



Kyushu, **Japan – July 22, 2013** – Walk Japan, the pioneer and premier provider of intimate, off-the-beaten-path walking tours in Japan, today noted The Land of the Rising Sun is on sale at “30 percent off.”

With the U.S. Dollar buying 30 percent more Japanese Yen than just 15 months ago, this picturesque destination is now far more affordable for Americans. And for travelers who want to experience Japan -- not just see it -- there is only one way to go.

On foot.

### **Anyone Can Walk Japan**

Walk Japan is the leading Japanese tour company offering a wide variety of walking tours ranging from majestic mountains (summer or winter) to tranquil tea gardens, temples, through major cities, peaceful countryside, golf courses and much more.

Tours range from two to twelve days and, while walking is featured, less active travelers will also find tours to enjoy. Tours are ranked from ‘Level One’ through ‘Six’ with One suitable for anyone who can walk a flight of stairs or around the block, on up to Level Six which involves up to eight hours of involved hiking in a day. Tours include only 12 to 15 travelers for a personal experience. The guides are all fluent in both English and Japanese and expert in local history and culture. Food, especially in the countryside is fresh and locally sourced, so along with daily walks in the fresh air, travelers will return home reinvigorated.

For example, the 12-day “Shogun Trail” tour starts in Tokyo and includes trains (super-fast, fast, not-so-fast, and downright slow), ferry, bus, mini-bus, street-tram, taxi and 'pirate' ship. Accommodations are typically in local inns for cultural immersion.

Walk Japan recently celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its original Nakasendo Way tour, a fully guided, walking tour between the Nakasendo's beginning in Kyoto to its end in Edo, modern-day Tokyo, providing a unique, intimate experience of Japan and its people. This immensely popular tour is listed in the best-selling books [1,000 Places to See Before You Die](#) and [The Rough Guide to Ultimate Adventures](#).

### **New Basho Tour**

To celebrate that 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Walk Japan today announced its new, 10-day Basho Tour, designed to offer its many repeat customers an all-new alternative. The Basho Tour follows in the footsteps of 17th Century Japanese poet, Matsuo Basho. Beginning in the great city of Tokyo, travels wind through the beautiful and iconic scenery of the Tohoku region, along the rugged Sea of Japan coast to Sado Island before reaching the cultured, old capital of Kyoto. The walking is along trails easily enjoyed by regular walkers and, like Basho, all can take delight and inspiration from some of the greatest scenery to be found in Japan including Matsushima, one of the classic Three Views of Japan, and the beautiful gardens found at Hiraizumi and Kenrokuen.

Most Americans tend to think of Japan for its prominent Tokyo skyline and industry – while much of the country is comprised of visually arresting countryside from the sea, lakes to the mountains, interspersed with ancient temples and expansive gardens. Visit the photo gallery of the tours for a glimpse of this country’s exotic beauty [www.walkjapan.com/walkingtours/basho-tour](http://www.walkjapan.com/walkingtours/basho-tour)

Walk Japan Founding Partner, Tom Stanley, commented, “Many of our clients have told us their Walk Japan tour was truly the ‘trip of a lifetime,’ or a ‘bucket list trip’ and we cater to our clients to ensure that lifetime standard of quality. We listen carefully to our clients, and develop tours that blend Japanese culture, history, food, and unrivalled scenic beauty to offer a wide variety of experiences, tour duration and pricing. Our new 10-day Basho tour is a great example.

“Japan has a vast and fascinating heritage,” Mr. Stanley explained. “Our two-day Kyoto tour is our most popular short tour. Kyoto, Japan’s culture capital, remained the home of the imperial court for eleven centuries before it was removed to Tokyo in the late 19th Century. Over 1,100 years as the imperial home, Kyoto justly became one of the great cities of the world. At times it experienced turbulence and violence but, and often at the same time, it was where some of the world’s most distinct and exquisite arts and greatest cultures were cultivated. Our gently paced, walking tour unveils Kyoto’s importance at the heart of Japanese culture and history in typical Walk Japan style -- inimitable and fascinating.”

### **About Tom Stanley**

Mr. Stanley first came to Japan with his family in 1959 when his father, an American diplomat, was posted there. Prior to this his family’s contacts with Asia were mainly in China, where all his grandparents and two great-grandparents were missionaries. Japan was something of an enemy to his pro-China ancestors, especially his parents who were interned in China by the Japanese during World War II. Nevertheless, Japan made a favorable impression on the whole family after they began living there. Tom completed high school at the Canadian Academy in Kobe, Japan, the same school his Canadian mother and her siblings attended in the 1930s.

Subsequently, Tom studied modern Japanese history and received his doctorate from the University of Arizona after periods of research at Hiroshima and Keio Universities. His academic career subsequently took him to the University of Arizona, the University of Tokyo, the National University of Singapore and the Australian National University before he settled down at the University of Hong Kong in 1986. Here he taught modern Japanese history and served as head of department and associate dean until retiring from the University in 2008.

### **About Walk Japan**

Kyushu, Japan-based Walk Japan is the pioneer, and premier provider, of intimate, off-the-beaten-path walking tours in Japan ([www.walkjapan.com](http://www.walkjapan.com)). Beginning in 1992 with our innovative and best-selling Nakasendo Way tour, we were the first to successfully introduce the real Japan, geographically and culturally, that often remains inaccessible for most visitors to the country.

Since then, Walk Japan has created more original tours throughout Japan and been widely recognized for its work, including selection by [National Geographic](#) as one of the 200 Best Adventure Travel Companies on Earth. [Time Asia](#) describes our bilingual tour leaders as 'the quiet stars of the show' with 'a mine of general knowledge about the country'. Together with our

great liking for the Japanese and their society we take you into a 'hidden' Japan to explore, understand and enjoy its food, customs, society and history. Or, as [BusinessWeek](#) says about us for '...a fascinating and intimate peek into Japan...'

Walk Japan's classic and popular [Nakasendo Way tour](#) is listed in the best-selling books [1,000 Places to See Before You Die](#) and [The Rough Guide to Ultimate Adventures](#) - is now complemented by our [Shogun Trail](#), [Kunisaki Trek](#) - listed in National Geographic's [Sacred Places of a Lifetime: 500 of the World's Most Peaceful and Powerful Destinations](#) - [Hokkaido Hike](#) and [Kyushu Expedition tours](#).

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