

UPDATED TRAVEL & JAPANESE INTEGRITY 2023

2023: I am already 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.

Systems: 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.

Covid: 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.

Layers: 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 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.

MICHELIN *FRUSTRATIONS*

The single greatest frustration travellers experience today is access to the Michelin restaurants those restaurants travellers dream of visiting. During Covid many of these chefs relied on local customers and this carried on for several years almost three. Japanese client would frequent their favourite restaurants and support them given the difficulty they were facing with restrictions. Consequently over time the Japanese customers have become the principal customers and replaced tourists. Each time they visit the restaurant they book their next visit so now that things are back to normal travellers find it very difficult to get access to their favourite restaurants. And many failed to realise that Japanese chefs are reluctant to take foreigners due to the fact that they change their mind at the last minute about their reservation due to jet-lag, etc. At the end of the day unless you're a client and well-known or well-connected it's very difficult to get a seat but don't be discouraged there are lots of other options.

JAPANESE INTEGRITY

Japan is unique and enjoying Japan is easy if you are open-minded. It is difficult to compare a trip to Japan to anywhere else. The most significant change in travel is the general courteousness of Japanese people, the size of Tokyo, food variety, and general standards. Japanese people are extraordinary, and they are mostly willing to help foreigners with whatever their needs may be.

You will experience an extraordinary level of integrity with Japanese, for example, my brother left his Leica camera in a taxi and the driver brought it back to the hotel and dropped it to the front desk. And one of our friends took a taxi to the Tsukiji (fish market) and it was 03h00am and the market was closed, so the driver took them back to their hotel and refused to accept payment.

Integrity is very much a part of the local culture and respect is a common denominator. Always stay composed, never raise your voice, and be patient at all times. Be aware that things move slowly sometimes especially when it comes to purchasing services or goods.

SLOWLY

In Japan slow is a sign of quality and respect and it demonstrates that care has been given. You can wait a long time in a shop to have a gift wrapped and I mean a long time. These are some of the elements that make Japan special so remain patient.

VUSUALLY

You should also consider that Japanese are very visual people so this includes the idea that small is precious and cute is considered “kawaii” said like “hawaii” but with a “k.” This denotes something as being a pleasant and nice surprise and refers to humans or objects. Japanese are very dedicated to the Japanese way of life but at the same time engage foreign aspects and elements, such as Starbucks and other fast foods. These are novel in Japan and represent a certain change, a sense of enjoying overseas.

That’s the good side and now the difficult. Japanese are slow, small things can be excruciating and make you feel crazy. Japanese are not always the best problem solvers, and if they are it can take forever. You need to exercise patience at all time, and realize that wrapping a small gift at a shop can turn into a twenty-five minute affair.

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 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.

LETS GET STARTED

Here are some options of things to do while in Tokyo, and from the list you can choose to develop your own itinerary;

- Shopping /plenty of options/
- fish market /requires a guide for proper access-ask hotel concierge/
- Museums /numerous depending your preferences/
- Temples /numerous/
- Gardens /numerous/
- Key Sightseeing e.g. sky tree, Tokyo Tower, etc.
- Relaxation & Spa
- Contemporary Art Galleries /many/
- Cuisine /quality choices/
- Kids Gifts /kiddy Land/
- Music /many options/
- Coffee /many/
- Animal Cafes /few/
- Palace /Tokyo & Kyoto/

Start with Tokyo is often the priority for any traveler and they sometimes wish to start off in Tokyo and finish in Tokyo. Otherwise, you can start in Kobe, Osaka, or Kyoto and finish in Tokyo. But from my experience, Tokyo is best at the beginning and at the end of any trip because most travellers are anxious to have one last time for shopping in Tokyo before departing Japan.

CUISINE STYLES

Eating in Japan is a treasure trove, but at the same time what we consider a treasure and what you are used to, are two different animals. The cuisine in Japan is not “nobe” styled, and if you come to Japan and expect to eat Nobe you’ll be challenged, or even shocked, and or uncomfortable. Foods in Japan are based on domestic ingredients, so each restaurant specializes in one food., e.g. yakitori is chicken and only chicken, and sushi is usually fish only and raw, and tempura is only fried, and ramen is only noodles. So when you choose a specific culinary experience you’ll need to take into consideration what you can and cannot eat.

DIETARY ISSUES

You must be cautious about where you eat because dietary substitutions can be complex, and result in disappointment. Japanese chefs do not understand the very basic ideas of food restrictions, and even allergies are often problematic. For example the basis for “Washoku”, traditional Japanese kitchen is a base named dashi, and all dashi is made with fish and seaweed.

If you cannot eat fish stock, it gets even more complex. If you have any kind of dietary restrictions you must be selective in your choice of restaurants. This needs to be arranged well in advance and my recommendation to use Pocket Concierge to help you in managing your preferences or the hotel concierge. For vegetarians meals that won’t disappoint are also possible, however in general eating is a pleasure, and most people are fascinated by the variety of foods.

The more complicated it is for chefs, the less likelihood you'll get a reservation. It isn't because chefs are difficult, it has more to do with working style, menu changes etc.

PROTOCOLS

I won't bore you with a long list of protocols in Japan, however, there are many and a few are considered key while others less important. The first protocol is being on time, not changing plans and remaining respectful. Most foreigners decide at the last moment to change their minds. This in Japan is a big "no-no" and if you change your mind and time schedule, your host will explode from frustration. Japanese have a deep sense of respect for being on time and being one minute late is considered rude. If you would be late, it is key to call minimum 30-minutes before the appointment. All you need to say is, "I am sorry I am thirty minutes late" and providing an explanation isn't important.

THE JAPANESE BASICS:

1. No tipping is required except at Ryokans and the protocol is to hand it at the start of your trip in an envelope, and make sure the money is clean and not folded. The appropriate amount is ¥5,000-10,000.
2. Handling money has a specific protocol in most shops and even in taxis there is a *money tray*, so place the money slowly and carefully without throwing it onto the tray. Do not directly hand money to Japanese in shops, or anywhere.
3. Taxi doors open automatically and do not open the doors or attempt to exit from the roadside as it is considered dangerous and it is.
4. Chopsticks, place them where you find them, and nowhere else during mealtime. Do not place them in any bowl, or use them to spear foods. Please always place and maintain your hashi (chopsticks) parallel and on the chopstick holder when not in use.
5. Campai (pronounced kam-pie) means cheers and it is customary to have a drink at the start of a meal. Your host will pour for you, so you take the bottle and pour him. Always hold the glass when someone pours for you
6. Shaking hands, so if you shake hands never squeeze the hands of Japanese, as bowing is a normal protocol and squeezing is not acceptable.
7. Dressing is important, and according to the situation (not too casual) as Japanese are often formal, so not track suits ever, and when you see people badly dressed they are often Chinese.
8. Shoes sometimes need to come off so pay attention to these kinds of situations, and if there is a step up, it means shoes off - take your time.
9. Speaking and telephone discretion should always be used and if you are in a public environment always be quiet and respect the environment.
10. Eating drinking in public is not common but happens but be cautious about walking with beverages.
11. Garbage Bins are scarce in Japan and on the streets, you are expected to dispose of your own garbage where you are to avoid carrying it.
12. On an escalator always stay to one side and that's the left side so people who are more rushed can walk freely without any obstructions. In Osaka people stay to the right side.

SHOPPING DEPARTMENT FOODS

ISETAN SHINJUKU

Address: 3 Chome-14-1 Shinjuku, Shinjuku City, Tokyo 160-0022

Hours:

Monday 10 AM–8 PM
Tuesday 10 AM–8 PM
Wednesday 10 AM–8 PM
Thursday 10 AM–8 PM
Friday 10 AM–8 PM
Saturday 10 AM–8 PM
Sunday 10 AM–8 PM

These days shops are not as filled with Chinese tourists who are often 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: <https://www.mistore.jp.ez.hp.transer.com/store/shinjuku.html>

FUREIKA * (Isetan Shinjuku)

The vendor I often use is Fureika, (* Michelin) 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” - <https://www.chuugokuhanten.com/store/fureika.html>

ISETAN SHINJUKU

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 it is a must visit.

