



KYUSHU, Japan

PILGRIMAGE TOUR

History of Christianity in Japan

Christianity first came to Japan in 1549, when the Portuguese missionary *Francis Xavier* arrived in the country. The same year he gained permission from *Shimazu Takahisa*, the feudal lord of Kagoshima in southern Kyushu, to establish a catholic mission. *Takahisa* was hoping to start a good trade relationship with Europe, by allowing the Christian mission. The idea was at first supported by the Shogunate, who saw it as an opportunity to create some counteraction for the strong Buddhist movement in Japan.

Christianity spread quickly through Japan, especially southern Japan, and the Shogunate started to oppose the Christian presence in Japan. The ruling government now saw the Christians as a threat to their rule, and with fears of colonization and loss of power they started persecuting Christians in the later part of the 1500's.

In 1597 twenty six Christians from various backgrounds – including native Japanese (both men and young boys) – were executed in Nagasaki, by public crucifixion. The execution was a direct order from the *hogun*, *Toyotomi Hideyoshi*.

The following years saw more executions and battles, but effectively Christianity was suppressed towards the end of the first half of the 1600's. The twenty six Martyrs of Nagasaki became famous as they were the first to die in Martyrdom, but many other cases followed. In 1632, fifty five Christians were also executed in Nagasaki – an event which has been dubbed the *Great Genna Martyrdom*.

Our itinerary will cover the martyrdom sites, churches and memorials of the Christians during this period.

06/07OCT **BRUNEI/TOKYO/NAGASAKI [D]** **MON**

NOTE: Check in on 06OCT 2200H

Departure from Brunei past midnight for your flight to Tokyo. Arrival at Narita International Airport. You will be met and transferred to Haneda Airport [about 45min travel time] to take your domestic flight to Nagasaki. Meeting and transfer to hotel for dinner and accommodations

08OCT **NAGASAKI [B/D]** **TUE**

After breakfast explore Nagasaki . Visit the following important sites:

26 Martyrs Shrine and Museum - Built in 1962 to commemorate the 100th year anniversary of the canonization of Christians on this site in 1597. First Filipino saint - St. Lorenzo Ruiz was martyred here.

St. Philip Nishizaka Church - Named after a Mexican martyr who was one of the 26 martyrs. This church is the most visited landmark in Nagasaki with it's 2 distinct towers and unique architecture similar to Gaudi's style

Oura Cathedral - This is the oldest wooden church in Japan in Gothic style. The church was designated as a national treasure in 1933, but was partly damaged in the atomic

bombing of World War II. The church is on the list of the UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage in 2018.

Glover Garden - An open-air museum preserving the rich connections between Westerners and Japanese people. This garden features several Western-style houses, including the oldest wooden one in Japan, as well as gardens and rooms recreated in the fashion of the turn of the twentieth century.

**09OCT
WED**

NAGASAKI/SOTOME/SHIMABARA [B/D]

Breakfast. Visit the the **Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum** built as a remembrance to the atomic bombing of Nagasaki by the United States on 09 August 1945 at 11:02:35AM. Next to the museum is the **Nagasaki Peace Memorial Hall** for the atomic bomb victims. These locations symbolize the nuclear age and serve as a reminder of the vast destruction and indiscriminate death caused by nuclear weapons and at the same time signify a commitment to peace. Continue to Sotome, a small town in the coastal region north of Nagasaki. The small town has a rich history in Japan's Christian faith. During the ban on Christianity in the Edo Period, Sotome was home to communities of "Hidden Christians", many of whom emigrated there from other parts of Nagasaki. The remote coastal region allowed them to practice their religion in secret. We visit the following pilgrim sites:

Shitsu Church - When he encountered the hidden Christians, Fr. Petitjean, the head of the French mission realized that there were many other Christians hiding in the Sotome region. He appointed Fr. Marc Marie de Rotz as parish priest of the Shitsu and Kurosaki districts. Fr De Rotz established this church at his own expense. A statue of the Virgin Mary that was ordered from France still stands on the bell tower, although the original bell is gone, as it was given up for metal collection during World War II.

