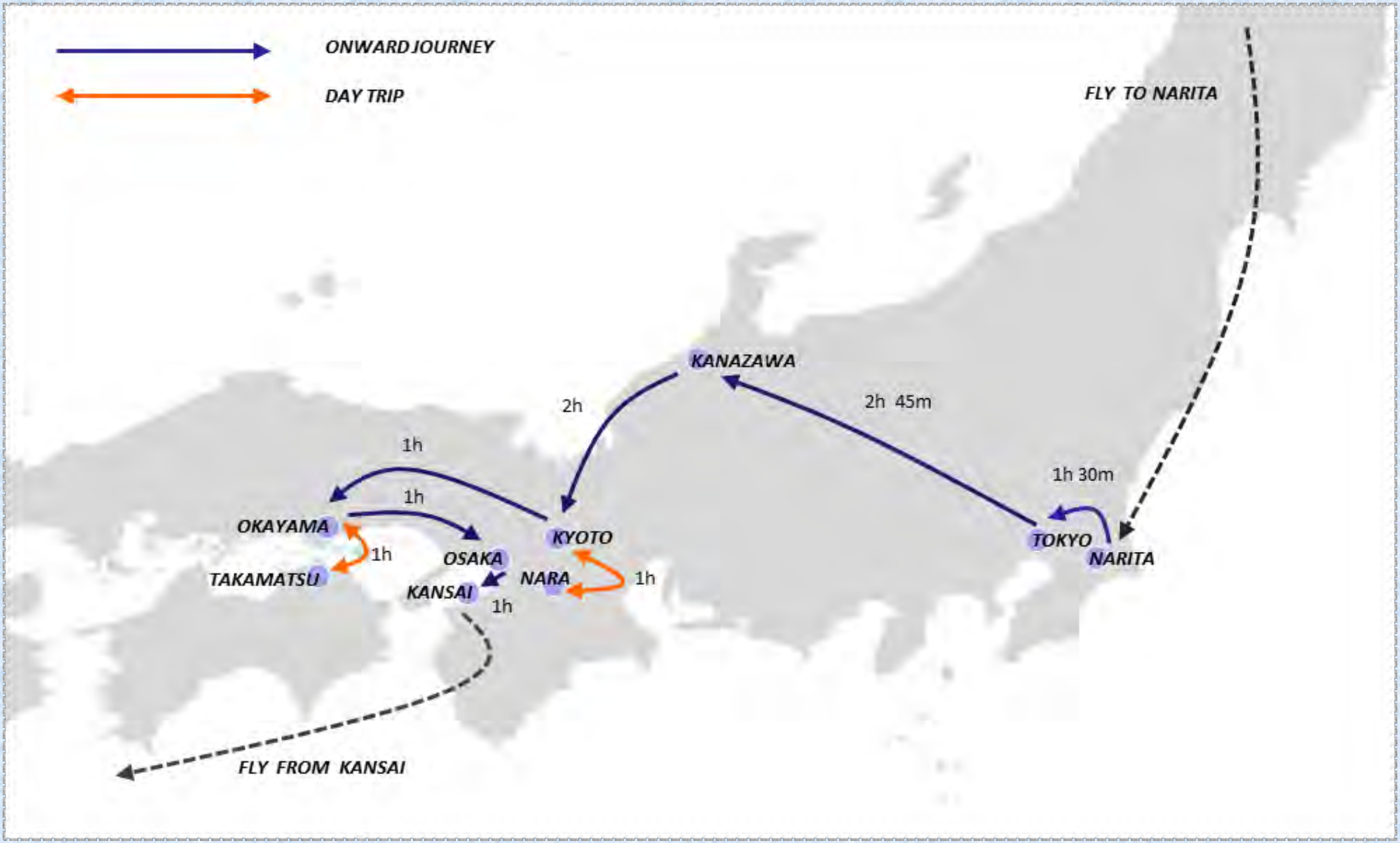
Japan explored, Laterally

lateral**life**

Because I've always wanted to...