PRECCE MIDTOWN

Address: 〒107-0052 Tokyo, Minato City, Akasaka, 9 Chome-7-4

Hours:

Monday 8 AM–11 PM
Tuesday 8 AM–11 PM
Wednesday 8 AM–11 PM
Thursday 8 AM–11 PM
Friday 8 AM–11 PM
Saturday 8 AM–11 PM
Sunday 8 AM–11 PM

[Phone: 03-5413-5109](tel:03-5413-5109)

Midtown Precce, and I suggest a quick visit there if you are either hungry as the facility has some multiple 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.

GINZA 9 (Ginza)

[Address:](#) 8 Chome-10 Ginza, Chuo City, Tokyo 104-0061

[Hours:](#)

Monday 11 AM–8 PM
Tuesday 11 AM–8 PM
Wednesday 11 AM–8 PM
Thursday 11 AM–8 PM
Friday 11 AM–8 PM
Saturday 11 AM–8 PM
Sunday 11 AM–8 PM

Ginza 9, is a worthwhile shopping building to visit with lots of variety and it has high fashion and a very good whiskey shop in the B1.

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

TOKYO SHOPPING BY DISTRICT

The shopping in Japan never fails those curious, and you have a multitude of large scaled department stores to choose from. Make sure whenever you visit any department stores to check the top floor, and basement floors - it is there you'll find plenty of visual candy.

[1. Isetan Shinjuku Store](#)

[2. Ginza Mitsukoshi](#)

[3. Nihombashi Mitsukoshi Main Store](#)

[4. Wako Ginza](#)

[5. SEIBU IKEBUKURO Main Store](#)

[8. Keio Department Store Shinjuku](#)

[9. Tobu Department Store Ikebukuro](#)

[10. Shinjuku Marui Honkan](#)

[11. Granduo Kamata](#)

[13. Daimaru Tokyo](#)

DEPARTMENT STORES GINZA & NIHONBASHI

[20. Matsuya Asakusa](#)

[21. Ario Nishi-Arai](#)

[22. The Daiso Shibuya Center-gai](#)

[14. SEIBU SHIBUYA](#)

[15. Tamagawa Takashimaya](#)

[16. Matsuzakaya Ueno](#)

DEPARTMENT STORES UENO & ASAKUSA

[17. Shinjuku Takashimaya](#)

DEPARTMENT STORES SHINJUKU

[18. Tokyu Department Store Toyoko](#)

[30. Otsuka Loft](#)

DEPARTMENT STORES SHIBUYA & HARAJUKU & EBISU

[19. Hankyu Men's Tokyo](#)

[23. Ario Kitasuna](#)

[24. Ebisu Mitsukoshi](#)

[25. Momo Natural Jiyugaoka](#)

[26. Ario Kasai](#)

[27. United Arrows Roppongi Hills](#)

DEPARTMENT STORES AKASAKA / ROPPONGI

[28. Kyodo Loft](#)

[29. Shinjuku Mylord Loft](#)

HOT OFF THE PRESS SHOPPING

<https://mikanshimokita.jp>

<http://www.k-toyo.jp>

FISH MARKET NAMED TOYOSU

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: <https://www.shijou.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/english/toyosu/>

DAIWA SUSHI TSUKIJI

Almost anyone who visited the old fish market knew this sushi restaurant it was a must visit, see and taste. It has been many years since I've been but I understand it's still rocking and rolling so if you decide to go I believe early morning is the best please be sure to check the schedule:

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



Chutoro sushi "Takahashi"

SUSHI ETC.

<https://mesubim.com/category/sushi-styles/>

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

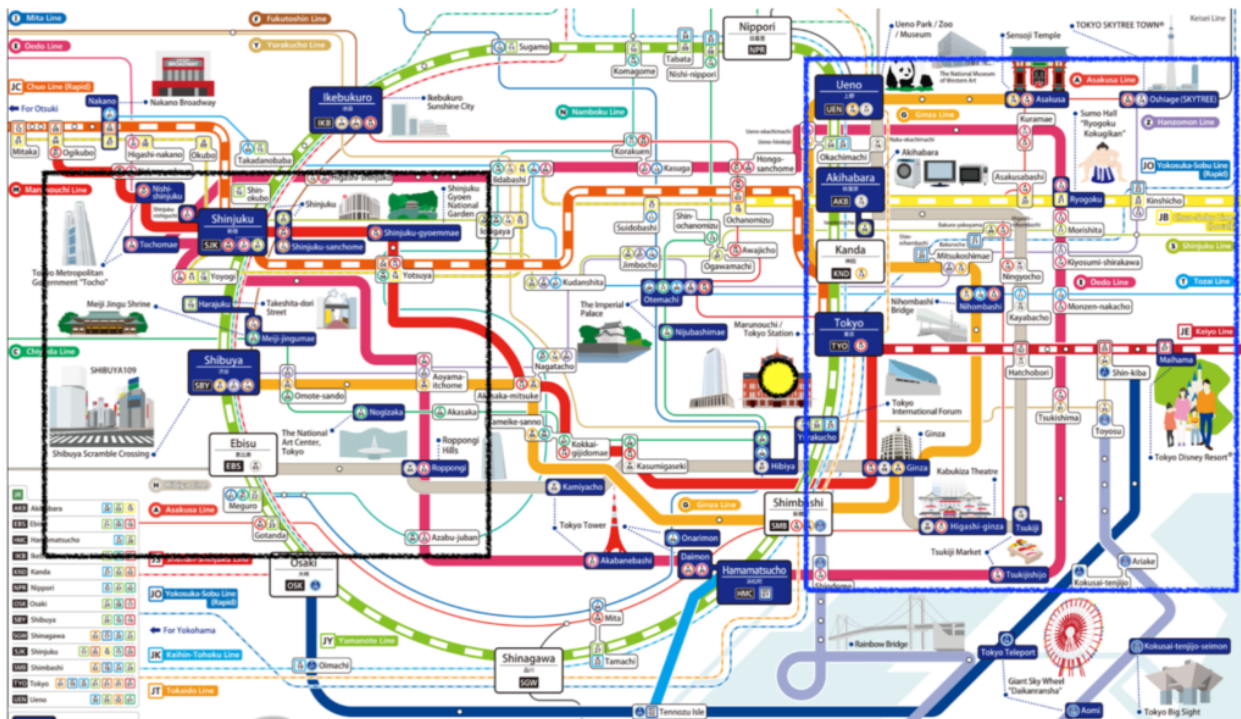
A visit to Hiroshima as a must to see the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. A place continuously appealing for the elimination of nuclear armaments and the realization of permanent world peace. It is divided into east building and main building. At the east building,

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.



HOTELS TOKYO

Choosing a hotel in Tokyo is a lot more difficult than it seems. Nowadays in Japan hotels are short staffed so you have to be very careful about selecting the hotel experience to avoid any closures of bars or restaurants. Since coming to Japan there have been so many new hotels added to the roster some not even mentioned.

When choosing the hotel location is the most important in the map below shows distinctly the black area in the blue areas. And then there is the area between the black and the blue which is an area we are very fond of because it's central to Tokyo yet you can easily access the east and western parts of Tokyo. And there are a number of hotels I haven't mentioned which are very good but I am not a hotel guide 😊😊😊

[Aman](#): everybody loves this hotel and it's all a matter of personal choice.

