



Updated - Japan Travel /access restricted

I am buzzing with visitors, and I am shelled with entertainment cycles of friends visiting and Japan is an easy place if you keep things simple. But if you decide to go deep into culture it becomes very complex. It's not something I recommend unless you're determined to change your mind about many things you've learned. Japanese work with systems and communities and western people work with groups as individuals. It is a very different way of thinking and I find it challenging yet extraordinary to see a country which still maintains a degree of tradition. Japanese

have rules and roles are based on universal systems that Japanese abide by - and that's why it's so orderly clean and functional. But more than that it is generally speaking a very safe country people have integrity and people understand the concept of respect and personal space.

Since three years Japan has been closed from the rest of the world reminding us of Japan's closure Sakoku literally translated as "chained country" was the isolationist foreign policy of the Japanese Tokugawa shogunate under which, for a period of 265 years during the Edo period (from 1603 to 1868), relations and trade between Japan and other countries were severely limited, and nearly all foreign nationals were banned from entering Japan, while common Japanese people were kept from leaving the country. The fact that Japan was closed changed very much the accessibility foreigners used to have to the high-end restaurants. And you may feel frustrated by the fact that you do not have the same access you used to have. That's because Japanese client visit restaurants booked their psycho and reserve for the next dates and consequently availability is very scarce.

Japan is a complex place, layers and layers of intricate details, some visitors enjoy peeling back the layers while others prefer to see it more superficially. I have been doing Japan for 40 years, and I am still puzzled by some regular occurrences, and I ask myself why. As a tourist, you can easily enjoy Japan and for the first time, it is wise to take it easy, do not pack too much into your travels and allocate sufficient time to each journey.

I compiled this basic information for friends to pick and choose what best suits their own interests. I do advise first time travellers to focus on Tokyo, Kamakura and Kyoto. If you are a contemporary art lover, you can incorporate Naoshima and visit Tadao Ando designed Benesse House Museum.

I always recommend Kyoto as a place to spend some time but consider the city and the temples are spread out from east to west and from north to south. A driver and car is recommended there as an absolute must otherwise you can use a taxi due to the geography and location of temples crosses you from East to West unless you have days to divide the city into geographic visits.

ONSEN

If you miss Onsen then you miss Japan - onsen is one of those memories you'll never forget, and its either something you'll love or hate. Onsen is all about sleeping on tatami and living in a Yukata for 24-hours. The cuisine is all Japanese except

breakfast which is usually a choice between western or Japanese: <https://mesubim.com/2014/11/23/yagyunosho-part-v-breakfast/>

If you decide to visit an onsen beware they charge by the person and it is quite costly, although well worth it. You have two meals and a private onsen in your room. If you decide to go ask me for some more advice.

FISH MARKET

In Tokyo, I am always asked about the fish market, and if you are keen to see it, I recommend asking the hotel to arrange a guided tour given tourists are not usually welcomed there in the early hours anymore.

DAIWA

<https://tabelog.com/en/tokyo/A1313/A131307/13227265/>

Eating sushi at the market is touristic at best, and if you have any interest go very early or you'll be forced to line up for hours but Daiwa is an institution. If you want to try Daiwa early morning sushi (its been years since I tried it) go to Tsukiji building 6, and claim your spot in the line up but nowadays I believe you can buy a ticket in advance (same day) as it opens at 06h00.

Counter-only seating in the tiny space was very tight. There was barely any elbow room with 12 to 16 at one time and four chefs behind the counter. This sushi is fresh but I am afraid to say that fresh fish isn't the only prerequisite for sushi.

FISHY STUFF

In fact, as a side note, and not to turn anyone off sushi, don't be squeamish after reading this. Raw fish poses a threat and in most countries, in Europe there are strict regulations on deep freezing fish to kill all bacteria using a blast chiller to minus 40°C.

There is a very good reason but let me share the words of a Japanese medical surgeon who was describing how people go fishing and come back after eating fresh caught fish with terrible gut wrenching pain. The problem is, when fish is too fresh you can risk anisakis: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anisakis> a worm that bits the stomach walls and it isn't life threatening yet it is painful and frightening.

TREATING FISHY STUFF

So back to sushi at Tsukiji, and sushi in general; all sushi chefs practice the same techniques to treat all fish and free them of all types of small host worms. The techniques involve salt and vinegar, a common technique used. At the same time, fish that is too fresh can pose issues and so factor into the equation the quality. In the Tsukiji it is more fresh than in most other places, but quality in Japan has multiple degrees.

So, when eating raw fish consider the minimum cost per person is ¥20,000 and up. Don't fool around with random places, hygiene is critical in eating raw fish.

DAY TRIP TOKYO-KAMAKURA

I added Kamakura to the list for travellers who wish to have a little more cultural activity while visiting Tokyo - perhaps a stroll at the seaside beach. It is all a matter of priority and we enjoy a short morning trip to Kamakura, a soba lunch and back home - and when you go do not miss the giant buddha and or the bamboo forest and the tea, it is a lovely day trip.

<https://mesubim.com/2016/04/01/hawk-fake-wasabi-matsubara-an/>

HIROSHIMA

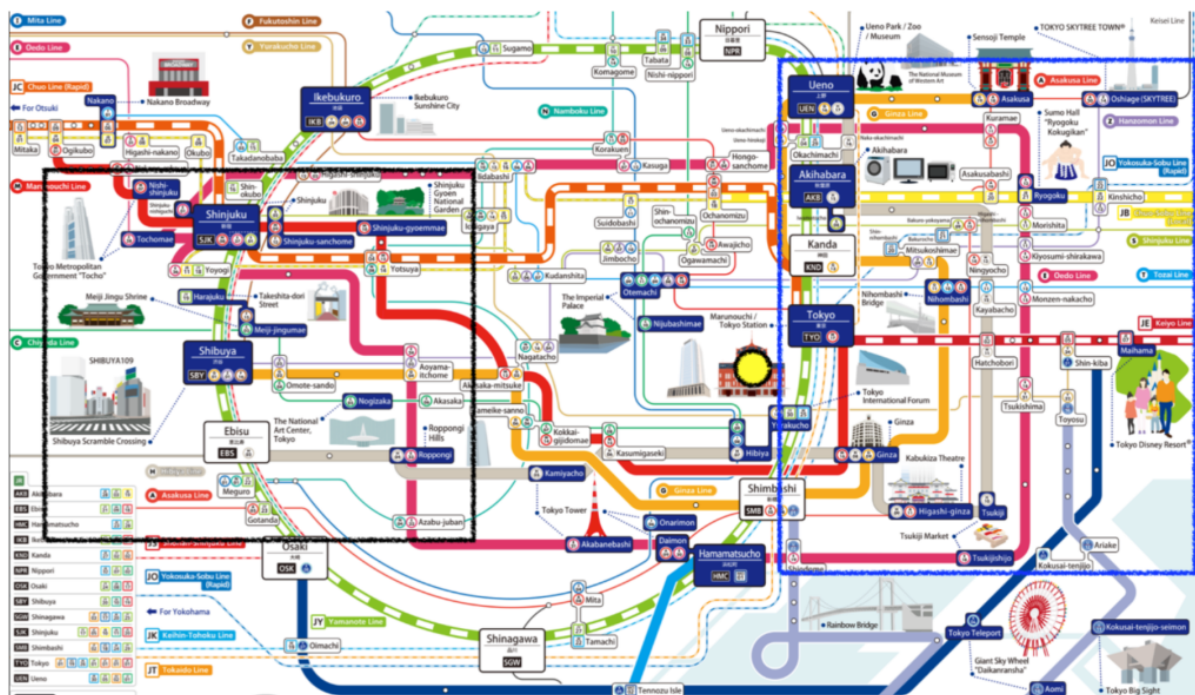
A visit to Hiroshima as a must to see the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. A place continuously appealing for the elimination of nuclear armaments and the realization of permanent world peace. It is divided into east building and main building. At the east building, the history of Hiroshima (Hiroshima-no-ayumi) dealing with the A-bomb exposure period is presented through picture panels, films, and figures concerning factors related to the historical background at the time. In the main building, the museum shows the devastation caused by the atomic bomb in detail. The Peace Memorial Park, in which this museum is located, is known as a famous cherry blossom viewing site.

SLEEP TOKYO

I am asked where should I stay in Tokyo, a difficult question to answer because for each person they have his/her preferences, and the options for hotels are based on location and proximity of those things you wish to do. But basically, the city is divided into east and west. Most tourists stay in either Shinjuku, Roppongi,

Marunouchi, Ginza, and or Shibuya because there is plenty to do and walking distance to shopping makes it easier. But almost everywhere there are shops and the map is divided between east and west: left side in **Black** is where you could spend time but it is not to say the **Blue** area is boring, it is bustling with shops as well.

If you look at a map, you'll see that Tokyo retains some of its Edo Period features, most notably a large green oasis in the middle of the city, site of the former Edo Castle and today home of the Imperial Palace and its grounds. Surrounding it is the castle moat; a bit farther out are remnants of another circular moat built by the Tokugawa shogun. The JR Yamanote Line forms a loop around the inner city; most of Tokyo's major hotels, nightlife districts, and attractions are near or inside this oblong loop, so the subway is useful and quick.



Back to where to go Left side of the map west is the **Black Area** on the map - left side:

SHIBUYA CROSSING

Not to miss it, one of the busiest intersections in the world. During rush hour, you'll find more than 1,000 people crossing this famous spot. When it comes to people watching and lots of Japanese it's the place. In Shibuya, there is plenty to see, department stores, international brands and lots of odd shops selling knick-knacks. In fact, there is Tokyu Hands a place many enjoy although it isn't for everyone nevertheless interesting to see and walk up to the top floor to burn some calories

and have an iced coffee and then down and explore each floor: <https://www.tokyu-hands.co.jp/en/>



And after Tokyu Hands, the area Shibuya has lots of shopping and if you cruise the neighborhood you'll find supreme, second-hand shops, music vinyl specialists and

so many kids of variety. <https://www.tokyu-hands.co.jp/en/list/shibuya/> and there is are numerous Tokyo hands in Tokyo but Shibuya is best.

From Shibuya you can walk to Harajuku District is the center of Japanese fashion and youth culture. Start by checking out the endless boutiques and vintage shops on Takeshita Street and the main road Omote Sando has the famous Prada building and the Nezu museum: <http://www.nezu-muse.or.jp/en/> and in and around Prada there is some small streets parallel which is interesting to see. I do like the building made by Kengo Kuma selling Taiwanese cakes: <https://www.sunnyhills.com.tw/index/ja-jp/> so go and try the cake if you wish.

In the same area, you can find a decent coffee: <http://www.shozo.co.jp/news/> a kid of strange Japanese coffee shop with good small cakes. If you prefer Blue Bottle it is next door and in this area, if those don't suit you try: <https://www.maisonkitsune.com/mk/cafe-kitsune/> which is nearby and kind of stylish. If you are a serious coffee fanatic there are other options yet further away but interesting: <https://mesubim.com/2015/12/01/shokunin-tanaka-bear-pond/> and the owner is cool yet "otaku" and has his own way of doing things, *so no photos*.

The real deal - Coffee and culture in

Tokyo: <https://mesubim.com/2015/12/01/shokunin-tanaka-bear-pond/>

The area of Shibuya, Omote Sando, Harajuku, and even Shinjuku is almost all within reach. The area is huge with numerous things to see, do and eat.

I will help you with restaurants if you need more direction or see here: <https://mesubim.com/2014/01/23/tokyos-30-best-sushi/> it is old yet they are more or less the same.

TABELOG AWARDS

<https://award.tabelog.com/en>

BOOK RESTAURANTS

Considering it's difficult to book a restaurant it's even more complicated due to the fact that many tourists change their mind after making a reservation. Not giving the restaurant sufficient notice makes it difficult for everyone so consequently restaurant owners handover reservations to third parties. It's important to read the rules and regulations because some do not appreciate you showing up late not even 5-minutes - and if you do ,you can lose your table and your chairs or if you

were perfume or if you're too loud or are use your telephone there are a multitude of reasons why your reservation can be cancelled.

[Pocket Concierge - Reserve top restaurants in Japan](#)

Book Michelin-starred and top restaurants in

Japan. **Tableall:** <https://www.tableall.com> **Omakase:** <https://omakase.in>

OMOTE SANDO

Lots of funky shops and it is worthy to explore yet these areas are mixed with vintage and brands and not far away is Omote Sando's main road with none other than Tadeo Ando's Omote Sando Hills: <https://www.omotesandohills.com/en/> an odd shape and perhaps boring to some extent but many enjoy it.

Iconic Harajuku style while in Tokyo manicure from Jill & Lovers: <http://www.jillandlovers.jp> we never tried however you can at your own risk, just kidding but if you need hair and nails it is must book in advance in Japan as the saloons are everywhere. There are more than McDonald's and Starbucks, it is just insane and most are busy all times.

Speaking of busy, you can try: <https://store.tsite.jp/daikanyama/english/> again in the reach of the same Neighbourhood. If you like this quadrant stay in Roppongi.

To check out some nice food in Tokyo, you can head to Ebisu and eat traditional Japanese eateries or Robuchon's Castle, a gastronomy experience. Speaking of Robuchon once again, the atelier is popular if you like Japanese-French in Tokyo. Japanese are/were fanatics of French food so there are thousands of good restaurants serving French just so you know: <https://www.robuchon.jp/latelier-en> and this Robuchon is located in the Roppongi and in the Hyatt complex, it is a huge mixed-use development.

BEEF

If you do get ready for a small delicious beef steak: <https://mesubim.com/?s=steak+tokyo+aragawa> and it is fine dining and "takai" but many love it, or the sister restaurant: it is atmosphere dull and goodgyu: <https://mesubim.com/2015/11/18/gorio-tokyo-steak/> both these are top end if you are not a vegan or a vegetarian or afraid of meat, just the price is scary.

KOREAN

Now think about the idea of travelling in Japan and eating Korean food or any other food for that matter. Do not hesitate to try Korean food Italian food French food, or Indian food because you won't be disappointed as Japanese always have a twist. And if you're a meat lover Korean is amazing because principally when you eat Japanese beef you have only to cut the sirloin and the fillet. If you go to Korean you can barbecue the best meats and they're all raised in Japan at least the places I go.

We adore Korean food in Japan, it is extremely good and they have excellent beef and veggies: <https://mesubim.com/2016/04/06/shins-korean-bbq-menu-tokyo/> and you need to try Korean, you cook yourself. The owner is a close friend and his ingredients are wonderful, and his beer is super cold in a frosty glass, and that is a Japanese fetish.

There are good Japanese beef alternatives as well, and they adore to cook using Sumi and in particular "shabu-Shabu" - namely: <https://mesubim.com/?s=shabu+shabu> and avoid Sukiyaki, it is too sweet, however, if you like sweet: <https://mesubim.com/2016/03/21/shabu-or-sukiyaki/>

HOTELS TOKYO

The Ritz is very good and the hotel starts on a high floor: and below is a marvelous shopping complex named Midtown and it has many yummy and good shops; Precce for shopping foods to take home, traditional cakes, traditional foods and lots of shops including on the top floor of the shopping are some cool shops: <https://www.tokyo-midtown.com/en/> and there is the Suntory Museum as well as their shop which has nice items, and the park next door. The Ritz area is high-rise but it is easy to access the areas which you will like most and Ginza.

The Okura Hotel is a brand newly constructed project, yet it is nothing comparable to what it was in the past so we do not recommend it. But it has a special place in our hearts as we spent years there.

