

# Japan Winter Trip 2026-2027: Travel Plan and Logistics

Monday, December 28, 2026 - Friday, January 15, 2027

## Route Logic

**Core shape:** outbound flight on Dec 28, one arrival night in Tokyo on Dec 29, a main Osaka base, a Lake Biwa ryokan reset, a two-night Kawaguchiko nature / Fuji / onsen chapter, then a final Tokyo base.

**Trip style:** structured but forgiving. Each day has one anchor, one secondary target at most, a real food/rest break, and an evening that can be shortened without damaging the day.

**Morning rule:** normal days assume about 2 hours from wake-up to leaving the hotel, including getting ready, breakfast, bathroom, bag checks, and mental boot-up. Travel/check-out days need closer to 2.5-3 hours unless packed the night before.

**Early-start exception:** sunrise, Fushimi Inari, and long-transfer days only work if clothes, bags, tickets, snacks, and route are set the night before.

**Weather target:** winter highs mostly in the 40s, lows mostly in the 30s, colder around Fuji. Sunrise around 7 AM; sunset around 5 PM.

## High-Level Base Plan

Dates	Nights	Base	Purpose
Dec 28	0	Flight	Depart BNA 08:15; overnight westbound flight via YYZ
Dec 29	1	Tokyo	Arrive HND 16:40; arrival night only; easy food and sleep
Dec 30 - Jan 3	5	Osaka	Main Kansai city base, NYE, Den Den Town, Nara, Catholic Mass
Jan 4 - Jan 7	4	Otsu / Ogoto	Lake Biwa ryokan, onsen, Omihachiman, Fushimi, Sakamoto
Jan 8 - Jan 9	2	Kawaguchiko	Nature + light hiking + onsen chapter; arrival-afternoon Fuji chance plus two morning chances
Jan 10 - Jan 14	5	Tokyo	Akihabara, Gundam Base, Shibuya, Shinjuku, final shopping
Jan 15	0	Tokyo / HND	Final lunch and 18:50 departure

## Priority Booking Dates and Constraints

When	Item	Trip Date	Notes
Now	Hotels	All dates	Book refundable hotels first: Tokyo arrival, Osaka, Otsu / Ogoto, Kawaguchiko, Tokyo final
Now	Ogoto ryokan	Jan 4 - Jan 8	Default target: Yuzanso if price / room category works; prioritize station shuttle, view, and onsen over lakefront walkability
1 month prior	Mishima - Kawaguchiko bus	Jan 8	Reserve Mishima South Exit 10:20 -> Kawaguchiko 11:50 if using the fast Otsu/Kyoto/Mishima route
1 month prior	Fuji Excursion / Tokyo route	Jan 10	Reserve Kawaguchiko -> Shinjuku if using direct train; otherwise use highway bus
1 month prior or earlier if available	Shinkansen	Dec 30 and Jan 8	Book Dec 30 Nozomi early for New Year peak; for Jan 8 target Kyoto 07:51 -> Mishima 09:57 on Hikari 640
Late 2026	NYE / Joya no Kane details	Dec 31	Confirm participating temple and exact ticket/ringing rules for 2026/27
Late 2026	Gundam Base entry controls	Jan 12	Check whether timed entry or crowd control applies
Late 2026	Opening-hour recheck	All anchors	Reverify New Year hours for restaurants, museums, shrines, shops, and ryokan meal plans

## Open / Closure Reality

**New Year rule:** Dec 29-Jan 4 is uneven. Big cities function, but small shops, independent restaurants, museums, and specialty stores may close or run short hours.

**Tea issue:** Taiho-an in Uji is normally closed Dec 21-Jan 9, so the municipal tea ceremony is not placed in the active itinerary.

**Fushimi issue:** Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum closes Dec 28-Jan 4, so Fushimi is placed on Jan 6.

**Cycling issue:** January Lake Biwa cycling is not guaranteed. This itinerary uses Lake Biwa for ryokan, old towns, shrines, views, and onsen rather than depending on e-bikes.

