



inspired  
traveller

# Writing in Kyoto

with Stephanie Dowrick

31 OCTOBER – 9 NOVEMBER 2011

**‘Stephanie Dowrick’s teaching is potent and universally accessible. Her wisdom inspires a diversity of individuals to meet their lives with greater insight, equanimity and creativity.’**

– Donna Idol, Manager, Mana Retreat Centre, New Zealand

**“Participating in Stephanie’s ‘Spiritual Stories’ workshop has been the highlight of my visit to Australia from California.”**

– Eleanor Brown, Los Angeles (USA)

**“My trip to Japan truly lived up to the company name of ‘Inspired.’ A perfect balance of self-discovery, reflection, challenges, luxury and exploration of an amazing country.”**

– Pamela Tustin, participant, Sacred Japan 2010

**The ‘Sacred Japan Tour’ was a magical way to celebrate my 40th birthday! ... William, our remarkable tour guide, made sure every day flowed beautifully. An unforgettable experience!**

– Ellen Regos, participant, Sacred Japan 2010

# Overview of Tour

## BACKGROUND AND HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JOURNEY

**Kyoto is one of the world’s most beautiful small cities. Better still, it is the perfect place to explore and extend your writing life. Inspiring and accessible for writers at all levels of experience, this small-group writing retreat will focus particularly on the skills of ‘deep looking’ and ‘free writing’ and the ease of creativity and insight that they allow.**

**Mornings will be spent writing and workshoping in a highly supportive atmosphere with ample time for individual reflection on your work. In the afternoons you can choose between exploring the city with the group or resting, reflecting and more writing. A day trip from Kyoto to the enchanting Reiki Mountain is included. We will also have one of our ‘deep looking’ workshops in an exclusive Zen garden, accompanied by Mark Hovane, an Australian university teacher and meditator based in Kyoto for 20 years.**

### Highlights Include:

- Participating in seven highly focused, inspirational writing workshops facilitated by one of Australia’s most successful writers of fiction and non-fiction, Dr Stephanie Dowrick. One of these workshops will be in an exquisite Zen garden, accompanied by Mark Hovane.
- Learning the exquisite meditative/creative practice of Haiku.
- Daily Tai Chi with William to start the day. Easily learned, and joyfully practised in a private corner of the hotel’s peaceful grounds.
- Enjoying the company of other ‘inspired travellers’, led by two highly experienced Japan enthusiasts.
- Staying in Kyoto’s beautiful district of Higashiyama (‘eastern mountain’) in the wonderfully comfortable Westin Miyako Kyoto Hotel, one of Kyoto’s best. Single rooms available.
- Complimentary shuttle (bus) service from the hotel to the centre of the city and return. Easy public buses and subway trains also widely available.
- Travelling together to the magical ‘Reiki Mountain’ at Kurama.
- Savouring deliciously prepared cuisine in a variety of local haunts.
- Free time to explore and stroll through Kyoto’s ‘living art’: gardens, temples, shrines, as well as shopping.
- Optional Ikebana workshop hosted and facilitated by Mark Hovane.

## WORKSHOP LEADER – Stephanie Dowrick



Formerly a publisher and founder of Londoner publishers, The Women’s Press, **Stephanie Dowrick, PhD**, is herself one of Australia’s most experienced and successful writers. She is widely known for her informed, highly engaging teaching, with its strong emphasis on insight, creativity and the pleasure and ease of new discoveries.

She is the author of two novels and also a number of life-changing books, including *Intimacy and Solitude*, *Creative Journal Writing*, *Forgiveness and Other Acts of Love*, *Choosing Happiness* and *In the Company of Rilke*. Her most recent book is *Seeking the Sacred*, described in the Sydney Morning Herald as “a chalice of wisdom”.

Stephanie is a frequent guest on ABC Radio, and contributes to the *Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. She is an Adjunct Fellow with the Writing & Society Research Group at the University of Western Sydney and an ordained Interfaith Minister. [www.stephaniedowrick.com](http://www.stephaniedowrick.com)

## TOUR MANAGER – William Suganda



**William Suganda** has for over a decade been creating and managing special interest group programs in both Australia and overseas. A graduate of the University of Sydney with majors in Japanese studies and psychology, he has also taken groups with Stephanie Dowrick to New Zealand and twice to Japan. William lived in Tokyo while studying at Keio University. A Tai-Chi practitioner, William is also a professionally accredited counsellor and psychotherapist.

Through his company, Inspired Traveller, William is able to offer inspiring programs for individuals to restore their spirits and enjoy exceptional experiences in the uplifting, thoughtful company of others.



