

VareseNews

From Malpensa to Tokyo, a cross-section between modernity and millenary traditions

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Are you already thinking about the holidays? The Land of the Rising Sun could be a great holiday destination, leaving from **Malpensa** airport. Japan will also host the **Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games** this summer. Is there a better time to go there?

Just in these days, **All Nippon Airways** has announced the **first direct flight Malpensa – Tokyo Haneda**, available **from April 2020 with three flights per week**. From July 10, 2020, there will be five weekly flights. In addition to this, there will be the **Alitalia** flight already active.

The other airlines departing from Malpensa to Japan (Tokyo Narita) with stopovers are **Emirates, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines, Ethiopian, Air France, Singapore Airlines, Alitalia, Klm, Aeroflot, Air India, Etihad, Cathay Pacific, Thai, Iberia, British Airways, Eurowings, Swiss, sas, Austrian, Korean Air, Air China, China Eastern, Etihad**.

But what to do, see and visit in this land? There are many and varied offers: you can make more touristic itineraries, seeing all the iconic and inevitable, and more personalized or requested routes.

According to **National Geographic**, the **ten things to do in Japan** are:

- Visit the monuments of **Kyoto**: the Buddhist temple Kinkakuji or the dry, minimalist, cryptic

landscape garden in Ryoanji.

- Spend the **night in a temple**, possibly on Mount Koya.
- Visit the art galleries on Art Island, **Naoshima**, which houses the most avant-garde art spaces on the Japanese contemporary art scene.
- Skiing in **Niseko**: Yes, even in Japan you can ski. Niseko has the best skiing facilities on the island, and you can try ice climbing.
- Experience traditional **hospitality**, possibly in a traditional Japanese inn.
- Immerse yourself in a **thermal spring**: in Japan, the thermal baths are very popular; the most famous are those of Dogo.
- Explore the **ancient** eastern **part** of Tokyo, which has never strayed from its pre-war status as the city's main entertainment district: Hanayashiki (the theme park) and Rokku Broadway, a theatre district, are very fascinating.
- Excursions in the Northern Alps: from the small town of **Kamikochi**, the gateway to the area, visitors can choose routes of varying degrees of difficulty that will take them – at the end of the walk – to breath-taking scenery before their eyes.
- Visit the Peace Park and the **Hiroshima** Peace Museum: the monuments were erected in memory of the victims of the two atomic bombs in August 1945.
- Taste the “class B gourmet”: Japan is not just sushi and sashimi, the most sophisticated food. There is more, like **ramen**, the king of the country's second-class cuisine.

More classic, however, the choice of **Lonely Planet**:

- **Tokyo** and the not-to-be-missed Tsukijii Market, the Hanazono-jinja temple, the Mandarake and Book Off manga shops, Jing?-gaien (the outdoor gardens of Meiji-jing?), the Ota Memoria Art Museum and the East Garden of the Imperial Palace.
- **Kyoto**, the guardian of Japanese traditions: see the station, Funaoka onsen (the best bathing establishment in the city), Sumiya Pleasure House (one of the last remaining ageya houses in Shimabara, the original pleasure district of Kyoto), the temple of Nanzen-ji and the Kyoto museum.
- **Osaka**: Umeda Sky Building (the most spectacular work of modern art), the city aquarium, Dotombori – the nightlife area of Osaka -, Osaka Castle and the Open Air Old Japanese Farmhouses museum.
- Relaxing in an **onsen**
- At the table with the Japanese
- **Cherry blossom**: to see it you have to visit the country in spring, celebrated by the Japanese with qozakura (contemplation) and festivals of all kinds.

di Translated by Antony Cerchia (Reviewed by Prof. Robert Clarke)