Hyatt: https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/hotel/japan/grand-hyatt-tokyo/tyogh?src=corp_lclb_gmb_seo_aspac_tyogh

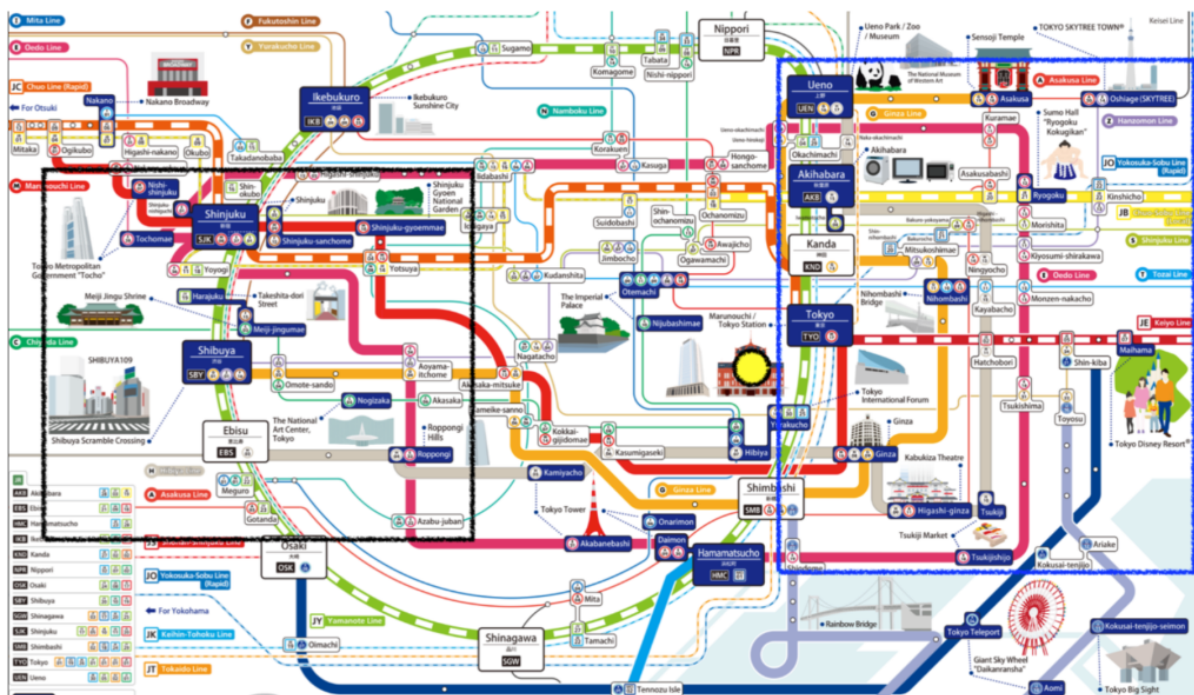
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| <p>Luxury Hotel Accomodation in Roppongi Japan Grand Hyatt TokyoA modern luxury hotel in the heart of Roppongi, Tokyo - Grand Hyatt Tokyo. Expect top dining experiences and ultimate relaxation.www.hyatt.com</p> |
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Ritz: <http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/japan/tokyo?scid=bb1a189a-fec3-4d19-a255-54ba596febe2>

Tokyo Accommodations begin on the 47th floor. Michelin starred French fare at Azure 45
Centrally located to Tokyo's attractions. www.ritzcarlton.com

Okura: <https://theokuratokyo.jp/en/>

The Okura Tokyo The Okura Tokyo is a luxury hotel in Tokyo's central Toranomon district. Guests are welcomed into a place defined by elegant Japanese aesthetics, service that is both personal and accommodating, and a distinctive Japanese sensibility. theokuratokyo.jp



Blue Area on the map (right side) is trendy and there are some good men's and women's shopping around and in the Neighbourhood. Ginza or Marunouchi you can walk to Hermes and see the building, all in glass blocks.

A good resource: <https://en.palacehoteltokyo.com/destination/tokyo/>

Each area in Tokyo has its own shape and form, so you should start with Ginza and Marunouchi and see it for what it is, and in and around Ginza you can travel a few minutes up to Coredo: <https://mitsui-shopping-park.com/urban/nihonbashi/> and from there visit the mandarin and have a pizza at their pizza bar and see my cutter.

<https://mesubim.com/2015/08/23/my-pizza-cutter-damascus/>

You are in Tokyo's answer to Manhattan; Ginza is famous for its insanely high rent and ten-dollar cups of coffee. This is the place to go when you want to spoil yourself with upmarket shops, restaurants, and galleries. Beef, yes meat and most people love Japanese beef and dream of it, do you?

ELECTRONICS

If your fancy is electronics, the famous for its endless lines of electric stores, Akihabara is a tech lover's heaven. The district is known as an electric town, and you can find anything and everything here. There are arcades and games galore alongside tons of anime and manga spots. While you are there you can see a maid café, yes odd but popular. The manga-style waitresses dress in traditional maids' uniforms and call you master. There are a variety of different maid cafés, including some with guys waiting tables. You won't find this anywhere else and I have never tried it, no time.

PARKS

If that grosses you out take a stroll in Yoyogi park or Ueno Park, both are large gardens yet I prefer Yoyogi as a park. But if you aren't interested in Parks you are surrounded by lots of shopping and Kitte: <http://jptower-kitte.jp/en/>

RAMEN +

Asakusa has a fascinating history. If you are planning to do any walking tours, this is the place to do it. With a rich history of kabuki theaters and red-light districts, you can spend hours wandering around and taking it all in. You can also visit Kappabashi where they sell all the restaurant equipment if you cook, or go to eat ramen at one of my favorites: <https://mesubim.com/?s=matador+ramen> but be aware Ramen shops have line ups and often impolite people work there. If you like spicy, I took Matteo there and he managed to eat the spiciest they have: <https://mesubim.com/2015/01/24/kikanbou-ramen/>

Aman: <https://www.aman.com/resorts/aman-tokyo>

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| <p>Aman Tokyo - Luxury Urban Hotel in Tokyo, Japan - Aman Discover Aman Tokyo, a luxury hotel and sanctuary spread across the top six floors of the Otemachi Tower near the Imperial Gardens. Discover Chiyoda with Aman. www.aman.com</p> |
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Peninsula: <https://www.peninsula.com/en/tokyo/special-offers/rooms/luxury-in-advance?gclid=aw.ds&&gclid=EAlalQobChMIusGg55fS5gIVDHZgCh3qegsmEAYASA AEgLc- D BwE>

[Luxury in Advance | Tokyo 5 Star Hotel Promotions | The Peninsula Tokyo](#) Plan your next stay with the luxury of time and be rewarded with great rates .www.peninsula.com

Mandarin: <https://www.mandarinoriental.com/tokyo/nihonbashi/luxury-hotel?htl=MOTYO&kw=MOTYO&eng=google&src=local>

[Luxury 5 Star Hotel | Nihonbashi | Mandarin Oriental, Tokyo](#) High above the city, Mandarin Oriental, Tokyo is a five-star luxury hotel with views to take your breath away. Exuding crisp, contemporary style, we pride ourselves on our excellent technology, renowned spa, innovative restaurants and impeccable service.www.mandarinoriental.com

There are other newer hotels since and some more hip and less known such as the Trunk Hotel, a boutique property located near Shibuya:

HIP TRUNK HOTEL

<https://trunk-hotel.com> And since Covid the Edition which is preferred by many travellers yet the location is B+: <https://www.editionhotels.com/tokyo-toranomon> and there is One Tokyo a different kind of hotel: <https://www.onetokyo.com/en/accommodation/>

PRE COVID Itinerary: [Japan 2019](#)

Japan is a complex place, layers and layers of intricate details, some visitors enjoy peeling back the layers while others prefer to see it more superficially. I have been in Japan for over 30 years, and I am still puzzled by some regular occurrences, and I ask my self why. As a tourist, you can easily enjoy Japan and for the first time, it is wise to take it easy, do not pack too much into your travels and allocate sufficient time to each journey.

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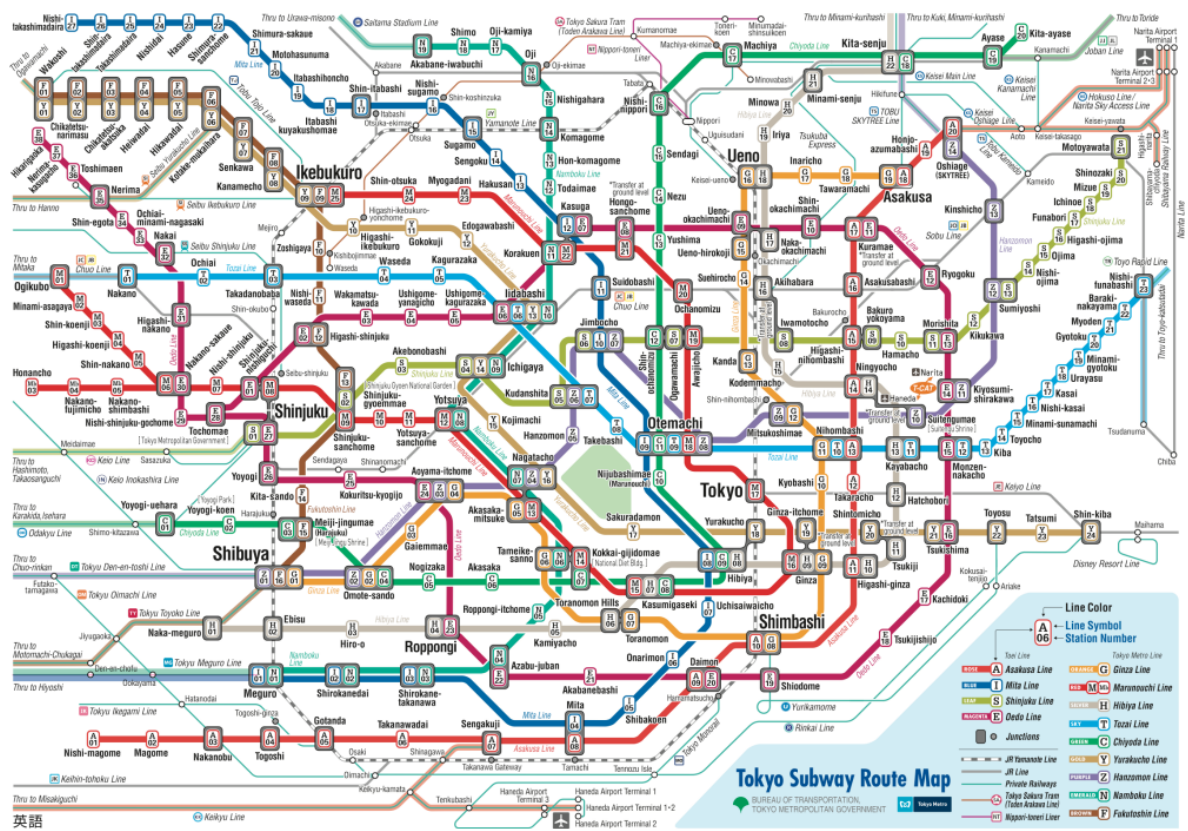
If you decide to visit an onsen beware they charge by the person and it is quite costly, although well worth it. You have two meals and a private onsen in your room. If you decide to go ask me for some more advice.

SKYTREE

It is the centerpiece of the Tokyo Sky tree Town in the Sumida City Ward, not far away from you, it is the tallest structure in Japan and the second tallest in the world at the time of its completion. A large shopping complex with the aquarium is located at its base. But more easy could be Mori Tower observation deck, and you can see their museum.

TOKYO

Tokyo is massive and it is made up of Japan's 47 prefectures, consisting of 23 central city wards and multiple cities, towns, and villages west of the city center. The Izu and Ogasawara Islands are also part of Tokyo: <https://www.ogasawaramura.com/en/go/>



SHOPPING

Ginza 9: <http://www.ginza9.com/language/index.html> are both new and are good to explore including the B1.

Taito Ward and Asakusa is not far from you: at the heart of the Taito District is Asakusa with its impressive Senso-ji Temple. This beautiful seventh-century traditional temple is Tokyo's most famous, yet very-very touristic and nothing to compare to Kyoto.

Prior to 1860's Tokyo was known as Edo, hence Edo sushi, a small castle town in the 16th century became Japan's political center in 1603 when Tokugawa Ieyasu established his feudal government there. A few decades later Edo had grown into one of the world's most populous cities.

With the Meiji Restoration of 1868, the emperor and capital moved from Kyoto to Edo, which was renamed Tokyo the "Eastern Capital". Since large parts of Tokyo were destroyed in the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, and in the air raids of 1945 but the people of Japan have demonstrated immense courage and this city is so impressive in so many ways.

Contrary to common perception, Tokyo also offers a number of attractive green spaces in the city center and within relatively short train rides at its outskirts. Tokyo offers unlimited choices of shopping, entertainment, culture, and dining. The city's history can be appreciated in districts such as Asakusa, and in many excellent museums, historic temples, and scenic gardens. If you are spending time in Tokyo you need to think over carefully your priorities to optimize your time there. This map gives you a sense of the geography of one area of Tokyo.

The Imperial Palace is a place to see and most visitors enjoy the gardens as the Palace itself isn't accessible to visitors. I recommend focusing more on smaller sites yet it's important to see and walk through the Palace:

<http://sankan.kunaicho.go.jp/english/index.html>

SHOPPING DEPARTMENT FOODS

These days they are filled with Chinese tourists on their phones screaming. If you are looking for the food hall experience, I recommend my favorite Isetan in Shinjuku. In B1, there are fruits, meats, and plenty of other Japanese foods, both grocery and prepared foods. The cheese vendor sells a range of imported cheese, and the fruits department is superb. The departments are divided between, Japanese foods grocery, and prepared foods. The B1 also has a tremendous sweets section and a bread area with a variety of Japanese bakers selling international and local brands.

The vendor I often use is Fureika, a Chinese food supplier producing some of the finest in Tokyo. Here you can buy some mapodofu, rice, or seasonal vegetables and ask for hashi for enjoying at your leisure. But do not walk and eat anywhere in Japan as it is just not tolerated. Also, while in a department store, you can sample, and vendors encourage clients to taste their products. Be sure to taste it where it is shared and do not walk away, try it and acknowledge its taste as good by saying "oishi."

The top floor in the department store Isetan has interesting for Japanese souvenirs, and there is a duty-free floor I stay away from. Enjoy Isetan Shinjuku and what it has to offer.

There are some alternatives such as midtown Precce, and I suggest a quick visit there if you are either hungry as the facility has some decent options. If you are

looking for some products to take home, at Precce make sure to buy Japanese Saran wrap as it is incredible and very useful if you use it at home.

Lastly if in Ginza you can try; Ginza 9, Takashimaya or Wako or wherever but while some offer food products for sale, many are selling brands. Make sure to check the top floor, or the gallery floors for exhibitions.

<http://www.amahare.jp/shop/>

BARS & COCKTAILS

I do not frequent bars at night, I often frequent wine bars, and I do not recommend guests to the places I go because they involve membership. But there are numerous good cocktail bars you can try.

