

Nara

Nara, a city even older than Kyoto, has the distinction of being the first permanent capital of Japan. Previously, the capital had moved to the palace of whichever emperor was reigning.

But from 710 to 784 — with another 10 years at nearby Nagaokakyo — Nara was a large metropolis of palaces, temples, shrines and dwellings. The arts, crafts and industry were encouraged and flourished to an exceptional degree, and the awesome results can still be seen today. The Nara period also realized the firm establishment of Buddhism alongside the indigenous Shinto religion, to the cultural enrichment of both.

At present, Nara has the unique honor of preserving the world's oldest wooden structure, at Horyuji Temple, and also the world's largest, at the great Todaiji Temple. Separated from Kyoto by hills running north to west, the venerable city basks comfortably in a pleasant state of mellow relaxation. Graceful tame deer, regarded as divine messengers, roam peacefully about Nara Park and in the precincts of shrines and temples.

Getting There

From Kansai International Airport:

By JR train: 35 min. by Limited Express “Haruka” to Tennoji Station and 35 min. by a rapid train to JR Nara Station.

By other train: 35 min. by Nankai Limited Express “Rapiit” to Namba Station and 35 min. by Kintetsu rapid express train to Kintetsu-Nara Station.

From Kyoto: 45 min. by JR rapid train to JR Nara Station or 45 min. by Kintetsu express train to Kintetsu-Nara Station.

Sightseeing

Nara is that rarity in the world, an ancient city of wooden monuments that, in spite of the vicissitudes of time, has managed to retain an impressive number of historical and artistic treasures. Although several days at least are necessary to see Nara's temples, shrines and art works properly, judicious planning can lead to a good overall view in a day or two of the most celebrated sites as they are clustered in specific areas.

Sightseeing Bus Tour

From Kyoto: Afternoon tour with an English-speaking guide is operated to visit Todaiji Temple, Kasuga Shrine and Nara Park from major hotels in Kyoto.

JTB Sunrise Tours: <https://www.japanican.com/en/>

Japan Holiday Tours: <https://www.nbcw.co.jp/jht>
In Nara: Both one-day and half-day tours with English guide tapes are operated from JR Nara Station or Kintetsu-Nara Station.

Nara Kotsu Bus: Tel 0742-22-5263

<https://www.narakotsu.co.jp/language/en>

AROUND NARA PARK

Nara Park (奈良公園) is a finely wooded area more popularly called Deer Park for its over 1,000 gentle deer wandering about. A favorite pastime is to feed them special biscuits obtainable at the park.

Kofukuji Temple (興福寺) was founded in 710 as the tutelary temple of the powerful Fujiwara family. Although much of the temple was destroyed in the 18th and 19th centuries, a number of buildings and Buddhist images designated National Treasures have survived to the present day. These include the five-storied pagoda, one of the most famous scenic sights of the ancient capital city of Nara.

Nara National Museum (奈良国立博物館) houses a remarkable collection of Buddhist art. Besides items owned by the museum itself are important objects entrusted to the museum for safekeeping by various temples and shrines throughout the country, and in particular those in the Kansai area. Open 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed on Mon. and Jan. 1.

Todaiji Temple (東大寺) is one of the greatest attractions in Japan. Founded in the mid-8th century, it has remained one of the most important temples in the land to this day. The colossal statue of Buddha was last repaired in 1692, and its wooden hall — the largest copper Buddha statue in the world — was rebuilt in 1709 one-third smaller than the original.

Nara-machi (奈良町) the area located south of Sarusawanike Pond and west of Gangoji Temple, preserves aesthetic Japanese structures such as **Imanishike Shoin Residence** (今西家書院) dating back to the 16th to 18th centuries. This area is ideal for exploring the aesthetic of traditional Japanese architecture and its historical background; ink and sake merchants' houses; several small museums portraying daily life and traditional crafts; and Nara's history of commercial trade with other Asian countries.

Kasuga Taisha Shrine (春日大社) is located in the east of Nara Park. Founded in 768, it is actually four shrines consecrated to different Shinto deities. Among the notable features are the vermilion color which creates a striking contrast to the surrounding verdant groves, the graceful deer that return to their pen at the call of a trumpet in the evening, and the 3,000 stone and hanging bronze lanterns donated from the 11th century on. Although repeatedly rebuilt 60 times (approximately every 20 years), it has always been based on the original plans, making it an outstanding example of mid-8th century Japanese architecture.

Shin-Yakushiji Temple (新薬師寺), southwest of Kasuga Taisha Shrine, was founded in 747 by Empress Komyo, and the main hall dates from that time. It is chiefly famous for the beautiful 9th century carving of Yakushi-Nyorai on a circular base surrounded by Twelve Divine Generals' skillfully worked in clay.

NISHINOKYO AREA

Heijo Palace Site (平城宮跡), the ancient capital of Japan in the 8th century, used to measure 1.3 km (0.8 mile) from east to west and 0.6 mile from north to south. Its main building, the “Daigokuden” where national ceremonies for welcoming foreign delegates were held was reconstructed in time to celebrate the 1300th anniversary of the Heijo-kyo Capital in 2010.