# Day 0: Depart Nashville / In Flight (Mon Dec 28)

**Weather:** Travel day. Nashville morning departure; Japan arrival is the next day.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:15 CST	Depart BNA	Air Canada / United / ANA itinerary begins. BNA -> YYZ -> HND.
Connection	YYZ layover	Scheduled 1 hr 18 min connection. Keep carry-on essentials tight and do not depend on a long meal stop.
Overnight	International flight	Sleep, hydrate, and protect arrival-night energy.

## Reference Notes

**Booked flight skeleton:** Mon Dec 28, 08:15 BNA -> Tue Dec 29, 16:40 HND, 1 stop at YYZ.  
Total scheduled travel time: 17 hr 25 min.

**Practical note:** This is not a Japan hotel night. The first Japan hotel night is Tue Dec 29.

# Day 1: Tokyo Arrival Night (Tue Dec 29)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Short daylight; evening arrival plan only.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
16:40	Arrive HND	Immigration, bags, customs; keep expectations low.
18:15	Transit to Shinjuku	Haneda -> Shinjuku is about 50 minutes by train; taxi or limousine bus is acceptable with luggage.
19:30	Check in	Cheap / basic Shinjuku hotel is fine because this is only an arrival night.
20:15	First meal	Matsuya / Matsunoya / CoCo Ichibanya / ramen / konbini; avoid reservation-dependent dining.
21:15	Short neon walk	Kabukicho / station-area walk only if awake. No sightseeing checklist.
22:30	Sleep	Protect the Osaka travel day.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Haneda official access guidance lists Shinjuku at about 50 minutes by train. Link: [Haneda train access](#).

**Note:** Use this day for food, lights, and sleep; do not schedule Tokyo attractions before Osaka.

## Day 2: Tokyo to Osaka, Namba Landing (Wed Dec 30)

**Weather:** Tokyo and Osaka highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Dry winter travel day.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
07:45	Wake / breakfast / pack	Travel-day morning; assume 2+ hours before leaving the hotel.
10:15	Transit to Shinagawa / Tokyo Station	Board reserved Tokaido Shinkansen to Shin-Osaka.
11:30	Shinkansen to Osaka	Use reserved seats during New Year peak. Eat eki-ben or snacks onboard.
14:15	Arrive Shin-Osaka	Transfer to hotel area; Namba / Umeda both workable.
15:30	Check in / reset	Do not stack a day trip after the train.
17:00	Namba / Dotonbori walk	Neon, food signs, river, first Osaka evening.
19:00	Dinner	Use dense food areas: Namba, Dotonbori, or nearby chains if holiday hours are uneven.
22:30	Sleep	First proper Kansai day is tomorrow.

### Reference Notes

**Note:** JR Central states Nozomi trains are all-reserved during peak periods and recommends reserving seats in advance. Link: [JR Central Nozomi peak periods](#).

**Note:** This is intentionally a travel-and-arrival day, not a sightseeing day.

# Day 3: Den Den Town and Osaka New Year's Eve (Thu Dec 31)

**Weather:** Highs in the upper 40s; lows in the 30s. Good city-walking weather.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:45	Wake / breakfast	Slow hotel morning; do not expect to move for about 2 hours.
10:45	Den Den Town / Ota Road block 1	Figures, models, retro games, electronics, hobby shops.
12:30	Lunch	Do not chase famous places; use the best open spot near Nipponbashi.
13:30	Passive break	Cafe, arcade sit-down, hotel reset, or slow browsing.
15:00	Den Den Town block 2	Maid cafe if open; second-pass shops; no overbuying before Tokyo.
17:00	Hotel reset	Mandatory break before NYE.
18:30	Dinner / izakaya	Book if possible; otherwise use dense areas and chains.
20:30	Midosuji Illumination / Namba	Winter lights, Dotonbori, snacks, and city energy.
22:30	Joya no Kane setup	Move toward a participating temple if doing bell-ringing; Shitennoji is the practical classic option.
00:15	Dotonbori / Namba after-midnight walk	Atmosphere, lights, snacks; leave before it becomes tiring.
01:30	Return	Do not try to make Jan 1 productive.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Osaka tourism frames Nipponbashi / Ota Road as western Japan's pop-culture center, with anime, games, figures, plastic models, cosplay, maid cafes, and hobby shops. Link: [Osaka Nipponbashi Ota Road](#).

