

- LODGING IN JAPAN & ITS USAGE -

There are two types of lodging in Japan, Japanese-style, so-called "RYOKAN", and Western-style. In the western-style establishments, facilities, service, meals, and method of charges are mostly the same. Here is a summary on RYOKAN and information for you Welcome to our Ryokan!

1. Facilities

In Japanese-style "RYOKAN", the floor of each room is covered with "TATAMI", most Ryokans have no beds. Ryokans are usually traditional Japanese style which means that you will sleep on "FUTON" on the floor when "FUTON" on the floor when sleeping. While rooms are provided with a private toilet, guests are to share baths in Ryokan, except at luxury ones. Particularly in "Hot-spring" resort, where bathing is the major attraction, the public baths are larger and luxurious, featuring a variety of open-air baths, so-called "ROTEN FURO", sauna, swimming/whirl-pool, or esthetic salon. It is a rule to take shoes off once entered inside of facilities. Guests are normally provided "slippers" for inside use, and still

required to take slippers off once entered inside of each guestroom.

2. Room Rate

Room rate is per person, per night on Twin base, and is normally inclusive of accommodation, dinner, breakfast the following morning and service charge. Tax additional. In hot-spring resort, hot spring tax of 150JPY per person, per night is also additional. Rates are changeable owing to seasons and days of the week - e.g. higher on Saturdays, highest during terms of Golden Week and Year-End/New Year.

3. Meals

Featuring seasonal seafood, vegetables and meats, a fixed course menu called "KAISEKI" is prepared by Chef for each meal in advance and it normally includes raw fish such as "SASHIMI". Raw fish could be replaced to other dish for those who can not eat raw fish when requested beforehand. It would be wise to consult meal plans with staff at the time of reservations. In Ryokan, meals are usually served in guestrooms. Buffet style meals and/or Western foods are also served at restaurants in first-class or large-sized hotels and Ryokans that are experienced in welcoming foreign guests.

4. How to Use Public Bath

People do not use baths just to wash themselves but also enjoy soaking bodies in a deep tub full of hot water and relax. As a number of people use the same bath in turn, there are rules required for those who share the bath as follows;

- a. No swimming suits, please, as public bathroom is considered same as a private one.
- b. The actual washing and rinsing bodies is done outside the tub. Take shower outside of tub first, then soak into the tub in order to maintain as clean water for everyone as possible.
- c. No usage of soap, shampoo, conditioner, bath gel and/or any kind is permitted in the tub.
- d. No swimming and no laundry in the tub. Running is also prohibited because of slippery floor.
- e. Hot spring water has various efficiency to health, however, soaking in the tub longer than prescribed time is no good for one's health. Observe the prescribed soaking time.
- f. Soap, shampoo, conditioner, towels, and/or hair dryers, etc. are usually provided in the public bathrooms, except those in budget-type inns.

5. Language/ Okami-san's

"Okami-san" is the wife of the owner of the Ryokan. They are masters in hospitality and usually welcome guest upon their arrival and may pay a visit to your room to check on your stay. They are the key person at the ryokan and very skilled at various areas. They run the ryokans and make sure that everything is run properly. English will vary from place to place but try to speak slowly and clearly and enjoy Japanese hospitality.

6. Tipping

10% Service Charge is automatically charged to guest's personal bill at hotels and Ryokans in Japan, therefore tipping is not necessary except for such occasions as a guest asks for a special request or treatment and feels obliged about it. In Ryokan, a maid called "Nakai-san" will be at service for delivery of meals to room and Futon-making for whole period of stay and a small tipping would be appreciated.