Amazing Tokyo for ¥1000

Amazing-value sushi, shopping bargains, secret museums, drink deals, family fun & much more...
Edo String Puppetry & Comic Storytelling
What Bunshichi Mottoi Did in Edo Old Town

Enjoy the off-the-wall Edokok spirit of premodern Edo through the comic storytelling of Bunshichi Mottoi.

December 20 (Wed), 2017
KFC Hall
Kokusai Fashion Club, Ryogoku
1-6-1 Yokoami, Sumida-ku, Tokyo
Tel: 03-5610-5801
Admission: All seats reserved
Adults ¥2,800, Students ¥1,200

Ticket Sales
Sale on 4 September (Wed) and 15 September (Wed)
Available for purchase online or in KFC Hall
Tel: 03-5610-5801
Website: http://www.kfc-ticket.co.jp/en/

Inquiries in English should be made via email only.
MAIL: info@youkiza.jp

December 20 (Wed), 2017
Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building
Kokusai Fashion Center, Ryogoku, Tokyo
1-6-1 Yokoami, Sumida-ku, Tokyo
Tel: 03-6228-1062
Admission: All seats reserved
Adults ¥2,800, Students ¥1,200

Ticket Sales
Available for purchase online or in KFC Hall
Tel: 03-5610-5801
Website: http://www.youkiza.jp/sp/2017bunshichi

Inquiries in English should be made via email only.
MAIL: info@youkiza.jp

 Doors open at 18:00. Performance starts at 19:00.

Admission
Adults ¥2,800
Students ¥1,200

Inquiries in English should be made via email only.
MAIL: info@youkiza.jp
Hello Tokyo...

Strapped for cash after a wild summer? We've all been there, but a temporary dip in your bank balance is no excuse not to enjoy your time in Tokyo to the fullest. Embracing our inner penny-pinchers, we've gone out and scoured the capital for cheap but amazing things to do, eat, drink, buy and see, and now proudly present our guide to frugal Tokyo, a city enjoyable for only a few thousand yen per day. Flip over to page 18 for budget lunches, affordable family fun, free art and tips for getting tipsy with pocket change. And if you need a pick-me-up after all that prudence, continue to page 30 for our feature on the best coffee in Tokyo.

PAGE 18

Caffeine fever
Our 20 favourite cafés in the capital

PAGE 30

Souvenir hunting
The story behind the souvenir jacket

PAGE 48

Our friends electric
Five electronic music artists to watch

PAGE 54

On the right tracks
The world of Japan's incredible sightseeing trains

PAGE 66
RUSH HOUR
Will the de-sardineification of Tokyo trains ever become a reality?
It’s a rite of passage for newcomers and pretty much everyone’s daily nightmare after that first ride. Rush hour commuting on Tokyo’s overcrowded trains and subways, that is. With trains regularly being at least 130 percent capacity between the peak hours of 8am and 9am, and gropers still being enough of a problem to warrant ‘women only’ carriages, the top of the morning can feel more like a descent into hell.
To combat all this, this July the Tokyo metropolitan government trialled two new projects – Jisa-biz and Telework Day.
Jisa-biz saw extra trains added on several lines during a two-week trial period to relieve the already sardine tin-esque chaos, while Telework Day on July 24 (24/7, yes…) encouraged people to try working remotely. Apparently 927 companies participated in this campaign alone, but how effective it really was remains to be seen.
So far, none of these or previous schemes really seem to have alleviated the woes of commuting in Tokyo. A radical solution – and perhaps the only one that could really work – would be to abolish the current system under which employers pay for their employees’ commuter passes, ideally helping reduce commuting times, but that’s unlikely to come to fruition anytime soon.

WHAT YOU SAID
Here’s what you tweeted in response…

‘As Japan’s population continues to decline, this won’t be an issue in 20 years or so’

‘More flexibility: companies should let us work from home!’

WHERE IN TOKYO IS THIS?

OODLES OF ODEN
Ever wondered what’s in the tins full of liquid next to the till at convenience stores? The answer: oden. This autumn and winter delicacy covers everything from boiled eggs to sticks of ‘chikuwa’ fish paste simmered in broth, and is also known as the food that we lust for as soon as the temperatures start dropping. Here are some of the essential picks.

DAIKON
Japanese radish

KONNYAKU
Konjac

TAMAGO
(Boiled) egg

GANMO
Vegetable and tofu fritter

CHIKUNABA
Steamed, chewy dough tube

HANPEN
Bunrei fish paste

‘Let employees choose when they show up to work?’

‘State sponsorship or creation of jobs outside of Tokyo should do the trick’

‘I have no problem getting a seat on the Yamanote at 6.45am…’

 accumulated

Where to admire the changing leaves this autumn

MEHRORIEN
This small but gorgeous Japanese garden will be set up for three dark autumn evenings. The colours reflect off the pond and waterfall, creating an illusion of greater space and making for a pretty spectacular sight.

SHOWA KINEN Koen
The ginkgo and maple trees turn a fiery orange and red at this Showa Kinen Park, the 350 acres of green space being the spot towards Yoyogi going (usually from the very end of October). The red maple and kaede maple leaves in the Japanese garden take on a fiery appearance right after that.

SANKEIEN
This small but gorgeous Sankeien is home to several priceless structures, including a historical tea house, a feudal lord’s residence and a three-storied pagoda from Kyoto. These treasures will be open to the public from mid-November to early December, coinciding with the arrival of the golden red autumn foliage – you can enter into kimono-clad couples taking seasonal wedding photos here.

Time Out Tokyo October-December, 2017

What we love about oden...
TOKYO UPDATE

LOCAL LEGENDS

TOMO HYAKUTAKE is a master of the pretty terrifying. For years this makeup and mask artist’s beautiful creations have been scaring the bejesus out of fans of Japan’s venerable ‘kaiju’ (monster) movie genre. With masks from films including Michel Gondry’s short ‘Tokyo! Interior Design’, manga adaptation ‘20th Century Boys’ and 2016 horror pastiche ‘Sadako vs. Kayako’ staring ominously from the walls of his Asagaya atelier, Hyakutake tells us how he grew up in an age when the ‘kaiju’ genre was drawn to the business after watching ‘Casshern’, for which his team created all effects. A bit of nagging (the Japanese minister’s charge is said to have walked out of negotiations at one point), managed to convince the Japanese government that there’s a catch, however. For the deal, a number of tax tariffs are set to be eliminated as soon as the treaty comes into force, which may be as early as 2019, while those in Europe will see their soon become tariff free immediately as well. Cheers to that.

Where to head for a make-up update – whether for Halloween or a funky party

SCARLET’s MAKE-UP CLASSES

Ever wanted to learn how to apply stage makeup like a drag queen? Look no further than Scarlett, who is here to help you look fabulous. Classes are usually held from Friday to Saturday, with slots available both during the day (noon-3pm) and in the evenings (either 5pm-8pm or 8pm-11pm). Scarlett specialises in the double line – makeup techniques often used by drag performers. ‘I think you’ll have some ideas for a party here, or just a funny way to change up your evening routine.’

HOT SPOT

MEETFRESH KINCHIJOJI

Taiwanese bubble tea purveyors The Alley decided that it was time to expand with not just one but two new stores opening in August, one in Omotesando and one in Shinjuku. The former is their new Tokyo flagship and replete with all of the chain’s familiar favourites, including the smoothie-like ‘Yieli E-ting’ with a spicy ‘Ki-ki-ki’ milk tea and a ‘Yi-ki-ki’ milk tea made with coconut milk and tapioca.

TAIWANESE TREATS

THE ALLEY XIEJIAOXIANG

With four Shihlin shops having seen daily queues throughout its summer, Taiwanese bubble tea purveyors The Alley decided that it was time to expand with not just one but two new stores opening in August, one in Omotesando and one in Shinjuku. The former is their new Tokyo flagship and replete with all of the chain’s familiar favourites, including the smoothie-like ‘Yieli E-ting’ with a spicy ‘Ki-ki-ki’ milk tea and a ‘Yi-ki-ki’ milk tea made with coconut milk and tapioca.

Where to head for a make-up update – whether for Halloween or a funky party

SCARLET’s MAKE-UP CLASSES

Ever wanted to learn how to apply stage makeup like a drag queen? Look no further than Scarlett, who is here to help you look fabulous. Classes are usually held from Friday to Saturday, with slots available both during the day (noon-3pm) and in the evenings (either 5pm-8pm or 8pm-11pm). Scarlett specialises in the double line – makeup techniques often used by drag performers. ‘I think you’ll have some ideas for a party here, or just a funny way to change up your evening routine.’

HOT SPOT

MEETFRESH KINCHIJOJI

Taiwanese bubble tea purveyors The Alley decided that it was time to expand with not just one but two new stores opening in August, one in Omotesando and one in Shinjuku. The former is their new Tokyo flagship and replete with all of the chain’s familiar favourites, including the smoothie-like ‘Yieli E-ting’ with a spicy ‘Ki-ki-ki’ milk tea and a ‘Yi-ki-ki’ milk tea made with coconut milk and tapioca.

TAIWANESE TREATS

THE ALLEY XIEJIAOXIANG

With four Shihlin shops having seen daily queues throughout its summer, Taiwanese bubble tea purveyors The Alley decided that it was time to expand with not just one but two new stores opening in August, one in Omotesando and one in Shinjuku. The former is their new Tokyo flagship and replete with all of the chain’s familiar favourites, including the smoothie-like ‘Yieli E-ting’ with a spicy ‘Ki-ki-ki’ milk tea and a ‘Yi-ki-ki’ milk tea made with coconut milk and tapioca.
**THINGS TO DO**

**MOMI-Ichi**

An annual autumn affair on the banks of the Tama River just south of Chofu, the Momi-Ichi is an opportunity for local creatives to peddle their wares under the open sky. Over 100 participants will be manning booths offering pottery, textiles, handicrafts, artworks and traditional delicacies. The programme also includes workshops, gigs and other fun for visitors of all ages.

- 14-15 Oct
- 3-35-13 Shinjuku, Shinjuku. tinyurl.com/TOTmomiichi. Free entry.

**ART DESIGNER 2017**

A new festival dedicated to all things design and art, the literally named Designertakes over central Tokyo from Asakusa to Shinbashi, Nakanoguro and Roppongi for one October weekend. The brainchild of designer Akiko Aoki, art director Shun Kawaiuchi and architects Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham, it’ll see shops, cafes and restaurants host pop-up exhibitions and much more.

- 14-18 Oct
- Various venues across Tokyo. tinyurl.com/TOTdesignart. Free entry.

**FILM **

**BLADE RUNNER FAN FESTIVAL**

Centering on the renowned ‘Borg’ city of Ideas, Blade Runner is just one of the many films that have inspired this sepia-toned obsession with the future. The three-day Blade Runner Film Festival will be dedicated to four of these cinematic classics specifically for this occasion, and a chance to see some of the finest versions of other fan manias.

- 18-20 Oct
- Nipponbashi Grande Hills, 6-10 Nipponbashi, Minato. tinyurl.com/TOTSrff. Free entry.

**MUSIC**

**KAKUBARHYTHM 15TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL**

Celebrating 15 years of the indie game, record label Kakabarhythm heads to Kawasaki for this celebration, and will be formatting some of the world's biggest festivals.

- 26 Oct

**FILM**

**DREAM YOSACOY MATSURI**

Blistered as Tokyo's largest music festival, it's a trip of faith rather than sound. All-star lineups from local and international headliners to perform live on the stage in front of massive video displays, and what to expect.

- 3-4 Dec

**MUSIC**

**MARUILLU GRAND PRIZE**

Japan's biggest annual competition for emerging acts, the Tonne and Mø, the alias of Danish singer and producer Anna Kristin Klarfeld, will be headlining the event.

- 18 Nov

**THINGS TO DO**

**MOMI-Ichi**

An annual autumn affair on the banks of the Tama River just south of Chofu, the Momi-Ichi is an opportunity for local creatives to peddle their wares under the open sky. Over 100 participants will be manning booths offering pottery, textiles, handicrafts, artworks and traditional delicacies. The programme also includes workshops, gigs and other fun for visitors of all ages.

- 14-15 Oct
- 3-35-13 Shinjuku, Shinjuku. tinyurl.com/TOTmomiichi. Free entry.

**ART DESIGNER 2017**

A new festival dedicated to all things design and art, the literally named Designertakes over central Tokyo from Asakusa to Shinbashi, Nakanoguro and Roppongi for one October weekend. The brainchild of designer Akiko Aoki, art director Shun Kawaiuchi and architects Astrid Klein and Mark Dytham, it’ll see shops, cafes and restaurants host pop-up exhibitions and much more.

- 14-18 Oct
- Various venues across Tokyo. tinyurl.com/TOTdesignart. Free entry.

**FILM**

**BLADE RUNNER FAN FESTIVAL**

Centering on the renowned ‘Borg’ city of Ideas, Blade Runner is just one of the many films that have inspired this sepia-toned obsession with the future. The three-day Blade Runner Film Festival will be dedicated to four of these cinematic classics specifically for this occasion, and a chance to see some of the finest versions of other fan manias.

- 18-20 Oct
- Nipponbashi Grande Hills, 6-10 Nipponbashi, Minato. tinyurl.com/TOTSrff. Free entry.

**MUSIC**

**KAKUBARHYTHM 15TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL**

Celebrating 15 years of the indie game, record label Kakabarhythm heads to Kawasaki for this celebration, and will be formatting some of the world's biggest festivals.

- 26 Oct

**FILM**

**DREAM YOSACOY MATSURI**

Blistered as Tokyo's largest music festival, it's a trip of faith rather than sound. All-star lineups from local and international headliners to perform live on the stage in front of massive video displays, and what to expect.

- 3-4 Dec

**MUSIC**

**MARUILLU GRAND PRIZE**

Japan's biggest annual competition for emerging acts, the Tonne and Mø, the alias of Danish singer and producer Anna Kristin Klarfeld, will be headlining the event.

