

# Great Gardens of Japan

## A Photographic & Botanical Journey with Harold Davis

Monday, November 9, 2026 to  
Saturday, November 21, 2026



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Autumn Red

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<a href="#">Page 2</a>
<b>Overview At-A-Glance</b> .....	<a href="#">Page 4</a>
<b>Day 1: Monday, November 9</b>	<i>Welcome to Tokyo! (D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 5</a>
<b>Day 2: Tuesday, November 10</b>	<i>Tokyo Gardens: Koishikawa Korakuen Garden and the Imperial Palace East Garden (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 6</a>
<b>Day 3: Wednesday, November 11</b>	<i>Zojo-ji Temple, Shiba Park, and Tokyo Tower (B)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 7</a>
<b>Day 4: Thursday, November 12</b>	<i>Ozaki Flower Park and Musashi Ichinomiya Hikawa Shrine (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 8</a>
<b>Day 5: Friday, November 13</b>	<i>Omiya Bonsai Village, Kanazawa DT Suzuki Museum, and Shofukaku Garden (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 9</a>
<b>Day 6: Saturday, November 14</b>	<i>Kanazawa Castle, Kenrokuen Garden, Samurai House, and Sushi Making (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 10</a>
<b>Day 7: Sunday, November 15</b>	<i>Kenrokuen Garden Morning Visit and Afternoon at Korakuen Garden in Okayama (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 11</a>
<b>Day 8: Monday, November 16</b>	<i>Korakuen Morning Visit and Afternoon at Ritsurin Garden (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 12</a>
<b>Day 9: Tuesday, November 17</b>	<i>Ritsurin Garden and Hiunkaku Garden (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 13</a>
<b>Day 10: Wednesday, November 18</b>	<i>Kyoto Heian Shrine Garden and Murin-an Garden (B)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 14</a>
<b>Day 11: Thursday, November 19</b>	<i>Arashiyama District, Yasai-tei Villa, Joju-ji Temple, Bamboo Temple (B, L)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 15</a>
<b>Day 12: Friday, November 20</b>	<i>Nanzen-ji Temple and Ikebana Experience (B, D)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 16</a>
<b>Day 13: Saturday, November 21</b>	<i>Onward Travel (B)</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 17</a>
<b>About the Trip</b>	<i>Important information for photographic travelers</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 18</a>
<b>Inclusions and Exclusions</b>	<i>This trip includes some amazing things! Read the details here</i> ..... <a href="#">Page 21</a>
<b>About Harold Davis</b> .....	<a href="#">Page 22</a>
<b>Terms and Conditions</b> .....	<a href="#">Page 23</a>

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# Great Gardens of Japan

## A Photographic and Botanical Journey

### with Harold Davis

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Monday, November 9 to Saturday, November 21, 2026 — *13 Days and 12 Nights*

**Introduction:** Gardens and gardening have been an important part of Japanese culture for more than one thousand years. In this exciting tour, noted photographer Harold Davis (author of [Creative Garden Photography](#)) and Japanese cultural ambassador Kana Hattori will lead us to explore the great gardens of Japan with our cameras. While this is a photography tour, we will also learn about related Japanese horticultural traditions, including flower arranging (ikebana), growing bonsai, and visit the flower districts and plant nurseries that Japanese gardeners frequent.

For the first few days we will be based in an elegant, modern Tokyo hotel and explore gardens including [Koshikawa Korakuen](#) and the [East Gardens of the Imperial Palace](#). From Tokyo, we will travel to [Saitama](#), with a stop at [Ozaki Flower Park](#) (Tokyo's most beloved garden center) along the way. In Saitama, we will visit [Musashi Ichinomiya Hikawa Shrine](#) with its iconic approach through a long row of trees, and spend the night at a serene traditional ryokan.... *continued next page*



© Harold Davis

*Windows on Autumn*—In this photograph of the autumn display from the [Villa Yusei-Tei](#), the foreground reflection shows a pool that can be manipulated with tools provided and with colored inks to create a huge variety of imagery. We will be visiting Yusei-Tei on Day 11 ([see page 15](#)).

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13 Days | 17+ Gardens | 12 Breakfasts | 9 Dinners | Many Extras!

*Please see Inclusions and Exclusions for details*

*Introduction, continued ...*

The next morning we will visit [Bonsai Village](#), dedicated to the centuries-old art of miniature tree cultivation (bring your macro lens!). In the afternoon, we'll transfer to [Kanzawa](#), and visit the reflective pools of the [D.T. Suzuki Museum](#) and the intimate [Shofukaku Garden](#). The next day in Kanazawa sees us at [Kanazawa Castle](#), a *Bukeyashiki* (a traditional samurai house), and [Kenrokuen Garden](#)—one of the “Three Great Gardens of Japan.” In the evening, we'll practice hands-on sushi making in the Kanazawa-style, then eat our art for dinner!

Following an early morning return visit to [Kenrokuen Garden](#), we'll transfer to [Okayama](#), where we'll photograph [Korakuen Garden](#), another of the “Three Great Gardens,” known for its winding paths beside elegant ponds and serene lawns. After the night in Okayama, we'll return for a morning session to [Korakuen](#), then transfer to [Takamatsu](#), where we will photograph [Ritsurin Garden](#), the only Michelin 3-star rated garden in Japan.