[Peninsula](#): it has become a classical tell they have a very faithful following him and the location is excellent but the lobby is sparse if you can call it a lobby.

[Mandarin](#): once upon a time it was a great hotel now it's difficult to say.

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 HOTELS

[Trunk Hotel](#): since Covid the Edition which is preferred by many travellers

[Edition](#): no doubt a very popular location high priority for many travellers who frequent Tokyo.

[One Tokyo](#): not the kind of place I would enjoy but popular.

[Yuen Bettei](#): this is unusual, not remote yet not central but they have onset in Tokyo - go figure.

5-STAR

[Ritz](#): Accommodations begin on the 47th floor and it has become a classic hotel.

[Palace Hotel](#): very well located it is a low rise hotel with a good restaurant good service and decent rooms not more not less.

[Grand Hyatt](#): A modern luxury hotel in the heart of Roppongi, Tokyo - Grand Hyatt Tokyo. Expect top dining experiences and ultimate relaxation. www.hyatt.com

[Okura](#): Iconic Hotel re-built missing the old touches of the grand luxury yet popular and there are some very good restaurants: <https://theokuratokyo.jp/en/dining/> and the old lobby was preserved and it still has some remnants of the past.

The Okura Tokyo is a luxury hotel in Tokyo's central Toranomom district. Guests are welcomed

into a place defined by elegant Japanese aesthetics, service that is both personal and accommodating, and a distinctive Japanese sensibility.

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 kinds of variety. <https://www.tokyu-hands.co.jp/en/list/shibuya/> and there 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 are some small streets parallel which are 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 kind 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*.

COFFEE

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

The real deal - Coffee and culture in Tokyo: <https://mesubim.com/2015/12/01/shokunin-tanaka-bear-pond/>

<https://www.oc-ogawa.co.jp/ocl-shimokitazawa/>

SUGARY

https://www.instagram.com/mypicnic_tokyo/?hl=en

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.

BOOK TOP RESTAURANTS

It has become absolutely ridiculous to find restaurants in Tokyo given the current situation an abundance of tourism. Now add to that mix the fact that for the last three years Japanese restaurants have relied on local business whereas before Chinese tourism was driving many of the top and restaurants. Well Japanese aren't big spenders they are dependable spenders so

finding a place in a restaurant requires patience. Mini turn to the concierge system the interface between hotels and customers and restaurants. The reason they're so popular is because foreigners come to Japan and think that they can change their mind every five seconds adding tremendous difficulty to the current limited supply of good options available. These options are what are they to look at but don't have high hopes and I'm sorry to disappoint you but good restaurant seats are in very limited supply.

Pocket Concierge [Pocket Copocket-concierge.jp/en/](https://www.pocket-concierge.jp/en/)

Tableall: <https://www.tableall.com>

Omakase: <https://omakase.in>

MIDTOWN

Marvellous shopping complex named Midtown and it has many yummy and good shops; Precede 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.

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 BBQ

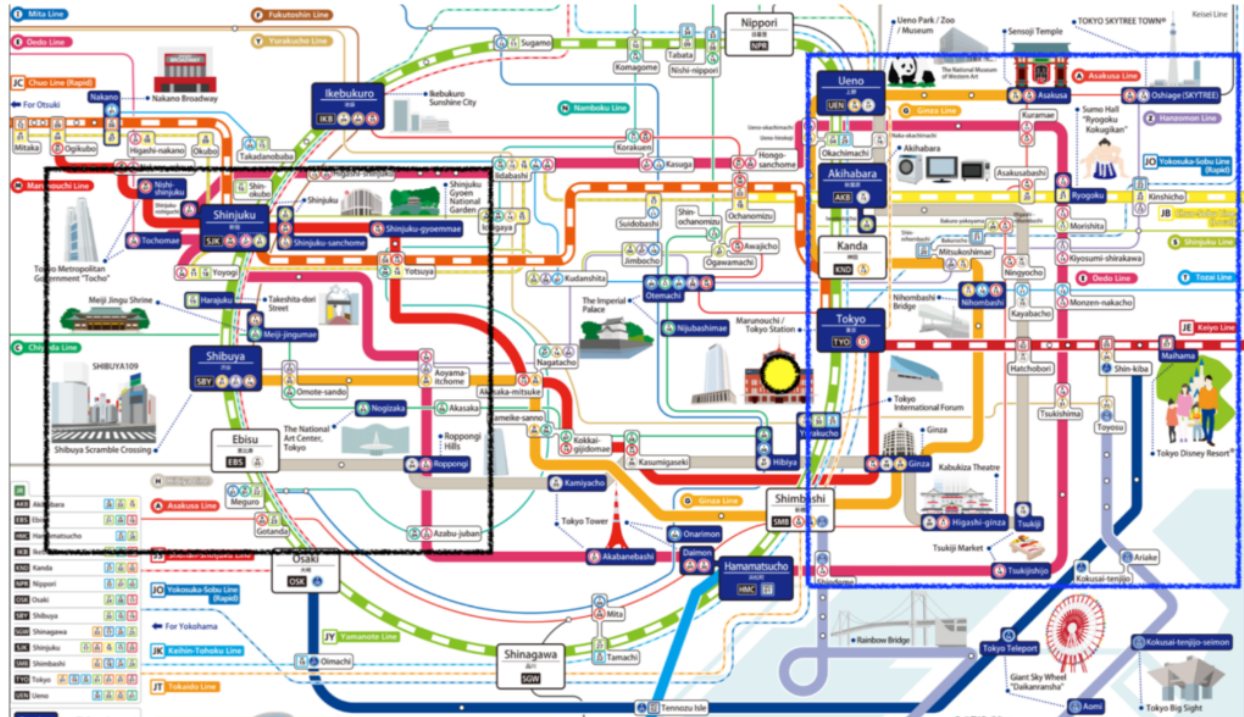
Now think about the idea of travelling in Japan and eating Korean food or any other food for that matter. Do not hesitate to try Korean food Italian food French food or Indian food because you won't be disappointed Japanese always have a twist. And if you're a meat lover Korean is amazing because principally 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 because mostly Japanese restaurants serve only two cuts, the filet and the sirloin. Hence the Koreans buy the other cuts which are excellent. We highly recommend Toranoana owned by a crazy guy but getting a reservation is complicated because it is often full, and it is a small restaurant.

Take a look at the menu translated and remember Koreans are daring when it comes to all parts of the cow: <https://mesubim.com/2016/04/06/shins-korean-bbq-menu-tokyo/> The fun is cooking over charcoal, 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.

SHABU-SHABU 'VS' SUKIYAKI

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/>



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 LINK

<https://en.palacehoteltokyo.com/destination/tokyo/>

Each area in Tokyo has it's 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/2020/06/13/pizza-cutter/>

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

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/>

ASAKUSA

Asakusa has a fascinating history, and retains the vibe of an older Tokyo, with traditional craft shops and street-food stalls along Nakamise Street near the ancient Sensō-ji temple. 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.

RAMEN MAN

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/>

CHICKEN RAMEN

A high percentage of Ramen is made with pork so if you have an aversion to pork maybe you should consider below chicken Ramen.

https://twitter.com/kumahige_2

PRE-COVID

Pre-Covid things are very different and obviously have changed everywhere on planet Earth but this is an interesting itinerary but I prepared for a friend it's worth a glance to get a few ideas of how you can plan your own trip: [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.

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.

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 you cannot find stores 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/>

HOT NIGHTLIFE TOKYO & Ni-CHŌME

We heard recently from local who is a partygoer that this is the hottest club in Tokyo: <https://raisetokyo.com> but if you're looking for something much more edgy you can go to the second area Ni-chōme in Tokyo. You have 13 million people living in Shinjuku city zone and it is bustling at night with lots of crazy activities.

