

## DESTINATION INFORMATION FOR WONDERS OF JAPAN

### What You Need to Know Before You Go

#### PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

In order to enter **Japan** and **South Korea** as a citizen of the United States, you will need:

A signed, valid passport. Your passport must remain valid for at least 6 months beyond the completion of your trip.

It is also imperative that your passport has enough blank visa pages available for entry and exit stamps.

Contact our partner, VisaCentral for easy, efficient passport and visa processing. Call 844 823 1224 and reference A&K's account number 73001 or visit our Travel Store at [www.abercrombiekent.com/travel\\_store](http://www.abercrombiekent.com/travel_store).

If you are not a citizen of the United States, your entry requirements may vary. Please consult your nearest diplomatic or consular office of the country or countries you will be visiting.

Note: Holders of US passports are not required to obtain a tourist visa for entry into **Japan** for stays of three months or less or **South Korea** for stays of 30 days or less.

#### CONSULAR INFORMATION

The U.S. State Department provides Country Specific Information sheets for every country in the world, as well as Travel Alerts and Warnings. Find this information by calling 888 407 4747 or 202 501 4444 or online at [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov).

#### CURRENCY

**Japan's** unit of currency is the Japanese Yen. **South Korea's** unit of currency is the Won.

Exchange money only at authorized outlets such as currency exchange kiosks, banks and hotels. Only exchange what you feel you will need while visiting. Save all receipts from any currency transaction. You may be asked to produce them when you exit the country, and they are required if you intend to reconvert local currency.

We suggest travelling with some U.S. dollars to be exchanged for local currency and at least two major credit cards. Major credit cards are generally accepted at shops, hotels and restaurants.

Many ATM machines in Japan do not accept credit, debit and ATM cards issued outside of Japan. Exceptions include ATMs found in 7-11 stores, post offices, international airports, some major department stores and Family Mart convenience stores. These locations are widespread in urban areas. If your journey takes you to more remote areas, you may not have access to an international ATM.

We do not recommend traveller's checks as they are not as widely accepted as in previous years, and are only accepted at some banks and international hotels.

#### HEALTH

It is important to familiarize yourself with any potential health issues or concerns related to your destination, and so we strongly recommend consulting the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for up-to-date information on required and recommended vaccines and medications. Visit them online at [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel) or call 800 232 4636. Plan to visit your doctor or local travel clinic at least 4-6 weeks before departure to allow time for any vaccinations to take effect or to fill any prescriptions.

Required Vaccination: None for either country

Please note that Japan prohibits the import (even for personal use) of some prescription and over-the-counter medications which are commonly used in the United States. We suggest that you consult the Japanese Embassy online at [www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop\\_en/index.html](http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_en/index.html) to determine if any medication you use on a regular basis falls into this banned category. Japanese physicians may be able to prescribe similar, but not identical substitutes. Be mindful that Japanese authorities will not make exceptions; prohibited medications are not allowed into the country under any circumstances.

## WEATHER

**Japan** belongs to the temperate zone with four distinct seasons, but its climate varies from cool temperate in the north to subtropical in the south. Two primary factors influence Japan's climate: a location near the Asian continent and the existence of major oceanic currents.

		Avg. High (F)	Avg. Low (F)	Avg. Days w/Rain
Osaka	May	74°	56°	10
Kyoto	May	75°	56°	14
Hiroshima	May	72°	53°	9
Sapporo	May	60°	40°	9
Tokyo	Jun	75°	62°	12

**South Korea** has four distinct seasons; spring, summer, autumn and winter. Spring usually lasts from late-March to early-May, summer from mid-May to early-September, autumn from mid-September to early-November, and winter from mid-November to mid-March. Summer can be very hot and humid. Winters can be extremely cold in the inland region of the country. Rainfall is concentrated in the summer months of June through September. The southern coast is subject to late summer typhoons that bring strong winds and heavy rains.

		Avg. High (F)	Avg. Low (F)	Avg. Days w/Rain
Gyeongju	May	72°	55°	12

Use a website such as weather.com to find average temperatures and rainfall during your travel times.