<http://www.amahare.jp/shop/>

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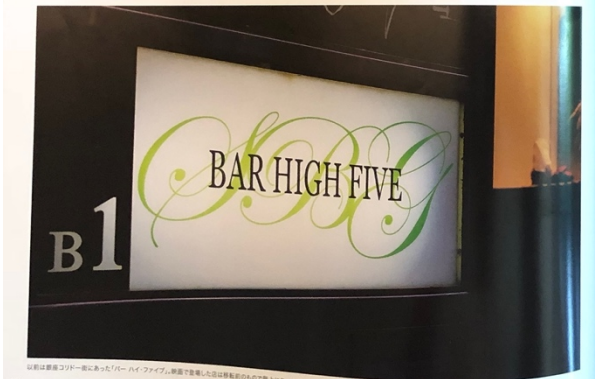
[Burugariiruba](#)

[LITTLE SMITH](#)

[CLASSIC BAR ORIBE](#)



ひよりの500本とらんとは絶妙なディスプレイ。3ヶ月前にリニューアルした際、以前よりも高級感を増やして、いかなる高級感にも対応できるようにラインナップには常に気を配る。



以前は劇場コブラーであった「バーハイファイ」は、映画で登場した店は撮影前のもので廃止したが、現在は劇場コブラーの劇場コブラーの劇場コブラー。

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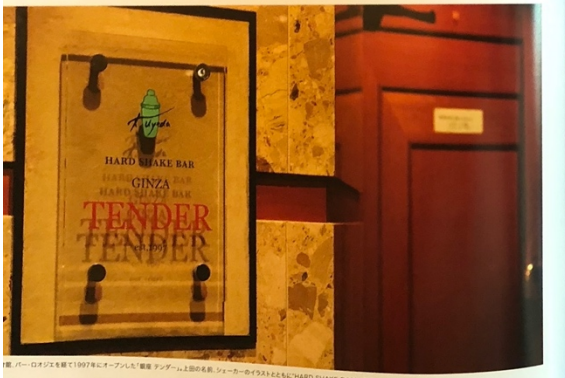
バー ハイ・ファイ

東京都中央区銀座5-4-15
エロートレインビル4F
03-3571-0815

オーナーバーテンダーはスタア・バーキン
ザから独立した上野秀嗣。優れた造りか
で世界中のバーテンダーたちと交流し、日
本にとどまらず世界で活躍。「The
World's 50 Best Bars 2017」
にも選ばれた。シューマンとは古くからの仲
で、映画でも最初に握手を交わすシー
ンが印象的だ。常時500本以上もボトルを
そろえ、提供できるカクテルの幅も広がって
いる。さらに日本バーテンダー協会の副会
長も務める上野。この撮影日はタイで革
命をやるバーから学びに来た若手は革
命家内をするなど、多忙の合間を縫って、日
本のバー文化を伝える手間も惜しまない。



このディスプレイは、映画「ハードシェイク」で登場した店のディスプレイを参考に、2015年撮影準備期間に作りだした。ハードシェイクのディスプレイも参考に。



「バー」ロケを機に1997年「ハードシェイク」撮影。アダム・上田の名義。シャークのイラストとも「HARD SHAKE BAR」のロゴ。



銀座 テンダー

東京都中央区銀座6-6-15
銀座ビル3F
03-3571-0815

銀座に数多あるバーの中でも最も正統とい
うべきは、オーナーバーテンダーの上田和男
は、500以上のオリジナルカクテルを生み出
してきたカクテルアーティストでもある。彼
本職のために作った「サイン」をはじめ、スタ
ンダードとなったシジがいくつもあり、スタ
ンダードのバーで人々を楽しませている。さらにその
「ハードシェイク」も世界的に有名だ。上田とい
く「ハード」は「強く」ではなく「しっかり」とい
うこと。映画でもシューマンにその妙技を賞
賛している。今では彼のカクテル作りを学ぶた
め、ヨーロッパをはじめ各地からバーテンダー
たちが来日し、また上田も海外へ講演に赴き、
正しくおもしろいカクテルの普及に努める。



大手町周辺の区画に200軒以上の飲み屋、バーが密集する。通称「カクテルの街」。このエリアには、銀座、麹町、丸の内、有明などが含まれており、それぞれ異なる雰囲気がある。



賑わい続ける東京、日本を代表する夜景スポット。このエリアには、銀座、丸の内、有明などが含まれており、それぞれ異なる雰囲気がある。



バーカウンターの上には、さまざまな種類の酒類が並び、客が注文するのを待っている。



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天保山ビル
03-6279-4223

「The World's 50 Best Bars 2017」にも選ばれた、いま東京で最も注目されるバーテンナーバーテンダーの鹿山博康は、カクテルの材料となるハーブを自ら育て、抽出など製法にこだわった独自のカクテルを日々追求する。親父のシェフマンはドイツのバーテンダーを介してこの店を知り、平日の夜に訪れるという。さらに特筆すべきは、鹿山がこよなく愛する高貴酒「禁制アブサン」(フランスで製造禁止となる1915年以前に醸造されたもの)のエクストラ。100年以上の歴史なアブサンの逸品をラッシュで常時提供してくれるのは、世界広しといえどもここだけではないだろうか。

Tokyo 2022



This is Tokyo

Fifty reasons why the Japanese capital is the greatest city on Earth. By the Time Out Tokyo team

THIS IS TOKYO

WAY BACK IN our inaugural issue in 2013, when Tokyo had just been appointed host of the 2020 summer Olympics and Paralympics, we set ourselves the impossible task of counting all the things that make Tokyo great – we stopped at 50 that could have kept going. Now, eight years on, as the metropolis gets ready for a very different-looking Games to the one we anticipated at the time of our launch, we decided to revisit that list and update it for a new decade.

Of course, there are numerous cool new attractions that weren't around in 2013, but the overall character of Tokyo is different now, too. Tokyo has transformed so much. It's become more edgy, more global and even more vibrant, but one thing hasn't changed at all: Tokyo is still the greatest city in the world. Here's 50 reasons why.

1 Because Tokyo is resilient

Could it have been any other city, but for there's one thing the pandemic has proven. It's that this city can get through anything. In those miserably early days of 2020, Tokyoites were quick to bring out their face masks and hand sanitiser and adhere to all the new safety measures. Even though three separate waves of emergency people kept helping each other out, donating unused face masks to the needy, helping the elderly book vaccination appointments and supplying goods to food banks.

There's no doubt the past 18 months have changed the world forever, and Tokyo has been spared. But our beloved city is no stranger to sudden change. Tokyo has weathered typhoons, fires and earthquakes, coming out the other side different, reinvented, and always on its feet. Tokyo's adaptability is exactly what makes it so resilient.

We know Tokyo can adapt to all this, too – and we can't wait to get back out there and see what's new. Tokyo will always be here, ready when you are.

CITY PRIDE

2 Because Tokyo is more than just one city

Technically, Tokyo isn't a city at all – it's a metropolis made up of 26 different cities, a handful of towns and villages, and 23 central wards. That's not just a piece of pub trivia, it's key to understanding how Tokyo works. The sheer size of the Tokyo Metropolis – around 14 million people living over 2,194 km² – means Tokyo doesn't have one single mood.

Each city has its own personality, which you discover as you go from the gritty of Shinjuku and the relentless cool of Shibuya to the old-fashioned regis charm of Toshima. Once you think you've got it down pat, you realise even the neighbourly hood within each city have their own distinctive character. That's why Tokyo and Osaka are right next to each other in Chuo ward, but they look like polar opposites.

3 Because Tokyoites are the most considerate people on the planet

Tokyo is the most populous city in the world, known for its densely packed urban landscape. But it seldom feels overcrowded because Tokyoites generally have exceptional manners – and we don't mean just saying 'please' and 'thank you'.

People here are considerate of those around them and try to avoid doing anything that could annoy or inconvenience others. That means you won't hear loud conversations, ringones or music blasting on the train (people have their phones set to 'silent mode', aka silent mode). Most indoor public spaces are treated the same way: so cafes and bars are free of annoying phone calls and conversations remain tight-lipped until after the credits finish rolling.

4 Because Tokyo is serious about sustainability

For Tokyo, sustainability is central to city planning, with the

goal of drawing 30 percent of the capital's power from renewable sources by 2030, aiming that to 100 percent renewables and net zero emissions by 2050. It's ambitious, but if any city can do it, Tokyo can. Local businesses are committed to using locally sourced, green ideas like growing salad greens under the Tozai line train tracks (Tokyo Salad), or trendy food bags made of discarded umbrella (Plasticity) and street bunnies (Hataraku Toke).

5 Because Tokyo is always evolving

Tokyo has a long history of reinventing itself, going back way before the salarymen replaced the samurai. The rapid pace of modernisation hasn't slowed down since then, and urban renewal projects are everywhere.

Shibuya seems to be constantly outdoing itself. Within the last couple of years, it has opened

Myoasha Park, the chic shopping mall with a rooftop park, as well as the impressive Shibuya Scramble Square with its vertigo-inducing rooftop observation deck (one of the best in Tokyo). Older districts are given a new lease on life as well, like the Nishi-Shinjuku, which recently preserved a historical bank building to house a boutique hotel (ES), a modern Japanese restaurant (Caveman) and a cocktail den (Anbar), turning it from boring and buttoned-up into Tokyo's coolest neighbourhood.

The Toranomon Azabudai Project in particular is a colossal undertaking that will create a new kind of Tokyo neighbourhood, where futuristic buildings designed by Thomas Heatherwick and Pei Cobb Freed Architects blend in seamlessly with lawns, gardens, trees and water features. More impressively, when completed in 2023, the district will be powered by 100 percent renewable energy.

→ Myoasha Park, 4-39-10 Jingum, Shibuya
→ Shibuya Scramble Square, 2-24-12 Shibuya
→ Toranomon Azabudai, 1-1-1 Toranomon, Minato
→ Es, 1-1-1 Toranomon, Minato
→ Caveman, 1-1-1 Toranomon, Minato
→ Anbar, 1-1-1 Toranomon, Minato

6 Because customer service here is next level

Service here is next level. It creates a lasting impression and elevates your experience. There's a word for it in Japanese: *omotenashi*, which translates to the warm, selfless and unparalleled hospitality that's become a key part of Tokyo's charm. Service in Tokyo is so intuitive that you can be assured



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8 Because Tokyo is a city of contrasts

Tokyo is a perfect mix of tradition and modernity. To travel through time without leaving a walkable section of downtown, grab a snack at a local market (Tsukiji), catch a centuries-old Kabuki show (Kabukiza), stop by a standing bar for a glass of sake (Ginza) and then peruse the ritzy Ginza Six department store.

→ Kabukiza, 4-12-5 Ginza, Chuo
→ Ginza Six, 6-4-1 Ginza, Chuo
→ Tsukiji Outer Market, 4-3-1 Tsukiji, Chuo
→ Kabukiza, 4-12-5 Ginza, Chuo

7 Because in Tokyo, futuristic technology is part of everyday life

Where else but Tokyo would you expect to order a coffee from a robot, or have the checkout machine automatically recognise your items by shape and calculate your bill?

Sure, Tokyo's space-age robots have features that seem baffling at first, but you'll find yourself counting on that bearded self-cleaning robot. And there's no need to worry: the technology isn't designed to replace people –



THIS IS TOKYO

the robots that wait tables at DAWN Avatar Robot Cafe, for example, are remotely controlled by humans, some of whom may not be physically able to do the job without robot assistance.

9 Because everything has a mascot
Tokyo loves its cutesy characters, from Pikachu to Hello Kitty, and it's common to see people in life-size costumes outside train stations. But you'll also find an ever-growing D-list of questionable mascots all around the city. Almost every random brand, city office, government initiative and sports team in Japan has its own marketing mascot and Tokyo has some of the best (or worst, depending on how you look at it).

Shibuya has the honour of being home to Kuma Kuma, a bright pink dog turd (yes, really) who's committed to keeping the streets clean. And 2020 gave us Koromon (pictured right), a cat who fights coronavirus by handing out free face masks.



11 Because Tokyo is very walkable
Walking is the best way to discover Tokyo's weird and wonderful neighbourhood restaurants, stores and cafes that you might otherwise miss if you were taking public transport. One of the best districts to explore on foot is Shibuya, which includes smaller neighbourhoods such as Ebisu and Daitokya.

For a city centre nature walk, opt for a stroll through trendy Tomioka, which leads to the lush Meiji Shrine grounds, beside Yoyogi Park. Or take a trip along the old school streets of Yamanote, the collective name for three of Tokyo's best preserved traditional neighbourhoods: Yanaka, Nezu and Sendagi.

12 Because the public transport system is second to none
Tokyo's train system is ridiculously efficient. In fact, punctuality is such an obsession here that railway companies will apologise if a train departs a few seconds earlier than scheduled. There's also a network of buses and taxis criss-crossing the capital, ready to take you anywhere the trains don't reach.

13 Because Tokyo is a city of suburbs
No matter how wacky, unorthodox or specific your style is, you'll always be able to find a dedicated haunt and a tribe of like-minded people. In districts like Shibuya, you'll often spot groups of lace-loving lolitas, fairy kei youth sporting pastel trinkets and gear, with deliberately dishevelled schoolgirl uniforms, but that's just a small fraction of Tokyo's diverse range of subcultures.

Subcultures in Tokyo aren't just limited to the way you dress – you'll find venues and even whole neighbourhoods catering to what you're into. Nostalgic rockabilles with slicked-back hair can be found showing off their dance moves in Yoyogi Park on the weekends, while otaku (avid group fanatics) often head to stores like Johnny's Shop in Harajuku to hunt for exclusive merch together.

14 Because Tokyo is perfect for singles and introverts
While dinner and drinks for two might look like a very fun way to help in other cities, in Tokyo going on your own is the norm. Most venues are set up for solo customers. Ramen chain Ichiban is famous for its 'flavour concentration booths' with serving windows and dividers designed to give single diners a little privacy, but its commitment to solo slurping isn't unique. High-end restaurants like Fushino and The Blind Donkey serve

up gourmet meals to diners around an open kitchen – a perfect dinner for one. To stop noisy parties from dominating the room, some bars even ban groups altogether, like Hitori in Shinjuku, which only allows lone drinkers to enter. You can easily go a whole day out in the capital barely saying a word to anyone. That's not to say Tokyo is socially dead, but people will respect your personal space when you need it most.

15 Because the LGBTQ+ community is small but fierce
It's impossible to be in awe of the local LGBTQ+ community in its tireless fight for equality. The movement isn't limited to those who identify as sexual minorities either, as the number of allies and activists at the annual Tokyo Rainbow Pride keeps growing every year. Shibuya's Ni-chome district is especially welcoming to queer folk. There are the iconic gay clubs with their awe-inspiring drag shows, but the community also provides refuge and a platform to help several minorities find their footing. At Pride House Tokyo's (see page 42), Japan's first permanent LGBTQ+ support centre, people can get workshops and counselling on relationships, employment issues and more.

16 Because Tokyo is becoming more accessible
Accessibility can be a challenge in a densely packed city like Tokyo, but we're seeing more new initiatives cropping up every day. Tourist attractions including temples (Tsukiji Hongwanji), observation decks (Tokyo Skytree) and museums (Nezu Museum) are going barrier-free. Even bathhouses like Mikoyu have become fully accessible. Meanwhile, specialist tour agencies Omako offer one-day excursions to the best accessible spots in town.

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The Japanese way of life is about being in harmony with the seasons – a trait that has also shaped the personality of the capital. Every season brings out a different side of the metropolis, changes the cityscape, calls for different celebrations, and serves up different food and flavours.

Spring brings joy as the city bursts into a sea of pink cherry blossoms while the longer summer days host vibrant street festivals. Although the pandemic has temporarily put a stop to that, in autumn, the city mellows as leaves turn yellow and red and maple hot pots become the go-to meal. Come winter, the city compensates for the longer nights with sparkling illuminations that light up the streets and public spaces.

Individuals like the architecture café Sumika Shinjuku, or the death metal and horror-themed bar Overstarch in Hail.

