



DISCOVER JAPAN

Classic Tour | 14 Days | Physical Level 1

TOKYO – MOUNT FUJI – SUWA – MATSUMOTO – TAKAYAMA
– KANAZAWA – KYOTO – NARA – KOYASAN – OSAKA

This tour is the perfect introduction to fascinating Japan, where skyscrapers give way to paddy fields and crowds disperse into the tranquillity of classical gardens.

- Discover the delights of futuristic Tokyo
- Admire breathtaking Mount Fuji
- Experience the speedy bullet train
- Get a glimpse of Buddhist life in Koya-San
- Explore the vibrant city of Osaka

TOUR MAP



DISCOVER JAPAN TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)
- All accommodation
- All meals (From dinner on day 1 to breakfast on the last day)
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only thing you may have to pay for are personal expenditure e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, early check in or late checkout and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

See the classic sights in the company of expert guides so you can really understand the history and culture of the destination. On our classic tours we take care of everything, leaving you to sit back and enjoy the experience to the full. The tours are fully inclusive with all meals and a comprehensive touring programme.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

Discover Japan' is rated as a physical level 1 tour. A reasonable level of fitness is required but it's more about spending time on your feet rather than covering large distances. You'll be getting on and off coaches and boats, walking around the sights and climbing some steps.

- On several days, there will be sightseeing on foot for extended periods of time, often involving steps or uneven ground
- You will be required to get on and off various sizes of boat without assistance

Of course, our National Escort and local guides will always endeavour to provide the highest level of service and assistance; however, they cannot be expected to cater for customers who are unfit to complete the itinerary.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 14 days in duration including international flights. Please note, due to flight schedules passengers may depart/arrive on Day 2.

Travellers booked on 'Land Only', the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to Reservations.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Tokyo and end the tour on Day 13 in Osaka. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Days 1-2: Tokyo

Meals: D

Fly overnight to Tokyo, the capital of Japan. On arrival, you will be met by an English-speaking representative and transfer approximately 1 and a half hours to your hotel.



Please note: Early check in is not included. If your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this, please speak to your reservations consultant. You will be transferred by shared coach with other passengers who are not part of a Wendy Wu Tour. If you are on a shared bus transfer, you may have to walk for a few minutes to get to your hotel. Transfers will differ depending on group size.

Destination Information

Tokyo – One of the world's most cutting-edge capital cities, Tokyo is a city of contrasts, famous for its neon-lit landscape, towering skyscrapers, peaceful shrines and lovingly tended gardens. Although long the political and cultural centre of Japan, Tokyo became the official capital when the Meiji Emperor moved it to Tokyo in 1867.

Day 3: Tokyo City Tour

Meals: B, L, D

Tokyo is the ultimate 24-hour city, but look behind its frantic, high-tech frontage and you'll find plenty of tranquil backstreets and old temples to explore; today take a tour by coach of this fascinating city. Head to the 1st observatory of the Tokyo Skytree for panoramic views over the city before taking a wander through the district of Asakusa for an opportunity to pick up some souvenirs on Nakamise Shopping street and visit Sensoji Temple. Due to the limited coach parking, you may need to walk around 15 minutes on flat road. Drive by the Imperial Palace Plaza and then stroll through tranquil Hamarikyu Gardens. You will be on your feet for 4-5 hours during your touring in Tokyo. Return to your hotel where your guide will let you know what time to meet for this evening's dinner cruise. Transfer from the hotel to your boat and take a leisurely 1-hour dinner cruise on Tokyo Bay for some excellent city vistas. You will need to get on and off your boat this evening without assistance.



Destination Information

Tokyo Skytree – The tallest structure in Japan and the tallest tower in the world, Tokyo Skytree is predominantly a television and radio broadcast tower and is earthquake resistant.

Sensoji Temple – Sensoji Temple is an ancient Buddhist Temple and the oldest in Tokyo. The temple was originally founded in the 7th century. The temple adorns an image of the Buddhist Goddess Kannon, who was said to have been rescued by two fishermen from the Sumida River in Tokyo.

Imperial Palace Plaza – Imperial Palace Plaza is the main residence of the Emperor of Japan. Built on the original site of Edo Castle, the Plaza is made up of a palace, museum and large park.

Hamarikyu Gardens – Hamarikyu Gardens is a beautiful example of Japanese garden style which sits at the mouth of the Sumida River.

