



THE
JAPANESE ODYSSEY

日本のオデッセイ

ENTRANTS' MANUAL

ED. 2025 - "THE FORGOTTEN TÔGE"

HONTONI ARIGATOU GOZAIMASU

Adding hontoni to the classic and polite expression of thank you is extra emphasis. It is like adding a “really” or “truly”.

We're off to Japan again this year for a new edition of the Japanese Odyssey. From now on, the event will be held every other year. Odd-numbered year. Since 2015 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 for two French guys not living there, and not mastering the language.

The variety of customs and traditions of the country make them difficult for outsiders to grasp. Japanese use the word “Gaijin” for people coming from outside, foreigners. The word has no negative or pejorative connotation at all. Take it as a slang word for someone who looks like a non-Japanese. That is what Guillaume and I are. Outsiders. Obviously the event wouldn't exist without the help of our local friends whose contributions, advices, country knowledge and little hands during this event and previous ones were invaluable.

We would like to take a moment to say a massive thanks to the people and the brands that shared a part of the way with us on those Japanese roads and throughout the organisation of the previous editions. Thank you to them for their patience and their confidence. We really appreciate. We do. It mean a lot to us. We also would like to take the opportunity to apologize to those same people, as there were probably many situations where Guillaume and I both demonstrated awkwardness.

We feel extremely lucky to have the City of Kagoshima on our side for a third year. We would like to thank Shimozurusan (Mayor of Kagoshima City), Kawagoe-san (Chairman of Kagoshima City Council) for their confidence and their hospitality. Our thanks wouldn't be complete if we didn't mention the enthusiasm and hard work of the people at both the International Affairs Division and the Sports Division at Kagoshima City Hall.

Eigo Shimojo is the man behind the lense. He has been covering the Japanese Odyssey since 2016. By publishing pictures and stories in Japanese cycling magazines he has put the event on the map for a lot of Japanese riders. And we're getting thrilled having more and more locals entering the event year after year. But Eigo's involvement is far greater than just taking pictures. He has a way to smooth out logistic difficulties and arrange things. In 2023, he made room in his car for Hiromu Mitsumune, who helped him follow and photograph the riders. He can spend hours at the turn of a mountain pass, in the middle of the night, listening to rock music and waiting for a participant. And when they meet, he offers him/her a smile, a piece of fruit, a bit of humor or a chocolate bar.

For overseas participants, picking up their bike case once they arrive in Matsumoto, thousands miles away from the departure, is an important and critical logistical point. We would be unable, and above all not legitimate, to organize and negotiate this service with a Japanese transport company. Masafumi Iwasaki who owns Masaya Bike Store in Fukuoka, is taking care of it with great efficiency.

We also would like to thank Timo Hyppönen from Pelago Bicycles, Lucas Badtke-Berkow from Papersky, Sogon Yoon from Farride Magazine, Ryoji Abeki at Champion System Japan, Ken Jungnickel, and Tim Smith. However, this statement should by no means be reduced to a simple inventory. They all show an immense enthusiasm for the event and a strong confidence. We owe you much guys.

Hontoni arigatou gozaimasu

Emmanuel & Guillaume

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THE 2025 JAPANESE ODYSSEY MANUAL



Welcome to all people planning to enter the 2025 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. Further information on this year's event, particularly if we learn of any road closures, will be emailed directly to registered participants over the summer.

We would like to apologize to all the readers who do not feel comfortable reading English.

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

Check the news page on the website to get the general news:

www.japanese-odyssey.com/news

You may also follow us on various social channels.

FACEBOOK @japaneseodyssey

INSTAGRAM @japanese_odyssey

SHORT ANSWER: IT IS NOT A RACE.

We regularly and inevitably receive messages asking if the Japanese Odyssey is a race?

We do understand competition, and yet, the Japanese Odyssey is not billed as a race. It is an adventure. For some, this « voyage » even turns into a co-operative ride, when for just a few kilometres, to tackle a long and steady climb, during this uninterrupted night on the saddle, or for three days, they decide to pedal with another participant.

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, documented his 2018 ride through the artistic project "Detour".