22 Because Tokyo is a city of global icons
Every great city has its iconic landmarks, but Tokyo is in a class of its own. The Shibuya Scramble Crossing (pictured) is considered the world's busiest pedestrian crossing. The massive swimming pool at Aoyama Semsei Temple are one of the city's definitive nighttime scenes and just across the river stands the city's most iconic skyscraper. Better yet, the almighty Godzilla watches over, protecting us from his lofty home in Shinjuku.

23 Because Tokyo has the best food in the world
The proof is in the Michelin guide. With the latest 2021 figures, Tokyo maintains its crown as the city boasting not just the most Michelin stars (27 for those counting) but also

the highest number of starred restaurants (212) in the world. However, that doesn't mean good food in Tokyo is elitist or unattainable. Quite the opposite, as many of these illustrious restaurants offer affordable lunches that hover around the ¥1,500 mark. So if you're looking to splurge, treat yourself to a perfectly executed modern Japanese kaiseki meal at the two-starred, or go cheap with a bowl of seafood-based ramen at the one Michelin-starred Konjiki Endo – either way you'll end up having some of the best meals of your life.

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27 Because the city's Japanese cuisine is constantly evolving
The world loves Japanese food for its clean flavours that celebrate seasonal ingredients. Tokyo takes the cuisine a step further by exploring its versatility, marrying Japanese

techniques and produce with some of the world's most revered cuisines – to great effect. Here you'll find bold, innovative restaurants offering inspired takes on Japanese, French (Hirakiga), Japanese-Vietnamese (Ando) as well as Modern European, Japanese (Kohji) food. To experience what's new and next in gastronomy, Tokyo's the city to be in.

28 Because no one does desserts like Tokyo
Tokyo's penchant for sweets never takes itself in any amazing ways. Dainty wagashi, or traditional confectionery that's often eaten with tea, are treated like delicate works of edible art while parfaits and kagigori (shaved ice desserts) pile up the ingredients to become towering towers of deliciousness that look as fantastic as they taste. Some of our favourites include Nanyu's Aoyama, a delicately matcha ice cream shop, Patisserie Anko Iwanagata for its visually stunning parfaits, and Ginta Gintan for its bowls of fluffy ginger-infused shaved ice.

29 Because you'll find the most bizarre, unique, OTT experiences
It's no secret that Tokyo is chock-full of attractions, and some of them are well and truly mind-blowing. Tokyo just takes things one step further than the rest of the world. Like adding a live band to your karaoke session at Bar's Kara Zone-R, or sweating it out in team Lab's immersive art museum. We've also got robot waiters at Popper Parlor (pictured), art aquariums filled with thousands of glittering gumballs, and impressively detailed themed restaurants (Vampire Cafe), which even locals can't quite believe either.

To top it off, the city's game centres are so impressive that some of them have even broken Guinness World Records, like the Sega Shinjuku LaPaz for being the arcade with the most claw machines (477), and the Gaspario Department Store in Bechohu with a whopping total of 3,000 capsule toy dispensers. If you think you've seen it all, you just haven't been in Tokyo for long enough.

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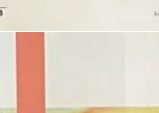
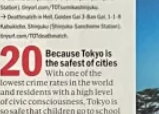
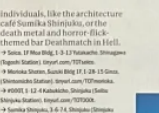
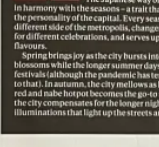
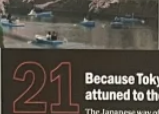
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FOOD & DRINK

22 Because Tokyo gave the world sushi

Can you imagine a life without sushi? We can't. Sushi may have been born in the Edo period (1603-1868) out of necessity the need to feed hungry workers fast and cheap and abundance (fresh seafood off Tokyo Bay), but it has grown into an indispensable part of global food culture, eaten and revered around the world. Still, no world city does it quite like Tokyo: since the freshness and the quality of the fish are given – thanks to Toyosu Market, the world's largest seafood market – chefs distinguish themselves through impeccable knife skills and their unique take on the sushi-tee, resulting in an extraordinary morsel of food that unlike anything you've ever tasted.

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Tokyo is home to some of the best cocktail bars around – and we're not the only ones who think so. In the expanded list of Asia's 50 Best Bars for 2021, Japan claimed more spots than any other destination, and the best of these world-class bars are in Tokyo. Shibuya's raucous SG Club serves up lists of classic cocktails in a handsome space, while the quieter Gen Yamamoto promotes bespoke cocktail tasting courses. At the other end of the scale, Shinjuku's famous Golden Gai cityways boast more bars per square metre than anywhere in the world. Whatever your poison, Tokyo has a bar to quench your thirst.

25 Because our pizzas are as good as the Italians'

If you think Tokyo is only good at Japanese food, you are seriously misguided. Some of the world's top chefs have raved about the excellent pizza in our beloved city, while Associazione Verace Pizza Napoletana, the authority for Neapolitan pizza, has honoured more than ten pizzerias in Tokyo for their authenticity. Japan's obsession with precision and perfection has no doubt led to this accolade and you can taste it yourself at Savoy, Serinquin and Pizzeria da Pepe. Napoli's 'Ca' 'Justo name a few.

26 Because Tokyo has a cafe for everything

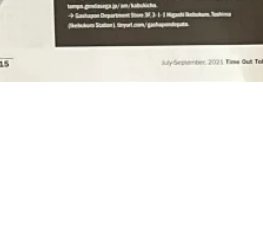
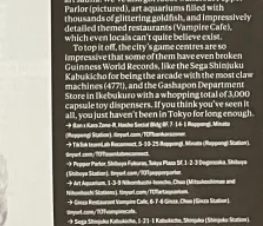
The finest cafe are all the rage in Tokyo. Almost every franchise and character, regardless of whether it's Japanese or an import, has its own cafe in Tokyo. From Gandam and Pokemon to the Moomins and Snoopy. And it's more than just the decor these hangouts even serve up food and drinks presented in the likeness of their namesakes. Fashion brands are also in the game. Louis Vuitton recently opened Le Café, which doesn't exist anywhere outside of Japan, in its jaw-droppingly beautiful Ginza Namiki store.

27 Because the city's Japanese cuisine is constantly evolving

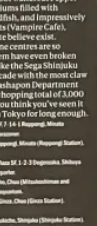
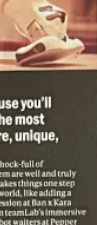
The world loves Japanese food for its clean flavours that celebrate seasonal ingredients. Tokyo takes the cuisine a step further by exploring its versatility, marrying Japanese



THIS IS TOKYO



THIS IS TOKYO



THIS IS TOKYO

ATTRACTIONS

30 Because Tokyo is home to some of the world's most revered contemporary artists... Who in the world doesn't know Yayoi Kusama and Takashi Murakami? Both contemporary artists, two of the most celebrated names of our time, are based in this great city.

31 Because Tokyo is surrounded by lush nature... Tokyo is full of green spaces, from the sprawling Inokashira Park and Meiji Park to the city-centre forest - filled with trees that are a century old - in the traditional Japanese gardens dotted around town like Hamaritsuyu.

32 Because Tokyoites are always fashionable... Tokyo invented the busy over-sized silhouette that has become one of the most popular styles in today's fashion. The city is also widely regarded as a streetwear capital, with its hip youth culture influencing global fashion trends.

33 Because Tokyo is an art city... Art may sometimes seem elitist, but in Tokyo it is accessible for everyone. World-class galleries like Mori Art Museum and The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo - designed by Jia Changyuan and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site - are just a fraction of what the city has to offer.

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THIS IS TOKYO

SEE MORE

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The distinctive Mode Gakuen Creative Tower in Shinjuku

36 Because the architecture is incredible... Tokyo's architecture isn't just stunning - it's also wildly diverse. Ancient buildings like the Kyomizu-dera temple in Kyoto Park are carefully preserved as examples of traditional Japanese architecture.

37 Because Tokyo is a shopping haven... If you think money can't buy happiness, you obviously haven't shopped in Tokyo, especially in Ginza (pictured). From homegrown designers to international labels, you'll find the world's best brands here.

34 Because Tokyo is unbelievably photogenic... Tokyo's tightly packed urban sprawl may not appear as obvious as the skyscrapers, but the metropolis is made for the camera. It isn't tall sleek skyscrapers, it's got a different look for everyone.

35 Because kombini... Japan's convenience stores, lovingly known as kombini, are the best in the world. In fact, you could live out of a kombini. These always-open local supermarkets are a lifesaver offering everything from groceries and ready-to-eat meals to emergency purchases like phone chargers and even clothes.



Getting your act off - the artistic, marble-core public toilets in Tokyo

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ATTRACTIONS

37 Because Tokyo is a shopping haven... If you think money can't buy happiness, you obviously haven't shopped in Tokyo, especially in Ginza (pictured). From homegrown designers to international labels, you'll find the world's best brands here.

38 Because Tokyo's got some of the wackiest designs... As much as we love to tout Marie Kondo's fail-proof tidying methods, it's hard to be a minimalist in Tokyo when just about everything 'sparks joy'. Goods like erasable pens, staple-free staplers, transparent umbrellas and cooling deodorant wipes might seem like novelty items to some, but in Tokyo they're everyday essentials.

39 Because nightlife here means more than just hitting the clubs... Sure, the pandemic has temporarily put the brakes on the city's famously till-the-early-hours nightlife. While we'll never stop boasting about Tokyo's heavy-hitting bars and clubs, that's not all the city's nightlife has to offer.

40 Because Tokyo's got the most teamLab installations... The world-conquering art collective teamLab have put their stamp all over the city with dedicated museums, temporary installations and free artworks for people to enjoy.

Time Out Tokyo July-September 2021



41 Because even Toilets are stunner... Tokyo has the most beautiful in the world. Like so many everyday things designed with a level of care that you just don't see elsewhere, Shinjuku's new transparent public toilet cubicles that turn opaque when locked - caps around the world, but it's just part of the Tokyo in which world-class architects and designers and Tadao Ando create accessible, lavish lavatories. Some look like origami and some look like they all look like works of art.



42 Because Tokyo's got the most teamLab installations... The world-conquering art collective teamLab have put their stamp all over the city with dedicated museums, temporary installations and free artworks for people to enjoy.

43 Because Tokyo's got the most teamLab installations... The world-conquering art collective teamLab have put their stamp all over the city with dedicated museums, temporary installations and free artworks for people to enjoy.

July-September 2021, Time Out Tokyo



July-September 2021, Time Out Tokyo

CULTURE & TRADITION

46 Because onsen are not only for special occasions
Spending an evening at a local onsen or sento after work is an everyday luxury in Tokyo. Each neighbourhood bathhouse is unique in its own way, whether it's equipped with a herbal aroma bath, an ink-bath hot spring or a Finnish-style sauna. You'll find a variety of baths ranging from old-school wooden ones that might have been around since the 1850s, to more modern ones like Sumida's Koganeya (pictured below), which boasts a



Protect your electronic devices from moisture at Kanda Myojin Shrine

Dish food and craft beer taps
→ Kagurazaka 4-14-8 Sakuragi-Kohshicho Station | logis.com

47 Because it's got a lively music scene
Foreign streaming services are still loved, but Tokyoites still love CDs and vinyl records, and nowhere else in the world will you find such a proliferation of music megastores and record shops. Tokyo's music obsession becomes really apparent at the countless small jazz bars, listening bars and live music venues dotted all around the city. You can really get a feel for it when you head to a music bar like B.Y.C., known for its extensive vinyl (and CD) collection, or a hole-in-the-wall livehouse like Ruby Room, which champions local talents in live sets.

It's more than just the local music scene too - the world's biggest names always make sure to add Tokyo to their tours. In the past, we've had Bruno Mars, BTS, U2 and Madonna.
→ B.Y.C. 2-19-14 Dogenzaka, Shinjuku District Station | bravo.com, bicyc.jp
→ Ruby Room, Aoyama-cho 4-2-25-17 Dogenzaka, Shinjuku District Station | rubyroom.com, rubyroom.com

48 Because it has shrines for everything

No matter what neighbourhood you're in, chances are you're within walking distance of a shrine. They're not all huge tourist attractions like the Meiji Shrine - there are plenty of small, local shrines tucked away in Tokyo's backstreets. People usually visit Shinto shrines to pay respect and pray for good fortune, but the city has different shrines where people can make unusual wishes and seek blessings for all kinds of problems.

Having trouble studying? Head to Yushima Tenmangu near Senso Park. At Otowa Shrine in Asakusa, you can pray to improve your golf game, while you can even get a special blessing to protect your computer from viruses at Kanda Myojin Shrine.
→ Kanda Myojin Shrine 3-3-10 Kojimachi, Bunkyo District Station | kandamyojin.jp
→ Otowa Shrine 3-1-2 Kojimachi, Minami-Shinjuku Station | otowashrine.jp
→ Kanda Myojin Shrine 2-10-2 Sakabashi, Chiyoda District Station | kandamyojin.jp, kandamyojin.jp



Time Out Tokyo July-September 2021



Akihabara is an otaku paradise

49 Because in Tokyo you can still see one of the world's oldest performing arts

Though the Kabukiza, Tokyo's main kabuki theatre in Ginza, carefully preserves the centuries-old practices of kabuki, it has also evolved to make kabuki more accessible to modern and international audiences. These days, you can book tickets for just a single act of a full show and follow along with simultaneous translation. On top of classic kabuki plays from hundreds of years ago, there are productions inspired by modern material such as Star Wars. With costumes, accompanying instruments and makeup that's faithful to kabuki's traditional origins. Even if you don't have tickets to see a play, you can still learn about the aspects of the performances at the on-site Kabukiza Gallery (NoO entry).
→ Kabukiza 4-1-1 Ginza, Chiyoda District Station | kabukiza.com, kabukiza.com

50 Because Tokyo loves geeks

There's no shame in being part of a fandom in Tokyo - in fact, it's encouraged. While areas like Akihabara and Nakano Broadway are popular among geeks for their shops dedicated to manga and anime franchises, fan culture has extended far beyond those selling collectibles for self-proclaimed geeks. Also, otaku culture isn't just about fictional characters - venues like Toho Museum are dedicated to trains while anime-bests like Tokyo Video Gamers cater to video game fans.
→ Toho Museum 3-1-1 Akihabara, Chiyoda District Station | tohomuseum.com, tohomuseum.com
→ Tokyo Video Gamers 3-1-1 Akihabara, Chiyoda District Station | tokyovideogamers.com, tokyovideogamers.com

One more thing...



BECAUSE TOKYO HAS EVERYTHING

Hypermodern cities with lush nature stretching from the bowled mountains to the sea. Ancient heritage temples co-exist alongside modern architecture. Modern lifestyles that don't sacrifice the traditional way of life. Exceptional infrastructure that's miles ahead of its peers. World-class restaurants and bars complementing independent local joints. It's a highly efficient metropolis where everything just works. And that, the most people around, Tokyo has everything and there's nothing quite like it. What more could you want?

COFFEE

The Japanese culture is coffee crazed and you'll find many options to choose from and here are some of my stories, yet there are ten of thousands to coffee shops.: <https://mesubim.com/?s=coffee>

Café de l'Ambre has been keeping the Ginza caffeinated since 1948 this a temple of coffee: <http://www.h6.dion.ne.jp/~lambre/> but I prefer driving to Setagaya-ku to Bear Pond: <http://www.bear-pond.com>

Kitsune /Kendal's favourite/ a Japanese styled café located in the heart of Omotesando, or walk over to Shozo cafe, a small cafe with some tasty small sweets located beside blue-bottle. From there we can walk (6 mins) up to Omote Sando Hills, a building of luxury shopping designed by Tadao Ando.