Day 4: Mount Fuji

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, transfer to the station and take a 30-minute bullet train to Odawara. On arrival, transfer to tranquil Lake Ashi. Take a cruise across the lake before taking the Komagatake cable car for spectacular views of Mount Fuji and the lake below. Next, continue by road through the foothills of the iconic Mount Fuji to the mountain's base. The region is spectacular with the calm waters of the five lakes, formed by past volcanic eruptions, reflecting Fuji's picture-perfect cone. Head up Fuji's 5th Station for spectacular mountain vistas, please note it is only possible to reach the 5th station if weather permits. If the 5th Station is closed, the Fuji San World Heritage Centre (formerly Fuji Visitor Centre) will be visited instead. Drive to Suwa to check in to your hotel for an overnight stay, and enjoy the onsen facilities.



Please note that you will need to pack a small overnight bag for tonight as your main luggage will be transferred separately this morning and arrive at your hotel in Takayama the next day. Due to your early start this morning, you may need to take a packed breakfast with you (provided).

Destination Information

Mount Fuji – At 3,776m, Mount Fuji is the highest of Japan's mountains and an iconic symbol of the country. Mount Fuji is notoriously shy and is often enveloped by clouds.

Lake Ashi – Formed after Mount Hakone's last eruption 3000 years ago, Lake Ashi is the symbol of Hakone and on a clear day offers spectacular views of Mount Fuji in the distance

Day 5: Matsumoto Castle

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, drive 2 hours to Nagano to explore the formidable 16th century Matsumoto Castle, also known as 'Crow Castle', due to its intense black exterior. You will have to remove your shoes before walking along some of the wooden floors and there are some steep wooden steps to reach certain areas. From the coach parking to castle, it is around 15 minutes walk on a flat road. There are steep ladder-style steps in the Matsumoto Castle that you must climb up and back down again. If you choose not to look inside the castle, you can enjoy the surrounding gardens, moat and architecture of Matsumoto Castle.



After lunch, head to a miso house and learn about the process of making this famous Japanese seasoning. Next, travel a further 2 and a half hours to Takayama, nestled high in the mountainous Hida region. Check in to your hotel in Takayama and enjoy the relaxing onsen facilities.

Destination Information

Matsumoto Castle – Known as the crow castle due to its dark black exterior, the Matsumoto Castle dates back to the 16th century and is the oldest wooden castle in Japan.

Ishii Miso – Ishii Miso was founded in 1868 and is still producing miso, an essential ingredient in Japanese cuisine, by a unique traditional method.

Takayama – Boasting one of Japan's most atmospheric townscapes, the layout of Takayama dates back to the 17th century and is home to much Meiji architecture.

Day 6: Explore Takayama

Meals: B, L, D

Head to the Miyagawa Morning Market, where you can sample some of the delicious local fruits and vegetables (at your own expense). Later, take a leisurely stroll round the traditional houses of the area and visit the museums, stopping at Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall, Kusakabe Folk Museum, Takayama Jinya and Kamisannomachi Street. You will spend approximately 5 hours on foot today sightseeing around the town of Takayama.



Destination Information

Miyagawa Morning Market – Occurring each morning, there are a number of stalls selling fresh vegetables, local craft works and local food products at the Miyagawa Morning Market.

Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall – Housing the floats from the Takayama Festival, which dates back to the 16th century, the Takayama Festival Floats Exhibition Hall is a great introduction to the cultural celebrations of Takayama.

Kusabe Folk Museum – Kusabe Folk Museum is a former house for a wealthy merchant named Kusakabe. The house is typical of the style during the Edo Period, with dark wooden beams and pillars.

Takayama Jinya – A former government office dating back to the Edo Period, Takayama Jinya is the only one of its type still remaining. The main work of the office was to handle legal cases and tax collection.

Day 7: Shirakawago & Kanazawa

Meals: B, L, D

Travel 1 and a half hours to the UNESCO World Heritage listed Shirakawago, famous for its traditional Gassho-Zukuri farmhouses, some of which are more than 250 years old. You will spend 1 to 2 hours on foot exploring the area. There are some stairs in the house if you want to explore the higher levels. Drive around 1 hour to try your hand at making washi paper this afternoon, before continuing another 1 and a half hours to Kanazawa. On arrival, wander through the beautiful Kenrokuen, before checking in to your hotel.

