

Japan Is Very Wonderful: The Ultimate Guide to Tokyo, Hakone, Kyoto, and the Kumano Kodo

Japan is a country that never fails to mesmerize visitors with its unique blend of ancient traditions and modern innovations. From bustling cities like Tokyo to tranquil countryside areas like Hakone, and from historical landmarks in Kyoto to the spiritual pilgrimage of the Kumano Kodo, Japan offers an array of experiences that are sure to leave a lasting impression.

Whether you are a history enthusiast, a nature lover, or a food fanatic, Japan has something to offer for everyone. In this ultimate guide, we will take you on a virtual journey through some of the most wonderful destinations in Japan – Tokyo, Hakone, Kyoto, and the Kumano Kodo. Get ready to be enchanted by the beauty and charm of these incredible places.

Tokyo: A Vibrant Metropolis Steeped in Tradition

Tokyo is often the first stop for visitors exploring Japan, and for good reason. This sprawling metropolis is a perfect blend of traditional Japanese culture and contemporary urbanism. From the neon-lit streets of Shinjuku to the serene gardens of the Imperial Palace, Tokyo offers a diverse range of attractions and experiences.

Japan Is Very Wonderful - The Guide to Tokyo, Hakone, Kyoto and the Kumano Kodo (Without Pictures) by Pearl Howie (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
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When in Tokyo, make sure to visit the historic district of Asakusa, home to the iconic Senso-ji Temple, the oldest temple in the city. Take a stroll along the bustling Nakamise Shopping Street and savor some traditional Japanese street food. For a taste of modern Tokyo, head to the trendy neighborhoods of Shibuya and Harajuku, where cutting-edge fashion, quirky cafes, and vibrant street art can be found.

There is no shortage of breathtaking views in Tokyo, and a visit to the observation deck of the Tokyo Skytree or the iconic Tokyo Tower is a must. And for those interested in Japanese history, a trip to the Edo-Tokyo Museum will provide a fascinating insight into the city's past.

Hakone: Immerse Yourself in Nature and Relaxation

Located just a short distance from Tokyo, Hakone is a popular getaway for both locals and tourists. This beautiful mountainous region is known for its hot springs, stunning views of Mount Fuji, and traditional ryokan inns.

One of the highlights of Hakone is taking a scenic cruise on Lake Ashi, where you can enjoy panoramic views of Mount Fuji on a clear day. Explore the Hakone

Open-Air Museum, which features an impressive collection of contemporary sculptures set against the backdrop of nature.

Don't miss the opportunity to soak in the rejuvenating waters of an onsen (hot spring) in Hakone. Many ryokan inns offer private hot spring baths, allowing you to relax and unwind amidst the tranquil surroundings. And for the brave-hearted, a visit to the Owakudani Valley, known for its volcanic activity and sulfurous fumes, is an unforgettable experience.

Kyoto: Journey through Time and Tradition

Steeped in history and culture, Kyoto is a city that transports you back in time. As the former capital of Japan, Kyoto is home to numerous UNESCO World Heritage Sites, ancient temples, and traditional gardens.

One of the most iconic landmarks in Kyoto is the Fushimi Inari Taisha, famous for its thousands of torii gates that wind their way up a forested mountain. Take a stroll through the enchanting Arashiyama Bamboo Grove and visit the historic Kinkaku-ji Temple, also known as the Golden Pavilion.

To immerse yourself in traditional Japanese culture, make sure to experience a tea ceremony in one of Kyoto's many tea houses. Explore the historic Gion district, known for its geisha culture, and if you're lucky, you might catch a glimpse of a geisha in their elegant kimono.

Don't forget to visit Nijo Castle, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its stunning architecture and beautiful gardens. And for a taste of Kyoto's culinary delights, indulge in a kaiseki meal, a traditional multi-course feast that showcases the finest seasonal ingredients.

The Kumano Kodo: A Spiritual Pilgrimage through Nature

For those seeking a spiritual journey amidst nature, the Kumano Kodo pilgrimage is an ideal choice. Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Kumano Kodo is a network of ancient pilgrimage routes that have been traversed for over a thousand years.

