

THE
JAPANESE ODYSSEY

日本のオデッセイ

ENTRANTS' MANUAL



THANKS

It seems like Guillaume and I will never learn from our mistakes.

This year, again, we will hold The Japanese Odyssey. For the last five years, we have been dedicated to dream up an event exploring the wilderness of Japan, and taking the entrants further along on those abandoned mountainous roads.

From the early beginning we can count on the support and the positive feedback of many of you. And we would like to thank you for this.

Japan is a confusing and puzzling country.

The variety of customs and traditions make them difficult to grasp for travellers and "gaijin". We would like to thank our local friends whose contributions, advices, country knowledge and little hands during previous events were invaluable. Thank you Eigo, Ryoji, David, Ken, Lucas, Masafumi (they will recognize themselves).

We also would like to take a moment to say a massive thanks to the brands that shared a little way with us on those Japanese roads and throughout the organisation of the different editions of The Japanese Odyssey. Thank you Pelago Bicycles, Champion System Japan, Far Ride Magazine, Papaersky Magazine, Apidura, Astuto wheels, and Masaya Bike Shop for being so enthusiastic.

Emmanuel & Guillaume



OUR OWN PRIVATE JAPAN

I emerged from the surgical unit limping and feeling quite dizzy. The waiting room was lined with comfortable leather pale beige armchairs. The air conditioning made the room pleasantly cool. I looked at Guillaume, who was sitting there alone. He seemed tired. Our bodies were used and consumed by almost 10 days of incessant rain. He looked back at me, feeling sorry. Today was a lovely day without a cloud in the sky, and the three-storey building of Muikaichi Hospital afforded a clear view over the area.

A couple of hours earlier, we were riding along a forest trail. When my front wheel got stuck in the mud, I immediately knew that my odyssey was over. I was too exhausted to avoid the fall, too exhausted to unclip, and I just dropped to the ground. I fell at slow speed on the right side and rolled on my bike. I was now lying on the floor, with an open wound on the right calf.

The doctor at the hospital had precise gestures and her hands moved slowly stitching my wound. She talked to me in english, explaining that I needed medication and that she would organise an appointment at a bigger hospital to get the suture checked. I was gazing at the badge pinned at her white blouse, and was intrigued by the tiny fox head drawn alongside her name. He seemed to be staring at me with a malicious smile.

I met Guillaume back in the waiting room. We talked a bit, and decided he would get back on the bike and try to reach Osaka before the cutoff date in 4 days. I envied him. I knew he would make it on time, I knew he would ride across the island of Shikoku on small and abandoned roads.

Just when we wanted to leave the hospital, the doctress dashed down the stairs and joined us in the hospital lobby. She handed us a bag containing fruits, sandwiches and drinks she just bought at the cafeteria. My right hand plunged randomly in the bag and grabbed a small bottle of orange juice. The label of the bottle had bright and flashy colours with a character representing a fox standing firm and holding an orange in his left hand.

We parted at the Muikaichi bus station. I was waiting for the bus to Hiroshima. I exchanged some words with the girl at the counter before she left. She was back 20 minutes later, with a friend of her. We talked again. And the 2 of them left again. This time they came back with a cardboard box, and tools to disassemble my bike. The bus arrived, and I got on it. I looked through the window. There were about 10 people on the village place waving me goodbye.

The rain had fallen again. I looked out the window to the hills around the cities we were crossing. Some houses were lit up, and I was trying to imagine and to get a glimpse of these ordinary lives.

Just a few kilometres away, across the Seto Inland Sea, Guillaume was in the hills. The awful weather at nightfall with the pouring rain and the grey atmosphere worried him. And food was lacking in this part of the island. The rain became heavier, reducing the visibility. He was almost at the top of the hill. With the incessant rain it would be too dangerous to undertake the descent on the other side down the valley. But he wasn't sure either to find a safe haven at the top to rest. He reluctantly turned back and went down a few kilometres into the forest to reach the shelter on the side of the road he had spotted getting uphill. He reached the old garage and took shelter from the rain. Guillaume sat down and started to relax. He looked at the decayed steel construction. On the crumbled wall in front of him, one can easily see an old, almost erased graffiti representing a fox with three tails.

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THE 2019 JAPANESE ODYSSEY MANUAL

Welcome to all people planning to enter the 2019 Japanese Odyssey.

This is our manual. It contains the information people considering entering this year event should know. Read it with attention. And read it again. Make sure you understand what: "being on your own" is really all about.

If you have any queries, hesitation or doubt, don't hesitate to contact us on:
contact@japanese-odyssey.com

You may also follow us on various social channels.