The next morning we'll re-visit [Ritsurin Garden](#), followed by a visit to the austere but elegant [Hiunkaku Garden](#), and then transfer to [Kyoto](#), where the group will spend the next four nights. Our garden visits in Kyoto will include the grounds of the [Heian Shrine](#), [Murin-an Garden](#), [Yusai-tei](#) in the [Arishiyama District](#), the [Jizo-in “Bamboo Temple”](#), and [Nanzen-ji](#). Experiences in Kyoto will include traditional rice cooking, and [Ikebana](#), where we will craft and photograph our own flower arrangements using traditional principles.

Please consider joining us on this very special trip that will emphasize photography of Japanese gardens, and the incredible culture that has grown up around horticulture in Japan over the ages.



*Reflections, Ritsurin Garden*

© Harold Davis

**Group Size:** This is an exclusive, small photo workshop (gardeners and non-photographer significant others are also welcome) with very limited space availability. The minimum group size is six and the maximum is twelve.

**How to Register:** Please send [Harold an email](#) expressing interest right away; a completed registration requires a \$1000 deposit, the trip [Reservation Form](#), and a copy of your currently valid passport page. Please see Inclusions and Exclusions ([page 21](#)) and Terms and Conditions ([page 23](#)).

For more information or to express interest, please call Harold at his studio: 510.528.9977 or email: [harold@digitalfieldguide.com](mailto:harold@digitalfieldguide.com)

**Cost:** \$9,950 per person (single supplement \$1,680). See [Reservation Form](#) for payment schedule, and please also see the Terms and Conditions ([page 23](#)) in this itinerary.

**Note about the Single Supplement:** The single supplement guarantees a single room every night except for Day 4 (November 12) when we will be staying at a Japanese-style ryokan in Saitama. Depending on the composition of the group, for this one night there is a possibility that we may need to double-up some group members in same-sex tatami rooms at this small ryokan.

**Logistics:** Our in-bound travel partner is Oku Japan, a premiere agency for off-the-beaten-track travel in Japan.

### **Overview At-A-Glance:**

DAY	ACTIVITY	OVERNIGHT	MEALS
1	Welcome to Tokyo!	Tokyo (Hotel)	D
2	Tokyo Gardens: Koishikawa Korakuen Garden and the Imperial Palace East Garden	Tokyo (Hotel)	B, D
3	Zojo-ji Temple, Shiba Park, and Tokyo Tower	Tokyo (Hotel)	B
4	Ozaki Flower Park and Musashi Ichinomiya Hikawa Shrine	Saitama (Ryokan)	B, D
5	Omiya Bonsai Village, Kanazawa DT Suzuki Museum, and Shofukaku Garden	Kanazawa (Hotel)	B, D
6	Kanazawa Castle, Kenrokuen Garden, Samurai House, and Sushi Making	Kanazawa (Hotel)	B, D
7	Kenrokuen Garden Morning Visit and Afternoon at Korakuen Garden in Okayama	Okayama (Hotel)	B, D
8	Korakuen Morning Visit and Afternoon at Ritsurin Garden	Takamatsu (Hotel)	B, D
9	Ritsurin Garden and Hiunkaku Garden	Kyoto (Hotel)	B, D
10	Kyoto Heian Shrine Garden and Murin-an Garden	Kyoto (Hotel)	B
11	Arashiyama District, Yasai-tei Villa, Joju-ji Temple, Bamboo Temple	Kyoto (Hotel)	B, L
12	Nanzen-ji Temple and Ikebana Experience	Kyoto (Hotel)	B, D
13	Onward Travel		B

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## Day 1: Monday, November 9

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### Welcome to Tokyo!

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*Included meals: Welcome Dinner*

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Hotel: [Park Hotel Tokyo](#) or similar  
Shiodome Media Tower  
1 Chome-7-1 Higashi  
Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-7227  
+81 3-6252-1111

- Check in at the hotel: 3:00 pm
- Group meeting at 25th-floor lobby: 6:00 pm
- Welcome Dinner

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#### *Planned Activities:*

Welcome to Tokyo! The group will meet at our 25th-floor hotel lobby in Tokyo at 6:00 pm on Monday, November 9, 2026, where we will meet our esteemed guide Kana Hattori-san. Tokyo is well served by [Narita and Haneda International Airports](#).

The [Park Hotel Tokyo](#) is located on the upper floors of the [Shiodome Media Tower](#). Most rooms have a fantastic view of the city, with some facing Mt. Fuji. The hotel prides itself on presenting [contemporary Japanese artistry](#) and the work of Japanese artisans in the public spaces, and in each room. This hotel, located at the nexus of multiple transportation options, will be an excellent and comfortable base for our photographic exploration of Tokyo and its gardens.

After our meeting at 6:00 pm, we will head out on foot for our Welcome Dinner!

*Yokohama Night*—There is a vast difference between the endless cityscapes of metropolitan Japan, such as the Tokyo-Yokohama area, and the quiet serenity of Japanese gardens.