Toshodajji Temple (唐招提寺), one of the largest and best proportioned temples of its period remaining, was founded in 759 by the illustrious Ganjin, a blind priest from China who arrived in Japan after many tribulations. Of particular note are the gilded dry-lacquer statues of Buddha Vairocana and the thousand-armed Kannon, both National Treasures. The Lecture Hall, originally the Assemblage Hall of the Nara Court, is a fine example of Nara period architecture. The Miroku Bosatsu statue enshrined inside is an Important Cultural Property.

Yakushiji Temple (薬師寺), near Toshodajji Temple, is another symbol of Nara. Founded in 697, the renowned 7-8th century Yakushi-triad in the main hall has rare Hellenic details on the base. The exquisite three-storied East Pagoda built in 730 gives an illusion of being six-storied, and is thought by many to be the most graceful structure in Japan. The east pagoda is under repair and will open to the public in 2020.

World Cultural Heritage: There are following historical properties (marked [WH] in the Index) in Nara.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Todaiji Temple • Kasuga Taisha Shrine • Gangoji Temple • Toshodajji Temple • Kofukuji Temple • Mt. Kasuga 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yakushiji Temple • Heijo Palace Site <p>Other [WHs] outside the following map area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horyuji Temple (Ikarugacho) • Hokiji Temple (Ikarugacho)



Kasuga Taisha Shrine

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HORYUJI TEMPLE AREA

Horyuji Temple (法隆寺) is the most precious repository in Japan from myriad points of view: historically, architecturally, sculpturally and pictorially. Its 45 buildings, from the 7th to 17th centuries, include some of the world's oldest wooden structures — along with the very oldest, the Five-Storied Pagoda. Founded in 607 by Prince Shotoku, regent for Emperor Suiko, promulgator of Buddhism and sponsor of the ‘Seventeen-Article Constitution’, the temple is a wonder well worth visiting.

Chuguji Temple (中宮寺), near Horyuji's East Temple, is a convent noted for its art objects, chief among them are a fragment of the oldest embroidery in Japan and the beautiful, exceptionally serene 7th century wooden statue of Miroku-bosatsu.

Yamato Bunkakan Museum (大和文華館), in its natural setting, was designed to synthesize a modern museum with traditional Japanese architectural concepts. Many treasures of international importance from throughout East Asia are on display. Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Mon.

Cultural Experience

Ganko-Ittetsu Nagaya (Tenement House) (がんこ一徹長屋), near Yakushiji Temple, features 6 craftsmen exceptionally skilled in such traditional crafts as wood carving, lacquering and bamboo tea whisk making. The Sumi Information Center exhibits the history, artwork and materials of sumi, or calligraphy ink, and permits you to make your own ink sticks. Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Mon, Aug. 1 to 31 and Dec. 29 to Jan. 5.



Nara Park

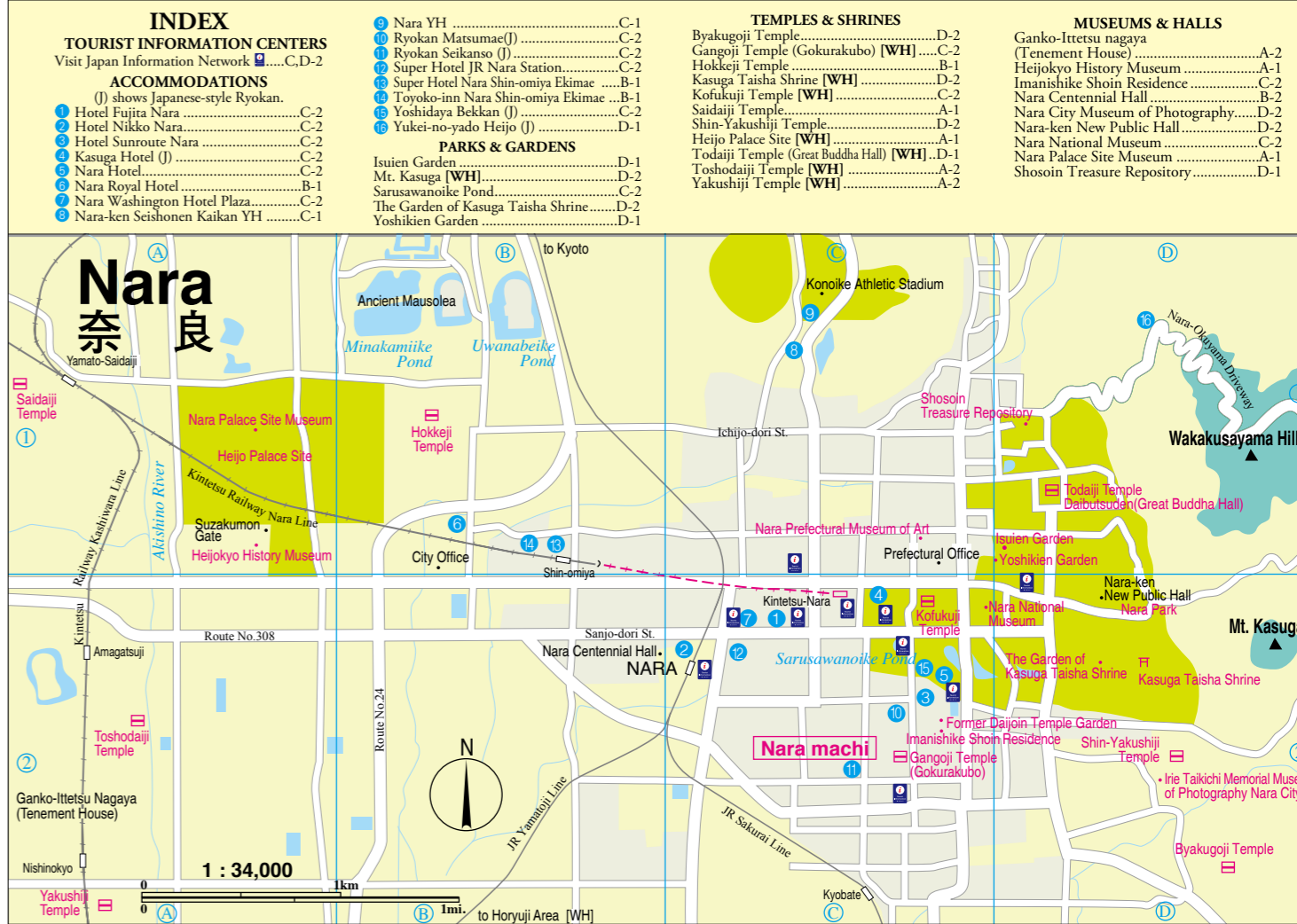
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Yakushiji Temple



