

MONTHLYTRAVELGUIDE · FREE GUIDE

The 12-Month Map

Japan

Every month in Japan on one page: weather, crowds, price pressure and an honest verdict.

WHEN TO GO. NOT JUST WHERE.

HOW TO READ THE MAP

One page. Twelve rows. One decision.

Each row is one month. Read across and you get the four things that decide whether a month is right for you, and a one-line reason.

THE VERDICT

GO	The best months for most trips. Book early: everyone else knows too.
GOOD	Worth it, with a trade-off you can plan around.
THINK TWICE	Works for some trips. Read the reason before you book.
AVOID	Hard going for most travellers. Only with a specific reason.

CROWDS AND PRICE PRESSURE

- ●○○ Low. Quiet sights, wide choice.
- ●●○ Moderate. Book the popular things.
- ●●● High. Book early and expect to pay more.

Patterns, not forecasts. The map shows what each month is usually like. Weather varies year to year, and price pressure is relative, never a quoted price. Check entry rules and holiday dates for your own year.

Seasons here are for the main Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka route. Hokkaido in the north and Okinawa in the south run on different calendars.



GO GOOD THINK TWICE AVOID

When to go: Japan

Month	Weather	Crowds	Prices	Verdict	Why
January	Cold, dry, clear skies	● ○ ○	● ○ ○	GOOD	Clear air and quiet sights. The first days of the month are busy with New Year holidays.
February	Coldest month; snow in the north	● ○ ○	● ○ ○	GOOD	Quiet cities and good snow in the north, where winter festivals fill hotels.
March	Cool, warming; blossom starts late	● ● ○	● ● ○	GOOD	Calm early in the month. Blossom season and its crowds usually begin in the last week.
April	Mild; cherry blossom early on	● ● ●	● ● ●	GO	Japan at its most famous and most booked. Book rooms early. Golden Week starts at month end.
May	Warm, fresh, mostly dry	● ● ○	● ● ○	GO	Golden Week fills the first days; after that, the best balance of the spring.
June	Rainy season on most of Honshu	● ○ ○	● ○ ○	THINK TWICE	Steady rain in Tokyo and Kyoto. Hokkaido escapes most of it and is at its best.
July	Hot, humid; rain clears mid-month	● ● ○	● ● ○	THINK TWICE	Heat builds and typhoon season begins. The mountains and Hokkaido are the cool option.
August	Hottest and most humid	● ● ●	● ● ●	AVOID	Peak heat, typhoon risk and the Obon holiday rush. Cities are hard work.
September	Hot early; peak typhoon month	● ● ○	● ● ○	THINK TWICE	Heat eases slowly and storms can disrupt travel. Better late in the month.
October	Comfortable, drier, clear	● ● ○	● ● ○	GO	Settled weather returns and autumn colour starts in the north and the mountains.
November	Cool, crisp; autumn colour peaks	● ● ●	● ● ●	GO	Kyoto's autumn leaves draw spring-sized crowds. Book rooms early.
December	Cold, dry, bright	● ○ ○	● ● ○	GOOD	Quiet and clear until year-end, when many sights and businesses close for several days.

Patterns, not forecasts. Prices show relative pressure, not quoted prices. Confirm holiday dates and entry rules for your year.



NEXT

From the right month to the right trip

This map is the short version. *When to Go: Japan* is the full guide: every month in depth, region by region, with the weather, crowds and closures that matter for each kind of trip.

The Trip Timing Planner picks up from there: booking windows, a 90 / 60 / 30 / 7-day countdown and packing lists by season, for any destination.



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