**Destination Information**

Shirakawago – Alongside Gokayama, Shirakawago is a UNESCO World Heritage site known for its unusual architectural style known as Gassho-Zukuri. The roofs of these houses are tilted at an almost vertical angle.

Washi Paper – Washi Paper is a type of Japanese paper made from the fibres of bark. This type of paper is commonly used in the art of origami.

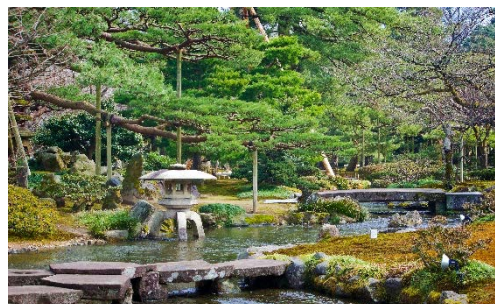
Kanazawa – Kanazawa is the capital of the Ishikawa Prefecture and is known for its beautiful samurai and geisha districts, as well as its stunning Kenrokuen Garden.

Kenrokuen – One of Japan's 'Three Great Gardens', Kenrokuen dates back to the early 17th century and is noticeable for its stunning beauty in all seasons.

Day 8: Gold Leaf Making

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, learn the process of how gold leaf is made and applied to everyday objects. Try it for yourself by decorating a pair of chopsticks and take your newly created artwork home! Later, stroll down the traditional Higashi Chaya (Eastern Teahouse District), visiting Ochaya Shima – a historical geisha house. After lunch, drive 4 hours to Kyoto, Japan's ancient capital, check in to your hotel and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

**Destination Information**

Gold Leaf Experience – When a lump of gold is beaten until it is only 1/10,000 mm thick, it becomes gold leaf, as used in temples, shrines and many traditional crafts. Kanazawa and its surrounding areas produce more than 99% of all gold leaf used in Japan.

Higashi Chaya Street – Higashi Chaya Street is a traditional Japanese street featuring historical rows of houses. It is also the geisha district of Kanazawa, offering visitors delicious treats and tea, as well as the chance to visit some of the guest houses used in the past by geishas as living quarters.

Kyoto – Kyoto was the ancient capital of Japan for approximately 1,000 years until 1867 when it was moved to Tokyo. Many national treasures can be found in Kyoto and in nearby Nara, including old shrines and temples, screen paintings, beautiful gardens, and statues of Buddha.

Day 9: Explore Kyoto

Meals: B, L, D

Start the day with a visit to Ryoanji, the ‘temple of the peaceful dragon’ and the famous Kinkakuji, also known as the ‘Golden Pavilion’ due to its gold-like exterior. You will need to remove your shoes at both temples. Sightseeing on foot will be approximately 2-3 hours on foot today. In the afternoon, head to a restored Japanese wooden townhouse and try your hand at origami and enjoy the age-old rituals of a tea ceremony with a tea master. Due to the nature of the cultural experience, you will be required to remove your shoes before entering the venue.

**Destination Information**

Ryoanji Temple – Ryoanji Temple is a Zen temple renowned for its garden, which features a dry, sand landscape with large rocks and smooth pebbles.

Kinkakuji Temple (Golden Pavilion) – Kinkakuji Temple is a Buddhist temple and is an excellent example of Japanese garden design. The structure is a brilliant golden hue colour and is very minimalistic.

Day 10: Discover Nara

Meals: B, L, D

Begin the day with a visit to the famous Fushimi Inari Shrine with its thousands of vermilion torii gates. You will walk up part of the mountain and the incline allows a steady-paced walk around 15 minutes with flat road and steps to reach torii gates. Due to the limited space of Fushimi Inari Shrine coach parking, you may need to walk from coach parking for 15 minutes. Next, transfer by coach to Japan’s former imperial capital Nara, a journey of approximately 1 hour. Visit Todaiji Temple, the world’s largest wooden structure and home to Japan’s largest Buddha. Also visit Isui-en Gardens, known for its natural ponds – sightseeing here will be about 3 hours on foot. Due to the congestion of Nara Park coach parking, you may need to walk from coach parking to Nara park for 15 minutes on flat road.

**Destination Information**

Nara – Home to 8 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Nara is a rewarding destination and a great spot for Japanese culture.

Todaiji Temple – A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Todaiji Temple is one of the Seven Great Temples of Japan and is home to the world’s largest bronze statue, Daibutsu.