He is absolutely right when he explains that "the emphasis lies on exploration and appreciation rather than speed". Indeed, this year we're putting the emphasis on slowness. Which we hope will enable you to feel the shape of these mountain roads, and the shape of the country.

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

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 while carrying only the necessary to ride, sleep and endure the inevitably wet and

cold weather that Japan mountain passes offer this time of the year.

We would like the entrants to make use of the occasion to take some turns, to leave highways and fast roads behind, 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 324 hours. 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 mean 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 2025 edition, entrants will have to ride about 2300 km, trying to reach the final destination within 324 hours (13 and a half 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 Matsumoto 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 2300 km, often in remote and secluded areas, 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.

KEEP IN MIND THAT YOU ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY. WHATEVER HAPPENS, DURING, OR AS A RESULT OF RIDING THE JAPANESE ODYSSEY, WILL BE SOLELY YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

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 experienced 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 mid-October should bring beautiful days. But nights will be chilly. Expect single-digit temperatures.

On the small mountain roads you'll take, surrounded by nature and with almost no human presence, it's very likely that you'll come across animals and wildlife. In 2023, one of the participants had a minor collision with a wild boar crossing the road at night and at high speed. Early morning and early evening are the times when animals are most active, so be especially careful. The same is true when it's raining or foggy.

The main tip is to let the animals hear you and know your presence in order to avoid sudden encounters. So make noise! Let animals know you're there. Call out, clap, sing, talk loudly or use a bear bell.

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 kinkyu 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.



ENTERING JAPAN

Entry to Japan for a short stay (less than 90 days) requires no visa for nationals of 68 countries.

But remember, you must present a passport valid for the entire duration of your stay. Once you booked your flight ticket and before leaving, we do advise you to fill in the information requested by the Japanese authorities on the "Visit Japan Web" website, to facilitate immigration and customs checks on arrival and to ensure you a stress free experience. You will need to create an account.

Early January 2024, system change to unify 2D codes for immigration clearance and customs declaration was made.

Both procedures are now unified on one code. It allows you a smoother entry as it will allow you to move more quickly through your arrival airport.

However, the app is not mandatory and you will not be denied entry to japan if you do not use the app.

<https://vjw-lp.digital.go.jp/en/>

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. 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 any audio player 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 and 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. Each entrant is required to be covered by an insurance policy which must protect him/her during the event, and which must cover emergency extraction and repatriation. A compulsory third-party liability insurance is also required. It is a rider's responsibility to contact his/her insurance and confirm that the level of cover provided covers endurance sports events. Please carry a copy of your cover certificate, including evidence of emergency extraction and repatriation cover.
7. The guiding principle is: "On your own and 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.

NEXT OF KIN

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

Since 2018, 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 2025 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.”

PLAN YOUR ADVENTURE

SATELLITE TRACKING

We will have a 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 Gen3 trackers..



SPOT tracker use is mandatory for the 2025 edition. We will provide you with a rented tracker device as a part of your registration.

We will hand out the trackers during the 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 ask us if their GPS head unit 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 head 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.

Note that private Spot trackers as well as Garmin InReach are welcome. There is a discount for those using their own device and their own service plan. We will set up an information form to collect their tracker information during the registration process.

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 Hachinohe.

If you withdraw from the event without reaching the finish line or if you take more than 324 hours 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.

BATTERIES

The device is battery-powered with 4 x AAA lithium batteries. You won't need extra external power supply. We used to provide the first set of batteries. But as the event is growing, it is becoming harder for us to board an airplane with such a significant number of lithium batteries.

We ask each entrant to come with his/her set of 4 AAA lithium batteries.

Keep in mind that the batterie must be carried in carry-on baggage only. We advise to keep them in their original packaging for airplane transportation.

In case you need to replace your batteries during the ride, prefer lithium batteries. In the absence of choice, traditional NiMH or alkaline batteries will also work, but keep in mind that their lifetime will be significantly lower.

INSTALLATION ON THE BIKE

The device weighs about 120g. You clip it to a carrier, and attach that carrier to your bike via a cable tie that we will provide you with. The trackers will not function reliably in pockets of in bags.

Please reserve a place on your frame, handlebars or on seatbag, so the device has a clear view of the sky with the spot logo facing upwards.