**Note:** Midosuji Illumination has recently run through Dec 31 until around 1 AM. Link: [Midosuji Illumination](#).

**Note:** Osaka Metro's tourism article says Shitennoji distributes bell-ringing tickets around 11 PM and normally continues bell-ringing later even after the first 108. Link: [Osaka Joya no Kane](#).

## Day 4: Soft New Year's Day in Osaka (Fri Jan 1)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Quiet holiday day.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
09:30	Late wake	No guilt. NYE was the event; slow morning is the plan.
11:30	Known-open food	Hotel, chain, konbini, station food, or mall food.
13:00	Low-pressure walk	Dotonbori / Namba / riverside / arcade streets; observe holiday atmosphere.
15:00	Rest	Hotel reset, laundry, planning, warm drink.
17:30	Evening food	Use chains or reservations; independent places may still be closed.
20:00	Optional light stroll	Keep it short. Tomorrow is the first normal-ish day trip.
22:00	Sleep	Recover from New Year.

### Reference Notes

**Note:** New Year closures make Jan 1 weak for small shops and restaurants. This day is designed as a soft reset, not a wasted day.

## Day 5: Nara and Naramachi (Sat Jan 2)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Cold but easy walking weather.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:00	Wake / breakfast	Two-hour morning before the day trip.
10:00	Transit to Nara	Kintetsu-Nara is best for Nara Park / Naramachi.
11:00	Nara Park edge	Deer and atmosphere; do not get trapped in tourist-current pacing.
12:00	One major temple at most	Todai-ji if desired; skip if crowds or fatigue are high.
13:15	Lunch	Find something in town before drifting into Naramachi.
14:30	Naramachi	Merchant streets, cafes, shops, slow wandering.
16:45	Return to Osaka	Leave before dark fatigue.
19:00	Osaka dinner	Simple dinner near hotel or Namba.

### Reference Notes

**Note:** Visit Nara describes Nara Park as walkable from Kintetsu-Nara and more leisurely than Kyoto despite steady visitor traffic. Link: [Nara Park](#).

**Note:** Todai-ji Daibutsuden winter hours are 8:00-17:00 from November to March, with no closing days listed. Link: [Todai-ji hours](#).

# Day 6: Osaka Cathedral and Final Osaka Sunday (Sun Jan 3)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Final Osaka night.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
09:00	Wake / breakfast	Slow Sunday; keep luggage and laundry simple.
11:30	Transit to Osaka Cathedral	Arrive before English Mass if attending.
13:00	Osaka Cathedral Mass	St. Mary's / Tamatsukuri; Catholic anchor of Kansai block.
14:30	Late lunch / cafe	Tamatsukuri, Namba, or Umeda depending mood.
16:00	Final Osaka flex	Repeat Den Den Town, Dotonbori, Umeda, or hotel reset.
18:30	Final Osaka dinner	Use a reliable area with plenty of open options.
20:30	Pack for Lake Biwa	Prepare for Monday checkout and ryokan transfer.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Osaka Cathedral official schedule lists Sunday English Mass at 1:00 PM. Link: [Osaka Cathedral](#).

**Note:** This is now the final Osaka night. The Lake Biwa move is Monday Jan 4, which avoids rushing out after Mass.

## Day 7: Move to Lake Biwa / Ogoto Onsen Reset (Mon Jan 4)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Good transfer day.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:30	Wake / pack	Checkout morning; assume 2.5 hours before moving with luggage.
11:00	Osaka -> Kyoto / Ogoto	JR route via Kyoto / Kosei Line depending hotel.
13:00	Arrive Otsu / Ogoto area	Drop luggage or go direct to ryokan if timing works.
15:00	Ryokan check-in	Yuzanso or comparable Ogoto ryokan; call shuttle from station.
16:00	Onsen / rest	First Lake Biwa reset. Do not force sightseeing.
19:00	Ryokan dinner	Use this night as a proper meal-plan night.
21:00	Bath / view / sleep	No outside plans.