- 18 Nov
THINGS TO DO
SETAGAYA BOROICHI
Around 700 stalls line the street during the annual Setagaya Boroichi, a venerable flea market that's been going strong for more than 430 years now. Held twice a year, the event attracts tens of thousands of visitors, making it one of the highlights of Setagaya's calendar. If you don't mind the long lines, it's worth sampling one of the market's popular daikan mochi rice cakes – the Boroichi's de facto official food.

THINGS TO DO
WORLD LATIN CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL
Yoyogi Park offers a taste of Christmas traditions from around the world during this weekend festival, which travels far beyond Latin American customs into the territory of Indonesian Christmas dances (who knew?) and sales of certifiably non-traditional outfits and decorations. A belly-dancing Santa Claus is also set make an appearance.

THINGS TO DO
SETAGAYA FOX PARADE
This annual event sees local residents dress up as foxes and parade in the territory of Indonesian Christmas festivals, which travels far beyond traditional territorial boundaries. A belly-dancing Santa Claus is also set make an appearance.

MUSIC
ALT-J
This symbol-named, Grammy-nominated trio from Leeds play reverb-smothered, off-kilter indie that echoes Yeasayer and Jeff Buckley. Finalist for the released third album ‘Relaxer’. Alt-J (pronounced ‘∆’), try the delta sign on your Mac) should be worth a look especially for friends of indie with focused, slow-burning melodies.

TO DO
Ninagawa's ongoing interest in the light, there's always desire, confusion and noise. That's what makes the world interesting.'

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year's new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

ANNUAL AFTER-DARK FESTIVAL
Roppongi Art Night takes place from September 29 to October 1 this year. One of the biggest names to take part will be decorated photographer and film director Mika Ninagawa, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.

Photographer and director Mika Ninagawa shares the secrets of Roppongi Art Night with Kosuke Shimizu, whose vivid, expressive and often very kawaii imagery has won her a loyal following. For this year’s new installation that she promises will be ‘fun to photograph’, the artist is taking on a new challenge at the festival.
Blue skies and cool air

Takeo Funabiki explains why autumn is the best season in Tokyo

MORNING you’ll notice how the sky looks different and the breeze has changed. The temperature is perfect for an evening stroll.

Even at the end of summer, Tokyo is very much an urban place. Cities are made for walking, not driving, and this is true even in autumn.

The start of September sees the start of the monsoon season, which will continue until October. As the monsoon starts to retreat, the sky becomes clearer and the heat decreases. The fall season begins.

As for my favourite autumn leaves spots in the capital, I’d have to mention the trees lining Icho Namiki-dori in front of the Imperial Palace moat from Hibiya to Jingu Gaien park, while Rikugien garden is a popular spot for viewing fiery foliage.

To see yellow leaves, I’d recommend the leaves spots in the capital, I’d have to mention the trees lining Icho Namiki-dori in front of the Imperial Palace moat from Hibiya to Jingu Gaien park, while Rikugien garden is a popular spot for viewing fiery foliage.

When stepping outside on your evening stroll, you’ll have ‘taifu ikka’ – supremely clear post-typhoon weather – to look forward to the morning after. The sky will be blue and the air will be fresh.

The sky will be blue and the air will be fresh. You’ll notice how the sky looks different and the breeze has changed. The temperature is perfect for an evening stroll.

MAGNIFICENT FOLIAGE

When asked what the best time to visit Tokyo is, I always say ‘October’. In part it’s due to the autumn leaves. To see yellow ginkgo trees, you’ll have to travel to Icho Namiki-dori in front of the Imperial Palace moat from Hibiya to Jingu Gaien park, while Rikugien garden is a popular spot for viewing fiery foliage.

As for my favourite autumn leaves spots in the capital, I’d have to mention the trees lining Icho Namiki-dori in front of the Imperial Palace moat from Hibiya to Jingu Gaien park, while Rikugien garden is a popular spot for viewing fiery foliage.

SHINTO AND BUDDHISM

have generally coexisted happily in Japan for centuries but to the uninstructed it can be difficult to tell your shrines from your temples.

As the Heian-era poet Fujiwara no Toshiyuki put it, ‘Nothing sounds to urbanites’ ears. A pleasant breeze brings faraway circles on the weather maps which indicated the typhoon’s route towards Tokyo.

School would close on the day of the typhoon, the wind would get stronger, I’d hope to catch a few of the walnuts that had fallen into the neighbour’s garden... Luckily enough, Tokyo’s location means that it rarely sees serious typhoon damage. Perhaps that’s why I can be so careless about them.

STORMY SKIES

In my youth, there was one more thing I was looking forward to every autumn typhoon. Yes, I was well aware of how destructive these storms can be and how they’re nothing to make fun of. But as a child, I did like them. Before one was to arrive, my parents would have to busy closing the storm shutters in our home. Of course, knowing that no tiles were coming off the rooftop and on, while I would get excited looking at the black circles on the weather maps which indicated the typhoon’s route towards Tokyo.

School would close on the day of the typhoon, the wind would get stronger, I’d hope to catch a few of the walnuts that had fallen into the neighbour’s garden... Luckily enough, Tokyo’s location means that it rarely sees serious typhoon damage. Perhaps that’s why I can be so careless about them.

WHAT I DO NEED TO EMPHASISE is that a typhoon can bring about chaos in Tokyo’s public transportation system, so it’s best to spend stormy days quietly inside. Forget worrying about losing an entire day to the elements. You’ll have ‘taifu ikka’ – supremely clear post-typhoon weather – to look forward to the morning after.

DO: FIRST-TIME VISITORS TO TOKYO

DON’T: FIRST-TIME VISITORS TO TOKYO

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.

Before you inadvertently start insulting the gods when visiting a Japanese place of worship, see our quick guide to spiritual etiquette.
I, TOKYO
Jörgen Axelvall
Photographer and artist
Age: 45

You moved to Japan in 2011 after 15 years in New York City. What made you choose Tokyo as your new home, especially in the wake of the natural disasters that rocked the country that year? I moved here for life. My flight actually landed, or rather attempted to land, on the exact minute of the Great East Japan earthquake on March 11, 2011. After a touch-and-go at Narita airport we eventually got redirected to Yokosuka military base where we were stuck onboard for another ten hours or so before finally disembarking at Haneda. Quite a tumultuous start to life in Japan, but nothing really compared to what others went through.

When did you first feel like a Tokyoite? Spiritually I felt part of the city quite quickly, possibly because I was here for the aftermath of the earthquake, a time when a lot of foreign residents left and very few tourists would visit. Artistically I considered myself a Tokyoite when I started exhibiting my work at galleries around Tokyo and getting my books published in Japan. I also felt a great element to call myself a Tokyoite the day I got my residence card and started paying my dues and taxes in Japan.

You work mainly as a photographer. What do you think of Tokyo as a subject? Tokyo is not a classically pretty city – I find a lot of the post-war architecture hideous. However, Tokyo has some fantastic gems. I spent some seven years shooting the Park Hyatt Tokyo building and those photographs were eventually awarded an exhibition at the National Art Center and published as a book. I still find great and interesting things here every day. Tokyo is always changing, for better or worse – either way it’s inspiring.

It’s been seven years since you moved to Tokyo. What has changed for you, and do these changes also affect your work? Tokyo has made me a nicer person. I love NYC and its energy but there’s also a lot of strife and selfishness. Tokyo is slow compared to NYC, but much kinder. It’s a good place to focus and get things done. My artistic style was pretty well developed when I moved here and the core hasn’t changed much, but of course I am influenced by the local culture – sometimes unconsciously. Little elements of Japanese aesthetics have made their way into my work.

What aesthetic aspect of Japan is your favourite? I like the concept of wabi-sabi, the acceptance and admiration of imperfection. It’s something I always strived for in my photographs, before I even knew what wabi-sabi means.

Where would you take visitors to Tokyo? One of the things that really appeals to me about Tokyo is that you don’t have to do anything else than just walk around, hang out and look at the city and its people. So far it’s the best city I’ve ever lived in for cycling and whenever I have visitors I like to show them around by bike.

NHK World offers a wide range of multilingual news and other programmes. Do you have a favourite programme? Watching newscasts is convenient for me. I like NHK’s coverage of Japan of course, but also of surrounding Asian countries, which are often neglected by the major Western news outlets.

Finally, any survival tips for international visitors? Stay happy and positive. Things are different here, very different. But that’s just it – different doesn’t mean wrong. Most visitors will get frustrated at some point, too used to have meltdown and at times still get frustrated, but made a conscious choice to at least try to laugh about the situation.

IF YOU HAVEN’T yet come across fluffy, brown and loveable Domo, you’re in for a treat. The character has been bringing joy to Japan for years and now Domo is going global.

The new touring exhibition Domo! World will bring the life and times of the sharp-toothed cutie and his friends into focus by featuring Japanese craftsmanship and cutting-edge 8K resolution technology. Here’s everything you need to know about an entirely new dimension of visual entertainment.

WHAT’S 8K?

8K resolution is the highest currently available standard of ultra-high definition television (UHD). 8K UHD boasts sixteen times as many pixels as the Full HD standard, making it incredibly clear. Imagine cutting out a corner a 16th of the size of the full 8K picture and enlarging it: you can still enjoy it with crystal clarity. In Domo World! this technology has been used to create intricately detailed stop-motion animations that reveal even the tiniest secrets of Domo’s life: by looking for a four-leaf clover or keep an eye out for which characters are a couple.

We can’t quite let you see the whole picture yet, but the big reveal is just around the corner!

WHERE CAN YOU SEE THE WHOLE PICTURE?

Domo will embark on a world tour from October 2017. The first place where you can get experience Domo World! in its entirety will be at New York’s Comic Con, after which Domo will visit London, Tokyo and a number of other Asian capitals throughout the year.

Visit nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/domo/ to find out how you can get NHK WORLD TV 24/7 in your country, on your TV, computer or mobile device.
Great-value sushi, shopping bargains, secret museums, drink deals and family fun – if you’re looking to enjoy Tokyo to the fullest but without breaking the bank, read on for our ultimate guide to cheap but sensational things to do in the capital...

Origami images: Keisuke Tanigawa
'SENBERO' MAY WELL BE our favourite word in the entire Japanese language. An amalgamation of 'seki' (1,000) and 'beru' (short for getting drunk), it means exactly that: getting merely merry for a thousand yen, and that even includes a snack or two. Even central Tokyo has its share of senbero-worthy spots, but nowhere has as dense a concentration of exquisite izakaya as Tateishi, an old-school, ramshackle neighbourhood out in Katsushika-ku. Sadly it could be facing last orders, as parts of the area are earmarked for demolition to make way for fancy new skyscrapers by 2022. Best start drinking while you still can – but don’t worry, as Tateishi’s motsuyaki (roasted giblets) kingdom, Uchida (1-18-8 Tateishi, Katsushika, tinyurl.com/TOTuchida), will continue to serve its karaage and nanban (both ¥500 gets you either a karaage or chicken nanban (both ¥500 gets you either a karaage or chicken nanban – both ¥500) to their Kyobashi or Kayabacho outlets for even more options sell out way before closing time. Head for their Yo-kohashi or Kavacho outlets for even more lunch options. The entire place is standing-only and the most popular choice on your own. Order some skewers (you’ll get four on a plate for ¥360), some macaroni salad, and most unusually, everything coming on Chinese food) menu going for – perhaps some pickled cucumber and, most importantly, their highball – simply pronounced ‘bowler’ here.

FAMILY FUN FOR UNDER ¥2,000

MOUNT TAKAO
Lace up your hiking boots and escape the city's hustle and bustle by climbing Mount Takao. Tokyo's most popular peak. You can get there by taking the Koi line all the way to Takanasanguchi Station, about 50 minutes from Shinjuku. Takao may not seem like a huge mountain at 599 metres tall, but once you find yourself puffing and panting near the top, you'll appreciate its grandeur. Take a break mid-hike at Yakuoin Temple for a look at the tengu (long-nosed goblin) statues. Once you reach the top, treat yourself to a picnic while admiring a panoramic view of Tokyo – and Mount Fuji on a clear day. Takao also has a mini-zoo and a wild plant garden. The hike takes about two hours and is suitable for the whole family. Avoid the lunchtime crowds and go in the morning instead.

EDO-TOKYO OPEN-AIR ARCHITECTURAL MUSEUM
If you still haven't visited the Edo-Tokyo Open-Air Architectural Museum, you're missing out on one of the most interesting museums in Tokyo. Located just short train ride away in the western suburbs, it's the ideal setting for a budget-friendly family day. The concept is unique as the outdoor museum is located right in magnificent Koganei Park and houses buildings characteristic of different historical periods – including a handful built by famous Japanese architects. Most of the structures are from the Meiji period (1868-1912) onwards and include a politician's elegant former residence, a farm house, a photo studio, a public bathhouse, various shops and a police box. You can enter most of the buildings and make yourself at home – as long as you don't mind stepping in and out of your shoes.

SUMO MUSEUM
Could't get your hands on some sumo tickets? While not as exciting as live match, this free museum is sure to please sumo enthusiasts. Even non-fans will be awestruck by the displays of materials related to the Japanese national sport. The museum is home to 3,700 sumo-themed, multicoloured woodblock prints, 500 sumo dolls and a collection of 'kesho-mawashi', those opulent silk belts worn by high-ranked wrestlers and equipped with an embroidered apron and tassels. The museum is located on the ground floor of the Ryogoku Kokugikan sumo arena. After your visit, take a stroll around the neighbourhood, where you will most likely run into rikishi (sumo wrestlers) going about their daily lives.

ESPACE LOUIS VUITTON
Don't let the doorman and the huge glass gates of the Omotesando Louis Vuitton boutique intimidate you. In addition to the gorgeous collections of shoes, handbags and garments, the building hosts one of the city's best-kept secrets, a small but stunning art space designed by Japanese architect Jun Aoki. The glass box is located on the top floor of the luxury boutique and offers an Instagram-worthy view of Tokyo. The contemporary exhibitions change every few months, but some noteworthy past ones have featured the works of minimalist artist Dan Flavin and installations from Pierre Huyghe.

UTOOPENAIRART
One of our favourite strategies for seeing fine art on the cheap pertains to the arts. Many art retailers hang their wares on the walls, and one can blame you for doing a little window shopping. Spotting an inclusion of art basel prices and shows of its own. Speaking of photography, the area around Shinkjuku Gyoen is a great place for a stroll. Free galleries like Third District, Sobyusya. Place Mud and Tote Pole are all within walking distance, and show off latest work from up-and-comers and veterans alike.