Ashura, Kofukuji Temple



Free Travel Information and Language Assistance

Tourist Information Center (TIC) of Japan National Tourism Organization is your helping hand while in Japan. Its services range from providing travel information and free literature on Japan to offering suggestions on tour itineraries.

Shin-Tokyo Building 1F, 3-3-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0005 Tel. 03-3201-3331
Open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Closed: Jan.1)



Tourist Information Centers (Narita International Airport):

Terminal 1:
Arrival F1, Passenger Terminal 1 Bldg.
Narita International Airport, Chiba 282-0004
Tel. 0476-38-3382
Open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day year-round

Terminal 2:
Arrival F1, Passenger Terminal 2 Bldg.
Narita International Airport, Chiba 282-0004
Tel. 0476-34-5877
Open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day year-round

JNTO Japan National Tourism Organization
日本政府観光局
<https://www.jnto.go.jp>

	Japan Official Travel App	
Overseas Offices		
Seoul:	#202, Hotel President 2F Euljiro 16, Jung-gu, Seoul, Korea Tel: 02-777-8601	
Beijing:	Beying Fortune Bldg., Suite 410.3, Dong San Huan Bei Lu Chaoyang District, Beijing 100004, China Tel: 021-5466-2828	
Shanghai:	Room 2111, Shanghai International Trade Centre, 2201, West Yan An Road, Shanghai 200336, China Tel: 2968-5686	
Hong Kong:	Unit 807-809, 8/F, Prosperity Millennium Plaza, 683 King's Road, North Point, Hong Kong Tel: 21-252-0742	
Jakarta:	61-62 Jakarta Selatan 12190, Indonesia Tel: 011-4905-7650	
Delhi:	Unit No.203, 2nd Floor, East Wing, World Mark 1, Asset- 11, Aerocity, New Delhi-110037 Tel: 022-623-8205	
Singapore:	16 Raffles Quay, #15-09, Hong Leong Building, Singapore 048691 Tel: 02-261-3525	
Bangkok:	10th Floor Unit 1016, Serm-Mit Tower, 159 Sukhumvit 21St, Bangkok 10110, Thailand Tel: 02-328-2280	
Manila:	9F, Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, 1226 Philippines Tel: 024-3719-9590	
Hanoi:	Unit 4/09 on the 4th Floor, CornerStone Building, 16 Phan Chu Trinh Street, Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi, Vietnam Tel: 03-2712-4770	
Kuala Lumpur:	1st Floor, Chulan Tower, 3 Jalan Conlay, 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Tel: 02-9279-2177	
Sydney:	Suite 1, Level 4, 56 Clarence Street, Sydney NSW 2000, Australia Tel: 212-757-5640	
New York:	Suite 448, New York, NY 10165, U.S.A. Tel: 213-623-1952	
Los Angeles:	707 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 4325, Los Angeles, CA 90017, U.S.A. Tel: 416-366-7140	
Toronto:	481 University Avenue, Suite 711, Toronto, M5G 2E9, Canada Tel: 06-9444-3407	
Rome:	3rd Floor, Via Barberini 95, 00187 Rome, Italy Tel: 020-7398-5670	
London:	3rd Floor, 32 Queenway, London, W2 3RX, U.K. Tel: 01-477-6070	
Madrid:	Carrera de San Jeronimo 15 - 3C, Madrid, 28014 Spain Tel: 069-20353	
Frankfurt:	Kaisersstrasse 11, 60311 Frankfurt am Main, Germany Tel: 011-42-96-20-29	
Paris:	4, rue de Valenciennes 75001 Paris, France Tel: 495-995-0120	
Moscow:	3rd Floor, 5, Bryanskaya Street, Moscow, Russia	

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Japan. Endless Discovery.

