

A close-up, warm-toned photograph showing a hand lifting a metal lid from a pot. Steam is rising from the pot, which sits on a dark, textured charcoal brazier. The brazier is placed within a wooden frame. The background is softly blurred, showing wooden slats.

ĀMAN
KYOTO

Experience Guide



Contents

Experiences at Aman Kyoto	3
Activities & Experiences	4
Complimentary Activities	7
On-Site Experiences	8
Local Experiences	12
UNESCO World Heritage Sites	15
Cultural Journey	19



Experiences at Aman Kyoto

What makes a hotel is more than its rooms and walls, but the experience outside, its connection to its environment and its deep-rooted links to local culture. As with all Aman hotels, Aman Kyoto's immersive activities are all part of how we hope to connect you to the world beyond your window.

On our doorstep is Japan's cultural capital – home to 17 UNESCO sites –, as well as the chance to try forest bathing in our secret garden setting, sketching with a local artist, a traditional tea ceremony and even a private temple experience.

Some experiences require planning in advance, so please discuss your interests with our team to allow us to assist with arrangements. As all the activities are reserved exclusively for our guests, we kindly ask for advance notice.

We look forward to making your stay memorable.

Warm regards,
Your Aman Kyoto Family

Activities & Experiences

Set in a secret garden at the heart of a forest, Aman Kyoto lies at the foot of Mount Hidari Daimonji, a stone's throw from Kyoto's golden Kinkaku-ji temple and its 16 other UNESCO World Heritage Sites. An ideal base for exploring the ancient capital's many attractions, Aman Kyoto is nonetheless a secluded world apart, where winding footpaths link tranquil forest glades ripe for exploration. Our carefully crafted range of experiences reveal the property's natural beauty and provide insight into Japan's rich cultural heritage. They are suitable for guests of all ages and can be tailored to suit individual preferences.





Complimentary Activities

Discover the full schedule of dates and times in our activity calendar.

Secret Garden Exploring

60 minutes

Discover the most beguiling corners of our enchanted forest on a guided walk. As the seasons change, so too does our garden, ensuring that no two walks are ever the same.

Origami Art

30-60 minutes

Origami is a traditional Japanese art of folding a single sheet of paper into three-dimensional forms. The joy of watching the paper transform in your hands nurtures creativity and has been cherished across generations. Inspired by the nature and creatures of the resort's secret garden, enjoy folding shapes such as birds, flowers and kimono while taking part in a timeless cultural ritual.

Leaf and Acorn Crafts

60 minutes

There are so many unique leaves and acorns in our beautiful garden. Find your favourites, then make original crafts with coloured paper provided.

Morning Yoga

60 minutes

Breathe in the forest air, let your heart and mind become light. Start your day with morning yoga sessions to ground and reinvigorate, surrounded by the tranquil beauty of nature.

A Moment of Matcha

15-30 minutes

Step into a serene tearoom where the timeless elegance of Japanese tradition comes to life. Savour earthy matcha, trying your hand at preparation, should you wish, accompanied by delicate seasonal confections as the subtle fragrance of tea envelops. Each bowl offers a moment of serenity away from the everyday.

Stillness in Calligraphy

60 minutes

With each stroke, a quiet breath opens into the stillness of Japanese calligraphy. Guided by a calligraphy master, you move from simple forms to an elegant unfolding of expression. In the space between ink and paper, discover a serene beauty—an art shaped by silence and presence.

On-Site Experiences

Discover Chanoyu: A Mindful Tea Ritual

Tea Ceremony | 45-60 minutes | Up to four guests |

Available at 11am or 12.30pm

Tea Ceremony with Lunch | 90-120 minutes |

Up to four guests | *Available at 12 noon*

Both are closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Guests aged 12 and above are required to book at least seven days in advance.

At Tea House Senkutsu, the beauty and spirit of Japan are celebrated wholeheartedly through an immersive tea ceremony led by a master practitioner. Here, seasonal scrolls and floral arrangements, the gentle rise of steam from the kettle and the interplay of light and shadow through shoji screens come together to create a serene and sensory experience. Step into the cosy four-and-a-half-mat room, an intimate space that transcends its size. Here profound stillness and depth envelop and a single bowl of tea guides you into a place of quiet elegance, offering a mindful, contemplative moment like no other.

