

vcuarts



INSTITUTE FOR
CONTEMPORARY ART
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH
UNIVERSITY

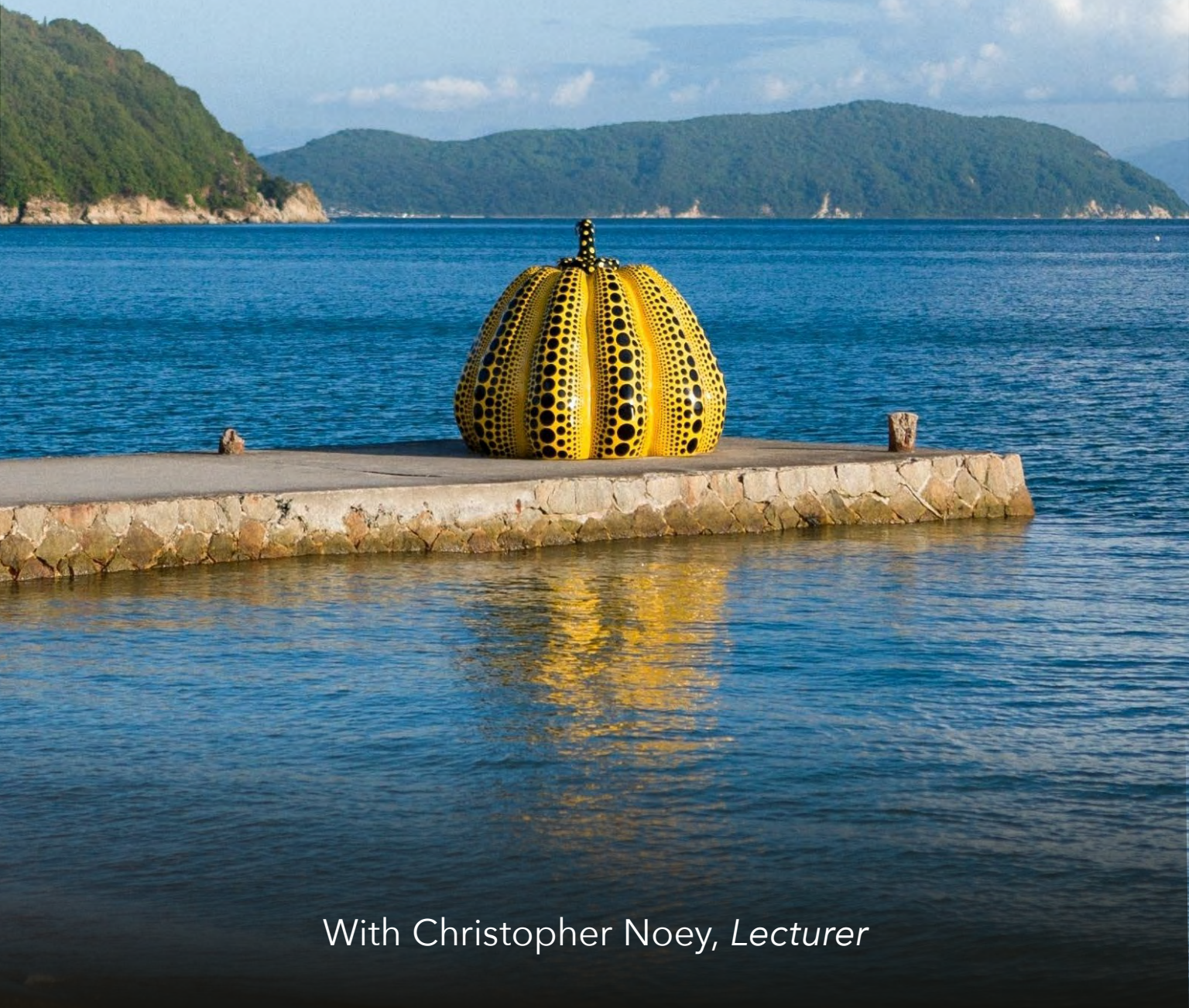


MUSEUM
TRAVEL
ALLIANCE®
BY ARRANGEMENTS ABROAD

Curated Currents

Culture & Art Along Japan's Inland Sea Featuring *Guntû*

October 26 - November 5, 2027



With Christopher Noey, *Lecturer*

Cruise Highlights

Experience Japanese art and traditions on a land-and-sea program, including a three-night Inland Sea cruise aboard the beautifully designed **Guntû**, a 17-suite floating *ryokan* with wood-lined interiors and exquisite dining.