## ELECTRICITY

**Japan** supplies electricity at 100 volts / 50 hertz. **South Korea** supplies electricity at 220 volts / 60 hertz.

Please refer to the "Electrical Adapter Guide For Global Travel" included in your pre-tour materials.

## WHAT TO PACK

Comfortable, casual clothing in natural, "breathable" fabrics. Choose versatile styles that can be layered if the weather (or level of air-conditioning) requires. The people of Japan and South

Korea are fashion-conscious but modesty in dress remains the rule. Women rarely bare their shoulders; revealing clothing is best avoided.

Somewhat smarter, but still casual, clothing is appropriate for evening dining in big-city or resort restaurants. Formal clothing is not necessary.

Conservative dress is suggested when visiting temples and other religious sites. You may be asked to remove your shoes and/or socks when entering certain religious buildings.

A lightweight (preferably non-plastic) raincoat or poncho.

A sweater or lightweight jacket for evenings and fiercely air-conditioned interiors.

Comfortable, soft-soled walking shoes with low or no heels. Sandals may not be comfortable for some sightseeing activities. In Japan, you will often be requested to remove your shoes.

Sunglasses, sun block and a sunhat.

Swimming suit

Lightweight binoculars, useful for sightseeing.

If you wear eyeglasses or contact lenses, be sure to pack an extra pair(s).

Simple first-aid kit.

Prescriptions and medications (We recommend you carry these in their original bottles and/or packaging.)

Charging cables for electronics.

Voltage converter and adapter plugs.

Laundry Service is available at all hotels and on board 'L'Austral'. Prices can vary widely, though, so please note price lists (and return timing) before using this service.

As a preventative measure, it is recommended that all luggage be secured with a TSA approved lock.

## What You Need to Know When You Arrive

### TIME ZONES

**Japan** and **South Korea** both operate on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) + 9 hours.

At 9:00 a.m. in the countries, it is:

EDT	8:00 p.m. the previous day
CDT	7:00 p.m. the previous day
MDT	6:00 p.m. the previous day
PDT	5:00 p.m. the previous day

### LANGUAGE

**Japan's** official language is Japanese. English is taught in schools at both the junior high and high school levels. Most hotels and larger stores in major cities have English speakers on staff. However, outside of major cities, very few people speak English.

**South Korea's** official language is Korean. English is widely taught in schools and most hotels and larger stores in major cities have English speakers on staff. However, outside of major cities, you will find fewer people who speak English.

Please consult with your guide on translations, if needed.

### AIRPORT INFORMATION

At international airports passengers cannot be met inside secured areas. This includes Immigration, Customs halls and Baggage Claim. Your A&K representative will greet you as you exit these restricted areas; look for the person holding the distinctive A&K signboard.

Before departing, remember to tag your checked luggage with the A&K luggage tags provided. These brightly colored markers help identify you and your luggage quickly.

### PROTECTION AND PRECAUTIONS

Use the safes where available in your accommodations to secure your valuables, especially passports, medications, jewelry, money and electronics. If you must carry valuables, keep them on your person at all times. Be mindful of your surroundings and take extra caution in crowds.

Photocopy the personal information pages of your passport; leave one copy with a family member or friend and pack another separately from the passport itself. You may want to scan and email a copy to yourself for easy, online access. This will help you to quickly secure a replacement should the need arise.

### ETIQUETTE AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Unless you are shooting a crowded public scene, it is considered courteous to ask permission before taking pictures of local people, especially small children. Please be respectful of local people who do not care to be photographed.

Photography is not permitted at some locations, which may include government buildings, museums, art galleries, private houses, etc. These areas are usually clearly marked. If in doubt, please ask; this will avoid having your camera confiscated.

Be sure to pack ample amounts of batteries and memory cards or film for your camera and video equipment, along with the appropriate charging cables. A dustproof case or sealable plastic bags and lens brush are also recommended.