ROUTE PLANNING

The 2025 edition is a little different from previous years. We're imposing 13 compulsory segments covering 960 km, which far exceeds the length of the previously imposed routes. This means you'll have a little less freedom to choose your routes between the imposed points or segments. And a few less options available. But still.

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.

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, Komoot ...

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 kilometres in distance but safer, or extra kilometres 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 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 branches, fallen rocks, holes and wildlife. 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.

RIDING BY NIGHT

We are very much focused on starting late in the season, hoping to have these dry, sunny and cool autumn weather conditions.

But it has a major drawback - night falls quickly and early. Expect to ride in the dark by 18:00. Keep in mind that riding in low visibility conditions increases accidents risks.



Thus it is important to make yourself as visible as possible. Use multiple lights (with different power sources), wear bright colored clothing and reflective bands, apply reflective tape to your bike and helmet, and remember to rest and to sleep.

BE PREPARED TO IMPROVISE

There are two rainy seasons in Japan. One is called "akisame" 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.



FERRIES

The forgotten Toge is this year's theme. But it could just as easily have been the « Ferry edition ». This year, we are imposing three ferry lines. And as a former participant humorously remarked, this will probably be your only flat kilometres during the event.

Using a ferry in Japan may surpass all your expectations. Those short 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. Accommodation on the boat is simple but comfortable. Toilets (and showers if you are lucky) are communal, clean and neat.



USUKI – YAWATAHAMA

<https://www.uwajimaunyu.co.jp>

Departure times from Usuki:

00 : 55 / 02 : 40 / 08 : 50 / 12 : 40 / 14 : 40 / 18 : 30 / 20 : 40

Duration : 2 h 20

The price of a one-way trip for a passenger and its bike is ¥ 4 300.

TOKUSHIMA – WAKAYAMA

<https://nankai-ferry-co-jp-e.athp.transer.com>

Departure times from Tokushima:

02 : 45 / 05 : 30 / 08 : 00 / 10 : 55 / 13 : 20 / 16 : 25 / 18 : 55 / 21 : 50

Duration : 2 h 20

The price of a one-way trip for a passenger and its bike is ¥ 5 600.

TOBA – IRAGO

<https://www.isewanferry.co.jp/en/>

Departure times from Toba :

08 : 30 / 10 : 40 / 12 : 00 / 13 : 40 / 15 : 10 / 16 : 30 / 17 : 40

(on sundays schedule is slightly different)

Duration : 1 h 00

The price of a one-way trip for a passenger and its bike is ¥ 3 100.

RE-SUPPLY POINTS

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 usually pay around ¥ 1 200 - ¥ 1 400 each for a meal: drinks, sandwiches, sliced omelette, onigiri, chocolate and some sweets..... You also may use the konbini to do your banking, as your international card is mostly accepted on their ATMs. 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.

DRINK

Apart from konbini, vending machines are scattered all around the country, providing hot and cold beverages where you need it the most, even on seemingly remote, rural roads.

BEING VEGAN IN JAPAN

While vegetarian options are plenty, being on a strict vegan diet can be hard to manage in Japan, especially in rural area.

If like us, you rely mainly on konbini for sustenance, onigiri and it's lesser known cousin omusubi will likely be the basis of your refuel stops.

Easy too pack, available in a number of flavors, they really are the go-to meal for the Odyssey.

Various type of nuts are also commonly available in konbini. Although a more costly option, they offer a very good option for the long, sustained efforts you will have to make during the Odyssey. Crips and such are usually a safe option too : some entrants from a previous edition relied mostly on Pringles for the entire journey.

If you plan to refuel in restaurants, however, then all bets are off. A lot of meals are prepped with dashi, a broth that contains fish - even if the meal appears vegan on the menu. Same goes for ramen, where the broth is usually infused with pork meat and bones. Don't get fooled by curry houses either ; their vegetable-based options are plenty, but a closer inspection of the ingredients reveal pork and beef stock are used in the making of the sauce.



SLEEPING OUTDOORS

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 1000 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

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/sumafu.html

YOUTH HOSTELS

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 19:00)

OTHERS OPTIONS

Love hotels and internet cafes may seem uncommon, borderline weird options, but actually quite suitable to long-distance riding. Checking in/out can be done at any time of the day/night, and you usually pay by the hour. Ideal if you need a few hours of sleep in a warm environment.