Shitsu Aid Center - Fr. de Rotz established this facility as a social welfare center. His intention was to help the women in need to gain independence.

Continue to Shimabara for overnight accommodations

**10OCT
THU**

SHIMABARA/NAGASAKI [B]

After breakfast, explore Shimabara , a "castle town" ,which was the capital of Shimabara Domain during the Edo period. It was the site of foreign trade and missionary activity during the late Muromachi period, and in the early Edo period. Visit following:

Shimabara Rebellion site - Shimabara Rebellion is often portrayed as a Christian rebellion against violent suppression by Matsukura Katsue in 1637. This was the largest civil conflict of Japan during the Edo Period

Hara Castle ruins - final battleground of the Shimbara rebellion

Shimabara Castle - a white walled castle built during the early Edo period. It was the seat of the Matsudaira clan and named one of the 100 great castles of Japan

After lunch , visit:

Unzen Church - built to commemorate the Pope's visit in 1981 and to honor the martyrs who endured horrific deaths in this place

Unzen Hot Springs - a major execution site of Christians until 1631

Nita Pass - This mountainside area is beautiful in all seasons but spectacular in fall. It is famous for its vibrant autumnal colors.

Return to Nagasaki for overnight accommodations

**11OCT
FRI**

NAGASAKI/HIRADO [B/D]

Breakfast then depart for Hirado, a former Dutch trading post and among the first trading sites between Japan and the west. Visit **Tabira Church** , very architecturally pleasing in red bricks. This was built by the local Christians of Tabira symbolizing the speed that Christianity recovered in Japan after the lifting of the ban on Christianity. After lunch, visit:

St Francis Xavier Memorial Church - Formerly known as Hirado Catholic Church then renamed to St Francis Xavier Memorial church in 1931. This was built to honor the mission work of ST. Francis in Japan

Hirado Castle - One of Japan’s grand castles and enjoy panoramic view of the sea. Check into hotel for overnight accommodations.

**12OCT
SAT**

HIRADO/FUKUOKA [B]

After breakfast, visit **Hoki Church**. Church was built in 1898 by carpenters who were newly baptized. It is highly regarded for its valuable construction that shows the history of faith in the area and the history of Japanese church architecture that moved from wood to brick. After lunch visit **Yamada Church**. This small church on Ikitsuki Island was built in 1912. The outside is very simple, but the main draw is inside. Built in Romanesque style it has an elegant rib-vault ceiling and beautiful mosaics. There is also a wall painting of the seven sacraments made with the wings of over 30.000 butterflies! Continue to Fukuoka for overnight accommodations

**13OCT
SUN**

FUKUOKA/TOKYO [B]

Breakfast then transfer to airport for your flight to Tokyo. Arrive at Haneda domestic terminal. Coach pick up for a short tour of Tokyo . After tour, drop off at Narita for overnight accommodations.

**14OCT
MON**

TOKYO/BRUNEI [B]

Breakfast then transfer to airport for flight back to Brunei.

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<u>INCLUDES:</u>	<u>EXCLUDES:</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Return air ticket Brunei/Tokyo/Brunei with taxes 2. Domestic flights Tokyo/Nagasaki and Fukuoka Tokyo with taxes 3. Terminal fees and passenger service charges [subject to change] 4. Twin Share accommodations with daily breakfast 5. Dinners as specified in itinerary 6. Air conditioned coach charter 7. English speaking guide 8. Entrance fees 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Visa fees , if required 2. Extra drinks during meals 3. Travel Insurance 4. Porterage at airports and hotels

FLIGHT SCHEDULE:

DATE	DAY	FLIGHT NUMBER	FROM	TO	ETD	ETA
06 - 07OCT	SUNDAY- MONDAY	BI695	BRUNEI	TOKYO [Narita]	0035	073
07OCT	MONDAY	JL611	TOKYO [Haneda]	NAGASAKI	1350	1545
13OCT	SUNDAY	JL312	FUKUOKA	TOKYO [Haneda]	1200	1335
14OCT	MONDAY	BI696	TOKYO [Narita]	BRUNEI	1145	1645