IRONICALLY, ONE OF THE best places in Tokyo to see art is on the cheap in one of the city's most expensive neighbourhoods: Ginza. Many of Ginza's top retailers – including Wako, Mitsukoshi, Chanel, and Hermès – house free exhibition halls and the displays can be breathtaking. Photography fans in the area should also check out the Leica shop, which hosts free exhibitions of its own.

UENO ZOO
Gorillas, elephants, giraffes, polar bears, tigers, oh my. Ueno Zoo has it all, including a bird house, a turtle- and reptile-filled vivarium, and an extensive assortment of small animals. However, the real stars are without a doubt Shin Shin and Ri Ri, the pair of giant pandas. Shin Shin just gave birth to a female baby back in June, and the cub will definitely draw a bigger crowd once she's ready to be displayed. Children and adults alike will marvel at the animals, and it's worth noting that Ueno Zoo is well-equipped with amenities – you're never far from a restaurant, snack stall, souvenir shop or bathroom.

MUSEUMS IN TOKYO
Of course, there are museums in Tokyo. Located a short train ride away in the western suburbs, it's the ideal setting for a budget-friendly family day. The concept is unique as the outdoor museum is located right in magnificent Koganei Park and houses buildings characteristic of different historical periods – including a handful built by famous Japanese architects. Most of the structures are from the Meiji period (1868-1912) onwards and include a politician's elegant former residence, a farm house, a photo studio, a public bathhouse, various shops and a police box. You can enter most of the buildings and make yourself at home – as long as you don't mind stepping in and out of your shoes.

ARCHITECTURAL MUSEUM
EDO-TOKYO OPEN-AIR ARCHITECTURAL MUSEUM
If you still haven't visited the Edo-Tokyo Open-Air Architectural Museum, you're missing out on one of the most interesting museums in Tokyo. Located just short train ride away in the western suburbs, it's the ideal setting for a budget-friendly family day. The concept is unique as the outdoor museum is located right in magnificent Koganei Park and houses buildings characteristic of different historical periods – including a handful built by famous Japanese architects. Most of the structures are from the Meiji period (1868-1912) onwards and include a politician's elegant former residence, a farm house, a photo studio, a public bathhouse, various shops and a police box. You can enter most of the buildings and make yourself at home – as long as you don't mind stepping in and out of your shoes.

AFORDABLE ART
Check out more of our open-air art picks at tinyurl.com/TOTopenairart

SEE MORE
TIMEOUT.COM/TOKYO
CHEAP THRILLS
Amazing entertainment for under ¥3,000

WITH INEXPENSIVE restaurants, bars and hotels for those in the know, Tokyo’s reputation for being an expensive city is mostly undeserved, but even long-term residents often lament how pricey its entertainment options can be. Here’s how to catch a show, gig or sumo bout for under ¥3,000.

ON-THE-DAY SUMOTICKETS
Watching giant men crash into each other doesn’t have to be wallet-wracking – as long as you don’t mind getting up early and taking your chances. The ticket windows at Ryogoku Kokugikan, the main stadium, open at 7.45am on tournament days and sell seats for a mere ¥2,200. The next sumo tournament in Tokyo is scheduled for January 2018.

SAVE ON CINEMATIX
Most Tokyo-cinema charges a near- extortionate ¥1,800 for a single adult ticket, but the capital’s cinemaphiles know how to get in on the cheap. The first day of each month is usually discount day (everyone enters for ¥1,100, while Wednesday is ‘ladies’ day’ (ladies, you’ve just saved ¥700). Double (or triple) bills are another way to save: Shin-Bungota in Ikebukuro does all-nighters for ¥2,380, while Waseda Shochiku offers double bills of classics for ¥1,380.

SINGLECTS AT THE KABUKI
A standard kabuki performance consists of one or three acts, but catching only one act is also possible at the Kabuki-za, Tokyo’s main kabuki theatre. Tickets for these are sold on the day and prices vary by show – most go for anywhere between ¥650 and ¥2,000. You’ll be seated on the fourth floor and have very nice views of the action. If your Japanese is up to par, check out www.kabuki-bito.jp for the schedule and prices.

DANCE ON THE CHEAP
Those looking to move their feet at a club but don’t feel like reaching for their wallet to pay an overcharge will want to check out Shibuya’s Oath. This box-sized bar also offers drinks at a very affordable ¥1,000. (fair), ¥500 (sun). Those new to Japan’s traditional form of comic storytelling will find a standard day at a rakugo performance to be wallet-friendly (¥1,000). The next rakugo at Suehiro-tei is on 7th November.

THE NOH ‘HAPPY HOUR’
Reopened in the basement of the humongous Ginza Six complex this spring, the Kanzo-Nogakudo is a venerable Noh theatre originally established in 1901. The ‘happy hour’ allows you to catch the last act of every performance for ¥900 – quite a drop from the regular prices of ¥7,600-¥12,500. Note that ‘happy hour’ tickets aren’t available in case of sellout.

COFFEE: KAILA IMADA, Time Out Tokyo editor
‘For those who can’t go a day without coffee, visiting cafés can add up to be a pricey expense. Save yourself some cash and try making your own brew in the morning before heading out the door. It’s always a good idea to grind your beans right before you brew, but grinders can be quite the investment. A cheap option is the stainless steel coffee mill (¥2,500) found at Maddine in Shinjuku, a shop that also sells single-origin beans at reasonable prices. Another place to buy affordable yet freshly roasted beans is Koji Ota in Toyozai and Takadakoba. 1.1kg bags of beans start as low as ¥470, with both single-origin and blend varieties available. The café also serves both iced and hot coffee for just ¥100 and the quality adds some chibi to your coffee.’

BARGAIN-HUNTING TIPS FROM THE EXPERTS

ELECTRONICS: YINTSUNG CHEN, Tokyo-based writer
‘Ever wondered why all those Chinese tourists crowd Tokyo’s big electronics stores on a daily basis? It’s because they love a bargain. When you take tax exemption and various cash back services into account, shopping at the capital’s mega-outlets can result in savings of tens of thousands of yen – in some cases, enough to buy a Taipei-Tokyo or Shanghai-Tokyo flight. Particularly popular items right now include Dyson vacuum cleaners and air purifiers, Brunos and Balmuda toasters, Panasonic’s Nano Care hair dryers and Japan-made rice cookers.’

FASHION: YVIAN MORELLI, Tokyo-based journalist
‘Stand out from the crowd and do the environment a favour by avoiding the identikit fast fashion chains that line the malls and scour Tokyo’s numerous vintage and secondhand shops instead – just look for “reuse” and “recycle” signs. Whether you’re in the market for a designer handbag at a fraction of the listed price or some pieces you’ll be the only one sporting, you’ll be sure to find pre-owned treasures that won’t break the bank. Tokyo is famous for having some of the best vintage scenes in the world. People take such good care of their belongings here, and most secondhand finds are in mint condition. Stock up on vintage gear from Japanese labels and purchase a handful of yokutas and kiminos (some for under ¥1,000) to give to your friends and family as souvenirs.’

AMAZING TOKYO FOR ¥1,000

THE DAYTIME JAZZ AT THE PIT INN
Pit Inn in Shinjuku is a must-visit for any jazz fan in Tokyo. It has history, ambience and a consistently excellent lineup of the best domestic and foreign jazz musicians nightly. The cover charge at night (from ¥2,000) is very reasonable, but its unique afternoon live sessions are a real bargain. Taking place from 2pm almost daily they cost just ¥1,300, including a drink.

LATE-NIGHT RAKUGO AT SUEHIROTEI
Those new to Japan’s traditional form of comic storytelling will want to start at this venerable Shinjuku theatre, where affordable late-night shows (£1,000) are held from 9.30pm every Saturday.

AMAZING TOKYO FOR ¥1,000

FASHION: YVIAN MORELLI, Tokyo-based journalist
‘Stand out from the crowd and do the environment a favour by avoiding the identikit fast fashion chains that line the malls and scour Tokyo’s numerous vintage and secondhand shops instead – just look for “reuse” and “recycle” signs. Whether you’re in the market for a designer handbag at a fraction of the listed price or some pieces you’ll be the only one sporting, you’ll be sure to find pre-owned treasures that won’t break the bank. Tokyo is famous for having some of the best vintage scenes in the world. People take such good care of their belongings here, and most secondhand finds are in mint condition. Stock up on vintage gear from Japanese labels and purchase a handful of yokutas and kiminos (some for under ¥1,000) to give to your friends and family as souvenirs.’

AMAZING TOKYO FOR ¥1,000

CONSTRUCTION: BUNGUEZAI, The building
‘Ever wondered why all those Chinese tourists crowd Tokyo’s big electronics stores on a daily basis? It’s because they love a bargain. When you take tax exemption and various cash back services into account, shopping at the capital’s mega-outlets can result in savings of tens of thousands of yen – in some cases, enough to buy a Taipei-Tokyo or Shanghai-Tokyo flight. Particularly popular items right now include Dyson vacuum cleaners and air purifiers, Brunos and Balmuda toasters, Panasonic’s Nano Care hair dryers and Japan-made rice cookers.’

FASHION: YVIAN MORELLI, Tokyo-based journalist
‘Stand out from the crowd and do the environment a favour by avoiding the identikit fast fashion chains that line the malls and scour Tokyo’s numerous vintage and secondhand shops instead – just look for “reuse” and “recycle” signs. Whether you’re in the market for a designer handbag at a fraction of the listed price or some pieces you’ll be the only one sporting, you’ll be sure to find pre-owned treasures that won’t break the bank. Tokyo is famous for having some of the best vintage scenes in the world. People take such good care of their belongings here, and most secondhand finds are in mint condition. Stock up on vintage gear from Japanese labels and purchase a handful of yokutas and kiminos (some for under ¥1,000) to give to your friends and family as souvenirs.’
1. ¥100 SHOPS
Japan takes the ‘dollar store’ or ‘pound shop’ concept to new heights. Whereas most foreign bargain pits are home to little more than plastic tat, misspelled designer T-shirts and non-brand cleaning products, Japan’s ¥100 shops contain true gems. All-time favourites Daiso and CanDo stock cute crockery, bentoboxes and calligraphy sets, while Natural Kitchen deals in chic home décor and Lawson Store 100 sells groceries.

2. A MICHELIN MEAL FOR ¥1,000
A bowl of ramen can go for up to ¥3,000 in London or New York – try that pricing in Tokyo and chances are you’ll be run out of town. Consider Tsuta, the first ramen shop ever to earn a Michelin star, never charges more than ¥1,000 for a serving – you will need to start queuing from before 6am to have a chance of getting a bowl through.

3. PUBLIC BATHING
From traditional downtown establishments to designer alternatives, all sento bathhouses in Tokyo charge an even ¥460 for a dip. Some of the best soaking spots have up to ten different tubs to try – all you need is the courage to bare yourself in front of the locals.

4. GOURMET LUNCH GALORE
While dinner at an exclusive sushi joint or a fine French restaurant can set you back up to ¥30,000 per person, most of these gourmet havens offer very attractively priced lunch deals. Look out for daily specials or ‘today’s teishoku’ (set meal) options.

5. TRADEYOUR HOTEL FOR A HOSTEL
Even at the capital’s big two beer breweries: Suntory in Fuchu and Kirin in Yokohama. The tours are interesting, none are as popular as the excursions offered at the capital’s 40-40 beer breweries: Suntory in Fuchu and Kirin in Yokohama. The tours are interesting but the best is saved until last – both let you sip brews for nada at the end of their walkarounds.

6. FLEA MARKET FINDS
Most penny-pinching urbanites around the world recognise the power of flea markets, and Tokyoites are no exception. Yoyogi Park and the Oedo Antique Market are regular markets, while the Oedo Antique Market is great for artsy types.

7. DRUGSTORES/SOUVENIRS
Skincare, makeup and shampoo, but also foot- and hand-soothing packs, warm eye masks and compression tights – the world is finally waking up to the world of Japanese drugstores. Fill your suitcase with select finds from any shop and get a hero’s welcome on your return home.

8. FACTORYOUTLET ACTUALLY FUN
Many Tokyo factories (yes, they exist) give free tours of their premises, but none are as popular as the excursions offered at the capital’s 40-40 beer breweries: Suntory in Fuchu and Kirin in Yokohama. The tours are interesting but the best is saved until last – both let you sip brews for nada at the end of their walkarounds.

9. RAMEN: YASUHISA SHIMBO. EYE MASK: KISA TOYOSHIMA. SENTO: KEISUKE TANIGAWA

10. ¥5,000
is the average bill when you do it ourselves. Consider the average cost for a meal comes to around ¥3,800, splashing cash at the club rather than on food seems de rigueur. Those ¥3,000 cover charges do hurt.

11. 20%
of our readers say they go out to eat at least twice a week. A handful of respondents admitting they eat out virtually every single day. Over 60 percent cut out more than five times a month – wonder the restaurant industry is booming.

12. ¥500,000+
is what one of you allegedly spends on clothes, shoes and accessories per month. We sincerely hope you’re a stylist or something.

13. 40-40

14. ¥14,000
Once you do hit the shops though, you spend an average of ¥14,000 in one go. Not too shabby if you say – and now we want to know how many items that usually includes.

15. 16%/5.8%
The real losers in the entertainment department are cinema and theatres, with only 16% and 5.8 percent of Tokyoites respectively heading to either more than twice a month. Is the main culprit high ticket prices or the lack of foreign-language options?
And breathe…

Get Zen with a tea ceremony and some temple time in our guide to mindful Tokyo.