*“Kyoto is a very safe, friendly city, and remarkably easy to navigate. One of the joys in visiting Kyoto is to experience the city and its people on your own, armed with some Japanese words and phrases that William will share!”*

Stephanie Dowrick

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ボジティブな方向に高める神秘的な、あるい



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### WRITING WORKSHOPS

Stephanie Dowrick will facilitate seven writing workshops. These will generally be held in the mornings and are suitable for writers at all levels of confidence and experience.

Stephanie will share the principles of writing that she has written about and taught successfully for many years, including ‘free writing’ and ‘deep looking’. She will offer writing exercises each day to expand participants’ writing skills and to identify and use your memories, observations and insights. She will give clear, helpful guidance about reading your own and other people’s work – and particularly how your expectations shape your writing and reading.

The goal always is not to compare yourself to others (or to your favourite writers) but to discover multiple ways to take your own writing dreams and skills further. This will allow you to feel more confident and excited about what you can achieve, and to identify your hesitations or blocks so that you can overcome them.

The writing workshops will be of equal benefit to those writing for joy and self-enquiry as for publication. One of our writing workshops will be in an exclusive Zen garden, accompanied by Mark Hovane and augmented by his inspiring vision and explanations, particularly about the ancient techniques of ‘hide and reveal’.

### WHO WOULD ENJOY AND BENEFIT FROM THIS TOUR?

Travel is a key way to leave the familiar behind and explore new and refreshing experiences, both inwardly and externally. Travelling as a member of a small group offers you instant company and stimulation, especially when you are sharing an interest as authentic and uplifting as writing – and are doing so in a city as beautiful as Kyoto.

To participate comfortably, you will need to enjoy moving around Kyoto by local transportation and on foot to visit places of interest. While this tour is not strenuous, you must be fit enough to walk unhurriedly and stand for several hours most days without feeling exhausted. The sightseeing tours in the afternoons are optional but William will lead them, and we highly recommend them.

The hotel rooms are Western and in our writing workshop room we will have Western chairs. However, in some temples and restaurants you may need to sit on flat cushions or directly on the floor. You also need to be able to carry your own luggage and we advise ‘zen packing’ (a small suitcase!) for ease. Writers are free to bring their laptops, journals or notebooks and additional reading.

Travel in a group also requires a fair degree of emotional ‘fitness’ and sometimes the needs of the group must come before your individual timetable. For example, it is important to be confident that you can be prompt when that’s required, listen respectfully to others and observe their needs, and keep up readily with the group when we are involved in shared activities. We also ask that you make a commitment to be present at all the writing workshops in order to give your support to others and to benefit from the unfolding of the teaching and experiences more generally.



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# Travel Itinerary

Included meals are indicated below as **B** – breakfast, **D** – dinner.

## MONDAY 31 OCTOBER

Today most participants leaving from **Australia** and **New Zealand** will travel from their home cities to **Kansai International Airport**. Please read the section on the suggested group flight and the suggested group hotel for more details – see page 9. Group travel to and from Japan is NOT essential. We are expecting some participants will travel in other ways and meet up with the group in Osaka.

## TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER

This morning all participants will meet at the **ANA Gate Tower Hotel Osaka**. We will then travel to our hotel in **Kyoto** in the impressive hills of **Higashiyama**, our base for the next 8 nights. The easy journey by shuttle bus will take approximately 2.5 hours depending on traffic.

On arrival in Kyoto we check in, store our bags and then explore the immediate neighbourhood before stopping for lunch in a simple but delicious local restaurant. After lunch, we will have time to rest, refresh and then gather for our first workshop. This will set the ground for the coming days and will also include an orientation session with William about Japan and especially about Kyoto.

This evening we meet in the hotel lobby before taking the hotel free bus to a local restaurant for our welcome dinner. **(B, D)**

## WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER – FRIDAY 4 NOVEMBER INCLUSIVE

Each morning we will have moving meditation (Tai Chi) in a private corner of the peaceful, beautifully tended hotel grounds at 7.15am. Optional but highly recommended.

**The Westin Miyako Hotel Kyoto** offers a vast selection of breakfast food, both Western and traditional Japanese. Previous participants have very much appreciated this exceptional spread.

Following breakfast, we gather each morning in the hotel lobby for the brief walk to the setting for our morning writing workshop with Stephanie Dowrick.

In the afternoons you can choose between exploring the city (with the group or on your own) or using your time to rest and reflect.

William will take those interested on a number of optional excursions visiting some of Kyoto's most beautiful temples, shrines, food markets and walks, including the **Heian Jingu** (Shrine of Peace), the **Kiyomizudera** (Clear Water Temple), the glorious **Golden Pavilion** and the **'Hall of the Lotus King'** temple to see the 1001 status of **Kannon/Kwan Yin**, goddess of compassion.

