

Riverdale Collegiate Institute

Arts Based Travel to Japan 2019

Riverdale Collegiate Institute (RCI) has developed a strong relationship through a formal partnership with Nara Women's University Secondary School (NWUSS) in Nara, Japan. For years we have had an agreement to facilitate a reciprocal exchange between a select number of students. As an extension of this program, we are planning a travel opportunity to strengthen the bond between the two schools and communities.

This travel opportunity will take place from April 13th, 2019 until April 24th, 2019 and a group of approximately 15 RCI students will spend four days in Tokyo, Japan and six days in and around Nara, Japan. The focus of the time there will be exploring the historic and contemporary Arts and Culture of Japan.

Part of the goal of this opportunity is to help students learn the benefits of international travel and to learn ways to travel responsibly and economically. As such, some of the accommodations will be either group accommodations at guest houses or hostels, traditional Japanese style accommodations and/or hotel accommodations. Students will be expected to be active, engaged and motivated participants in activities and will need to help with planning and facilitating the trip.

- **Program Costs:**

- Approximately \$3200 for return air travel, accommodations, meals, activities and ground transportation in Japan. Final costs will reflect actual costs at time of booking.
- **Financial support is available and alternate financial arrangements can be made.**

- **Program Includes:**

- Roundtrip air transportation from Toronto to Tokyo, Japan and home from Osaka, Japan.
- Airport transfers in Japan; Metro/transit Tokyo; Rail travel from Tokyo to Nara; Transit costs in Nara.
- 10 nights' accommodation in Tokyo and Nara.
- Breakfast and Dinner daily, most lunches.
- Activities and excursions daily.

- **The Program Does Not Include:**

- Surface travel expenses to and from the airport in Canada .
- Excess baggage or overweight baggage fees.
- Passport (and visa if necessary) fees.
- Comprehensive Health and Travel Insurance
- All personal expenses, such as spending money, gifts, souvenirs, personal needs, phone charges, etc. Expenses will vary depending on the spending habits and budget of each participant.

- **Student Expectations:**

- This experience is meant to provide a brief immersion into a foreign culture. To make the most of the opportunity, the participants should have a basic understanding of the culture in which they will be immersed. This includes committing to participating in cultural learning and instruction before departure.
- All students are expected to participate in all activities during their stay in Japan and to be welcoming of new and unique experiences. This will require open-mindedness, flexibility and a strong sense of curiosity.
- Traveling with a group can be extremely rewarding and fun. It is also stressful and requires patience, compassion and consideration. Participating students need to be committed to working cooperatively and sensitively with their peers.
- While travelling, students may be required to share accommodations with other RCI students of the same gender and may be required to use shared bathroom facilities. Participants need to be respectful of and willing to participate in this.
- Students are expected to make arrangements with their teachers as early as possible to make up any missed work or assignments. Students are expected to complete all assignments and meet all expectations of the course as determined by the teacher.
- If selected to participate, students and families are expected to commit to successfully completing the program.

- **Rules and consequences:**

Japanese culture is one where adherence to rules is valued and expected. While traveling, students are expected to comply with the following:

- All Japanese and Canadian laws must be obeyed while in Japan.
- The Riverdale and TDSB Codes of Conduct must be followed at all times.
- Any use or possession of alcohol, marijuana or illegal drugs will result in the student being sent home. Parents/guardians will be required to cover the costs.
- All participants must take part in activities that are scheduled for the whole program. Students are expected to adhere to all itineraries and timelines. Students who do not follow these expectations, or who leave the expected itinerary without permission, may be required to return to Toronto at the expense of their parents/guardians.
- While in Japan, participants serve as cultural ambassadors for Canada. They must, therefore, behave with courtesy in all public locations, including places of lodging, and wear clothing that is modest and neat. Respectful conduct is especially important at temples and shrines, memorials, and places of quiet contemplation.

Itinerary

(This is a sample itinerary which may be adjusted)

April 13th, 2019 – Depart Toronto

April 14th, 2019 – Arrive Tokyo

Transfer to Accommodations
Dinner
Check-In; Sleep

April 15th, 2019 – Tokyo

Asakusa, Sensoji Temple
National Museum of Japan
Kapabashi
Dinner
Ginza

April 16th, 2019 – Tokyo

Shinjuku Goen National Garden
Yayoi Kusama Museum
Harajuku
Meiji Gingu Shrine

April 17th, 2019 - Tokyo

Tsukiji Market
Imperial Palace
Akihabara
Kabuki Theatre

April 18th, 2019 - Tokyo; Shigisan

Tokyo Station
Shinkansen to Osaka
Transfer to Shigisan Temple
Temple Stay

April 19th, 2019 - Shigisan; Nara

Transfer to Nara
Naramachi
Isui-en Garden
Higashimuki

April 20th, 2019 - Nara

Todai-ji
Nara Park
Kasuga Taisha Shrine
Kofuku-ji

April 21st, 2019 - Nara; Kyoto

Toji Market
Tofuku-ji
Kyo Mizudera Temple
Gion District
Nishiki Market

April 22nd, 2019 - Nara; Osaka

Osaka Castle
Dotonbori
Food Tour

April 23rd, 2019 - Nara; Kyoto

Nijo Castle
Kinkaku-ji (Golden Temple)
Aryashima
Bamboo Forest

April 24th, 2019 - Nara, Osaka, Tokyo, Toronto

Travel to Osaka
Fly Home

Considerations

We are hoping for this to be a fun, active, engaging and possibly life-altering experience for the students who participate. However, overseas group travel is not for everyone. Before you apply and/or commit to this experience please consider:

- Travel is sometimes hard work. Days will be long and you will be expected to walk long distances, maybe in not the greatest weather while maintaining your patience and positive attitude.
- Japanese accommodations are not the same as North American accommodations, space may be tight and you may need to share space.
- Part of the adventure of travel is the new, unique and sometimes challenging food. You will need to embrace trying new things and enjoying the new experience. All food allergies, medical, religious and ethical food restrictions will be respected and accommodated.
- If you have a serious food allergy, you need to be aware that Japan has improved in recent years, but the labelling and allergen awareness is not at the same standard as North America.

The Application Process

- 1) Students will complete the Google Form application available from the school website, <https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/riverdale>. The deadline to complete the application is 12:00 noon on Tuesday, February 5th, 2019.
- 2) Students will be “shortlisted” for interviews and will be notified by February 8th, 2019. Interviews will take place the week of February 11th – 14th, 2019.
- 3) Students who are selected will be notified by February 21st, 2019.
- 4) Students, and guardians will need to commit to participating and submit completed permission forms by February 26th, 2019.

