Japan Travel Guide 2026: Why Now Is the Best Time for Singaporeans to Visit (Book Before July!)

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If you have been sitting on the fence about a Japan trip, consider this your definitive sign to book. Right now, in mid-2026, Singaporeans enjoy a rare confluence of factors that make Japan travel exceptionally attractive â?? a historically strong Singapore Dollar, affordable flight options, a wealth of seasonal experiences, and an important deadline looming in July 2026 that will make your trip noticeably more expensive if you wait.

Here is everything you need to know about travelling from Singapore to Japan in 2026.

Why Singaporeans Should Book Japan Travel Before July 2026

Starting **July 2026**, Japanâ??s departure tax is set to **triple**. This additional cost will be applied to every traveller departing Japan, making your overall trip more expensive the longer you wait. On top of this, the JR Pass â?? the popular rail pass used by tourists to travel across Japan on bullet trains â?? is becoming more expensive from October 2026.

The window to visit Japan at todayâ??s prices is closing fast. If you can travel between now and June 2026, you will avoid both of these cost increases and enjoy Japan at its most accessible price point in years.

The Singapore Dollar vs. the Japanese Yen: An Extraordinary Opportunity

The Singapore Dollar is currently trading at approximately **115â??125 Japanese Yen** â?? one of the strongest exchange rates ever recorded between the two currencies. In practical terms, this means your travel budget in Japan stretches significantly further than it did three or four years ago.

A bowl of ramen that costs Â¥1,200 works out to roughly S$10. A night in a good mid-range hotel in Tokyo that costs Â¥15,000 translates to around S$125. Even premium experiences â?? kaiseki dining, ryokan stays, and private onsen â?? are remarkably affordable by Singapore standards.

This currency advantage is a significant part of why over **726,200 Singaporeans** travelled to Japan in 2025 alone, making it one of the most popular destinations for Singaporeans year after year.

How to Get There: Flight Options from Singapore

Getting from Singapore to Japan has never been more convenient, with both budget and full-service options available:

Budget Options

- **Scoot**: Operates daily direct flights from Singapore Changi Airport (SIN) to Tokyo Narita (NRT), with fares from as low as S$188 one-way during off-peak periods. For April and May travel, return fares are typically in the S$340â??S$400 range.
- **Air Japan**: The most affordable airline for Japan routes, with round-trip fares averaging around S$219â??$278.

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Full-Service Options

- **Singapore Airlines**: Operates multiple daily flights to Tokyo (Narita and Haneda), Osaka (Kansai), and other Japanese cities. Fares are higher but include generous baggage allowances, in-flight meals, and superior comfort.
- **Japan Airlines and ANA**: Both offer excellent service and competitive pricing, especially if you book well in advance.

Pro tip: Travellers who book at least two weeks in advance typically save around 13% compared to last-minute bookings. Use Skyscanner or Google Flights to track fare trends and set price alerts for your preferred travel dates. Check out our article on Labour Day 2026 long weekend getaways from Singapore for some excellent short-trip ideas too.

Where to Go: Top Destinations for Singaporeans in Japan 2026

Japan is vast and varied. Here are the regions that Singaporeans visit most â?? and what makes each one special:

1. Kansai (Kyoto, Osaka, Nara) â?? Most Popular Among Singaporeans

The Kansai region remains the top choice for Singaporean visitors. **Kyoto** offers an unparalleled immersion in traditional Japanese culture â?? bamboo groves, ancient temples, geisha districts, and some of the finest kaiseki cuisine in the world. **Osaka** is the food capital of Japan, where the philosophy of â??kuidaoreâ?• (eat until you drop) rules. **Nara** is a delightful day trip featuring free-roaming deer and the iconic Todai-ji temple.

2. Tokyo and Kanto

No Japan trip is complete without experiencing the organized chaos of **Tokyo**. From the neon-lit streets of Shibuya and Shinjuku to the quiet elegance of Yanaka and the otaku haven of Akihabara, Tokyo offers something for every type of traveller. Day trips to **Nikko**, **Kamakura**, and **Hakone** (with stunning views of Mount Fuji) are all easily accessible.