Each evening William and Stephanie will be eating out in inexpensive and delightful restaurants near the hotel. Do join us if you wish. Alternatively, you might like to relax in the comfort of your hotel room, order room service or perhaps venture on your own or in a small group and try a recommended restaurant specialising in local delicacies! There is an excellent small grocery shop very near the hotel where you can buy inexpensive snacks, fruit, water, sweets etc. **(B)**

## SATURDAY 5 NOVEMBER

Today we visit **'Reiki Mountain'** at **Kurama**, a village surrounded by a cedar forest. Its nearby mountain is a mecca for Reiki enthusiasts but this is also a wonderful chance to see first-hand the rural beauty of Japan. Leaving Kyoto we travel by train to reach **Kurama village** before ascending the mountain by cable car and on foot. We take in the fresh mountain air while gently strolling along the paved mountain path dotted with tall cedars and red lanterns. We then return to Kurama village and, for those interested, we visit **Kurama Onsen** (small entrance fee applies) and relax in one of their therapeutic hot springs before returning to Kyoto by train and then back to our hotel by bus. Bring your notebook or journal for Haiku writing or easy observations. **(B)**

## SUNDAY 6 NOVEMBER

Tai Chi in the hotel grounds at 7.15am. Following breakfast, we gather as usual in the hotel lobby for the brief walk to our morning writing workshop with Stephanie.

In the afternoon you can choose between exploring the city or using your time to rest or walk at your own pace close to the hotel. Or you may want to join William on the optional group excursion.

Today William will take those interested on an optional excursion to **Fushimi Inari Shrine** and stroll through **10,000 Torii** (gates) up the mountain and marvel at how followers of **Inari** – the Shinto god of rice and sake – and, more recently, businesses, seek blessings for their enterprises. **(B)**

## MONDAY 7 NOVEMBER

Optional Tai Chi. The group will meet as usual for breakfast.

Today is a free day for you to choose between exploring Kyoto

and its environs (with the group or on your own) or spending time to rest or write. You may even want to succumb to Kyoto's many shopping temptations.

William will be spending part of the day either at **Arashiyama** ('storm mountain') enjoying the autumn colours and strolling through the bamboo forest at **Sagano**, or at **Lake Biwa**, Japan's largest, meditating by the lake. Group members are more than welcome to join him. **(B)**

## TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER

Tai Chi at 7.15am. Following breakfast, we will as usual meet at the hotel lobby for the brief walk to the setting for our morning writing workshop with Stephanie.

The afternoon is yours to enjoy. There may be a favourite shrine or garden to visit once more or something new still to be discovered. William will discuss all options.

Tonight we will celebrate our writing and touring achievements with a special farewell dinner at a traditional Japanese restaurant within easy distance of the hotel. **(B, D)**

## WEDNESDAY 9 NOVEMBER

After Tai Chi and breakfast we meet for our final workshop with Stephanie before concluding our retreat (12 noon). Please do not arrange to leave earlier as during the morning we will have a beautiful simple ceremony to mark the end of our time together.

For those flying to Sydney or elsewhere, William will give detailed instructions on how to travel to Kansai International Airport by shuttle bus. For those staying on in Kyoto, or travelling to other parts of Japan, William will give detailed information on how to travel to your next destination. **(B)**

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ボジティブな方向に高める神秘的な、あるい

# Tour Costs

## TOUR COSTS

\$ 4,280 per person (based on twin-share accommodation)  
\$1,200 supplement for a room for single occupancy.

## TOUR INCLUSIONS

The following arrangements are included in the tour cost:

- Accommodation in a 4-star hotel for 8 nights with daily full buffet breakfast.
- Two delicious traditional dinners, as indicated in the travel itinerary.
- Writing workshops with Stephanie Dowrick, plus notes.
- Notes to familiarise you with Kyoto and life in Japan.
- Tour guidance plus travel coaching and care from William Suganda, your tour manager.
- Travel by shuttle bus from the ANA Gate Tower Hotel Osaka (meeting point) to the hotel in Kyoto.
- Fares for the excursion to Reiki Mountain.
- Private Zen garden tour with Mark Hovane, including entry fees.
- DVD of shared photographs as a post-tour memento.

## TOUR EXCLUSIONS

The following arrangements are not included:

- Air travel (see suggested group flights below).
- Overnight accommodation in Osaka before the start of the tour (see recommended group hotel below).
- Travel and medical insurance (this is an essential requirement).
- Lunches, dinners and excursions that are not included in the itinerary
- Entrance fees and transportation costs on free afternoons and day.
- Personal expenses and incidentals.
- Tipping is not required in Japan.