TEA CEREMONY

For much more than dunking a bag into a mug, a Japanese tea ceremony lets you truly savour the stuff — preferably while overlooking a perfectly manicured garden. Immerse yourself in cha culture at Kosoan, a traditional wooden teahouse with a pretty garden in the leafy Jiyugaoka neighbourhood, or at Nakajima no Ochaya, located on a falcon pond in the impressive Hama-rikyu Gardens. And to learn the intricacies of the ritual, head to Tokyo Grand Tea Ceremony in October, where tea masters lead first-timers through a series of ceremonies and workshops. Although Japanese tea culture seems intricate and exclusive, TGTC aims to make the world of tea more accessible to everyone. They offer workshops in English and provide a vlog called “Cha Chichi” to help you understand the different stages of the tea ceremony. This month, TGTC is offering an online workshop called “Yonoe no Cha no Okae: The Art of Japanese Tea Ceremonies” where you can learn about the history, etiquette, and techniques of tea ceremony from the comfort of your own home.

ZAZEN MEDITATION

Now you’ve had your tea, find peace in the big city with zazen meditation (that’s a meditation done sitting in the lotus position). In fact, tea and Zen Buddhism have more in common than you might think, as their history in Japanese society is intertwined. Zen monks Chai brought green tea seeds to Japan for the first time, while ascetic monks took tea during their zazen meditation practice to stay awake. Several Buddhist temples in Tokyo teach the stress-busting, brain-strengthening technique of focusing your mind on your breathing and surroundings. The Korin-in temple in the upscale Hibiya district offers 90-minute sessions from 7am Monday–Friday. It’s a good idea to arrive early to ensure your spot, as sessions fill up fast. The temple also features impressive landscapes representing scenes from Japanese poetry. The Seventeenth-century Kyo Shiba Rikyu Garden is home to koi carp and turtles, while the lush Nezu Museum garden is filled with Buddhist statues, Zen style bamboo decorations and a modernist cafe. ZEN GARDENS

Our favourite of Tokyo’s serene, manicured gardens is Rikugien, which once belonged to a samurai lord. It’s great in spring (cherry blossoms) but also stunning in autumn. Designed in the kaiyu-shiki style, its focal point is a peaceful pond surrounded by winding paths and mini-hills. The garden also features 86 impressive landscapes representing scenes from Japanese poetry. The seventeenth-century Kyo Shiba Rikyu Garden is home to koi carp and turtles, while the lush Nezu Museum garden is filled with Buddhist statues, Zen style bamboo decorations and a modernist cafe. KAISEKI DINING

For an epic fine-dining experience, book yourself in for some kaiseki cuisine. This ceremonial, artful and perfectly balanced meal celebrating nature and Zen philosophy takes place over a few hours. Everything is chosen to reflect the season, from table decorations and calligraphic menus to your hostess’s kimono and, of course, the food. Think intense, fragrant matsutake (pine mushrooms) in autumn. Expect to pay at least ¥10,000 (€70, US$90) per person, plus drinks, for kaiseki. But it’s well worth the splurge. Our favourites are the Michelin-starred Sekihotei in Harajuku, Tagetsu in Aoyama and Uchi Chaya out in the wilds of Mount Takao.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

For religious sites in Tokyo without the crowds, visit the Tomioka Hachiman Shrine, famed for its traditional architecture and huge torii (gate). Otherwise, head to Yanaka for the Buddhist Tenno Temple, which dates back to the thirteenth century. For serenity with a view, climb the 86 stone steps of the shusse no ishidan up Mount Atago to the Atago Shrine – the highest natural point in the city.

CALM IN A CUP

Stéphane Danton (pictured left), owner of specialist tea shop Ochaesta in Nihonbashi, explains how Japanese tea can help you find inner peace.

What does your passion for tea? “My passion is for the ingredients — the leaves. I’ve been in this business for 12 years, and hope to introduce tea to people who don’t know anything about it.”

Can tea provide a way to find peace in today’s hectic world? “Yes, certainly. Japanese tea is thought of as elitist, but I’m working to change that. The world of tea is all about peace and tranquillity too. From discovering the intricacies of a tea ceremony to peaceful dining experiences, it’s all frantic-paced living and cramming through the urban sprawl feeling significantly lighter.”

Where should first-time visitors to Tokyo experience Japan’s tea culture? “Go where the expertise is, go to a tea shop. That’s where the journey starts.”
THE BEST COFFEE IN TOKYO

Tokyo is one of the world’s great coffee cities, with more specialist shops than most people can hope to visit in a lifetime. After much heated debate, we’ve picked out our 20 favourite cafés and marked them on the map here. Turn the page to see reviews for each one.

Reviews by Kaila Imada, Claire Williamson, Ili Saarinen and Yukako Izumi.
Map by Mayumi Hashimoto

1. KOFFEE MAMEYA
The look: Set in the exact same spot as the much-missed Omotesando Koffee, Eiichi Kunitomo’s Koffee Mameya is, first and foremost, a bean shop. You can choose from around 15 to 20 varieties, all in 150g bags, and have them ground for a specific purpose or machine on the spot. Inside each bean bag you’ll find a card detailing a barista’s advice for the best way to brew that particular variety.

The coffee: Kunitomo sources beans from five contract roasters – Nagoya’s Bontain Coffee, Ogawa Cafe in Kyoto, Fukuoka’s Tokado Coffee and one each in Melbourne and Hong Kong.

What to order: KM only serves coffee to go – grab a regular cup or espresso with the single-origin beans of your choosing.


2. PADDLERS COFFEE
The look: Importing beans from Portland’s famed Stumptown Coffee Roasters every week, Daisuke Matsushima’s Paddlers have been caffeinating shoppers at the Nishihara arcade since 2015. The café has a calm wooden interior, communal tables and a homely atmosphere – a little piece of the Rose City in one of the quieter corners of Shibuya.

The coffee: All beans are served fresh in French press or espresso form for the perfect flavour. Beans are also available by the bag, with their most popular roast being the Nano Challa from Ethiopia, which offers delicate notes of grapefruit and peach.

What to order: To accompany your cup, order one of Paddlers’ signature hot dogs, made with buns from a bakery in the neighbourhood.

→ 2-26-5 Nishihara, Shibuya (Hatagaya Station). paddlerscoffee.com. 7.30am-6pm, closed Mon.
THE BEST COFFEE IN TOKYO

3. FUGLEN TOKYO

The look: The original Fuglen shop in Oslo is a blend of café, cocktail bar and vintage design boutique, even the furniture is up for sale. Its Tokyo shop, which opened in May 2012, transplants the concept to a backdrop of tracks and a rolling train. The coffee: You’ll find a long list of espresso-based options, including pour-over and Aeropress, as well as a rotating selection of single-origin beans. The best spot for coffee is the upstairs café, which offers a relaxing atmosphere and a wide selection of coffee. The look: The clean and minimalist design of the café is complemented by the vintage furniture and decor, creating a cozy and intimate atmosphere. 9-3-14 Kanda-Nishiki, Chiyoda (Jinbocho Station). 03 5244 5458. glitchcoffee.com. Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat, Sun & hols 10am-10pm, closed Mon.

5. AMERICAN ESPRESSO

The look: Located on the ground floor of an apartment building close to Musashi-Koyama Station, this small café is a local favourite for its outstanding coffee and friendly service. The coffee: The café offers a variety of coffee options, including espresso, cappuccino, and a deliciously strong and smoky americano. The look: The café is a small, cozy space with a vintage feel, with wooden furniture and warm lighting. 3-16 Kanda-Nishiki, Chiyoda (Jinbocho Station). 03 5244 5458. glitchcoffee.com. Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat, Sun & hols 10am-10pm, closed Mon.

4. ONIBUS COFFEE

The look: Occupying a renovated, traditional-style building near Nakameguro Station, the cafe offers a unique ambiance with its wooden counter and coffee roaster. The coffee: Onibus import top-grade beans from around the world and roast them on-site, ensuring the freshest and highest-quality coffee. They offer a wide range of coffee options, including espresso, cappuccino, and a deliciously strong and smoky americano. The look: The café is a small, cozy space with a vintage feel, with wooden furniture and warm lighting. 5-9 Onibus, Nakameguro (Nakameguro Station). 03 5412 3083. onibuscoffee.com. Daily 9am-5pm.

7. GOOD PEOPLE & GOOD COFFEE

The look: Tucked in a side street near Musashi-Koyama station, this small café is a hidden gem for coffee lovers. The coffee: The café offers a variety of coffee options, including espresso, cappuccino, and a deliciously strong and smoky americano. The look: The café is a small, cozy space with a vintage feel, with wooden furniture and warm lighting. 3-3-14 Kanda-Nishiki, Chiyoda (Jinbocho Station). 03 5244 5458. glitchcoffee.com. Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat, Sun & hols 10am-10pm, closed Mon.

6. CAFÉ OBSCURA

The look: Operating a roastery and two shops in Sangenjaya, Obscura is one of the major players on Tokyo’s specialty coffee scene. The coffee: Obscura offers a range of coffee options, including espresso, cappuccino, and a deliciously strong and smoky americano. The look: The café is a small, cozy space with a vintage feel, with wooden furniture and warm lighting. 3-4-11 Higashiyama, Meguro (Ikejiri-Ohashi Station). 03 5725 1303. goodpeopleandgoodcoffee.com. Daily 9am-6pm.

8. GLITCH COFFEE & ROASTERS

The look: Kiyokawa Suzuki’s shop is located in fashionably vintage Jinbocho, nestled amongst dozens of secondhand bookstores and jazz cafes. The coffee: Glitch offers a variety of coffee options, including espresso, cappuccino, and a deliciously strong and smoky americano. The look: The café is a small, cozy space with a vintage feel, with wooden furniture and warm lighting. 4-4-16 Minami-Aoyama, Minato (Harajuku Station). 03 5244 5458. glitchcoffee.com. Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat, Sun & hols 10am-7pm.

9. THE ROASTERY

The look: Collaboratively run by the folks behind longtime favorites Fuglen, Obscura, and Obscura Coffee, this small roastery is a hidden gem for coffee lovers. The coffee: The roastery offers a range of coffee options, including espresso, cappuccino, and a deliciously strong and smoky americano. The look: The café is a small, cozy space with a vintage feel, with wooden furniture and warm lighting. 3-16 Kanda-Nishiki, Chiyoda (Jinbocho Station). 03 5244 5458. glitchcoffee.com. Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat, Sun & hols 10am-10pm, closed Mon.

10. PNB COFFEE

The look: Located on a quiet Meguro back street in autumn 2015, PNB ranks among the more stylish coffee shops in Tokyo. The coffee: The shop offers a variety of coffee options, including espresso, cappuccino, and a deliciously strong and smoky americano. The look: The café is a small, cozy space with a vintage feel, with wooden furniture and warm lighting. 5-10-19 Kanda-Nishiki, Chiyoda (Jinbocho Station). 03 5244 5458. glitchcoffee.com. Mon-Fri 10am-9pm, Sat, Sun & hols 10am-10pm, closed Mon.
11. CAFÉ DE LAMBRE
**The look:** Coffee Only ’reads the sign outside Café de Lambre, which has been keeping the Ginza horses well caffeinated since 1948. Remarkably, it’s still run by the same man: 103-year-old Ichiro Sekiguchi. The interior looks like it was last remodelled in the early 80s, although some of the equipment has clearly grown older, and it’s also the only coffee shop we’ve visited that has a washing machine behind the counter, no sign of the cloth filters used if you prefer to make your own.

**The coffee:** Fresh beans are brought in every day, ensuring a crisp taste that’s often missing even at some of Tokyo’s bigger specialist joints. Both espresso and pour-over varieties are available.

**What to order:** You won’t want to overlook the single-origin brews, which can be paired with pastries, cookies and granola bars.

12. SATEI HATO
**The look:** While it’s not hard to picture this delectable Matsushita’s Davide is a very decent street-side café in the old-school surrounds of eastern Tokyo. The mostly turquoise–coloured main room is nearly always buzzing, while the smaller space upstairs is more relaxing.

**The coffee:** Davide side-steps drip coffee entirely (reasoning it takes too long to serve), offering excellent espresso-based drinks instead.

**What to order:** Embrace your inner Milanese and down an espresso at the counter.

13. BLUE BOTTLE COFFEE
**The look:** The globe-conquering Blue Bottle aren’t known as the Apple of the coffee industry for nothing; their Kiyosumi-Shirakawa roastery (café and all other five Tokyo branches) is sleek, sterile and not the comfiest shop in town. Queues form outside on weekends, but it’s worth the wait.

**What to order:** Their charmingly DIY-style shop is fitted with a couple of small tables and a few stools against one wall, while the opposite side is filled with merchandise including coffee equipment and beans to take home.

14. DAVIDE COFFEE STOP
**The look:** In the evening. Even the slightly shabby decor recalls the kind of small town in continental Europe you’re having a good ol’ cup of coffee at your friend’s house. The walls are covered with the owner’s skateboard decks which he’s collected over the years, and there’s a handful of trinkets from his travels to Thailand littered around the shop.

**The coffee:** They’re sourcing beans from the same in-store roaster.

15. COFFEEAMP
**The look:** Named after the mini-trucks that zip around Kawasaki both pulls and pours quality hand drip coffee perfectly; the staff here is incredibly knowledgeable and happy to help.

**What to order:** There’s no food here, but try out their popular pour-over Blend which incorporates beans from Brazil, Guatemala and Colombia.

16. ARISE ROASTER
**The look:** Adjacent to the hip of Turret Coffee occupies a funky, intimate space only steps from the fishy action. Relax on one of the few ‘real’ seats or sit on the back of an actual turner as you chat with friends or experienced puller Kiyoshi Kawasaki over a cup.

**The coffee:** Kawasaki both pulls and pours quality espresso, hoping that his customers get a sense of the dedication that goes into filling every single cup.

**What to order:** If you need a real pick-me-up, get the Turret Latte, which has a double shot of espresso – not to mention some beautiful latte art. Those with a sweet tooth can snag one of the fluffy, buttery dorayaki (a pancake sandwich filled with whipped bean paste/made especially for Turret)

17. TURRET COFFEE
**The look:** Named after the mini-trucks that zip around nearby Tsukiji market, Turret Coffee occupies a funky, intimate space only steps from the fishy action. Relax on one of the few ‘real’ seats or sit on the back of an actual turner as you chat with friends or experienced puller Kiyoshi Kawasaki over a cup.

**The coffee:** Kawasaki both pulls and pours quality espresso, hoping that his customers get a sense of the dedication that goes into filling every single cup.

