A WORD FROM ALEX KERR.

Ever since *Lost Japan* was published almost 20 years ago, people have asked me to take them on a journey to visit the places I describe in the book.

Now, finally, the opportunity has come to do that. The timing is auspicious, as *Lost Japan* will be republished in September of this year. Our journey commemorates the new edition.

The Japan we see on this journey is utterly unlike what most visitors experience. We visit thatched-roofed houses in Shikoku’s Iya Valley; have a calligraphy event at my old house on the grounds of a shrine in Kameoka; visit Zen gardens and an imperial nunnery in Kyoto. In Nara, we see ancient and mysterious temples and shrines that only the real Nara experts know. We experience real Kabuki dance and see the world of Kyoto arts and crafts up close, meeting with the people who live and practice in that world.

It’s been my world for 40 years, this Lost Japan. I hope you join us for this very unusual experience.

**Arrive in Kyoto by Saturday, 7 November.** Check in to our hotel, the Hyatt Regency Kyoto, before we gather for a welcome dinner.

After a good night’s rest, it’s time to focus on the city of Kyoto. Founded in the eighth century A.D., it remained Japan’s capital city until 1868.

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**YOUR HOST IN JAPAN: ALEX KERR.**

Alex Kerr has lived in Asia for nearly 40 years. A U.S. Navy brat, he attended high school in Japan before attending Yale, Oxford, and Japan’s Keio University.

Alex began his firsthand study of East Asia in the early 1980s. Concerned about the destruction of traditional houses in Japan, he launched a project in 2004 to restore Kyoto’s old townhouses. Today his company, Chiiori Ltd., is involved in city planning and restoration across Japan.

He has written numerous books on Asian culture, among them *Lost Japan,* an award-winning series of autobiographical essays that recount his experiences over more than three decades in a changing Japan.

Alex also founded ORIGIN Asia, which teaches traditional arts in Japan and Thailand and oversees special programs in China, Cambodia, and Myanmar.

When he’s not writing, teaching, or practicing calligraphy, Alex can be found snooping around East Asia’s antiques shops, adding to his superb collection.
Begin with Alex’s introductory presentation on Kyoto. Then we’re off to the 15th-century Daitoku-ji Zen Temple complex, which stood for centuries at the heart of classical Zen arts. Of the many Zen rock gardens in the city, the one here is the most abstract.

After lunch, continue to Ji-ju-in Imperial Temple, originally a small palace given by the emperor to one of his favorite daughters. We take a private tour of its art treasures and secret gardens, followed by tea with the current abbess. We also have a lesson in the art of shabana flower arranging.

The following day begins at Fushimi Inari Shrine. Thousands of vermilion torii gates stretch for miles into the sacred mountain behind the shrine complex. This is a tourist mecca, though the crowd recedes after the first tunnel or two of torii. Alex leads us farther up the hill, past the tourists, where quiet still reigns in a numinous atmosphere.

Continue to Kameoka, west of Kyoto, where we have lunch and visit the pottery studio of Sasaki Shoraku, a third-generation potter from Kyoto, who uses the kiln of the famous artist Deguchi Onisaburo (1871-1948) to make his spectacular Raku tea bowls.

Next, we visit Alex’s 400-year-old private home on the grounds of Kameoka Tenmangū Shrine. See his collection of antique calligraphy, scrolls, ceramics, and lacquerware.

Enjoy dinner at his home before we return to Kyoto for the night.

The next day, 10 November, wear your most comfortable shoes, as we devote the day to a walking tour of old Kyoto.

Begin at Rokuharamitsu-ji, a tiny temple and one of the few buildings in the city that survived the 15th- and 16th-century civil wars. Enjoy a tour here.

Enter the Wild Boar Temple of Marishi, god of contests and chance. Then follow Miyagawa-cho Street through the traditional geisha district. Explore Upper Teramachi, home of Kyoto’s leading craft and antiques shops.

We stop for lunch at Alex’s favorite local soba noodle restaurant.

Walk down Teramachi, a popular covered arcade lined with shops selling everything from second-hand kimonos to kitschy trinkets. On Nishiki Street, we witness Japan’s last old-style covered market, a magnet for Kyoto’s high-end chefs in search of the freshest ingredients.