Colour Your Journey

90-120 minutes

This outdoor experience takes place between 9.30am and 2pm (weather and temperature dependent) and is available year-round. Please book at least three days in advance.

Join a local Japanese artist and recreate a scene from Aman Kyoto's once-forgotten secret garden during this outdoor art lesson. You'll also learn about traditional Japanese stencilling techniques to make your own set of keepsake postcards.

Bonkei Garden Experience

60 minutes

This outdoor experience takes place between 9.30am and 4pm (weather and temperature dependent) and is available year-round. Please note that pots cannot be taken away and that bookings must be made at least three days in advance.

Bonkei is the art of creating miniature gardens and landscapes. In general, Japanese gardens are an arrangement of wood, stone, moss, soil and waterscapes. Engage in this art form by joining one of our expert gardeners. During the experience, you can touch the moss, soil and stone to create your own unique potted garden.

Wagashi Sweet Making & Matcha Tasting

60 minutes

Starting time 9.30am, 3pm or 3.30pm. Unavailable on Wednesdays. Please book at least three days in advance.

The perfect accompaniment to matcha green tea, *wagashi* are Japanese sweets renowned for their delicacy and variety in appearance, often created to depict the four seasons. We invite you to create your own sweet masterpiece in this hands-on workshop.





Sushi Making

60 minutes

Commences at 3.30pm. Please book at least three days in advance.

Try your hand at creating sushi rolls and nigiri sushi using the finest fresh ingredients such as tuna, salmon and shrimp. Under the expert guidance of Taka-An's chef, who will demonstrate and share tips, you will learn how to recreate these culinary masterpieces at home. Conclude the 60-minute session by enjoying your handcrafted sushi with warm tea at a restaurant table.

Tsumami-Zaiku Crafts (Pinching Crafts)

60 minutes

Starting time 3pm or 3.30pm. Available on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays (excluding public holidays). Suitable for guests aged 10 and above. Contact us for a similar experience designed for guests aged between five and nine. Please book at least three days in advance.

Dating back over two centuries, *tsumami-zaiku* is a traditional Japanese craft often used to create hair accessories. The practice involves making intricate, floral objects by arranging small, colourful fabric shapes onto a base. Guided by a *tsumami-zaiku* artisan, try your hand at this ancient art using the finest silk cloth dyed by local craftsmen.

Picnic Lunch

60-90 minutes

Starting time between 12pm and 2pm March to May and September to November. For two people or more. Please book at least two days in advance.

Embraced by a gentle breeze, enjoy a serene picnic lunch crafted by Taka-An. A three-tiered bento features delicately crafted sushi, flavourful Kyoto Hirai beef and an elegant assortment of fresh seasonal fruits. Savour a moment of harmony with nature, accompanied by the refined artistry of Japanese cuisine.

Zen Meditation

60-90 minutes

This experience takes place between 7am and 5pm and is available year-round. Please book at least three days in advance.

Guided by a Zen Buddhist monk, experience the practice of zazen in Aman Kyoto's serene gardens or in the privacy of your guest room. Through gentle instruction, guests are introduced to meditation techniques that can be incorporated into everyday life. Settle into a moment of quiet stillness alongside the monk and discover the timeless wisdom and spirit of Zen, deeply woven into Japanese culture.

The Art of Kataezome

60-90 minutes

This experience takes place between 9.30am and 2pm and is available year-round. Please book at least three days in advance.

Katazome is a traditional Japanese stencil-dyeing technique, long used in the creation of kimono and textiles. Celebrated for its delicate layering of colour, it reflects the beauty and precision of Japanese craftsmanship.

During this hands-on experience, guests may choose from designs inspired by ukiyo-e, Kyoto's charming townscapes and scenic landscapes. Using traditional Japanese brushes, colours are carefully applied by hand to bring the selected motif to life. A meaningful introduction to a cherished Japanese art form, the experience concludes with a finished piece to take home as a lasting memento of your journey.

Local Experiences

A Taste of Home

3.5-4 hours

Starting between 11am and 12pm return transportation to the venue and brunch. Beverages are charged separately. Please book at least ten days in advance.