KABUKICHO RED LIGHTS

The biggest red light district in Japan, Golden Gai: cozy and unique bar area and Omoide Yokocho: old-fashion and nostalgic Izakaya alley - be prepared for the Wild West in Shinjuku. The term 'kyabakura' is actually just a shortened word for cabaret club. The difference between kyabakura and host clubs is that kyabakura caters to male customers and host clubs cater to female customers.

LOVE HOTELS

Love hotels in Japan get a bad rap as many assume that they're only used by cheating spouses who want to keep their affairs secret and away from their homes. Interestingly enough, these

hotels are more commonly used by couples in a relationship who might not have the space or ability to be alone together in their current housing situation. Young couple still living with their parents use the hotels so that they can enjoy together time without prying eyes. If you've ever wanted to stay in an underwater-themed room, princess room, torture chamber room, cowboy room, or any other room you can think of, chances are you can find it in Tokyo.

GOLDEN GAI

Here in a golden Gai you'll experience local finds; a night on the town with simple local delicious Japanese food and drinks. The buildings featured in the Golden Gai are old and not as pretty as those found in other areas of Tokyo, but they have history and are actually a sentiment to how resilient both people and structures can be. Most other buildings in the area toppled due to earthquakes, war, tsunamis, and other natural disasters. The six alleys that make up Golden Gai, however, have withstood the test of time and continue to stand proud.

Golden Gai Shinjuku

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.

[Burugariiruba](#)

[LITTLE SMITH](#)

[CLASSIC BAR ORIBE](#)



約4000本と云ふ膨大なライク・シェール類の類、同じ銘柄でも熟成年数を違えても、いかなる好みにも応えられるようラインアップには常に気を配る。



以前は銀座コジエ一帯にあった「バー・ハイ・ファイ」が、移転して上は専ら高級品の下駄上にあつたが、現在は銀座5丁目のこの地下に店を構える。



このシェラフン類、移転されたものはどうも選りすぐりや貴重品もあつたので、2015年銀座5丁目の新居に持ってきたら驚かされたバリエーションも見える。



「バー・ロックス」を継いで1997年「ハードシェイク」を継いで「TENDER TENDER」上野の店も、シェーカーやグラスなども「HARD SHAKE BAR」同様。



バー・ハイ・ファイ

東京都中央区銀座5-4-15
エポックビル5F
03-3571-5815

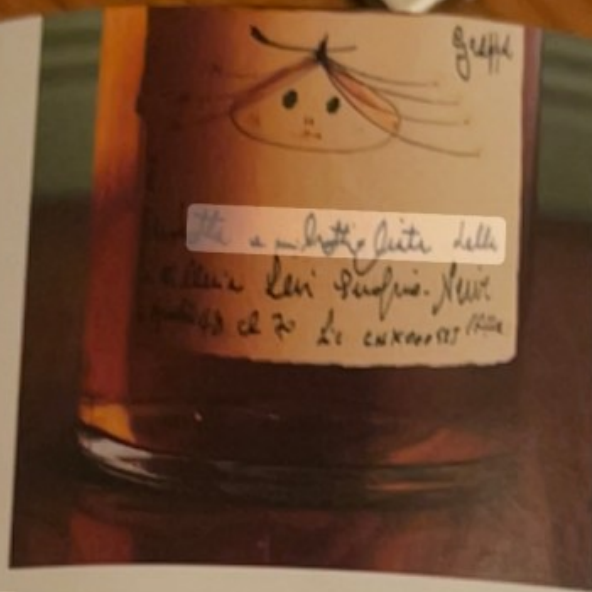
オーナーバーテンダーはスタアバーテンダーから独立した上野秀嗣。優れた語学力で世界中のバーテンダーたちと交流し、日本にとどまらず世界で活躍。『The World's 50 Best Bars 2017』にも選ばれた。シューマンとは古くからの仲で、映画でも最初に思く握手を交わすシーンが印象的だ。常時500本以上もボトルをそろえ、提供できるカクテルの幅も広がっている。さらに日本バーテンダー協会の副会長も務める上野。この撮影当日はタイでプロデュースするバーから呼びにきた若手に東京案内をするなど、多忙の合間を縫って、日本のバー文化を伝える手前も惜しまない。



銀座 テンダー

東京都中央区銀座6-5-15
東宝ビル5F
03-3571-8833

銀座に数多ある「バー」の中でも最も正統派といえる。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。根本第一の志に作られた「シェイク」をはじめ、スタンダードとなった「シゼ」がいくつもあり、世界中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」も世界的に有名な。上田いわく「ハードとは強くではなく「シゼ」のこと」と、皮肉でもシューマンにその妙技を披露している。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師に赴き、正しくおいしいカクテルの普及に努める。



Grappa from which the store name was derived, Romano Levi "Donna Selver "Tika". The label is handwritten by the founder.

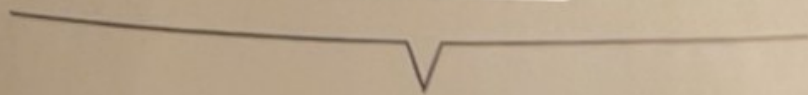
Information -

Donna Selvatica Address:
Sun Forest Morita Building
4F, 1-3-3 Jinnan, Shibuya-ku,
Tokyo Contact: 03-6416-9272

MILK CHOCOLATE



GRAPPA





2室限定 Applications for this tour will be by lottery. ~ Immerse yourself in the old and new charm of the historic islands ~ 4 days to relax at "Gantu"

★Please check when applying for travel assistance from the national or local governments.

Departure date/Thursday, June 29 [departure point/Tokyo Station]
 Price per person (1 room for 2 people/day 1-3: terrace suite with indoor bath)
 Tokyo station departure and arrival 1,200,000 yen
 Additional charge for single room 800,000 yen Days 1-3 Use of terrace suite with indoor bath
 ● Line staff/6 people ● Reception/1 person minimum
 ● Tourist/Day 1 From Tokyo Station to Gantu Gantu Tokyo Station
 ● Gantu Meal/33rd/Ta3

Tour schedule	
8:00-10:00	Tokyo Station (Shinkansen) Fukuyama Station Museum
1 day	神樂寺 神と真夜 Station Museum Rent a restaurant on Royal Road Ginza / Biwa performance) 16:30 頃 Gantsu / Dinner at Aiuchi)
21111	船外体験 半午 1 pm again 回 (Breakfast and dinner in Gantu)
Day 3 終日航海	in gansou 朝食 Gantu 瀬港 Steak (Teppanyaki)
17:30-20:00	福山駅 (Shinkansen Tokyo Station)

※天候・地震・入港延期・渡航管理などの諸事情により、船期や船外体験が変更 It may be canceled. We will let you know.

Applications for this tour will be by lottery. [Applications and inquiries] JTB Royal Road Ginza Main Store
 Phone reception only [Lottery reception period] January 30 (Mon) 10:00 to February 6 (Mon) 18:00 [TEL] 0120-262-115/ 10:00~18:00 (祝日以外は除く)

※当選の結果は、It will be on Tuesday, February 7th. ●Schedule may be canceled without notice.
 ●Takashimaya Salon, please. Please use the Takashimaya card credit card. I'll say Takashimaya debit card, credit card
 Please give me. Not a namphlet! Pamphlet
 So ¥1400
 2-3-11 観光庁登録旅行業第64号 一般社団法人 日本旅行業協会正会員

Enjoy a voyage on the "Gantu", a moving small luxury

- [Arashi Point]
- If you stay 3 nights in a row on the elegant 19-room lodging cruise ship "Gantu", anchored at scenic spots along the Seto Inland Sea 2. All-inclusive Meals at "Gantu" are prepared to your liking in the dining room.
 - Visit the museum "Ganku-in" at Kamiji on the first day Enjoy a biwa performance while looking out at the beautiful garden

① guntū



動画 Click here for details, including >>

★ Card member benefits/ One local confectionery per group

+1% Takashimaya's card, Takashimaya
 If you pay with a credit card, you will receive points. Apply at the JTB Royal Road Main Store.