### Reference Notes

**Note:** Yuzanso says it overlooks Lake Biwa and offers shuttle pickup from JR Ogoto-onsen Station after arrival. Link: [Yuzanso access](#).

# Day 8: Omihachiman Canal and Merchant Streets (Tue Jan 5)

**Weather:** Lake Biwa highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Wind can make it feel colder.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:30	Ryokan breakfast	Slow start; no early train sprint.
10:00	Transit to Omihachiman	Station plus bus/taxi/walk depending route.
11:00	Hachiman-bori canal	Canal walk and boat if operating.
12:30	Slow lunch	Old-town / local-town lunch; do not chase a famous reservation.
14:00	Merchant streets	Traditional architecture, shops, cafes; one main area only.
16:00	Return to ryokan	Protect the onsen evening.
18:30	Dinner	Ryokan meal or eat before returning depending plan.
20:30	Onsen	The point of this base.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** JNTO describes Hachiman-bori as a relaxed canal cruise where you sit back and take in the old townscape. Link: [Hachiman-bori Canal](#).

**Note:** Boat hours are commonly listed around 10:00-16:00, with winter weather affecting operation. Link: [Hachiman-bori hours](#).

# Day 9: Fushimi Inari and Fushimi Sake District (Wed Jan 6)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Dress for early shrine walk.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
06:30	Wake / quick prep	Early-start exception; prep clothes, bag, and snacks the night before.
08:30	Fushimi Inari	Walk the torii gates; turn around before fatigue. No need to complete the mountain.
10:30	Coffee / snack	Reset before the sake district.
11:15	Fushimi town walk	Canals, sake storehouses, old streets.
12:30	Lunch	Fushimi or Chushojima area.
14:00	Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum	Works after New Year closure; last entry is usually 16:00.
16:30	Return to Ogoto	Back before evening fatigue.
19:00	Onsen / dinner	Do not add central Kyoto.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Fushimi Inari is always open; the full mountain walk is optional and should not be forced. Link: [Fushimi Inari](#).

**Note:** Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum closes Dec 28-Jan 4 and is normally open 9:30-16:30 with last entry 16:00. Link: [Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum](#).

# Day 10: Sakamoto, Hiyoshi Taisha, or Biwako Valley (Thu Jan 7)

**Weather:** Lake/mountain day; highs in the 40s, colder and windier at elevation.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:30	Ryokan breakfast	Choose based on weather, not obligation.
10:00	Option A: Sakamoto / Hiyoshi Taisha	Old stone walls, shrine grounds, Mt. Hiei foothills. Best default.
10:00	Option B: Biwako Valley	Use only if visibility is clear and ropeway is operating.
12:30	Lunch	Keep it simple near the chosen area.
14:00	Low-pressure second block	Sakamoto lanes, Otsu lakefront, or short terrace/view time.
16:00	Return to ryokan	Final Lake Biwa onsen evening.
18:30	Dinner	Use a meal-plan night if available.
20:30	Pack lightly	Prepare for Fuji transfer.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Hiyoshi Taisha is listed as 9:00-16:30 and open daily. Link: [Hiyoshi Taisha hours](#).

**Note:** Biwako Valley winter season is weather-dependent; typical winter hours list 8:30-16:30, last ascent 16:00. Link: [Biwako Valley hours](#).