Visit architect **Tadao Ando**'s museums on the island of **Naoshima**, including a morning visit to his underground **Chichu Art Museum**, home to Claude Monet's *Water Lilies* and a site-specific installation by James Turrell.

Explore Japanese pottery at Osaka's **Museum of Oriental Ceramics** and visit **Bizen**, a renowned pottery destination to meet potter **Taiga Mori** and participate in a **hands-on workshop**.

Embark on guided tours of ancient temples, including Kyoto's **Sanjusangendo**, which houses 1,001 life-size statues of Kannon, and Nara's **Todai-ji**, home to one of the world's largest wooden buildings.

Tour Marugame Castle, one of the only "original" Japanese castles still intact, and stroll through the **Okayama Korakuen Garden**, one of Japan's three most celebrated landscape gardens.

Take an inside look at the preserved 1937 *machiya* townhouse and workshop of **Kawai Kanjiro**, one of Japan's most influential 20th-century potters, in Kyoto.



Kawai Kanjiro's home

About the Museum Travel Alliance

Celebrating 50 years of cultural travel in 2027, Arrangements Abroad operates exclusive journeys for the Museum Travel Alliance. MTA trips bring together patrons from more than 150 of America's leading museums, including the **Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University**, offering scholar-led, special-access experiences in destinations across the U.S. and around the world

Activity Level:
Intermediate



Pace Level:
Moderate



Visit Arrangements Abroad's website for more information about Activity and Pace Levels at www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs.



Traveling With *You*

Christopher Noey is an art historian, author, and Emmy Award-winning producer of films on art and culture. As a scholar of Asian art, Chris has led multiple programs on Japanese art and architecture, including past programs about how traditional aesthetics inform contemporary practice. At The Metropolitan Museum of Art, he created video installations for diverse exhibitions and was series director of the innovative online features *82nd & Fifth* and *The Artist Project*, in which he interviewed 120 contemporary artists on how they are inspired by The Met and its collections. He has taught at Williams College and the City College of New York.

The **Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University** is a proud member of the **Museum Travel Alliance (MTA)**, which offers exclusive travel programs for patrons of leading cultural institutions. From **October 26 to November 5, 2027**, join Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and Asian art historian **Christopher Noey** on a cultural journey through Japan. On this special land-and-sea program, sail Japan's Inland Sea for three nights aboard the meticulously designed **Guntû**, a 17-suite floating *ryokan* (traditional inn) with wood-lined interiors and exquisite seasonal dining.

Enjoy an overnight in **Osaka** for an introduction to Asian ceramics before your cruise. Aboard *Guntû*, step ashore on the art islands of **Naoshima** and **Teshima**. Continue onward to **Bizen**, one of Japan's most historic pottery towns, and **Kyoto**.

To reserve your place, [click here](#) to register online. You may also contact the Museum Travel Alliance at Arrangements Abroad by calling 212-324-1893 or emailing trips@museumtravelalliance.com. Inquire about also joining an optional postlude from **November 5 to 8, 2027**, to **Hakone**, a mountain town of hot springs and spectacular art. We spoke with Chris about the program.

What excites you about exploring the Inland Sea aboard Guntû?

Chris Noey: Sailing on *Guntû* embodies the Japanese concept of *Shibusa*—timeless tranquility achieved through economy of form, line, and effort. We spend three nights aboard a floating *ryokan*, surrounded by fine woodwork, textiles, and Japanese hospitality. We'll step ashore on Naoshima and Teshima and see how artists and architects work with the natural landscape, from traditional houses transformed into contemporary art installations to museums like Tadao Ando's underground **Chichu Art Museum**, where we'll have a before-hours tour.