Journey Key
= Train
Kanazawa
Tokyo
Kyoto
Nara
Osaka
Okayama Prefecture
Takamatsu
Takaoka
高岡
Toyama
富山
Komatsu
小松
Kaga
加賀
Fukui
福井
Nagano
長野
Matsumoto
松本
Takayama
高山
Karuizawa
軽井沢町
Maebashi
前橋
Takasaki
高崎
Saku
佐久
Nikko
日光
Utsunomiya
宇都宮
Ina
伊那
Kofu
甲府
Yokohama
横浜
Gifu
岐阜
Gujo
郡上
Gero
下呂
Nakatsugawa
中津川
Nagoya
名古屋
Toyota
豊田
Yokkaichi
四日市
Tsu
津
Ise
伊勢
Shima
志摩
Toyohashi
豊橋
Hamamatsu
浜松
Shizuoka
静岡
Fuji
富士
Yaizu
焼津
Hakone
箱根町
Mount Fuji
富士山
Tottori
鳥取
Maizuru
舞鶴
Asago
朝来
Himeji
姫路
Maniwa
真庭
Kurashiki
倉敷
Naruto
鳴門
Tokushima
徳島
Wakayama
和歌山
Gobo
御坊
Shirahama
白浜町
Aki
安芸
Mikurajima
御蔵島村
TOYAMA
ISHIKAWA
FUKUI
GIFU
NAGANO
GUNMA
SAITAMA
TOKYO
YAMANASHI
KANAGAWA
AICHI
SHIZUOKA
SHIGA
KYOTO
HYOGO
OSAKA
NARA
MIE
WAKAYAMA
TOKUSHIMA
KAGAWA
OKAYAMA
TOTTORI


ONWARD JOURNEY
DAY TRIP
FLY TO NARITA
KANAZAWA
2h
2h 45m
1h
1h
1h 30m
OKAYAMA
KYOTO
TOKYO
NARITA
1h
OSAKA
TAKAMATSU
NARA
1h
KANSAI
1h
FLY FROM KANSAI

In a Nutshell...

Day 1, Arrive in Tokyo and transfer to Palace Hotel

Day 2, Palace Hotel - Visit Tokyo

Day 3, Palace Hotel - Discover Western Tokyo

Day 4, Bullet train to Kanazawa and transfer to Yuyarurusaisai

Day 5, Travel to Kyoto and check in to Hyatt Regency

Day 6, Hyatt Regency - Excursion to Nara

Day 7, Hyatt Regency - Kyoto Garden experience

Day 8, Bullet train to Okayama and transfer to ANA Crowne Plaza

Day 9, ANA Crowne Plaza - Explore Island of Shikoku

Day 10, Onwards to Osaka and check in to St Regis

Day 11, Homebound

Flights...

Date	Airline & Flight Number	From	Departs	To	Arrives	Class
TBC	EK 022	Manchester T1	TBC	Dubai T3	TBC	TBC
TBC	EK 312	Dubai	TBC	Tokyo	TBC	TBC
TBC	EK 317	Osaka	TBC	Dubai T3	TBC	TBC
TBC	EK 017	Dubai	TBC	Manchester	TBC	TBC

Trains...

Date	Train Name/ No.	From	Departs	To	Arrives	Class
TBC	Shinkan-sen HAKUTAKA 557	Tokyo (Track #23)	09:32	Kanazawa (Track #13)	12:30	Green (First) Class
TBC	Ltd Ex-press THUNDER-BIRD 16	Kanazawa (Track #2)	09:53	Kyoto (Track #7)	12:09	Green (First) Class
TBC	JR Nara Line Rapid Service for NARA	Kyoto (Track #8)	09:32	Nara	10:19	N/A
TBC	JR Nara Line Local for KYOTO	Nara	17:08	Kyoto (Track #9)	18:18	N/A
TBC	Shinkan-sen HIKA-RI 461	Kyoto (Track #14)	09:46	Okayama (Track #21)	11:17	Green (First) Class
TBC	JR Marine Liner 17 for TAKA-MATSU	Okayama (Track #8)	09:32	Takamatsu (Track #5)	10:26	Green (First) Class
TBC	JR Marine Liner 52 for OKA-YAMA	Takamatsu (Track #5)	17:40	Okayama (Track #6)	18:32	Green (First) Class
TBC	Shinkan-sen SA-KURA 580	Okayama (Track #24)	09:28	Shin-Osaka (Track #24)	10:24	Green (First) Class

