MACLEAY VALLEY TRAVEL PTY. LTD.

33 Smith Street, Kempsey
NSW 2440
Australia

Email: info@macleayvalleytravel.com
Website: www.macleayvalleytravel.com

Telephone (02) 6562·6699
Toll Free 1800 81·0809
Fax (02) 6562·6276

NORTHERN JAPAN SPRING TOUR

AT CHERRY BLOSSOM TIME

16 Day Conducted Tour

for $9,695 per person twin share

This price includes airport taxes & levies

This tour visits many Cherry Blossom festivals and also Azalea, Moss Phlox and Wisteria Festivals. The price includes:

- Economy Class airfares from Sydney, Melbourne & Brisbane into Tokyo and out of Sapporo with Cathay Pacific Airways.
- A 15 day tour of central and northern Japan by coach and bullet train. As well as the flower festivals the tour visits several Japanese gardens, many museums, art galleries and historical villages.
- Good accommodation, mainly three to four star.
- Many meals, as stated in the itinerary.
- Prepaid gratuities to the main tour guide and drivers.
- All transfers and transport and entrance fees to many attractions.
- Services of a local tour guide and if there are 15 or more participants, an Australian tour escort.

This tour visits Japan in mid spring, when the flowers mentioned should be in bloom and the festivals should be open, but this cannot be guaranteed as it depends on the climatic conditions at the time. This is an opportunity to see this beautiful and fascinating country when it should be at its best.

For a single room there is an extra cost of $1,420.

Tour departs Australia on the 14th April and returns 29th April 2027

Itinerary for Northern Japan Spring Tour

Included meals are indicated as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

14.04.27 Australia – Hong Kong - Tokyo, Japan

Depart Brisbane at 00.05am on Cathay Pacific Airways flight CX 156, arriving in Hong Kong at 6.50am. Brisbane passengers then depart Hong Kong at 8.40am on CX 548, arriving in Tokyo (Haneda Airport) at 1.55pm.

Depart Melbourne at 7.25am on CX 134, arriving in Hong Kong at 2.55pm.
Depart Sydney at 7.40am on CX 110, arriving in Hong Kong at 3.10pm.
Sydney and Melbourne passengers then depart Hong Kong at 4.20pm on CX 542, arriving in Tokyo (Haneda Airport) at 9.35pm.
We are met and transferred to our hotel for a two night stay.
Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Ginza or similar

15.04.27 Tokyo

(B/D) This morning is at leisure to recover from your flights.
Around midday we depart the hotel and visit the Omiya Bonsai Art Museum in Saitama City, which is the world's first publicly run Bonsai Museum, opened in 2010. The museum displays masterpieces and other outstanding works, with the collection of the former Takagi Bonsai Museum of Art forming the nucleus.
Next we will visit the Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden in inner Tokyo, with its spacious lawns, walking paths and tranquil scenery. The largest section is devoted to a traditional Japanese landscape garden, featuring large ponds dotted with islands and bridges with well manicured shrubs and trees surrounding the water.
The other main gardens include a symmetrically arranged formal French garden and an English landscape garden surrounded by cherry trees. There is also a beautiful greenhouse with many tropical and sub-tropical flowers.
This evening we have an included dinner at a local restaurant within walking distance of the hotel.
Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Ginza or similar

16.04.27 Tokyo – Mt Fuji area

(B/D) Our first visit today will be to Nezu Shrine with the Bunkyo Azalea Festival. The Nezu Shrine is believed to have been established more than 1900 years ago, and is famous for its 300 year old beautiful azalea garden. The garden features about 3000 azalea plants of 100 different species, including some rare varieties.
Next we visit the Tokyo National Museum which was established in 1872 and is the largest art museum in Japan. The museum contains a comprehensive collection of art works and archaeological objects of Asia, focusing on Japan.
Following this we visit the Tokyo Tower, the second-tallest structure in Japan. At 333 metres high, this Eiffel Tower-inspired lattice tower has two observation decks and we will visit the lower observation deck.
Afterwards we transfer to our hotel in the Mount Fuji area.
This evening we have an included dinner.
Accommodation: Highland Resort & Spa or similar