# Day 11: Lake Biwa to Kawaguchiko (Fri Jan 8)

**Weather:** Travel into colder Fuji weather; expect highs around 40F and lows in the 20s.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
04:45	Wake / final pack	Early-transfer exception; pack the night before and skip a formal ryokan breakfast unless a boxed option is easy.
06:00	Leave Otsu / Ogoto	Taxi or pre-arranged ryokan drop-off toward Ogoto-onsen Station; taxi direct to Kyoto Station is acceptable if it removes friction.
06:30	Kyoto Station buffer	Buy snacks / breakfast / drinks; do not make this a tight connection.
07:51	Kyoto -> Mishima	Target Hikari 640, Kyoto 07:51 -> Mishima 09:57; reserve seats.
09:57	Arrive Mishima	Exit to South Exit bus area; bathroom / snack only if time allows.
10:20	Mishima -> Kawaguchiko bus	Target Mishima-Kawaguchiko Liner bus 0007, Mishima South Exit 10:20 -> Kawaguchiko 11:50; reserve and prepay online.
11:50	Arrive Kawaguchiko	Taxi / hotel luggage drop / station lunch; first Fuji view chance begins if weather is clear.
14:00	Lake walk / Oishi side	Short low-risk scenic block; no attraction checklist after the long transfer.
16:30	Sunset / lake	Arrival-afternoon Fuji chance; stay close to hotel if tired or cold.
18:00	Dinner / onsen	Use hotel meal plan or precise food backup; town dining is not the focus.
21:30	Sleep	Sunrise day tomorrow.

## Reference Notes

**Fast route target:** Ogoto/Otsu -> Kyoto -> Mishima -> Kawaguchiko. Target Hikari 640, Kyoto 07:51 -> Mishima 09:57, then Mishima-Kawaguchiko Liner bus 0007, Mishima South Exit 10:20 -> Kawaguchiko 11:50.

**Why this works:** Ogoto Onsen is about 20 minutes from Kyoto by car or JR train, so a 06:00 hotel departure creates a real Kyoto Station buffer before the 07:51 Hikari. The Mishima bus transfer is only 23 minutes, so do not add lunch in Mishima.

**Fuji chance count:** 2 nights gives an arrival-afternoon / sunset chance on Jan 8 plus true morning chances on Jan 9 and Jan 10.

**Note:** Current official Fujikyū City Bus timetable lists Mishima South Exit 10:20 -> Kawaguchiko 11:50 as bus 0007. Link: [Mishima-Kawaguchiko Liner](#).

**Note:** SEKITORI lists the Kawaguchiko-Mishima line among reservable bus routes. Link: [SEKITORI route list](#).

**Ticket warning:** Fujikyu recommends web reservation/payment because the route is crowded. The ticket is for the reserved bus only; if plans change, modify before the deadline rather than showing up for a different bus.

# Day 12: Fuji Sunrise and Kawaguchiko Slow Day (Sat Jan 9)

**Weather:** Very cold morning: lows in the 20s; daytime around 40F. Clear winter air is the reason to be here.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
06:15	Sunrise setup	Be outside before sunrise; dress like it is below freezing.
06:55	Fuji sunrise attempt	Oishi Park, north shore, or Chureito depending lodging/location.
08:15	Breakfast / warm up	Back to hotel or cafe if open.
10:30	Oishi Park / north shore	Slow lake views; no rushing.
12:30	Lunch	Simple local food; do not overplan.
14:00	Chureito or Kawaguchi Asama-jinja	Pick one. Chureito for view; Asama-jinja for shrine atmosphere.
16:30	Sunset / lake	Light fades early; keep evening close to lodging.
19:00	Dinner / onsen	Early night.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Kawaguchiko New Year guides list Oishi Park, the north-shore walking trail, and Arakurayama Sengen Park as sunrise options. Link: [Kawaguchiko New Year guide](#).

**Note:** This day is about two Fuji chances: morning and late afternoon. Do not fill it with attractions.

# Day 13: Kawaguchiko to Tokyo, Shinjuku Evening (Sun Jan 10)

**Weather:** Fuji morning cold; Tokyo afternoon highs in the 40s.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
06:45	Second Fuji morning	Use this as the final serious Fuji-view attempt before Tokyo.
08:30	Breakfast / warm up	Slow morning; do not rush the reason we stayed here.
10:00	Pack / checkout / final lake look	Leave luggage with hotel or keep it simple at the station.
12:10	Travel to Tokyo	Leave after noon; target highway bus to Shinjuku if train timing is poor, or Fuji Excursion if a good reserved departure exists.
14:30	Tokyo check-in / bags	Final base begins; exact timing depends on bus/train choice.
15:30	Rest	Do laundry / unpack / recover.
17:30	Shinjuku orientation	Station, Kabukicho lights, easy shops.
19:00	Dinner	Matsunoya, ramen, izakaya, or reservation if found.
21:30	Hotel	Save energy for Akihabara.