FACEBOOK **[@japaneseodyssey](#)**

INSTAGRAM **[@japanese_odyssey](#)**

TWITTER **[@japaneseodyssey](#)**



IT IS NOT A RACE.

We do understand competition. And yet, we don't see the Japanese Odyssey as a race. It is an adventure. It is above all a "voyage".

What makes us ride our bike?

It certainly is about going fast and going high. But not exclusively. Your Japanese adventure is also about opening your eyes, enjoying the sceneries, trying to get a grasp of the culture of this country, meeting some of the locals and enjoying the company of fellow entrants.

James Robertson, was sent last year to Japan to document the ride through the artistic project DETOUR.

readymag.com/u16005985/1298747

He is absolutely right when he explains that "the emphasis lies on exploration and appreciation rather than speed".

Our event is not about competing against the others. It is about challenging yourself. The difference is subtle.

This year we are taking you again on forest roads. The event and the autumnal season will provide opportunities to explore the landscape, and to ride huge distances with the bare minimum gear.

We would like the entrants to make use of the occasion to take some turns, to leave behind them highways and fast sections, and to explore secondary roads and secluded areas.

There will be no official timing and no rankings. We won't hand out medals. Success in the event is measured by its completion in 10 days. Make it within the time limit and you are a winner. But remember the time component and the travelled distance are only minor elements of your adventure.

The Japanese Odyssey is not a race. But that does not means it is a leisurely ride either.

Don't underestimate its difficulties and don't think you are ready to take on such an adventure when maybe you are not.

For the 2019 edition, entrants will have to ride about 2200 km, trying to reach the final destination within 10 days. They will have to cope with rain - probably, and insane gradient - for sure. They will endure moments on the bike when they will be cold and wet, tired, and even bored. Mountains will slow them down, and short autumnal days will test their capacity of riding solo with the darkness stretching infinitely around them.

We don't want to bring bad luck, but some entrants won't make it to Tokyo in time, or at all. Be prepared for the worst, and make the best of your Odyssey.

WARNINGS

To understand the spirit of the Japanese Odyssey, take a quick look in the dictionary for the definition of the word “odyssey”. It is a long series of wanderings and adventures, filled with notable experiences and hardships.

Entrants will go solo and unsupported across Japan, over a distance of about 2,200 kilometres. The Japanese Odyssey is ridden entirely at the entrants' own risks. Don't attempt this event unprepared, as no one will be there to rescue you. Stay always acutely conscious of your own limitations.

TAKING PART IN THE JAPANESE ODYSSEY IS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS. ENTRANTS TAKE PART AT THEIR OWN RISK.

1. There is no organization. There won't be any logistics support for emergency cases. It cannot be stressed enough that entrants will be on their own.
2. They will have to be ready for a demanding adventure. They will endure days of consecutive 12 to 15 hours on the saddle.
3. They will have to show real capacities in (not exhaustive) taking care of their bike, finding a place to sleep every night, handling the bad weather in mountainous areas, trying to understand road signs in a foreign country, and handling information in a foreign language.
4. Entrants' participation in the Japanese Odyssey involves serious risks of accident that may cause (and it is not exhaustive): material damages, head or body injuries and even death from various causes including (but not limited to) over exertion, dehydration, cardiac arrest, slips, falls, accidents with others, or accidents caused by their own.

Thus, we want every entrants to understand and to agree that one elects voluntary to take part in The Japanese Odyssey and assume all risks of lost, damage, injury and death that may be sustained.

We should not be liable for any death or personal injury suffered by an entrant arising from its participation in the Japanese Odyssey. They also agree to release us from and against any claims, demands, proceedings of any nature whatsoever which may be made by them or on their behalf in respect of any loss, damage, injury and death caused to them or their property as a result of their participation in the Japanese Odyssey.

WE WANT EVERYONE TO GET BACK HOME SAFE, BUT KEEP IN MIND THAT SAFETY WILL BE YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSABILITY.

SAFETY FIRST

The Japanese Odyssey is demanding. Your preparation for the event is single-minded and time-consuming. You certainly have to make many sacrifices to make sure you will arrive in Japan with the best possible chances of completing the event, spending hours on the bike training and on the computer for researching the best routes, and spending money on getting the right gear.

However, always keep in mind that your family and friends waiting at home are more important than a bike ride.

Therefore, we ask you to always consider safety first when making any decisions.

Keep in mind that even experimented riders are not sheltered from hazards or injuries which may immobilise them in the cold, or rain in the midst of the mountains.

