

DISCOVER THE ISLANDS OF JAPAN

A 12-DAY VOYAGE FROM OSAKA TO OSAKA,
INCLUDING BUSAN, SOUTH KOREA

EXPEDITION DOSSIER

25 APRIL – 6 MAY 2027



 **BETCHART
EXPEDITIONS INC.**
with  **AAAS**,  **Sigma Xi**, &  **ACS**
17050 Montebello Rd., Cupertino, CA 95014





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Join us as we set sail and explore some of Japan's iconic highlights alongside lesser-known and rarely-visited islands and destinations on one, unforgettable all-inclusive voyage aboard our luxurious, 140-guest flagship *Heritage Adventurer*.

Made up of 6,852 islands, the perfect way to explore Japan's seldom visited destinations is by sea and *Heritage Adventurer* is the ideal vessel for such a voyage. Combining a thrilling mix of culture, history and the natural world our authentic expedition cruise will see us exploring ancient castles, serenely beautiful gardens and opulent temples and shrines combined with witnessing some of Japan's stunning natural landscapes.

Experience all-inclusive luxury cruise travel as we explore Japan's second-largest city, Osaka, famous for its vibrant nightlife and street food. Venture to destinations such as the historic and serene castle town of Matsue, the ancient anachronistic town of Hagi. Experience the tranquillity of Yakushima Island, a world away from the hustle and bustle of Japan's mega cities with its towering mountains and ancient forest. We'll also moor at Uwajima, one of Japan's premier pearl producers with the opportunity to visit one of the city's traditional pearl farms.

Among the many highlights of our itinerary will be the iconic garden of Kenroku-en and one of Japan's most famed gardens the 28-acre formal 17th Century Koraku-en garden and Yuushien Garden, home to 250 types of peonies. Our voyage also visits parts of Japan where relatively few tourists set foot such as Sado Island - widely considered a perfect miniature Japan and thriving cultural capital filled with performing arts, natural scenery, samurai history, and more. During our exploration of Nagasaki, we will gain further insight into its World War II history as well as its role in international trade during the isolation period. We will also spend a day in the laidback metropolis of South Korea's Busan famous for its beautiful beaches, markets, mountains and temples.

Helping us understand all we will see and experience, and travelling with us throughout the voyage, will be our expert Guest Speakers and Japanese guides. They will add immeasurably to your enjoyment and understanding of this captivating country.



© Julia Mishina

ITINERARY

Day 1: Osaka

Arrive at Honshu's largest port city Osaka where modern architecture and a vibrant dining scene are nestled alongside the 16th Century shogunate Osaka Castle. Make your way to your hotel where you will spend the first night of the expedition. This evening meet your fellow voyagers and expedition guides over dinner at the hotel.

Day 2: Osaka

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before exploring Osaka. Opportunities here include visiting Minoh Park and Osaka Castle. With an area of just 9.6 square kilometres (963 hectares), Minoh Park is one of Japan's smallest National Parks and home to the iconic 33-metre high Minoh Waterfall and diverse wildlife, including the Japanese Giant Salamander and protected Mino Monkeys. Explore Osaka Castle, one of Japan's most famous landmarks, take in the views from Osaka Castle Main Tower and relive dramatic stories of warlords and Osaka's fascinating history. We also plan to visit Dotonbori, Osaka's vibrant downtown hub of food and culture, for lunch. This afternoon your Captain and Expedition Team welcome you aboard *Heritage Adventurer*.

Day 3: Tamano/Uno-Ko

From the port of Uno-Ko we will visit one of Japan's most famed gardens, Koraku-en, which translates as 'garden of pleasure after'. This 17th Century formal garden has 28 acres of walking trails, ponds, plum and cherry trees. This afternoon we will continue to Kurashiki. Here we will explore the old merchant quarter and its 17th Century wooden warehouses painted white with traditional black tiles, along a canal framed with weeping willows and filled with koi. There is also a chance to visit the Ohara Museum of Art which includes rare works by Matisse, Picasso and Renoir as well as collections from Japan's famous Mingei movement including ceramics by Hamada Shoji.

Day 4: Uwajima

Shikoku Island and the port of Uwajima, situated deep inside the

sawtoothed coast of Uwajima Bay, is our destination for today. The city of Uwajima is emerging as the nation's largest pearl cultivation centre. We also plan to learn the process of implanting, harvesting, extracting and sorting pearls on a visit to a pearl farm. We will also see Uwajima Castle which is built on top of the hill with panoramic views over the town and harbour and the Tenshaen Garden, built in the Samurai era. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure.

