

SENSING JAPANESE AUTUMN

AMID THE COLORED LEAVES

With its plethora of red, yellow, and orange trees, Japan becomes vibrantly dyed in the autumn. To feel the glow of colors that seem to warm the chilly air, visit Japan in this beautiful season.



AUTUMN IN THE WATER MIRROR

Chuson-ji temple in Hiraizumi Town, Iwate Prefecture, was inscribed in 2011 on the UNESCO World Heritage List. After the temple was founded in the mid-9th century, large-scale construction was carried out with a prayer for a peaceful world free of strife. Although the gorgeously decorated golden hall is particularly famous, the small structure situated in the middle of the pond stands out in the fall as a treat for the eyes. Its silhouette framed by the red maples reflected on the mirror-like water surface can only be viewed at this time of year. AFL0



ON THE PILGRIMAGE ROUTE

Shikoku Island contains a pilgrimage route of about 1,400 km that follows the footsteps of a Buddhist monk active some 12 centuries ago, linking 88 temples where he practiced spiritual austerities. Today, many international visitors can be seen among the pilgrims wearing white garments and conical hats as they make the tour. The act of setting off on a journey of self-encounter, rambling through four prefectures on the island rich in regional distinctiveness and blessed with autumn colors, is instinctively appealing. AFL0



QUINTESSENTIAL JAPANESE LANDSCAPE



The beauty of autumn foliage in Japan is attributed to the country's wealth of deciduous broad-leaf tree species. Seasonal color changes in the mountains and trees render the Japanese landscape predictably fascinating. A small hamlet in Shirakawa Village, Gifu Prefecture, is famous for its rows of thatched-roofed houses, most of whose residents still conduct their daily lives there. This is Shirakawa-go, another World Heritage Site. When planning a visit to the valley—a veritable living landscape showing Japan as it used to be—make sure to go there in the radiant fall season. AFL0