This trip offers you the chance to get behind the scenes and see the conservation of temple architecture. We will first visit the Heian Era buildings of the Imperial Palace and then see how traditional crafts skills are being used in contemporary designs in a Kyoto guesthouse. Following this we will visit Honryu-ji, where we will see how the Main Hall is being dismantled and worked on. It’s a fantastic opportunity to witness first hand how ancient and modern technologies combine to ensure Japan’s historic buildings and craft skills are being passed on to the future.

Honryu-ji Temple Main Hall

Kyoto Imperial Palace: The building you see today was constructed in 1855, but retains many older structure of the Inner Palace (residence of the Emperor). You can see how architectural styles developed overtime since the Heian period (794-1185) in Shishin-den, Seiryō-den, Kogosho, Ogakumonjo and Otsunegoten.

Kyoto State Guest House: This recently completed building demonstrates a combination of modern and historic features. The construction and interiors use traditional skills that represent Kyoto - carpentry, plastering, hand woven textiles, lacquer and makie gold decoration.

Honryu-ji Temple: The Main Hall (National Designated Important Cultural Property), is the oldest of Kyoto’s 16 main sites as it escaped the Great Fire of Kyoto in the 18th century, and became known as the "Burning Temple". You will be guided through the current conservation works by the Head of the Kyoto Prefectural Cultural Property Protection Division.

Toji Temple: A UNESCO registered temple belonging to the Koho Daishi Kukai Branch of Buddhism. The five-story pagoda at 55m high, is the tallest wooden building in Japan. We will visit the first floor of the pagoda, as it undergoes conservation.

Note: Please do not wear high heels – wear comfortable walking shoes to visit the restoration site.