17.04.27 Fuji Shibazakura Festival – Hakone - Tokyo

(B) This morning we visit the Fuji Shibazakura Festival. The festival displays Shibazakura, whose scientific name is phlox subulata. It is a perennial of the family Polemoniaceae, and a species of phlox. From April to May it usually blooms in small blossoms of around 1.5cm diameter, in red, pink, white, or purple. Native to North America, it is also known as "Moss Phlox". Noted for the resemblance of its flowers to cherry blossoms, it is a creeper plant, covering the ground like a lawn, and thus it is called 'lawn cherry.' With snow-capped Mt. Fuji in the background there are great picture-taking opportunities. Please note that our visit will take part early in the festival and as such the flowers may not yet be in full bloom.

We then visit the Ichiku Kubota Art Museum, devoted to the masterful silk dyeing works of Ichiku Kubota. On display are several of his kimono creations depicting themes of nature and also parts of his unfinished masterpiece comprised of eighty kimonos, which together form a picture of Mt. Fuji.

Our last stop today will be a visit to the Hakone Open-Air Museum, featuring over a thousand sculptures and other works of art, including some by Picasso and Henry Moore. Following this we return to Tokyo for an overnight stay.

Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Ginza or similar

18.04.27 Tokyo – Hitachi - Mito

(B/D) Today we have a 2½ hour drive north to the Hitachi Seaside Park. This huge 500 acre park is home to a variety of colourful flowers and grasses. While we are there the tulips should be in flower. We have lots of time to enjoy the park and explore the area. Afterwards we continue to Mito for an overnight stay.

This evening we enjoy an included dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel Terrace the Garden or similar

19.04.27 Mito - Aizu Wakamatsu

(B/D) This morning we visit the Ashikaga Flower Park to attend their Great Wisteria Festival. In 2014, this festival was voted by CNN as one of the "Top 10 World Dream Destinations." The park covers 23 acres and showcases the beauty of wisteria and many other flowers. There are more than 350 wisterias, and there are wisteria tunnels up to 80 metres long that visitors can walk through. The park's main feature is a huge, sprawling wisteria that is over 140 years old. The park also has more than 5000 azalea bushes that should be blooming. The rich and vibrant colours in the full sunshine create a dazzling view.

Next we have a 2½ hour drive to visit Ouchi-Juku Traditional Village. It is famous for the numerous traditional thatched buildings from the Edo period that line the main street. We have an overnight stay in Aizu Wakamatsu. This evening we enjoy an included dinner at a restaurant within walking distance of the hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel New Palace or similar

20.04.27 Aizu Wakamatsu – Matsushima - Sendai

(B/L) Today we visit the rustic but fascinating Sazaedo Temple, a 17 metre high 3-storey structure built in 1795. It has a fascinating spiral staircase both up and down. It is made entirely out of wood employing traditional Japanese woodworking/joinery techniques. The level above the temple also contains the memorials of 19 young Byakkota Samurai warriors who took their own lives at this site during the civil war of 1868. Following this we have a three hour drive to Matsushima and enjoy an included lunch at a local restaurant. Then we visit the Naohide Kokeshi shop, which

makes traditional wooden dolls. Then we enjoy a sightseeing cruise through the fascinating offshore small islands. Matsushima is one of the three most beautiful sites in Japan, along with Miyajima in Hiroshima and Amanohashidate in Kyoto. Afterwards we travel through to Sendai, the main city in northern Japan, for a two night stay.
Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Sendai or similar

21.04.27 Sendai
(B) Today is at leisure in Sendai to relax or explore the city at your own pace.
Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Sendai or similar

22.04.27 Sendai - Hiraizumi – Kitakami - Hanamaki
(B/L/D) Today we travel to and visit the Hiraizumi World Heritage Site. Here there is a well-preserved group of various temples and gardens dating back to about 1050. We will visit Konjikido Golden Hall, built in 1124, and covered in gold leaf. This is followed by an included lunch at a local restaurant. In the afternoon we visit the Esashi Fujiiwara Heritage Park, a themed park to experience the Japanese Heian era (794-1185). The 50 acre park has a palace, a guest house, a temple and another 120 buildings that represent historical structures from that period. The park has been the setting for many Japanese films and TV dramas. Afterwards we have a walk along the riverside to view the impressive cherry blossom trees at Tenshochi, which should be in bloom. We overnight in the Hanamaki area. Dinner this evening is included. Please note that your accommodation for this evening may be in a Japanese Tatami room. In this style of hotel, passengers will sleep on a mattress on the floor instead of a western style bed.
Accommodation: Hotel Koyokan or similar