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## Day 2: Tuesday, November 10

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### Tokyo Gardens: Koishikawa Korakuen Garden and the Imperial Palace East Garden

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*Included meals: Breakfast and Dinner*

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Hotel: [Park Hotel Tokyo](#) or similar  
Shiodome Media Tower  
1 Chome-7-1 Higashi  
Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-7227  
+81 3-6252-1111

- Breakfast at the hotel
  - Koishikawa Korakuen Garden
  - Imperial Palace East Garden
  - Group Dinner
- 

#### *Planned Activities:*

After breakfast at the hotel, we will use public transportation to visit [Koishikawa Korakuen Gardens](#), one of the oldest and most beautiful gardens in the city. Originally constructed in the early Edo period, this garden is a harmonious blend of Chinese and Japanese design, featuring carefully placed stones, ponds, bridges—including the well-known *Moon Bridge*—and seasonal plantings that reflect the changing moods of nature. The park includes winding paths, maple groves, and scenic viewpoints.

Following lunch on our own, we will continue to the [East Gardens of the Imperial Palace](#), a spacious and beautifully maintained landscape located within the inner grounds of the former [Edo Castle](#). These gardens offer a unique blend of historical significance and natural beauty. Photographic subjects include magnificent old castle walls and gates scattered among sweeping lawns, manicured trees, and stone paths, and the Emperor's personal bamboo grove.

[Moon Bridge, Korakuen Garden](#)—This special moon bridge—*Engetsu-kyo*, *The Bridge of the Round Moon*—was designed in the Chinese style. Located in [Korakuen Garden](#), it is one of the oldest stone bridges in Japan, dating from the 1600s. The term “moon bridge” refers to a bridge that together with its reflection makes almost a complete circle. Photographs of this moon bridge can be found in *Japanese Garden Design* (Tuttle Press, 2016) and other books related to Japanese design.

Photographing the *Engetsu-kyo* moon bridge requires a wide-angle lens, as it is hard to get sufficient distance from the subject. A polarizer is also recommended.



## Day 3: Wednesday, November 11

### Zojo-ji Temple, Shiba Park, and Tokyo Tower

*Included meals: Breakfast*

Hotel: [Park Hotel Tokyo](#) or similar  
Shiodome Media Tower  
1 Chome-7-1 Higashi  
Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-7227  
+81 3-6252-1111

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Zojo-ji Temple
- Shiba Park
- Tokyo Tower

#### *Planned Activities:*

After breakfast, we will travel by public transportation to [Zojo-ji Temple](#). The temple is actively used today as well as being an important historic site. The temple's majestic Sange Datsumon Gate, centuries-old wooden halls, and peaceful cemetery grounds, are all set against the dramatic backdrop of [Tokyo Tower](#) and the Tokyo skyline. Light filtering through temple grounds and the quiet presence of Jizo statues create opportunities for atmospheric photography. From there, we will continue on foot to [Shibakoen \(Shiba Park\)](#), one of Japan's oldest public parks established in 1873. The park is home to large camphor, ginkgo, and zelkova trees, and [Momizi-dani \(Maple Valley\)](#), a landscaped ravine with a woodland pathway that is a popular place for autumn leaf viewing.

After a lunch on our own, we will take the elevator to the top of [Tokyo Tower](#). From the observation deck, the Tokyo skyline stretches out in every direction. From there, you can return to the hotel with the group or enjoy exploring Tokyo on your own with pointers from our knowledgeable guide. Dinner is on your own.

[Samadhi Mudra](#)—I photographed this statue of Buddha in the garden outside Senso-ji, the oldest temple in Tokyo. The hand gesture in representations of Buddha are significant and have specific meanings. The hand gesture shown in this photo invites meditation and a deep sense of involvement with the universe.



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## Day 4: Thursday, November 12

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### Ozaki Flower Park and Musashi Ichinomiya Hikawa Shrine

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*Included meals: Breakfast and Dinner*

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Hotel: [Shindo Yamaya Ryokan](#) or similar  
3-110 Horinouchicho, Omiya-Ku  
Saitama-Shi, Saitama 330-0804  
+81 048-641-0501

- Breakfast and luggage transfer\*
  - Ozaki Flower Park
  - Musashi Ichinomiya Hikawa Shrine
  - Dinner at the ryokan
- 

#### *Planned Activities:*

This morning we'll visit [Ozaki Flower Park](#), one of Tokyo's most beloved garden centers. With over 100,000 different plant species, Ozaki Flower Park has supported horticultural development in Japan for decades. We will take our time to explore seasonal blooms, displays, and rare ornamental species with our cameras.

From there we then transfer by private coach to [Saitama](#) and explore [Musashi Ichinomiya Hikawa Shrine](#), one of the most important Shinto shrines in the region. Established in 437 BCE and designated an "Imperial Shrine-1st Rank" in 1870, the [approach to the shrine](#) is an impressively long, tree-lined path—[Hikawa Sando](#)—that leads to three large torii gates. Maple and ginkgo trees surround the buildings of this 2,000-year-old shrine, turning the grounds red and gold in the fall.