In a 150-year-old farmhouse on the quiet outskirts of Kyoto, brunch is tenderly prepared with freshly harvested morning vegetables – ingredients nurtured with intention and presented in a way that allows their natural purity to shine. Steaming rice, fragrant miso soup and delicately seasoned side dishes carry both the vitality of the soil and the warmth of those who tend it. Here, guests are welcomed into the rhythm of a farming household – an experience reminiscent of returning to a long-forgotten hometown. In this serene setting, discover the quiet beauty of a life lived simply, gently and in harmony with nature.

Guided Cycling Tour

Up to 4 hours

Starting between 8am and 2pm.

Venture beyond our garden on e-bike tour and take in the history and culture of this ancient capital. Let us know your interests and we will tailor a route specially for you.

Rental Bikes

Electric bikes are available for rent from 8am to 6pm.

Please note that for both the guided cycling tour and bike rentals, a minimum height of 144cm (4ft 7in) is required, due to the size of the e-bike. Due to the limited number of bicycles, please inform us by 5pm one day prior for reservations, changes or cancellations.





UNESCO World Heritage Sites

For eleven centuries, from 794 until 1869, Kyoto served as the capital of Japan. Today, it is considered the cultural capital of Japan with 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and countless temples and shrines to explore, including the nearby golden temple of Kinkaku-ji. As tempting as it is to enjoy our secret garden and Aman Spa, this ancient city is full of cultural experiences to explore. The Aman Kyoto team can assist with creating personalised itineraries with professional guides or advising on your own self-guided excursion.

Kyoto has one of the world's largest collections of UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We recommend spending about five to six hours with a car in order to visit four of these sites.

Golden Pavilion (officially Rokuon-ji temple) is located about five minutes by car from Aman Kyoto. With an exterior covered in golden leaf, a pond and a traditional Japanese strolling garden, it is an excellent example of a Muromachi-period garden design.

Close by, is a second temple renowned for its exceptional Zen Garden. Once the home of an aristocrat, **Ryoan-ji** was converted into a temple in 1450. It is now best known for its exquisite dry landscape garden with no trees or shrubs. There are 15 rocks of various sizes placed harmoniously on a carefully raked bed of white gravel.

Next, visit **Ninna-ji temple**. This is the head temple of the Omuro School of the Shingon sect of Buddhism and was established in 888. Members of the Imperial Family used to serve as the head priest and the temple was also known as Omuro Imperial Palace.

The last stop of the day is to one of the oldest shrines in Kyoto. **Kamigamo Shrine** is dedicated to the God of Thunder and Rain and was founded 100 years before Kyoto was born.

Neighbourhood Stroll

If you would like to enjoy the fresh forest air, why not enjoy a short stroll around the mountains and visit some of the local shrines.

A 20-minute walk leads to a temple named after one of the most sophisticated people in the 16th century. **Koetsu-ji temple** was named after Koetsu Honami, a master of several Japanese arts and his interest in the tea ceremony is reflected in the layout of this temple.

Close by is **Josho-ji temple**, founded in 1616 and associated with the Edo-period courtesan, Yoshinodayu. Her proficiency in poetry, ikebana flower arrangement and music made her one of the most famous courtesans. Josho-ji is particularly well known for its cherry blossoms in spring.





Cultural Journey

For 1,200 years, Kyoto flourished as Japan's capital since Emperor Kanmu established the city, then known as 'Heian-kyo' in 794. Rich history and tradition have shaped Kyoto into the revered city it is today, celebrated for its ever-changing natural beauty across the seasons. With shrines dating back almost 1,400 years and temples founded by influential figures, Kyoto's history is entwined with Japan's own story. Within this historical tapestry, a culture known as *ichigen-san okotowari* (invitation only) thrives, reserving exclusivity for longstanding patrons in centuries-old establishments and entertainment districts. Aman Kyoto offers access to these unique institutions through its Aman Journeys itineraries, which help unlock usually inaccessible locations, exclusively for our guests. As these journeys are in high demand, reservations in advance are highly recommended. Please note that full cancellation fees apply.

Private Zen Meditation

60 minutes

Includes return transportation to the temple and a personal guide. Please book ten days in advance.