LOGISTICS

BIKE CASES LOGISTICS

We will organise and will be providing a bike cases transfer from Kagoshima to Matsumoto. This option is by no way mandatory. For riders interested, you will be able to leave one bike case (or one suit case) with us at registration. The cases will then be transported to the finish line.

The suitcases will be collected by the carrier at the pre-event briefing on Thursday 2nd, and will be stored in Fukuoka. On Tuesday 14th, they will be delivered to Matsumoto. We are renting a conference room located 800 m from the station. You will be able to collect your suitcases between Tuesday 14th and Friday 17th evening.

Your bike cases will be transported and stored carefully, but keep in mind that we (the organisation), neither the Municipality of Matsumoto, nor the transport carrier will hold any responsibility in any cases of damage or loss.



MASAYA

So please do not put anything valuable in your case. Keep in mind that if you scratch from the event, you will need to make your way to Matsumoto to pick up your case and your belongings.

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.



SHINKANSEN LUGGAGE RULES

Bullet train luggage rules have changed since May 2020. Japan Rail announced a new policy that affects the Tokyo to Osaka, Osaka to Fukuoka, and Fukuoka to Kagoshima Shinkansen lines.

The new system classifies luggage with a total size referring to the combined total of length, width, and height of 160 cm and more as "extra large luggage". In that case, you must reserve a special seat. These seats are the last row of the carriage and have a dedicated space behind them.

Suitcases over 250 cm won't be allowed on board at all.

In practical terms, if you plan to reach Kagoshima by train from Tokyo, Osaka or Fukuoka with your bike case you need to reserve a special seat. You will need to book your seat before getting on the train. Oversized baggage storage can be reserved when making seat reservations at no additional charge.

You can book your ticket at any JR station the day you are travelling, you can choose face-to-face at one of the ticket desk or you can go straight for the tickets machines nearby. Reserving your Shinkansen seat ticket with an oversized baggage area will automatically include this reserved space for your luggage.

Matsumoto is not served by the Shinkansen. Leaving the city to get to Tokyo you will take the Azusa Limited Express to Shinjuku Station. The train requires just over 2 h 30 for the journey between the two cities. The one way trip costs around ¥ 6 620 and is covered by the JR Pass. There are no special regulations regarding excessive baggage on Limited Express Trains.

HOW TO ARRIVE TO KAGOSHIMA

KAGOSHIMA AIRPORT (KOJ)

The airport is located 40 km northeast of Kagoshima City. The easiest and cheapest way to travel from Kagoshima Airport to the city is by taking the bus shuttle into Kagoshima City. It is a one hour bus ride.

nangoku-kotsu.com/ashuttle/kagoshima-city-line

FROM TOKYO BY PLANE

JAL, ANA, Skymark and Solaseed airline companies are operating frequent flights between Tokyo Haneda Airport (HND) and Kagoshima Airport, while Jetstar connects Kagoshima with Narita Airport (NRT). Flight time is around two hours.

FROM TOKYO BY TRAIN

Tokyo and Kagoshima are connected with each other by the Tokaido, Sanyo and Kyushu Shinkansen. One transfer of trains is required along the way, typically at Shin-Osaka or Hakata Station in Fukuoka. The one way trip takes about seven hours and costs around ¥ 30 000. The JR Pass fully covers the trip if done by the slower Hikari and Sakura trains, but a supplement fee is required on the Nozomi and Mizuho trains.

FROM FUKUOKA

Fukuoka is the largest city on the Japanese island of Kyūshū. Located in the northwest of the island.

The one way journey between Fukuoka (Hakata Station) and Kagoshima by Kyushu Shinkansen takes about 1 h 30, costs around ¥ 10 000 and is fully covered by the JR Pass.

BEFORE THE RIDE

VISIT KAGOSHIMA



Kagoshima is the southernmost city on Kyushu Island in southern Japan. The thriving port city is the capital of the Prefecture of the same name. It is historically the city of the Shimazu Clan, an important family of daimyo (feudal lords) from Kyushu.