Day 5: Yakushima

Today we plan to sail to the very south of Kyushu and the island of Yakushima which became Japan's first UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993 and has a particularly diverse flora. We will spend the afternoon on a choice of nature walks in Yakusugi Land in Yakushima National Park. It is home of the endemic Yakushima Macaque, and populated by a number of the island's renowned ancient cedar trees, such as the Buddha Sugi, Futago Sugi and Sennen Sugi, which are over 3,000 years old.

Day 6: Nagasaki

Arrive this morning in Nagasaki, the second city destroyed by an A-bomb in World War II. We will tour the Peace Memorial Park, Atomic Bomb Museum and Dejima Island which was built during the Edo period to accommodate Portuguese



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Christian missionaries and prevent the propagation of their religion. It was also the residential quarters of the Dutch, the only foreigners allowed to trade in Japan during the Sakoku (isolation) period. For 200 years, until Japan reopened the country in the 19th Century, Dejima was its only window to the world. With the reopening of the port to Westerners in the latter half of the 19th Century, Nagasaki blossomed as a prosperous and sophisticated international city. Suitable housing was required for the sudden influx of foreigners who made their homes here. Many of the stone and clapboard residences that were built during this period survive today and are preserved in Glover Garden which we plan to visit this afternoon. The best known European-style residence here is Glover House, built in 1863, was the setting for Puccini's opera *Madame Butterfly*.



© Stephen Bradley

time to explore Hagi Castle, Shizuki Park and Tokoji Temple. This afternoon travel to the outskirts of the city and the Yoshika Taibi Memorial Museum which is dedicated to a large collection of Hagi-yaki pottery which was highly prized in the Edo period as wares for tea ceremonies. Alternatively, discover the natural wonders of 300 million year old limestone Akiyoshido Cave.

Day 7: Hagi, Japan

Hagi was a minor fishing port until Mori Terumoto fortified it in 1604 and it was Mori Samurai that helped spark off the anti-Tokugawa revolt in the mid-19th Century. Today it is better known for its traditional pottery making. This morning we will explore the Teramachi District with its temples and shrines, the Jokamachi District, where we find the old Samurai houses and also take

Day 8: Busan, South Korea

Today we cross the Sea of Japan to South Korean metropolis Busan, known for its beautiful beaches, bustling city streets, Buddhist temples, cinematic legacy, mountains and the largest fish market in South Korea. This city by the sea is rightly famous for its seafood, surf and street food. Options today could include exploring the labyrinthine streets of Gamcheon Culture Village,

decorated with various murals and art pieces crafted by the locals themselves. Its brightly coloured houses have earned it the title 'the Santorini of South Korea'. Wander the endless isles of the Jagalchi Fish Market sampling some of the local delicacies. One of the few Buddhist temples by the sea, descend 108 steps to Haedong Yonggungsa Temple which promises to answer at least one wish through sincere prayers.

Enjoy a new perspective from 411 metres at BUSAN X the SKY tower, marvel at the engineering feat and city icon that is the Busan Gwangandaegyo Bridge. While natural beauty and cutting-edge design collide on Dongbaekseom Island, an island of camellia trees and location of Nurimaru APEC House – a contemporary recreation of a traditional Korean pavilion.



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Day 9: Matsue

This afternoon we arrive at the port of Sakaiminato, entry point to Matsue, known as 'the town of water' due to being situated between Lake Shinji and Lake Nakaumi. We plan to visit Matsue Castle, a national treasure and one of Japan's few largely intact 17th Century castles. Other options today may include exploring Daisen-Okii National Park, steeped in beauty and history it's also the home of rare



© Dennis Minty

flora and fauna including the giant salamander, visiting the picturesque Yuushien Garden which coincides with the iconic annual Yuushien Peony Festival. At the Adachi Museum of Art, learn about the art of Japanese paper making at the Yakumomura village, or perhaps you may wish to spend some time exploring the picturesque streets and the local canals.

