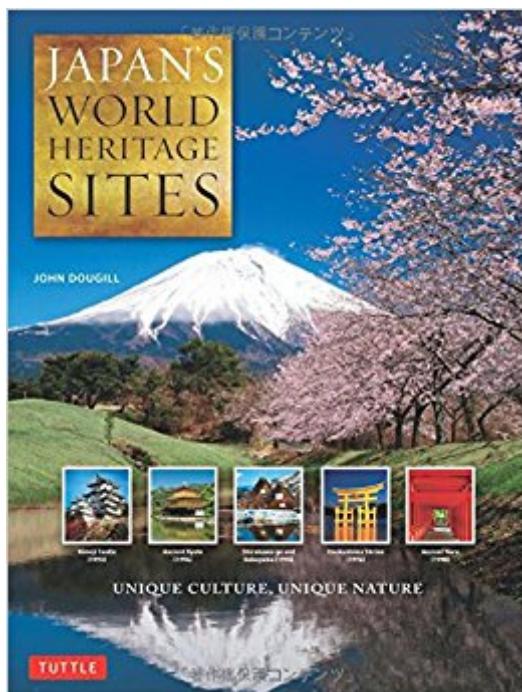


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Japan's World Heritage Sites: Unique Culture, Unique Nature



Synopsis

"It's a nice tome for armchair travel, whisking you off around the country from where you sit— or time travel, taking you back to that life-changing decade-lost holiday and old friends." — The Japan Times

Visit the most compelling cultural and nature sites in all of Japan with this beautifully photographed travel guide. In Japan's World Heritage Sites, readers are introduced to the temples, gardens, castles and natural wonders for which Japan is so justly renowned—all of those now declared to be Unesco World Heritage Sites. Author John Dougill describes each site in detail, stating why they were singled out by Unesco, the current number and types of sites, the application process, how the sites have been selected, and how difficult it is to be given the special status of a World Heritage Site. Dougill traveled to all of the sites in Japan to research this book. Because the Japanese archipelago extends from Siberia all the way down to Taiwan, Dougill describes how his journey led him from the sub-Arctic to the sub-tropical zones. These are without a doubt the most interesting sites that Japan has to offer, including the following:

- Mount Fuji, Japan's tallest and most sacred volcano. Located on Honshu Island near Tokyo, Mt. Fuji is considered the sacred symbol of Japan
- Himeji Castle, a monument from Japan's long feudal history. Also known as Egret Castle, because it looks like a bird taking off in flight.
- Horyu-ji Temple, the world's oldest surviving wooden structure—a center of Buddhist learning that still serves as a seminary and monastery
- Hiroshima Peace Memorial or Atomic-Bomb Dome—one of the few structures to partially survive the atomic blast in 1945
- The Ogasawara Islands, a remote archipelago of over 30 islands—including Iwo Jima—that is home to rare wildlife and spectacular scenery

Readers will learn how Japan first became involved with the World Heritage Sites program back in 1993, the importance of these designations, and their popularity in Japan, where they are visited by millions of people annually, both Japanese and foreigners.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"From Mt. Fuji to ancient Kyoto to the Peace Memorial at Hiroshima, UNESCO tagged seventeen sites with their highest honor and the 350 color photographs and masterful descriptions will certainly solidify Japan's standing as a tourist destination." *Foreword Magazine*"John Dougill brings to this book an eye for telling detail and a skill in communicating the mood and essential character of Japan's World Heritage Sites. The description of each place contains practical information for the visitor, lush photographs, and a lively discussion of each site's history and major characteristics. The variety and geographic range promise the visitor an unforgettable experience of Japan."

Suzanne Gay, Professor of East Asian Studies and History, Oberlin College"How fortunate we are to have Kyoto's esteemed John Dougill bring us on his journey through the astonishing cultural and natural worlds of Japan's seventeen World Heritage Sites. Dougill, an established author on Japanese history and religion, knows what is most significant about these wonders, and so is our perfect guide." *John Einarsen, Founding Editor, Kyoto Journal*"Japan's UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Sites are important and treasured attractions and this excellent book fully explores their grand beauty and deep spirituality. Reading through it is like taking a complete tour guided by a true expert." *David A. Mason, Specialist in Korean Cultural Tourism, NamSeoul University, Korea*"Japan's World Heritage Sites is a beautiful introduction to the subject.

With lavish photographs, excellent maps and thoughtful introductions to each site, the book is perfect for travel planning or as a resource while you're exploring Japan. It's a brilliant discussion of the varied and beautiful wonders of Japan." *Chris Rowthorn, Lonely Planet author*"A

fascinating and generously illustrated overview of Japan's World Heritage attractions, packed with useful visitor information. The book features well-known attractions, while spotlighting some of the lesser known gems amongst Japan's national treasures." *Julie Highmore, novelist*"John

Dougill's long experience as a writer on Japanese culture shines through in this marvelous compilation of all of Japan's World Heritage Sites. This beautifully written and lavishly illustrated volume offers a compelling and thorough view of Japan's premier historic and natural wonders."