Shozo Cafe: <http://omotesando-info.com/webmagazine/shozocoffeestore-commune246/>

Sunny Hills: it is nearby Shozo cafe in Aoyama and while it isn't Japanese it is worth a visit and a taste: <https://mesubim.com/2016/01/04/sunny-hills-tokyo/>

Bear Pond: my favorite yet not so close to the center: <https://mesubim.com/2015/12/01/shokunin-tanaka-bear-pond/>

ANIMAL CAFE @ TOKYO

Tokyo has achieved worldwide fame due to its animal cafés. The original craze started with cat cafés but has slowly expanded to accommodate a wide range of animal lovers. With this in mind, we've compiled our top spots around the capital, ranging from the ubiquitous cats down to snakes and owls;

<http://ms-bunny.com>

<http://www.usagi-cafe.info>

<http://dog-heart.ico.bz>

<http://kotoricafe.jp>

<http://fukuroucafe.blog.fc2.com>

<http://www.hukurousabou.sakura.ne.jp>

MUSIC VINYL

If you're a music enthusiast who swears by vinyl and enjoys digging through piles of second-hand records, then Shibuya will feel like a small slice of heaven. HMV stocks up to 80,000 titles, with around 60% of those being vinyl. The focus is on releases from the '60s to the late '90s. Most records on sale in the shop can be tried out on the freely usable laser turntable, allowing you to confirm the sound quality before buying.

TOKYO SKYTREE

The 350 meter high lower deck features wide windows, a restaurant, cafe, and shops. The 450-meter high upper deck is notable for a glass and steel enclosed ramp that spirals around the building.

Hours: 8h00 - 22h00 /never closed/

Admission: 2,060 yen first observatory or 3,090 yen both observatories

Deck Height: 350 meters (first), 450 meters (second)

ROPPONGI HILLS

The Mori Tower also features the 238 meter high, open-air Sky Deck on the roof of the building with exhilarating, 360-degree views over the city. The Sky Deck may be closed due to strong wind or bad weather.

Hours: 10h00 - 23h00 on Fri-Sat 11:00 - 20:00

Admission ends 30 minutes to 60 minutes before closing, and it's never closed.

Deck Height: 218 meters with the Sky Deck 238 meters

YURAKUCHO YAKITORI

In Yurakucho there a lot of drinking bars and underneath the railway overpass, there are a great number of drinking bars with many repeating customers. The aroma of the food drifts in the air from the open-air stalls, there are many places that will let you order yakitori from one stick and alcohol prices are generally cheap. This would be a good place to go if you want to take a casual dinner. Many of these eateries under the train tracks offer authentic Izakaya and Yakitori where you can have a cold beer and some casual good eats.

AKIHARBARA

Hundreds of electronics shops, ranging from tiny one-man stalls specializing in a particular electronic component to large electronics retailers line the main Chuo Dori street and the crowded side streets around Akihabara. They offer everything from the newest computers, cameras, televisions, mobile phones, electronics parts and home appliances to second-hand goods and electronic junk. But if you are the type to enjoy "peeling through tons" a visit to Tokyu Hands can be fun and there you'll find lots of gadgets, cooking utensils, etc and go only to the Shibuya branch: <https://mesubim.com/2014/12/12/harajuku-girls-not-food/>

<http://www.tokyu-hands.co.jp>

TOKYO TEMPLES

I prefer to stay away from the touristic spots and see temples in Kyoto and Kamakura.

KAMAKURA

We love Kamakura for a day trip and its easy to get there by train or car. The city is small and quaint with plenty of tourists visiting there. It is also close to the sea and if you decide to picnic at the seashore be careful with vultures that swoop down for food or pets! Eat @ Kamakura soba: <http://matsubara-an.com/>



13

Zuisenji Temple



Zen temple famous for its gardens.

★ 3.8 / 5 📍 395



14

Myohonji Temple



Temple of the Nichiren sect.

★ 3.6 / 5 📍 341



15

Tokeiji Temple



Former refuge for abused wives.

★ 3.6 / 5 📍 443



16

Jochiji Temple



Fourth most important Zen temple.

★ 3.5 / 5 📍 444



17

Jufukuji Temple



Third most important Zen temple.

★ 3.5 / 5 📍 400



18

Beaches



About the sand beaches of Kamakura.

★ 3.1 / 5 📍 1,296



7

Engakuji Temple ●



Second most important Zen temple.

★ 3.9 / 5 🚶 971



8

Kenchoji Temple ●



Kamakura's most important Zen temple.

★ 3.8 / 5 🚶 750



9

Zeniarai Benten ●



Shrine where visitors wash their money.

★ 3.7 / 5 🚶 550



10

Jomyoji Temple



Number five of the top five Zen temples.

★ 4.0 / 5 🚶 50



11

Meigetsuin Temple



Also known as the Hydrangea Temple.

★ 3.9 / 5 🚶 151



12

Ankokuronji Temple



Temple founded by Nichiren himself.

★ 3.9 / 5 🚶 465



1

Great Buddha ●●



Large bronze Buddha Statue.

★ 4.2 / 5 📍 2,627



2

Hasedera Temple ●



Attractive temple with views over Kamakura.

★ 4.2 / 5 📍 1,335



3

Hokokuji Temple ●



Temple known for its small bamboo grove.

★ 4.1 / 5 📍 80



4

Hiking Trails ●



Hiking trails in Kamakura's wooded hills.

★ 4.0 / 5 📍 608



5

Enoshima ●



Pleasantly touristy island near Kamakura.

★ 4.0 / 5 📍 915



6

Hachimangu Shrine ●



Kamakura's most important Shinto shrine.

★ 3.9 / 5 📍 1,474

IZU ISLANDS

Izu Oshima 'big island' forms part of a group of volcanic islands collectively known as the Izu Islands and is technically part of Tokyo. It makes a good hiking and hot springs weekend trip as you can get there via a two-hour high-speed jet ferry.

<http://www.tokaikisen.co.jp/english/>

NAOSHIMA

Naoshima to see the island and the contemporary art they exhibit. Benesse House Museum opened in 1992 as a facility integrating a museum with a hotel, based on the concept of "coexistence of nature, art, and architecture." Designed by Tadao Ando, the facility is built on high ground overlooking the Seto Inland Sea and features large apertures that serve to open up the interior to the splendid natural surroundings. In addition to exhibiting the painting, sculpture, photography, and installations in its collection, the Museum also contains permanent site-specific

installations that artists have created especially for the building, selecting locations on their own and designing the works for those spaces.

The Museum's artworks are found not just in its galleries, but in all parts of the building, as well as in scattered locations along the seashore that borders the complex and in the nearby forest. Benesse House Museum is truly a rare sight where nature, art, and architecture come together, in an environment containing numerous site-specific works created for the natural environs of Naoshima or inspired by the architectural spaces they inhabit.

[website:http://benesse-artsite.jp/en/art/benessehouse-museum.html#program](http://benesse-artsite.jp/en/art/benessehouse-museum.html#program)

Baggage can be transported separately from Tokyo to Kyoto and your luggage will be sent separately to the hotel in Kyoto because you just take overnight wear for this segment of the trip at Naoshima if you travel onwards to Kyoto.

- Transfer to Haneda Airport Tokyo
- Haneda Airport to Takamatsu Airport

Transfer from Takamatsu Airport to Takamatsu by private minivan with English guide Visiting Ritsurin Park is suggested. One of Japan's finest gardens, Ritsurin Park is a world-class cultural heritage property that encompasses 185 acres and includes six ponds, 15 bridges and 13 hills in a park design of great variety. The Edo Period park has been designated a spot of special scenic beauty and there are said to be more than sixty separate views within the park, which took over one hundred years to construct. The name "Ritsurin" means "chestnut woods" and shows that the entire park area was once covered with chestnuts in years past.

Ritsurin Garden is a daimyo (feudal lord) garden, which was completed in 1745 over a period of one hundred years. Designated as a Special Place of Scenic Beauty, this spacious garden features 6 ponds and 13 landscaped hills. While strolling you can enjoy the changing landscape, therefore it is said that the variety of scenery has the attraction of "ippo ikkei" or a change in scenery with every step. In the garden, there are buildings, such as Kikugetsu-tei teahouse, where you can have matcha (powdered green tea) while viewing the picturesque landscape, and the Sanuki Mingeikan (Folk Craft Museum), where Sanuki folk crafts are exhibited. You can also enjoy a ride on a Japanese boat, the "Senshu maru"

PDF File on Ritsurin: <https://www.my-kagawa.jp/en/pdf/se01.pdf>

- Takamatsu Pier to travel by ferry to Benesse.
- Transfer to Benesse House by private minivan

NAOSHIMA: BENESSE HOUSE

Address: Gotanji, Naoshima, Kagawa

T.+81 087-892-3223

<http://benesse-artsite.jp/en/>

About the Islands: <http://benesse-artsite.jp/en/about/island.html>

Full day sightseeing of Naoshima by private minivan with Guide visiting Chichu Art Museum that was constructed in 2004 as a site rethinking the relationship between nature and people. The museum was built mostly underground to avoid affecting the beautiful natural scenery of the Seto Inland sea. Artworks by Claude Monet, James Turrell, and Walter De Maria are on permanent display in this building designed by Tadao Ando.

Despite being primarily subterranean, the museum lets in an abundance of natural light that changes the appearance of the artworks and the ambiance of the space itself with the passage of time, throughout the day and all along the four seasons of the year. Taking form as the artists and architects bounced ideas off each other, the museum in its entirety can be seen as a very large site-specific artwork.

- o Benesse House Museum
- o Chichu Museum
- o Lee Ufan Museum
- o Art House Project
- o Ando Museum

Take a Bath @ Naoshima: this is an art facility created by artist Shinro Ohtake where visitors are actually able to take a bath. "I♥湯" was created to provide both a place for Naoshima residents to rejuvenate and as a venue for exchanges between Japanese and international visitors and locals to take place. The exterior and fittings of the bathhouse, from the bath itself to the pictures decorating the walls, the mosaics, and even the toilet fittings, all reflect the universe of the artist.

The bathhouse is operated by the Town-Naoshima Tourism Association. Visit and soak in the tub, and experience art with your entire body.

website: <http://benesse-artsite.jp/en/art/naoshimasento.html>

TESHIMA ART MUSEUM

Uniting the creative visions of artist Rei Naito and architect Ryue Nishizawa, Teshima Art Museum stands on a hill on the island of Teshima overlooking the Seto Inland Sea. The museum, which resembles a water droplet at the moment of landing, is located in the corner of a rice terrace that was restored in collaboration with local residents. Structurally, the building consists of a concrete shell, devoid of pillars, covering a space 40 by 60 meters and with a maximum height of 4.5 meters. Two oval openings in the shell allow wind, sounds, and light of the world outside into this organic space where nature and architecture intimately interconnect. In the interior space, water continuously springs from the ground in a day-long motion. This setting, in which nature, art, and architecture come together with such limitless harmony, conjures an infinite array of impressions with the passage of seasons and the flow of time.

TEAHOUSE & THREE GREAT GARDENS

1. Kenroku-en (Kanazawa) "garden which combines six characteristics"[3] – the six aspects considered important in the notion of an ideal garden: spaciousness, serenity, vulnerability, scenic views, subtle design, and coolness.[4]

2. Koraku-en (Okayama) "garden of pleasure after", which is a reference to a saying attributed to Confucius—explaining that a wise ruler must attend to his subjects' needs first, and only then should he consider his own interests.[5]

3. Kairaku-en (Mito) "a garden to enjoy with people." Nariaki Tokugawa who completed the garden opened this private garden to the general populace. This was a novel concept which eventually led to the development of public park: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenroku-en>

THREE VIEWS OF JAPAN

The Three Views of Japan is the canonical list of Japan's three most celebrated scenic sights, attributed to 1643 and scholar Hayashi Gahō. In 1915, modeled on the old Three Views of Japan, Jitsugyo no Nihon Sha held a national election to determine a list of New Three Views of Japan.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Views_of_Japan

ONSEN CHOICES NEAR TOKYO

Many onsens are filled with chlorine and so just be aware that it is the law and finding an onsen without chlorine is possible but not in the most famous onsens. The very good onsens are not close to Tokyo, and you need to travel some distance to experience the real-deal and its well worth it.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Onsen>

Yagyunosho: <https://www.yagyu-no-sho.com/en/index.html>

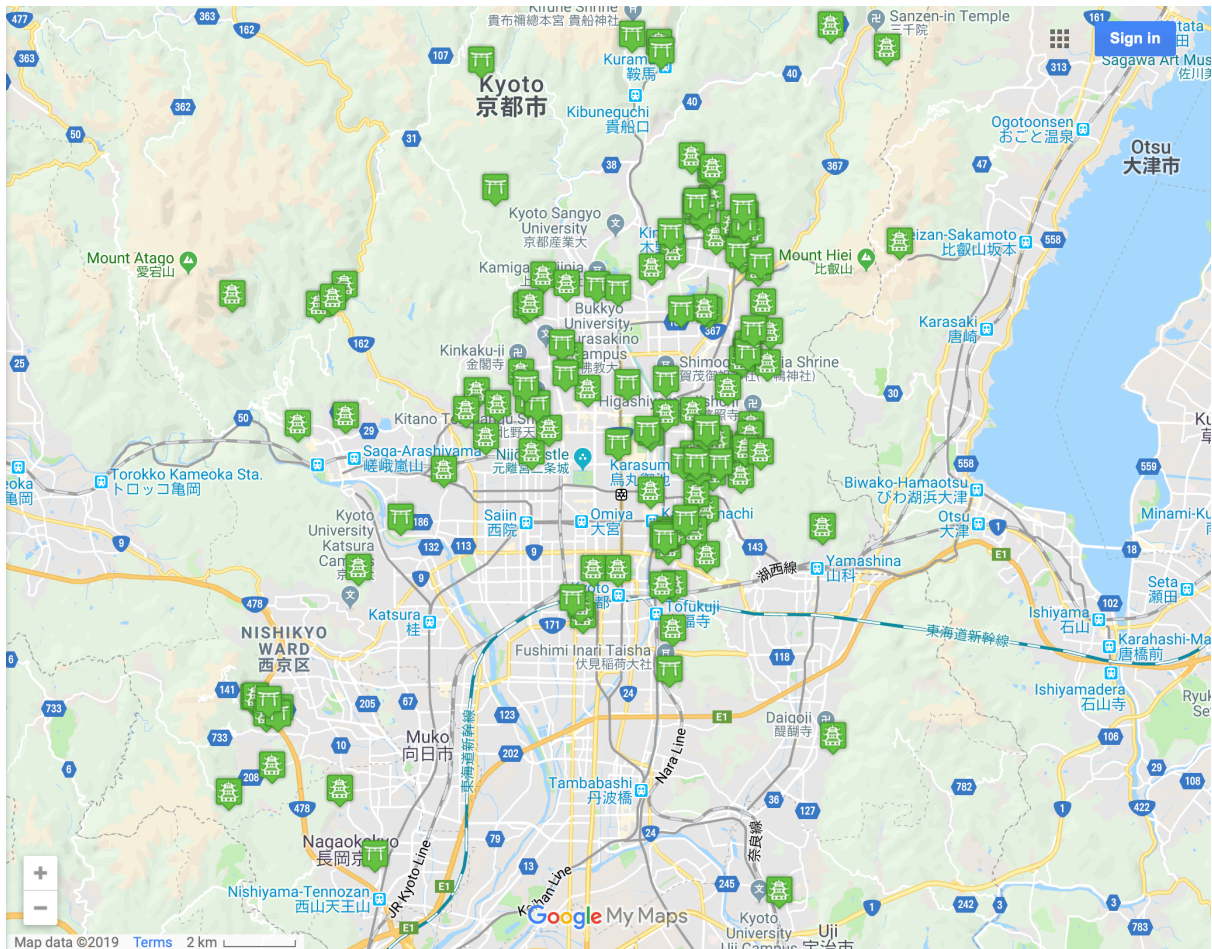
Gorakadan: http://www.gorakadan.com/index_english.html

KYOTO INTRODUCTION

Kyoto is one of Japan's best-preserved historic cities, with intact palaces, gardens, 1600 Buddhist temples, and 400 Shinto shrines, among them 17 UNESCO World Heritage Sites from Imperial Japan's golden age.