Day 10: Kanazawa

Options today include exploring the historic mountain settlement and UNESCO World Heritage Site of Shirakawa-go, high in the remote mountains of the Shogawa River Valley in Hakusan National Park. Take in the sights on mountain walks and experience the unique cultural traditions including the region's iconic Gassho-zukuri farmhouses, some of which are more than 250 years old. They are designed to withstand the heavy snow in winter and provide a large attic space for cultivating silkworms. Alternatively explore the rich art centre of Kanazawa discovering some of the unique styles of Japanese art. Kanazawa is rightly famous for its Kutani-style pottery, exquisite lacquerware, gold-leaf workmanship, hand painted silk, and classical Noh dance-drama performed since the 14th Century. Wander winding cobblestone streets, elegant

restaurants, craft galleries and visit the impressive Edo-period Kenrokuen Garden, one of the Three Great Gardens of Japan, and explore the Omicho Market boasting everything from flowers, to crafts and food. This evening, join the expedition team in the Bridge, Observation Lounge or up on the Observation Deck as we set sail for Sado Island.

Day 11: Sado Island

Today we will explore remote Sado Island off the coast of Niigata. Comprising the mountain ranges of Osado and Kosado flanking the Kokunaka Plain, Sado was once a destination of political exile. It now boasts its own rich cultural and religious life incorporating puppet theatre, Okesa folk songs, Ondeko drumming and demon dances, and Noh theatre thanks to some of its more famous displaced figures. Home to the Japanese Crested Ibis, extinct on the mainland, and the iconic

Taraibune Tub Boats, which we will have the opportunity to experience, this island off the beaten path combines stunning natural scenery including Senkakuwan Bay and Ogi Peninsula, and wilderness and wildlife with a rich history including gold and silver mining, Samurai warrior culture and unique agri- and aqua-culture practices. Sado Island is widely considered a perfect miniature version of Japan. Here, we will visit the Shukunegi Village National Important Preservation Area and learn more about traditional taiko drumming at the Sado Island Taiko Centre.

Day 12: Niigata/Osaka

This morning sail into the bustling port town of Niigata, famous for snow, rice, sake, hot springs and the six-arched, granite-sided stone Bandai Bridge, designated as a Nationally Important Cultural Property in 2004, and one of the most scenic spots in the city. Enjoy breakfast before boarding your flight to Osaka Itami Airport.

Note: During our voyage, circumstances may make it necessary or desirable to deviate from the proposed itinerary. This can include poor weather and opportunities for making unplanned excursions. Your Expedition Leader will keep you fully informed. This tour offers a variety of activities and excursions. Your personal interests will determine which of these you wish to join. Please note that some activities and excursions will run at similar times, and it will not be possible to participate in both. Accordingly, refunds for excursions and missed landings are not available. Voyages are planned and scheduled pending final regulatory approval.



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© Fiona Wardle



© Nathan Russ

HERITAGE ADVENTURER

Heritage Adventurer is a true pioneering expedition vessel of exceptional pedigree often referred to as the 'Grande Dame of Expedition Cruising'.

Purpose built for adventure in 1991 at Finland's Rauma shipyard and specifically designed for Polar exploration, *Heritage Adventurer* (formerly known as *MS Hanseatic*) is 124-metres long, boasts the highest passenger-ship ice-class rating (1A Super) and an impressive history of Polar and remote region exploration making her perfect for Heritage Expeditions signature experiential expedition travel.

Originally designed to accommodate 184 guests, we now welcome just 140 expeditioners to create a spacious, comfortable on board experience and continuation of the exceptional, personalised expedition experience synonymous with the company. A fleet of 14 Zodiacs ensures all

guests are able to maximise their expedition experience.

On board, enjoy stylish, sophisticated accommodations spanning 4 decks, visit the captain and crew in the Bridge with our Open Bridge Policy and dine on gourmet fare from leading chefs.

Watch your adventure unfold from numerous spectacular indoor and outdoor viewing locations including *Heritage Adventurer's* famed Observation Lounge resplendent with 270-degree views and join our world-renowned team of naturalists, botanists, historians and experts as they interpret the natural and human history discovered during each voyage, as well as hosting regular lectures.

And should you require a little R&R, unwind in the library, pool, gym, hot tub, sauna and steam room, indulge in some retail therapy or find a quiet place to enjoy a coffee or cocktail from the café and bar.