Embark on a trek along the Kumano Kodo and discover hidden shrines, serene forests, and cascading waterfalls. The Kumano Nachi Taisha, with its picturesque pagoda and stunning waterfall backdrop, is a must-visit along the pilgrimage route.

Immerse yourself in the tranquility of the Kumano Kodo and experience the power of nature. Take a dip in the healing waters of the hot springs at Kawayu Onsen and reflect upon your journey at the Kumano Hongu Taisha, the spiritual heart of the Kumano Kodo.

Japan is a country that captivates with its rich cultural heritage, breathtaking landscapes, and warm hospitality. Whether you explore the bustling streets of Tokyo, relax in the hot springs of Hakone, delve into the historical treasures of Kyoto, or embark on a spiritual pilgrimage along the Kumano Kodo, Japan promises an unforgettable experience.

So, pack your bags, immerse yourself in the wonders of Japan, and create memories that will last a lifetime.

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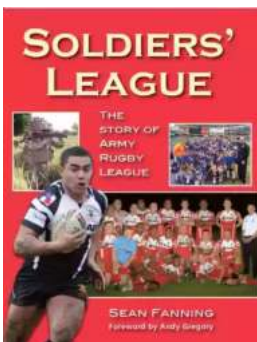


Japan was the beginning of something extraordinary.

Much of who I was on that trip has disappeared. Relationships, business, home, beliefs have all gone or changed radically. But Japan was not my trip, this was the escape of a lifetime for a client.

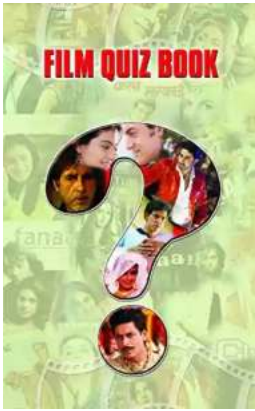
I discovered that amazing things don't just happen when you follow your dreams, they also happen when you help others follow theirs.

My guidebooks have always been “an escape in a box” a tour you can follow and do yourself – this one is eight nights in some of the most beautiful places (and hotels) in the world. (It also helps if you eat fish and aren't scared to get naked in front of others.)



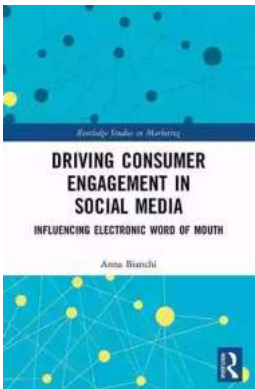
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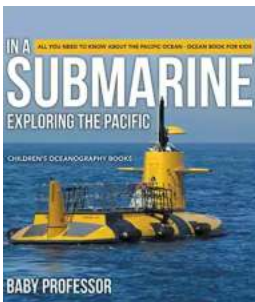
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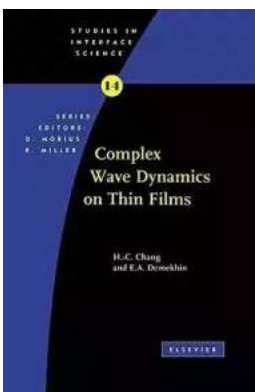
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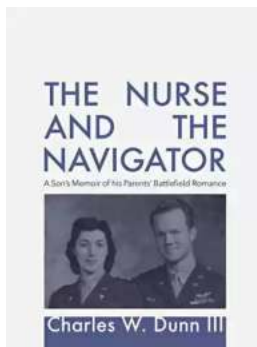
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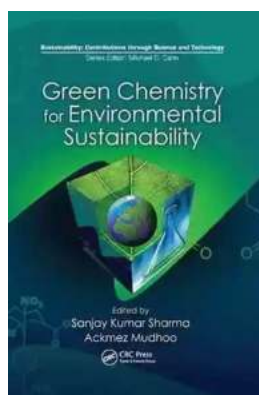
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