23.04.27 Hanamaki – Kakunodate – Akita
(B/L/D) This morning we depart for Kakunodate, often referred to as “Little Kyoto”. Our visit should coincide with the Kakunodate Cherry Blossom Festival, which is typically held in late April to early May. We will see the Kakunodate Samurai District, which has many samurai residences dating back to 1620. The street is lined with massive weeping cherry trees, some of which are up to 200 years old.
A short walk from the samurai district will bring us to the banks of the Hinokinai River. The cherry trees that line a mile-long portion of the river were planted in 1934 to celebrate the birth of Emperor Akihito, and are now formerly designated as a Place of Scenic Beauty. During todays touring we will also visit the Hideyoshi Sake Brewery. We overnight in Akita. Lunch and dinner are included today.
Accommodation: ANA Crowne Plaza Hotel or similar

24.04.27 Akita – Hirosaki - Aomori
(B/D) **Please Note:** This morning we will need to prepare an overnight bag for the next two nights, as our main luggage will be freighted to Hakodate on Hokkaido Island.

After breakfast we visit the Akita City Folk Performing Arts Heritage Centre. Then we drive north to the Aomori Prefecture. En route we visit the Hirosaki Sakura-Matsuri Cherry Blossom Festival, typically held each year from late April to early May. The scenery here is fantastic. Blue sky, majestic mountains, 2600 cherry blossom trees and the wonderful Hirosaki Castle.

Upon arrival in Aomori, we have an included visit to the Nebuta Museum.
We have an overnight stay at Aomori City. Dinner this evening is at a local restaurant within walking distance of the hotel.
Accommodation: Hotel JAL City or similar

25.04.27 **Aomori - Hakodate**

(B/D) This morning we experience the fantastic Japanese bullet train from Aomori to Hakodate. Our train journey will travel through a tunnel located beneath the Sea of Japan.
In Hakodate we visit the local fish market, followed by Goryokaku Fort & Tower. Fort Goryokaku is a massive star-shaped western style citadel constructed in the early Edo period to protect Hakodate against invasion by the western powers. In the centre of the fort stands the former magistrates office from where the officers of the Shogunate administered the whole island of Hokkaido. The fort was turned into a public park in 1910 and over 1000 cherry trees were planted along its moats.
Late this afternoon we will ascend Mt. Hakodate by coach for a panoramic view of the city. We descend the mountain by rope line (cable car).
We have a two night stay in Hakodate. Dinner this evening is included at the hotel.
Accommodation: Hakodate Onuma Prince Hotel or similar

26.04.27 **Hakodate – Matsumae – Hakodate**

(B/L/D) This morning we have a two hour drive to Matsumae to see Matsumae Castle. The castle is the only Japanese style castle on the island of Hokkaido. Over 10,000 cherry trees representing more than 250 different varieties can be seen around the grounds. At the edge of the park is the Matsumaehan Yashiki, a small historical theme park that recreates Matsumae Town of the early Edo period. Some of the buildings display life-sized mannequins in their traditional clothing from that period.
Lunch is at a local restaurant in Matsumae. Then we return to Hakodate and visit Hokiji Temple, known as the ‘weeping cherry blossom’.
Dinner this evening is included at the hotel.
Accommodation: Hakodate Onuma Prince Hotel or similar

27.04.27 **Hakodate – Otaru - Sapporo**

(B/L/D) Today we check out of the hotel and commence a five hour drive through to Sapporo. In Otaru we will visit the Otaru Canal, the Kitaichi Glass gift shop and the Music Box gift shop. Lunch today is included. Later we proceed to Sapporo for an overnight stay. This evening we have a farewell dinner at a local restaurant within walking distance of the hotel.
Accommodation: Hotel Monterey Edelhof or similar

28.04.27 **Sapporo – Hong Kong**

(B) After breakfast we will visit the Hokkaido Jingu Shrine, which is popular for international visitors. We then visit an indigo dyeing factory to learn about this traditional culture and have a hands-on experience making a handkerchief. Next we visit Sapporo Beer Museum. Afterwards we transfer to Chitose Airport for our flights home.
Depart Sapporo (Chitose Airport) at 4.40pm on CX 581, arriving in Hong Kong at 8.55pm.