Your Sample Itinerary...

Day 1 - Arrive in Tokyo

Your flight is scheduled to land at Tokyo International Airport. You will be transferred by Emirates directly to your hotel in Tokyo (approximately 90 minutes).

Accommodation: Palace Hotel, Deluxe Balcony King Room.

Meals: Breakfast.

Day 2 - Visit Tokyo

This morning you will have your in-depth orientation before enjoying a full-day tour.

Start the day with a visit to the Takagi Bonsai Museum in Ichigaya, then head on to visit Koishikawa Korakuen, one of Tokyo's most famous gardens. From there, continue to Rikugien, considered the most beautiful Japanese style garden in the city.

This afternoon you will visit Ueno Park, best known for its popularity as a cherry viewing spot, and in a way the cultural heart of Tokyo – nowhere else can rival the sheer number of museums.

Ueno's gems are the Tokyo National Museum, the National Science Museum, the National Museum of Western Art, the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, and the tiny but fascinating Shitamachi Museum. There's also plenty of park – as well as shrines and temples – to see.

Accommodation: Palace Hotel, Deluxe Balcony King Room

Meals: Breakfast.

Day 3 - Discover Western Tokyo

Your guide will meet you at your hotel this morning and take you for a tour of Western Tokyo. Start with a visit to Meiji-jingu, Tokyo's most important shrine, where we highly recommend the Inner Gardens. Strolling through the trendy nearby districts of Harajuku, Omotesando, and Shibuya makes an interesting contrast to the traditional shrine, allowing you to really get a taste of modern Tokyo. Why not make some memories in one of the extremely popular purikura photo booths – the ultimate in Japanese selfies – here?

Spend the afternoon at leisure. We recommend taking a short break from the bustle of the city and enjoying the serenity of Shinjuku Gyoen Gardens before venturing into the bustling Shinjuku Station area. Famous for shopping and nightlife as well as unparalleled people watching, Shinjuku Station is the busiest station in the world and is surrounded by department stores, restaurants, and izakaya.

Higashi Chaya-Gai, Kanazawa

Accommodation: Palace Hotel, Deluxe Balcony King Room

Meals: Breakfast

Day 4 - Bullet train to Kanazawa

This morning you will make your own way to Tokyo station and take the bullet train to Kanazawa. Your guide for the afternoon will meet you on the platform on arrival and take you for a half-day private tour. Visit Kenrokuen, one of Japan's most beautiful gardens. Founded in the Edo period, and opened to the public in 1871, the garden now features ponds, hills, and a number of buildings and tea houses. Kenroku-en famously combines all six principles traditionally desirable in a Japanese strolling garden, with spaciousness and seclusion, artifice and antiquity, and water courses and panoramas. We highly recommend visiting the elegant Seison-kaku Villa in the park while you are there. Time permitting, also visit Higashi Chaya-Gai, one of Japan's best preserved geisha districts. It is here that you can also visit one of the gold-leaf workshops, which produce Kanazawa's famous product. You can even try your hand at gold-leaf yourself (price of experience not included in package).

Note: Send your main luggage separately to Kyoto this morning, taking an overnight bag to Kanazawa.

Your 7-day Green Class JR Rail Passes will start today.