DATES

Voyage #HA270425
25 April – 6 May, 2027

PRICES USD\$

Heritage Suite **\$19,500 pp***

Located on Deck 6, Heritage Suites are an expansive 44m² and feature large double panoramic windows, king bed, large living area with a sofa, coffee table and chairs and grand marble bathroom with a double basin, bathtub and shower, large writing desk, floor to ceiling cabinetry for storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Worsley Suite **\$15,950 pp***

Located on Deck 6, Worsley Suites are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king or two single beds, comfortable chaise-style lounge suite, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Single **\$15,950 pp***

Superior Single Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king bed, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Triple **\$10,350 pp***

Superior Triple Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, two single beds and one Pullman bed which folds down from the wall, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Deck 5 **\$12,300 pp***

Superior Cabins on Deck 5 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king or two single beds, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Superior Deck 4 **\$11,500 pp***

Superior Cabins on Deck 4 are a spacious 22m² and feature large panoramic windows, king or two single beds, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Main Deck Single **\$13,950 pp***

Main Deck Single Cabins on Deck 3 are a spacious 22m² and feature two porthole windows, king bed, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

Main Deck Triple **\$10,100 pp***

Main Deck Triple Cabins on Deck 3 are a spacious 22m² and feature two porthole windows, two single beds and one Pullman bed which folds down from the wall, comfortable lounge, writing desk, private en-suite with shower, ample storage and a flat screen entertainment system.

* The price listed includes the local landing fees of USD\$690 (All prices are per person in USD\$).

PRICE INCLUDES

Landing fees, one night hotel accommodation equivalent to your on board accommodation (incl. dinner/breakfast), transfer to ship, all on board ship accommodation with meals, house beer, wine and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, and all shore excursions and activities. Programme of lectures by noted naturalists, post cruise flight.

PRICE EXCLUDES

All items of a personal nature, laundry, drinks, gratuities. International/domestic flights, visas and travel insurance.

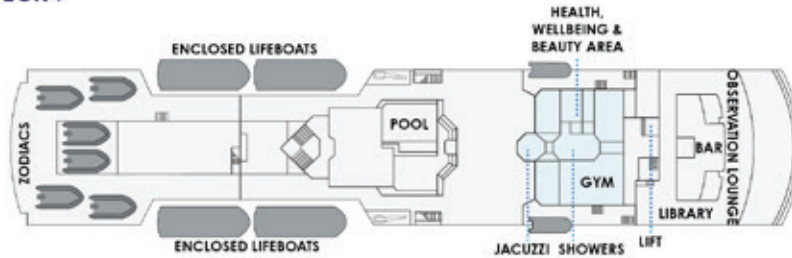
16/12/2025

Heritage Adventurer Deck Plan

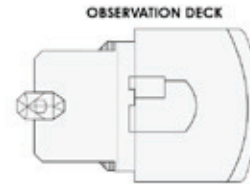


DECK 6: ● WORSLEY SUITE ● HERITAGE SUITE
DECK 5: ● SUPERIOR ● SUPERIOR TRIPLE ● SUPERIOR SINGLE
DECK 4: ● SUPERIOR
DECK 3: ● MAIN DECK TRIPLE ● MAIN DECK SINGLE

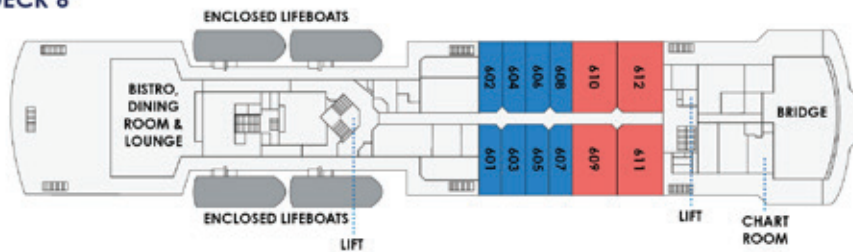
DECK 7



DECK 8



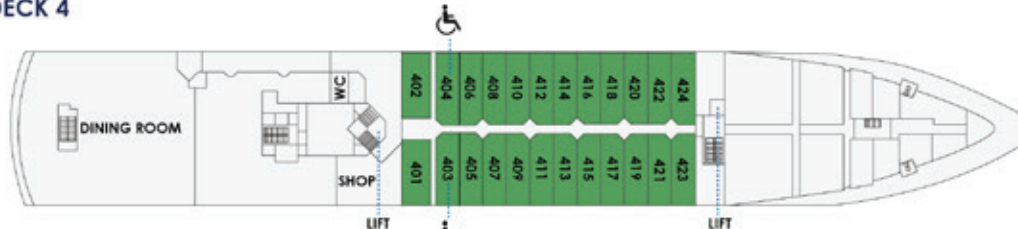
DECK 6



DECK 5



DECK 4



DECK 3



DECK 2



SUITE CATEGORIES

- HERITAGE SUITE
- SUPERIOR SINGLE
- DECK 4 SUPERIOR
- MAIN DECK SINGLE
- WORSLEY SUITE
- DECK 5 SUPERIOR
- SUPERIOR TRIPLE
- MAIN DECK TRIPLE