There are many components that benefit your speed and your comfort on an endurance event such as the Japanese Odyssey. Fitness is definitely one of the main factors. But your security depends also on your kit and on what you have put in your saddle bag.

Good working lights and brakes are obligatory equipment. We strongly encourage you to use 2 functioning front lights and 2 functioning rear lights.

Remember to carry highly visible clothing for riding at night, such as a reflective vest and arm/legs strips.

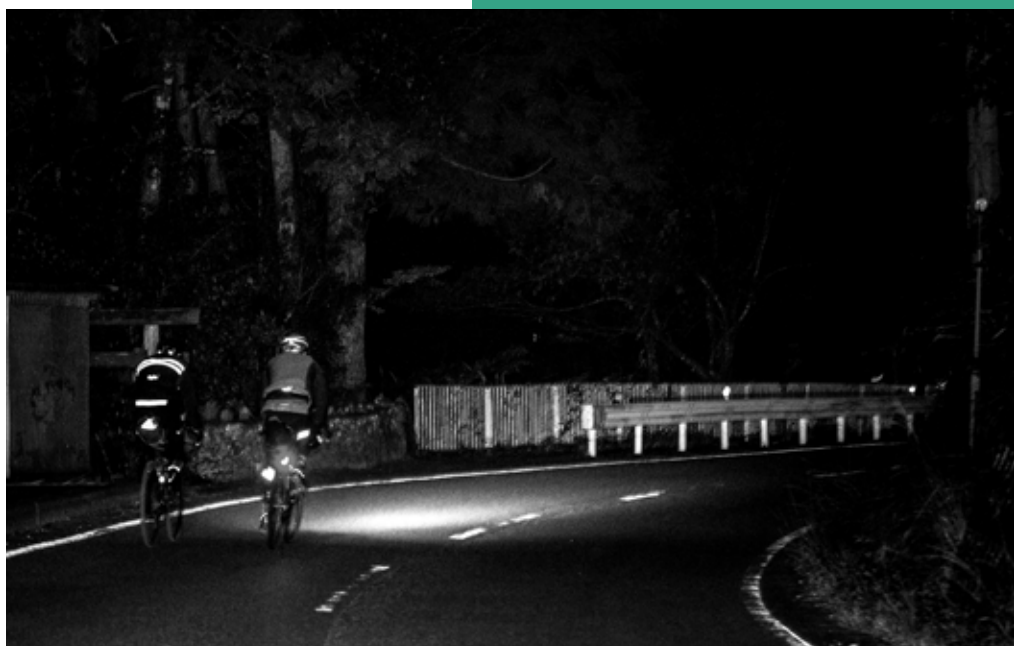
Dress appropriately for the conditions and carry warm and waterproof equipment with you to ensure that you will be warm enough at anytime (leggings, gloves,...). Japan is a country where almost every village has its own mountain and its own forest. The route of this year odyssey will take you along mountain ranges where the weather can change very quickly and might put the riders at risk.

Crossing the country in mid-October should bring beautiful days. But nights will be cooler. Expect single-digit temperatures. Last year, most of the entrants were surprised on day one. After a sunny and gentle afternoon, they encountered a freezing temperature when they reached the border of the Nagano Prefecture at night.

If you try to alleviate the boredom by using earphones or by using your phone while riding your bike, you will find yourself in violation of the Japanese highway code.

Call the number 119 to ask for an ambulance or rescue service.

Calls can be made from mobile phones or public phones. When making an emergency call from a public phone, neither money nor a pre-paid telephone card are necessary, just pick up the handset and dial the required number. When making an emergency call from a public phone that has a pinky tsuho colored red button (an emergency notification button) on the front of the unit, make sure to press it and then dial the required number.



GROUND RULES

Again, the Japanese Odyssey is NOT billed as a race. The intention is for a long distance unsupported adventure. Authenticity, equity, and respect for the other entrants and for the environment are the fundamental principles guiding the organisation of the Japanese Odyssey. Mountains are a hostile environment with weather conditions changing very fast. Mutual aid and solidarity can be essential. Thus, we emphasize the camaraderie spirit and allow entrants to ride together.

There is no organization. All that is provided is inspiration. However, we set some few rules in order to put on an enjoyable and safe adventure, and to ensure equal opportunity within the entrants.