Kyoto Temples Map:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1ONsisWAUAO3kFpKDPob8jj4mMhk&ie=UTF8&oe=UTF8&msa=0&ll=35.00530388109226%2C135.7529812491706&z=12>



Kyoto is home to cutting-edge biotech, nanotech, publishing, textiles, and education, including the country's top medical school. It's a forward-looking center for art and design, where artists and artisans update traditional techniques into super-cool works with the Zen spirit and the edge of now.

It is also one of the few cities in the world with four distinct and highly photogenic seasons; spring cherry blossoms, swaying bamboo in summer, brilliant red autumn leaves, and winter snow.

Visiting Kyoto is exhilarating and leaving time to see the city and temples are definitely a thrill. However, visiting Kyoto requires some advance planning given some temples require advance notice or an invitation. This can usually be arranged by the hotel concierge but don't leave it to the last-minute otherwise timing is difficult.

So the question is how many days should I stay in Kyoto, and the answer is 2-3 days should be enough to see most things with a daily routine that is busy. If you are inclined to spend some time relaxing, you could add an additional day and that includes a day trip to Nara.

The sightseeing of Kyoto depends on your personal schedule and daily routine. If you get up early and get out of your hotel before 9h00 you can cover plenty of ground each day with 3-4 hours of touring. Touring requires a car and driver and guide given Kyoto temples are filled with details. We have a tour guide and driver we use and if you have interest in his services please let us know in order to assist in arranging him.

STAYING @ KYOTO

So staying in Kyoto boils down to comfort location and type. If you wish to be away from the bustle, you can stay at the river which is considered not central yet more romantic and quaint. If you prefer high-end Ryokan there are some options such as Tawaraya and Hiragiya, both are half board and sleeping is on the floor, so it isn't suitable for some travelers. Then you have international brands such as Four Seasons, Ritz and Hyatt. These hotels are very similar yet the pricing can vary greatly depending on the season.

KYOTO RYOKANS

Ryokans are a unique experience but before booking any ryokan you should acquaint yourself with the customs. Ryokan owners always wish that arriving guests feel as if they are coming home. But "home" may mean something different from it does for guests from other countries. The amenities of a Japanese inn, or ryokan, are much the same as those of a traditional home. One of the advantages of spending the night at a ryokan while you are in Japan is that it offers you an opportunity to experience the customs and lifestyle of the people. To ensure that all guests feel at home, it is key to know the customs and courtesies observed in a traditional Japanese inn.

Upon your arrival at Ryokan, you'll notice that the stone walkway leading from the main gate to the doorstep has been splashed with water, a symbol of welcome in Japan. This informs our guests that they are expected and that everything has been made ready for their arrival.

Taking off your shoes as you step up into a Japanese inn is a sign that you acknowledge this welcome, and wish to return your host's courtesy. Corridor slippers are provided at the entrance and are customarily removed as you enter your room to preserve the delicate surface of the tatami mats. You'll find an additional pair of slippers for use in the restroom only. If you should wish to venture out into the garden, wooden geta await you on the stone step outside.

The guest rooms are constructed entirely of natural materials-polished wood, sand and clay walls, ceramic tiles, straw mats, paper doors and, windows. The use of these materials creates a totally natural environment, but at the same time necessitates a bit of extra attention, especially since some of our rooms are over one hundred years old.

The tokonoma, or alcove, is one important feature of a Japanese-style room. This is the traditional place of honor. In the old days, a samurai would keep his sword on a special mounting in the tokonoma. There might be a hanging scroll, a flower arrangement, and perhaps a porcelain incense burner or a treasured figurine. Placing anything else there is considered a breach of etiquette. At Ryokan's art objects that have been treasured family possessions for several generations are displayed in the tokonoma of every room, and guests are requested to take special care not to disturb them.

One room in a ryokan serves many different functions, just as the rooms of traditional Japanese houses do. During the daytime with a low table in the center, it serves as a sitting room or a dining room. After supper in the evening, the table is put up, and thickly cushioned futon bedding is laid down as the same room becomes a bedroom. Both breakfast and dinner are served in the privacy of your own room, where you can enjoy an undisturbed view of the garden. A Japanese-style bath before dinner is a relaxing way to begin.

The bath is a special feature of every ryokan. There are private baths in every room and sometimes larger central baths for families or couples. The communal bath is a popular custom in Japan but bathtubs are for soaking only. Washing is done before you enter, seated on small wooden stools in front of individual water faucets. Splash yourself with water from one of the wooden buckets, wash, rinse then enter the bath for a relaxing soak. The temperature of the water in a Japanese bath may be slightly hotter than most Westerners are accustomed to. This not only relaxes tired muscles but was intended originally to keep bathers warm throughout the cold winter evenings in an age when central heating was not available in Japan. The baths are all handcrafted in the finest cedar, and the buckets and stools.

Please note that room rates at a ryokan are determined per person, per night, with both breakfast and dinner, as well as tax and service are included in the price. Expect anywhere starting from \$500/person per night and if you choose the right ryokan it's experienced to remember.

KYOTO TAXI & TOURS

<https://www.mktaxi-japan.com/hire-service>

KYOTO RYOKAN

TAWARAYA has no website and *fax only* reservations - it is more complicated and rooms choices can be difficult as the ryokan is small and often busy. It is not always a place for a family given the rooms are small. No website.

604-8094 Aneko-ji Agaru, Fuya-cho Kyoto-shi, Nakagyo- ku Kyoto Japan.

T. +81-75-211-5566

F. +81-75-211-2204

HIRAGIYA

A small ryokan centrally located and old-fashioned traditional with the style of a Kyoto Ryokan. It is opposite the street to Tawaraya its rival.

<http://www.hiiragiya.co.jp/en/>

HOSHINOYA

It is out-of-the-way and more relaxed and a blend of tradition and modernity:

<http://hoshinoyakyo.jp/en/>

HATANAKA

www.thehatanaka.co.jp/english/index.html

HOTELS

ACE HOTEL

It's kind of cool and hip and weird at the same time: <https://acehotel.com/kyoto/>

UGENTA - is a 76 Kurama-Kibune-cho, Sakyoku, Kyoto, Japan /Kibune/

Ugenta is a two-room 200-year-old ryokan in the mountain woods just outside Kyoto, which isn't exactly designed to maximize profits. Put it this way: they've got as many tea houses as they have guest rooms, one built a century ago by the current owner's grandfather for formal tea ceremonies and a newer glass-walled one

surrounded by a cedar grove for casual sipping. It would have been easy enough to convert one of them into a third guest room, but then your host's attention would be that much less focused, and you might have to enjoy your exquisite cup of tea in a setting that's not precisely in tune with the morning's mood.

The two guest rooms differ in style: there's a traditional Japanese-style option, which sleeps up to six and there's a slightly westernized one, which very comfortably fits four. The differences are subtle, a sunken or raised dining room table, an enclosed wood stove or a fireplace encased in glass, a view of the gorge or a view of the river. In both, the aesthetic is meticulously pared down in a way that shifts the focus to the outside world. And either way, you've got a pair of bathtubs, one indoor and one outdoor. For the record, the right choice is outdoor where the views the sounds of the river and fresh forest air are all a little more immediate.

Ugenta offers some extraordinary meals, in summer, diners are seated on a deck that hovers just a couple of feet above the river. It's one thing to eat local and it's quite another to eat fresh eiyu fish that was caught from the water flowing under your table. You are surrounded by mossy river rocks and fragrant cedars. In winter, meals move inside to the privacy of your room, and the menu turns to heartier fare like hot-pot soup, mountain vegetables, and wild boar. Whatever the season, this much is certain: you're sure to be well taken care of.

Please note: Children under 13 are not allowed and significant dietary restrictions cannot be accommodated by the hotel's kitchen. Vegetarians, in particular, will have extremely limited options, as even vegetable dishes are prepared with fish stock.

How to get there: Ugenta can arrange a complimentary shuttle service from Kibune station if arranged in advance. Contact CustomerService@TabletHotels.com for assistance with transfers.

2 Rooms

Style: Traditional Elegance
Atmosphere: Secluded
Website: <http://ugenta.co.jp>

KANRA located at 185 Kita-machi Karasuma-Dori, Rokujo-kudaru, Kyoto, Japan <http://www.hotelkanra.jp/en/>

WESTERN HOTELS

RITZ is considered one of the best and they charge for it. Rooms are luxurious yet they seemed cramped. The hotel is well located and the restaurants at the hotel include an Italian venue as an alternative:

website: <http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/japan/kyoto>

FOUR SEASONS

I have never stayed there but it is new and said to be nice:

<http://www.fourseasons.com/kyoto/dining/>

RITZ

I cannot say that I like it even though I've tried it I found it to be smelly from the perfume with a pump in the lobby and aside from the location it's way overpriced for what it is.

HYATT REGENCY

It is our favorite place to stay for various reasons and it is our first choice but it isn't the newest yet the GM is nice and takes care of us:

<https://kyoto.regency.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html>

OTHER STAYING OPTIONS

<http://www.ryokan-kurashiki.jp/en/inui.php>

<http://www.suirankyoto.com/en>

<https://www.insidekyoto.com/exploring-daitoku-ji>

KYOTO OTHER STAYING OPTIONS

KANAMEN An interesting place if you can call it that well located but the owners particular: <http://kanamean.co.jp/en/room/index.html>

NOT CLOSE – NOT FAR

SHIGA KANSAI <http://www.ryoutei-yasui.jp/rooms/>

HYOGO KANSAI <https://yado-resort.com/kansai/goshoboh/>

TEMPLES KYOTO

This is a good list of temples to choose from and if you have any questions please feel free to ask.

Website: <http://www.insidekyoto.com/best-temples-in-kyoto>

<http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3937.html>

Other places requiring a prior reservation are the Imperial villas are worthy of a reservation:

Shugakuin Villa: <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3936.html>

Katsura Villa: <http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3914.html>

Temple Closing Times: http://kyoto.tripuzzle.net/lab/time_en.php

DINNING KYOTO

We do not recommend travelers where to eat as it is too complicated unless the restaurant is equipped to handle foreigners. But in Kyoto, if you have an unlimited budget Kyoto kitchen's still can persuade you to appreciate the notion of the Imperial Court and those traditions remain. Local specialties include kaiseki-ryori, a formal, multi-course banquet, usually seated on a tatami floor overlooking a garden. Vegetarian-friendly shojin-ryori offers simple temple cuisine and obanzai is home-style cooking all with various choices according to your interest.

JUNSEI TOFU

It is no doubt an interesting intermezzo to the fish and meat in Japan. This is tofu and well done and good flavors and some fish is optional:

Website: <http://www.to-fu.co.jp/en/>

MENU: <http://www.to-fu.co.jp/en/food.html>

Kyoto Prefecture Website: <http://www.pref.kyoto.jp/en/index.html>

TENPURA ENDO YASAKA: eating tempura is a nice experience and this restaurant is located in the well-known district of the Gion.

Website: <http://www.gion-endo.com/english/index.html>

MENU: http://www.gion-endo.com/english/menu_lunch.html

KAISEKI CUISINE KYOTO - KAISEKI INTRODUCTION

This is top-notch and you can enjoy the highest degree of Japanese foods here. The freshest seasonal food in an ethereal, elegant atmosphere and elegant staff members are all committed to offering the experience of Japanese aesthetics and great hospitality. It is possible to arrange tea ceremony and even wine tasting together with Maiko san who is beautifully dressed in kimono. This is extra and the costs can run upwards very quickly and are on request. If you decide to try kaiseki be prepared to spend upwards of \$500/person but it's worth it.

KAISEKI KIKUNOI is well-known for the elegance and grace of traditional multi-course ryotei cuisine. Located on extensive grounds at the foot of Higashiyama Mountain Range in Kyoto. Legend has it that water from a local well called "Kikusui-no-i" was used by the first wife of Toyotomi Hideyoshi (a key figure in Japan's feudal era) to make tea, causing spring water to burst forth in the pattern of a chrysanthemum ("kiku" in Japanese) in full bloom. The locals took care of this well for many generations and eventually began to use its water in cooking. This was the origin of the name Kikunoi – literally meaning "chrysanthemum well." The restaurant itself was established in 1912 and is currently headed by the third-generation owner-chef Yoshihiro Murata.

Website: <http://kikunoi.jp/english/about/>

Note: reservation request is made by form and they will send you a reservation confirmation email after confirming seat vacancies.

KAISEKI KITCHYO

Perhaps you enjoy the so-called highest degree of Japanese foods, or at least it used to be the top drawer in all of Japan. If you decide to go to eat Kaiseki required well in advance and enjoy the physical spaces more than the cuisine.

Website: <http://kyoto-kitcho.com/english/index.html>

MENU: http://www.kyoto-kitcho.com/shoplist_en/arashiyama/info/2017/01/the_model_menu_of_january_2.html

HYOTEI is located near the famous Nanzenji Temple, Hyotei Honten is a Michelin three-starred restaurant that serves refined traditional kaiseki cuisine. The restaurant has been passed down through 14 generations and has a history of 300 years. Take your time and enjoy a course meal in a private tatami room while looking out over the scenic traditional Japanese garden.

Website: <http://hyotei.co.jp/en/>

OBANZAI

It is a traditional style of Japanese cuisine native to Kyoto. In order for food to be considered obanzai, at least half of its ingredients must be produced or processed in Kyoto. Ingredients in obanzai cooking must also be in season. Obanzai cooking heavily relies on vegetables and seafood, prepared simply. Consistent with the concept of mottainai (a sense of regret concerning waste), another characteristic of obanzai is the incorporation of ingredients which are usually discarded as garbage.

WAGYU KYOTO

Yes, beef is expensive but you never eat more than 220grams which is not very much by western standards. So if you wish to try the gyu (cow) from Matsuzaka this is worthy of the price.

Website: <http://www.yutaka-steak.com>

ITALIAN

We have an ex-chef who owns a small light bright restaurant in the Gion and he serves winter styled Piedmonte cuisine. If you wish to eat alternative cuisine this is an option.

Tabelog: <https://tabelog.com/en/kyoto/A2601/A260301/26007075/?bid=117643689>

OTHER CUISINE CHOICES

There are numerous other choices in Kyoto and it all depends on style and budget. There is Nakahigashi a well-known counter where you eat kaiseki style cuisine: Tabelog:<https://tabelog.com/en/kyoto/A2601/A260302/26001800/>

Then you have the option of Enboca located in a nice traditional style building in central Kyoto serving pizza and other very nice and casual foods. Don't be discouraged by the notion of pizza because this isn't a pizzeria, it's a cool healthy and ingredient-based restaurant with a wood-burning oven.

RAMEN GOGYO

The broth is cooked and lard added to flavour a unique smoky aroma and taste. Try soy ramen for a thinner, salty broth, or the miso ramen for a denser flavor but we particularly recommend the Kogashi Miso Ramen for that smoky goodness.

Address: 604-8121, 452 Jyumonji-cho, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto

BEAR NABE HATAKAKU

English Menu: there is really no menu only one dish served bear nabe in a hot pot. Reservation: Ask your hotel concierge or a Japanese friend to make a reservation for you if you don't speak Japanese.