Warm, palm-fringed Kagoshima is often compared to Naples in Southern Italy because of its similarity in climate, vibrant culture, as well as the fact that both places have a volcano very close to the city. The Sakurajima is an active volcano located in the Bay, with small eruptions occurring almost daily. The volcano will accompany your whole stay. Indeed, it is so imposing and eye-catching that it will be difficult not to see it during your wanderings. The ferry trip takes 10 minutes between Kagoshima and Sakurajima, so there is plenty of opportunity for exploring the wonderful "cherry blossom island".

You can see most Kagoshima attractions by walking. Getting around the city is not complicated. You can also use the streetcar, which crosses the city. But don't hesitate to hop on your bike to visit distant places like the sublime Sengan-en

garden, a large traditional Japanese-style landscape garden along the coast classified as a Unesco World Heritage site.

Shiroyama Park, the city's green lung, is located centrally. The park is most famous for its spectacular views over downtown Kagoshima, Kagoshima Bay and Sakurajima. The night view is also very nice. In 2023, every time we climbed there we met and got to know three or four participants. Easy to say that with its 107 m ascent the perfect place to shake down and relax the legs a little.

OUR PERSONAL TIP

The Sakurajima offers its most beautiful views from the city of Tarumizu on the opposite side of Kagoshima city.

Reach the small road: (coordinates: 31.526752, 130.705313). From that spot you can observe the volcano, its active crater, and in front of it a part of the bay where dozens of fishermen boats are stationed. Oh, by the way, the first segment on the day of departure offers this view of the volcano.



EVENT ESSENTIALS

WEDNESDAY 01 OCTOBER / AFTERNOON

- Kagoshima Backcountry Social Ride (not mandatory)
- Evening gathering for those already in the city

THURSDAY 02 OCTOBER / MORNING

- Pre-Event Ride organised by the Sports Division of Kagoshima City (not mandatory)
- Registration
- Bike cases drop-off

THURSDAY 02 OCTOBER / AFTERNOON

- Registration
- 16:00 - Event Briefing
- Welcome Reception

FRIDAY 03 OCTOBER

- From 5:00 - Gathering and portraits
- 8:00 - Official Start of the Japanese Odyssey

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER

- 20:00 - Cutoff time



THE ROUTE

«THE FORGOTTEN TÔGE»

Tôge (峠) is the Japanese word for mountain pass. It is made up of a radical kanji meaning mountain (Yama) and a combination of two other common kanji in the Japanese language meaning: up or above and down or under.

A cursory glance at the map of the country shows that very little flat area exists in Japan. The plains are few and small. They are therefore naturally located along the coast. But if cycling along the coast can offer the best such as cycling while feeling the sea breeze, or discovering and exploring small fishing villages it can also unfortunately and quite frequently be summed up as a nightmare by immersing you in a heavy-traffic environment on long stretches of road full of endless streams of large tractor trailers, trucks, and busses.

Since the first Japanese Odyssey, we've always tried to get away from the coast and to venture inland.

The 2025 route will be mountainous.

Even more than in previous years. From the start in Kagoshima to the finish in Matsumoto (and with the exception of ferry departure and arrival urban areas) you'll be in mountainous regions. Sticking to old roads as much as possible, will definitely slow things down. Yes, the route will focus on slowness and isolation, and will get you through the islands of Kyushu and Shikoku, the Kumano region south of the Kii Peninsula, and the Japanese Alps on the main island of Honshu. Yes, the 2025 route will be mountainous.

Starting and rolling out from Sakurajima on the morning of 3rd Oct., the route will take the riders along the eastern side of the Bay.

Mandatory segment 1 starts after only a little more than 20 km with the dual objective of taking you away from the busy Road 220, and stretching our "peloton" in the first hills. You've just left a conurbation of nearly 600 000 inhabitants, and then, very quickly, you find yourself alone on a narrow road. A narrow, uphill road. The first day will already be a tough one, with a succession of bumps and already after 130 km, a seven kilometres uphill climb on a gravel road above 1100 m. Through the forest you will catch on your right occasional glimpses of the highlands surrounding Mt. Kirishima. And the best is yet to come. If you could have blasted the whole stage from Kagoshima to the eastern town of Usuki where you will catch a ferry to Shikoku, in around 280 km, crossing the interior of Kyushu over a series of climbs and descents will almost double the mileage. You'll be paying particular attention in this remote and outlying region as there will be fewer services and opportunities for help.