\* *Before we check out of the Park Hotel Tokyo, we will give our luggage to a transfer service and see it again in Kanazawa on Day 6. Keep your cameras and what you will need overnight with you in a small backpack or bag.*



*Camellia japonica*

© Harold Davis

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## Day 5: Friday, November 13

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### Omiya Bonsai Village, Kanazawa D.T. Suzuki Museum, and Shofukaku Garden

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*Included meals: Breakfast and Dinner*

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Hotel: [Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel](#) or similar  
2 Chome-1-1 Korinbo  
Kanazawa, Ishikawa 920-0961  
+81 76-231-2411

- Breakfast
  - Bonsai Village
  - Transfer to Kanazawa
  - DT Suzuki Museum
  - Shofukaku Garden
- 

#### *Planned Activities:*

In the early morning we will visit [Omiya Bonsai Village](#), a unique district dedicated to the centuries-old art of miniature tree cultivation. With several traditional nurseries and a specialized museum, this area is special for close-up, detail-oriented photography of bonsai. After visiting the Bonsai Village, we will travel to [Kanazawa](#) by train. Kanazawa is a provincial capitol with preserved Edo-period charm and extensive gardens. We will start our visit to Kanazawa by enjoying two smaller gardens.

The [D.T. Suzuki Museum](#) is a serene architectural space with reflective pools that make for an elegant photographic opportunity. This museum is dedicated to the life and philosophy of Buddhist scholar Daisetz Suzuki. Our visit to the D.T. Suzuki Museum will be followed by a stop at the intimate [Shofukaku Garden](#). This small garden makes for an interesting counterpoint to the grandeur of [Kenrokuen Garden](#) where we will photograph on Day 6.

*Neagari Goya-matsu Pine Tree* — Located in [Ritsurin Garden](#), this Japanese white pine with its imposing roots was originally a bonsai given by the 11th Tokugawa Shogun, Ienari, to the ninth lord of Takamatsu, Matsudaira Yorihiro, in Edo (Tokyo) in 1833. No longer a bonsai, this tree has come a long way!



© Harold Davis

## Day 6: Saturday, November 14

### Kanazawa Castle, Kenrokuen Garden, Samurai House, and Sushi Making

*Included meals: Breakfast and Dinner*

Hotel: [Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel](#) or similar  
2 Chome-1-1 Korinbo  
Kanazawa, Ishikawa 920-0961  
+81 76-231-2411

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Kanazawa Castle
- Kenrokuen Garden
- Samurai House
- Kanazawa-Style Sushi Making

#### *Planned Activities:*

Today we explore the stone walls of [Kanazawa Castle](#), a striking example of traditional Japanese fortification. [Stone work](#) creates the foundation for many gardens, and Japanese stone masons are among the finest in the world.

After photographing the castle's stone ramparts, we will then visit a preserved samurai house with the opportunity to photograph interiors, wooden beams, and atmospheric details.

In the afternoon, the group will explore [Kenrokuen Garden](#), one of the "Three Great Gardens of Japan." This is an expansive garden with classical landscaping and many photogenic features, including stone lanterns, reflective ponds, meandering paths, and graceful bridges.

In the evening, we will enjoy a hands-on sushi-making class with plentiful fresh ingredients. This is a unique opportunity to make one's own art before eating it for dinner!



*Harold's Kanazawa Sushi*

\* *We will be reunited with our luggage at the hotel today.*



*Stone Lantern, Kenrokuen Garden, Kanazawa*

## Day 7: Sunday, November 15

### Morning Visit to Kenrokuen Garden and Afternoon at Korakuen Garden in Okayama

*Included meals: Breakfast and Dinner*

Hotel: [ANA Crowne Plaza Okayama](#) or similar  
15-1 Ekimotomachi  
Kita Ward, Okayama, 700-0024  
+81 86-898-1111

- Early Morning Visit to Kenrokuen Garden
- Breakfast and luggage transfer \*
- Transfer to Okayama
- Korakuen Garden

#### *Planned Activities:*

We will start the day with an early morning return visit to [Kenrokuen Garden](#) (6:00 am – 8:00 am). Returning to the hotel for breakfast, we will give our luggage to the transfer service and check out before traveling by train to [Okayama](#).

We will spend the afternoon exploring [Korakuen Garden](#), a World Heritage Site and one of the “Three Great Gardens of Japan” Renowned for its spacious lawns, elegant ponds, and thoughtfully designed walking paths, [Korakuen Garden](#) offers a peaceful retreat showcasing traditional Japanese garden artistry.

Before the Second World War, the Red Crowned Cranes lived in Korakuen Garden but they disappeared during an air raid in 1945. Reintroduced in 1956, the Red Crowned Cranes have thrived and are designated a Special Natural Monument of Japan. Their aviaries can be visited in the garden.

\* *In the morning before we check out of the Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel, we will give our luggage to a transfer service and see it again in Kyoto on Day 9. Keep your cameras and what you will need overnight with you in a small backpack or bag.*



*Umbrellas, Korakuen Garden, Okayama*

© Harold Davis

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## Day 8: Monday, November 16

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### Korakuen Morning Visit and Afternoon at Ritsurin Garden

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*Included meals: Breakfast and Dinner*

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Hotel: [Royal Park Hotel Takamatsu](#) or similar  
1-chome-3-11 Kawaramachi  
Takamatsu, Kagawa 760-0052  
+81 87-823-2222

- Breakfast at the hotel
  - Morning visit to Korakuen Garden
  - Transfer to Takamatsu
  - Ritsurin Garden
- 

#### *Planned Activities:*

After breakfast, we will visit [Korakuen Garden](#) for a second time to take advantage of the morning light. After exploring the garden, we will transfer to [Takamatsu](#) and photograph [Ritsurin Garden](#).