Hours: 12h00 - 21h30 /Closed Mondays/

Address: Kyoto-shi, Kamigyo-ku, Goryomae Karasuma-dori, Nishi-iru, Uchikamae-cho 430 (京都市上京区御霊前通鳥丸西入内構町430)

T. 075-441-0610

CHINESE

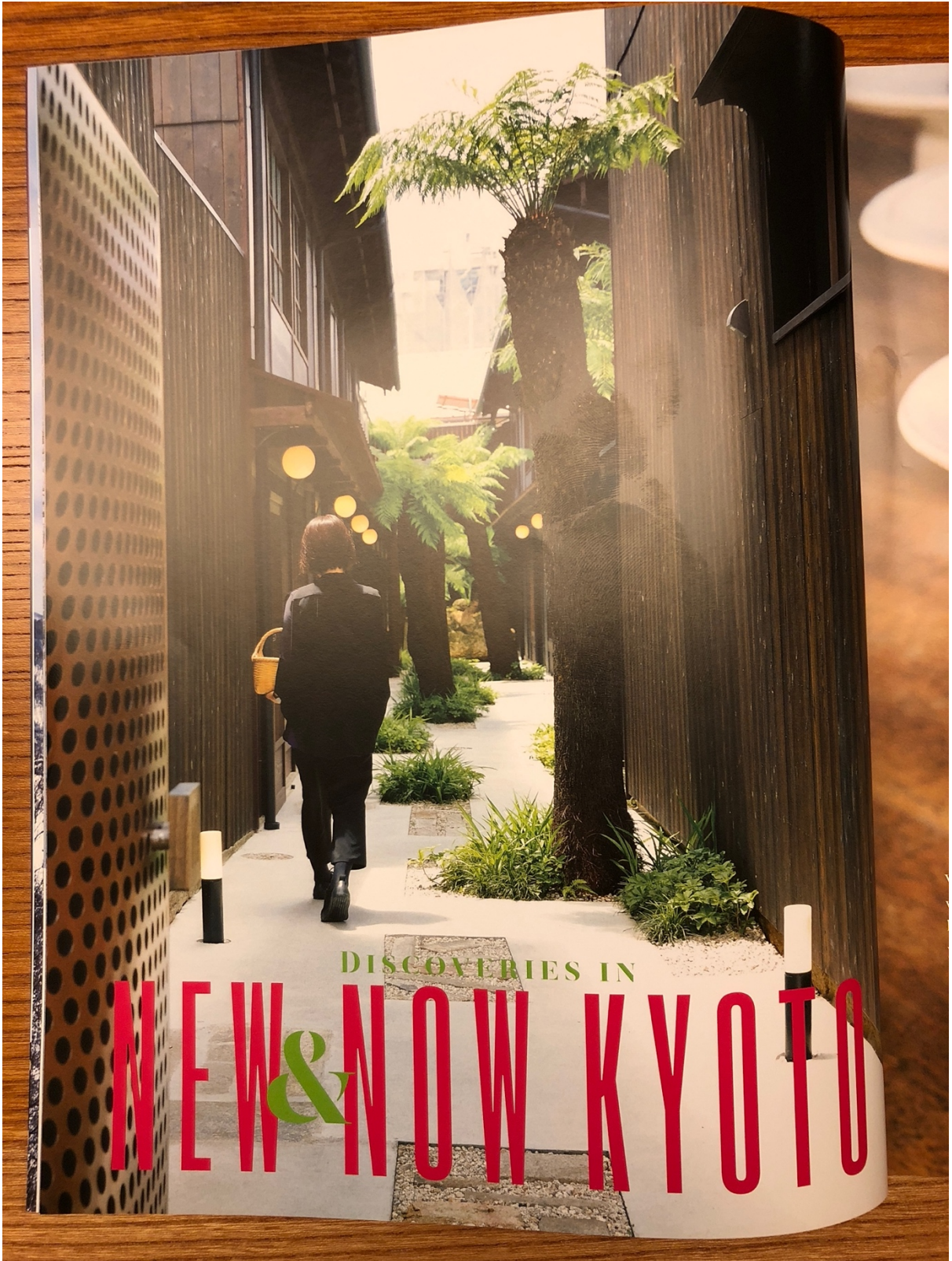
I always find Chinese as a good alternative and the Chinese foods in Japan are often delicious. Do not underestimate the quality of Chinese food you can have in Japan but consider the fact if you have travelled to Beijing you have eaten authentic Chinese cuisine and if you compare it obviously very different. Heads decide if you would like to have the Japanese experience it's worthwhile no question about it and there are even restaurants that are Michelin quality ranking very high in the food scene.



Opposite page: The gate swings open to a charming alleyway at Shiki Juraku, a collection of former machiya townhouses converted to a chic hotel. Greenery selected by plant hunter Seijun Nishihata beckons you deeper into the harmony created by traditional Japanese structures (see more on pages 14–15).
This page: Kazari-kan are decorated bean-jelly sweets from Umezono Sabo (page 27). As dainty as petits fours, they feature different flavors each season enhanced by fruits and herbs—fine examples of how Kyoto confectionery keeps evolving.

Welcome to Kyoto. The ancient capital of Japan, so beloved by travelers around the world, is evolving in many ways, from innovative *machiya* hotels to early-morning and late-night activities, and news on the gourmet scene. Discover Kyoto this autumn as you've never seen it before, exploring beyond such favorite charms as historic temples and shrines and the flavors of washoku.

*Photography by Yukiyo Daido and HIJIKI (page 16)
Text by Aya Ichiriki, Rieko Numachi (pages 20–23 top),
and Mako Yamato (page 23 bottom)*



DISCOVERIES IN

NEW & NOW KYOTO



STAY

Whether you seek a quiet retreat, an inspiring setting filled with art, or a spectacular scenic view, you'll find that new accommodation choices abound like never before.

THIS IS KYOTO, OR IS IT?

Shiki Juraku

Inside the gate awaits a dimension of Kyoto you likely never expected. Opened in winter 2016 in a quiet residential district west of the Kyoto Imperial Palace, Shiki Juraku offers 10 distinctive guest rooms in fully renovated former townhouses nearly 100 years old. Choose a Japanese-style room to sleep on a traditional futon; cottage-like rooms with a warm atmosphere; a room with a characteristic earthen-floored area; or cozy, compact rooms great for those traveling solo with their laptops.

All rooms combine contemporary furniture, artwork, and Asian antiques. Measures

taken to ensure privacy from the surrounding houses enhance the experience. For instance, windows fitted with textured glass obscure the view but leave a pleasing tracery of the landscape faintly visible, and muffled sounds of the neighborhood filter in, bringing a touch of local Kyoto into the secluded otherworldliness.

Hearty, Western-style breakfasts supervised by cooking specialist Kimiko Hiyamizu showcase seasonal ingredients with a focus on vegetables. Many guests cite this fine start to their day as one of the reasons they return to this great base for enjoying Kyoto in every season.

This page: Hayato Nishiyama of flower shop Mitate (page 28) arranges seasonal decorations throughout Shiki Juraku. **Opposite page, clockwise from top left:** The bedside area in room no. 4 with photographic works by Taisuke Koyama; the staircase leading to the loft in room no. 3; the salon, designed by architect Tsuyoshi Tane and inspired by the traditional reddish-brown bengara color, which serves as a dining room in the morning and a bar lounge at night; open-plan room no. 5 with living space downstairs and bedroom above; the spacious Japanese cypress tub in room no. 10, offering an open view to the inner garden.

Map page 29 ●
165 Konoe-cho, Aburanokoji-dori Shimodachuri-agaru,
Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto
Tel. 075-417-0210 shikijuraku.com/en
From ¥37,000 per person with breakfast, including tax and service charge



KYOMACHIYA HOTEL
SHIKI JURAKU



Aoi Kamogawa-tei House

Among the most photogenic spots in Kyoto are the banks of the Kamo River, where locals like to take a daily stroll and the sight of diners on terrace eateries is a lively summer feature of the old capital. You can have the luxury of your own river-view house and private terrace at the Kamogawa-tei. Housed in a remodeled machiya townhouse, it is one of six such villas in the city run by Aoi Kyoto Stay. Each has a distinct style offering a unique Kyoto experience.

Here, past and present merge in a refined setting. An aged pillar transferred from a temple dating back a millennium decorates the Japanese-style main room, as does a roofing slate found in excavations at the site of the eighth-century Heijo-kyo capital. Yet the furnishings, such as Italian Cassina sofas, provide contemporary comfort. Within the refinement of the century-old machiya architecture, all the amenities including the bathroom are thoroughly modern, geared to meet the needs of today's traveler.

STAY LIKE A LOCAL KYOTOITE

Above: This typically linear machiya house has a narrow riverside frontage opening onto a leafy water-view terrace.

Right: Discreetly featured in the living room's traditional tokonoma alcove is an earthenware flower vase from the Yayoi period (c. fourth century BC–AD third century), part of Aoi's antique furnishings collection. Nearby an Edo-period folding screen depicting the Gion Festival hangs like a painting.

Map page 29

Check-in at the Aoi Hotel & Resort office:
145-1 Tenno-cho, Kiyamachi-dori Bukkoji-
garu, Shimogyo-ku, Kyoto
Tel. 075-354-7770 en.kyoto-stay.jp
From ¥50,000 per night based on double
occupancy, excluding tax and service charge;
five-guest maximum. Available services include
a catered vegetarian breakfast.





Le Machiya Mibu

Hearing the two-car tram, endearingly called the Randen by locals, rattle by outside, you'll feel as if you've been a Kyotoite for quite some time. Inside Le Machiya Mibu, a mid-century house with Japanese-style rooms renovated for a comfortable stay, Scandinavian-style furniture enlivens the decor, which retains original doors, windows, and screens. The bedrooms have futon mattresses laid out on tatami mats. With a fully modernized bathroom and kitchenette, the house is a good base for a long stay. The tram's Nishioji-Sanjo Station is only steps away, making it easy to reach such popular stops as the Shijo downtown area; several UNESCO World Heritage sites such as Ninnaji temple; the Toei Uzumasa movie studios; and the Arashiyama district. For a deeper experience of Kyoto, a concierge is on hand to arrange for you to attend workshops at a venerable wagashi confectioner or Kyoto-style pickle shop. Mibu is one of four accommodation properties handled by the Le Machiya consortium (see website).

Left: The softly lit dining room combines Scandinavian-modern furnishings and the burnished woodwork of the original house. Right: The facade of Le Machiya Mibu is typical of old Japanese townhouses. The leaves of Japanese maples by the entrance turn crimson in autumn, giving a little taste of the Kyoto seasons.

Map page 29
 23 Mibu Nishiotake-cho, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto
 Tel. 075-708-5596 lemachiya.com
 From ¥20,000 per night based on double occupancy, including tax and service charge; accommodations for a maximum of five guests



Jam Jar Lounge & Inn

With mellow jazz wafting in the background, take a break from sightseeing to sip an espresso and enjoy a chat with jovial Australian owner Danny Matheson at the Jam Jar Lounge & Inn guesthouse, located in a converted 110-year-old machiya in Kyoto's Nishijin weaving district. The café lounge on the first floor is cozy and charming, with the original earthen walls and lattice windows seamlessly blending with a tasteful selection of vintage Australian furniture and Art Deco lights and stained glass.



The guest rooms, one on the first floor and another on the second, have a serene style, thoughtfully achieved with details such as lacquered washi paper in contrasting colors on the fusuma sliding doors. The guests-only entrance at the back of the building helps ensure total privacy. The second-floor guest room comes equipped with a kitchenette, great for a carefree extended stay, just as if you were a real machiya resident.



Right: Enjoy an Australian wine or a well-made cup of latte at the café's bar. Above: This guest room offers a private view of the courtyard garden.

Map page 29
 758-2 Higashi-Imakoji-cho, Imakoji-dori
 Shichihonmatsu Nishi-iru 2-chome,
 Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto
 Tel. 075-204-8508 jamjarjapan.com
 Café 10 AM to 7 PM; closed Mondays (or
 Tuesday if Monday is a national holiday)
 From ¥12,000 per night based on double
 occupancy, including tax and service charge



KYOTO AM & PM

To make the most of a Kyoto visit, consider some activities that are worth an early wake-up call and others that are fun after dark. We recommend fresh and seasonal experiences that offer new ways to immerse yourself in the old capital's charms.

Cycling in the early morning along the Kamogawa, you have Kyoto's main river almost to yourself.



Temple drums, shrine biking

Situated on the bank of the Kamo River in the heart of the city, the Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto, is a five-star resort with refined guest rooms, distinctive dining, and a superb spa. The hotel offers several morning activities for its staying guests. A popular outing provides a unique chance to attend a morning sutra-chanting service at Myokakuji temple. After observing the monks chanting to the accompaniment of drums, you can beat a drum yourself, then share a Japanese breakfast with the monks.

One of the hotel's cycle excursions winds through quiet streets to Fushimi Inari Shrine, famed for its thousands of red torii gates. Once there, you can enjoy the mystical atmosphere of the hushed precincts.

For those staying elsewhere, Kyoto Eco Trip rents bikes to all comers.

Morning sutra service

7 to 9 AM
¥10,000 per group (up to six people);
reservations required. Cancellation on the
appointed day or failure to show up results
in forfeiture of the full fee.

Cycling tours

Offered daily, weather permitting
6:30 to 8 AM
Free; reserve by 6 PM one day in advance

The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto

Kamogawa Nijo-dhashi Hotori, Nakagyo-ku,
Kyoto; tel. 075-746-5555
ritzcarlton.com/kyoto

Kyoto Eco Trip bicycle rentals

This popular shop, a 1-minute walk from
Kyoto Station, offers a wide range of bikes.
See website for location, hours, and prices.
Tel. 075-691-0794
kyoto-option.com/english



Photography courtesy of the Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto

AWAKENING WITH HOTEL MORNING PROGRAMS

Silent meditation and the Way of tea

Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto opened in autumn 2016, providing spacious guest rooms that look out on the renowned 800-year-old Shakusuien garden sharing the grounds. Exclusively for staying guests the hotel offers an excursion featuring a tea session and zazen meditation at Shoden Eigen'in, a subtemple of Kenninji, the oldest Zen temple in Kyoto.

Shoden Eigen'in is known for its close associations with Oda Urakusai, a famous tea master of the mid-16th to early 17th century. Participants can enjoy freshly whisked *matcha* green tea while learning about Zen and the Way of tea, then practice silent meditation during two 15-minute zazen sessions.

Normally closed to the public, Shoden Eigen'in will be open for 19 days this autumn. It has a superb collection of treasures and spectacular paintings on fusuma sliding doors.



Photography courtesy of Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto

Kenninji Shoden Eigen'in zazen experience

A minimum of two people
Inquire at hotel for fee and time
Reservations required a week in advance

Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto

445-3 Myohoin Maekawa-cho, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto
Tel. 075-541-8288
fourseasons.com/kyoto

Shoden Eigen'in special fall opening

November 15 to December 3
586 Komatsu-cho, Yamatoji-dori Shijo-sagaru 4-chome,
Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto
shoden-eigenin.com/english





Left: In the so-called Momiji Tunnel between Ichihara and Ninose stations, the single track runs under a canopy of autumn leaves.
Below: Rows of red lanterns cast a gentle glow over the stone steps on the approach to Kifune Shrine and light up the trees overhead.
Photography courtesy of Eizan Railway

Kibune Momiji Toro nighttime illumination 12

November 3 to 26
Dusk to around 9 PM (illumination until 8 PM in the Kibune area)
¥420; no reservations taken
eizandensha.co.jp
Eizan Railway connects Kyoto's Demachiyana Station and the Kibune area. Best views: the section between Ichihara and Ninose stations; around Kibuneguchi Station; and the area around Kifune Shrine.
Kifune Shrine is about a 30-minute walk from Kibuneguchi Station. A bus service is also available.