**What to order:** If you need a real pick-me-up, get the Turret Latte, which has a double shot of espresso – not to mention some beautiful latte art. Those with a sweet tooth can snag one of the fluffy, buttery dorayaki (a pancake sandwich filled with whipped bean paste/made especially for Turret)

18. 4/4 SEASONS COFFEE
**The look:** An Italian-style bar and café run by the jovial and talented Kyohi Nishiya, this welcoming shop has a slanting neighbourhood feel to it, thanks to the owner-barista’s no-fills attitude and the fun, retro décor.

**The coffee:** Nishiya pulls a highly competent espresso, which forms the base for his ample selection of mixed coffee.

**What to order:** There’s no bypassing the espresso banana milkshake, while the creamy custard pudding is equally heavenly.

19. COFFEEHOUSE NISHIYA
**The look:** Imagine a stereotypical Italian-style bar and café run by the jovial and talented Kyohi Nishiya, this welcoming shop has a slanting neighbourhood feel to it, thanks to the owner-barista’s no-fills attitude and the fun, retro décor.

**The coffee:** Nishiya pulls a highly competent espresso, which forms the base for his ample selection of mixed coffee.

**What to order:** There’s no bypassing the espresso banana milkshake, while the creamy custard pudding is equally heavenly.

20. LO SPAZIO
**The look:** Imagine a stereotypical Italian-style bar and café run by the jovial and talented Kyohi Nishiya, this welcoming shop has a slanting neighbourhood feel to it, thanks to the owner-barista’s no-fills attitude and the fun, retro décor.

**The coffee:** Nishiya pulls a highly competent espresso, which forms the base for his ample selection of mixed coffee.

**What to order:** There’s no bypassing the espresso banana milkshake, while the creamy custard pudding is equally heavenly.
Manabu Tago, art director and designer and president of MTDO Inc, has designed products for some of Japan’s coolest companies, including Toshiba and Realflight, and has served as a judge at several design awards.

He casts his expert eye over Casio’s latest G-Steel model and shares the secrets of functional beauty.

What does design mean to you?
A brand’s products physically express the brand’s philosophy or identity. Hence, as a product designer, I always need to be conscious of including the brand’s philosophy or identity into my work. It’s important for a designer to always question people’s expectations and aim for something new. Designers should also not forget that design has the power to change people’s lifestyles – especially when we’re talking about things like watches, which are worn and shown to others.

What’s your first impression of the new G-Steel?
Really good, actually I can see Casio’s playful mind in it. It builds on the tradition of the G-Shock as a both strong and casual watch, but also has a new style. Most people use their smartphones to check the time in today’s digital society, but I believe that there’s also a desire to go back to the analogue. Analogue watches are usually both delicately made and stylish, so they attract quality-conscious fans who don’t mind spending a little more than they would on a digital watch. Casio has managed to harness this tendency while adding their own technological prowess to create something new.

How do you think Casio has managed to make a watch as function-packed as the G-Steel appeal to such a wide audience?
When manufacturers focus only on practical utility, emphasizing functions or market demands, their products often take a specific form that attracts only a very narrow consumer base. But that’s not true with the G-Shock. The reason, in my mind, is that Casio has maintained a sense of fun in the development process. The dial indicator of the G-Shock is a great example: it doesn’t focus too much on utility and makes the watch feel dressed down – in a good sense. This means it can be worn in both casual and formal situations. This, in turn, testifies how Casio has managed to uplift a clear culture and identity, which has then led to success for the brand.

THE STYLE OF STEEL

Always looking to meet changing demands and surprise the world, G-SHOCK CASIO’s signature watch series, never stops evolving. It has been reborn again this autumn, with the first fully analogue G-STEEL line. Surrounded by a high strength steel frame, this power-packed chronograph wows both with its functionality and its appearance, and is sure to add an extra notch of class to your look.

Functional beauty
A top-of-the-line series, the G-STEEL has long attracted the attention of trend-setters, as new models do not disappoint on the face front: the stainless steel andrescent bands sit sleek and complement a formal outfit, while the simplified design means the watch goes equally well with a leather jacket. But the true beauty of this watch lies in its functions: equipped with an automatic time adjustment system through smartphone connection, water resistant up to pressure of 20 bar (200 metres), it also boasts the following high-light features.

S shock resistance
Analogue watches usually can’t withstand a knock, with hands often popping out when the timepiece gets hit. But CASIO’s shock-resistant technology makes this model supremely sturdy.

Smartphone connectivity
By having the G-STEEL draw the accurate time for your location via Bluetooth on your smartphone, CASIO has succeeded in reducing the amount of detail on the dial. While the watch itself looks simple, its dedicated smartphone app is a real treasure chest of information, packing in the world time for over 300 cities.

Information on the fly
The watch comes with a distinctive dial indicator at the nine o’clock position, inspired by the turbine blades of a jet aircraft engine. It rotates to graphically indicate Bluetooth connection, elapsed stopwatch time, alarm setting and battery level.

For more information on Casio’s latest timepieces and where to purchase yours, visit world.g-shock.com

Promotional feature
LOCAL INSIGHT

What does design mean to you?
A brand’s products physically express the brand’s philosophy or identity. Hence, as a product designer, I always need to be conscious of including the brand’s philosophy or identity into my work. It’s important for a designer to always question people’s expectations and aim for something new. Designers should also not forget that design has the power to change people’s expectations and aim for something new. Designers should also not forget that design has the power to change people’s lifestyles – especially when we’re talking about things like watches, which are worn and shown to others.

What’s your first impression of the new G-Steel?
Really good, actually I can see Casio’s playful mind in it. It builds on the tradition of the G-Shock as a both strong and casual watch, but also has a new style. Most people use their smartphones to check the time in today’s digital world, but also has a new style. Most people use their smartphones to check the time in today’s digital society, but I believe that there’s also a desire to go back to the analogue. Analogue watches are usually both delicately made and stylish, so they attract quality-conscious fans who don’t mind spending a little more than they would on a digital watch. Casio has managed to harness this tendency while adding their own technological prowess to create something new.

How do you think Casio has managed to make a watch as function-packed as the G-Steel appeal to such a wide audience?
When manufacturers focus only on practical utility, emphasizing functions or market demands, their products often take a specific form that attracts only a very narrow consumer base. But that’s not true with the G-Shock. The reason, in my mind, is that Casio has maintained a sense of fun in the development process. The dial indicator of the G-Shock is a great example: it doesn’t focus too much on utility and makes the watch feel dressed down – in a good sense. This means it can be worn in both casual and formal situations. This, in turn, testifies how Casio has managed to uplift a clear culture and identity, which has then led to success for the brand.

THE STYLE OF STEEL

Always looking to meet changing demands and surprise the world, G-SHOCK CASIO’s signature watch series, never stops evolving. It has been reborn again this autumn, with the first fully analogue G-STEEL line. Surrounded by a high strength steel frame, this power-packed chronograph wows both with its functionality and its appearance, and is sure to add an extra notch of class to your look.

Functional beauty
A top-of-the-line series, the G-STEEL has long attracted the attention of trend-setters, as new models do not disappoint on the face front: the stainless steel andrescent bands sit sleek and complement a formal outfit, while the simplified design means the watch goes equally well with a leather jacket. But the true beauty of this watch lies in its functions: equipped with an automatic time adjustment system through smartphone connection, water resistant up to pressure of 20 bar (200 metres), it also boasts the following high-light features.

S shock resistance
Analogue watches usually can’t withstand a knock, with hands often popping out when the timepiece gets hit. But CASIO’s shock-resistant technology makes this model supremely sturdy.

Smartphone connectivity
By having the G-STEEL draw the accurate time for your location via Bluetooth on your smartphone, CASIO has succeeded in reducing the amount of detail on the dial. While the watch itself looks simple, its dedicated smartphone app is a real treasure chest of information, packing in the world time for over 300 cities.

Information on the fly
The watch comes with a distinctive dial indicator at the nine o’clock position, inspired by the turbine blades of a jet aircraft engine. It rotates to graphically indicate Bluetooth connection, elapsed stopwatch time, alarm setting and battery level.

For more information on Casio’s latest timepieces and where to purchase yours, visit world.g-shock.com
Get ready for the Love Tokyo Awards 2017

Kicked off successfully last autumn, our Love Tokyo Awards will be back for a sophomore edition this November. Showcasing the city’s most-loved restaurants, bars, cafés, shops and products for 2017, plus our picks of the people who made Tokyo an even better city this year, the awards ceremony has been set for November 2.

THE NOMINEES
Who’s still in the running? See below for the Time Out Tokyo editorial team’s nominees – the city’s very best restaurants, shops, bars and cafés. Experts from across the global Time Out network will be joining our own ace team in picking out one outstanding venue in each category, judged by criteria including originality, service, value and atmosphere. The winners, along with recipients of the Best Product and Face of Tokyo awards, will be announced on November 2.

RESTAURANTS
ISE SUEYOSHI
SHINPAKU
YAKITORI IMAI
UBUKA
MADAI RAMEN MENGYO
GYOZA BAR COMME A PARIS
PATH
PONCHI-KEN
SHUNKOUTEI
KANEKO HANNOSUKE

SHOPS
KOFFEE MAMEYA
AMBUSH WORKSHOP
NAMONI BROADWAY
TOKYO HOTRUDU
MITSUKOSHI NINMIBASHI MAIN STORE
BEAMS JAPAN
RS (HACHIGO)
SHIYOSHIWARA
DISH UNION
TOKYOBIKE GALLERY

CAFÉS
MONOZUKI
CHOCOLATE JESUS
TOKYO SARYO
KOSOAN
DAVIDE COFFEE STOP
CAFÉ KITSUNÉ
HIGASHI-MUKOJIMA COFFEE-TEN
CAFÉ TROIS CHAMBRES
ROAR COFFEE HOUSE AND ROASTERY
SATEI HATO

BARS
BAR OAK
LUPIN
TENDER
BAR LA SALOTTI
DRAMAJU
SHINOHANA
STAR BAR GINZA
SANJAC BAR
ORIENTAL LOUNGE
ORCHARD BAR GINZA

LOVE FUKUSHIMA
- announcing the ten most exciting things to do in Fukushima prefecture

LOVETOKYOAWARDS
lovetokyoawards.com
1. STUDY UP ON SAMURAI HISTORY
An essential part of any trip to Fukushima, Tsuruga Castle lets you explore the history of the feudal lords who ruled Aizu, see weapons crafted by local swordsmen and learn the fascinating story of the Ryukotai (white tiger force) – a group of 20 teenage samurai who chose to take their own lives on a nearby hill during the Boshin War in 1868 believing, wrongly, that the castle’s defences had been breached. In addition to their graves, said hill is home to Sazaedo, a hexagon-shaped temple built entirely of wood back in 1796. A structure echoing its mind-bending shape is said to have been attempted – unsuccessfully – by Da Vinci himself.


2. TRAVEL BACK IN TIME
Located less than an hour’s drive south from the regional hub of Aizu-Wakamatsu, Ouchijuku is a postal village dating back to 1796. A structure echoing its shape is said to have been attempted – unsuccessfully – by Da Vinci himself.


3. TRAVEL BACK IN TIME
Located less than an hour’s drive south from the regional hub of Aizu-Wakamatsu, Ouchijuku is a postal village dating back to 1796. A structure echoing its shape is said to have been attempted – unsuccessfully – by Da Vinci himself.


4. HARVEST THE BEST OF THE LAND
The hills around Fukushima City are famed for their orchards – so much so that one of the major roads crossing the area is known as the ‘Fruit Line’. Get your farmer’s hat on at the Marue orchard, where picking experiences are offered from early June to early December. The best month for a visit is October, when pears, grapes and apples await hungry harvesters. You’re allowed to pick all you want for a set price (from ¥540) – as long as you’re ready to eat all on the spot afterwards.

Marue orchard, where picking experiences are offered from early June to early December. The best month for a visit is October, when pears, grapes and apples await hungry harvesters. You’re allowed to pick all you wants for a set price (from ¥400).


5. SOAK IN CLOUDY WATERS
Hot springs dot the Fukushima landscape from Iwaki in the southeast to Fukushima City in the northeast, with the waters of each and every place said to boast different healing properties. Popular destinations include Iizaka in Fukushima City, Ashinomaki near Aizu-Wakamatsu and Yunomoto in Iwaki. But our pick is the remote Takaya Onsen, renowned for its cloudy, milk-like water which is rich in hydrogen sulphide. Its opaqueness makes it ideal for first-time onsens- goers who’d rather not reveal, well, everything to fellow bathers.

Takaya Onsen: Takaya, Mackinraku, Aizuwakamatsu.

6. GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY
With organic-going back well over 300 years, Somayaki pottery plays a central role in Fukushima’s artisanal history. Before 2011, most of the traditional kilns were based in Namie, a town near the wrecked Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant that is still partially off limits to the public due to radiation concerns. These workshops relocated to sites across the prefecture after the disaster. The temporary central kiln was established in the city of Nihonmatsu. In addition to selling and displaying ware from ten or so member kilns, it offers pottery classes for anyone eager to make their own pieces. You can also check out the pottery’s store – they even have sake jelly.


7. TASTE PURE CUTENESS
Around 9am every weekday morning, dessert lovers from both near and far assemble by the dozens in a nondescript Iwaki residential street. They all come to seek out the uberi-kawaii jellyies sold at Jelly no Ie, a family-run shop turned nationwide phenomenon. Post-2011 media attention has meant that these colourful cuties now sell out in minutes, while online booking is just as competitive. But it’s worth your trouble: their jellies are both absolutely delectable and Instagram-friendly.


8. MARVEL AT MARINE WILDLIFE
Those garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours. But the garrulous honks you hear from the Aquamarine Fukushima aquarium as you approach in a local bus are a joy you could revel in for hours. Watching these playful beasts feed is a joy you could revel in for hours.

Aquamarine: 50 Tatsumicho, Onahama, Iwaki. 0246 73 2525. aquamarine.or.jp.