Ritsurin Garden in Takamatsu is considered one of Japan's finest gardens, dating from the Edo-period. Construction of the garden started in 1625 by the local *Daiymo* (feudal lord), and the buildings in the garden date from the early 17th century. A succession of Daiyos continued extending and improving the garden and it was finished in 1745.

Open to the public in 1875, Ritsurin Garden is one of the largest strolling gardens in Japan and the only three-star Michelin rated garden in Japan. The garden is known for its *ippo ikkei* (new view with every step) design. In 1953, the Japanese government designated the garden as a Special Place of Scenic Beauty.



*Pine Tree, Ritsuren Garden*

© Harold Davis

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## Day 9: Tuesday, November 17

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### Ritsurin Garden and Hiunkaku Garden

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*Included meals: Breakfast and Dinner*

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Hotel: [The Hotel Higashiyama Kyoto Tokyu](#) or similar  
3 Chome-175-2, Ebisucho  
Higashiyama Ward, Kyoto 605-0033  
+81 75-533-6109

- Breakfast at the hotel
  - Morning photography at Ritsurin Garden
  - Hiunkaku Garden
  - Transfer to Kyoto
- 

#### ***Planned Activities:***

After breakfast, we will return to [Ritsurin Garden](#) for another exploration and photography session in the morning light. This is a very large garden and there is plenty to photograph!

Next we will visit [Hiunkaku Garden](#), located in the grounds of the [Takematsu Castle](#) ruins. This is a historically significant garden that is best known for its stonework treatment, including large granite stepping stones and incorporating a dry riverbed, known as a *kare-gawa*.

Late in the afternoon, we will transfer by train to [Kyoto](#) and settle into our hotel home for the next four nights. ✱ *We will be reunited with our luggage at the hotel in Kyoto today.*



*Something Fishy, Ritsurin Garden*

© Harold Davis

## Day 10: Wednesday, November 18

### Kyoto Heian Shrine Garden and Murin-an Garden

*Included meals: Breakfast*

Hotel: [The Hotel Higashiyama Kyoto Tokyu](#) or similar  
3 Chome-175-2, Ebisucho  
Higashiyama Ward, Kyoto 605-0033  
+81 75-533-6109

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Heian Shrine Garden
- Murin-an Garden

#### *Planned Activities:*

On our first day in [Kyoto](#), we'll visit to the expansive grounds of [Heian Shrine](#), known for its striking torii gate and vibrant architecture inspired by Kyoto's ancient imperial palaces. Behind the shrine lies a beautifully landscaped garden, featuring winding paths, large ponds, arched bridges, and seasonal plantings. The garden's expansive design, and elaborate arcade bridge are great photographic subjects.

In the afternoon, we will explore [Murin-an Garden](#), a hidden gem created in the Meiji period for a prominent statement and designed by [Ogawa Jihei](#). [Murin-an Garden](#) has been designated by the Japanese government as a National Place of Scenic Beauty, and is only open to a limited number of daily visitors.

The garden features a stream fed by the Lake Biwa canal and "borrows" the scenery of the Higashiyama Mountains. The unique design combines ancient and modern, and Japanese and Western elements and styles.

We will be on our own to explore Kyoto in the late afternoon. Enjoy dinner at your leisure.



Katsura Imperial Villa Garden, Kyoto

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## Day 11: Thursday, November 19

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### Arashiyama District, Yasai-tei Villa, Joju-ji Temple, Bamboo Temple

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*Included meals: Breakfast and Lunch*

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Hotel: [The Hotel Higashiyama Kyoto Tokyu](#) or similar  
3 Chome-175-2, Ebisucho  
Higashiyama Ward, Kyoto 605-0033  
+81 75-533-6109

- Breakfast at the hotel
  - Arashiyama District
  - Yasai-tei Villa
  - Rice Cooking at Okudosan
  - Joju-ji Temple
  - Bamboo Temple (Jizo-in Temple)
- 

#### ***Planned Activities:***

Today, we will spend the day photographing and exploring the beautiful [Arashiyama District](#), famous for its stunning autumn scenery facilitated with a private vehicle. To start, we will visit [Yusai-tei](#), where mirrored reflections of a curated autumn view create stunning visual effects. *Please note that during the crowded autumn season, there are special rules when visiting Yusai-tei, which is completely booked months in advance. Harold will talk about Yusai-tei and explain how to photograph this special villa before our visit.*

After we have photographed at Yusai-tei, we will participate in a traditional *Okudo-san* rice cooking experience using a *kamodo* (wood-fired stove) and have lunch.