## SHOPPING

Many A&K guests enjoy the chance to purchase items that reflect their destination, and so as a courtesy, your guide may recommend a particular shop or arrange a shopping visit. Please note, however, that these recommendations should not be taken as A&K's endorsement of the shop, merchandise and/or pricing. You assume all responsibility for any transactions that take place, including shipping arrangements that are made. The decision to shop while travelling is a personal choice and shopping is never compulsory. If at any point during your journey you feel pressured to shop or make purchases, please immediately discuss the matter with your Abercrombie & Kent representative.

To avoid disappointment, we suggest the following guidelines:

- Compute the exchange rate and thoroughly review credit card receipts before signing.
- Take your purchases home with you whenever possible. Airfreight can take many months and actual shipping charges can be excessive. Customs delays, fees and regulations can further complicate the issue. If you choose to ship purchases, we suggest taking a picture of the item(s) and/or marking them in some way to ensure you receive what was purchased. For example, you could write your name on the backside of a rug. Determine if your shipment will be delivered door-to-door or to the nearest customs facility, as is often the case. Most goods shipped from other countries to the United States are subject to Customs duty.
- Duty taxes, if applicable, are paid as you re-enter the United States. Regardless of assurances by merchants, these cannot be prepaid on your behalf. Currently, each person is entitled to an \$800 duty-free exemption, however, may only bring one liter of alcoholic beverages, 200 cigarettes and 100 cigars.
- Keep all sales receipts for items purchased throughout your trip and try to pack all items that you will need to declare together. This will ease the Customs process upon re-entry into the U.S.

Consult the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website for more details. <http://www.cbp.gov/>

## FOOD AND DRINK

Regardless of precautions, changes in water and diet can result in mild abdominal upsets and nausea. To prevent serious illness, avoid suspect foods such as uncooked vegetables, peeled fruit, unpasteurized milk and milk products. Beware of any food or drink sold by street vendors. Please ensure that Abercrombie & Kent is made aware of any dietary requirements you may have in advance of travel. While we will do our best to comply with special dietary requests, menu choices that adhere to strict requirements may be limited and quite basic.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Contact your cellular telephone provider to determine if your phone operates on the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and what, if any, activation may be required. If your phone is not GSM-enabled, you may find that renting a phone specifically designed for use overseas is the most practical option.

## TIPPING GUIDELINES

As a convenience, all staff gratuities are included. Any additional gratuities that you may wish to bestow upon any specific member/s of your tour staff are left to your personal discretion.

# LIFE ON BOARD: 'L'AUSTRAL'

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Designed in 2012 'L'Austral' embodies luxury, intimacy and wellbeing. The elegance of the vessel's exterior and interior lines and her intimate size make this the ideal vessel for navigating Japan. 'L'Austral' can accommodate up to 264 guests, however, Abercrombie & Kent limits the guest capacity to just 199 to further enhance the intimate experience.

All staterooms and suites have private balconies and a bathroom with shower, except the Owner's Suite which has a tub and shower. Each stateroom has a hairdryer, individual climate control, closed circuit flat-screen TV (for watching pre-programmed movies, on-board services and channels with voyage information such as positioning, temperature, etc.) with iPod player, direct-dial telephones, ample wardrobe and small electronic safe, and a vanity/writing desk. Amenities including bathrobes, slippers and toiletries are provided in each cabin. Most staterooms feature two twins or 1 king bed (convertible upon request). Prestige and Premier suites have separate sitting area and sofa. The Owner's Suite features 2 rooms/2 baths including a bedroom and an additional second room with sofa/seating area and private dining area. Butler service provided for deck 6 suites in Categories 6, 7 and 8.

You will be enchanted by the contemporary decor inspired by the luxury yachting world, with fluid lines and a modern color scheme combining natural wood with shades of grey and white. A refined ambiance is enhanced by the quality of the workmanship and materials: white Corian counters in the lobby contrast with the warmth of leather to recall a boat's hull, while the central sculpture of enameled pieces takes its inspiration from traditional nautical themes.

Facilities include a swimming pool, inviting spa, Turkish bath-style steam room, full range of fitness equipment and open-air Sun Deck.

