

A Foodie's Guide To Tokyo

Tour the city's culinary delights, one neighborhood at a time

Tokyo's mind-boggling array of restaurants guarantee that no visitor will go away hungry. From the sushi counters near Tsukiji fish market to the soba restaurants of Asakusa, each neighborhood has a style of cooking to satisfy and delight all appetites.



SUSHI

Japan's best-loved culinary export is the epitome of freshness and flavor. And nowhere in the world will you find more varieties of delicious sushi than in Tsukiji, home to the largest fish market on Earth. Nearby eateries range from tiny counters to full-fledged restaurants, all of them offering fresh-off-the boat seafood prepared to order. For a fun and low-cost option, try the "conveyor-belt" style of restaurant known as *kaitenzushi*.



KAISEKI

Comprising a series of small dishes made from the finest seasonal ingredients, *kaiseki* is a true gourmet experience. A single *kaiseki* meal might include sushi, sashimi, fried fish and vegetables, simmered dishes, soup, rice and meat courses, all of which are prepared with attention to flavor, texture, and color. And what better place to experience Japan's most elegant and upscale dining experience than in Ginza—Tokyo's most elegant and upscale neighborhood.

YOSHOKU

Japan's love of foreign food is evident in yoshoku, a homegrown take on such Western-style dishes as steak, pasta and omelets. Popular yoshoku fare includes hanbagu (German-style steak patties), omu-raisu (ketchup-flavored rice topped with egg), and ebi-furai (deep-fried jumbo shrimp). Try these hearty dishes—and lots more—in the foreigner-friendly neighborhoods of Shibuya, Omotesando and Roppongi.



TEISHOKU

Teishoku is a set meal that includes a main dish accompanied by miso soup, white rice, a salad and pickled vegetables known as *tsukemono*. The main dish in a *teishoku* meal can range from grilled fish to ginger-fried pork to steak. The perfect areas to try the varied delights of *teishoku* is Shinjuku and Shinbashi, whose offices are filled with Japanese workers hungry for home-style lunches and dinners.



SOBA

Made of buckwheat flour, soba noodles are prized as a delicious source of nourishment. These days, soba is often enjoyed alongside rice dishes in casual restaurants, and the noodles can be eaten hot or cold. A popular dish to accompany soba is tempura, which are pieces of deep-fried vegetables and fish. The perfect neighborhood to try soba is Asakusa, which is renowned for its vintage shops and restaurants.



YAKITORI

Yakitori—skewers of chicken grilled over charcoal—is a popular snack that's often enjoyed in open-air food stalls during warm-weather months. Because the skewers go so well with beer, they are a favorite after-work treat of the city's office workers. The business districts of Tokyo and Shinbashi have many *yakitori* restaurants, some of which occupy temporary spaces set up on sidewalks or under train tracks.



WAGASHI

Wagashi, or Japanese confections, are often made from sticky rice (*mochi*) and sweetened red-bean paste (*anko*). One traditional treat is a cake called *chagashi*, which is eaten as an accompaniment to a cup of green tea. Another popular snack is *senbei* (rice crackers). In the *shitamachi* (downtown) areas of Ueno and Yanaka, you'll find a bevy of traditional sweets shops. *Wagashi* is also available in the basement areas of department stores known as *depachika*.

For more details to eat out, visit the following websites:

Gourmet Navigator: www.gnavi.co.jp/en/

English OK! Directory: www.englishok.jp/

Tokyo Food Page: www.bento.com/tokyofood.html

Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau:

www.tcvb.or.jp/en/guide/gourmet.html

Foreign Language Menus:

www.tourism.metro.tokyo.jp/english/foreign_menu_top.html



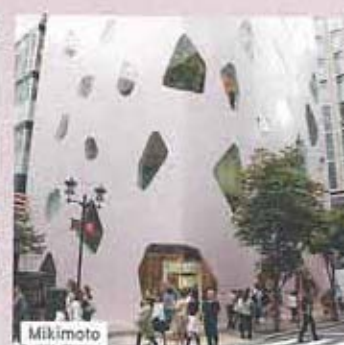
Yodobashi Akiba



Mitsukoshi



Muji



Mikimoto

Electronics

The world-famous Akihabara electronics district continues to impress, thanks to the opening of the gleaming Yodobashi Akiba superstore and the Tokyo Animation Center. But the smaller back-street shops are worth a visit for their discount prices and offbeat goods, while venerable retailers like Laox and Sofmap continue to attract savvy consumers.