29.04.27 **Hong Kong – Australia**

Brisbane passengers depart Hong Kong at 00.15am on CX 165, arriving in Brisbane at 10.50am.
Melbourne passengers depart Hong Kong at 00.20am on CX 105, arriving in Melbourne at 11.15am.
Sydney passengers depart Hong Kong at 00.45am on CX 181, arriving in Sydney at 11.45am.

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Tour Difficulty Level 4

This tour rating typically involves an above average level of physical activity, such as ascending stairs, getting into a bathtub shower, being responsible for your own luggage at airports and hotels, walking distances of up to 2 kilometres at a time over possible uneven ground and/or cobblestone streets. Walking tours of considerable distances should be expected on tours with this rating, as well as early departures. The itinerary has plenty to see and do, resulting in full days of touring for most days. Unfortunately this tour rating is not recommended for individuals who cannot walk unaided.

Conditions for Macleay Valley Travel's Northern Japan Spring Tour

Deposits and Payments - A non-refundable deposit of $800 per person is payable within 7 days of booking. The balance is payable in full 8 weeks prior to departure. Macleay Valley Travel has to adhere to strict payment deadlines and your booking on the tour may be cancelled if final payment is not received by the due date, with no refund applicable.

Refunds and Cancellations - Cancellations after final payment will result in a refund limited to whatever we can recoup from the airline. Any refund for a cancelled booking will not be paid until the airline(s) provide the refund to Macleay Valley Travel.

Insurance - Adequate travel insurance that includes medical coverage for Covid-19 is required. Please contact your preferred travel insurance provider. The responsibility to obtain adequate travel insurance rests with the passenger. Proof of your travel insurance is required to be presented to us on or before the final payment date of the tour.

Airline Tickets - With this tour, airline tickets will be issued very soon after booking. Please note that any changes made to airline tickets once they have been issued will likely incur high cancellation and/or reissue fees. These fees are typically set by the airline.

Passports - All travellers require a current passport with at least 6 months left on it at the end of the tour. Non-Australian passport holders require a re-entry visa for Australia. Visas are not required for Japan if travelling on an Australian passport.

Basic Tour Price and Taxes - Air taxes and fuel levies are included in the basic tour price if the tour is paid in full on or before the due date on the final invoice. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to charge for any increase in air taxes and fuel levies if the tour is not paid in full by the due date.

Not Included in the Cost - Travel insurance, visas and all items of a personal nature such as telephone calls, drinks, excess baggage, tips, meals (except those specified in the itinerary), etc. are not included in the cost. Similarly, credit card payments (Visa/MasterCard) can only be accepted if 1.2% is added to the price to help defray the merchant fees charged to us by the credit card companies. There is a 2% surcharge for American Express.

Twin Share Bookings – If you do not have a travel partner, but wish to travel at twin share rates, we will try and assign you with another traveller but this is not guaranteed. We assign passengers by their gender, on a first come, first served basis and do not assign twin share passengers according to their age, profession, interests etc. There are risks with sharing a room with a person you do not know, and Macleay Valley Travel accepts no responsibility if you are incompatible with your assigned room mate. Additionally, if you are assigned a travelling companion to share with and they cancel off the tour prior to making the final payment, then you will either be required to pay the single room supplement or we will try our best to assign you with another twin share passenger, if one is available.

Single Accommodation - For passengers in single accommodation, Japan often has smaller rooms dedicated for single passengers. This can potentially be considerably smaller than what you might be accustomed to, however this is the norm for Japan, and the price you have paid for the single room supplement reflects these dedicated single rooms. The single room supplement will provide you with privacy, but not necessarily the same sized rooms as other twin share passengers.