KYOTO NARA



京都
奈良

Kyoto

Ancient Kyoto was the imperial capital of Japan for over a thousand years. Enfolded by scenic hills to the north, west and east, which the founding Emperor Kammu described as a 'natural fortress', the city reigned from 794 to 1868 as the cultural and artistic center of the nation — a position it still holds today — as well as the political nucleus.

The more than 1,600 Buddhist temples and 300 Shinto shrines attest to its importance as a religious focal point, while the impressive Imperial Palace and two jewel-like Imperial Villas set in their legendary gardens are reminiscent of the aesthetic splendor of the city's once-pivotal role.

But Kyoto, originally called Heiankyo — ‘Capital of Peace’ — doesn't live only in the past. The seventh largest city in Japan with a population of 1.4 million, it has also kept pace with the modern world. Thriving electric, machinery and chemical plants are numerous. The comprehensive Kyoto International Conference Center located in the northeastern part of the city is a marvel of state-of-the-art technology. Combined with the remarkable array of other superb attractions, it has made Kyoto a world-class convention destination. Some of the most prestigious universities in the country are also situated here, forming a major educational enclave.

However, the vast wealth of traditional art, architecture and crafts that have influenced architects and artists from around the globe have been carefully and lovingly preserved. So whether viewing the dazzling Golden Pavilion mirrored in its smooth, reflecting pond, absorbing a glittering, time-honored festival, or simply wandering through picturesque narrow streets redolent of antiquity, visitors find that Kyoto, a city unlike any other, can both stimulate — and satisfy — the soul.



Ryoanji Temple



Sagano

Getting There

From Kansai International Airport: 75 min. by JR Limited Express “Haruka” or 85min. by Limousine bus to JR Kyoto Station.

From Narita International Airport:

By rail: 1 hr. by Narita Express to Tokyo and 2 hrs. 20 min. by Shinkansen “Nozomi” or 2 hrs. 40min. by Shinkansen “Hikari” to JR Kyoto Station.

By air: 1 hr. to Osaka Itami Airport and 1 hr. by Limousine bus to JR Kyoto Station.

From Central Japan International Airport: 30 min. to Meitetsu Nagoya Station by Meitetsu Limited Express and 40 min. by Shinkansen “Nozomi” to Kyoto Station.

Getting Around

An extensive bus and subway network covers the city. Fares start from ¥230 for buses and from ¥210 for subways, with both being determined by the distance traveled. Taxis are plentiful, with fares starting from around ¥450 for the first 1.2 km.

For frequent users, One-day (¥900) and Two-day Passes (¥1,700) are available for both buses and subways. Also handy for the day tripper is the Kyoto City Bus & Kyoto Bus One-Day Pass (¥600).

For more information:
https://kyoto.travel/en/traveller_kit/tools_service.

Accommodations

Kyoto's accommodations range from Luxury and First class Westernstyle (¥25,000 to ¥90,000) to business-style (¥10,000 to ¥20,000) hotels to Ryokan, or Japanese inns, which encompass the discreetly deluxe (¥30,000 to ¥90,000) to the modest (¥10,000 to ¥20,000). The traditional inns are an excellent way to experience traditional Japanese lifestyle first-hand. All accommodation is clean, safe and comfortable.

Useful Website

- ◆ Discover your own Kyoto (Run by Kyoto Tourism)
<https://www.kyototourism.org/en/>
- Kyoto City Official Travel Guide (Run by Kyoto City)
<https://kyoto.travel/en>



An authentic Japanese Ryokan (Hiragiya)



Ninen-zaka Slope

Nishiki Market

ANNUAL EVENTS

Kyoto

April: ‘Miyako Odori’ or Cherry Blossom Dance.
<http://miyako-odori.jp/english/>
May 1st - 24th: ‘Kamogawa Odori’ dance at the Pontocho Kaburenjo Theater.
May 15th: ‘Aoi Matsuri’ or Hollyhock Festival of Kamigamo & Shimogamo Shrines.
May, 3rd Sunday: ‘Mifune Matsuri’ or Boat Festival on the Oi River, Arashiyama.
June 1st & 2nd: ‘Takigi Noh’ or open-air traditional ‘Noh’ play performance at the Heian Shrine.
July 17th & 24th: Grand Parade of ‘Gion Matsuri’.
August 16th: ‘Daimonji’ Bonfire.
October 22nd: ‘Jidai Matsuri’ or Festival of Ages.
December 31st: ‘Okera Mairi’ of the Yasaka Shrine.

NARA

January, 4th Saturday of: Grass-Burning Ceremony on Wakakusayama Hill.
February 3rd and August 14th & 15th: ‘Mantoro’ or Lantern Festival of the Kasuga Taisha Shrine.
March 1st - 14th: ‘Shuni-e’ (‘Omizutori’ or Water-Drawing Ceremony) of the Todaiji Temple Nigatsudo.
March 25th - 31st: ‘Hana-eshiki’ or Flower-Offering Ceremony of the Yakushiji Temple.
May 3rd Friday and Saturday: ‘Takigi Noh’ or open-air traditional ‘Noh’ play performance at the Kofukuji Temple.
May 19th: ‘Uchiwamaki’ or Fan-Throwing Festival of the Toshodajji Temple.
December 15th - 18th: ‘On-matsuri’ Festival of the Kasuga Shrine.