●The plan will be a service of a card that Takashimaya Salon does. All photos are images.

Guntu translated

Cherry Blossoms Train Ride



1.白壁と桜の調和が美しい金沢城公園 2.「白山 エグゼルホテル東急」での朝食 (Image Granflla 天)車内 4.船船のおもてなしが楽しめる「親神の宿 柏樹園」客室の一例 5.和川遊覧船(日本さくら名所100)

Original tour for cardholders/Limited to 18 people on each departure date

Hokuriku on a Gran Class tour of famous cherry blossom spots Shinzen

no Yado Hakujuto, an inn in front of the gate of Eihei Temple A 3-day journey to familiarize yourself with Zen

Country travel, please check at the time of

application. Departure date/April 3rd (Mon), 5th (Wed), 9th (Sun), 11th (Tue) [Departure point/Tokyo Station]

Price per person (1 room for 2 people) / Departing from and arriving at Tokyo Station 169,000 yen

●Small number of people 12 people Receptionist/from ●添乗員/同行

2 people ●Hotel used/1 day 2 days 目:永平寺町「親神の宿 柏樹園」

※5つ星の宿 飯島文酒社基準最上級 Rank Hotel 23

tour schedule

1 day	8:36-10:24 17:00	東京駅発(北陸新幹線 Gran Class) → 金沢駅 French course meal 金沢城公園 → 玉泉院丸庭園内「玉泉園」(tea and Japanese sweets) Yunokuni Tensho Dinner of dishes that make the most of
the 2nd day	9:00 14:30 pm	Hotel Maruki (100) 足羽川桜並木(100 famous cherry blossom spots in Japan) Japanese food at department Buckwheat: 粟 親神の宿 柏樹園(泊/永平寺典座老師(永平寺) cooking supervision) Special vegetarian dinner (with chef commentary)
3rd day noon	早起 9:30-10:00 20:00-21:16	ご希望 Participated in "To" at Hotel Toyama Excel Hotel Tokyu Western-style course meal 松川遊覧船(100 Selected Cherry Blossom Spots in Japan - Enjoy the Cherry Blossom Tunnel from Above) Takaoka Koji Park (Japan's Top 100 Cherry Blossom Spots) 20:00-21:16 Shin-Takaoka Station (North Shinkansen Green Car) Tokyo Station

※気象条件、道路状況により行程が変更となる場合がございます Thank you. There may not be.

Course number VJ4827C-583

A fulfilling holiday where you can enjoy delicious food,

famous gardens, and experiences while enjoying cherry blossoms in the best season

[Trip point]

1. Take the Hokuriku Shinkansen Gran Class for the outward trip

2. At the main temple Eiheiiji,

坐禅 Enjoy hands-on experiences and walks around Jakko,

At Hakujuen, the head chef guides you through the supervision of Eiheiiji Temple

3. Relax at 18 famous

gardens at Yunokuni Tensho

4. French course, Echizen Japanese banquet,

Specialty preparation of the Western-style course



For children at Eihei Temple (image)

[Applications/Inquiries] Hankyu Travel

You can also make a reservation online

International [Reception starts] January 30 (Mon) 10:00- [TEL] 0570-05-5089/10:00-17:30 (until 13:30 on weekends and holidays)



●There is risk without prior notice. Please ●●●. I am not sure. credit card

Please give me. I will. Debit card Credit

card is from the beneficiary.

105-0022 East South

Tower 1

47号 一般社団法人 日本旅行業協会正会員

0570-05-5089

●The plan will be a monthly card service at Kashimaya Salon. All photos are images.



1. 函館本線 CURSUITE TRANSIITE
4. アイヌの伝統文化を体験 "Popoilo"
5. 湖のルート



Hankyu Travel International special charter plan / 5 copies, limited to 10 people / first come, first served

Take a trip on the longed-for cruise train "TRAIN SUITE Shiki-shima" Hokkaido/Tohoku
A 5-day "explore into the depths" journey that touches nature and culture



★国・ Please apply for local government travel assistance.

Departure date/May 14 (Sun) Departure point/Tokyo]
Price per person (1 room for 2 people) / From Tokyo to Ueno Station 1,360,000 yen
• Small number of participants / 28 people Reception / from 2 people
Personnel / From Ueno Station on the 2nd to Ueno on the 5th
Hotel used/1 day Sun: Tokyo/Hibiyakuni Hotel Tokyo Deluxe Twin)
2-4 Sun Train Suite Shiki-shima (Suite)
You can choose from 3 days or "shikotsu." Meals
/ 4 times, 4 times, 4 times

A special trip around
Hokkaido and Tohoku on a cruise train
[Point of]
1. Special charter for "TRAIN SUITE Shiki-shima" where all rooms are suites or better
2. In Hokkaido, hot springs and Lake Shikotsu area
Stay at a hot spring inn
3. At the Imperial Hotel Tokyo,
Departure eve dinner party
(Concert and "Shiki-shima" Crew Introduction)

tour schedule		Day 4	
15:00-	Check in at the Imperial Hotel Tokyo yourself)	beef	東京 Station/Station "TRAIN SUITE Shiki-shima" French cuisine on board
1st day 18:00-	night dinner party French cuisine course concert Shiki-shima crew introduction	afternoon	Shinkansen Hokuto Station Shinkansen
Around 9:30	Hotel Ueno Station (11:10) "TRAIN SUITE Shiki-shima"	evening	東京 Station Course or Kuroshio Course Sightseeing Outside the car 東京 Course: French (dinner) Ishi Course Italian (Dinner) Inside the train (泊)
the 2nd day	車内にて日本料理 (昼食) dinner on board → 車内 (泊)	morning	Western food (breakfast) on board Naruko-Kogen Station Naruko Onsen free 東京 Naruko Onsen Station "TRAIN SUITE Shiki-shima"
"morning"	函館駅 → 函館 Japanese food for sightseeing)	Day 5	車内 (food)
the 3rd day	French in the car) Shiro Station Sightseeing (We 象徴空間)) 温泉 Symbiosis Hot Springs or Areas) (泊)	17:20	Farewell party at Ueno Station "Prologue" (18:10)

Course number VJ2500T-583

[Applications/Inquiries] Hankyu Travel International

Limited by phone [Reception starts] January 30 (Mon) 10:00- [TEL] 0570-05-5089/10:00-17:30 (Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) until 13:30
●事前に予告なくスケジュールが変更、また、やむを得ない事情により旅行が中止される場合があります。It may be canceled. ●
Please see the inquiry salon. Please give me. Kashimara bit card
ご利用ください。●お申し込みの際はカード情報、住所など、受付に必要最低限の個人情報をあわせてお送りください。credit card I will. Apply by debit card or credit card
please is. Prompt
plug. This is a chair, so please apply. Co., Ltd. 〒105-0
south tower 株式会社日本旅行業協会 観光庁長官登録旅行業第1847号 一般社団法人日本旅行業協会

●The plan is a service for cards that run the Dakashimaya Salon. All photos are images.



1.山と桜のコントラストが美しい天野千早城 2.「新緑ホテル」の夕景(イメージ) 3.「七和寺」の桜 4.皇居内苑(「新緑ホテル」内観) 5.桜並木を走行する、嵯峨野トロッコ列車

Original tour for cardholders/Limited to 30 people on each departure date Tour eligible for online reservation gift campaign Kyoto cherry

blossom tour and Yoshino Senbonzakura tour by taxi Special exhibition of Kinpusen-ji

Temple Stay at Nara Hotel, Kansai Guest House for 3 days

★**国** Please check with your local government when applying.