Enter Sugimoto-kō, the finest of old Kyoto’s merchant houses. In Lost Japan, Alex discussed the residence and its significance.

Enjoy some free time this afternoon.

This evening, enjoy a kaiseki dinner with a personal friend of Alex’s who presents a kabuki dance.

Leaving Kyoto behind, we arrive at Uji, a small city between Kyoto and Nara. We come to visit Manpuku-ji, main temple of the Obaku Zen sect, built in the early 17th century. Here we meet monk Tanaka Chisei, head of the temple.
archives hall, who leads us on a special private tour of the temple and its secret gardens.

Continue to Byodo-in Temple, also in Uji. With striking upswept eaves, the temple's Phoenix Hall is featured on Japan's 10-yen coin. It houses an important early statue of Amida Buddha by Jocho, a celebrated 11th-century sculptor. Both building and sculpture date from the mid-11th century.

Continuing toward Nara, we stop at Hannya-ji, a minor temple dedicated to Monju, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom. This is a favorite of Alex's for its untamed wildflower garden.

Now we turn our attention to Nara, first capital of Japan (A.D. 710). Though its status as the hub of ancient Japan would last a mere 75 years, Nara's time in the limelight proved extraordinarily productive.


Catch outstanding views of Todai-ji from the balcony of Nigatsu-do.

Sangatsu-do, the only original eighth-century building in the park (all the others have been rebuilt), contains stunning ancient sculptures centered on the towering Fuku Kensaku Kannon.

Kofukuji Treasure Museum boasts important early Buddhist statues. The best known is a six-armed, baby-faced Ashura-zo.

Before leaving Nara Park, take some time to feed the resident deer that run free (but keep your cash and maps out of sight, or they’ll feast on those, too).

From Nara, we drive to Osaka and check in to our hotel.

Pre-Tour Option to Tokyo.

If this is your first visit to Japan, we urge you to extend your visit with a pre-tour extension to Tokyo. There is so much to see and do in this incredible city. Don’t miss it.

You might also consider adding some pre-tour time in historic Kyoto to see significant sites that our hosted journey does not visit—the Gold Pavilion, Nijo Castle, Ryoanji Sand Garden, and Sanjusangendo Hall of the 1,001 Buddhas.

For more information, email R. Crusoe travel specialist Nina Choi at nchoi@rcrusoe, or call Nina at 888-490-8007.

Byodo-in Temple’s distinctive Phoenix Hall is featured on Japan’s 10-yen coin. Uji.
cauldron of secrecy [is] the area around Nara, where ancient Shinto grew up and Esoteric Buddhism flourished.”

We come to the region for three important ancient sites rarely visited by foreigners: Akishino-dera, Kushiyama Kofun, and Sujin Tenno-ryo.

Akishino-dera is home to the statue of the god of the arts, one of Japan’s most beautiful masterpieces.

Continue to a pair of adjoining tumulus mounds surrounded by moats: Kushiyama Kofun and Sujin Tenno-ryo, both dating to prehistoric times.

We end back in Osaka.

As Alex explains, Kyoto is the city of culture; Osaka, on the other hand, is the city of fun. Osaka has a wealthy mercantile and craft tradition; it also features a gritty downtown of the type that has vanished in contemporary Japan’s homogenized cities. Osaka is also famous for its tasty street food, including kushiyaki (breaded vegetables and meat on bamboo skewers) and okonomiyaki (grilled egg-and-vegetable pancakes).

This evening, we venture out to get a taste of Old Downtown Osaka’s popular nighttime culture. Destination? The Shinsekai neighborhood, an entertainment area built right after World War II that was once the hub of Osaka nightlife. It has fallen on hard times but remains full of color like no other cityscape in Japan. At its center is Tsutenkaku Tower, from which radiate streets lined with small shops, restaurants serving kushiyaki, and small “downtown Kabuki” theaters.

In one of these theaters, we see a “downtown Kabuki” show in which actors costumed in silver lamé kimonos and pink wigs perform Kabuki-style drama and dance accompanied by pop music. You have likely not seen anything like it.

After the show, we dine on kushikatsu, a type of kabobs made with meat, vegetables, pork, or seafood. They are ubiquitous in Shinsekai.