Guided Tours

Four companies offer one-day, half-day, and cultural experience tours with English-speaking guides.

JTB Sunrise Tours: <https://www.japanican.com/en/>

Japan Holiday Tours: <https://www.nbcw.co.jp/jht/>



Gion Festival

Cultural Experience

Nishijin Textile Center (西陣織会館), at Horikawa-dori Imadegawa, is named after the district that was and still is famous for weaving the superb Nishijin silk. Nishijin products are exhibited and Kimono shows are held. Open daily 10 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (-5:00 p.m. from November to February). Closed Dec. 29 to Jan. 3.

Gion Corner (ギオンコーナー) provides an interesting selection of various traditional arts — from the tea ceremony to ancient court music. Every evening 6:00 and 7:00 (only Fri., Sat., Sun. and national holidays in Dec.-Mid.Mar.). Tickets, ¥3,150, available at hotels, travel agencies and the Gion Corner itself. Closed July 16, Aug. 16 and Dec. 29 to Jan. 3.

Fureai-kan (Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts) (ふれあい館) in Miyako Messe, near Heian-jingu Shrine, is not to be missed. This museum not only exhibits various handicrafts made of silk, bamboo, lacquerware, paper and ceramic, but also introduces the visitor to the delicate workmanship of traditional crafts through videotapes and the chance to experience Yuzen dying firsthand. Open daily 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed for 2 days in Late Aug. Dec. 29 to Jan. 3.

Sightseeing

Kyoto is a sightseer's paradise. It is virtually a living museum of Japan's great artistic heritage. To explore it on foot, at least in each general area, is an intriguing and rewarding experience that creates unforgettable memories. Further, sightseeing is facilitated by the original basic grid pattern in which the city was first laid out.

Although the most famous temples and shrines are listed, you are bound to come across many others that are of equal architectural and historical interest.

There are tours of varying lengths of time in Kyoto itself and from Osaka or Tokyo with English speaking guides. But whichever way you choose to view the treasures of Kyoto, you will never see enough — and never be disappointed.



Fushimi Inari Taisha Shrine

Kiyomizu-dera Temple

Walking Tour Routes

Some of the most pleasant experiences in Kyoto are reserved for those who have the time to meander around certain parts of the city. Below are a few recommended walking routes.

A Higashiyama Area

Kiyomizudera Temple — Sannen-zaka Slope — Maruyama Park — Chion-in Temple — Shoren-in Temple — Heian-jingu Shrine — about 50 min. Take a City Bus No. 100 from Bus Terminal D1 or City Bus No.206 from Bus Terminal D2 at Kyoto Station and get off at Kiyomizu-michi bus stop. The winding, stone-paved approach up to Kiyomizu-dera Temple is flanked by innumerable curio and souvenir shops. On returning from the temple, halfway down 'Teapot Lane' on the right, is Sannen-zaka which — dotted with cherry blossoms in the spring and brilliant autumn maple leaves in the fall — leads past an intriguing mixture of shops, shrines, temples,old houses and pottery workshops to beautifully landscaped Maruyama Park. A short distance across from the park is Yasaka-jinja Shrine, home to the Gion Festival. Further along the main route on the way to Heian-jingu Shrine are the famous Chion-in and Shoren-in Temples and a cluster of museums.

B Along The Old Canal

Ginkakuji Temple — The Path of Philosophy — Eikando Temple — Nanzenji Temple; about 50 min.Take a City Bus No.100 from Bus Terminal at Kyoto Station and get off Ginkakuji-mae, or Bus No.17 or 5 from A2 or A1 at Kyoto Station and get off at Ginkakuji-michi stop. This is a remarkably pleasant, leisurely stroll along the tree-lined, trafficfree old Sosui Canal, better known as the 'Path of Philosophy'. Meditators of all ages have long preferred this contemplative, peaceful way down to Nanzenji Temple.

C Arashiyama Area

Arashiyama bus stop — Shakado Temple — Gioiji Temple — Jojakkuji Temple — Kameyama Park — Tenryuji Temple; about 1½ hrs. Take a Kyoto Bus No.73 from Bus Terminal C6 or City Bus No.28 from D3 at Kyoto Station and get off at Arashiyama or take JR Sagano Line to Saga-Arashiyama Sta. Pine-clad hills, plenty of cherry blossoms in spring, blazing maple leaves in autumn and a scattering of temples evoke the mood of the aristocratic Kyoto of yore in this western part of the city.

D Ohara Area

Ohara bus stop — Sanzen-in Temple — Jakko-in Temple; about 2 hrs. A one hour ride on a Kyoto Bus No. 17 from Bus Terminal C3 at Kyoto Station takes you to Ohara bus stop, and Ohara, just northeast of the city, is a recommended destination for a touch of rural tranquility. At least half a day should be allowed for a comfortable walking tour. Jakko-in Temple is a gem and hill-top Sanzen-in Temple is impressive. Views of the maple leaves in mid-November are justly celebrated.