Once on Shikoku you will head up right into the mountains again right out of the ferry terminal at Yawahama. It's all relative, but the slopes on Shikoku are probably a little less steep than on Kyushu. What's more, with the exception of CP7 (Shikano Col) and S11 (Oshima Pass), you'll enjoy a slightly lower and moderate elevation than on Kyushu. The various check points and segments will have you zigzagging across the island for 600 km to Tokushima. It's a long trip. By comparison, a direct crossing of the island along the coast is just over 250 km. You will be cycling in remote and secluded regions. Most of the time you'll be on roads with no vehicles. And most importantly with no tourism facility or infrastructure.

Again, there might be fewer services and opportunities for help. So be careful.

Then it's time to catch a ferry again. This time to Wakayama, at the western entrance to the Kii Peninsula. The 500 km route through the Kumano region will take you through a series of medium-height passes, ranging from 500 to 800 m in altitude, with the exception of the start of S12 at 1100 m. Much of the route passes through mountains covered with dense forests of Japanese cedars, and bamboo groves.

Arriving in Toba, you will take your last ferry for your shortest crossing. Barely enough time to charge your electronics. Head for Mie Prefecture and a few kilometres of relative flatness before heading north into the Japanese Alps.

The first compulsory CP (Misawabo Lake) is at just over 1000 m, as if after almost 1900 km since you left Kagoshima it was necessary to warm up, but Mt. Ontake at over 1800 m and the Norikura are soon to follow. To be honest, the Norikura has nothing of a forgotten pass. In fact, it's the highest road in Japan at almost 2800 m. And is very popular. The last kilometres of the ascent are closed to traffic, with the exception of some local buses authorized to transport hikers to the summit. In a word, it's a tough climb, but a cyclist's delight. Provided the weather is kind. I'll let you imagine climbing to this altitude in the pouring rain.

Then, with the Norikura behind you, the adventure is almost over. And almost won. All that's left is 130 km, and to bypass Matsumoto, first from the south to avoid the infernal Route 158, then skirt the city on its eastern flank over the last few passes. The view of the Alps is magnificent.

THE CONTROLS

The 2025 Japanese Odyssey will start from the Sakurajima Island in the Bay of Kagoshima on October 3rd.

Entrants will have to ride to Matsumoto within a 13,5 days (324 hours) time limit. If they want to be deemed a finisher of the 2025 Japanese Odyssey, they'll have to go in the determined order through the mandatory control points (CP) and segments. If at any point, for any unexpected reason, or if road conditions do not permit it, just find your way and return to the route when possible. Likewise, some of our segments are long. It is perfectly possible and permitted to leave the mandatory route to find food or rest. Simply return to the point where you left off.

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 tyres, 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, the top of an intended hill or the border between two prefectures, 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 and segments entrants can take the route of their choice. Depending on the route choices, the adventure stretches over about 2300 km.

THE MAP

Here is the map with the 20 check points and segments. Most of them are situated on remote, mountainous roads.

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

Use this address to get the detailed version of the map:

shorturl.at/0ocgo



START AND FINISH LINE

EVENT START : KAGOSHIMA

Location: Sakurajima Peninsula
31.59104, 130.59617

For the third time the route starts from Sakurajima, one of the most active volcanoes in Japan, located in the north of Kagoshima Bay. The volcano is still erupting. It did yesterday, last week, last month, and will continue to do so tomorrow and beyond.

Two years ago, for the 2023 edition, participants climbed up to the Kihoku Astronomical Observatory, some forty kilometres from the start, on a slippery road covered by a thin layer of volcanic ash.

We will all meet on the morning of Friday, 3rd October on the 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

The time for the start of the 2025 Japanese Odyssey is set at 08:00.

FINISH LINE : MATSUMOTO

Location: City Alps Park
36.261768, 137.952532

Your adventure ends in Matsumoto. Situated at an altitude of 300 meters, the town lies at the foot of the Japanese Alps, nestled between mountains in the heart of Nagano Prefecture.