## Reference Notes

**Departure principle:** leave Kawaguchiko after noon so Jan 10 still counts as a real Fuji morning, then make Tokyo arrival boring: bags, reset, easy Shinjuku evening.

**Tokyo route options:** highway buses from Kawaguchiko to Shinjuku are frequent in current schedules, with examples around 12:10 -> 13:55 and 12:50 -> 14:35. Fuji Excursion is cleaner if a good reserved noon-ish departure exists, but schedules are limited. Links: [Kawaguchiko highway buses](#) / [Fuji Excursion](#).

# Day 14: Akihabara Day 1 (Mon Jan 11)

**Weather:** Tokyo highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Good city-shopping weather.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
09:30	Late start	Do not arrive before stores are useful.
10:30	Akihabara block 1	Major stores first: Radio Kaikan / AmiAmi / Kotobukiya / electronics depending priorities.
12:30	Lunch	Akihabara or Ueno/Okachimachi edge.
13:30	Passive break	Cafe, arcade rest, or Ueno/Okachimachi edge if staying east.
15:00	Akihabara block 2	Second-tier shops, retro games, figures, parts, gacha.
17:30	Hotel drop / rest	Do not carry bags all evening.
19:00	Dinner	Akihabara, Ueno, Kanda, or Shinjuku depending hotel.
20:30	Optional final shop	One last store only if near dinner.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Jan 11, 2027 is Monday, so do not plan around the Sunday Chuo-dori pedestrian zone. This is still a strong Akihabara shopping day.

# Day 15: Odaiba, Gundam Base, and Waterfront (Tue Jan 12)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; waterfront wind can make Odaiba feel colder.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
09:00	Wake / breakfast	Late enough for shops and malls; still allow 2 hours before moving.
11:00	Transit to Odaiba	Yurikamome / Rinkai route depending hotel.
11:45	DiverCity / Gundam Base	Gunpla, Gundam goods, browsing, buying.
13:30	Lunch	DiverCity or nearby mall food.
14:30	Waterfront rest	Bay view, promenade, sit-down block.
16:00	Optional add-on	Small Worlds / Miraikan / teamLab only if energy is high and tickets work.
18:00	Return / dinner	Back toward hotel or Shimbashi / Yurakucho.
21:30	End	Do not make Odaiba a death march.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Important: the life-sized Unicorn Gundam statue was announced to end display at the end of August 2026; for Jan 2027, treat Gundam Base Tokyo as the anchor, not the statue. Link: [Gundam statue end notice](#).

# Day 16: Shibuya, Harajuku, and Shinjuku Night (Wed Jan 13)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Dress for evening walking.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
09:30	Late start	Urban day; no early museum pressure.
10:45	Shibuya block 1	PARCO, Nintendo / Pokemon / Capcom / anime-game retail if relevant.
12:30	Lunch	Shibuya or Harajuku.
13:30	Passive break	Cafe, department-store rest area, or hotel if close enough.
15:00	Harajuku / Omotesando	Street browse or calmer Omotesando walk; skip if too crowded.
17:00	Hotel reset	Drop bags before Shinjuku night.
19:00	Shinjuku dinner	Omoide Yokocho / izakaya / ramen / tonkatsu.
20:30	Shinjuku neon walk	Kabukicho, 3D cat, station area, then stop.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** This is the Shibuya day and the Shinjuku night. Do not add museums or distant neighborhoods.

# Day 17: Akihabara Day 2 and Targeted Buying (Thu Jan 14)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Final full day.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:30	Wake / list review / breakfast	Make a buying list before leaving; final full day still gets a real morning.
10:30	Akihabara block 1	Targeted second-pass stores; buy what you skipped.
12:30	Lunch	Simple, reliable, not famous.
13:30	Passive task block	Packing math, tax-free receipts, cafe, or arcade sit-down.
15:00	Option A: Nakano Broadway	Used figures / collectibles if Akihabara is done.
15:00	Option B: Akihabara block 2	Stay if there is still unfinished shopping.
18:00	Final dinner	Choose the neighborhood that won the trip: Shinjuku, Ueno, Akihabara, or Ginza.
21:00	Packing	Do not leave packing for departure day.