In the afternoon, we will visit some of the many temples in the [Arashiyama District](#), starting with [Joju-ji Temple](#), which was established by the Emperor in 810. One of its most distinctive features is the beautiful pathway, colored by fallen autumn leaves, that leads up to the temple precinct. From there we will continue on to [Jizo-in Temple](#), often called the “Bamboo Temple.” Jizo-in is known for its moss-covered paths, stone statues, and tranquil bamboo groves.



*Arashiyama Yusei-Tei*

## Day 12: Friday, November 20

### Nanzen-ji Temple and Ikebana Experience

*Included meals: Breakfast and Farewell Dinner*

Hotel: [The Hotel Higashiyama Kyoto Tokyu](#) or similar  
3 Chome-175-2, Ebisucho  
Higashiyama Ward, Kyoto 605-0033  
+81 75-533-6109

- Breakfast at the hotel
- Nanzen-ji Temple
- Ikebana Experience
- Farewell Dinner

#### *Planned Activities:*

On our final day in Kyoto, we will begin with a visit to the serene grounds of [Nanzen-ji Temple](#), one of the city's most historically and spiritually significant Zen temples. Surrounded by tall cedars and stone pathways, this temple complex features tranquil gardens, moss-covered grounds, and striking architectural elements. Of special note are the iconic [Sanmon Gate](#) and a beautiful still-functioning aqueduct built in the Roman-style during the Meiji era.

In the afternoon, immerse yourself in traditional Japanese flower arrangement—we will participate in an [Ikebana experience](#), and learn about the principles of balance, form, and natural beauty as they are embodied in this elegant art form.

Enjoy the rest of the afternoon exploring on your own before rejoining the group for our festive Farewell Dinner.



*Under the Aqueduct at Nanzen-ji*

© Harold Davis

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## Day 13: Saturday, November 21

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### Onward Travel

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*Included meals: Breakfast*

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Hotel: [The Hotel Higashiyama Kyoto Tokyu](#) or similar ■ Breakfast at the hotel  
3 Chome-175-2, Ebisucho  
Higashiyama Ward, Kyoto 605-0033  
+81 75-533-6109

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#### ***Planned Activities:***

After our last breakfast, anyone not staying in Japan will make their own way back to the airport for their flight home. If you are staying in Kyoto, we would be happy to suggest other photographic opportunities. Ms. Kana Hattori, our guide, will be on hand in the morning to assist with any questions about Kyoto or onward travel.



*Autumn Red, Saihoji, Kyoto*

© Harold Davis

## About the Trip

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### *When and Where to Meet*

We will meet at the [Park Hotel Tokyo](#), a hotel located in the Shiodome Media Tower in Tokyo and convenient to the trains from [Narita and Haneda International Airports](#). Your adventure to Japan includes pre-paid, first night accommodations. Please note at check-in that you are with the Harold Davis group. The hotel will have each of your names with the reservation.

We will meet in the 25th-floor lobby of the Park Hotel Tokyo at 6:00 pm on Monday, November 9, 2026, and walk to a local restaurant for a festive Welcome Dinner hosted by Harold and Kana-san. Please be checked into the hotel before we meet.

### *Photographic Items to Bring with You*

Please bring a camera, tripod, wide-angle and telephoto lenses. Most likely, you will want to bring a macro lens or other way to capture close-ups.

Bring plenty of memory cards, your charger, and extra batteries for anything that takes batteries.

Harold is available for personal consultations in advance of departure to discuss which photographic gear to bring. He says, “All photographic gear choices involve trade-offs. For this trip, there is great deal to be said for traveling as lightly as possible.”

### *Contacting Harold and Phyllis*

If you have any questions at all, please contact Harold by email at [harold@digitalfieldguide.com](mailto:harold@digitalfieldguide.com) or Phyllis at [phyllis\\_davis@sonic.net](mailto:phyllis_davis@sonic.net). Harold’s mobile phone when he is traveling is +1.510.295.3982.



Stone Lantern

© Harold Davis

## About the Trip, continued

### Accommodation Notes

The following types of accommodation are used on this tour:

- **Hotel** (Tokyo, Kanazawa, Okayama, Takamatsu, Kyoto).

Modern western-style hotels are used in these cities. The rooms are generally smaller than equivalent hotels in the West. All have en-suite facilities, air-conditioning, TV and fridges in rooms.

- **Ryokan** (Saitama).

For the one night in Saitama, we will be staying in a traditional *ryokan* (Japanese inn). The rooms will be in the Japanese style with tatami mats and futons laid out in the evening.

### Single rooms

The single supplement guarantees a single room every night except for Day 4 (November 12) when we will be staying at a Japanese-style ryokan in Saitama. Depending on the composition of the group, for this one night it is possible that we may need to double-up some group members in same-sex tatami rooms at the small ryokan.

### Meals

Most meals will be Japanese cuisine. If you have any food restrictions, please be sure to note that on the [Reservation Form](#). Alcoholic drinks are not included in the cost of the tour. Tips are not generally expected in Japan.



Shirakawa River, Kyoto

© Harold Davis

## About the Trip, continued

### Baggage Handling

Using Takkyubin (Japanese courier service), on Day 4 your bag (one per person) will be transferred from Tokyo and delivered on Day 6 in Kanazawa. That way, you will not need to travel with your bag on public transit (keep your photo gear and what you will need overnight with you). On the morning of Day 7 your bag will be picked up at the Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel and reunited with the group on Day 9 at the Hotel Higashiyama in Kyoto (keep your photo gear and what you will need overnight with you).

