforgettable experience and gives you the opportunity to taste the true flavor of traditional Japanese life. Without question, a stimulating magnetism of the Ryokan is its piping hot soaking baths guaranteed to drain every ounce of stress and fatigue from your mind and body. Besides the hot springs, dinners at the Ryokan are the singular most compelling attraction: they are prepared and presented as a combination of the finest of Japanese cuisine, intermixed with savory local delights. A typical menu, brought to you dish upon dish, offers a variety from Sukiyaki and Tempura to raw and grilled fish. A simple breakfast is served. Your guest room is a large undivided room with traditional rice-straw Tatami matting, with only a single low table as furniture. Doors are Shoji screens, and decoration will usually be one or two simple ink brush drawings or scrolls. Guests sleep on Futon bedding laid out in the evening by maids. Each room will be shared with a total of four quilters and will have a private bath to be shared by your roommates. These arrangements have always worked well on past quilting tours. This will be a truly Japanese experience and as the saying goes... when in Japan, do as the Japanese do!

November 11, Wednesday

We'll have the morning to do a little exploring on our own before departing Takayama and boarding the train to Nagoya. Then we transfer to the famous **BULLET TRAIN** for the ride to **TOKYO**. We arrive in time to check into the Marriott Courtyard Tokyo Ginza Hotel and have dinner at a local American-style restaurant! Although Japanese food is delicious, it is always nice to be able to have a taste of home. Our hotel is located in the Ginza area of Tokyo and will be our home for the remainder of our stay in Japan. Your suitcase from Kyoto will be delivered directly to your room.

November 12, Thursday

YUZAWAYA KAMATA STORE is a fantastic shopping area with Japanese fabrics and indigo-dyed Japanese panels in abundance and at reasonable prices. Great fat quarters at low prices! You'll find Yukata (robes) in cotton fabrics, Sashiko thread and patterns, and buttons, buttons, and more buttons! This is not the only store, but one that is located in a complex with many others that carry notions, handicraft items, yarn and much more. We'll explore the markets and arcades, where it is as much fun to look, as it is to buy! This evening we'll attend a performance at the famous **KABUKI-ZA THEATER**. This will be a dance performance rather than a drama, as it is all in Japanese. Tickets are sold only on the day of the performance and Mariko will be doing her best to make sure that we all see a good performance.

November 13, Friday

Today is the day we have all been waiting for! We will spend the day in Yokohama for **INTERNATIONAL QUILT WEEK YOKOHAMA**. This wonderful show is sponsored by the Japanese magazine Patchwork Quilt Tsusin. The show has been held since 1992 and has become one of the largest patchwork and quilting events in Japan. In 2008 there were a total of 200 vendors, approximately 200 contest quilts on exhibit, in addition to many quilts being displayed from other countries and special categories. See more by visiting <http://viq.com/english/iqw/index-iqw.htm> As of the writing of this brochure, information is not yet available from the show organizers regarding what classes will be offered. With Mariko as our interpreter, the **QUILTING CLASS** we take is sure to be informative and fun. Once the information is available, it will be sent to everyone who is booked on our quilting tours.



November 14, Saturday

Our hotel is located in the Ginza and today you will have time to explore the area with Mariko and your Traveling Together escort, getting you oriented so that you can spend time at the stores that interest you most. The **GINZA** is the most exclusive and expensive shopping area in Japan and known for having the most expensive real estate on earth. The streets are lined with neon signs, department stores, boutiques, and restaurants. You will want to browse some of the famous department stores, including Itoya (a seven-story stationary store), Mikimoto's to look at their world-renowned pearls, and you may even find some more fabric! Browsing and spending time may be the only thing you want to do in the Ginza, due to the cost of things at many of the trendier stores. Not to worry, there are plenty of smaller retail shops and department stores, including shops to buy souvenirs for everyone back home. Dinner tonight will give everyone a chance to reminisce about the wonderful time shared with fellow quilters and a last chance to spend time with Mariko. By now, you may even have found someone on the tour that you would like to room with for the next time we Travel Together!

November 15, Sunday

Flights for the U.S. depart Tokyo's Narita Airport in the afternoon, and no matter what time your flight is scheduled to leave, your transfer to Narita is included. A lot of shops in the Ginza are open on Sunday in case you feel the need to run out and buy that one last item for someone back home! The scenery, traveling with other quilters and the chance to get to know some of the Japanese people, make this trip the quilting adventure of a lifetime!

BOOK EARLY!

This will be a small group and SPACE IS LIMITED!

\$4494 per person, double occupancy

\$ 527 single supplement (Single availability is very limited)

Airfare is not included in the cost of the tour

There is an additional cost for the one night at Takayama for male/female couples or anyone not wanting to share a room with a total of four people. Please call for details and cost.

Please see below, and then go to the Sign-Up Forms page for Terms and Conditions and the Registration form.

While Traveling in Japan...

Please note that this particular tour requires a good amount of walking each day. Temples require the climbing of stairs and some train stations have no lifts and require the use of stairs. For the overnight journey to Takayama, you will need to pack a small overnight bag that you will be able to handle when getting on and off the trains and walking between the train station and the hotel. Remember that you may even need to carry it up or down a flight of stairs at the train stations. Please note that not all restaurants "westernize" meals for American groups. Mariko will do her best to have some of the items cooked that normally are served raw, but this will not always be the case. Japan is a country of different smells and different foods, but it will be a wonderful experience! We always request non-smoking areas when they are available. Smoke and its odors are sometimes unavoidable, as many places in Japan allow smoking. Just remember that the reason we all like to travel to other countries is to experience the cultural differences!