Climatic Conditions - The tour dates have been selected to time with the proposed blooming period and expected opening dates of the flower festivals, however the specific blooming dates are subject to weather conditions and seasonal variations. As such we cannot guarantee that you will see the blossoms in bloom, although it is very likely.

Breakaway - All fully inclusive prices are based on group travel. Some post tour extensions may be permitted. If you wish to extend your travel arrangements, please contact Macleay Valley Travel at the time of booking for prices.

Accreditation - Macleay Valley Travel is a fully accredited travel agency under the AFTA (Australian Federation of Travel Agents) ATAI - AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme. As such, you are assured of a consumer focused and quality assured business, ensuring professional conduct and ethical business practices.

Health and Fitness - Macleay Valley Travel recommends that the passenger is reasonably healthy and/or fit to participate in this tour. Persons with a disability requiring special assistance must be accompanied by a companion. Macleay Valley Travel and their representatives cannot provide this service. The Health & Fitness Questionnaire located on the last page of this itinerary needs to be completed in full by each passenger and accompany your booking form. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to accept/decline or terminate a passenger's participation in the tour under certain circumstances. It is strongly recommended that you are fully vaccinated against Covid-19, but this is not mandatory. Passengers must comply with any specific Covid-19 requirements that may be imposed by airlines and/or authorities of the destinations visited and any such measures are at the expense of the customer.

Disclosure of fees or commissions received from third parties - Macleay Valley Travel Pty Ltd may receive fees, commissions, gifts or financial incentives from third parties under this contract.

Limitation of Liability concerning Covid-19 - It is possible that there may be outbreak(s) of Covid-19 during this tour. Whilst we take necessary safety precautions, Macleay Valley Travel cannot be held responsible for any quarantines or other associated costs brought about by quarantines, border closures and/or travel delays. You are aware that Covid-19 is a highly contagious and potentially dangerous disease that may result in significant personal illness and even death. You acknowledge that you are voluntarily participating in the tour with knowledge of the inherent risks of Covid-19, and you agree to assume all risks.

Airline Seating – Online check-in is available from 48 hours before your flight. Standard seat selection can be arranged during this time free of charge, based on airline availability. If you wish to be pre-seated before this time, extra fees will likely apply.

Limitation of Liability - As Macleay Valley Travel acts only as agent for the Airlines, Hotels, Coach Companies etc., providing accommodation, transportation and other services, Macleay Valley Travel shall not be liable or responsible for death or injury to any person or loss or damage to any property including baggage arising out of or connection with any transportation, accommodation or other services, or resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, fire, breakdown in machinery or equipment, acts of Government or other authorities, de jure or defacto wars, whether declared or not, hostilities, civil disturbances, strikes, riots, thefts, epidemics, pandemics, endemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, delays or cancellations caused by changes in schedules or itinerary, or over bookings or defaults or for any causes beyond Macleay Valley Travel's control or any loss or damage resulting from improper or insufficient passports, visas or other documents and neither Macleay Valley Travel, and its servants or employees shall be or become liable or responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the tour member as a result of the foregoing causes. Additionally you must meet the entry requirements for each country you visit. Macleay Valley Travel will not be liable if you are denied entry to a country for any reason, including a past criminal history. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to decline bookings made for any group tour. Any tour booking confirmation is conditional, contingent on our view of the ability of a person to be able to participate in a tour without the likelihood of conflict between members of a tour whether perceived or actual. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to modify the itinerary or the accommodation if circumstances make this necessary, provided that the amended itinerary is of equal value or greater value than that of the original program.