Your suitcase should weigh no more than 20–25 lbs. at time of departure. The total dimensions of the bag when adding the bag's external length, width, and height should be no more than 62 inches. (For example, a piece of soft-sided luggage that measures 25 x 18 x 14 would have total dimensions of  $25+18+14 = 57$  inches and is within these size limits).

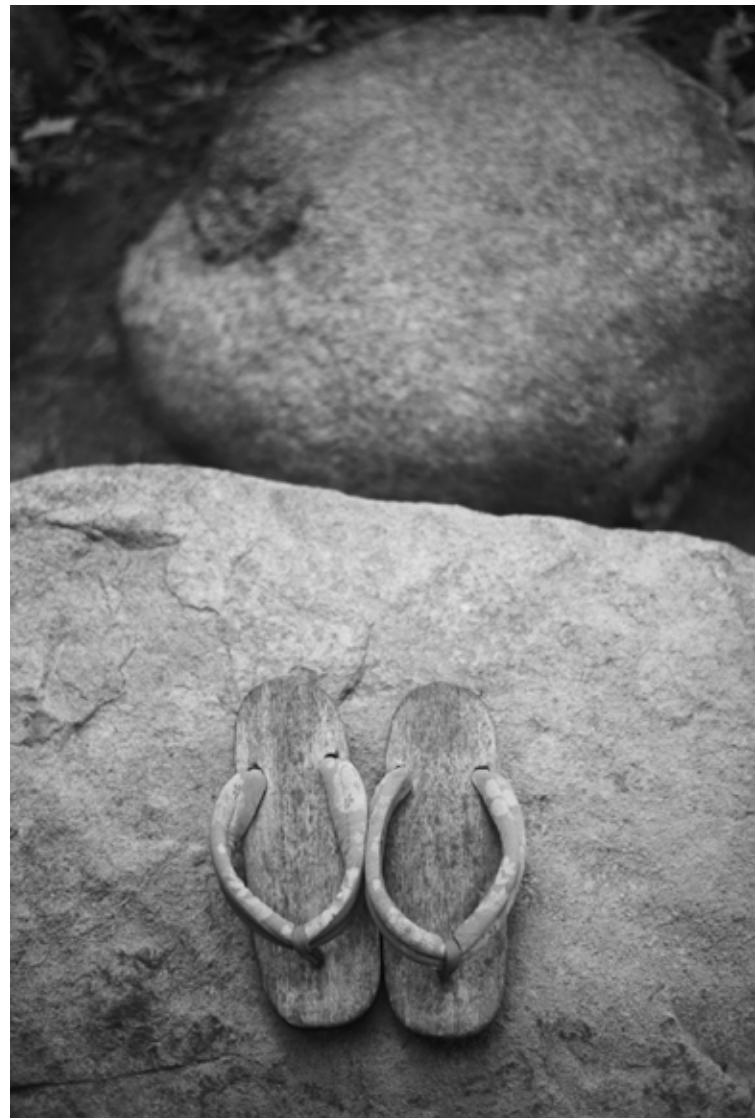
On the topic of luggage, Harold's recommendation for this trip is to *travel as lightly as possible*. There's so much more enjoyment to be had if you are not worrying about carrying heavy luggage.

### Clothing

For this autumn trip, long sleeves are recommended, but you should not need a winter coat. You should be prepared for rain, and have a light windbreaker or a rain jacket. It is best to bring fleece as well as a selection of light layers to wear.

### Appliances and Plug Adapters

If bringing any appliances, please note that most North American appliances can be used in Japan. Please ensure your appliances have plugs with 2 flat prongs, or bring a 3-prong to 2-prong adapter because many outlets in Japan do not accept 3-prong-grounded plug types. Some lodgings may only have a limited number of outlets in the room, so if you are charging more than one item of equipment, you may wish to bring a small multi-socket adapter.



Sandals

© Harold Davis

## Inclusions and Exclusions

### **Included in the tour cost:**

- 13 nights accommodations in hotels (12 nights in Western-style hotels and 1 night in a Japanese-style ryokan).
- Meals as included in the itinerary as noted in each day's description (12 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 9 dinners).
- Transportation between tour locations by private coach and public transit (such as trains, taxis, etc.).
- Full-time services of a bilingual guide.
- Photographic teaching and coaching by Harold Davis.
- Entrances to shrines, temples, and gardens as detailed in the itinerary. Experiences, including sushi making, rice cooking, and Ikebana flower arrangement as noted in the itinerary.
- Luggage transfers (one suitcase per person): Luggage transfer Day 4 from Park Hotel Tokyo to Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel on Day 6; and luggage transfer Day 7 from Kanazawa Tokyu Hotel to Hotel Higashiyama in Kyoto on Day 9.