1. Entrants must be over 18.
2. In Japan you should keep to the left side on roadways. Follow the Japanese Road Code. On a bicycle you basically follow the same rule as a car. That means stopping at all stop signs and red lights, and yielding the right of way. Remember to use hand signals when turning, slowing down or stopping. Cyclists must yield the right of way to pedestrians. Do not ride on sidewalks except on those with 'Pedestrians and Bicycles' signs.
3. When riding, it is mandatory to wear a helmet. Don't use your radios and mp3 while cycling.
4. At night, entrants are asked to wear high visibility (or reflective) gears and clothing: vest, jacket, bands,...
5. It is mandatory to have a front & a rear light. It is your responsibility to have your lights and brakes regularly checked, your bicycle well maintained and to carry all the necessary repair equipment.
6. Entrants must subscribe an insurance or agree to cover the cost of rescue in the event they need to be evacuated.
7. The guiding principle is: "On your own & Unsupported".
8. Entrants must carry their own gear. Posting stuff anywhere prior to the start is forbidden.
9. Entrants can ride together (but no drafting or echelon, please) They also can rely on each other for mechanical assistance and general support. Mountains are a hostile environment where mutual aid and solidarity can be essential. For this reason we ask each entrant, if their place and the circumstance they are in allow, to make it their priority to go to help any other entrant in danger or in difficulty.
10. Private assistance is forbidden. That means entrants can eat, resupply, sleep or service their bike only at places also available to other entrants or at commercial shops along the route.
11. "Unplanned support" is allowed. Make sure you understand what "unplanned means. If someone you don't know along the route is giving you something to drink, or helping you to fix something on your bike it is "unplanned" and OK. But pre-arranged outside support is forbidden.

The Japanese Odyssey is, by its nature, impractical to oversee and to police. So please, play by the rules. Be respectful to others. Do not litter. And enjoy.

LAUNCHING ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12TH, YOUR ADVENTURE STARTS IN KAGOSHIMA.

NEXT OF KIN

The “next of kin” procedure has first been brought in by Mike Hall on the Transcontinental Race, and then has been adopted by many other bikepacking events.

Since last year, we have decided to introduce and to apply this procedure to make sure that in the case of a severe accident there would be a proper notification to the next of kin and relatives of the involved entrant.

The idea is to ask every entrant at the time of the registration to give us the name and the contact email address of their next of kin. During the summer we will contact them and tell them that they have been nominated next of kin. We will also explain them important details about the event, the signed disclaimer, your responsibilities, and our limited obligations as organizers. We strongly recommend you to talk with your next of kin about your decision to ride the 2019 Japanese Odyssey, so that they know what you have signed up for.

It is important that they understand that you are taking full responsibility of your ride and that you won't be getting any assistance. This can avoid some misunderstanding.

What follows is the procedure brought in on the TCR.

“Due to the nature of the event we cannot provide emergency rescue to riders. Our commitment is to notify next of kin as soon as possible once we are aware of an incident and provide them with as much information as we can.

If an accident should happen, you should inform your next of kin first and then only Japanese Odyssey. If we do learn of an accident first, we will attempt to advise your next of kin so that they may begin to assist you if necessary. We will only share any details you make public or if you give us permission.”

“It is important that riders and their friends and family understand that this passing of information to your next of kin is likely to be the only action we will be able to perform in the event of an accident. As it says many times in the disclaimer agreement, riders are self-reliant and responsible for themselves and that we may be unable to assist them. Therefore we can carry no obligation.”

GETTING YOUR BIKE CASE SENT FROM KAGOSHIMA TO TOKYO

Most of you will probably come with a bike box, and will try to get it sent to the finish line in Tokyo. TA-Q-BIN is a delivery service provided by the Yamato company, which send your parcel anywhere in Japan.

Browse their internet site: kuronekoyamato.co.jp/yt/en/

We used their services on previous editions and never had problems getting them to handle our bulky and huge cases. However, since 2017, they seem to carry out their procedure of size limitation more rigorously. Their delivery service is no longer available for items exceeding a total size of 160 cm. With the total size (cm) referring to the combined total of length, width and height.

Therefore, our friends of **Masaya Bike shop** in Fukuoka are organising with a private carrier the transport of the cases. This option is by no way mandatory, and we leave it to the entrants to decide whether they want to use this option or not. The final logistics isn't settled so far. The idea is certainly to pick-up the cases at the pre-event briefing and to deliver them at a convenient location in Tokyo. We will communicate further on about this option and its price. But for those interested in this delivery option, thank you to specify it in the registration information.



MASAYA

RINKO BAGS

Japan has an excellent rail network that allows travel to almost any place in the country in little time. But the rule is: bicycle must be covered in order to be taken on a train, a bus, or a subway.

The bike must meet standard luggage size requirements and if not in a bike box must be packed in a carry-on-bag, called rinko bags. Take both wheels off to pack your bike.