MACLEAY VALLEY TRAVEL - BOOKING FORM

PLEASE PRINT DETAILS CLEARLY IN BLOCK LETTERS AND ALSO

A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR PASSPORT MUST BE SENT WITH BOOKING FORM

Name of Tour :_____ Departure Date:_____

Passenger 1 (as written in passport)_____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth:_____

Passenger 2 (as written in passport)_____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age:_____ Date of Birth:_____

Postal Address: _____

_____**PostCode**_____**Email**_____

Telephone / Fax Number:_____**Mobile**_____

Passport Number:_____Expiry Date:_____

Passport Number:_____Expiry Date:_____

Passport Nationality:_____Preferred Name:_____

Passport Nationality_____Preferred Name:_____

(Passport must have 6 months validity from the time of tour completion)

Single room / Twin beds / Double bed: (Room type is subject to availability)

Circle which airport you wish to depart from: SYDNEY / MELBOURNE / BRISBANE

Special Dietary Requests – Passenger 1:_____ Passenger 2:_____

Optional Extensions:_____

Any existing medical conditions – Passenger 1:_____ Passenger 2:_____

In case of emergency, please notify :

Name:_____ Relationship:_____

Address:_____

Phone Number:_____

Please return this sheet with your non-refundable deposit of $800 per person & the health & fitness form

DECLARATION. I have read and understand fully the booking conditions and I accept them.

Signature:_____ Date:_____

A copy of passport is required to verify spelling of name; If this is not provided and the information we have for the airline is incorrect and ticket is issued, then the airline will charge a reissue fee.

HEALTH & FITNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

Macleay Valley Travel strives to make our tours enjoyable experiences for all passengers, however some countries and tour services lack the standards that you can typically expect in Australia.
To help ensure your personal safety and enjoyment on tour, please answer the following questions. The information you provide will be treated confidentially and will be used to check that the transportation, accommodation and facilities on tour are suitable for you:

1. Do you have any allergies? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details and severity:_____

2. Can you walk 500 metres to 1km in distance comfortably and unaided? Yes / No

3. Can you negotiate uneven, undulating and sometimes challenging terrain? Yes / No
If no, please provide details about these limitations:_____

4. Do you use a mobility aid? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details:_____
_____

5. Are you travelling with a companion or carer who is able to provide all the assistance you need to enter buildings, disembark and embark ships, aircraft, coaches, small boats and assist you on excursions? Yes / No
If yes, please provide the name of your carer/companion and your relationship to them:_____

6. Are you taking any medical equipment to assist you? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details:_____

7. Do you suffer from any condition which may cause you to experience memory loss or become disoriented? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details:_____
_____

8. Are you asthmatic or do you have other breathing difficulties? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details (travelling to high altitudes is not recommended):_____

9. Do you require supplementary oxygen? Yes / No

10. Are you currently taking medication? Yes / No
If yes, are you able to administer your own medication? Yes / No

11. If you have any other medical information that is not covered in the previous questions, please provide a description here:_____

The information you supply us will be passed onto relevant travel suppliers who will do their best accommodate you. However, it is very important to remember that meeting your needs cannot be guaranteed, especially when travelling to third world countries.

DISCLAIMER
I confirm that the information provided on this questionnaire is both true and correct and I understand that there is no guarantee that all these needs will or can be met. I agree that Macleay Valley Travel may offer a recommendation with regard to fitness to travel, based on the information I have provided. I also understand that this information may be passed onto those responsible for supplying the land arrangements for my travel, and that my information will not be communicated to any party which is not directly responsible or otherwise associated with my travel arrangements. I further confirm and agree that should I choose not to disclose information which subsequently requires me to return or be returned home from a tour or cruise, Macleay Valley Travel is not responsible for any costs associated with cancellation penalties, airfares, land transportation or any other related hardship. Please note that a refund for lost touring cannot be claimed. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to update the information I provided to Macleay Valley Travel immediately should my circumstances change.

Name:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____

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4. Do you use a mobility aid? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details:_____
_____

5. Are you travelling with a companion or carer who is able to provide all the assistance you need to enter buildings, disembark and embark ships, aircraft, coaches, small boats and assist you on excursions? Yes / No
If yes, please provide the name of your carer/companion and your relationship to them:_____

6. Are you taking any medical equipment to assist you? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details:_____

7. Do you suffer from any condition which may cause you to experience memory loss or become disoriented? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details:_____
_____

8. Are you asthmatic or do you have other breathing difficulties? Yes / No
If yes, please provide details (travelling to high altitudes is not recommended):_____

9. Do you require supplementary oxygen? Yes / No

10. Are you currently taking medication? Yes / No
If yes, are you able to administer your own medication? Yes / No

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Name:_____

Signature:_____

Date:_____