9. GO FLOWER-SPOTTING
Estimated to be more than 1,000 years old, the weeping higan cherry tree in the city of Koriyama’s Onigo hill is one of Japan’s most beautiful trees. In springtime, its branches stretch out over 50 meters high. Estimated to be more than 1,000 years old, the weeping higan cherry tree in the city of Koriyama’s Onigo hill is one of Japan’s most beautiful trees. In springtime, its branches stretch out over 50 meters high.


10. LEARN THE TRICKS OF THE SAKE TRADE
Perennial contenders at all of Japan’s most prestigious sake tasting competitions, Fukushima-based sake breweries are renowned for their innovative spirit. A particularly informative brewery to visit is Suehiro in Aizu-Wakamatsu. Most of its distilleries double as a museum and shop and include Iizaka in Fukushima City, Ashinomaki near Aizu-Wakamatsu and Yunomoto in Iwaki. But our pick is the remote Takaya Onsen, renowned for its cloudy, milk-like water which is rich in hydrogen sulphide. Its opaqueness makes it ideal for first-time onsens- goers who’d rather not reveal, well, everything to fellow bathers.


It has been more than six years since the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident of March 2011 hit Fukushima prefecture. The recovery from that disaster has been remarkable, with Fukushima already attracting almost as many tourists as before 2011. Fukushima is o

Ten things to do in Fukushima
Dine in style without breaking the bank in Tokyo’s fanciest neighbourhood. By Mayumi Koyama

**Where to eat now in... Ginza**

**TOKYO’S CENTRE OF luxury is packed with exorbitantly priced boutiques, but there’s more to Ginza than bling. The neighbourhood is also a cultural hub where the modern bumps up against the traditional in fascinating ways. That spirit extends into Ginza’s eating scene, which boasts old-school eateries and places on the culinary cutting edge. Here in fascinating ways. That spirit extends into Ginza’s eating scene, which also a cultural hub where the modern bumps up against the traditional boutiques, but there’s more to Ginza than bling. The neighbourhood is now in…Ginza**

**Where to eat**

**RENGATEI**

Rengatei sits quietly on gas-lit Ginza-dori and has served traditional ‘yoshoku’ fare since 1895. Yoshoku is characterised by Japanese re-imaginings of turn-of-the-century European and American cooking – think beef stew, deep-fried cutlets and rice on a plate. Popular dishes include pork cutlets, omelette over rice, fried oysters, fried lobster and hashed beef with rice. The place gets so packed at lunchtime that customers spill out onto the street, creating a jovial atmosphere.

- Rengatei. 3-15-16 Ginza, Chuo (Ginza Station). 03 3561 7258. tinyurl.com/TOTrengatei.
- 11:30am-2.30pm (last orders), 5pm-9pm (8.30pm). Sun & holidays until 8.30pm (9pm).

**KONDO**

Kondo’s amazing tempura challenges everything you think you know about food. That a deep-fried vegetable can taste so light and fresh seems impossible – so Stark is the contrast between one’s usual understanding of food cooked in grease and the oil-kissed contrast between one’s usual understanding of food cooked in grease and the oil-kissed everything you think you know about food.

Kondo’s amazing tempura challenges everything you think you know about food. That a deep-fried vegetable can taste so light and fresh seems impossible – so stark is the contrast between one’s usual understanding of food cooked in grease and the oil-kissed everything you think you know about food.

- Kondo. 8-5-12 Ginza, Chuo (Ginza Station). 03 3561 7247. tinyurl.com/TOTkondo.
- 12noon-2pm (closed Sun), 5pm-8.30pm, Sun & holidays.

**RENGE**

Renge occupies a small, unassuming space on the ninth floor of a newly renovated building and consists of little more than an open kitchen, counter seating and a few small tables. Don’t let the setting fool you, as there’s nothing basic about the food; in fact, it allows chef Hidetoshi Nishioka’s creations conjured up by chef Kondo. In fact, he refers to tempura as ‘steamed cuisine’, wrapping vegetables from all across Japan and ultra-fresh Tsukiji seafood into a gentle hull of batter before giving them the hot treatment. One of Kondo’s standouts is the sweet potato tempura, which looks like a slice of pure gold. Fried very gently in order to maintain its sweetness and served piping hot, it’s a dish you’re unlikely to find anywhere else no matter how hard you try.

- Renge. 7F, 7-4-13 Ginza, Chuo (Ginza Station). 03 6228 5551. tinyurl.com/TOTshiseido.
- 11.30am-9pm, closed Mon.

**SHISEIDO PARLOUR GINZA**

Like Rengatei, Shiseido Parlor – which was founded in 1902 – is a pioneer of yoshoku. The restaurant’s signature dish is sure to raise eyebrows – and possibly remove them altogether. It consists of curry rice topped off with lobster and abalone, which are flamed at your table. Of course, it’s quite the luxury option and will set you back around ¥10,000 (plus a service charge). The third-floor cafe also specialises in sweet treats including old-school ice cream soda (popular for well over a century now, we hear) and fruit parfaits, with a strawberry version ¥1,730 (plus tax) for the omakase (chef’s selection), the only option on the menu. This deal is composed of four or so seasonal dishes, which draw on influences from French, Italian and fusion styles while remaining very Japanese both in terms of preparation techniques and presentation. On our visit, Suzuki’s autumn menu included a marinated and grilled salmon (Pacific saury) that lingered long in the memory and a heavenly fresh ginkgo nut jam.

**SUZUKI**

At this hidden gem you’re in for delicate and colourful meals prepared by Akinobu Suzuki, an itamae with 28 years of experience, 15 of which were spent in New York. Easy on the eye, uncompromisingly seasonal and ambitiously out-there in terms of flavours, chef Suzuki’s cuisine feels almost under-priced – despite the fact you need to shell out a flat ¥10,000 (plus tax) for the smakase (chef’s selection), the only option on the menu. This deal is composed of four or so seasonal dishes, which draw on influences from French, Italian and fusion styles while remaining very Japanese both in terms of preparation techniques and presentation. On our visit, Suzuki’s autumn menu included a marinated and grilled salmon (Pacific saury) that lingered long in the memory and a heavenly fresh ginkgo nut jam.

- Suzuki. 1-3-1 Tsukishima, Chuo (Shintomicho, Tsukiji station). 03 3543 1711. tinyurl.com/TOTsuzukiginza.
- 6pm-10pm, closed Mon.
The best yakiniku in Tokyo

We check in with the experts on where to find the very best grill-it-yourself meat in town

FROM SUSHI AND SASHIMI to gentle grilled fish teishoku (set meals) and two-hour crab feasts – thinking of Tokyo and seafood is probably what springs to mind first. But Tokyo’s yakiniku scene is looking to change that. This meat-loving Instagrammer fills his feed with the best carnivore-friendly restaurants in the city. The 29er is particularly obsessed with the yakiniku (grilled meat) scene. Yakiniku is communal dining at its most moreish – diners usually order several dishes to meat, all composed with expertise and dedication. Highlights include fluffy, supermodel-slim chateaubriand, beef served with truffles, and deep-fried, breaded fillets – all dishes that were first introduced by Yoroniku and then taken up by competitors. Yakiniku isn’t usually considered a seasonal pleasure, but here you can be sure that the time of year is reflected on the menu.

GINZA COBAU

Considered overpriced and inaccessible, Ginza’s yakiniku eateries don’t have the best of reputations among the capital’s price-conscious carnivores. But Cobau is the exception; with pricey deals starting from ¥9,180, it’s far from cheap, but provides value with an impressive menu of rare, gorgeously plated kuroge (black-haired) wagyu cuts. One of the few places in Ginza that combines quality with variety, the refined, chic restaurant also offers a wide range of non-yakiniku meat dishes, including Korean-style sukiyaki.

- 3-46-10 Minami-Aoyama, Minato (Sukiyabashi JCT Station). 03 5568 5510.
- 4pm-11pm (10pm). 6pm-12midnight (last orders 11pm), Sat, Sun & hols

GNKINA

You’ve sampled the standard steaks and offal, and are looking to climb the carnivore ladder. There’s no better place to begin your quest than this ichigayu eatery, which always stocks finest-quality kuroge wagyu beef. Book in advance if you want to sample their famed sirloin, a truly luxurious treat. The eight-course daily specials (from ¥17,000), composed only of A5-grade product, represent the zenith of yakiniku in Tokyo.

- Gemundenaka 6F-2 Rokubancho, Chiyoda (Ichigaya Station). 03 3492 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTcobau. Mon-Fri 6pm-11pm, Sat, Sun & hols 6pm-12midnight (last orders 11pm), closed Wed.

NAKAHARA

An essential stop on the Tokyo yakiniku trail, this sleek Aoyama giant is known especially for ordering out one of the prix fixe ‘courses’. More than just a list of different cuts and flayours, these fed like carefully thought-out love letters to meat, all composed with expertise and dedication. Highlights include fluffy, supermodel-slim chateaubriand, beef served with truffles, and deep-fried, breaded fillets – all dishes that were first introduced by Yoroniku and then taken up by competitors. You can be sure that the time of year is reflected on the menu.

- 4-3-27 Minami-Aoyama, Minato (Sukiyabashi JCT Station). 03 3492 4829. tinyurl.com/TOTnakahara. Mon-Fri 6pm-12midnight (last orders 11pm), Sat 3pm-12midnight (last orders 11pm), Sun & hols 3pm-11pm.

YAKINIKU SHIMIZU

Hungry for meat after a visit to Meguro’s temples? No worries – this carnivore’s haven is just a quick walk away. The spicy appetisers prepare you for their masterpiece, the kuroge wagyu beef tongue (¥1,500), a rare, gently elastic delicacy that everyone should sample at least once. Those on a budget might want to choose the five-course set (¥3,800), a combination of rare delights soaked in slightly sweet barbecue-style sauce. We’ll even let you in on a secret: it’s not on the menu, but staff will serve beef over bread (from the cow’s pancreas) if asked nicely.

- 7F Bldg 8F-12-10 Ichigaya, Shinjuku (Ichigaya Station). 03 3492 2774. tinyurl.com/TOTshimizu. Sun-Sat 5pm-12midnight (last orders 11pm), Sun & hols 5pm-11pm. Closed Sun & holidays.

ICHIRIN SAITEMO HANA WA HANA

Having spent five years honing their skills at Tsukishima yakiniku favourite Denden, the duo behind this hidden Yushima gem are especially well-versed in fresh offal. While ‘organ meats’ might not jump off the menu to price-conscious carnivores, the kuroge wagyu tongue, deep-fried beef tongue or diaphragm cutlet (‘harami katsu’) are particularly obsessed with the yakiniku (grilled meat) scene. Yakiniku is communal dining at its most moreish – diners usually order several dishes to meat, all composed with expertise and dedication. Highlights include fluffy, supermodel-slim chateaubriand, beef served with truffles, and deep-fried, breaded fillets – all dishes that were first introduced by Yoroniku and then taken up by competitors. Yakiniku isn’t usually considered a seasonal pleasure, but here you can be sure that the time of year is reflected on the menu.

- 3-46-8 Yushima, Bunkyo (Yushima Station). 03 3836 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTichirin. 6pm-12midnight, closed Sun.
- Excellent post-drink destination. Ichirin stays open until midnight, making it an excellent post-drink destination.

- 3-46-8 Yushima, Bunkyo (Yushima Station). 03 3836 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTichirin. 6pm-12midnight, closed Sun.

- 3-46-8 Yushima, Bunkyo (Yushima Station). 03 3836 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTichirin. 6pm-12midnight, closed Sun.

- 3-46-8 Yushima, Bunkyo (Yushima Station). 03 3836 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTichirin. 6pm-12midnight, closed Sun.

- 3-46-8 Yushima, Bunkyo (Yushima Station). 03 3836 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTichirin. 6pm-12midnight, closed Sun.

- 3-46-8 Yushima, Bunkyo (Yushima Station). 03 3836 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTichirin. 6pm-12midnight, closed Sun.

- 3-46-8 Yushima, Bunkyo (Yushima Station). 03 3836 2987. tinyurl.com/TOTichirin. 6pm-12midnight, closed Sun.
KICHIJOJI might ring a bell for Ghibli fanatics who head west to visit the famous animation studio’s museum, or to those drawn to romantic strolls through the luscious Inokashira Park. However, the charming area – an ever-present on lists of Tokyo’s ‘most desirable neighbourhoods’ – is also a treasure trove for those looking to spend a little cash, offering up a selection of stores capable of satisfying the most ardent shopaholic. Make your way through Nakamichi-dori just west of the station for cute cafés and ‘zakka’ shops selling a variety of miscellaneous knickknacks, or head on down the path which leads to Inokashira Park for vintage wear and the lively restaurants which line the street. Here are our favourite Kichijoji stores.

**Skit**
A haven for sneakerheads, Skit carries everything from the latest models and limited-edition versions to dead stock amongst which you might rediscover a pair of past favourites. Sift through rows upon rows of colourful, wrapped-up shoes which line the store walls classified according to brand. The focus here is on men’s shoes from the old favourites (Adidas, Nike, Reebok, Onitsuka Tiger etc), but there are a few pairs for women and kids as well. Make sure to follow the store’s Twitter feed as they’re frequently updating it with new arrivals. The shop selects products on a pair-by-pair basis, so if you’re not sure of your size you better make a quick decision.

*Otake Bldg 2F , 2-2-10 Kichijoji-Honcho, Musashino (Kichijoji Station). 0422 72 1557. twovirgin.com. 3pm-11pm, Sat, Sun & hols 1pm-9pm.*

**Hyakunen**
If you’re not looking hard enough, you might miss this cult bookshop tucked away on the second floor across from the Tokyu department store. It’s worth seeking out though: inside you’ll find a grand selection of both secondhand and newly published books, magazines and ‘zines as well as DVDs and a small range of records. There’s even a handful of children’s books on hand in case you have your little ones in tow. The shop also hosts exhibitions and Q&A sessions where readers can meet with authors and various artists who have work showcasing at the bookshop.