Why does pottery matter so much on this itinerary?

Chris Noey: I love that we approach pottery from several directions. On a special tour of Osaka's **Museum of Oriental Ceramics**, we'll compare Asian pottery traditions, seeing what centuries of artisans achieved through glaze, firing, and control of the kiln. We then travel to Bizen, one of Japan's Six Ancient Kilns, where this tradition reaches back centuries. We'll meet third-generation potter **Taiga Mori** and handle the iron-rich clay ourselves at a private workshop.

What do Kyoto and Nara add to the artistic story?

Chris Noey: So much, as they're Japan's early imperial cities, and we'll see how patrons used art and architecture to express religious belief and political authority. We'll have inside looks at temples like **Todai-ji**, with its 49-foot bronze Great Buddha, and **Sanjusangendo**, with its long hall housing 1,001 gilded Kannon figures. Continuing the pottery thread, we'll visit the house of acclaimed potter **Kawai Kanjiro** in Kyoto, with a guided tour of the rooms where he lived and worked. We'll also take part in a traditional tea ceremony and enjoy special access to museums that exhibit a great variety of art, from pre-modern Japanese art to 20th-century photography.

Curated Currents

Culture & Art Along Japan's Inland Sea Featuring *Guntû*

October 26 - November 5, 2027



Map of the region

Tuesday, October 26: *Departure*

Depart for Osaka, Japan, on an overnight flight.

Wednesday, October 27: *Osaka, Japan*

(R)

Upon arrival in **Osaka**, meet our team for a private transfer to the **Four Seasons Hotel Osaka**. Later, join fellow travelers for a **warm welcome reception**.

Thursday, October 28: *Osaka / Onomichi / Embark Guntû / Marugame*

(B,L,D)

Explore one of the world's finest collections of Chinese and Korean ceramics on a guided visit to the **Museum of Oriental Ceramics**. Admire rare masterpieces and learn about glazing techniques across East Asia.

After lunch, transfer by high-speed train to **Onomichi** and board the **elegant Guntû**, your refined *ryokan* on the sea. Settle into your cabin, then gather for a **festive dinner** as you sail toward Marugame.

Friday, October 29:

Marugame / Naoshima

(B,L,D)

Step ashore in **Marugame** for a guided tour. Visit **Marugame Castle**, one of only 12 "original castles" to survive the post-feudal period intact, then stroll charming shopping arcades lined with traditional craft shops and colorful *wagashi* boutiques.

Return aboard *Guntû* for lunch and an optional **Kagawa-style Shishimai** (Lion Dance) performance (*pending confirmation*) while sailing to Naoshima. Gather for dinner on board.



Marugame Castle



Okayama Korakuen Garden

Saturday, October 30:

Naoshima / Teshima

(B,L,D)

Call at **Naoshima** for a morning visit to Tadao Ando's **Chichu Art Museum**, home to Monet's *Water Lilies* and James Turrell's sky installations.

Continue with a guided tour of the **Art House Project**, where restored homes have been transformed into artworks by artists like Turrell and Hiroshi Sugimoto, then visit the Ando-designed **Lee Ufan Museum** to see the Korean artist's contemplative installations.

Reboard *Guntû* for lunch while sailing to **Teshima**. Join an expert guide to discover the island's culture, including the **Teshima Art Museum**, a hilltop structure shaped like a giant water droplet overlooking the sea.

Gather for dinner on board.

Sunday, October 31:

Onomichi / Disembark / Kurashiki

(B,L,D)

Disembark *Guntû* in Onomichi and travel to **Kurashiki**, a charming canal town.

Join a guided visit to the **Ohara Museum of Art**, Japan's first private Western-style museum, with Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works by Monet, Matisse, and Rodin.

After lunch, check into the **Ryokan Kurashiki**, then enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Monday, November 1:

Kurashiki / Okayama / Bizen / Kurashiki (B,L,T,D)

Head to **Okayama** and stroll **Okayama Korakuen Garden**, one of Japan's three most celebrated landscape gardens, with its open lawns, ponds, tea houses, and hilltop views from Yuishinzan Hill.