Department stores

Japan's fabled department stores offer everything a shopper could hope for, from clothing, accessories and jewelry to homewares and food — all under one roof. In Tokyo, the best-known areas for these stores are Ginza, where you'll find such well-known names as Mitsukoshi, Matsuya and Matsuzakaya, and Shinjuku, which is home to Takashimaya and Isetan.

Discount fashion

When not infatuated with brand-name goods, Tokyoites are eager to seek out a good value. Chain stores like Muji and Uniqlo offer inexpensive, well-made clothing and other items that's a hit with the locals — the shops are so popular, in fact, that both brands have opened branches overseas. With comfortable and colorful fashions suitable for any occasion, these stores can be found in most Tokyo neighborhoods.

Boutiques

Boasting some of the world's most eager — and fashion-conscious — consumers, Tokyo is a magnet for luxury boutiques. The celebrated Ginza district is home to brand-name shops by Shiseido, Gucci, Dior and Chanel, as well as Mikimoto, which is housed in a stunning building whose surface resembles bubbles on the surface of water. Across town in the upscale Omotesando neighborhood, you'll find the likes of Louis Vuitton and Issey Miyake—and don't miss the jaw-dropping Prada building, whose facade is composed entirely of glass.

Shopping Spree

Flash some cash at Tokyo's toniest retailers

In Japan, shopping has been elevated to an art form. High-end Tokyo department stores stocked with luxury goods sit next to world-famous brand boutiques, while discount clothing shops and used electronics retailers all vie for your hard-earned yen. One thing's for sure: you won't leave the city empty-handed.



Tokyo Midtown

Shopping complexes

Why travel all over town when you can find everything you need in one neighborhood? That's the thinking behind Tokyo's growing number of large-scale complexes, which offer not only retail shops but restaurants, movie theaters, museums and offices. Among the most celebrated of these mini-cities are Omotesando Hills, Tokyo Midtown, and Roppongi Hills, whose mazy design recreates the energy of Tokyo's streets.



Omotesando Hills



Roppongi Hills



Oriental Bazaar

Crafts and antiques

If you're looking for a distinctly Asian memento of your Tokyo trip, head to one of the many antique fairs or shrine sales held throughout the city. Or if you'd like something newer, the popular Oriental Bazaar in the Omotesando area sells inexpensive souvenirs ranging from kimonos to folding screens to teacups and lacquerware. A variety of traditional handicrafts, from combs to furniture, are also on display at the Edo-Shitamachi Traditional Arts and Crafts Museum in Asakusa. The museum hosts demonstrations by craftsmen on weekends, as well as a crafts auction twice a year in July and December.

¥100 shops

Tokyo is not all about high-end boutiques and glitzy department stores. Shops that offer all items for a single ¥100 coin have exploded in popularity. Most neighborhoods feature at least one ¥100 store, which are the perfect places for tourists to pick up inexpensive souvenirs like chopsticks and teacups. Two of the most popular ¥100-shop chains are Daiso and Can Do.

TRAVEL REFERENCE INFORMATION

Access from Narita Airport to Central Tokyo

Train

The fastest and most popular train services running from Narita Airport to points in Central Tokyo are the NARITA EXPRESS, operated by Japan Railway to either Tokyo Station (¥2,940) or Shinjuku Station (¥3,110), and the KEISEI SKYLINER, connecting Narita with Keisei Ueno Station (¥1,920).

Suica & N'EX: Save money when you purchase a combination Narita Express ticket and Suica rechargeable electronic ticket, which you can use on most public transportation in the city. <http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/suica-nex/index.html>

Local Transportation

Suica & Pasma

These two rechargeable IC cards allow travelers to ride on virtually all of Tokyo's subways, trains and buses without the hassle of buying individual tickets. The cards are available for purchase at most train stations and bus terminals in a variety of denominations. http://www.jreast.co.jp/e/suica-nex/s_users_guide.pdf
<http://www.pasma.co.jp/en/index.html>

Trains & Subways

Tokyo has an extensive network of trains and chikatetsu (subway). The JR network covers much of the city, and the two major subway lines (Tokyo Metro and Toei) can take you virtually anywhere you need to go.