3. Hokkaido

Japanâ??s northernmost island is a revelation in every season. In summer, Hokkaidoâ??s lavender fields and dairy farms are achingly beautiful. In winter (for those planning ahead), it offers world-class skiing and onsen experiences. **Sapporo**, the islandâ??s main city, is a delight for food lovers, particularly for its famous ramen and fresh seafood.

4. Kyushu (Fukuoka, Nagasaki, Beppu)

Fukuoka is one of Japanâ??s most liveable and underrated cities, famous for its vibrant food stall culture (yatai), excellent ramen, and proximity to beautiful nature. **Beppu** is a geothermal wonderland with steaming hot springs and â??hell pondsâ?• of otherworldly colours.

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Getting Around Japan: The JR Pass and IC Cards

Japanâ??s public transport system is legendary for its punctuality and coverage. Here is how to navigate it:

JR Pass

The JR Pass gives unlimited access to most Japan Railways (JR) trains, including the iconic Shinkansen (bullet trains). It is ideal if you plan to travel between multiple cities. **Book your JR Pass before October 2026** when prices are set to increase. A 7-day JR Pass currently costs around S$490 per adult.

IC Cards (Suica / ICOCA)

For getting around within cities, an IC card is indispensable. Load it up with cash and tap on and off trains, buses, and even vending machines. Most convenience stores (7-Eleven, FamilyMart, Lawson) also accept IC card payments.

ATMs

Japan remains predominantly cash-based outside major cities. **7-Eleven, FamilyMart, and Lawson ATMs** reliably accept international cards, with modest fees of Â¥110â??Â¥220 per transaction. Always carry some yen cash for smaller establishments, temples, and rural areas.

Budget Breakdown: How Much Does a Japan Trip Cost?

Here is a rough daily budget guide for Singaporeans travelling in Japan in 2026:

Category	Budget Traveller	Mid-Range	Comfort
Accommodation	S$50â??70 (hostel/capsule)	S$100â??150 (business hotel)	S$200â??350 (boutique/ryokan)
Food	S$30â??50	S$60â??100	S$150+
Transport	S$15â??25	S$25â??40	S$40â??60
Activities	S$10â??20	S$30â??50	S$80â??150
Daily Total	**~S$110â??170**	**~S$215â??340**	**~S$470+**

A 7-night trip for a couple travelling mid-range â?? including return flights, JR Pass, accommodation, food, and activities â?? typically comes in between **S$3,500 and S$5,000 all-in**. With the current SGD/JPY exchange rate, this represents exceptional value.

Practical Tips for Singaporeans Visiting Japan

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- **Pocket Wi-Fi or SIM Card:** Rent a pocket Wi-Fi device at the airport or buy a local travel SIM. Coverage is excellent across Japan.
- **Driving in Japan:** Singaporeans require an International Driving Permit (IDP) to rent a car in Japan. Apply before you leave via the Singapore AA or Automobile Association.
- **Etiquette:** Japan is a polite society. Keep voices low in public, do not eat while walking, and always remove shoes when entering homes or traditional venues.
- **Tipping:** There is no tipping culture in Japan. Excellent service is standard and expected â?? do not tip.
- **Rubbish bins:** Public bins are rare. Carry a small bag for your rubbish and dispose of it at convenience stores or your hotel.

Book Now â?? Here Is Why You Cannot Wait

To summarise the case for booking your Japan trip before July 2026:

- â? Departure tax triples from July 2026
- â? JR Pass prices increase from October 2026
- â? SGD/JPY at historic highs â?? maximum purchasing power now
- â? Spring shoulder season (Aprilâ??May) offers pleasant weather and fewer crowds than the sakura peak
- â? Affordable direct flights available from Singapore on Scoot and Air Japan

For flight deals and booking, check Skyscanner Singapore and compare with Singapore Airlines and Scoot directly. For a comprehensive Japan travel guide, visit the Japan National Tourism Organization Singapore Office.

Also read: Must-Read Japan Travel Guide: Tips, Hacks and Must-Doâ??s and 7 Cheapest Travel Destinations from Singapore in 2026.

Japan is waiting. Book before July â?? and make the most of this extraordinary window while it lasts.

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