Bid farewell to Osaka as we drive and then take a ferry to Naoshima Island in the Inland Sea. This is home to a remarkable art project conceived and funded by billionaire Soichiro Fukutake, president of the Benesse publishing company. Fukutake had architect Ando Tadao design a hotel and two museums to house his private collection. Leading artists from around the world mount installations in the wooden houses of Naoshima’s old port town.

After checking in to our unique hotel, Benesse House, we visit the Lee Ufan Museum, also designed by Ando Tadao and a recent addition to the island.

On to the Chichu Museum. Illuminated only by natural light, it houses just a few select artworks. We enjoy a sunset viewing of the James Turrell installation here.

Dinner tonight is at the Benesse House Museum’s Issen Restaurant. As the museum is open late, feel free to explore at your leisure. It houses the core of Fukutake’s modern-art collection.

The next morning, visit the Art House Projects in the old port town. These include a Turrell installation at Minamidera; Kadoya, where the floors are filled with water; a house with mist-and-waterfall paintings by Senju Hiroshi; and Go-O Shrine, a modern Shinto shrine.
with glass stairs designed by Hiroshi Sugimoto.

After our visit, we ferry to Shikoku Island and then drive to the Iya Valley. En route, stop at a famous pilgrimage shrine and at several excellent viewing points along the Iya Gorges.

Iya has one of Japan’s most striking landscapes, steep misty mountains doted with old farmhouses. Alex discovered the valley in 1973, then purchased and restored a 300-year-old thatched farmhouse called Chiiori. His experiences form the core of the Lost Japan narrative.

After a traditional nabe (a bouillabaisse-type stew) dinner at a local hotel restaurant, we drive deeper into Iya, arriving at the hamlet of Ochiai. Here, Alex and his foundation, Chiiori Trust, have restored eight Edo-period thatched houses. These are our home-away-from-home for the next two nights, marvelous examples of traditional architecture outfitted with modern conveniences.

After a sound night’s sleep, we explore Ochiai, then drive deeper into the valley. Regarded as one of Japan’s Three Hidden Regions, remote Iya was known for its vine bridges. Though 14 once existed, only two remain. One, near the entrance to the valley, is a tourist magnet. The other is hidden deep in the valley, and that is precisely where Alex leads us.

Back in Ochiai, we take a lesson in soba (buckwheat) noodle-making and over lunch enjoy what we’ve made.

Late afternoon, we go to Alex’s thatched house Chiiori, the place where it all began for him. Wine and drinks are served before a catered dinner and a calligraphy demonstration by Alex.

Then back to the houses in Ochiai for the night.

On Monday, 16 November, return to Osaka. En route to the hotel, we stop at the home of the widow of Hosomi Ryo, the great art collector, to meet her and view some of her family’s beautiful antiques.

Later we enjoy a farewell dinner at the hotel.

On Tuesday, 17 November, head for the Osaka airport on your own, and fly home.
Lost Japan. Hosted by Alex Kerr. 
11 Days.

* Day 1: United States
Friday, 6 November 2015
Depart independently on an overnight flight to Japan.

* Day 2: Osaka, Kyoto, Japan
Saturday, 7 November 2015
Arrive Osaka, transfer to Kyoto, welcome. 
*Hyatt Regency Kyoto.

* Day 3: Kyoto
Sunday, 8 November 2015
Introduction to Kyoto by Alex, Daitoku-ji Zen Temple complex, Jiju-in Imperial Temple, chabana flower arranging demonstration and lesson. 
*Hyatt Regency Kyoto.

* Day 4: Kyoto
Monday, 9 November 2015
Fushimi Inari Shrine, drive to Kameoka, Shoraku pottery studio, presentation by Alex on Japan’s traditional arts, Tenmangu (Alex’s 400-year-old home) to view his private antiques, calligraphy, and artifacts collection, drive back to Kyoto. 
*Hyatt Regency Kyoto.

* Day 5: Kyoto
Tuesday, 10 November 2015
Walking tour of Kyoto Old Town including Rokuharamitsu-ji Temple, Wild-Boar Temple of Marishi, Miyagawa-cho geisha district, Upper Teramachi crafts and antiques district, Nishiki Street covered food market, Sugimoto-ke Merchant House, leisure time, kaiseki dinner with Kabuki dance. 
*Hyatt Regency Kyoto.