*Search easy-to-use numbered subway maps and transfer information at the following websites:

Bureau of Transportation, Tokyo Metropolitan Government
<http://www.kotsu.metro.tokyo.jp/english/index.html>

Tokyo Metro
<http://www.tokyometro.jp/global/en/index.html>

Tokyo Handy Guide/Map
Free Guide/Map of Tokyo available at three Information Centers and many accommodation facilities in Tokyo. Simply present your TOKYO HANDY GUIDE or attached COUPON, and enjoy up to a 20% discount on admission to a variety of sightseeing spots and museums.

Tokyo Tour Guide Service
Sightseeing tours in seven languages conducted by Tokyo Tourism Volunteers are wonderful ways for foreign visitors to enjoy the charm of Tokyo. Guides are ready to take you through all of Tokyo's must-see spots. <http://www.tourism.metro.tokyo.jp/english/tourists/guideservice/guideservice/index.html>

Observatory
The Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building features observatories (Floor 42, Main Building No.1) for visitors free of charge, as well as an employees cafeteria that is open to the public (Floor 32, Main Building No.1) <http://www.metro.tokyo.jp/ENGLISH/TMG/observat.htm>

Travel Information

Banks & Currency

The Japanese currency unit is the yen (¥), available in coin denominations of ¥1, ¥5, ¥10, ¥50, ¥100, ¥500, and banknote denominations of ¥1,000, ¥2,000, ¥5,000, and ¥10,000.

Generally, banks are open from 9:00am - 3:00pm. Cash machines (ATMs) are often closed on the weekends, but an increasing number of convenience stores are offering 24-hour ATM services.

Credit Card

In addition to the increasing acceptance of credit cards in Japan, international ATM cards are accepted for withdrawal at all postal savings service ATMs (known as "Yucho"). 24-hour ATM services are also available now for international banking cards at more than 12,000 Seven-Eleven stores all over Japan.

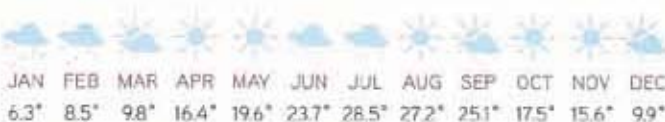
Taxes

A consumption tax of 5% is added to the price of all goods purchased in Japan. When using hotel facilities in the Tokyo area, a Tokyo Metropolitan Government accommodation tax of ¥100 - ¥200 is levied.

Climate

Tokyo has a temperate climate with four distinct seasons. Hot and humid summers are tempered by cool, sometimes cold winters, and significant snowfall is fairly rare. The rainy season is June.

Average monthly temperatures in Tokyo (degrees Celsius)



Tokyo Metropolitan Government facilities & services

Tokyo Tourist Information Center

The Tokyo Information Center offers the best up-to-the-minute information on the top tourist spots in Tokyo, recommended accommodations, and maps. Everything you need to find your way around Tokyo is here!

TMG Building
Headquarters
Tokyo Metropolitan
Main Building
No.1, 1F
Open 9:30 am - 6:30 pm. Closed New Year's Day
Tel: (03) 5321-3077

Keisei Ueno Branch
Outside the ticket gates Keisei Ueno Station

Open 9:30 am - 6:30 pm, 365 days a year
Tel: (03) 3836-3471

Haneda Airport Branch
Haneda Airport Terminal 1, 1F

Open 9:00 am - 10:00 pm, 365 days a year
Tel: (03) 5757-9345

Tokyo Tourism Website

The Tokyo Tourism Website offers all the best sightseeing information in one spot!

<http://www.tourism.metro.tokyo.jp>

TOKYO METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT

Tourism Division, Bureau of Industrial and Labor Affairs
2-8-1, Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 163-8001, JAPAN

Tokyo Basics

Get familiar with the city's must-see neighborhoods

1 Ueno & Yanaka

The numerous museums in Ueno provide the best way for visitors to learn about the culture and history of Japan. The surrounding neighborhood of Yanaka offers a glimpse into the lifestyles of the past four centuries, with traditional shops, temples and restaurants.

2 Ryogoku

Ryogoku is renowned for the Kokugikan sumo stadium. This area is also home to the impressive Edo-Tokyo Museum, which features traditional Japanese design elements and celebrates life in the metropolis from the early 17th century onwards.

3 Akihabara

Upbeat and alive, the electricity really is in the air in Akihabara, home of Tokyo's world-famous "Electric Town" and also the booming heart of Japan's manga and anime culture.

4 Tokyo Station

(including Marunouchi, Nishimbashi and Otemachi)
The heart of Tokyo's business district is experiencing a renaissance, thanks to the arrival of world-class hotels, restaurants, and shopping centers. The station building itself is one of Tokyo's earliest — and most magnificent — examples of European-style architecture.