Then, in **Bizen**, meet third-generation potter Taiga Mori at **Bizen Gallery Kai** and see contemporary Bizen ware linked to the city's nearly 1,000-year-old unglazed pottery tradition.

After lunch, shape your own Bizen clay piece in a **hands-on workshop**, then enjoy a serene **Japanese tea ceremony** with classic Bizen vessels. Return to Kurashiki for dinner.



Bizen pottery



Todai-ji Temple, Nara

Tuesday, November 2:

Kurashiki / Okayama / Kyoto

(B,L,D)

Transfer to **Kyoto** by high-speed train, then visit the **Kyoto City Kyocera Museum of Art** for its renowned collection of *Nihonga* (modern Japanese-style) paintings.

After lunch, hike **Fushimi Inari Shrine** beneath thousands of red *torii* gates. Continue to the **Katsura Imperial Villa** (*pending confirmation*), an Edo-period complex of palace buildings and rustic teahouses.

Tonight, savor a refined Kyoto-style *kaiseki* meal accompanied by a ***maiko* performance** at a traditional restaurant.

Wednesday, November 3:

Kyoto / Nara / Kyoto

(B,L)

Spend today in **Nara**, Japan's first permanent capital. Begin with a monk-led visit to the UNESCO-listed **Todai-ji temple complex** and stand before its massive 49-foot-tall *Daibutsu* bronze Buddha.

Following lunch, visit the **Buddhist Art Library** at the **Nara National Museum** and discover its collection of Buddhist scrolls, followed by leisure time to roam the city or relax in **Nara Park** among the famous *sika* deer.

Alternatively, visit the **Irie Taikichi Memorial Museum of Photography**, which houses works by the renowned 20th-century photographer. Return to Kyoto for dinner at leisure.

Thursday, November 4:

Kyoto

(B,L,D)

Take an optional early-morning visit to **Sanjusangendo**, a 12th-century temple known for its long hall housing 1,001 life-sized Kannon statues. You may participate in a *zazen* meditation session on site. This morning, all guests will visit the **Kyoto National Museum** to see a world-class collection of pre-modern Asian art.

Following lunch, visit potter **Kawai Kanjiro's preserved *machiya* home and studio** to see his wood carvings and calligraphy, as well as the kiln where he created ceramics.

Later, opt for a visit to the peaceful **Arashiyama Bamboo Grove** and the glittering Golden Pavilion at **Kinkaku-ji**, then gather for a **festive farewell dinner**.

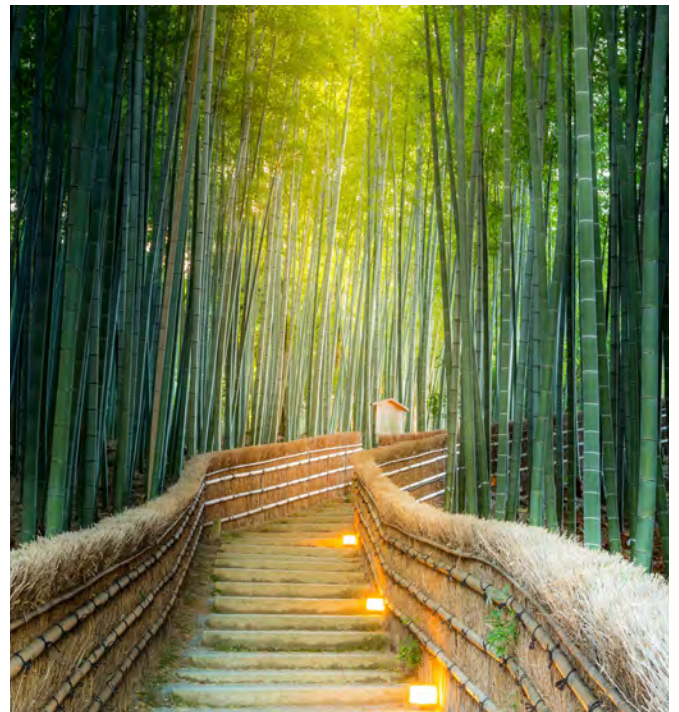
Friday, November 5:

Kyoto / Return

(B)

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Extend your journey on an optional Hakone postlude, November 5-8, 2027. Read on for details.