Departure date/April 8th (Sat), 9th (Sun) [Departure point/Tokyo Station]

Price per person (1 room for 2 people) / 179,000 yen to and from Tokyo Station

●Minimum number of participants: 20 Receptionists/minimum ●添乗員/同行

of 2 persons ●Hotels used: Day 1, Takaragaike Hotel

※阪急交通社基準最上級5ランクホテル ●食事/朝2回・昼2回 (Bento) ・ Twice in the evening

tour schedule

Day 1	10:30-11:00	Tokyo Station Tokaido Nozomi Green Cherry 車 → 京都駅
	11:00	和歌院 Blossom Spots Shrine (Cherry Blossom Spots)
		京料理「六盛」 (Dinner) The Prince 京都家分酒(泊)
	9:00	Hotel Torokko Torokko Torokko 龍岡駅
		mountain name)
Day 2 around	16:30 pm	world 蓮座・仁和寺(桜の名所) → 奈良市内
		昼食 In the hotel main dining room
		Legendary French Course Dinner)
朝	10:00	Enjoy a stroll through Nara Park until departure. From
		Hotel [Taxi] Yoshino Thousand Cherry Blossom Spots → 吉野山(昼食)
3rd afternoon		金尊 Yamadera Gokachochara Shrine (Cherry blossom viewing spot)
		大和八木駅(特急) Notoriya Station
	20:00-21:24	Nagoya Station (Green car of Tokaido Shinkansen) Tokyo Station

※到着条件、道路状況により行程が変更となる※ There is a match. It may not be.

■Course number VJ350C-583

[Application/Inquiries] Please refer to page 38 of Hankyu Travel International.

[Reception starts] January 30 (Monday) 10:00-[TEL] 0570-05-5089/10:00-17:30 (until 13:30 on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays)

Visit the famous cherry blossom spots in the ancient

capital, and stay and move in a luxurious space in a high-quality space.

[point]

1. In Yoshino Senbonzakura, take a taxi for tourist information in

2. 金尊 the mountains

Visit the special exhibition of the hidden Buddhist principal image

3. The Prince Kyoto Takaragaike with all rooms over 36m² and

Nara Hotel, which is said to be in Kansai

Accommodation

4. Take the popular resort train "Hinotori"



金尊山寺-秘仏本願 especially 龍岡

Internet reservation gift campaign

Nara Hotel



Customers who make online reservations for the above "Kyoto Cherry Blossom Tour" (Course No. VJ350C-583) using a Takashimaya card will receive a "Nara Hotel Original Coffee" as a gift!

Enjoy the coffee offered at the tea lounge at home. A blend of Supmoni from Colombia, Mocha from Ethiopia and Mandheling beans from Indonesia. It goes well with sweets that have a refreshing aftertaste and a bitter taste.



Click here to make a

●This service is for cardholders who deliver Kashima Salon. All photos are images.

No Train

Riding per say - Kyoto Cherry Blossoms

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 the 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 but 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 greenest city in the world. Here's 50 reasons why.

1 Because Tokyo is resilient

Covid-19 isn't behind us just yet, but there's one thing the pandemic has proven. It's that this city can get through any shock. In those unusually 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 through three separate states 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 hasn't been spared. But our beloved city is a stranger to sudden change. Tokyo has weat hered typhoons, fires and earthquakes, coming out the other side different, renewed, 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 2,193 km² – means Tokyo doesn't have one single mood. Each city has its own personality, which you discover as you go from the glitz of Shinjuku and the relaxed cool of Shibuya to the old-fashioned rough charm of Toshima. Once you think you've got that down pat, you realise even the neighbourhoods within each city have their own distinctive character. Tsukiji and Ginza 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, ringtones or music blasting on the train (people have their phones set to 'manner mode', aka silent mode). Most indoor public spaces are treated the same way, so cafes and bars are free of annoying phone calls and ringers that remain tight-lipped until after the credit card is settled.

4 Because Tokyo is serious about sustainability

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

goal of drawing 30 percent of the capital's power from renewable sources by 2030, upping 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 sustainability, too; the capital is full of bright green ideas like growing salad greens under the Total line train tracks (Tokyo Salad), or trendy tote bags made of discarded umbrellas (Plasticity) and street business (Atarashi Toki).

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

Miyashita 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 Nishi-Shinjuku, which recently preserved a historical bank building to house a boutique hotel (KS), a modern Japanese restaurant (Caveman) and a cocktail den (An Bar), turning it from boring and forgotten-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 Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects blend in seamlessly with lawns, gardens, fountains and water features. More impressively, when completed in 2023, the district will be powered by 100 percent renewable energy.

→ Miyashita Park, 6-20-10 Shinjuku, Shibuya (Miyashita Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)
→ Tokyo Salad, 2-24-12 Shinjuku (Tokyo Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)
→ KS, 3-5 Nishi-Shinjuku, Nishi-Shinjuku (Nishi-Shinjuku Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)
→ Caveman, 1F, 3-5 Nishi-Shinjuku, Nishi-Shinjuku (Nishi-Shinjuku Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)
→ An Bar, 1F, 3-5 Nishi-Shinjuku, Nishi-Shinjuku (Nishi-Shinjuku Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)

6 Because customer service here is next level

Service is everything. 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

THIS IS TOKYO



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 (Kabukichō) or enjoy a standing bar for a glass of sake (Shibubachi) and then peruse the ritzy Ginza six-department store.

→ Tsukiji, 4-10-10 Tsukiji, Chuo (Tsukiji Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)
→ Kabukichō, 4-1-1 Kabukichō, Chuo (Kabukichō Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)
→ Ginza Six, 6-5-10 Ginza, Chuo (Ginza Station) [View on TripAdvisor](#)

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

Where else but Tokyo would you expect to order a coffee from an robot, or have the checkout machine automatically recognise your items by shape and calculate your bill? Sure, Tokyo's space-age toilets have features that seem baffling at first, but you'll find yourself counting on that heated seat in winter. And there's no need to worry; the technology isn't designed to replace people –



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the robots that wait tables at DAWN Avatar Robot Cafe...

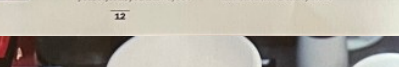
9 Because everything has a mascot Tokyo loves its cutesy characters...

10 Because Tokyo is a city of global icons Every great city has its iconic landmarks...

11 Because Tokyo is very walkable Walking is the best way to discover Tokyo's weird and wonderful neighbourhoods...

12 Because the public transport system is second to none Tokyo's train system is ridiculously efficient...

13 Because Tokyo is a city of subcultures No matter how wacky, unorthodox or specific your style is...



up gourmet meals to diners around an open kitchen...

15 Because the LGBT+ community is small but fierce It's impossible not to be aware of the local LGBT+ community...

16 Because Tokyo is becoming more accessible Accessibility can be a challenge in a densely packed city like Tokyo...

17 Because Tokyo is a city of great value The world's most expensive cities list, but that's not the full picture...

18 Because Tokyo offers great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

19 Because Tokyo is a city of great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

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21 Because Tokyo is attuned to the seasons The Japanese way of life is about being in harmony with the seasons...

22 Because Tokyo is a city of great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

23 Because Tokyo is a city of great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

24 Because Tokyo is a city of great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

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32 Because Tokyo is a city of great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

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FOOD & DRINK

22 Because Tokyo gave the world sushi Can you imagine a life without sushi? We can't...

23 Because Tokyo has the best food in the world The proof is in the Michelin guide...

24 Because Tokyo is an excellent place for a drink Tokyo is home to some of the best cocktail bars around...



THIS IS TOKYO

FOOD & DRINK

25 Because Tokyo is a city of great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

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33 Because Tokyo is a city of great value Tokyo is a city of great value for its diversity and quality...

