JAPAN

Japan is a land of opposites, with traditional roots and a rich cultural heritage set against hyper-modern cities and cutting-edge technology. No trip would be complete without visiting Tokyo, the non-stop neon jungle. One must-visit spot is the Tsukiji fish market, the largest in the world, for the best sushi around, or visit Shibuya crossing to experience the frenetic pace of everyday life at street level. For great views, the brand new Palace Hotel Tokyo (en.palacehoteltokyo.com) offers a little breathing space from the skyscrapers, instead offering vistas of the Imperial Palace gardens. For temples and shrines galore, hop a bullet train to the cultural capital Kyoto. With literally thousands of temples to choose from, as well as bamboo forests and hundreds of vermilion shrine gates, it's a cultural treasure trove for travellers. To experience local hospitality at its best, visit a ryokan, a traditional Japanese inn, complete with tatami floors and futon beds. On the outskirts of Kyoto, Hoshino (global.hoshinoresort.com/hoshinoya_kyoto) combines this experience with a contemporary twist and makes a serene escape for couples. While seasonal visions of Japan may conjure up landscapes of cherry blossom in spring, or serene monasteries with trees producing an ombre of autumnal reds, Japan is also a great skiing resort throughout winter. Be one of the first to stay at the super-luxurious ski-in-ski-out Ki Niseko resort (kiniseko.com), which opened in late 2014.