Arashiyama Bamboo Grove

Cruise Rates

Suites	Decks	Double	Single
Terrace Suites	Decks 1 & 2	\$27,999	\$49,999
530 sq. ft.; Simmons Hollywood twin beds; sofa; writing desk; terrace; inside bath; minibar; wine cellar; Bluetooth speaker.			
Terrace Suites with Open-Air Bath	Decks 1 & 2	\$28,999	Inquire
540 sq. ft.; Simmons Hollywood twin beds; sofa; writing desk; terrace; open-air cypress bath; minibar; wine cellar; Bluetooth speaker.			
Grand Suites	Decks 1 & 2	\$29,999	Inquire
860 sq. ft.; Simmons Hollywood twin beds; sofa; writing desk; terrace with daybed; open-air cypress bath; minibar; wine cellar; sound system.			
Terrace Suites Prestige	Decks 1 & 2	\$32,999	Inquire
970 sq. ft.; two bedrooms; three Simmons beds, including two twin beds arranged as a Hollywood twin and one semi-double bed; sofa; writing desk; terrace; inside bath; open-air cypress bath; dry sauna; minibar. Accommodates up to three guests.			
The Guntû Suite	Deck 2	\$35,999	Inquire
970 sq. ft.; Simmons Hollywood twin beds; sofa; writing desk; terrace with daybed; open-air cypress bath; minibar; wine cellar; sound system.			

Rates Include

- Six nights hotel accommodations; three nights cabin accommodations aboard *Guntû* as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, T=Tea, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine and beer at all included lunches and dinners
- Business-class high-speed train journey (Osaka-Okayama / Okayama-Kyoto)
- Airport/hotel/airport group transfers for participants on arrival and departure days
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers; customary shipboard gratuities

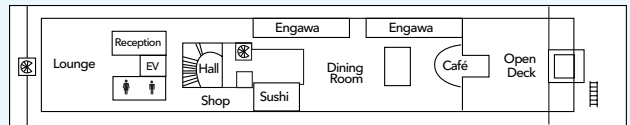
NOT INCLUDED IN RATES: International airfare; passport/visa fees; airport transfers other than on arrival and departure days; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than those noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; excess baggage; trip insurance; optional Hakone postlude; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

DISCLAIMER: This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of Institute for Contemporary Art at VCU and Museum Travel Alliance. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at <https://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms-conditions/>.

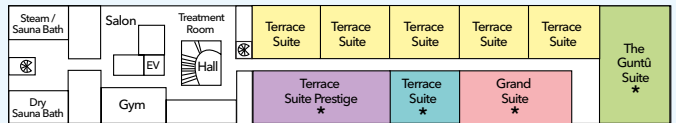
© 2026 Museum Travel Alliance. All Rights Reserved.

Guntû

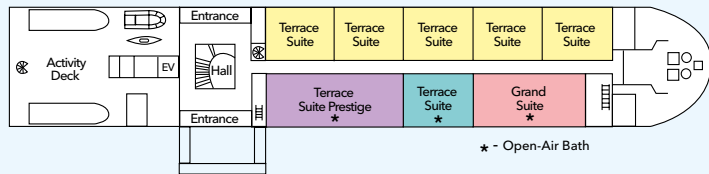
DECK 3



DECK 2



DECK 1



Resembling a traditional Japanese *ryokan*, *Guntû* is a luxurious floating hotel on the Seto Inland Sea. This recently remodeled, silver-hulled marvel features 17 wood-paneled cabins designed by renowned architect Yasushi Horibe. All cabins include Simmons beds, terraces, and minibars; most have wine cellars. Dining options cater to every palate, including a six-seat sushi bar showcasing local fish. The Engawa, a traditional terrace, serves sweets, *sake*, and snacks. In the Lounge, guests savor *matcha* and Japanese sweets.