SATELLITE TRACKING AND BLUE DOTS

We will have GPS-tracking dashboard up for the event.

It has a main justification as it will offer the entrants safety and peace-of-mind by notifying their family and their friends their GPS position and letting them know that everything is fine. The technology is also intended to help us follow your route, check everyone goes through the mandatory check points, and to give a general overview of everyone's position. The tracking solution will be powered by MAPProgress and SPOT trackers..



SPOT tracker use is mandatory for the 2019 edition. We will provide you with a rented tracker device as a part of your registration.

The device weights about 100g. You clip it to a carrier, and attach that carrier to your bike via a cable tie. Make sure the tracker has a clear view of the sky with its SPOT logo pointing upwards.

We will hand out the trackers during the pre-event briefing. We will take time to have the use of the tracker demonstrated, and to make sure everyone is at ease with its operation. We will also turn on and test all the trackers.

Sometimes entrants are asking us if their GPS is performing the same way as a satellite tracker. The answer is no. The tracker does real time live publishing of data points as you go along, it shows "dot watchers" where you are live. Whereas, your GPS unit cannot be used with the MAPProgress dashboard. The SPOT satellite tracker device allows location information to be automatically sent to a web site, and refresh every 5 minutes.

The device is battery powered with 4 x AAA Lithium batteries. You won't need extra external power supply. We will provide the first set of batteries. They should last about 2 weeks.

But in case you need to replace your batteries, make sure they are the lithium batteries. The entry fee covers the rent of the SPOT tracker (+ 4 AAA lithium batteries) and the cost of our supplier for the satellite tracking solution.

Note that there is a discount for those using their own device. We will set up an information form to collect their SPOT information : ESN number (the serial number for the device, it is located within the battery compartment. It should begin with 0- and followed by seven digits).

We don't ask for a refundable deposit for the trackers. But if it happens that you lose or damage your tracker, please understand that we will ask you to pay for the full retail price of the device.

We will take the trackers back with us in Europe at the end of the event. We need to collect them back at your arrival in Tokyo.

If you withdraw from the event without reaching the finish line or if you take more than 10 days to complete the route, then you must return your tracker to our address in a timely manner so that we don't incur additional rental charges.

ROUTE PLANNING

You will go over 2,200 km. And you will have to pass 7 checkpoints and 7 mandatory segments. But the route you choose to take between each is up to you.

One of the most challenging and fun part of your adventure, is planning your route at home ahead of the event. It will make your trip more efficient, and it will minimize your stress.

However, it is important to take into account two factors:

- Traffic in big cities, or on major highways can be dense and dangerous. Wherever possible, try to avoid large cities, and stay on smaller local roads. It is also important that you plan a safe and good route entering Tokyo.
- The succession of steep climbs can be very challenging. It is strongly recommended to check elevation profile of your route on websites, so you will be able to know how much elevation you can expect to gain or lose on a particular route.

You will start your adventure by mapping out your route on route-planning sites and/or apps. You have many tools to find and to look in details at your preferred route: Google maps, Google Street view, RidewithGps, Strava, ...

It will enable you to determine your daily starting and ending locations and to eliminate major highways or toll roads. This step will also help you researching where you can sleep each night. Switch to a street view to scope out the routes you plan to take, and to get important information ahead of the event about traffic and road conditions. If your route planning program don't let you trace a route, it means bikes are not legal on that part of the route. Those programs will give you the fastest routes possible. Which are not always the safest. Main routes are direct, but



also have heavier traffic. Thus you might have to consider different options, extra km in distance but safer, or extra km in distance but flatter. And you will have to ask yourself which option you would prefer.

Check your route as much as possible. Make sure a Google street view is available along the whole route you selected, you will avoid dead ends. There is an incredible network of roads in Japan. Wherever you go, even once you get out of the cities and towns, there will be some great and soft routes, in perfect condition. They really do build roads everywhere. You will often find yourself alone on a small beautiful road. But strangely, a road can be wide with perfect tarmac for some distance and then suddenly become narrow and potholed.

Most routes are numbered, with the number usually displayed on a road sign just after an intersection. You usually don't get lost easily. Blue and green colours will be your friends during your odyssey. Blue background road signs typically

point you to national or prefecture roads (hexagon sign). The green background signs point you to the toll expressways and are not allowed by bike. Information on the signs are normally written in Japanese and English.

The stop sign is a red, downward pointing triangle. The warning signs designating situation you have to pay attention to are pattern on a yellow diamond.

One thing you have to take care of on Japanese roads are the speed bumps, road separators, and drainage ditches that can be fairly deep.