## SUGGESTED GROUP FLIGHT

JetStar is currently the only airline offering direct flights between Australia (from Cairns or the Gold Coast) to Osaka. The suggested group flight for this tour is with JetStar. If you are flying from another country, discuss your travel requirements with a travel agent.

It is essential that you reach Osaka by the evening of Monday 31 October 2011.

On the last day of the tour, our gathering will conclude at noon. If you are travelling to Australia this allows ample time to return to Osaka for the JetStar flight out of Kansai International Airport (at 2050 on flight JQ20). If you need additional information or advice about your flights to and from Japan, please feel free to contact William Suganda (details below).

***If you are travelling on to other parts of Japan or elsewhere, please ensure that your onward travel arrangements take into account the tour's concluding time. Please do NOT make arrangements to leave the hotel before 12.30pm on 9 November.***

## SUGGESTED GROUP ACCOMMODATION OVERNIGHT ON 31 OCTOBER 2011

We will meet in Japan for an 8.30am breakfast on Tuesday, 1 November 2011, at the very comfortable ANA Gate Tower Hotel Osaka (1 Rinku Orai Kita, Izumisano, Osaka). We suggest that you stay here overnight on 31 October 2011. The hotel is about 10 minutes away by shuttle bus from Osaka International Airport.

If you would like us to book your accommodation at this hotel, please indicate this on your application form. Participants are responsible for the cost of the hotel overnight. Your Western or Japanese full breakfast is included in the tour cost.

If you are not staying overnight at the suggested group hotel, you will need to travel to the ANA Gate Tower Hotel Osaka at meet the group at the hotel's lobby by 10 am. The group will then leave together for Kyoto.

# Additional Information

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please read the following important information with care:

Exchange rate – the tour is priced in Japanese Yen using the exchange rate of 1 AUD = 86.47 YEN. If the Japanese yen drops considerably in value against the Australian dollar, we will need to adjust the tour costs appropriately. We will notify you before the final payment is due.

Tour viability – we need a minimum of 10 participants for this tour to proceed. We will limit this tour to a maximum of 18 participants, plus your tour leaders.

Single rooms are available at an additional cost. If you are travelling on your own and are happy to share we will do our best to allocate you a twin-share room with a congenial traveller.

We will stay at the Westin Miyako Hotel in Kyoto for 8 nights. Non-smoking rooms have been requested but this cannot be guaranteed. There is also a small chance that you may need to change rooms during your stay due to rooming allocation and availability.

Travel and medical insurance is required. You must provide a copy of your insurance certificate to Inspired Traveller before departure. It is possible to purchase travel and medical insurance from our travel agent (details below).

A pre-departure meeting will be held in Sydney about 30 days before the tour's departure. Important tour information along with travel notes will be distributed. If you don't live in Sydney or cannot attend William will post these documents to you and is available by phone to answer any questions.

Water and Japanese tea are included with meals. We would ask participants not to drink alcohol during the writing retreat.

If you would like to book your JetStar flights with My Way Travel, please note a \$55 booking fee will apply.

Please read the booking conditions and the cancellation policy on the application form.

## ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD

In Kyoto we stay for 8 nights in the delightful 4-star Westin Miyako Kyoto Hotel situated in the peaceful Higashiyama district and a short distance to the Heian Shrine. Rooms are very comfortably equipped and presented with excellent facilities and amenities. Please note that while non-smoking rooms have been requested, this will be subject to availability and at the discretion of the hotel.

## LUGGAGE

As many Japanese railway stations do not have lifts or escalators, please do not take more luggage than you can comfortably carry for some time by yourself.

## TO BOOK

To secure your place on this tour please complete the application form and send it with your A\$500 deposit to:

**By post** Edward Ngo  
My Way Travel  
164 Hargrave St  
PADDINGTON NSW 2021

**By fax** +61 2 8580 5771

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For enquiries about the tour, including the travel itinerary, suggested group air travel, and health or fitness, please contact:

**William Suganda** at *Inspired Traveller*  
Phone **02 8005 0978** (Australia)  
Email **william@inspiredtraveller.com.au**



If your enquiry specifically relates to additional travel arrangements to complement this tour, payments and travel/medical insurance, please contact:

**Edward Ngo** at *My Way Travel*  
Phone **02 9327 7400**  
Email **edward@mywaytravel.com.au**



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ます。これらの



*Are we to look at cherry blossoms only in full bloom,  
or at the moon only when it is cloudless?  
...Branches about to blossom or gardens strewn  
with faded flowers are worthier of our admiration.*

Kenko Yoshida (from *Essays in Idleness*)