

[03/05/10]

JAPAN : Through the Cultural Maze Fall 2010 Itinerary

Led by Japan-hand Sonia Katchian and Lightroom expert Peter Krogh, the Japan Photo Workshops are an induction for photographers into all things Japanese with improved skills in Lightroom and digital workflow. Geared specifically to the professional photographer wishing to take their work up a notch, the workshop is also open to photographers ambitious and energetic enough to keep up with the pace.

Dates:

Saturday, October 23 – Sunday, October 31, 2010; 9 days / 9 nights

Lodging:

In Tokyo we stay at the Asia Center, located in Akasaka, central Tokyo. Rooms are modest, Western style, with twin beds, internet and TV in all rooms.

<http://www.asiacenter.or.jp/eng/>.

In Kyoto, we stay at a charming Japanese style hotel. Rooms have tatami floors and futon bedding, in-room baths plus optional luxury spa upstairs. The website for Ryoku Fuso is

<http://www.ryokufuso.jp/> .

While we want to experience the best that Japan has to offer, we are sensitive to the fact that budgetary constraints are of concern to many. Therefore we have chosen lodging that is basic, clean, safe and pleasant. Lodging is based on double-occupancy. Single occupancy is available in Tokyo, for an additional \$175, and in Kyoto for an additional \$250. (these are approximate figures and will depend on the prevailing exchange rate.)

The Workshops:

Mornings start with an introduction to places we will visit that day plus special cultural tips from Japan-hand Sonia Katchian. Sonia is a former Tokyo correspondent for PHOTODISTRICTNEWS and has been a corporate and editorial photographer for 30 years, ten of them in Japan. We will visit well-known temples and hot spots but will also visit lesser known venues.

We gather after dinner to review and edit our images. Digital master Peter Krogh will show us ways to improve our digital files and workflow, whether you want to obtain rich black and white, muted or vibrant landscapes, beautiful skin tones, HDR effects and more. Peter literally wrote the book on the subject of digital workflow and will be available throughout each day to give us tips on both Lightroom and workflow.

We have schedules for each day, but we hope to be flexible and stay open to change...whether due to the weather, serendipity, or circumstances beyond our control.

Provisional Itinerary:

Day 1: We start in Tokyo with the in-gathering of participants on Saturday the 23rd. After introductions of participants and instructors we will go over some workshop guidelines and safety issues, then we kick off with a **Welcome Party**.

Day 2: Out of consideration to different peoples' reactions to jet lag, we will have a slow start this day, with free-time till noon. We start by a visit to a local shrine... **Nogi Shrine**, then we go to **Meiji Shrine**, one of the key Shinto complexes in Tokyo, where we may see a wedding party, or some other special event. Then we head to **Harajuku** where teenagers, decked out in their 1950's American garb, blast rock music and dance all afternoon on the closed off streets. We will stroll over to high-fashion Omotesando, where we could visit a **tea garden**. After dinner we gather in the downstairs meeting

room with our laptops for the nightly image edit/Lightroom session with Peter.

Day 3: It's up early on Monday morning to watch and photograph **sumo** wrestlers go through warmup exercises at a sumo 'stable'. This is a special treat, but it starts early. There are special do's and don't's that Sonia will go over. She will give everyone a special assignment to think about while shooting. After a stroll through the funky old Ryogoku neighborhood, a stop at a bank to change currency, and lunch, we go to **Asakusa Kannon Shrine** one of the oldest shrines in Tokyo. Then we fast-forward to the 21st century by heading to **Akihabara**, Tokyo's astonishing electronics district. After dinner we gather for an image edit/Lightroom session with Peter.

Day 4: Another early morning, this time to **Tsukiji**, the world's largest fish market, boisterous and colorful at 4am. Hardly a smell of fish anywhere though! After filling up our memory cards we might have sushi for breakfast, and a rest, after which we head out to the old city of **Kamakura**. As we may get back late in the evening, our editing session will be next day.

Day 5: After breakfast, we gather for Lightroom with Peter, then board the **shinkansen**, bullet train, with bento lunches in tow, for a memorable ride to Kyoto. Check in at our hotel then visit the **Gion** geisha district. This is the area where most of the geisha and maiko (**geisha-in-training**) living quarters are located. We are very fortunate to have good contacts with one of the oldest geisha houses in Kyoto and will be entertained by a **maiko**!

Day 6: A visit to **Kokedera**, also known as Saihoji, or the Moss Temple. Some 143 varieties of moss have been identified on the grounds of this exquisite Zen temple, designated a Unesco World Heritage Site. Special permission is required for a visit, and we will have it. A monk will instruct us in meditation, and we will get to practice, prior to heading onto the grounds. After lunch we may choose to visit the dazzling beauty of **Kinkakuji** Temple and its golden pavilion, or visit a miso maker. After dinner, Lightroom with Peter.

Day 7: A stroll down the so-called Philosophers' Walk including such sites as **Ginkakuji**, **Nanzenji** temples and **Honen-in** shrine with a stop at Kawai Kanjiro's **pottery studio**.

Day 8: After breakfast we visit **Arashiyama Park** with its wild monkey preserve and bamboo groves. A two-hour boat ride down the Hozu River takes us past forests and mountains. We proceed after lunch to pick up our bags and board the **shinkansen** back to Tokyo.

Day 9: An optional class in flower arrangement or **ikebana**, then a **Sayonara Party** at the Foreign Correspondents Club of Japan where we review our best images. Then on to photograph **Halloween** in various parts of Tokyo – it's like nothing you have ever seen!