Accommodation: Yuyarurusaisai, Japanese standard Room

Meals: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 - Travel to Kyoto

Today, travel to Kyoto on the delightfully-named Thunderbird Express train. Your guide will meet you at Kyoto station and take you to drop off your overnight luggage at your hotel before taking you to one of the city's most interesting sights: austere–looking Sanjūsangen-dō temple. The temple dates back to the 13th century and houses a thousand near-identical golden statues of Kannon, the goddess of mercy; the statues are said to have a thousand arms apiece. Visitors will quickly notice that they actually have forty, but it is still an impressive sight. Time permitting, take a stroll through Gion, Kyoto's most famous geisha district, before finishing the tour at your hotel.

Accommodation: Hyatt Regency, Guest Room

Meals: Breakfast.

Day 6 - Excursion to Nara

Your guide will meet you at your hotel this morning and escort you on the local trains for a day trip to the ancient capital of Nara, nowadays a pleasant small town. You will see the impressive giant bronze Buddha – Japan's largest – housed in the famous all-wood Tōdai-ji temple (which is also the world's largest wooden structure). Walk through Nara-kōen Park, which is home to very friendly local

deer, which will follow you hoping for tasty treats! We also recommend visiting the lovely Isui-en Strolling Gardens, where you can watch the carp and wander amongst the plum, cherry, and maple trees.

Accommodation: Hyatt Regency, Guest Room

Meals: Breakfast.

Day 7 - Kyoto Garden experience

A tour of some of Kyoto's hidden gems and private gardens with award-winning architect and a lecturer at a university in Kyoto. The history of Japanese gardens is intrinsically linked to Buddhism and nowhere is this more apparent than in Kyoto, with its thousands of temples, palaces and historic residences. While many of the gardens are very famous, bringing huge crowds of visitors, there are many which are private or can only be visited with special permission. With your guide, a landscape architect and garden historian, you will be able to get access to such special gardens and will have the opportunity to learn about the theory behind their design and their relationship to architecture and their surroundings.

Accommodation: Hyatt Regency, Guest Room

Meals: Breakfast.

Day 8 - Bullet train to Okayama

Make your way to Kyoto Station after breakfast and set off on the bullet train to Okayama. Your guide for the day will meet you on arrival and take you for a full-day tour. First visit Okayama Castle and Korakuen Gardens before heading on to the charming town of Kurashiki, known best for its pretty canals and cobbled old centre, as well as its superb museums and galleries. Spend the afternoon exploring the historic Bikan quarter near the canal, where merchant homes and storehouses dating back to the Edo and Meiji periods have been restored.

Note: Send your main luggage separately to Osaka this morning, taking an overnight bag to Okayama.

Accommodation: ANA Crowne Plaza, Premium Hollywood Twin Room

Meals: Breakfast.

Day 9 - Explore Island of Shikoku

Today you will set off with your guide to the island of Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's four main islands. You'll be visiting the port city of Takamatsu for its stunning Ritsurin Gardens. Considered one of the best gardens in Japan, it is often suggested that Ritsurin deserves a spot on the list of the "three most beautiful gardens of Japan". After spending some time in the gardens, we suggest visiting Shikoku Mura, an open-air museum situated in a pleasant hillside park, which preserves and exhibits traditional buildings and structures that have been relocated here from all over Shikoku Island.

Korakuen Gardens, Okayama

Accommodation: ANA Crowne Plaza, Premium Hollywood Twin Room
Meals: Breakfast.

Day 10 - Onwards to Osaka

After breakfast, return east to Osaka on the bullet train. Your guide will meet you at Shin-Osaka Station and take you for a full-day tour of the city. After dropping off your overnight bags at the hotel you will set out to explore. Visit Osaka Castle Park, which has a lovely Japanese garden, then head to the south of the city for Tennoji Park, where you'll find Keitakuen, a traditional garden designed by Jihei Ogawa, a famous landscape architect of the Meiji period. Osaka Municipal Museum of Art is also found in the park and is well worth a visit.

Accommodation: St Regis, Deluxe Hollywood Twin Room
Meals: Breakfast.