CENTRAL KYOTO

Higashi-Honganji Temple (東本願寺) is the largest wood-en building in Kyoto. Founded by the first Tokugawa shogun in 1602, the present buildings date from 1895.

Nishi-Honganji Temple (西本願寺), called one of the finest examples of Buddhist architecture in Kyoto, was founded in 1272 in Higashiyama but moved to its present site in 1591. Along with Higashi-Hongan-ji, it is the fountainhead for Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism, one of the largest sects in the country.
Shokokuji Temple (相国寺) of the Gozan (Five Great Zen temples of Kyoto) was founded in 1392, and was once a famous painting academy. Jotenkaku Museum is located within its precincts.

The Museum of Kyoto (京都文化博物館) is the most recent and a highly significant addition to the many attractions of Kyoto. A large building of coherent displays, it depicts and defines the traditions of Kyoto as they were to what they are, and continue to be, today. Incorporating every spectrum of society and as many facets of it as possible, this museum examines an aspect of Kyoto's history not fully covered until now. Open 10:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. (Special Exhibition Hall 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.). Closed Mon. and Dec. 28 to Jan. 3.

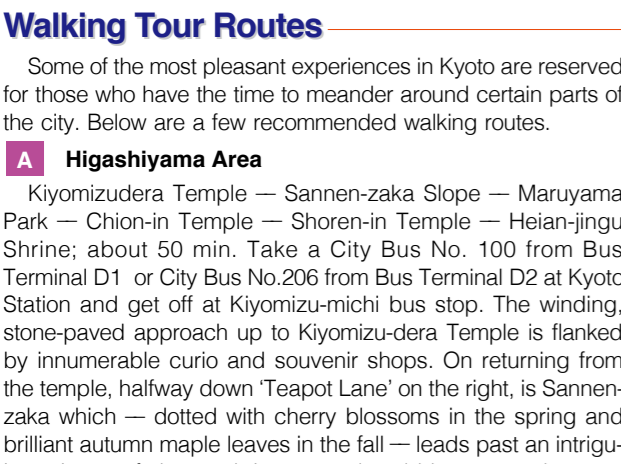
Nijo-jo Castle (二条城) was built by the Tokugawa shogun in 1603. Gorgeous details and a specially-constructed 'nightingale' floor to warn of approaching visitors. Open 8:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Tue. in July, Aug., Dec. & Jan. and Dec. 26 to Jan. 3.

Kyoto Imperial Palace (京都御所) is noted for its striking simplicity. The present site was chosen in 1790, and the present palace was completed in 1855, after the former one was destroyed by fire. The style reflects the original style as closely as possible. Check for visiting conditions with the Imperial Household Agency, open daily except Mon. (See Note for Imperial Palace and Villa Visitors.)

Shimogamo-jinja Shrine (下鴨神社), in the dense Tadasuno-Mori Forest, is well-known for its hollyhock Aoi Matsuri (Festival) and is located near the confluence of the Kamo and Takano Rivers.

Kitano-Tenmangu Shrine (北野天満宮), southwest of Daitoku-ji Temple, was founded in 947 to honor the wronged 9th century scholar Michizane Sugawara. Among the shrine's treasures are two sets of scrolls in the Treasure Museum, considered the best of their kind, illustrating the history of the shrine. An outdoor flea market is held monthly on the 25th.

World Cultural Heritage: Seventeen of Kyoto's historical properties are registered on the World Heritage list, as follows (also marked [WH] in the Index).
Nijo-jo Catle, Shimogamo-jinja Shrine, Kiyomizu-dera Temple, Toji Temple, Heizan Enryakuji Temple, Daigoji Temple, Ninnaji Temple, Byodo-in Temple, Ujigami-jinja Shrine, Kozanji Temple, Saihoji Temple (Koke-dera), Tenryuji Temple, Kinkakuji Temple, Ginkakuji Temple, Ryoanji Temple, Nishi-Honganji Temple.



EASTERN KYOTO (Higashiyama)

Kiyomizu-dera Temple (清水寺), perched daringly on a steep hillside, is possibly the most beloved temple in the nation. Founded in 798, its present buildings date mostly from 1633. It is entered from 'Teapot Lane', so-called because of the numerous shops lining the approach that sell Kiyomizu ceramics. Open 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Kyoto National Museum (京都国立博物館) under the aegis of the Imperial Household Agency, was erected in 1897. More than 10,000 choice art works deposited by temples, shrines and individuals are housed in this invaluable collection. Open 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Mon. and year-end holiday.

Kawai Kanjiro's House (河井寛次郎記念館) presents an excellent opportunity both to visit a traditional Japanese house and to view pottery created by the late, world-famous Kawai Kanjiro (1890-1966). Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Closed Mon., Mid. Aug., Late Dec. and Early Jan.

Maruyama Park (円山公園), just a little to the east of Yasaka-jinja Shrine, is known for its beautifully landscaped garden and its magnificent cherry blossoms in spring.

Yasaka-jinja Shrine (八坂神社), affectionately called 'Gion-san' by the throngs of regular devotees, features one of the tallest Torii gates in Japan, and an unusual main hall built in the residential 'Gion-zukuri' style (1654).