5 Ginza

This renowned shopping district is home to flagship stores of many of the world's top luxury brands. It's also a popular weekend destination, when the main Chuo Dori thoroughfare is closed to traffic.

6 Odaiba

The manmade island of Odaiba is built for fun, from the exhilarating train ride over the Rainbow Bridge to its myriad shopping and entertainment venues. Odaiba's beach is also one of the best spots to view the annual Tokyo Bay fireworks display in August. (see page 6)

7 Shinagawa

The city meets the water in this business and entertainment district, where canal-side bars and walkways let visitors feel the sea-cooled breezes that slow the pace of the city. The area is home to a stunning aquarium, Epson Shinagawa Aquo Stadium, and it also houses a major bullet-train station.

8 Shibuya

(including Omotesando, Aoyama and Harajuku)
The nonstop gathering spot for Tokyo's friendly youth, bustling Shibuya blends quickly into upscale Aoyama and Omotesando, where visitors will find hidden cafes and chic boutiques. This area's style and excitement will suit travelers of all ages.

9 Shinjuku

Shinjuku, home to the Kenzo Tange-designed Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building, is the skyscraper kingdom of Japan. Soar to the top of the area's high-rises for spectacular views of the endless Metropolis, including Mount Fuji by day and stunning views of the glowing city at night.

10 Ikebukuro

A major urban center, Ikebukuro is popular with teenagers for its department stores, off-price restaurants and street-smart vibe. Families will enjoy the Sunshine City complex, which offers kid-friendly activities such as an aquarium and a 60th-floor observatory.

11 Roppongi

Since its opening in 2007, Tokyo Midtown has become one of Tokyo's hottest destinations. It's stylish shopping and dining complex evokes a Japanese feel thanks to design elements including washi paper, bamboo and wood. Just a short walk away, you will find Roppongi Hills, also one of Tokyo's favorites. Roppongi is a center of art and one of the liveliest nightlife districts with dozens of bars and clubs.

12 Asakusa

A must-see neighborhood for every Tokyo visitor, Asakusa personifies Old Japan. The Nakamise arcade boasts dozens of souvenir stalls and traditional goods shops, while the massive Kaminarimon Gate and the bustling Sensoji Temple are two of the city's major cultural symbols.



Urban Oasis

Discover the beauty of Tokyo's parks and gardens

Tokyo has a reputation as a concrete jungle, but the city is actually filled with traditional gardens and parks where visitors can surround themselves with lush greenery. Many of these spots were the property of feudal lords who lived near the Edo Castle (The Imperial Palace today). Visit Tokyo's nature escapes and discover the sense of calm that lurks in the heart of the world's largest city.



The Imperial Palace Gardens

No visit to Tokyo would be complete without a visit to the grounds of Japan's royal palace. Surrounded by moats and accessible by bridges that are overlooked by a traditional guard tower, the Imperial Palace Gardens boast a variety of nature trails, the remnants of the former Edo Castle, and a small museum that houses the Imperial collections. On December 23 (the Emperor's birthday) and January 2, visitors can greet the Imperial Family, who make an appearance on a palace balcony. www.kunaicho.go.jp/eindex.html



Koishikawa Korakuen Gardens

This stunning nature sanctuary is typical of the gardens established by the Mito-Tokugawa daimyo in the Edo Period. Reflecting lakes, rivers, mountains and rural districts, it beautifully demonstrates the eloquence of Japanese and Chinese sculpted landscapes. www.tokyo-park.or.jp/english/park/detail_05.html#koishikawa



Hama-rikyu Gardens

Originally established as the private garden of an Edo-era feudal lord, Hama-rikyu is now a sprawling oasis that's open to the public. The park features gorgeously landscaped pathways, a large central pond, bird sanctuary, and traditional teahouse, as well as superlative views of surrounding skyscrapers and Tokyo Bay. www.tokyo-park.or.jp/english/park/detail_04.html#hamarikyu



Rikugi-en Gardens

Established in 1695, this enchanting park offers a classic Japanese nature experience, with over 6,000 trees, a carp-filled lake, a wooden teahouse and magnificent views from the many winding paths. In spring, Rikugi-en is treasured as a viewing spot for shidare-sakura cherry blossoms, while in autumn the park attracts visitors to its dramatic fall foliage. www.tokyo-park.or.jp/english/park/detail_08.html#rikugien