* Day 6: Uji, Nara, Osaka
Wednesday, 11 November 2015
Drive to Manpuku-ji Temple, private tour of temple and secret gardens with monks who oversees the temple archives, Byodo-in Temple, Hannya-ji Temple, Nara Park including Todai-ji Temple, Nigatsu-do and Sangatsu-do halls, and Kofukuji Treasure Museum, drive back to Osaka. 
*Ritz-Carlton Osaka.

* Day 7: Outer Nara, Osaka
Thursday, 12 November 2015
Tour of Outer Nara including Akishino-dera, Kushiyama Kofun, Sujin Tenno-ryo, Old Osaka Shinsekai at night including Naniwa Club for nouveau Kabuki performance. 
*Ritz-Carlton Osaka.

* Day 8: Naoshima Island
Friday, 13 November 2015
Drive and ferry to Naoshima, hotel check-in, Lee Ufan Museum, Chichu Museum at sunset, Benesse House Museum dinner. 
*Benesse House.

* Day 9: Naoshima Island, Iya Valley
Saturday, 14 November 2015
Art House Projects, ferry to Takamatsu on Shikoku Island, drive toward Iya Valley, Iya Gorges, arrive at Edo-period Ochiai houses. 
*Chiiori Ochiai Houses.

* Day 10: Iya Valley
Sunday, 15 November 2015
Ochiai tour, Niju-Kazurabashi secret vine bridge, soba noodle-making lesson, drinks and dinner at Alex’s private home, Chiiori, calligraphy demonstration. 
*Chiiori Ochiai Houses.

* Day 11: Osaka
Monday, 16 November 2015
Drive to Osaka, visit with the widow of art collector and industrialist Hosomi Ryo at the family home, hotel check-in, dinner at hotel. 
*Ritz-Carlton Osaka.

* Day 12: Osaka; United States
Tuesday, 17 November 2015
Fly home.

Price:
Per person sharing room................ from $12,860
Single supplement......................... $2,980

The tour is sold as described. There are no refunds for unused portions of this journey. The tour price is based on a minimum of 6 travelers as well as present currency exchange and fuel rates. If fewer than the minimum number of travelers participates, or if there is a major change in exchange rates or a fuel surcharge, a price supplement may be added.
apply and/or the itinerary may be adjusted. After booking, travelers receive a confirmation. Expect a detailed itinerary a few weeks before departure.

*R. Crusoe strongly recommends that travelers purchase travel insurance. If you have a pre-existing health condition, be sure to purchase this insurance within 21 days of booking.*

**Inclusions**
Accommodations (deluxe or higher category) based on double occupancy; other ground transportation; meals and sightseeing as indicated; wine and local beer with included meals; lectures and special events; hotel taxes; entrance fees to museums and places of interest; baggage handling; gratuities for local guides, drivers, porters; professional tour escort throughout; tour development and planning; reservation management by an R. Crusoe senior tour consultant; and preparation and delivery of preliminary and final documents.

**Exclusions**
All international airfare; arrival and departure airport transfers; costs of obtaining passports; personal expenses such as laundry and beverages; room service; excess baggage fees; communication charges; gratuity to tour escort; and personal insurance coverage.

**Meals**
All breakfasts included plus most lunches and dinners.

**Transfers**
Arrival and departure transfers are not included in the tour price. Public and private options for transfers between the airports, train stations, and hotels are available. Please speak with Nina Choi about the options for your own itineraries.

**Luggage**
Porterage services are limited in Japan and are nonexistent on Naoshima and Shikoku islands. Please keep this in mind when packing. We recommend that travelers bring only what they need for the Naoshima/Shikoku days in a weekend-size rolling bag, and check the remainder of their belongings at the Ritz-Carlton Osaka, the hotel to which we return for the last day of the tour.

**Eligibility**
All travelers should be in good health and able to walk during touring. This tour requires travelers to walk on uneven and possibly slippery surfaces and to go up and down stairs. Many venues on this tour do not have elevators. Some areas prohibit coaches—particularly in the old towns—so walking is mandatory. By forwarding the deposit for this tour, the traveler certifies that he/she does not have any physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/her or others. It is essential that persons with any medical problems or related dietary restrictions inform R. Crusoe & Son well before the date of departure. All travelers are expected to be ready to experience cultural differences with grace.

**Airfare**
Air travel from/to the U.S. is not included in the price of the tour but can be booked with our partner air travel company.