Joseph Cali, author of books on Japan"Japan's World Heritage Sites offers plenty of dreamy photos of national wonders as well as helpful guides and maps." *About.com*

John Dougill is a professor at Ryukoku University in Kyoto. He has authored fourteen Japanese college textbooks as well as Kyoto: A Cultural Guide and In Search of Japan's Hidden Christians. Find him at greenshinto.com

This is a beautiful coffee table book but I purchased it as a guide book. It is too big to travel with but it is organized so well and it is so detailed that it is a perfect companion for my travel books.

Very good quality at this price. Good shipping!

John Dougill previously wrote some great guidebooks about nice places around Kyoto. He now ventured into covering 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Japan. It is the first-ever book on World Heritage sites in Japan and the timing was perfect. It was right after Mount Fuji was approved as World Heritage site. Though the book has only six pages for the newly approved World Cultural Heritage site, he deftly summarizes the appeal of major component sites and briefly mentions why it was approved as World Heritage. Introduction on Himeji Castle, however, is insufficient giving only four pages. When it comes to Historical sites on Kyoto and Nara the author gives full coverage on every component site. And it seems the author is not good at introducing Natural Heritage sites such as Shiretoko, Yakushikma and Shirakami Sanchi possibly because of his field of research. Since this book was published two more sites has been added to World Heritage list such as Tomioka Silk Mill and Modern Industrial Heritage sites. So the following is my technical advice as a Licensed Guide and one of the Mount Fuji World Heritage Guides in Shizuoka.¹ Make it Two-Volume book from the next edition² Add the space for Glossary and Footnotes because some of the terms used in this book may not ring a bell for Japan starters.³ Assign another writer for Mount Fuji and other Natural Heritage sites leaving the Dougill as the senior editor.⁴ Hire a Japanese editor for fact-check or spell check. If the publisher did that spelling mistake as GOKOYAMA for Gokayama could have been avoided.Verdict: Excellent and First-ever Book on World Heritage sites in JapanRating: 95 out of 100Recommended for: Every tourist interested in visiting Japan

I live in Kyoto, Japan and often see some of the sites covered in this book. I drive by Kinkakuji temple on my way to work once a week. Yet, I know very little about it, aside from the fact that it is gold in color. The first thing I did when I opened this book was to look up Kinkakuji temple, and now

I know so much more about it, enriching my understanding of where I live. I love the way this book is laid out, with each world heritage site easy to find, each highlighted with beautiful photos and then covered with very readable and interesting explanations. Next time I travel to other places in Japan, I will know what to look for! I highly recommend that anyone interested in Japan should definitely buy this book.

Today, I received my very own copy of "Japan's World Heritage Sites" by John Dougill, a British citizen living in Kyoto for a good many years. John has written many books about Japanese tradition, culture and religion, and this one is my favourite. This book covers all World Heritage sites of Japan and is in an atlas format, abundant with many eye catching photographs. John's journey starts in Hokkaido and he travels slowly all the way south, his last destination the Ogasawara Islands. Each site covered has an extensive explanation about its history, how to get there and many beautiful pictures. A virtual tour in the "Land of the Rising Sun," discover ancient temples, shrines and castles. Learn about its history and culture in a fun way. John shares his first hand experience in a captivating and entertaining way. It's a nice reference book where you can look back and reminisce where you have been and dream where you want to go next. I can heartily recommend this extensive work for the first time visitor to Japan and even the more seasoned traveller will find many interesting sites to discover. Happy reading, Hugo Kempeneer

John Dougill does a great job of exposing the reader to a fascinating history of the World Heritage natural and cultural sites program, and specifically to sites in Japan. Through this book he invites one to share in the aesthetic, historical and spiritual qualities of each site. Alongside the 17 properties recognized by UNESCO in the city of Kyoto, one learns about the unique "Prayer-hand houses" situated in the central mountains of Japan. One travels the length of the country visually and mentally excavating the spirit of each place. Exquisite photography with some full page hypnotic images accompany this journey, and stir an appetite in the reader to learn more. It provides one with a delightful opportunity to vicariously travel to these locations, and inspires one to consider a pilgrimage there of one's own.

John Dougill's new publication covers the fantastic variety of Japan's 17 World Heritage Sites. He masterfully guides us from the cultural treasures of the ancient capital, Nara, to the stunning natural paradise of one of the most unique islands in the world, Yakushima. This book has a breathtaking display of 350 color photographs. I

think it would be hard for anyone to buy this book and be able to resist the allure of these wonderful sites. This is, however, not just a beautiful book of photos. The author provides not only the basic information we need to visit each location, but also a telling vignette that truly captures the essence of each site. It does not take long before we realize that we are in the hands of someone who really knows Japan deeply and has a solid grasp on its history, culture and especially its religion. The information is not served up as a list of facts and dates, but rather as charming story about each site. Without the photos this is a book worth buying. With the photos and text, this is a book that any lover of Japan, or World Heritage Sites, or travel in general will not want to miss. Highly recommended.

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