Experience tranquility and achieve a clear state of mind with a visit to a private temple that is otherwise inaccessible to the public. Sitting on the traditional *tatami*-mat floors in an ancient hall, a Buddhist monk will share the principles of meditation, dispelling some common misassumptions, while encouraging you to find your inner peace. During this morning excursion, you will explore the temple's magnificent Japanese garden.

Private Calligraphy Lesson

60 minutes

Includes return transportation to the temple and a personal guide. Please book ten days in advance.

Shodo (calligraphy) is an ancient art form that was born from Chinese culture. The principles and techniques are similar but have evolved in its current form throughout centuries. As writing was once the only way to keep records, *shodo* was an essential communication skill and believed to have an inseparable connection with Zen thoughts. No corrections can be made, so there is only one chance in every stroke. The artwork varies greatly depending on its author, reflecting their personality and state of mind. To learn this charming art, you will visit a private temple that can only be accessed by our guests.

Private Ink-Painting Lesson

60 minutes

Includes return transportation to the temple and a personal guide. Please book ten days in advance.

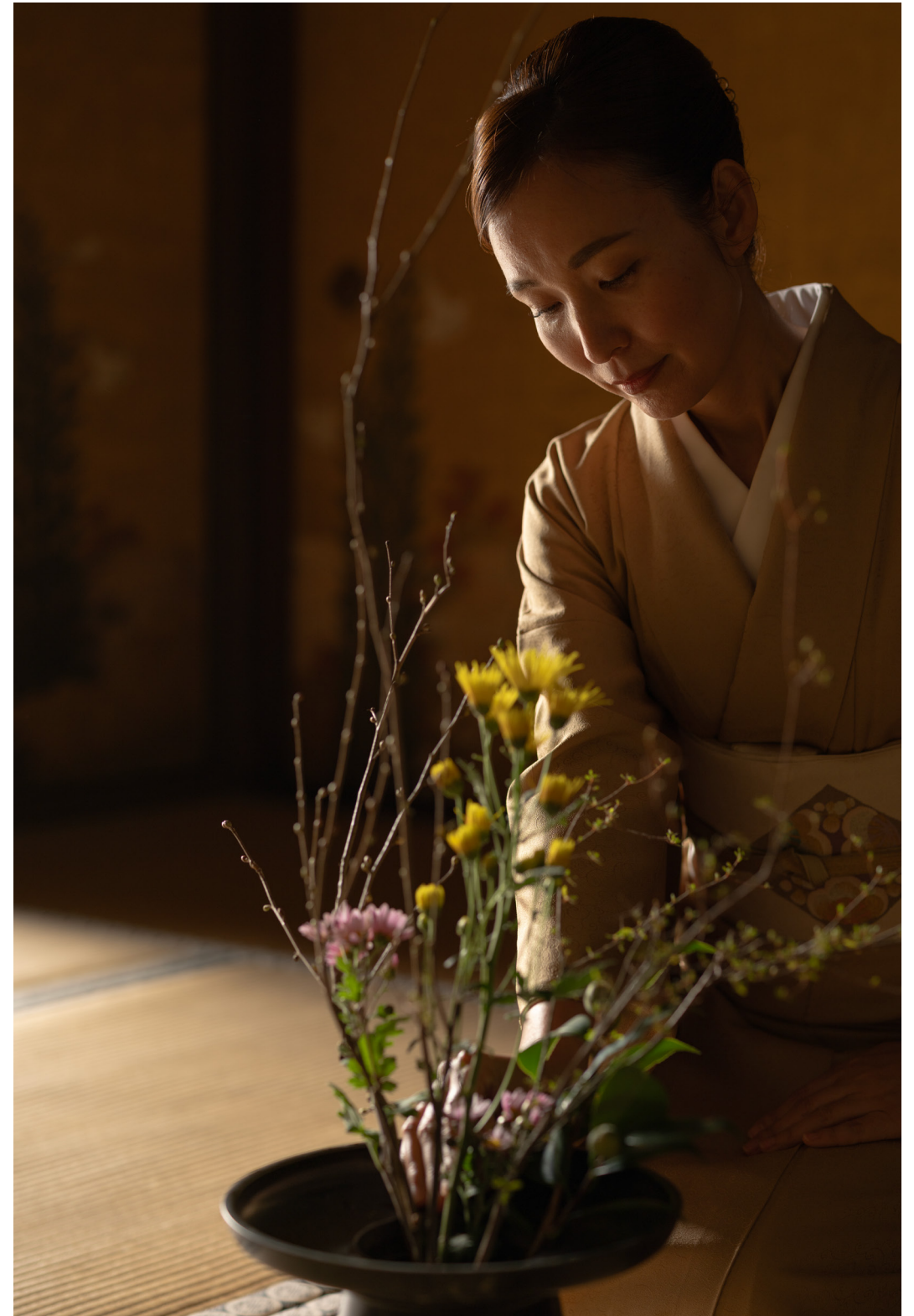
Japanese ink painting, also known as *sumi-e*, is a type of East Asian brush painting. It flourished in China thousands of years ago and was introduced to Japan by Zen Buddhist monks. Using just simple black ink and a carefully curated white canvas, *sumi-e* captures the timeless beauty and complexity of the natural world. We are delighted to offer this hands-on experience, which also helps to focus and purify the mind.