For relaxation, *Guntû* provides a spa area with treatment rooms, communal baths featuring *hinoki* cypress tubs and saunas, and a gym with Technogym® equipment. Specialized treatments include Choukoku-Lymph® and Japanese-style *netai* massage. The Open Deck invites guests to take in panoramic views of the Setouchi landscape, from sunrise to moonlit nights.



Guntû

Optional Postlude in Hakone

November 5 – 8, 2027



Gabriel Loire, *Symphonic Sculpture*, 1975 Hakone Open-Air Museum

From Kyoto, you may join a three-night postlude in **Hakone**, a scenic mountain town famous for hot springs and incredible views of Mount Fuji. Stay at the **Hotel The Mitsui Hakone (or similar)** and immerse yourself in the region's celebrated art with visits to the **Narukawa Art Museum**, home to a noted collection of *Nihonga* paintings by artists such as Kyujin Yamamoto and Ikuo Hirayama, and the **Okada Museum of Art**, which houses impressive holdings of Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, ceramics, and ancient Asian artifacts.

Enjoy an after-hours reception at the **Hakone Open-Air Museum**, strolling among large-scale sculptures by Picasso, Henry Moore, and Japanese masters set against the natural landscape. Roam one of the world's largest collections of René Lalique's Art Nouveau jewelry, glassware, and decorative objects at the **Lalique Museum**. Meet a **private collector** at their residence before visiting the **Pola Museum of Art**, renowned for its distinguished Impressionist holdings set amid a serene beech-tree forest.

Accommodations



Thermal spring spa, Hotel The Mitsui Hakone

Hotel The Mitsui Hakone (or similar)

At this hotel on a forested hillside overlooking Mt. Sengen, each room is fed by the area's thermal waters for private, open-air bathing.

Postlude Rate
\$6,499 per person, double rate
\$8,299 single rate

Rate Includes

- Three nights hotel accommodations
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine and beer at all included lunches and dinners
- Business-class high-speed train journey (Kyoto-Hakone)
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/hotel/airport group transfers for participants on arrival and departure days
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers
- See main program for exclusions



Standard suite, Higashi, Ryokan Kurashiki, Okayama

Four Seasons Hotel Osaka

Opened in August 2024 in Dojima, this Four Seasons hotel blends modern luxury with Japanese tradition. It features 175 rooms, a unique 28th-floor *ryokan*, a spa, and diverse dining.

Ryokan Kurashiki, Okayama

Housed in three converted 18th-century sugar storehouses, this high-end traditional Japanese inn features only eight guest suites right along the district's iconic willow-lined canal.

Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto

In Kyoto's Higashiyama district, this beautiful property is built around Shakusui-en, an 800-year-old pond garden. Its setting places you close to Kyoto's temples, old lanes, and garden culture.



Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto

INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART AT VCU
Curated Currents
October 26 - November 5, 2027
RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, please [click here](#) to register online through a secure form. You may also call Museum Travel Alliance at 212-324-1893 or 855-533-0033; email: trips@museumtravelalliance.com; or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$2,000 per person (of which \$1,000 is non-refundable for administrative fees) payable to *Arrangements Abroad*. Mail to: Museum Travel Alliance, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

Address

City State Zip

Telephone (mobile) (home)

E-mail

ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel room preference ☐ one bed ☐ two beds

Guntû cabin preference (1) (2)

I wish to share a room/cabin with

OPTIONAL HAKONE POSTLUDE

☐ I/we will attend the optional Hakone postlude

Postlude hotel room preference ☐ one bed ☐ two beds

FORM OF PAYMENT

☐ Enclosed is my check (payable to *Arrangements Abroad*)

☐ Debit card ☐ Credit card

Name on debit/credit card

Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code Expiration date

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the Terms & Conditions of this Program (see <https://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms-conditions/> to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment by check, wire transfer, or credit card 120 days prior to departure. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required) Date

Signature (required) Date

Front cover: Yayoi Kusama, *Pumpkin*, 1994, Naoshima.

B_271026GTUKIX_VCU CST 2059789-40