The finish is set in the Matsumoto City Alps Park to the north of the city. From its observation platform, you can enjoy panoramic views of the city and the Japanese Alps. It's the perfect place to get off your bike, put it on the ground in the lawn, and realize what you've just accomplished and how far you have come.

Any entrant making it to the City Alps Park before Thursday 16th, October at 20:00 will be considered as having completed the 2025 Japanese Odyssey.

We will meet and gather with those of you who are still around on Thursday 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.

MT. NORIKURA



Mt. Norikura is a massive volcanic mountain. And we're back there. At long last. We were there for the first two editions of the Japanese Odyssey, then no more. With one small difference this time. On our first two visits, we approached the pass from the East. This time, it's from the west side (Takayama).

This may not seem like a big deal. But it's not entirely so as on the East side there is a ski resort at an altitude of 1,600 m (Norikura Kogen) offering a wide range of accommodation options, whereas on the western side, over the 80 km between CP 17 and the summit of S18, options are much more limited.

But first thing first. Norikura is Japan's highest mountain road. The summit pass is at 2710 m, on the border between Gifu and Nagano Prefectures. And... it is closed to personal vehicle and consequently both sides are very low on traffic. As you ascend, you'll just need to open your eyes, you'll be treated to panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, and lush alpine meadows.

Coming from the south, you'll have a long climb to the start of segment 18. You'll need to pay particular attention as you travel along Route 158 just before entering the Norikura Skyline. Rd 158 is a very busy road, with many tunnels. Then turn right onto Route 5.

From here to the summit, it's about 14 km without much respite. The skyline starts at an elevation of about 1600 m and goes up to 2700 m on good sealed tarmac giving an average elevation of about 8%. There are one or two rest areas on the way to the top, with toilets, but not much else. So plan ahead. At the top of the road, there are stores and a restaurant.

The Mt. Norikuradake road is only open over 4 months in summer and fall, from July to early-November (depending on the snowfall). We'll just make it.

A FEW TIPS

Bring food and water.

Start early. As they do close the road with gates from late afternoon (18:00) to early morning (07:00)

Bring Layers. At the summit, the temperature should not exceed 3 - 4 °C.

Be Patient. The climb is not horrible. Really. The biggest challenge is the distance, and the overall 25 km ascent, 12 km from the point where you join Route 158 (from 850 m to around 1700 m altitude), then the 14 km climb on the Skyline to the summit.