© Harold Davis

*Autumn Sunset at Koun-ji Temple*

### **Not included in the tour cost:**

- Flights to and from Japan
- Airport transfers
- Meals not listed as included
- Drinks with meals, snacks, and miscellaneous items
- Excursions, experiences, and entrance fees to museums, temples, etc., not listed in the itinerary

13 Days | 17+ Gardens | 12 Breakfasts | 9 Dinners | Many Extras!

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## About Harold Davis

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**Harold Davis** is a world-class [artist and photographer](#) who has expanded the parameters of his field with [imagery](#), [new techniques](#), and as an [author](#) and [educator](#). Honored with the prestigious Photographic Society of America Progress award in 2022 for his development of a unique technique for [photographing flowers for transparency](#), these works have been described as “ethereal” and having “a purity and translucence that borders on spiritual.” (Popular Photo Magazine)

Harold’s most recent books include [Composition & Photography](#), [Creative Garden Photography](#), and [Creative Black & White](#), all from Rocky Nook.

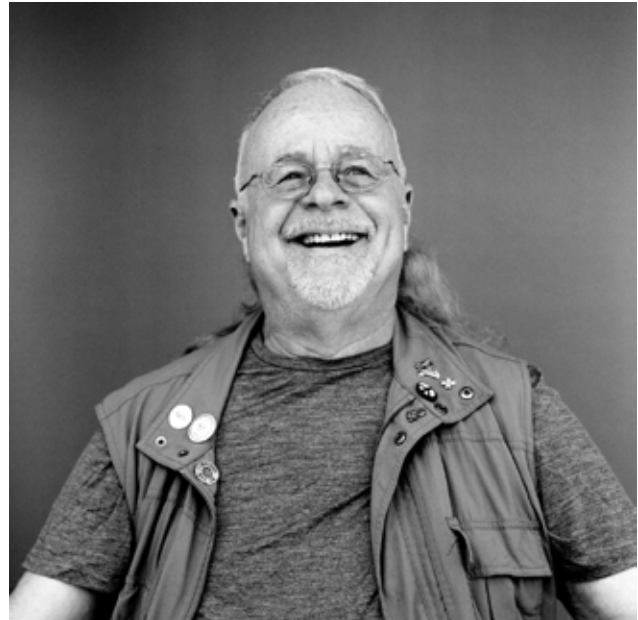
He is also recognized as a master of black and white. The Seattle Times put it this way: “Harold Davis is the digital black and white equal of Ansel Adams’s traditional wet photography.”

In 2022, two of Harold’s floral images were produced as [United States postage stamps](#). A set of five new stamps [were published by the USPS](#) in 2024 with a [new stamp debuting in 2026](#).

*Translucent Flora: Photographs by Harold Davis* was exhibited at the Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture at the San Francisco Botanic Garden in 2023.

Harold is a sought-after workshop leader, who has led groups all over the world and taught and lectured at many institutions including the School of Visual Arts in New York, Google, Maine Media Photographic Workshops, and the Heidelberg Summer School of Photography in Germany.

Click [here for Harold’s blog!](#)



*Photograph by Nan Phelps*

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# Terms and Conditions

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## Subject to Change

All itinerary details are subject to change depending upon conditions before and during the workshop.

## Refunds

We will refund your trip deposit at your request until May 31, 2026.

You should purchase travel insurance as we will not be able to offer refunds or credits under any circumstances, other than refunding your deposit until May 31, 2026.

***It is the participant's responsibility to protect their investment in this Destination Travel Workshop.***

## Travel Insurance

You should purchase Travel Insurance (sometimes called Trip Insurance) for this Destination Travel Workshop in case of any unforeseen emergency or situation that requires you to cancel, or should there be a reason that you cannot attend. This includes, but is not limited to, natural disasters, health safety, outbreaks, epidemics, illness, acts of God, or closures that prevent the workshop from taking place on schedule. ***It is your responsibility to protect your investment in this Destination Travel Workshop.***

Since we will not be able to offer refunds or credits after May 31, 2026, please do purchase Travel Insurance. You should check to make sure that the insurance policy you purchase covers potential medical expenses and medical evacuation, as well as the cost of the Destination Travel Workshop, and airfare. There are advantages to purchasing insurance within 14 days of sending your registration and deposit (typically, pre-existing health limitations do not apply; check the policy for details).

In addition, please be aware that you may not be protected without purchasing Cancel For Any Reason (CFR) Insurance. Please do check the details of the insurance to make sure that it provides the coverage that you really want; for example, an unexpected event, such as a pandemic, should be covered.

There are many highly-regarded travel insurance companies, and you should probably price compare. Be sure to read all terms and conditions carefully. Some reputable travel insurance companies are [Travel Insured International](#), and [World Nomads](#).

We must emphasize that travel comes with risk. We are not responsible for global pandemics, acts of God, terror, accidents, thefts, delays, weather, or any unforeseen event or catastrophe. Please be sure to protect your investment in the Destination Travel Workshop by purchasing travel insurance when you send in your registration.

## Health Insurance

Please note that your US health insurance, including Medicare, will most likely ***not cover health events while traveling abroad***. These can be surprisingly expensive. We highly recommend purchasing medical and evacuation insurance for your trip, which is usually included in the cost of travel insurance or can be purchased as a standalone. In any event, we are not responsible for medical expenses incurred while traveling with us.

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