Day 11 - Homebound

You will be transferred to Kansai Airport by Emirates for your flight home today.

Accommodation: Overnight flight
Meals: In-flight meals

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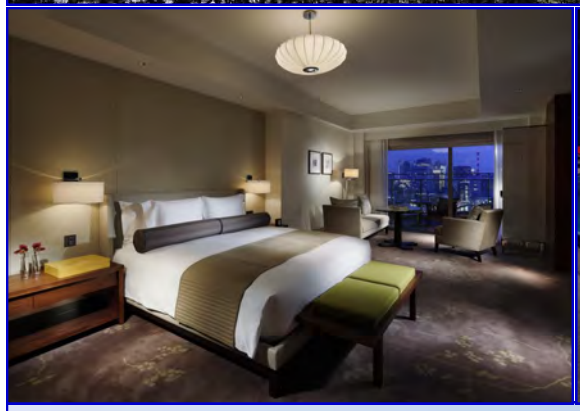
Laterally sleeping...

Palace Hotel, Tokyo
The Palace Hotel enjoys one of Tokyo's most prestigious addresses, right next to the central Imperial Palace. This might be the most recent luxury hotel to open in Tokyo, but it has a long history: Initially founded in 1947, the hotel reopened in May 2012 after a complete refurbishment taking three years. The selection of restaurants here is particularly good – the management's ambition is to collect as many Michelin stars as possible! Japan's first Evian Spa is worth a visit too.

http://en.palacehoteltokyo.com/



Yuyarurusaisai, Kanazawa
Standing on the bank of the beautiful Sai River, Yuyarurusaisai has gorgeous rooms which combine Western and Japanese styles. The hotel has 15 rooms, and a restaurant and bar, which also overlook the river.
The standard rooms are located in the top floor corner of the hotel, and the windows and balcony overlook Kanazawa city.