*Murata Bldg 2F , 2-2-10 Kichijoji-Honcho, Musashino (Kichijoji Station). 0422 27 6885. 12noon-9.30pm, closed Tue.*

**Nico**
Head on up to Nico for a well-curated collection of vintage duds for both sexes and unique lifestyle accessories you never knew you needed. Located a stone’s throw from Kichijoji Station’s south exit, the shop is conveniently open late on weekdays to catch shoppers after work hours. Sift through classic clothing staples including striped boatneck shirts and denim button-downs, many of which are categorised by the year they originated. The collection is heavy on the ‘90s and early 2000s, but there are a few well-kept pieces from earlier years, and everything is still in great condition. There’s also a small lineup of jewellery and accessories, including a nice selection of pre-loved Ray-Bans.

*Otake Bldg 2F , 1-1-2 Kichijoji-Minamicho, Musashino (Kichijoji Station). 0422 72 1557. nicotokyo.com. 3pm-11pm, Sat, Sun & hols 1pm-9pm.*

**Outbound**
Outbound is the sister store of popular lifestyle shop Roundabout in Yoyogi-Uehara and showcases a beautiful selection of items collected from all across Japan. With gorgeous clothes, carved furniture, woven baskets and fine jewellery to explore, browsing through this ‘select shop’ is always a peaceful and soothing experience. Outbound also plays host to various exhibitions which change regularly. Be sure to check their website for news on the latest shows and happenings.

*Shop 101, 2-7-4 Kichijoji-Honcho, Musashino (Kichijoji Station). 0422 27 7726. outbound.to. 11am-7pm, closed Tue.*

**Markus**
Situated just off of the popular Nakamichi-dori shopping street, Markus is home to a fine array of Japanese objects of desire sourced from all across the country. The shop owner personally outings everything in the shop and goes around the country to visit various craftsmen to learn about their unique products. You’ll see that items are categorised by area and artisans, with small descriptions accompanying each and everyone. Our favourites include beautiful handmade fans from Kagawa, tea leaves from Shizuoka prefecture and stunning pottery and kitchenware from Okinawa.

*Musashino Country Heights A112, 2-15 Kichijoji Horochu, Musashino (Kichijoji Station). 0422 27 3004. marku-s.net. Mon-Fri 11am-6pm, Sat, Sun & hols 11am-6pm.*
The souvenir jacket has gone from controversial fashion statement to cult classic. Kaila Imada delves into the world of the ‘sukajan’

**A JACKET WITH DEEP ROOTS** in both Japanese and American culture, the ‘sukajan’ has made a stylish comeback in recent years, with modern versions being sported by everyone from Kanye West to Zayn Malik. But where did it originate?

Fashionistas can thank the American soldiers stationed in Japan who were stationed in Yokosuka south of Tokyo after World War II. They were the first ones to embellish their army wear with local elements of Japanese culture, such as motifs of geishas and dragons, and symbols of Japanese culture like parachute silk from the military campaigns. After World War II, the trend continued and soon jackets made from leftover parachute silk were being embellished with local symbols as a symbol of defiance against mainstream society. Back then, the jacket was often seen as a symbol of rebellion – and its notoriety was secured when filmmakers started using sukajans as the outfit of choice for screen gang members and the yakuza.

But questions of its authenticity continue. The selection here is pretty good and differs from the samples hanging around the store. Quality can’t be rushed, though, and it will take about three months from the date you order for the jacket to be finished.

**Where to buy a sukajan**

Whether you’re looking to buy a jacket as an actual souvenir or just want to try out the style, there are many places to shop for an authentic sukajan. From Yokosuka, home of the original sukajan and an hour out of the city, to dedicated stores around Tokyo, here are some of our favourite spots.

**Prince Shokai**
Located along Dobutsu Street, Yokosuka’s popular shopping row. Prince has been turning out authentic souvenir jackets for nigh on 70 years. You can choose from a select range of colours as well as pick the embroidery print from the samples hanging around the store. Quality can’t be rushed, though, and it will take about three months from the date you order for the jacket to be finished.

- From ¥34,000. 2-5 Honcho, Yokosuka, Kanagawa (Yokosuka Station). 046 823 0312. sukajyan.com. Daily 11am-6pm.

**First Shokai**
Another popular Yokosuka spot for the souvenir jacket. First Shokai has been making customisable souvenir jackets for 35 years. You can personalise your jacket just the way you like it here – picking the design and style of the jacket from the store, the brand’s books of photos in the store are a good place to get inspired. The shop has made numerous jackets for celebrities, including Ken Yokoyama’s Crazy Ken Band and singer Eikichi Yazawa. Again, though it’s a customisable jacket, you’ll need to be patient: a customised jacket takes about two months for completion, but we guarantee it’ll be well worth the wait.

- From ¥22,000-35,000. 2-5 Honcho, Yokosuka, Kanagawa (Yokosuka Station). 046 825 3800. 12noon-7pm, closed first and third Thu of the month.

**Okuma Shokai**
This Yokosuka shop is one of the few that still carries Tailor Toyo, one of the original producers of the souvenir jacket. The brand’s reversible numbers – which come in a multitude of colours and patterns – are particularly coveted. Mikasa is also home to another made-in-Japan brand called Hoshihime, whose jackets come in thicker varieties for the cooler months and thin versions perfect for layering.

- From ¥12,960. 4-7-8 Ueno, Taito (Ueno Station). 03 3832 4466. mikasa-vol2.com. Daily 11am-8pm.

**Kinji**
This popular vintage and consignment shop in Harajuku houses a fine selection of gently used and vintage souvenir jackets. Sift through the dedicated rack set up in the middle of the shop for a mix of unique coats at reasonable prices. You can usually tell you’re holding an authentic jacket by the higher price tag, but Kinji is also the perfect place to get a reasonably priced item if you aren’t ready to splurge.

- From ¥14,800. 2-7 Honcho, Yokosuka, Kanagawa (Yokosuka Station). 046 822 0312. sukajyan.com. Daily 11am-6pm.

**Kinji**
This popular vintage and consignment shop in Harajuku houses a fine selection of gently used and vintage souvenir jackets. Sift through the dedicated rack set up in the middle of the shop for a mix of unique coats at reasonable prices. You can usually tell you’re holding an authentic jacket by the higher price tag, but Kinji is also the perfect place to get a reasonably priced item if you aren’t ready to splurge.

- From ¥14,800. 2-7 Honcho, Yokosuka, Kanagawa (Yokosuka Station). 046 822 0312. sukajyan.com. Daily 11am-6pm.

**First Shokai**
Another popular Yokosuka spot for the souvenir jacket. First Shokai has been making customisable souvenir jackets for 35 years. You can personalise your jacket just the way you like it here – picking the design and style of the jacket from the store, the brand’s books of photos in the store are a good place to get inspired. The shop has made numerous jackets for celebrities, including Ken Yokoyama’s Crazy Ken Band and singer Eikichi Yazawa. Again, though it’s a customisable jacket, you’ll need to be patient: a customised jacket takes about two months for completion, but we guarantee it’ll be well worth the wait.

- From ¥22,000-35,000. 2-5 Honcho, Yokosuka, Kanagawa (Yokosuka Station). 046 825 3800. 12noon-7pm, closed first and third Thu of the month.

**Okuma Shokai**
This Yokosuka shop is one of the few that still carries Tailor Toyo, one of the original producers of the souvenir jacket. The brand’s reversible numbers – which come in a multitude of colours and patterns – are particularly coveted. Mikasa is also home to another made-in-Japan brand called Hoshihime, whose jackets come in thicker varieties for the cooler months and thin versions perfect for layering.

- From ¥12,960. 4-7-8 Ueno, Taito (Ueno Station). 03 3832 4466. mikasa-vol2.com. Daily 11am-8pm.

**Kinji**
This popular vintage and consignment shop in Harajuku houses a fine selection of gently used and vintage souvenir jackets. Sift through the dedicated rack set up in the middle of the shop for a mix of unique coats at reasonable prices. You can usually tell you’re holding an authentic jacket by the higher price tag, but Kinji is also the perfect place to get a reasonably priced item if you aren’t ready to splurge.

- From ¥14,800. 2-7 Honcho, Yokosuka, Kanagawa (Yokosuka Station). 046 822 0312. sukajyan.com. Daily 11am-6pm.

**First Shokai**
Another popular Yokosuka spot for the souvenir jacket. First Shokai has been making customisable souvenir jackets for 35 years. You can personalise your jacket just the way you like it here – picking the design and style of the jacket from the store, the brand’s books of photos in the store are a good place to get inspired. The shop has made numerous jackets for celebrities, including Ken Yokoyama’s Crazy Ken Band and singer Eikichi Yazawa. Again, though it’s a customisable jacket, you’ll need to be patient: a customised jacket takes about two months for completion, but we guarantee it’ll be well worth the wait.

- From ¥22,000-35,000. 2-5 Honcho, Yokosuka, Kanagawa (Yokosuka Station). 046 825 3800. 12noon-7pm, closed first and third Thu of the month.

**Okuma Shokai**
This Yokosuka shop is one of the few that still carries Tailor Toyo, one of the original producers of the souvenir jacket. The brand’s reversible numbers – which come in a multitude of colours and patterns – are particularly coveted. Mikasa is also home to another made-in-Japan brand called Hoshihime, whose jackets come in thicker varieties for the cooler months and thin versions perfect for layering.

- From ¥12,960. 4-7-8 Ueno, Taito (Ueno Station). 03 3832 4466. mikasa-vol2.com. Daily 11am-8pm.
Kosuke Shimizu discusses business and the importance of the blank space with butoh dancer Norihito Ishii of the internationally renowned Sankai Juku troupe.

BUTOH, A FORM OF DANCE

Theatre inspired by traditional Japanese aesthetics, has had a tremendous impact on the world of contemporary dance. One leading influence has been the Sankai Juku dance company, established in 1975 and now based at the Théâtre de la Ville in Paris. With Sankai Juku set to perform a piece called ‘Meguri – Teeming Sea, Tranquil Land’ this November at Tokyo’s New National Theatre, the troupe’s new generation of dancers are claiming the spotlight. One of them is 33-year-old Norihito Ishii, who we caught up with to discuss art, business – and art as business.

A bit of a loner in his childhood, Ishii first came in contact with the world of dance through a late-night TV show inspired by the street dance boom that spread through Japan in the late ‘90s. He started out dancing in entertainment productions, but gradually started feeling that something was missing. The turn to contemporary dance, he says, was an attempt to ‘find an answer to my doubts about myself’. This was also when Ishii first encountered Sankai Juku, a troupe that would have a huge influence on his future. For Ishii, whose routines had tended towards the kinetic until then, the ‘quiet, yet scintillingly rich’ style of Sankai Juku, described as anything from ‘slow’ and ‘intensely controlled’ to ‘theatrical’, was a revelation. ‘I had no idea that such subtle beauty existed,’ he recalls.

After undergoing a period of training, Ishii officially became a member of Sankai Juku in September 2010. Ushio Amagatsu, the company’s artistic director and a butoh legend, remains a powerful influence on Ishii’s creative work. ‘Amagatsu is constantly absorbing things from everyday life,’ says Ishii with reverence. ‘He takes in new things while reading, studying, looking, listening, eating and drinking.’ This is a spirit of constant inquiry that Ishii seems to have inherited: in addition to dance, he has immersed himself in both photography and design, recently turning to the traditional Japanese arts as well. In a world where many artists have a hard time making a living, the multi-talented performer is also an entrepreneur, employing marketing techniques with his company Deviate.co to raise the artist into the realm of ‘respectable professions’ in Japan.

Put his philosophy into practice. Having used flowers to express eternal themes such as the transient nature of life and the stillness of death, it was built on the same aesthetic sensibilities that fuel his dancing. Drawing on his experience with Sankai Juku and the traditional arts, Ishii focused on the concept of ‘yohaku’, which translates as ‘blank space’ but corresponds to the Buddhist concept of nothingness and emptiness. Yohaku, says Ishii, is the key to success in art, in both an expressive and business sense. Blank spaces allow an artwork to stimulate the imagination of its viewers. ‘The existence of emptiness lets people fill it with feelings, which can then relate to their own lives,’ says Ishii. ‘This is why a demand for art will always exist, and why I devote myself to the production of yohaku.’

NORIHITO ISHII: KISA TOYOSHIMA. STAGE: MEGURI © SANKAI JUKU

FRATELLI PARADISO

Italian dining + Bar + Natural wine from Sydney

Omoideando Hills 3F, 4-12-1 Jingumae, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
Reservation: 03-3408-0808
travel@fratelli-jp.com
Open: 11:00-23:00 (Sunday 23:30)
New shows to see

Check out the new Yayoi Kusama museum, explore ancient Latin American history and pass through a real-life animal house at autumn’s best art events

YAYOI KUSAMA: CREATION IS A SOLITARY PURSUIT, LOVE IS WHAT BRINGS YOU CLOSER TO ART

The first exhibition at Shinjuku’s Yayoi Kusama Museum – the world’s only museum dedicated entirely to the bewigged contemporary artist – will be on until February 2018 and features works from Kusama’s ‘My Eternal Soul’ series, which was also the focus of the Museum’s extensive and widely popular retrospective earlier this year. Note that entry is by timed ticket (four per day, at 11am, 12.30pm, 2pm and 3.30pm) and the museum is open Thursday through Sunday) – and you’ll need to buy tickets in advance. Do so through the museum’s bilingual website.

FEAR IN PAINTING

Based on a bestselling book by Kyoko Nakano, a scholar of German literature and an art historian, this travelling exhibition heads to Ueno after a summertime stop in Kobe. Perfect for those dark and rainy autumn days, it focuses on some of the scariest paintings in the history of Western art: 80 pieces by mostly Victorian-era artists, including pre-Raphaelite painter John William Waterhouse and illustrator Aubrey Beardsley. 

AN EXHIBITION OF TRULY EPIC SCALE

An exhibition of truly epic scale, this look at ancient Andean culture covers a whopping 15,000 years, nine distinct civilisations and a geographical area that corresponds to most of the western side of South America. Said civilisations range from the prehistoric settlers of Caral in modern-day Peru to the Incas, who ruled over a mountainous empire from the 13th to the mid-16th century before being conquered by the Spanish. Split into thematically-focused sections, the display also highlights the creations of the famed Nazca Lines and displays art from across the Andes, including golden masks and accessories, ceramics and clothing.