Fushimi Inari Shrine – The Fushimi Inari is a corridor of red tori gates which stretch through the thick woods of Mount Inari, a truly remarkable sight.

Day 11: Koyasan

Meals: B, L, D

This morning, drive 2 and a half hours to Koya-san, the centre of Shingon Buddhism. See Okunoin, Japan's largest cemetery and home to the mausoleum of Kobo Daishi, founder of Shingon Buddhism. Next, visit the Kongobuji Temple and Garan temple complex. The walk through Okunoin Cemetery to the mausoleum of Kobo Daishi is roughly 2km and sometimes you will be walking over uneven surfaces. Here, you will be on your feet for approximately 4 hours. Continue to Osaka, a journey of approximately 1 hour 30 minutes, to check in to your hotel.



Destination Information

Koyasan – Known primarily as the centre of the Shingon sub-section of Buddhism, Koya-san sits in the mountains and is the ideal spot to get a glimpse of Japan's traditional religious life.

Kongobuji Temple – Dating back to 16th century, the Kongobuji Temple is the head temple of the Shingon Buddhist sect. The interior of the building is adorned with paintings of cranes and there are sliding doors throughout.

Garan Temple – Garan Temple is a compound of seven halls, the ideal number of halls in Buddhism. The main sight of worship is in front of the Cosmic Buddha.

Okunoin Cemetery – Home to Kobo Daishi's mausoleum (founder of Shingon Buddhism), Okunoin Cemetery is the largest cemetery in Japan, with over 200,000 tombstones, as many wished to be buried near Kobo Daishi.

Osaka – Osaka is Japan's third largest city. What Osaka lacks in sightseeing locations, it makes up for with its flamboyance, fun loving people and amazing food

Day 12: Explore Osaka

Meals: B, L, D

Begin the day with a visit to Osaka Castle. At Osaka castle park, you will reach to the castle for 15 minutes` walk from coach parking on flat road. Next, enjoy a stroll around the Dotonbori district, a restaurant mecca, where you can sample delicious local delicacies, followed by a 20-minute cruise along the Yodogawa River. Spend the rest of the afternoon at leisure before a farewell dinner this evening.



Destination Information

Osaka Castle – Osaka Castle is one of Japan’s most famous castles, known for sweeping views of the city from its hilltop perch. Construction began in 1583 by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who intended the castle to become the centre of a new, unified Japan under his rule.

Dotonbori District – Historically a theatre district and still a popular entertainment area today, the Dotonbori district offer an eccentric and electric atmosphere.

Day 13-14: Depart Osaka

Meals: B

This morning is free at leisure before you transfer to Osaka airport for your return flight arriving home today or the following day.

Please note: Only breakfast is included today. Late check-out is not included in our Discover Japan tour. If you wish to book a late check-out for your final day in Osaka, please contact our reservations department who can confirm the additional price and make this arrangement for you, subject to availability at the hotel.

Transfers: In the event that your flight departs outside of the majority group departure time, you will be transferred to the airport by a shared coach (not with other Wendy Wu Tours passengers). If you are on a shared coach transfer, you may have to walk for a few minutes to get to the coach.

JAPAN - TRAVEL INFORMATION

VISAS:

Visas are not required for New Zealand passport holders for entry into Japan for stays of up to 90 days. Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back into New Zealand.

At the time of booking Visa conditions may have changed, currently no visa is required for New Zealand Passport holders. Your travel consultant will inform you if any changes are applicable prior to your departure.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original

AIRPORT TRANSFERS:

As we offer our customers a variety of airlines to suit your needs, clients will arrive/depart in Japan at different times during the day. Depending on the number of customers arriving/departing on the same flight as yourself, the type of transfer to your hotel/airport will vary.

You will always be met on arrival by English-speaking staff and transferred all the way to your hotel either by:

- Direct shared bus (shared with other passengers, not just Wendy Wu Tours clients),
- Shared bus plus taxi from the nearest bus stop to the hotel (maximum 5 minutes' walk),
- Chartered coach (if there are more than 8 Wendy Wu Tours passengers arriving at the same time).

On the departure day, all passengers will be met by English-speaking staff at the hotel and transfer by one of the three ways as above. For those passengers using a shared bus or shared bus plus taxi to the airport, the guide services end when they drop you off at the bus stop, and you will need to check in at the airport on your own.