We ask entrants to ride only on routes where cycling is legal. Should you find a no cycling notice for a road you should not attempt to ride it.

CLOSED ROADS

As you will discover it, closed roads in Japan are often passable by bike. Sometimes they close roads that they no longer intend to maintain, in which case the road will stay closed indefinitely

but is still useable. Be careful on such roads, keep in mind it is a dangerous option in case there is a problem and that riding fast downhill in the wilderness on a road no longer maintained might bring extra danger such as fallen rocks or animals. In the mountains you also have to be careful of trucks travelling to and from roadworks.

TUNNELS

The recent tunnels have wide sidewalks you can cycle on and that isolate you from the traffic. But the older tunnels don't have sufficient space for a wide sidewalk. You will be riding on the same road as the cars. You have to light up front and rear lights and go for it. Reflective vest comes in handy. In most cases you can find a route avoiding the tunnel, ...and going over the mountain. Tunnels that are for cars only will have signage plain and clear on the entrance, and usually have a cycle tunnel or path nearby.

If a road is not explicitly banned, but if you feel it is not safe, get off and try a different route.

We also do encourage the entrants to share information about dangerous roads and to think of the other entrants. Keep your fellow riders out of risky areas.



BE PREPARED TO IMPROVISE

There are two rainy seasons in Japan. One is called "AKI-SAME" and goes from August to September/early October. It is characterized by torrential rain and typhoons. Those heavy rainfalls cause every year widespread flooding and landslides with mudslides blocking and destroying roads in mountainous areas. It is possible that one of your selected route will be blocked this autumn. It is possible that a mandatory segment will be blocked. Therefore it is important that you keep in mind to remain flexible about your route choices, and don't hesitate to divert from your planned route if necessary.



PRE-START BRIEFING

We will hold a pre-start briefing in the afternoon of Friday, October 11th in Kagoshima. The exact location and time of meeting will be communicated later on. The pre event briefing is mandatory for all riders.

It is an informal and friendly meeting. We will have the opportunity to meet and to get to know each other. We will also hand out the trackers and take time to have their use demonstrated, and to make sure everyone is at ease with their operation. It will also be your final opportunity to ask your burning and thorny questions.



FERRIES

Japan is an island nation. Your adventure will take you on Kyushu, Shikoku, and finally Honshu, three of the four main islands.

These three islands are connected by each other with bridges and tunnels. Most of them are prohibited to bicycles. So, you will need to hop from one to the other with a ferry.

As you will be travelling just with your bike, reservation is not necessary. You just need to show up before the departure at the ticket office. There are numerous sailings a day. Those short ferry trips are good occasion to relax, to use the WI-FI on board, to recharge the batteries of your tech devices, and perhaps to sleep a bit.

Using a ferry in Japan may surpass all your expectations.

Ask for the cheapest option: 2nd class with no bed. You will stay in a common space with a carpet and/or tatami mats to rest on. Accommodation on the boat is simple but quite comfortable. Toilets and showers are communal, clean and neat.

The following ferry lines are mandatory ; no other ferry line is allowed.

The UWAJIMA UNYU ferry

Usuki – Yawatahama in 2 h 30

www.uwajimaunyu.co.jp/english/#timetables

The NANKAI ferry

Tokushima – Wakayama in 2 h

www.nankai-ferry.co.jp/timetable



Note that we first wanted entrants to leave Kyushu and reach Shikoku with the ferry line going from Saiki to Sukumo. We communicated on our social channels on this ferry line being mandatory. But due to soaring fuel prices, this ferry line has been suspended. Therefore, we want the entrants to use instead the UWAJIMA UNYU line to reach Shikoku.

THE CONTROLS

The 2019 Japanese Odyssey will start from the Sakurajima Island in the Bay of Kagoshima on October 12th. The time for the start is set at 07:30 AM.

Entrants will have to ride to Tokyo within a 10 days time limit. If they want to complete the 2019 Japanese Odyssey, they'll have to go in the determined order through the 7 mandatory control points (CP) and the 7 mandatory segments.

Not all the roads leading to the CP have been tested. So keep in mind that some portion may be wild, and that it could be touch and go with road conditions as landslides happen and roads get closed. Reaching those CP and then continuing your route will lead you on small, secluded and wild forest roads. Except for a few tiny portions of gravel, entrants will ride on sealed roads.

But that doesn't necessarily mean a dream ride on a smooth tarmac. Indeed, rindo (forest roads) are sometimes no longer maintained or repaired.

