

General Information of Japan for participants from abroad

TIME DIFFERENCE

All of Japan is in the same time zone, 9 hours ahead of G.M.T.

CLIMATE AND CLOTHING

The average temperatures in Kobe in January is 5 Celsius (41.0 Fahrenheit) and 48 Precipitation and it is also quite dry and very often sunny. Heavy clothes (overcoats, sweaters) are appropriate clothing for this season.

MONEY

1) Currency and Money Exchange

The unit of Japanese currency is yen. Coins are available in 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, and 500 yen and banknotes in 1,000, 2,000, 5,000, 10,000 yen. Exchange banks and money exchange counters can be found at Kansai International Airport for money exchange and purchasing of the travelers checks. A passport may be required for currency exchange service. Exchange is also available at Portpia Hotel.

2) Travelers Checks and Credit Cards

Travelers Checks are accepted by leading banks and hotels and stores in major cities.

International credit cards such as Visa, American Express, Diners Club, and MasterCard are also acceptable at these major establishments. However, credit card transactions are not always convenient outside big cities so obtaining cash beforehand is recommended when you travel Japan.

3) ATMs

Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) are commonly available at banks and post office throughout Japan. However, many DO NOT accept foreign credit cards or cash cards and their service hours are very often restricted. For ATMs that accept credit cards, it is advised to contact each credit card company beforehand and check the location of each ATM and its availability as these conditions vary from machine to machine.

Foreign credit, debit, and cash cards can be used at Post Office ATMs in locations throughout Japan. Post Offices where this service is available display stickers indicating which cards are accepted. Cards from the Cirrus, Plus, Maestro, and Visa Electron networks can be used. Accepted credit cards include Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Diners Club.

***Please kindly be noted that there are NO ATMs near the CDB.**

HEALTHCARE

1) Water

Tap water is safe to drink anywhere in Japan. Mineral water can be easily obtained at super markets, convenience stores, and other similar places.

2) Hospitals

Medical systems and facilities in Japan are well established so that you can expect to receive a high standard medical treatment if you have any health problem during your stay.

ELECTRICITY

The voltage used throughout Japan is uniformly 100 volts alternating current at a frequency of 60 Hertz. A step-down transformer is required to convert the voltage. There are no columnar-shaped plugs or 3-pin plugs used in Japan but 2-flat pin plugs are used instead. It is therefore advised to purchase a plug adapter beforehand.

POSTAL SERVICE

Hotels and convenience stores often provide simple postage services. Post offices are open daily from 9:00 to 17:00 except Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays.

TELEPHONES

1) Domestic calls

Public telephones accept 10 yen and 100 yen coins and/or telephone cards. A local call costs 10 yen per minute. No change is given for partial use of a 100 yen coin. Prepaid telephone cards cost 1,000 yen at convenience stores and similar places.

2) International calls

A direct overseas call can be made from a public telephone displaying an International and Domestic Telephone sign. These phones can be found at airports, hotels, and other key facilities. Direct dial calls can be made via a telephone company using the company's access number.

Direct dial access number

KDDI: 001-010

SoftBank Telecom: 0061-01

NTT Communications: 0033-010

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

For general transport, taxis are plentiful and train and bus services are convenient throughout Japan.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist Information Centers provide reliable information for your travel, accommodation, and sightseeing in Japan. Please also check Japan National Tourist Organization's website.

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/>

Kansai Tourist Information Center (Kansai International Airport):

Arrival Floor, passenger Terminal Building, Kansai International Airport

Tel: 0724-56-6025

Office hours: 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. every day

RESTAURANTS

There are restaurants in Portopia Hotel. Please refer to the URL for detailed information.

<http://www.portopia.co.jp/en/dining/index.html>