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 Shrine's 79-hectare city-centre forest - filled with trees that are a century old - to the traditional Japanese gardens dotted around town like the Hamarikyō Yōji.

- Hamarikyō Garden, 1-2 Shinjuku-ku, Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)
→ Meiji Shrine Garden, 1-1-2 Yamanote-ku, Meiji (Meiji Station)
→ Inokashira Park, 1-1-1 Shinjuku-ku, Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)



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32 Because Tokyoites are always fashionable

Tokyo invented the boxy, oversized silhouettes 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.

- Aoyama, 1-1-1 Minami-Shinjuku-ku, Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)
→ Aoyama, 1-1-1 Minami-Shinjuku-ku, Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)
→ Aoyama, 1-1-1 Minami-Shinjuku-ku, Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)

33 Because Tokyo is an art city

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

- Mori Art Museum, 6-3-1 Aoyama-ku, Minami-Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)
→ The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, 1-10-1 Tomitacho, Bunkyo-ku (Bunkyo Station)



The distinctive Mode Gakuen Cocoon Tower in Shinjuku

or Akihabara, you can stay overnight in a one-of-a-kind room created by a local artist.

- Mori Art Museum, Mori Tower 6-3-1 Aoyama-ku, Minami-Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)
→ The National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo, 1-10-1 Tomitacho, Bunkyo-ku (Bunkyo Station)
→ Mori Art Museum, Mori Tower 6-3-1 Aoyama-ku, Minami-Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station)

34 Because Tokyo is unbelievably photogenic

Tokyo's tightly-packed urban sprawl may not appear as an obvious beauty but the metropolis is made for the camera. If you're a street photographer, it's got a different look for everyone.

- Akihabara, 1-1-1 Chiyoda-ku, Chiyoda (Chiyoda Station)
→ Akihabara, 1-1-1 Chiyoda-ku, Chiyoda (Chiyoda Station)
→ Akihabara, 1-1-1 Chiyoda-ku, Chiyoda (Chiyoda Station)

35 Because konbini

Japan's convenience stores, long known as konbini, are the best in the world. In fact, you could live out of a konbini. 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.

- Akihabara, 1-1-1 Chiyoda-ku, Chiyoda (Chiyoda Station)
→ Akihabara, 1-1-1 Chiyoda-ku, Chiyoda (Chiyoda Station)
→ Akihabara, 1-1-1 Chiyoda-ku, Chiyoda (Chiyoda Station)

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36 Because the architecture is incredible

Tokyo's architecture isn't just stunning - it's also wildly diverse. Ancient buildings like the 13-story Kannonji in Ueno Park are carefully preserved as examples of traditional Japanese architecture.

- Kannonji, 1-1-1 Ueno-ku, Ueno (Ueno Station)
→ Kannonji, 1-1-1 Ueno-ku, Ueno (Ueno Station)
→ Kannonji, 1-1-1 Ueno-ku, Ueno (Ueno Station)



Get lost in it all - the historic Kannonji in Ueno Park

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ATTRACTIONS

37 Because the city 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. Tokyo's got more flagship stores than most ports, with big-name brands like Muji and Yamaha operating one-of-a-kind multi-story city-centre stores offering an overwhelming selection. Plus, the city regularly gets special editions of everything from KitKats to cult sneakers, exclusive to Tokyo. Better yet, many stores here offer clothes in Asian fit and sizes. Away from malls, the city is also home to districts focused on certain types of shopping: the kitchen town of Kappabashi, Nippori for fabrics, Akihabara for all your manga and anime needs, and Ochanomizu for musical instruments.



→ Muji Ginza 3-3-5 Ginza, Chuo (Ginza Station) muji.com, T01magazine.com
→ Yamaha 7-9-14 Ginza, Chuo (Ginza Station) yamahashop.com

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



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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.

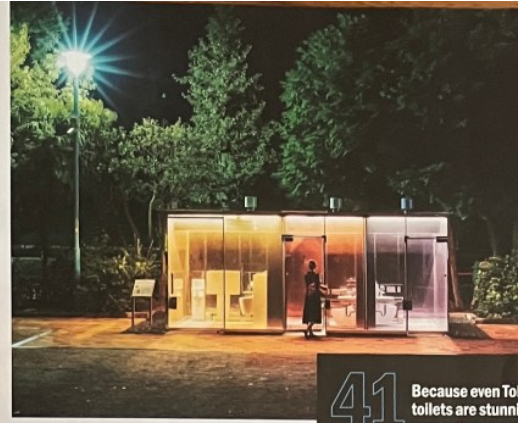
Mega home goods stores like Tokyu Hands make it especially difficult to exercise self-control. There are portable hand massagers to soothe texting fatigue, microwave cookers for everything from eggs to pasta, and canned beer which foams up like a draught pint the moment you crack it open. Sure, some things are borderline excessive, like the infamous umbrella hat, yet it's hard to feel buyer's remorse when everything you buy is so brilliantly designed.

→ Tokyo Hands 12-18 (Ginza) Ginza, Chuo (Ginza Station) T01magazine.com

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.

Tokyo is a city of nighttows, so on any given night, you'll find people flocking to karaoke parlours to sing their heart out or *spazhu* centres – indoor sports arcades – like Shibuya EST to blow off steam by bowling or throwing a few darts. Not looking for a riotous night out? There is an abundance of low-key options, including late-night paraffin parlours like Parfateria Momobukuro as well as luxe, multi-level super



41 Because even Toilets are stunning

Tokyo has the most beautiful in the world. Like so many everyday things he designed with a level of care that you just don't see elsewhere. Shibuya's new transparent public toilet cubicles that turn opaque when locked – cap 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 to use. Some look like origami and some look like they all look like works of art.

SEE MORE

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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.

If you've already checked teamLab Borderless and teamLab Planets Tokyo off your list, then make a reservation at Moon/lower Sagaya Ginza. This spectacular private dining room projects ever-changing digital art on the table and into the surrounding space as you eat. For teamLab art that you can see for free, check out the outdoor digital monolith at teamLab Planets as well as a stunning mural at Tokyo Skytree, an 11m-tall waterfall at Ginza Six, and a continuously changing floral display inside Kite shopping complex.



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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 inky black 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 1950s, to more modern ones like Sumida's Koganeyu (pictured below), which boasts a

47 Because it's got a lively music scene
Forget streaming – 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 R.Y.G., known for its extensive vinyl and CD collection, or a hole-in-the-wall livehouse like Ruby Room, which champions local talents in live acts. 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.

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 no music studying? Head to Yushima Tenmangu near Ueno Park. At Onari 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 Kamii Myoujin Shrine.

49 Because in Tokyo you can still see one of the world's oldest performing arts
Through 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 performance at the on-site Kabukiza Gallery (¥600 entry).

50 Because Tokyo loves geeks
There's no shame in being part of a fandom in Tokyo – in fact, it's encouraged. White areas like Akihabara and Nakano Broadway are popular among otaku for their shops dedicated to manga and anime franchises. Fan culture has extended far beyond shops selling collectibles for self-proclaimed geeks. Also, otaku culture isn't just about fictional characters – venues like Toho Museum are dedicated to trains, while arcade bars like Tokyo Video Gamers cater to video game fans.

One more thing...
BECAUSE TOKYO HAS EVERYTHING
Hypermodern cities with lush nature stretching from the forested mountains to the sea. Elegant heritage temples co-exist alongside mega architecture. Modern lifestyles that don't sacrifice the traditional way of life. Exceptional infrastructure that's years ahead of its peers. World-class restaurants and bars complementing independent local joints. It's a highly efficient metropolis where everything just works. Add to that, the nicest people around. Tokyo has everything and there's nothing quite like it. What more could you want?