Entrants might find used asphalt, poor surface, stones, branches and flying debris. Also, roads covered with moss are very slippery. For those who intend to select and ride on larger gravel sections, make sure to use good and wide tyres as the Japanese use large grey flinty stuff for their sharp gravel.

Every year, people are asking us what is the best setup. Actually there isn't one. It is whatever best suits you. We had all sorts of bikes on the previous editions: classic race bike, gravel bike, folding bike, steel/aluminium/carbon frame. What matters most is that you'll have a bike that you're comfortable on, equipped with good, grippy tires, fully operational brakes, and a set of lights. As for components : aim toward durability and reliability ; save that ultra-light, exotic bike of yours for less demanding rides.

Don't expect to find anything on top of the CP or mandatory segments. No premises, no rest house. Controls will in most cases just be an intersection, or the top of an intended hill, and they won't be staffed. Should you have an accident or a mechanical problem on the more remote CP, you are likely to be out of cell phone reach and few if any vehicles will pass. Again, our main concern is to have any of you getting back home safe after the event. Therefore we ask you to always consider safety first when making any decisions.

In-between those imposed control points, entrants can take the route of their choice. Depending on the route choices, the adventure stretches over about 2,200 km.

THE MAP

Here is the map with the 14 CP and segments. Most of them are situated in the inland part of Japan, which is pretty hilly and mountainous, and dominated by small agriculture and forest areas.

Remember that rural areas sometimes lack food and water supplies, so plan ahead!

Use this address to get the detailed version of the map

<https://goo.gl/5MggXj>



START, CONTROLS POINTS AND FINISH LINE

EVENT START : KAGOSHIMA

Location: Sakurajima

31.592, 130.59927

Sakurajima is an active volcano and now a peninsula in the bay of Kagoshima. The volcanic activity still continues and drops volcanic ashes on the surroundings of the area.

We will all meet on the morning of October 12th on the Sakurajima Island. It is only 15 minutes away from Kagoshima by ferry, with the ferry operating 24 hours a day. Expect a ferry every 15 minutes between 06:00 and 07:00.

www.city.kagoshima.lg.jp/sakurajima-ferry/english/guides.html

FINISH LINE : TOKYO

Location: Nihonbashi

35.684048, 139.774462

Your adventure ends in Tokyo, at the Nihonbashi Bridge. Congratulations, you made it.

The Nihonbashi Bridge was formerly a wooden bridge erected early in the 17th century, and was reconstructed in stone during the Meiji Period. Now the bridge stands obscured and overshadowed by an elevated expressway. But it remains the symbolic heart of the country. Indeed, the bronze plaque on the road in the middle of the bridge marks point zero, from which distances from and to Tokyo are measured.

Any entrants making it to the Nihonbashi Bridge in Tokyo before Tuesday 22th, October at 19:00 will be considered as having completed the 2019 Japanese Odyssey.

We propose to meet and to gather with those of you who are still around on Tuesday night. Nothing will be planned and arranged in advance, consider this rather as a casual opportunity to sit back, relax and to share your adventure or misadventures with your fellow entrants.

CONTROL POINTS AND THEIR COORDINATES

CP1- control point Mt Wanitsuka

31.76914, 131.26968

CP2- control point Mt Eboshi

32.28596, 131.21246

S3- mandatory segment to Mt Shiraga

Start: 32.42919, 130.81828

Finish: 32.46239, 130.82172

CP4- control point tunnel Ohira Pass

32.8063, 131.38802

S5 - mandatory segment around Old Oguni Highway

Start: 33.05993, 131.20232

Finish: 33.09102, 131.17326

S6- mandatory segment to Tenguokogen

Start: 33.46038, 132.88895

Finish: 33.47652, 133.0025

CP7- control point Kyobashira Pass

33.8241, 133.86174

S8 - mandatory segment around Naka Highway

Start: 33.75224, 134.16112

Finish: 33.75715, 134.249

S9 - mandatory segment to Mt Gomadan

Start: 34.04907, 135.3912

Finish: 34.06372, 135.55915

CP10 - control point Okumotori Pass

33.71533, 135.86313

CP11 - control point "David's choice" / Kunimi-dake

35.47661, 136.41745

S12 - mandatory segment to Kanayama Pass

Start: 35.77264, 136.32511

Finish: 35.78852, 136.39386

S13 - mandatory segment around Mt Ontake

Start: 35.97293, 137.35505

Finish: 35.96346, 137.42143

CP14 - Mikabo Rindo

36.144, 138.81801

RE-SUPPLY POINTS AND SLEEPING OUTDOORS

For the next 6 months you will spend great amount of time on your bike, getting prepared and ready for this adventure. The riding part isn't usually the problem. The problem is the other part. The route planning, packing and unpacking, knowing when and where to sleep and to eat.