Heian-jingu Shrine (平安神宮) constructed in 1895 to commemorate the 1,100th anniversary of the founding of Kyoto, this is a scaled-down replica of the first Imperial Palace in Kyoto, which was built by and dedicated to Emperor Kammu in 794. The rear garden is outstanding.

Honen-in Temple (法然院), known for its quiet surroundings and attractive garden, is located at the foot of Mt. Nyoigatake. It is open to the public only in spring and autumn.

Chion-in Temple (知恩院), at the north end of Maruyama Park, is one of the largest and most famous temples in the nation. Headquarters of the important Jodo sect, it was founded in 1234. The present buildings date mainly from 1619 to 1641.

Shoren-in Temple (普蓮院), north of Chion-in, was long the residence of the head abbots of the Tendai sect, who were invariably imperial princes. Founded in 1144, the modern-day structures were erected in 1895. The garden, considered one of the finest in Kyoto, was designed by the masters Soami and Enshu.

Nanzenji Temple (南禅寺), originally a detached palace of Emperor Kameyama in the 13th century, became the headquarters of the great Rinzaï sect in 1293. In spite of fires, an eclectic collection of notable structures remain.

Ginkakuji Temple (銀閣寺), or Silver Pavilion, never was covered with silver as was intended. The Ashikaga-era shogun who had it erected in 1489 died before this could be realized. However, the exquisite pavilion and its accompanying unequalled garden are perennial favorites with visitors.

NORTHERN KYOTO

Shisendo Temple (詩仙堂) was originally the private retreat of Jozan Ishikawa, a renowned Edo period poet and scholar. A delicate, diminutive structure, it flows naturally into an exquisite, microscopic garden, a masterpiece of landscaped art.

Daitoku-ji Temple (大徳寺) Among the temples of the Rinzaï sect of Buddhism, Daitoku-ji is the biggest. The giant compound contains a total of 24 buildings, each of which houses a large number of cultural properties. Built in the 14th century, this temple was destroyed by fire during a time of internal strife, but was subsequently restored by the famous priest Ikkyu.

WESTERN KYOTO

Kinkakuji Temple (金閣寺), or Golden Pavilion, is an exact replica of the 15th century structure that was burned down in 1950. Rebuilt in 1955, it still exudes an impression of timelessness.

Ryoanji Temple (龍安寺), justly famous for its exquisite garden of raked sand and 15 judiciously placed rocks. Ideal for contemplation, with its Zen influence.

Koryuji Temple (広隆寺), south of Movie Land, houses, amongst various priceless Buddhist statues, the famed Miroku-bosatu (early 7th century) with its enigmatic smile. It was founded in 622 for the repose of Prince Shotoku's soul. The Lecture Hall is the second oldest building in Kyoto.

Toei Kyoto Studio Park (東映太秦映画村) consists of an outdoor set of a feudal age town still in use for period movies. Actors in costume ready for shooting heighten the historical mood. Miniature castles, houses and shops for filming in the Film Art Hall on the grounds are displayed along with a brief history of Japan's film industry. Open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Mar. to Nov.), 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Dec. to Feb.)

Tenryuji Temple (天龍寺) ranks foremost among the Five Great Zen temples in Kyoto. Although the handsome buildings are mostly late 19th century, the spacious garden from the Muromachi period (14th to 16th centuries) is exceptional.

SOUTHERN KYOTO

Toji Temple (東寺) was founded in 796. Repeated fires failed to claim a variety of treasured art objects. The five-storied pagoda, rebuilt in 1644, is the tallest wooden building in Japan (184 ft.). Monthly flea market on the 21st.

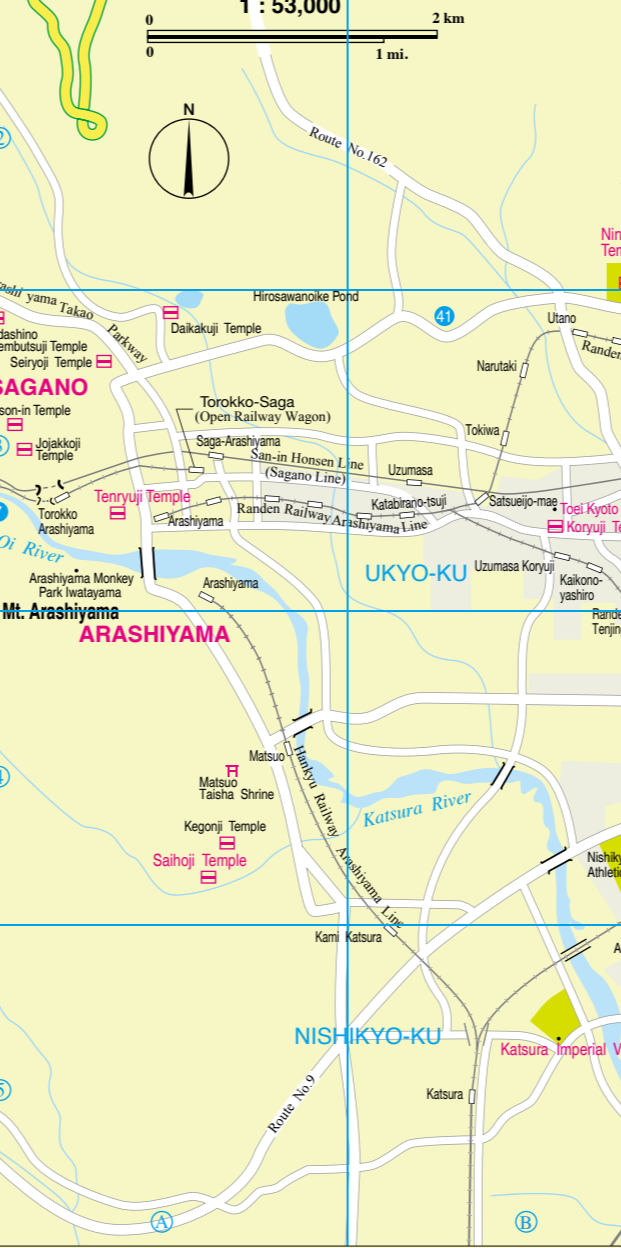
Tofukuji Temple (東福寺) includes rare examples of early Zen architecture. Founded in the mid-13th century, its many