Instructors:

Sonia Katchian, Director of Photo Shuttle: Japan and PHOTODISTRICT NEWS Tokyo correspondent for a decade, provides the nuts and bolts of this workshop. She will discuss the fine points of setting up a photo shoot in Japan, how to make inquiries by phone even with no Japanese, how to woo a complete stranger whom you wish to photograph, navigate the world's busiest train system, plus tons of other useful tips and hints. Sonia knows the ropes in Japan and is ready to pass on her skills! <http://photoshuttle.com/>

Peter Krogh, alpha tester for Adobe software and author of THE DAM BOOK: DIGITALASSET MANAGEMENT FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS, focuses on what we do with our photo files once the

images are captured. This is a fantastic opportunity to listen to and learn from this trusted expert and highly-sought speaker. When he is not traveling nationwide speaking to photographers, Peter is an editorial, corporate and advertising photographer based in D.C.

Participants:

This is an advanced workshop, open to professional photographers and advanced amateurs. We also welcome people who are willing to embark on a great adventure and take incredible pictures while doing so. Space is very limited; please register early!

Requirements:

Each participant must bring digital SLR camera and accessories, a laptop computer (Mac or PC) with Photoshop and Lightroom installed, and all necessary power cords and cables. You may shoot with film too, but all edit sessions will be based on our digital captures. Participants must have a passport valid for the entire time they will be in Japan. Entry to Japan does not require a visa for tourists who are U.S. citizens (and for many other countries). If you are not sure about your situation, check with your closest Japanese consulate. Everyone should bring cash or travelers checks to pay for some meals, shopping and incidentals. Do not rely on credit card usage as very few stores accept credit cards. Though not mandatory, we urge everyone to take out travel insurance.

Workshop Fee:

The \$6,450 fee (\$6,200 if paid by June 1st) includes 9 nights' lodging, all travel within Japan, all entrance fees, most breakfasts, lunches and dinners. Participants are responsible for airfare to and from Tokyo, some meals and personal expenditures. Travel insurance is highly recommended. A \$700 deposit must accompany registration, with balance due August 31, 2010.

Payments, Cancellations & Refunds:

Cancellations, if made 4 months or more prior to start date, will obtain a 50% refund of deposit (+ full balance, if already paid). On cancellations made 60-119 days prior to start date, deposit is not refundable, but balance paid will be refunded in full. Cancellations made less than 60 days prior to start date are not refundable unless a last-minute participant can be found, in which case balance paid will be refunded but not the deposit. Should a participant choose to leave the workshop after it has started or need to leave due to health or other emergencies, they are not eligible for a refund. If cancellation is due to a decision of the Japan Photo Workshop organizers, a full refund will be made to all participants by check within two weeks of notification. **We are not responsible for non-refundable airfares.**

Health & Safety:

We expect all participants to be in good physical and mental health. If there are any medical conditions we should be aware of, please tell us when you register. We cannot accommodate special diets, but we will certainly try to take into account any dietary restrictions participants may have. Japan has one of the lowest crime rates in the world. The bad news though, is that the country is prone to earthquakes. A mini-drill with safety precautions about what to do in case of an earthquake will be held on Day 1. The Japan Photo Workshop will not be held liable for any accidents or emergencies. Should an accident or emergency occur that requires hospitalization, the Workshop will attempt to get the student to the nearest medical center but is not responsible or obligated in any other way.

Registration:

www.photoshuttle.com/workshops

Fine Print:

Workshop fee is quoted in U.S. dollars and based on two persons sharing a room. The fee has been calculated a year prior to start date. Due to fluctuations of international currency exchange rates it may be necessary to adjust the fee. Workshop organizers will do their best to keep the fee as quoted and will let all registrants know prior to start date if any such adjustment is needed. Workshop originates and ends in Tokyo, Japan. Airfare to and from Tokyo is the responsibility of each participant; and it is the participants' responsibility to be in Tokyo by the start date. Any accommodations needed prior to or after the workshop are the responsibility of the participant. Photographs may be taken during the workshop showing participants and instructors in the various locales which may be used in marketing material for future workshops. Participants agree to the use of such photos for marketing purposes and, if they don't, will let the organizers know in advance.

The Japan Photo Workshop will not be held liable for any damage, should it occur, to, or loss of property, or injury to or death (God forbid) of participants by an act or omission of its organizers or subcontractors, including but not limited to accidents, health incidents, whether by transportation vehicles used to convey participants and instructors or otherwise. The Japan Photo Workshop will not be held liable for any loss or damage due to delay, cancellation, or disruption in any manner caused by the laws, regulations, acts or failures to act, demands, orders, or interpositions of any government or any subdivision or agent, or by acts of God, strikes, fire, flood, earthquake, war, rebellion, terrorism, insurrection, sickness, quarantine, epidemics, theft, or any other causes beyond their control. The participant waives any claim against the Japan Photo Workshop, any of its organizers or instructors for any such loss, damage, injury, or death, may God forbid.

Though our itinerary is subject to change, without penalty, any participant who chooses not to be part of the group's activities at any point will do so at their own expense, with no pro-rated refund. In the untoward event of a health or personal emergency, the Japan Photo Workshop will not be liable for a refund. We therefore encourage everyone to purchase travel insurance prior to departure. Under no circumstances is the Japan Photo Workshop responsible for nonrefundable airfares.

#####