Start Ticking Off Your Bucket List With a Visit to Kyoto in 2016

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According to research by the University of Southampton*, travel-related activities account for the number one bucket list spot for almost 50% of the 2,076 respondents. Thanks to the competitive rate of the Japanese Yen against the British Pound, there has never been a better time to visit Japan so Kyoto Convention and Visitors Bureau is encouraging all travellers to start ticking off their bucket list in 2016 with a trip to the beautiful city.

Kyoto Convention and Visitors Bureau has released a snapshot of some of the most desirable experiences to be enjoyed on a trip to Japan's cultural capital in the New Year.

Travel At Speed Through Japan On A Shinkansen Bullet Train
Climb on board one of Japan's iconic Shinkansen bullet trains in Tokyo and watch as they depart at their scheduled second from the buzzing Japanese metropolis. The pioneering trains reach speeds of up to 285 km/hour, transporting travellers to the imperial city of Kyoto in as little as two hours and 15 minutes. On a clear day, travellers can even catch a glimpse of the majestic Mt. Fuji from the train. For more information, visit kyoto.travel/en/traveller_kit/accessinfo.

Learn the Art of Zen Meditation
Since the 12th century, Zen became widely adopted as the religion of Japan's increasingly influential Japanese warriors. Two popular Zen practices, Zazen and Shakyo are now offered to beginners wanting to learn the practice in some of the city's most stunning shrines. The Shunko-in Temple offers Zazen classes, led by the deputy head priest Rev. Taka Kawakami, who instructs in English on the basics of Zen meditation and how to incorporate the Zen philosophy and mindfulness into everyday life. For more information, visitwww.shunkoin.com.

Spend The Night In A Traditional Ryokan
For those looking to immerse themselves in a truly authentic experience, spend the night in the calm surroundings of a traditional*ryokan*, a Japanese-style inn. The personal experience often includes two meals per overnight stay served to guests in their room by highly professional female staff known as *nakai* (room maids). The guests can feast on the local delicacies while relaxing in their tatami-floored rooms. Shared outdoor bathing facilities are often found in the most traditional of ryokans, with some using water filled from local hot springs. When it comes to resting, beds in a ryokan take the form of a futon, a flat, foldable mattress, which are prepared in the evening whilst guests are out. For more information, visitkyoto.travel/en/planyourvisit/accommodations.

Get A Glimpse Into The Secret World Of A Geisha
You can catch sight of Maiko (apprentice Geisha) and Geiko (Geisha) in traditional kimonos walking through the streets of Gion, one of the main downtown districts in Kyoto, but for a truly special experience, enjoy an evening with the performers at selected ryokan and hotels. The Maiko and Geisha's will perform a selection of traditional songs, dances, and games for visitors to enjoy, offering a glimpse into their private world. For more information, visitkyoto.travel/en/thingstodo/entertainment/100.

To find out more about Kyoto, visit kyoto.travel/en.

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Notes To Editors
*****According to The University of Southampton Study: *18-24 year olds: generation aspiration?* Available from:yougov.co.uk/news/2014/06/12/aspirational-generation.

About KCVB
Kyoto Convention and Visitors Bureau is the official partnership for international tourism representation of the City of Kyoto, Japan. Kyoto's diverse history and reputation as Japan's original capital and cultural centre provide a wealth of opportunities for tour operators and travel agents. The city is home to the Imperial Palace whilst also being the only place where 'real' geishas can still be seen, its old temples and Zen gardens interspersed with urban living means that Kyoto is a striking contrast of heritage and modern city. Its location just 25 minutes from Osaka and 2hrs 15 minutes from Tokyo, make it easily accessible from Japan's two main international gateways.

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