You will probably share with the other entrants your training program, the hours and kilometres ridden. But remember it is the off-bike bits that matter. How you recover from sleep deprivation, the little time-saving bits that you learn about where to pack your most used items, what food works for you and just efficient use of time: when you stop for food, you also plug in anything that needs charging, and check your route.

FOOD

It is impossible to starve in Japan. Konbini is the Japanese word for convenience stores. They are everywhere in Japan, and in medium and big cities are open all day round.

Konbini are a favourite stop for most cyclists. It is the cheapest way to eat in Japan. They are huge chains, so the uniformity means you can be sure of getting the same wide range of relatively healthy food and drink, plus a lot of nutritionally dubious, but somewhat comforting snacks.

They are offering a wide range of products and services. They will provide you with fresh and healthy items: salads, fruits (expensive),

sandwiches, bento boxes (rice-vegetables-fish/meat). With Guillaume we use to pay around ¥1000-1200 each for a meal: drinks, sandwiches, sliced omelette, onigiri (rice ball made from white rice formed into triangular or cylinder shapes and often wrapped in seaweed), chocolate and some sweets..... You also may use the konbini to do your banking, as your international card is mostly accepted on their ATMs. (We had the most success with 7-Eleven's. Lawson or Family Mart, not so much). Cash is still the preferred payment method in Japan, especially in small stores and /or rural areas, so make sure you have some to cover your daily expenses.

SLEEPING OUTDOORS

You won't have any difficulties finding quiet places to put your sleeping bag or hammock.

You will find all long your route quiet cosy bus shelters. Public parks can be a good option as well. Make sure they are not too near from a residential area though. As a matter of fact, you can sleep pretty much anywhere, as long as you install your sleeping bag late enough and leave at dawn. Respect your surroundings, and leave no traces of your stay.

MICHI NO EKI

Michi no Eki are roadside stations. They are a government-designated rest area found along roads and highways in Japan. There are currently over 1,000 locations throughout Japan.

Depending on their size, you'll find places to sleep, eat, refresh, ATM, vending machines, etc.

www.michi-no-eki.jp/stations/english

CAMPsites AND YOUTH HOSTELS

Camp sites are run by government or individuals, and they charge for some money (usually ¥200 to ¥500), but some of them are free. Here's a map of all free campsites:

mapmates.net/camp-zero/sumafo.html

OTHERS OPTIONS

Minshuku (a room in a private house) and youth hostel are almost available in any medium size villages. It is strongly recommended to make a reservation on the morning. Allow ¥3,000 - ¥4,000 per night in a youth hostel. Keep in mind that check-in is usually quite early (around 7:00PM)



ENTRY AND REGISTRATION

Before you commit to enter, take a good look at this manual. Make sure to read with extreme care and attention the WARNINGS and GROUND RULES sections. And remember, the Japanese Odyssey is more than challenging.

There is no requirement to have completed any other particular bike event to take part in the event. However, having previous participation in bike endurance events will give you helpful experience.

You are required to be at least 18 years old to take part in the Japanese Odyssey.

You also need to be an experienced cyclist and you must be sufficiently trained to undertake this tough and demanding adventure.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fit enough to complete the adventure, that you are in good health, and do not have any illness that will hinder your ability to complete the Japanese Odyssey.

It is also our responsibility to check and monitor your condition during the adventure and to withdraw if you are no longer fit to continue.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Send us an email if you are on our side for this adventure, with the following information:

- Family Name
- First Name
- Gender
- Date of birth
- E-mail address
- Postal Address
- Nationality
- Next of kin. Name and contact email address.
- Will you rent a tracker or use your own device?
- Interested in an organised logistics for sending your bike case in Tokyo?

We will then email you back both an entry disclaimer attestation and the PayPal account number for the entry fee.

Sign and send back the entry disclaimer. Pay the registration fees. Your registration is confirmed.

Train. Hard. And... Be prepared.

ENTRY FEES

The entry fee of 220 € for the 2019 Japanese Odyssey includes the rent of the tracker, the set up of the tracking leader board and the satellite tracking, the participation at the pre-event briefing and at the dinner in Kagoshima on Friday Oct-11, and the 2019 event's cap.

For the entrants bringing their own tracker device, an entry fee of 155 € applies.

CANCELLATION POLICY

You are entitled to total refund if you cancel your registration before the 1st of July.

There will be no refund for cancellations from the that date onwards.

THE
JAPANESE ODYSSEY
日本のオデッセイ

YOUR CONTACT

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