http://www.yuyarurusaisai.jp/en/

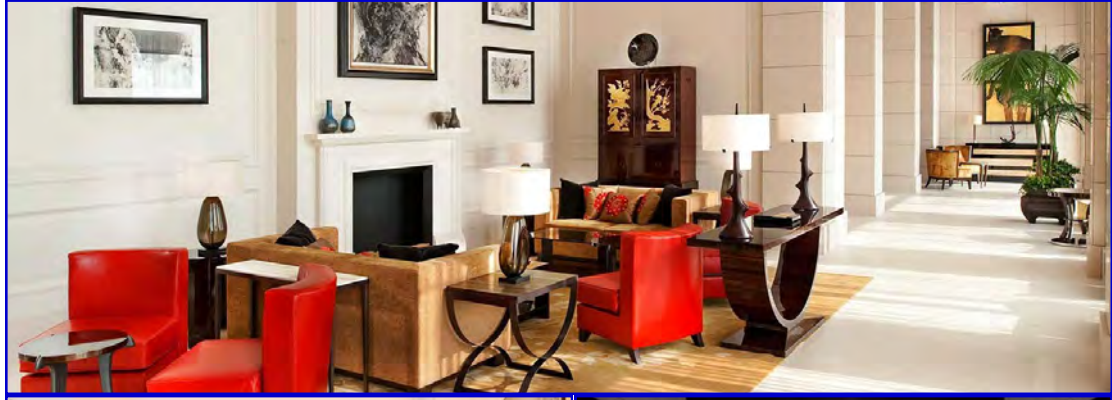
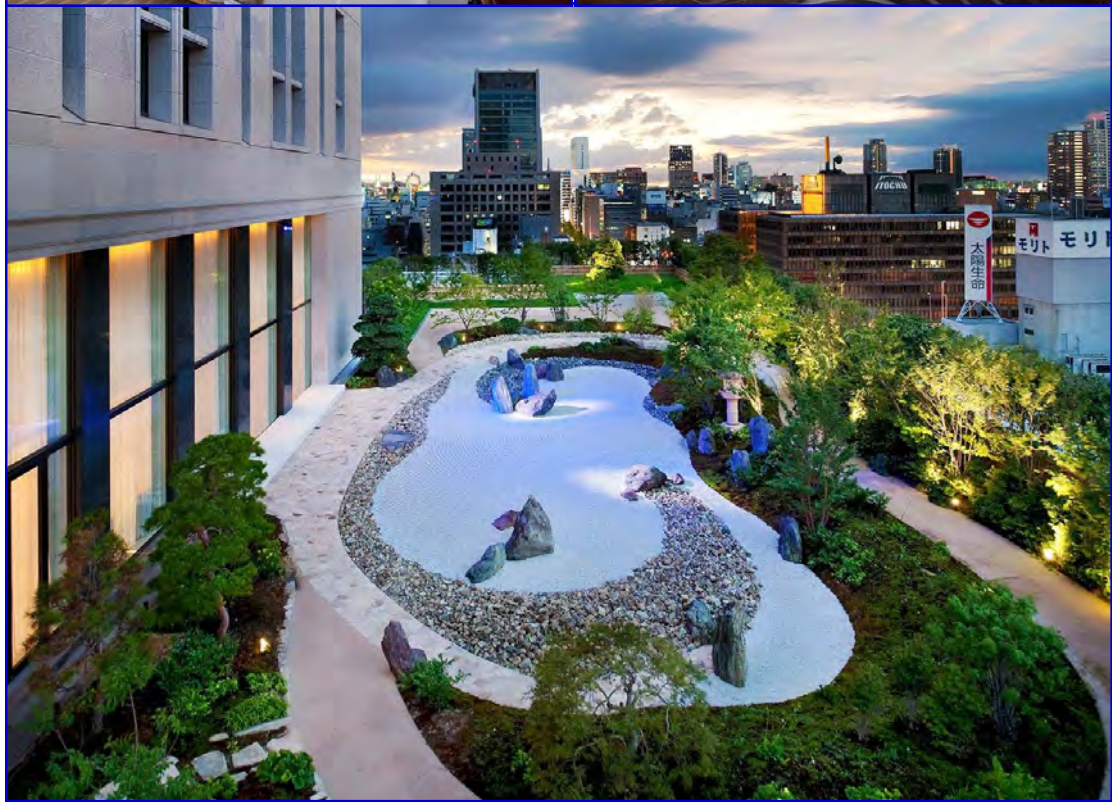
Hyatt Regency, Kyoto
Billing itself as Kyoto's most luxurious hotel, the Hyatt Regency opened its stylish doors in 2006.
Just minutes from JR Kyoto Station, the Hyatt Regency is located in the heart of the richly cultural Higashiyama area, amidst the famous Chishakuin, Sanjusangendo and Yogenin Temples.
With rooms blending Japanese and Western luxury, the Hyatt Regency excels at comfort, and brings already high levels of Japanese service to new levels for their guests.

https://kyoto.regency.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html

ANA Crowne Plaza, Okayama
The ANA Hotel Okayama is conveniently located at the hub of the Chugoku and Shikoku regions, and is easily accessible and a popular stop for visitors to Korakuen, one of three most recognized gardens in Japan. Its modern interior is the handiwork of a team of world-famous hotel designers and the facilities include 219 guest rooms, five banquet rooms, two restaurants and a main bar.

https://www.ihg.com/crowneplaza/hotels/us/en/okayama/okjja/hoteldetail

Laterally sleeping...

St Regis, Osaka
The St. Regis is one of Osaka's newest five-star hotels and is located on the high-end Midosuji Avenue. Lined with ginkgo trees and the flagships of luxury brands, Midosuji Avenue goes through Osaka's most lively neighbourhoods: Umeda, Shinsaibashi, Dōtonbori, Amerika-mura, and Namba.
The St. Regis offers large, modern rooms with Japanese touches, easy access to the subway, and all the other facilities you would expect from a world-class hotel.

http://www.starwoodhotels.com/stregis/property/overview/