## Reference Notes

**Note:** Nakano Broadway is the only Tokyo add-on that supports the same mission rather than stealing the day. Use it only if it feels useful.

## Day 18: Tokyo Departure (Fri Jan 15)

**Weather:** Highs in the 40s; lows in the 30s. Evening HND departure.

Time	Activity	Location / Details
08:00	Wake / pack / breakfast	Departure-day morning; pack fully before leaving the hotel and assume 2 hours before movement.
10:30	Final shopping / revisit	One neighborhood only near hotel or easy rail line.
12:30	Final lunch	No reservation gamble unless very close to route.
14:00	Return to hotel / bags	Allow luggage and tax-free packing time.
14:45	Transit to HND	Aim to reach Haneda around 15:50, roughly 3 hours before the 18:50 international departure.
18:50 JST	Depart HND	Air Canada / ANA / United itinerary via YYZ.
19:50 CST	Arrive BNA	Scheduled same-calendar-day Nashville arrival after crossing the date line.

### Reference Notes

**Note:** Keep this day boring on purpose. One shopping pass, lunch, airport.

## Optional Day Swaps

Swap	Use Instead Of	Reason
Himeji Castle + Kokoen	Jan 2 Nara or Jan 6 Fushimi	Only if a major castle matters more than the current slow-town plan. Himeji Castle closes Dec 29-30 but otherwise lists normal winter hours.
Nagahama / Kurokabe	Jan 7 Sakamoto / Biwako Valley	Craft-town / shop texture; use only if Omihachiman leaves us wanting another Shiga town.
Biwako Valley	Jan 7 Sakamoto	Clear-weather mountain / lake panorama option. Cancel if wind, poor visibility, or ropeway issues.
Railway Museum Saitama	Jan 14 Nakano or Akihabara Day 2	Good if train/tech interest wins over shopping time. Closed Tuesdays and New Year holidays; verify schedule.
Takatsuki Catholic / Ukon sites	Osaka city flex	Catholic-history option between Osaka and Kyoto if Takayama Ukon becomes a priority.

## Food and Restaurant Approach

**New Year food strategy:** Dec 31-Jan 3 should rely on dense areas, chains, malls, station buildings, hotel dining, konbini, and known-open restaurants. Do not depend on tiny independent restaurants during this window.

**Osaka:** use Namba, Ura-Namba, Tenma, Fukushima, Umeda, and station buildings. Book one NYE dinner if a specific place matters.

**Lake Biwa:** use ryokan meal plans for 2-3 nights, but avoid making every night a formal dinner. Keep one or two lighter / flexible nights.

**Kawaguchiko:** book lodging with dinner or have a precise food backup; winter evenings are not the time to improvise.

**Tokyo:** Akihabara / Shinjuku / Shibuya days should use structured food breaks rather than chasing famous restaurants.

## Current Research Links

Topic	Source
Haneda access	Haneda Airport train access
Nozomi peak reservations	JR Central Nozomi all-reserved peak periods
Osaka Cathedral	Tamatsukuri / Osaka Cathedral
Nara Park	Visit Nara - Nara Park
Fushimi Inari	Japan Guide - Fushimi Inari
Gekkeikan Sake Museum	Gekkeikan Okura Sake Museum
Ogoto Onsen	Ogoto Onsen Association
Yuzanso	Yuzanso
Omihachiman	JNTO Hachiman-bori Canal

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Source</b>
Hiyoshi Taisha	Hiyoshi Taisha hours
Biwako Valley	Biwako Valley hours
Mishima-Kawaguchiko bus	SEKITORI route list
Fuji Excursion	Fujikyu Railway Fuji Excursion
Gundam statue notice	Gundam official notice