The main lounge offers nightly entertainment and the theater-style lecture room featuring the most up-to-date audio/visual equipment for daily lectures, briefings, recaps and movies. There is also a panoramic lounge with small library.

A daily program features the following day's events, excursions and hours of meal service and is delivered to your stateroom each evening. Additionally, atmospheric conditions permitting, news is received daily from various news services and printed copies are available for guests at reception.

'L'Austral' is equipped with three elevators accessing passenger decks 3-6. The main passenger stairwell is equipped with a handicap accessible/ wheelchair lift between deck 6 and 7.

For Assistance: A&K's cruise staff are available to assist with any needs. Please call or visit the Reception desk or Shore Excursion desk at any time for assistance

## CURRENCY

'L'Austral' uses the euro as its official currency. Guests can pay for incidentals with US Dollars as well and exchange rates will be provided by the Purser when making payment. For purchases on board guests should present their Boarding Swipe card to the cashier who in turn will swipe the card and process a charge docket for signature. The charges will automatically be transferred to your onboard account.

Any personal expenses incurred onboard (including premium champagnes, premium wines and premium spirits, boutique, laundry, communications charges, medical services and medications) will be charged to your shipboard account and presented for payment at the end of each expedition. Cash, travelers' checks (in euros) and credit cards are accepted as payment of

onboard accounts. VISA and MasterCard are the recommended brands although American Express is accepted as well. Personal checks cannot be cashed on board and funds for cashing travelers' checks are limited.

All onboard transactions made by bank or credit card are processed via the Ponant home office in Marseille, France. Call your bank or credit card company and let them know about your travel plans and advise on board charges are processed through France to avoid having your overseas purchases viewed as suspicious. Please note when receiving your credit card statement, credit card charges from the vessel will show on your statements as charged to 'L'Austral'.

## LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATIONS

English is the official language onboard 'L'Austral' when chartered by A&K. It is recommended that mobile-phone usage (when available) be confined to the privacy of your own cabin.

Guests with personal laptops with wireless modem can access the internet from anywhere on board with the purchase of an internet account (user ID and password will be provided). There is also access to 3 PCs with internet satellite system (bandwidth of 256kbps). Access time may be purchased from Reception for onboard usage. Bandwidth varies and access will be slower than that which is available on land. Fees range from approximately €30 (euros) for 100 minutes, €60 for 240 minutes and €180 for 1,000 minutes. (Fees are subject to change.) You will be issued a receipt with the amount of time purchased along with a user name and password. These codes will be unique to you and not stored anywhere on the system so it is important that you keep a record of this information. It is recommended you purchase internet time conservatively as unused minutes are non-refundable.

Please Note: Satellite phone reception and transmission as well as the speed and accessibility of wireless internet are affected by the ship's location, weather and atmospheric conditions. Internet speed is also affected by the number of users on board relative to the ship's available bandwidth. While the ship's wireless access is suitable for simple e-mail and communication, do not rely on it for heavy duty applications such as social media sites, downloading files or streaming movies.

## FOOD AND DRINK

International and local cuisine is served in the stylish, spacious dining room in a single, unassigned seating. Alternative dining is alfresco in the casual indoor-outdoor Grill Restaurant.

Please ensure that Abercrombie & Kent is made aware of any dietary requirements you may have in advance of travel. While we will do our best to comply with special dietary requests, menu choices that adhere to strict requirements may be limited and quite basic.

## DRESS CODE

Daytime/Evening attire: Casual comfortable clothing is appropriate on board. A jacket and tie (and for ladies, one or two casual evening outfits) are suggested for the Captain's Welcome Cocktail Party and the Farewell Party on board ship. This clothing 'upgrade' is ultimately at your discretion. Formal wear is not a requirement.

## ELECTRICITY

Electrical service onboard the vessel is 220 volts / 50 hertz. All staterooms have a 110/220 volt-shaving socket in the bathroom, to be used for electric razors only. There is also one 110 volt plug in the cabin located below the mirror in addition to the standard 220 volt outlets. A limited amount of adaptors are available on board; however, supplies are not guaranteed.