If you have paid extra for a private transfer, the above does not apply.

You will meet your national escort at the welcome dinner or, if arriving late, the following morning after breakfast at the welcome meeting.

Please ensure your Wendy Wu Tours luggage tag is visible on your suitcase/hand luggage, as this may also assist your guide in identifying you

EATING IN JAPAN:

Japanese cuisine is delicious, colourful and healthy. Meals are usually served with a bowl of rice and a bowl of miso soup and consist usually of fish, pickled vegetables and meat. Japan's other main staple is noodles, most famous being Udon and Soba. All meals (excluding drinks) are included in our fully inclusive group tours from the groups' arrival until the day of departure. Our schedule of meals is designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked throughout Japan. Food is an important element of Japanese culture. It is a time for families and friends to come together and much of family life revolves around the dinner table. Most food is eaten with chopsticks so best get practicing as cutlery is not always available at restaurants.

Breakfast will mostly be buffet style but may be a set-menu. Lunches are mostly pre- set options as is custom in many local restaurants. Dinner is usually buffet-style, featuring a wide selection of high-quality Japanese and Western dishes, but may occasionally be a set-menu. We usually find this style of dining suits the wide and varied tastes of our customers on tour. These are also pre-booked in advance prior to your arrival by your guides. This will provide greater flexibility and allow you to sample a broad range of local cuisines and dishes. All beverages will be at your own expense and are readily available. Please note: if you have any dietary requirements, you must inform us before your tour starts, and please be aware that restaurants may not always be able to accommodate these. Gluten-free food may not be as readily available as in New Zealand.

On some days where lots of sights are covered, dinner times may be early, and your tour group may head directly to the restaurant after sightseeing without stopping at your hotel to freshen up.

DEVELOPMENT IN JAPAN:

Japan is a developed country and as such matches the west in modernity and technological advances. Japan is an extremely safe country and takes great responsibility in maintaining high safety standards.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Roads in Japan are extremely well maintained and are comparatively smooth compared with the rest of Asia.

Bullet trains: Second class reserved seats are booked for our groups on bullet trains; there will be toilet facilities on board.

Due to the limited space on bullet trains, a separate luggage transfer service will be arranged for all suitcases (1 case per person). You will need to pack a separate overnight bag to carry on the train as your suitcase will not arrive until the following day after a bullet train journey. Your guide will indicate when you will need to prepare for this throughout your tour.

TIPPING POLICY:

Although tipping in Japan is not customary, if you feel you have received an excellent service, please feel free to tip your guide at your discretion.

PORTERAGE:

Please be aware that portorage is not included on our tours in Japan. You will therefore need to be able to handle your own luggage within the hotel and when using transportation like trains and coaches.

ACCOMMODATION:

Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. In the Fuji area, hotels tend to be more traditional in style and culture. In this area, you may be asked to take your shoes off at the door and store them in a secure locker – this is very traditional Japanese culture.

Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the New Zealand and Japan.

Please note that in Japan, hotel rooms and bathrooms are renowned for being small. Standard single rooms are usually smaller than a standard double or twin room, contain one small double bed (or one single bed), and are designed for one person to use. All group tour hotels have private western bathroom facilities, air conditioning, TV and telephone. Hotels in Japan often do not have porters and you will be required to carry your own luggage. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your National Escort/local guide. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable. Please note that authorities will only allow bottles onto the aircraft if they have been checked in as main baggage. Bottles in hand luggage may be confiscated.

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

Personal Expense - You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you.

Optional Tours - May be offered in each city you visit during your tour. These are not included in the standard itinerary and will only be available if time permits and if seats are available.

Please ensure you have additional funds available if you feel you may wish to participate in any extra activities. Each option will be arranged locally by your National Escort/Local Guide, participation and tipping for optional excursions is completely at your discretion.

CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at nearly all the palaces, fortresses and some temples involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails. Buddhist temples or pagodas also tend to be built at an elevation, as this is the most auspicious position according to ancient beliefs. This means you sometimes need to walk from the bus park to the entrance, and/or need to climb some steps inside.

People with knee or hip injuries who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

We recommend that you contact either your Doctor or Health centre for advice on vaccinations and travel health. Safetravel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.safetravel.govt.nz as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements.

You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation along with a link to our website where you can find your visa information (if applicable) and other important information. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate; in these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements whilst maintaining the integrity of your trip.

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