**Registration**
Full payment is required at the time you book. Payment can be made by personal check, Visa, Discover/Nova, MasterCard, or Diner’s Club.

**Cancellations**
Cancellations received after 15 June 2015 are subject to the following forfeit as a percentage of tour cost: 100 percent.

For more information or to book this journey with R. Crusoe & Son, please email Nina Choi at nchoi@rcrusoe.com, or call her at 888-490-8007.

R. Crusoe & Son strongly recommends travel insurance that includes coverage for trip cancellation or interruption; illness or injury while abroad; baggage loss, theft, or damage; and emergency medical evacuation. Information on our policy is available.

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On the advancement of deposit, the depositor acknowledges that he or she has read and understands the specific inclusions, exclusions, registration, and cancellation policies of the tour, the terms and conditions listed below, and that he or she agrees to be bound by them. Cancellation penalties apply, and R. Crusoe & Son makes no refund for unused services. R. Crusoe & Son strongly recommends that travelers purchase travel insurance as described below.

Arrangements: Quoted tour prices include planning, handling, and operational charges and are quoted in U.S. dollars based on the current rate of exchange, tariff, and fuel prices. In the event of unexpected and significant cost increases, prices are subject to revision. On some programs, a fuel surcharge may apply. R. Crusoe & Son will advise travelers of possible surcharges that apply to a specific journey as soon as these surcharges are known.

Responsibility: R. Crusoe & Son and its operating partners purchase transportation, hotel accommodations, restaurant services, and other services from various independent suppliers not subject to its control. R. Crusoe & Son and its operating partners cannot, therefore, be liable for any personal injury, loss, or damage to person or property that may occur due to (1) a wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary act by others not under the direct control of R. Crusoe & Son and its operating partners, (2) defects in, or failures of, any aircraft, vessel, automotive vehicle, or other means of transportation not under its control, or (3) acts of God. R. Crusoe & Son and its operating partners also reserve the right to withdraw a tour or any part of it, to make such alterations in the itinerary as it deems necessary or desirable, to refuse to accept or retain as a member of any tour or part thereof any person at any time, and to pass on to tour members any expenditures or losses caused by airline schedule changes, delays, or events beyond its control.

Eligibility: Participation in R. Crusoe’s programs requires that travelers be in generally good health. Walking and stair climbing are commonly part of many tours. Travelers with physical disabilities must make them known to R. Crusoe & Son at the time of booking. It is also essential that persons with any medical problems or related dietary restrictions inform R. Crusoe & Son well before departure. All travelers are expected to be ready to experience cultural differences with grace.

Travel Documents: All travel documents (air and cruise tickets, passport, destination-specific vaccination records, and inoculation verification) are the traveler’s responsibility. It is also the responsibility of the traveler to obtain any necessary visas and public health documents for all applicable destinations and to comply with all customs requirements. Without the required documents, travelers may be denied entry into a particular destination. R. Crusoe & Son is not liable for such denial.

Air Transportation: International air prices are a separate cost in addition to the land prices of tours. Should a traveler cancel or change an air reservation before or after his or her departure, cancellations penalties may apply.

Baggage: Baggage handling is at the traveler’s risk throughout the tour. Baggage restrictions may apply. If so, R. Crusoe & Son is not responsible for excess baggage fees.

Smoking: Smoking is not permitted during situations that involve fellow travelers. This applies when travelers are in restaurants, sightseeing vehicles, trains, ships and other water transport, air transport, and when participating in group activities.

R. Crusoe & Son Travel Protection Plan
Even on a perfectly planned vacation there are forces of nature that R. Crusoe & Son cannot prevent. There is the possibility that luggage is lost en route, an illness pops up, or even the sudden need for emergency cash. To ensure that your voyage provides you with a lifetime of pleasant memories, this program contains a broad package of benefits for our travelers including:

- insurance coverage for trip cancellation or interruption
- insurance coverage for illness or injury while abroad
- emergency medical evacuation
- reimbursement for baggage loss, theft, or damage
- 24-hour assistance anywhere in the world

Complete details (including terms, condition limits, costs, and enrollment procedures) are sent upon confirmation of your tour reservation.
For pre-existing condition coverage, the premium must be paid within 21 days of the initial deposit.

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