Private Ikebana Flower Arrangement

60-90 minutes

Includes return transportation to the venue. Please book ten days in advance.

Plants play a crucial role in the Shinto religion and the arranging of flowers is known as *ikebana* (giving life to flowers) or *kado* (way of flowers). *Ikebana* aims to bring out the inner qualities of flowers and express emotion. It has always been considered a dignified art and is believed to aid in refreshing the body and restoring the spirit. Each piece represents a part of humanity, life and time. As *ikebana* displays can be commonly found in temples and shrines, we believe that the best way to learn this refined art is to visit a special temple with an exclusive space.





An Encounter with Maiko and Geiko

60 minutes

Includes return transportation to the house. Please book at least ten days in advance.

An *ochaya* (tea house) is an establishment where guests are entertained by a Maiko or Geiko (known as geisha outside of Kyoto). Though known as a tea house, an *ochaya* does not normally serve tea or perform tea ceremonies. *Ochaya* are extremely discreet and exclusive establishments and visiting without an invitation or reservation is a serious breach of manners. This outstanding and memorable Aman experience will be held at an *ochaya* in one of Kyoto's five Geiko districts. It includes watching a traditional dancing performance, engaging in light conversation and playing the traditional *ozashiki* (tea house party) game.

Buddhist Cooking Class

2.5 hours

Includes Buddhist cuisine and return transportation to the venue. Please book at least ten days in advance.

Shojin ryori is a type of vegan Buddhist cuisine. Buddhist beliefs discourage harming animals, so animals and their byproducts are not consumed. Pungent flavours such as garlic or onion are also avoided. *Shojin ryori* follows the 'rule of five', where every meal must contain five colours (green, yellow, red, black and white) and provide five flavours (sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami). Bring balance to your body and find Zen in your mind through this cooking class, before enjoying the plant-based cuisine of Buddhist monks.

Private Tea Farm Visit at Uji

90 minutes

Transportation is not included but can be arranged separately. The journey takes approximately 60 minutes each way. Please note that this experience is not available during harvesting season. Please book ten days in advance.

The ideal climate for tea cultivation can be found in nearby Uji, where river fog and temperate weather have led to the region becoming one of Japan's leading tea production areas. A culture unique to Japan, guests are invited to visit a tea plantation renowned for growing the finest Uji tea, where tea has been hand-picked for six generations, alongside learning about the Honzu cultivation method that has been practiced in Uji for over 400 years. Following the plantation tour, embark on a journey of taste and aroma with an Uji tea tasting for an in-depth discovery into the region's unique cultivation.



Refunds are not applicable for cancellations made within 72 hours of booked on-site activities.

For the Cultural Journey, once the booking is confirmed, we are unable to accommodate changes to the timing or cancellations of reservations, as this aligns with local etiquette. Full pre-payment and cancellation fees apply. We respectfully request that you confirm the date and fee before initiating any enquiry.

For further information or reservations, please contact Aman Kyoto at amankyoto.concierge@aman.com.

We will be delighted to assist you.

From all of us at Aman Kyoto, we wish you a happy and peaceful stay.



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