CONTROL POINTS, SEGMENTS AND THEIR COORDINATES

SEGMENT 1

From Kihoku astronomical observatory to Mt. Ebinodake

Segment start: 31.50986, 130.73105

Segment finish: 31.93868, 130.81307

CHECKPOINT 2

Road to Kuma

Coordinates: 32.20029, 130.61697

CHECKPOINT 3

Nunoga falls

Coordinates: 32.31888, 130.68541

SEGMENT 4

Hirazo Pass

Segment start: 32.44577, 130.77651

Segment finish: 32.40019, 130.96028

SEGMENT 5

Mitate Valley

Segment start: 32.63149, 131.30303

Segment finish: 32.951, 131.67008

SEGMENT 6

Tochimoto River

Segment start: 33.45515, 132.58672

Segment finish: 33.29442, 132.66329

CHECKPOINT 7

Shikano Col

Coordinates: 33.19658, 132.60882

SEGMENT 8

Mount Sasayama

Segment start: 33.04325, 132.5526

Segment finish: 33.08953, 132.75129

SEGMENT 9

Tsuno wind park

Segment start: 33.31654, 132.97312

Segment finish: 33.45595, 133.12519

SEGMENT 10

Kyobashira Pass

Segment start: 33.73514, 133.67782

Segment finish: 33.82421, 133.86182

SEGMENT 11

Oshima Pass

Segment start: 33.90056, 134.03014

Segment finish: 33.98028, 134.23956

SEGMENT 12

Kumano Kodo

Segment start: 34.06586, 135.54679

Segment finish: 33.69438, 135.81347

SEGMENT 13

Totsukawa

Segment start: 33.96596, 135.76333

Segment finish: 34.06356, 136.09476

SEGMENT 14

Fujikasa pass

Segment start: 34.32558, 136.49189

Segment finish: 34.42068, 136.54788

CHECKPOINT 15

Misawabo Lake

Coordinates: 35.13883, 137.91745

SEGMENT 16

Tsumago-juku

Segment start: 35.55657, 137.72374

Segment finish: 35.59214, 137.60271

CHECKPOINT 17

Ohira Observatory

Coordinates: 35.95115, 137.38606

SEGMENT 18

Norikura to Shirakaba Pass

Segment start: 36.18054, 137.53028

Segment finish: 36.11227, 137.65987

CHECKPOINT 19

Lake Momiji

Coordinates: 35.93529, 138.03761

CHECKPOINT 20

Tobira Pass

Coordinates: 36.18754, 138.12918

FINISH LINE

Matsumoto City Alps Park

Coordinates : 36.261768, 137.952532

Find all the checkpoints and segments on a single map:

shorturl.at/Vsi91

REGISTRATION

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.

Training and fitness are key points. Self-sufficiency is another. The ability to make decisions while sleep-deprived, under pressure or in adverse weather conditions is a requirement to be able to undertake the Odyssey. Autonomy also applies to knowledge of the bike. You will need to be able to repair your bike on side of the road in the event of a mechanical. Consider your setup carefully and join the adventure with tried-and-true gear.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

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

1. Family Name
2. First Name
3. Gender (Male / Female / NB)
4. Date of birth
5. E-mail address
6. Postal Address
7. Nationality
8. Next of kin. Name and contact e-mail address.
9. Will you rent a tracker or use your own device?
10. Interested in the organised logistics for sending your bike case in Matsumoto?
11. Head diameter :
S (50 - 53 cm)
M (54 - 57 cm)
L (58 - 60 cm)
XL (61 - 63 cm)
12. Social networks handles:
Facebook / Instagram
13. Do you require a vegan meal for the Welcome Reception?

We will then email you back an entry disclaimer attestation and the PayPal account number or bank details.

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 340 € for the 2025 Japanese Odyssey includes the rent of the tracker, the setup of the satellite tracking system, the participation at the event briefing and at the welcome ceremony in Kagoshima on Thursday Oct. 02, the 2025 event's cap and member/finisher woven patch.

For the entrants bringing their own tracker device, a reduction of 60 € applies.

BIKE CASE TRANSFER

The bike case transfer is not mandatory, it is an additional service we offer as an option. The service costs 110 € and has to be booked and paid in advance.

It will allow you to turn up with your bike case at the event briefing, and we will get it transported and stored in Matsumoto.

Please note that we won't be able to deal with your bike case if you haven't booked the service upon registration.

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 that date onwards.

JEAN X THE JAPANESE ODYSSEY

In 2018, as we were riding toward Toba, along the Pacific Ocean, we made a bit of impromptu beach riding. And there it was: littered all over the place, lots of bottles and cans, plastic bags, and lots of unidentified plastic debris, carried by the tide, piling up on the shores.

We like to think of Japan as a very clean country, which adds up to the magical experience of riding there.

This got us thinking – the Japanese Odyssey is quite a selfish endeavour – and we use our fair share of plastic, getting our supplies mostly from konbinis.

Surely, there is a way to mitigate our overall impact ; and to help keeping Japan clean in some way.

For us it starts with reducing the amount of goodies we give to the riders. Having a full bag of swag is nice, but the riders really come for the experience, and are pretty much equipped already.

But we wanted to do more.

So we got in touch with JEAN (Japan Environmental Action Network), a NGO that specializes in ocean cleanup and litter analysis.

Beaches cleanup is nice and all. But, as they say themselves « Collection alone cannot solve the problem ».

So JEAN goes way further than that. Litter analysis allow to identify the type and source of garbage, and then act to prevent it altogether.

Each year since 2019, we have raised money and made a yearly donation to JEAN. We also do our best to raise awareness on the matter.

For 2025, a part of each entrant registration will be donated to JEAN.

Feel free to help us in this mission by spreading the word on social networks, or by donating via PayPal on our address:

www.paypal.me/japaneseodyssey

All the donations will be transferred to JEAN at the end of the Odyssey.

Together, let's make this count!

THE
JAPANESE ODYSSEY
日本のオデッセイ

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