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23

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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 Japaneseque 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: <https://mesubim.com/?s=skytree>

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



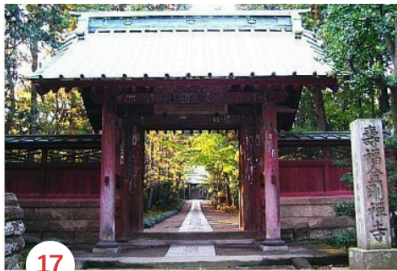
16

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



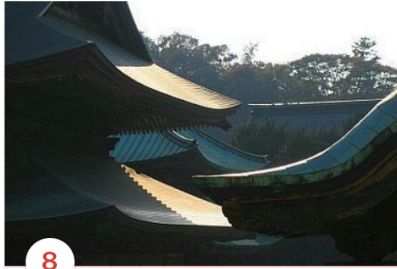
7

Engakuji Temple ●



Second most important Zen temple.

★ 3.9 / 5 🚶 971



8

Kenchoji Temple ●



Kamakura's most important Zen temple.

★ 3.8 / 5 🚶 750



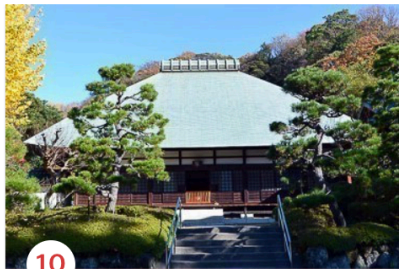
9

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



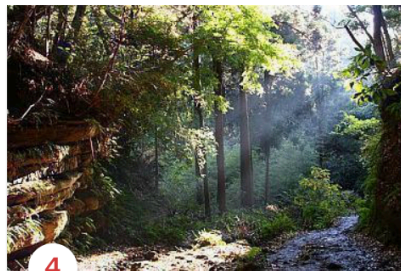
3

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/>

Some travellers consider 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.

You have Naoshima a place for those seeking contemporary art and the architecture of Ando, all in a unique setting. While we have never been, we have helped numerous people to reserve there, and it can be a hassle as it is often full.

This is a basic level of information for planning a trip to Japan and for most travellers, 7/10 days is more than sufficient to see Tokyo, Kyoto, etc.

In planning a trip, you need to decide your places and priorities, and I recommend to travellers to determine what they wish to accomplish before planning their trip. This is key to the success of travel here, and cramming too much in can make it very tiring.

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

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.

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

I always strongly recommend for those who have the intention to travel comfortably to organise in advance of your trip services such as;

<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.hiragiya.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, Sakyou-ku, 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 by writing us:

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](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 gyū (cow) from Matsuzaka this is worthy of the price.

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

ITALIAN

We had an ex-chef who owns a small light bright restaurant in the Gion (Tadato) 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: I can't say it's our favourite but it's very popular for Japanese- 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

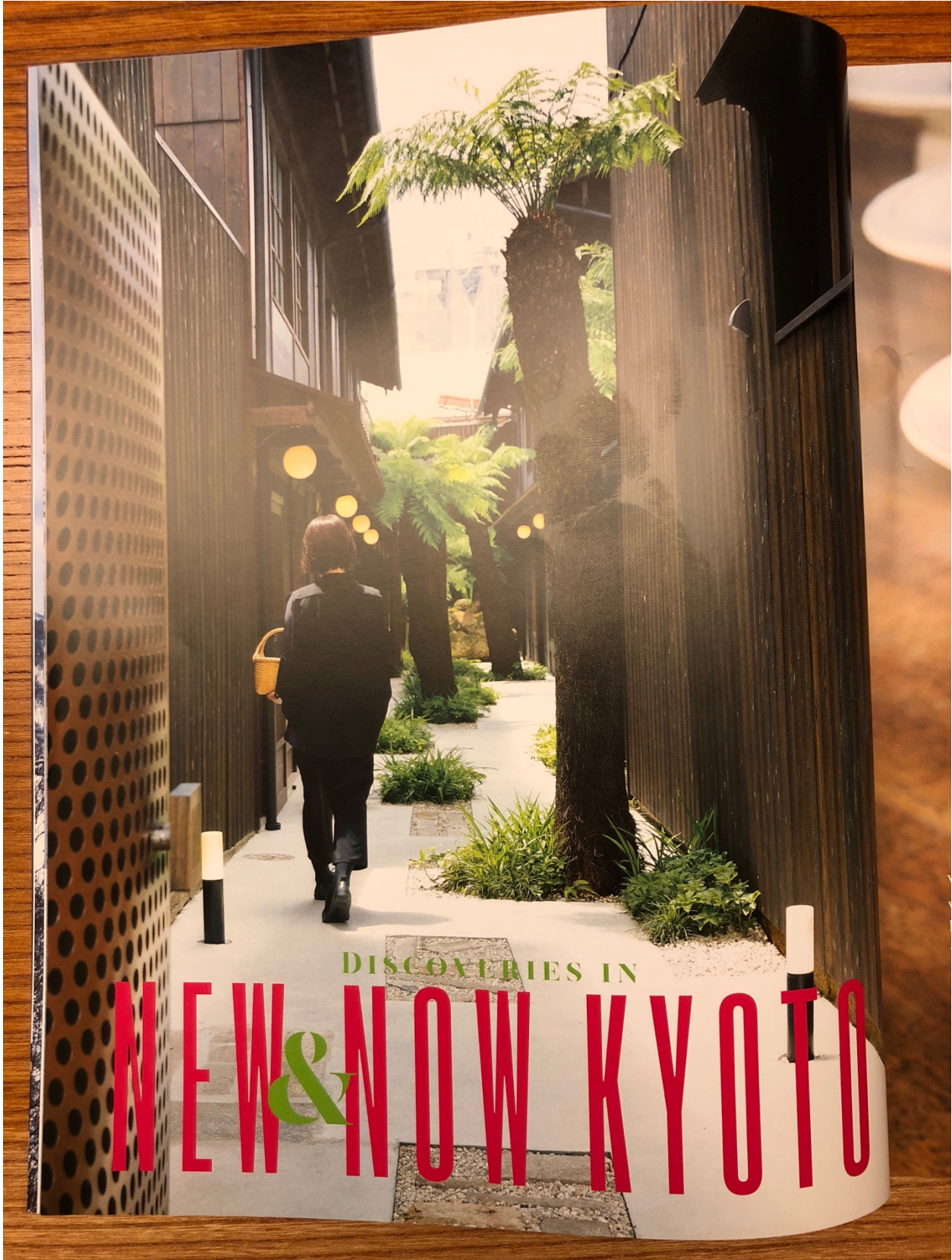


Opposite page: The gate swings open to a charming alleyway at Shiki Juraku, a collection of former *machiya* townhouses converted to a chic hotel. Greenery selected by plant hunter Seijun Nishihata beckons you deeper into the harmony created by traditional Japanese structures (see more on pages 14–15).

This page: *Kazari-kan* are decorated bean-jelly sweets from Umezono Sabo (page 27). As dainty as peints *fouris*, 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 **1**
 165 Konoe-cho, Aburanokoji-dori Shimodachiuri-agaru,
 Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto
 Tel. 075-417-0210 shikijuraku.com/en
 From ¥37,000 per person with breakfast, including tax and service charge





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 Heijō-kyō 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-
agaru, 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 façade 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.

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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, Higashinotomidori 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.kyotoyaoichihonkan.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
omezono-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, Higashiyama-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 KIJÉ's #kyotokyoto campaign!

For two months from September 1 to October 31, we will post a daily Kyoto topic to the KIJÉ Facebook @edit.tokyo.japan.jp and KIJÉ 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

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MAGICAL MOMENTS

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

2017 KYOTO MAGAZINE NOVEMBER - *LOOKING BACK*

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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- ・硬貨を強く押し込んで下さい。
- ・約 秒間見えます。
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