BETCHART EXPEDITIONS INC.
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Call Betchart Expeditions with your questions and for reservations!
Phone (800) 252-4910 or (408) 252-4910 or Email: info@BetchartExpeditions.com
Betchart Expeditions Inc. CST#2036304-40 - 17050 Montebello Road - Cupertino, CA 95014
www.betchartexpeditions.com

COSTS & CONDITIONS

Voyage Fee:

<u>Category:</u>	<u>Published</u>	20% Discounted Fare Book by February 26, 2026	Deposit due by Feb 26, 2026
Heritage Suite, Deck 6	\$19,500.00	\$15,738.00 per person based on 2 per cabin	\$5,000
Worsley Suite, Deck 6	\$15,950.00	\$12,898.00 per person based on 2 per cabin	\$4,000
Superior Single, Deck 5	\$15,950.00	\$12,898.00 per person based on 1 per cabin	\$4,000
Superior Triple, Deck 5	\$10,350.00	\$ 8,418.00 per person based on 3 per cabin	\$3,000
Superior, Deck 5	\$12,300.00	\$ 9,978.00 per person based on 2 per cabin	\$3,500
Superior, Deck 4	\$11,500.00	\$ 9,338.00 per person based on 2 per cabin	\$3,500
Main Deck Single, Deck 3	\$13,950.00	\$11,298.00 per person based on 1 per cabin	\$3,500
Main Deck Triple, Deck 3	\$10,100.00	\$ 8,218.00 per person based on 3 per cabin	\$3,000

Voyage Fee Includes: Local payment, pre/post cruise transfers, one-night hotel accommodations in a twin share room (incl. dinner/breakfast), all on board ship accommodation with meals, house beer, wine and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, landing fees and all expedition shore excursions. Program of lectures by noted naturalists.

Voyage Fee Does Not Include: International/domestic flights; independent transfers; pre/post extensions; any ground services before and/or after the voyage other than those specifically mentioned; passport, visas, required travel insurance and all items of a personal nature; drinks, phone calls, laundry, gratuities, administration fees and cancellation/luggage/repatriation/medical insurance (required to travel).

Questions, Reservations, Deposits, and Payments: To reserve your place on the Discover the Islands of Japan, April 25 - May 6, 2027, please phone Terri at Betchart Expeditions Inc. **(408) 252-4910** or **(800) 252-4910** or email: betchartTerri@gmail.com

To confirm your place: Advance payment as listed above is payable by check to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Receipt of advance payment and reservation form **AND** Booking Form, indicate your acceptance of Terms & Conditions. The final payment is due to Betchart Expeditions Inc by, December 4, 2026

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit is refundable until October 20, 2026 less a handling fee of \$950 per person. Cancellation after October 20, 2026 deposit is fully forfeited. There is no refund for any cancellation after December 4, 2026 and any unpaid balance is due immediately. No refunds are made for unused services.

Responsibility: Betchart Expeditions Inc. acts only as agent for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels and exercises every care possible. Betchart can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident, or irregularity in connection with the services of any airplane, ship, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, terrorism, quarantine, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or to cancel any tour prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Prices quoted in this brochure are per person, in USD. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance. Discounts on voyage only, not including \$690 landing fees.

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Please mail the reservation form, Booking Form and your deposit check for (see below) per person to:

Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014.

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RESERVATIONS

#1811

YES! I/We want to join the **Discover the Islands of Japan, April 25 - May 6, 2027** offered by Betchart Expeditions Inc. Please reserve _____ space(s). As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$_____ (see above) per person, payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name _____ Age _____

Name _____ Age _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Membership (please circle): AAAS Sigma Xi ACS Planetary Society Other _____

Category (in order of preference 1st – 2nd – 3rd choice)

_____ Heritage Suite, Deck 6	_____ Superior, Deck 5
_____ Worsley Suite, Deck 6	_____ Superior, Deck 4
_____ Superior Single, Deck 5	_____ Main Deck Single, Deck 3
_____ Superior Triple, Deck 5	_____ Main Deck Triple, Deck 3

Cabin Occupancy: _____ Twin _____ Single _____ Triple

_____ Share (___with a friend, or ___pair with a room-mate or room-mates)

Please mail Reservation Form & Deposit Check to: **Islands of Japan 2027**
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014