Shisendo Temple

Kyoto 京都

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gardens, ranging from one of cultivated moss to one of skillfully placed stones and raked sand have always been much admired.

SIDE TRIPS

Katsura Imperial Villa (桂離宮) is another jewel worth taking the time to obtain permission to view. The 'stroll-type' exquisitely landscaped garden is dotted with delicately constructed tea houses. Mostly 17th century. (See Note for Imperial Palace and Villa Visitors.)

Shugakuin Imperial Villa (修学院離宮) is well worth obtaining the prior permission necessary to view this breathtaking example of landscaping art. Constructed in the 17th century by a Tokugawa shogun for a retired emperor, it is the largest garden in Kyoto. (See Note for Imperial Palace and Villa Visitors.)

Sanzen-in Temple (三千院) Located north of Kyoto in the ancient village of Ohara, Sanzen-in Temple was established in the 8th century. Within the temple precinct, the Ogokuraku-in hall enshrines a statue of Amida Buddha, flanked by two kneeling attendants. Built in the 12th century, the statues have been designated a National Treasure by the Japanese government.

Jakko-in Temple (寂光院) is a secluded Buddhist convent



Amida-sanzon-zou, Sanzenin Temple

to the west of Sanzen-in Temple in Ohara. It was here that the Empress Dowager Kenrei-mon-in became a nun in 1185 after the death of her infant son, the Emperor Antoku, in the sea battle of Dannoura. Her tomb is on the hillside behind. The beautiful views of the maple trees are also worth admiring.
Mt. Hiei (比叡山), in the northeastern part of Kyoto, is equally as famous for its spectacular vistas from the summit as it is for its prestigious Enryaku-ji Temple. The temple has been a major influence in the Buddhist world since it was founded in 788. Set in a deep cedar forest, it at one time housed 3,000 buildings in its three precincts. Most of its present buildings date from the mid-17th century.
Fushimi-Inari Taisha Shrine (伏見稲荷大社) is very close to both Keihan's Fushimi-Inari Sta. and JR Inari Sta. The head shrine of some 30,000 Inari shrines located throughout the land, it was founded in 711 and is dedicated to five Shinto deities. The more than 1,000 red painted Torii gates straddling the four-kilometer path up the hill behind it were donated by the faithful, as were the many stone statues of foxes, messengers of the Inari Taisha Shrine.

Byodo-in Temple (平等院), in Uji city, center of the famous tea-growing district, is also known for the Phoenix Hall Temple with its gracefully upswept eaves and two bronze



Graceful Byodo-in Temple, Uji © Byodoin

phoenixes on the gables of the main roof. Built in the early 11th century as a pavilion for a Fujiwara noble, it was converted into a temple by his son.

Note for Imperial Palace and Villa Visitors

Kyoto Imperial Palace is now open to the public throughout the year except on Mondays, the period between December 28 and January 4, and on days when Imperial Court functions are scheduled.

<Opening Hours>

April to August: 9 am - 5 pm (Last entry 4:20 pm)
September & March: 9 am - 4:30 pm (Last entry 3:50 pm)

October to February: 9 am - 4 pm (Last entry 3:20 pm)

<Free guided tours (no registry) in English / Chinese>
English: 10 am and 2 pm (Duration: 50 min.)
Chinese: 10 am and 2 pm (Duration: 50 min.)

Visiting **Sento Imperial Palace, Katsura Imperial Villa, and Shugakuin Imperial Villa.**
The tours are available throughout a year except on Mondays and from December 28 to January 4.

<How to apply>

Entry tickets are distributed on-site at each location from 11 am, and are available on a first-come-first served basis. () capacity

Sento Imperial Palace (35 persons): 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm

Katsura Imperial Villa (20 persons): 1:30 pm, 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm

Shugakuin Imperial Villa (35 persons): 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm is available.

※Audio guidance (English, Chinese, and French) is available.

For information on applying in advance, please visit:
https://sankan.kunaicho.go.jp/english/index.html
For inquiries: E-mail kyotosankan-info@kunaicho.go.jp
Tel. (075) 211-1215