Ride the rails through illuminated leaves

The nighttime lighting of autumn leaves has become a fairly common sight in Kyoto, but this is something special. Along the Eizan Railway in north-central Kyoto, trains run through gloriously illuminated trees to the stop for Kifune Shrine, one of the most celebrated spots for fall foliage. Sit back and marvel at the view outside large windows reaching almost to the ceiling. Especially spectacular is the stretch be-

tween Ichihara Station and Ninose Station, popularly known as Momiji ("autumn leaves") Tunnel. There the density of brightly colored leaves pressing against the darkened cars affords a magical experience. We recommend that you set off at dusk to reach Kifune Shrine with time to enjoy its setting before heading back to the city. Don't forget to wear good walking shoes for the shrine visit.



Sophisticated evening pleasures

Bars being part of the lives of many Kyotoites including the trendy young generation, there is an endless variety of establishments tucked away in the city's narrow streets. Notable is K6, celebrating its 23rd anniversary this year. In 2014 this famed bar opened a spin-off on the floor below in the same building. Called Cave de K, it has the feeling of a wine cellar, as the name suggests.

On the menu at Cave de K are sweets gen-

erously steeped in liquor, such as pancakes doused with Macallan 12 whisky. Among the beverage offerings by the glass are four or five kinds of champagne (including Krug), most of them luxuriously poured from magnums. Befitting the sophisticated Kyoto style, the bar satisfies patrons' discerning tastes by stocking only the best labels. If you are tempted to visit even before nightfall, the bar is ready to serve you starting at 11 AM.



Right: This elegantly arranged dessert is made with blood orange and cardamom, ¥800. It showcases the fruit in various guises such as *pâte de fruit* (fruit jelly) and a candy topping. Cardamom ice cream and Grand Marnier give additional layers of flavor. Krug champagne by the glass, ¥4,800.

Cave de K 13

Val's Building 1F, Kiyacho Nijo Higashi-iru, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto; tel. 075-231-1995
11 AM to 2 AM; closed Tuesdays
A cover charge of ¥1,000 applies after 5 PM
10 percent tax and service charge added to all prices
Brunch and multicourse menus also served



EATS & TREATS

In Kyoto today even the most exalted traditional cuisine can be found in new places. farm-fresh produce is growing in rooftop fields, and new-wave confectioners and cafés are opening. Whether you're looking for a fine meal, an afternoon pick-me-up, or an unusual gift or souvenir, here's where to go.

**DINING HIGH
AND REFINED**

SAVORY


The scene pictured on the opposite page shows a rooftop in central Kyoto. This is, in fact, a normal working day at Rokkaku Farm on the three-story building of Kyoto Yaoichi Honkan, a market popular with locals and highly rated by food professionals for its extensive selection of vegetables and many other goods.

Rokkaku Farm vegetables grow in soil from a farm under the same ownership in northwest Kyoto prefecture and are irrigated with groundwater drawn up to the roof-

top. Needless to say, they feature prominently in the cuisine prepared at the company's restaurant adjacent to the rooftop farm. The idea of this unique dining experience was hatched to promote interest in vegetables and, by extension, agriculture. Savoring the bounty of the earth while looking out the windows at this lush farm in the heart of the city, diners are spurred to appreciate the effort involved in nurturing the vegetables and the energy they give to our health and well-being.



Left: The Seasonal Vegetable Assortment is offered in the ¥6,000 multicourse dinner, or à la carte for ¥1,800.
Right: Freshly picked vegetables abound with nutrients.

Map page 29 
Kyoto Yaoichi Honkan 3F, 220 Sanmonji-cho, Higashinotomori Sanjo-sagaru, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto, tel. 075-223-2320
11:30 AM to 3 PM (last order), 6 to 10 PM (last order)
Closed Wednesdays
www.kyotoyaichihonkan.com/restaurant02.html




Kodaiji Jugyuan Restaurant Hiramatsu Kodaiji

The Hiramatsu group, which operates restaurants, hotels, and other businesses in Japan and abroad, will open its first two Kyoto restaurants this autumn. Kodaiji Jugyuan will offer exclusive washoku *ryotei* dining in a century-old structure of elegant *sukiya*-style tea-house design with an exquisite garden by master landscape gardener Ogawa Jihei VII. The cuisine, made with consummate care (far right), will reflect the spirit of *ichigo ichie* in the Way of tea, which treasures each encounter in life as unique. In an adjacent four-story building, Restaurant Hiramatsu Kodaiji will



serve the company's long-renowned French cuisine in settings with such traditional warm textures as earthen walls (below left). Both establishments offer views of Yasaka Pagoda.



Map page 29 
353 Kodaiji Masuya-cho, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto
ja@hiramatsu.co.jp (Jugyuan)
rhk@hiramatsu.co.jp (Restaurant Hiramatsu)

Kodaiji Jugyuan (opens September 23)
11:30 AM to 12:30 PM (last order), 5:30 to 7:30 PM (last order); closed irregularly
Multicourse lunch and dinner menus only, from ¥20,000 excluding 15 percent tax and service charge
Restaurant Hiramatsu Kodaiji (opens September 19)
11 AM to 1 PM (last order), 5:30 to 8:30 PM (last order); closed irregularly
Lunch multicourse menus, ¥5,000 and ¥7,000; dinner multicourse menus, ¥12,000 and ¥15,000. Prices exclude 10 percent tax and service charge





SURPRISES CASUAL AND SWEET

Kaikado Café


The gleaming coffee canisters created by Kaikado, Japan's oldest maker of handmade tea caddies, quickly became favorites in Japan and abroad, noted for beauty and functionality that magically merge coffee culture and the craftsmanship born of Japanese tea culture. This blended tradition is symbolized at Kaikado Café, which has generated buzz since opening in 2016.

The café's charms start with a specialty brew made from beans roasted by Nakagawa Wani Coffee, the favorite of aficionados. Teas, select breads, and sweets round out the menu. But also showcased here are beautiful and functional items made with the same passion for craftsmanship seen in the tin, brass, and copper canisters. The coffee cup below, for instance, was made by Asahiyaki kiln in Uji, Kyoto, in collaboration with Nakagawa Wani Coffee. The slightly elliptical rim is easy on the lips, the shape brings out the best of the coffee aroma, and the handle is easy to hold. The bamboo plate and spoon by Kohchosai Kosuga and the sugar pot and milk pitcher by Kaikado render the tabletop a curation of modern artistry.

Located in a former tram garage and office from the 1920s, the café is a true salon for the appreciation of coffee, tea, and craftsmanship.

Above: Shop manager Kiyotaka Kawaguchi uses a coffee dripper created by Kanaami Tsuji metal weavers to pour a serving. Kaikado's brass, copper, and tin canisters handsomely line the shelves. They will age tastefully over the years, as will the lampshades made by the same craftsmen.

Right: A perfect accompaniment to the specialty Kaikado Blend (¥820) is hearty buttered toast with azuki-bean paste (¥480); prices include tax. Coffee cups and other wares including tea caddies and coffee canisters are for sale in the café.

Map page 29 
352 Sumiyoshi-cho, Kawaramachi-dori Shichijo-agaru,
Shimogyo-ku, Kyoto; tel. 075-353-5668
10:30 AM to 7 PM (last order 6:30 PM); closed Thurs-
days and the first Wednesday of each month
kaikado-cafe.jp






Umezono Sabo

The owner of Umezono Sabo, which opened in 2016, grew up in a family operating a traditional Japanese-style sweets café. She enjoyed pairing azuki-bean paste with her daily refreshments like yogurt and fruit, which inspired her *kazari-kan*, made from bean jam molded with agar and bracken starch and arranged with flair. Her Earl Grey–infused sweet, for example, is dressed with almond-flavored white bean paste, fruit, and rose petal, as if it were a European gâteau. Kazari-kan are lighter in texture than ordinary bean jelly and come in a variety of flavors such as matcha green tea and zesty lemon.

Offerings on the menu change as often as monthly, with new flavors always being created. One notable example was spicy stollen kazari-kan, complete with dried fruits and nuts, which sold out immediately at Christmastime. Umezono Sabo's sweets are also a hit with foreign guests unfamiliar with wagashi or sweet bean paste. Here, wagashi is truly transcending generations and borders.

Left: Served in the upstairs café, popular black tea and matcha flavors of kazari-kan (¥350 each) go well with Tsukigase organic black tea from Nara (¥550); prices include tax.
Right: Up to 10 varieties of kazari-kan are on offer each day in the antique showcase. You may also buy for take-out.

Map page 29 
11-1 Murasakino Higashi-Fujinomori-cho, Kita-ku, Kyoto; tel. 075-432-5088
11 AM to 6:30 PM (last order 6 PM)
Closed irregularly
umezono-kyoto.com/nishijin



Zen Cafe

Though Zen Cafe is run by the venerable wagashi confectioner Kagizen Yoshifusa, which began making sweets for the tea ceremony in the early 18th century, matcha green tea is not on the menu. The hope is that, here, confections with origins in the strict formalities of the Way of tea can be enjoyed casually with coffee and other café drinks.

Kagizen Yoshifusa's long-beloved specialty, *kuzukiri* (kudzu-starch jelly cut into thin noodles), takes on a new twist at the café, which starts with the same highly prized kudzu starch from the Yoshino district of Nara but turns it into *kuzumochi* dumplings. First-timers are recommended to taste the flavor of the kudzu itself before topping the kuzumochi with a generous dose of *kinako* soybean powder and cane syrup. Reportedly, one foreign guest returned to the café daily, captivated by the indescribably light and smooth texture and mellow sweetness of this treat.




The real success of Zen Cafe comes from the drive to innovate while staying true to the essence of wagashi traditions.



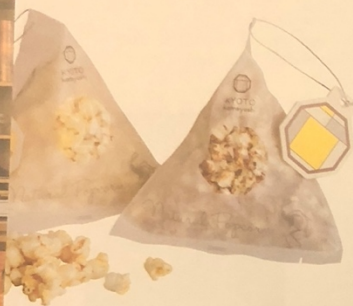
Above: This kuzumochi and drink set (¥1,500 including tax) pairs the house specialty with bittersweet café au lait. Also on the menu are seasonal wagashi and fruit sandwiches. The black lacquer dish is by Keikou Nishimura.

Left: The relaxing café, in a quiet back street, has both table and counter seating.

Map page 29 
570-210 Gion-machi Minami-gawa, Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto; tel. 075-533-8686
11 AM to 6 PM (last order 5:30 PM); closed Mondays kagizen.co.jp/en/store

Take Home Kyoto

Innovative yet distinctly Kyoto, these items make perfect gifts and souvenirs of your visit. You'll find them in unique shops that characterize the city's new directions.



Kyoto Kameyoshi Kitayama Lab

Additive-free popcorn, handmade with organic corn from the owner's Kyoto farm, comes in locally sourced flavors: horse-chestnut honey (left, ¥690); aromatic and mellow kinako soybean powder and cane-sugar syrup (right, ¥600); and—not to be missed—delicately sweet and pungent Japanese sansho pepper. Prices include tax.

47 Koyama Nishimoto-machi, Kita-ku, Kyoto
Tel. 075-202-8466
11 AM to 5 PM; closed Thursdays

Munian

Based on recipes passed down by a French chocolatier and handmade with great care, fresh truffles are quick-frozen, then allowed to rest, developing smooth, melt-in-your-mouth texture and rich flavor. Above are matcha green tea and mellow gin. From ¥800.

416-5 Dainichi-cho, Gokomachi-dori Shijo-agaru, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto
Tel. 075-256-0200
11 AM to 6 PM; closed Wednesdays
munian.net



Uragu

Vivid and stylish, this original line of stationery includes letter paper, postcards, and more. At right are tiny Mamemo note pads (7.5 cm long, ¥350 each), available in 30-plus patterns—you'll be tempted to grab a bunch. The charming shop is tucked away in a tiny alley of a teahouse district.

4-297 Miyagawasuji, Higashiyanama-ku, Kyoto; tel. 075-551-1357
Noon to 6 PM; closed Mondays (or Tuesday if Monday is a national holiday) uragu.com



Kotoshina

This natural skin-care brand combines the expertise of an organic tea farm in Uji, Kyoto, and a French cosmetics maker. Products feature catechin, vitamin C, and other components of green tea; precious teased oil noted for moisturizing; and soothing natural spa waters from Gamarde, France. Face Lotion Brightening (left, ¥4,200) and Brightening Cream (right, ¥5,500) combat a summer of sun exposure.

Kyoto Bal 1F, 251 Yamazaki-cho, Kawaramachi-dori Sanjo-sagaru, Nakagyo-ku, Kyoto; tel. 075-223-0503
11 AM to 8 PM; closed irregularly
kotoshina-kyoto.com



Mitate

Lending this issue's cover a feeling of autumn is the flower shop's signature "Seasonal Box" (about 12 cm square, ¥3,000 including tax), which captures nature's essence each month. The shop features wildflowers arranged in a selection of curios and containers. Formerly a Nishijin brocade workshop, the renovated space has an understated elegance.

41 Shichiku Shimotakedono-cho, Kita-ku, Kyoto
Tel. 075-203-5050
Noon to 5 PM; closed Sundays and Mondays
hanaya-mitate.com
Inquiries accepted in Japanese only

Join KIJE's #kyotokyoto campaign!

For two months from September 1 to October 31, we will post a daily Kyoto topic to the KIJE Facebook @edit.tokyo.japan.jp and KIJE Instagram @kije_magazine. Join us, and share your Kyoto news and stories by posting with the hashtag #kyotokyoto. Let's all enjoy Kyoto this autumn!

KYOTO DISCOVERIES

Map by Takashi Kamizumi



- 1 Shiki Juraku page 14
- 2 Bijuu page 16
- 3 Kyoto Art Hostel Kumagusuku page 17
- 4 Hotel Anteroom Kyoto page 17
- 5 Aoi Kamogawa-tei House page 18
- 6 Le Machiya Mibu page 19
- 7 Jam Jar Lounge & Inn page 19
- 8 The Ritz-Carlton, Kyoto page 21
- 9 Four Seasons Hotel Kyoto page 21
- 10 Shoden Eigen'in page 21
- 11 Arashiyama night cruises page 22
- 12 Kibune Momiji Toro page 23
- 13 Cave de K page 23
- 14 SAVORY page 25
- 15 Kodajiri Jugyuan / Restaurant Hiramatsu Kodajiri page 25
- 16 Kaikado Café page 26
- 17 Umezono Sabo page 27
- 18 Zen Cafe page 27
- 19 Kyoto Kameyoshi Kitayama Lab page 28
- 20 Munian page 28
- 21 Urugu page 28
- 22 Kotoshina page 28
- 23 Mitate page 28

Magical Moments @ Kyoto

Other Areas Ideas: <http://www.discovershikoku.com/about>

Magical Moments @ Kyoto

Temple Sorenji Temple & Ogurayama Tenpodai: the temple is not open to public but with a donation you can see it - request in advance, and Nakagawa Kitayama Trees are tremendous with a stop in Ogurayama to see the red maple leaf.

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絶対に太陽を見ないで下さい

100円
・太陽を見ないで下さい。
・硬貨を強く押し込んで下さい。
・約 秒間見えます。
・100円硬貨以外の物はいれなくて下さい。









Shortcode



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