ANCIENT CIVILIZATION OF THE ANDES

An exhibition of truly epic scale, this look at ancient Andean culture covers a whopping 15,000 years, nine distinct civilisations and a geographical area that corresponds to most of the western side of South America. Said civilisations range from the prehistoric settlers of Caral in modern-day Peru to the Incas, who ruled over a mountainous empire from the 13th to the mid-16th century before being conquered by the Spanish. Split into thematically-focused sections, the display also highlights the creations of the famed Nazca Lines and displays art from across the Andes, including golden masks and accessories, ceramics and clothing.

A SUMMERTIME STOP IN KOBE

...and more down-to-earth design. The Ando-picked Zaha Hadid plan for this extensive, multi-disciplinary exhibition realised in collaboration with veteran dancer and actor Min Tanaka, 72, Centred on the relationship between light and the body, ‘Photosynthesis’ consists of images Tanaka shot with Tanaka as his subject way back in the late 70s and new photographs taken specifically for this exhibition.

The first exhibition at Shinjuku’s Yayoi Kusama Museum – the world’s only museum dedicated to the artist. You’ll get to pore over around 40 works by Van Gogh himself, plus up to 80 pieces said to have influenced him.

UNKEI: THE GREAT MASTER OF BUDDHIST SCULPTURE

Active in the late Heian (794–1192) and early Kamakura (1192–1333) periods, Unkei is considered Japan’s greatest master of Buddhist sculpture. Working during a period of political upheaval, when the centre of power shifted from the aristocracy in Kyoto to the samurai in Kamakura, Unkei brought a revolutionary strand of realism into the realm of religious art, depicting buddhas, bodhisattvas and other figures of Buddhist lore in stark, striking terms. This comprehensive look at his life and work features display of statues borrowed from temples across the country, including the stately ‘Four Heavenly Kings’, a registered national treasure composed of four sculptures each over two metres tall.

ATSUHIKO MISAWA’S ANIMAL HOUSE: HOUSE OF ENIGMAS

Depicting wild beasts with a sharp but humorous eye, wood sculptor Atsuhiro Misawa has been working on his ongoing ‘Animals’ series for more than 16 years now, so you might have seen his lively pieces at a previous Tokyo exhibition – or in replica forms at one of the city’s countless knickknack shops. Misawa’s latest show lets you dive deep into his world of quirky beasts: ‘House of Enigmas’ series funnies friends from lions and bears to cats and bunnies displayed in a maze-like space inspired by the designs of architect Leichie Shihari. Misawa himself will be working on new sculptures at the museum on October 24.

A COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT HIS LIFE AND WORK

This exhibition that surveys both the Dutch master’s creativity in Kamakura, Unkei brought a revolutionary strain of realism into the realm of religious art, depicting buddhas, bodhisattvas and other figures of Buddhist lore in stark, striking terms. This comprehensive look at his life and work features display of statues borrowed from temples across the country, including the stately ‘Four Heavenly Kings’, a registered national treasure composed of four sculptures each over two metres tall.
Now that Koshiro Hino never sleeps. It’s possible that Koshiro Hino never sleeps. The Osaka-based experimental multi-talent has been in the beat business since high school and has developed a unique sound best appreciated on the dancefloor. Synths scatter like droplets while a pounding bass line gives the eclectic mixture weight. Look out for “Exit Entrance”, the new NHK yx Koyxen album on DFA Records, this October.

Akiho Kiyama

Dividing her time between Tokyo and Berlin, Akiho Kiyama is already a household name among European techno aficionados. Master of the minimal, she steers clear of catchy dance tracks and takes her tunes in a more abstract direction. The resulting soundscapes are cerebral beauties capable of moving heart, head and feet.

CRZKNY (Crazy Kenny)

Japanese producers were quick to embrace newwave, the stark, cerebral beauties capable of moving heart, head and feet. It’s difficult to put it into words. Some of the ones I’ve seen in the media are “hazy”, “obscure”, “slow”, “experimental” and “pop”. Pop is something I’m experimenting a lot with right now. I want to always have that strange and special bit.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START MAKING MUSIC?

In elementary school, I listened to the J-pop that was popular at the time, but later turned to grunge and old punk and then John Frusciante. Listening to the hell out of all solo albums. I also liked dark and deathly stuff like Syd Barrett – anything that was creepy and psychedelic. My favourite Japanese band was Number Girl.

Before moving to Tokyo, I had no concept of club music. I formed YPY, his techno-focused alias. Challenging the conventions of club tunes in ever-innovative ways, he has recently found a receptive audience in Europe, releasing records on Berlin’s Nous and London’s Where Records on Berlin’s Nous and London’s Where

Perhaps the Brightest among Tokyo’s new wave of indie stars, 27-year-old Hiroshima native Sapphire Slows has gone from bedroom producer to star attraction at major Japanese electronic music festivals including spring’s Rainbow Disco Club and Taico Club. Her new single ‘The Edge of My Land’ is an exciting track that hits at more great thingsthe origin of dance music. It’s difficult to put it into words. Some of the ones I’ve seen in the media are “hazy”, “obscure”, “slow”, “experimental” and “pop”. Pop is something I’m experimenting a lot with right now. I want to always have that strange and special bit.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START MAKING MUSIC?

In elementary school, I listened to the J-pop that was popular at the time, but later turned to grunge and old punk and then John Frusciante. Listening to the hell out of all solo albums. I also liked dark and deathly stuff like Syd Barrett – anything that was creepy and psychedelic. My favourite Japanese band was Number Girl.

Before moving to Tokyo, I had no concept of club music. I formed YPY, his techno-focused alias. Challenging the conventions of club tunes in ever-innovative ways, he has recently found a receptive audience in Europe, releasing records on Berlin’s Nous and London’s Where Records, electroclash and electronic music. As I started going to record stores like Big Love and Jet Set, I’d dig for the latest indie, experimental and ambient records. Record stores are great for getting into a new groove, even if you don’t know the names of the artists. Music gradually became my passion, and eventually it also became my job. I was lucky to have my stuff released by [LA based label] Not Not Fun and Big Love – that’s how I got started.

YOU’VE BEEN GETTING INTO DJING LATELY. WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR THE NEAR FUTURE?

Learning the DJ craft has had a huge influence on my own productions. I think the two roles are complementary and challenge me to become better at both. As for upcoming plans, my new mini-LP ‘Time’ is coming out on UK label Kaleidoscope in September. It’s something I put a lot of time into making while having a lot on my mind, and it’s my most vocally-focused, pop-heavy release so far. Beyond that, I’ll be touring China in October and Europe in November, including a date at Ableton Loop 2017 in Berlin. I also want to release something next year, so I hope to keep producing at the same time. It’ll be pretty busy, but I’m really excited.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR THE NEAR FUTURE?

YOU’VE BEEN GETTING INTO DJING LATELY. WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR THE NEAR FUTURE?

Learning the DJ craft has had a huge influence on my own productions. I think the two roles are complementary and challenge me to become better at both. As for upcoming plans, my new mini-LP ‘Time’ is coming out on UK label Kaleidoscope in September. It’s something I put a lot of time into making while having a lot on my mind, and it’s my most vocally-focused, pop-heavy release so far. Beyond that, I’ll be touring China in October and Europe in November, including a date at Ableton Loop 2017 in Berlin. I also want to release something next year, so I hope to keep producing at the same time. It’ll be pretty busy, but I’m really excited.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR THE NEAR FUTURE?

YOU’VE BEEN GETTING INTO DJING LATELY. WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR THE NEAR FUTURE?

Learning the DJ craft has had a huge influence on my own productions. I think the two roles are complementary and challenge me to become better at both. As for upcoming plans, my new mini-LP ‘Time’ is coming out on UK label Kaleidoscope in September. It’s something I put a lot of time into making while having a lot on my mind, and it’s my most vocally-focused, pop-heavy release so far. Beyond that, I’ll be touring China in October and Europe in November, including a date at Ableton Loop 2017 in Berlin. I also want to release something next year, so I hope to keep producing at the same time. It’ll be pretty busy, but I’m really excited.

WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR THE NEAR FUTURE?

YOU’VE BEEN GETTING INTO DJING LATELY. WHAT ELSE DO YOU HAVE PLANNED FOR THE NEAR FUTURE?

Learning the DJ craft has had a huge influence on my own productions. I think the two roles are complementary and challenge me to become better at both. As for upcoming plans, my new mini-LP ‘Time’ is coming out on UK label Kaleidoscope in September. It’s something I put a lot of time into making while having a lot on my mind, and it’s my most vocally-focused, pop-heavy release so far. Beyond that, I’ll be touring China in October and Europe in November, including a date at Ableton Loop 2017 in Berlin. I also want to release something next year, so I hope to keep producing at the same time. It’ll be pretty busy, but I’m really excited.
Grand stands

Mari Hiratsuka sips her way around the ‘kaku-uchi’ counters of Tokyo’s finest liquor stores

**Originally used to describe** the unsanitary act of drinking straight from the bottle, the Japanese word ‘kaku-uchi’ now refers to sipping booze in the corner of a liquor store – often at a stand bar set up specifically for the purpose. These counter-only establishments, which allow you to sample any bottle from the shop’s own vast selection, aren’t just considerably cheaper than bars: they often also go to great lengths to provide snacks that pair well with the drinks on offer. These are five of our favourite casual-in-store boozers – don’t knock your comfortable shoes and prepare to linger.

**Deguchiya**
Originally opened in 1933, Deguchiya added a kaku-uchi counter when it was renovated in 2008. Although wine is the specialty here, you’ll also get to choose from a great selection of sake and shochu, craft beers and a small lineup of puchiguru. The staff living here focus on bottles from smaller scale vineyards and famous organic and natural wines. The bar offers the opportunity to sample wines from ¥400 per glass, along with slices of cheese (¥400). Look out for guest bottles, too: one recent offering was Tamagawa sake, created by Oxford graduate-turned-sake brewer Philip Harper, the only Westerner to date to earn the title of ‘toji’ (master brewer). Deguchiya is a great spot for learning more about the origins and producers of your favourite tipples.

**Jip Wine Bar & Wine Shop**
Located near the verdant loveliness of Shinjuku Gyoen park, Jip specialises in domestic wine. In fact, the store-bar is a pioneer in the field, having opened in 2000 – at a time when there were only a handful of vineyards in Japan. They now stock a hand-picked selection of bottles from more than 80 wineries across the country, from Hokkaido in the north to Kyushu in the south. Bottles can be bought at the store and drunk at the counter, although you’ll need to pay a ¥1,800 corkage fee per bottle. The appetiser menu lists everything from raw fish to sashimi to a selection of refined Japanese dishes, most available for well under ¥1,000 per plate. You can also pick from a lineup of at least 20 wines by the glass (all ¥500), including reds, whites, rosés and sparkling wines. Originally built as a live music venue, the building also hosts its own musical performances from time to time.

**Jollys Ebisu**
A venerable liquor store with nearly 100 years of history, Jollys Ebisu on Meiji-dori and is even more of a standout after last year’s top to toe renovation. Now composed of a shop, a wood-trimmed counter and a basement music studio, it’s a popular spot with backpackers and local office workers alike. All bottles available in the store can be tasted at the bar, which also serves up food including hot dogs and spam musubi rice rolls. Look out for a great selection of craft beers from American breweries, including Lagunitas and Long Island.

**Kaku-Uchi Se-Bon**
Opened in 2011 in Nomura-Nakacho, a neighbourhood packed with cheap warung-style holes, Se-Bon occupies a renovated warehouse that feels like Tokyo’s best kept secret. In summer the floor-to-ceiling shutters are thrown open to let the light in, while in winter they are closed down to create the cosiest of atmospheres. The drink selection starts and ends with sake: Se-Bon’s owner keeps regulars happily on their toes with a rotating lineup of high-quality, hard-to-find sakes from the likes of Iwaiwa and Hanaabi, all priced so that three glasses will set you back less than ¥2,000. A single glass can be had for under ¥1,000, while appetisers – including smoked duck, steamed dumplings and shiokara (salted and fermented seafood) – go for a wallet-friendly ¥260. Bringing your own food is allowed as well, although you’ll need to pay a small fee before digging in. Se-Bon is a laidback joint where you’re expected to strike up conversation with fellow drinkers and make new boozy discoveries. Two other shops of the same name can be found in Toyosu and Mombetsu.

**Beer Stand HiranoYa**
HiranoYa is all about change with the times: founded in 1997, it operated as a liquor dealer-come-convenience store during the bubble economy years of the late ’80s before eventually turning into a beer stand in 2013. It now stocks an incredible 100 varieties of Belgian beer – an obsession so great they’ve even got one of their sons to brew for them. The sister glass, alongside slices of ‘the cheese of the day’ (¥150). Look out for guest bottles, too: one recent offering was Tamagawa sake, created by Oxford graduate-turned-sake brewer Philip Harper, the only Westerner to date to earn the title of ‘toji’ (master brewer). Deguchiya is a great spot for learning more about the origins and producers of your favourite tipples.

**Beer Stand HiranoYa**
HiranoYa is all about change with the times: founded in 1997, it operated as a liquor dealer-come-convenience store during the bubble economy years of the late ’80s before eventually turning into a beer stand in 2013. It now stocks an incredible 100 varieties of Belgian beer – an obsession so great they’ve even got one of their sons to brew for them. The sister glass, alongside slices of ‘the cheese of the day’ (¥150). Look out for guest bottles, too: one recent offering was Tamagawa sake, created by Oxford graduate-turned-sake brewer Philip Harper, the only Westerner to date to earn the title of ‘toji’ (master brewer). Deguchiya is a great spot for learning more about the origins and producers of your favourite tipples.

**Beer Stand HiranoYa**
HiranoYa is all about change with the times: founded in 1997, it operated as a liquor dealer-come-convenience store during the bubble economy years of the late ’80s before eventually turning into a beer stand in 2013. It now stocks an incredible 100 varieties of Belgian beer – an obsession so great they’ve even got one of their sons to brew for them. The sister glass, alongside slices of ‘the cheese of the day’ (¥150). Look out for guest bottles, too: one recent offering was Tamagawa sake, created by Oxford graduate-turned-sake brewer Philip Harper, the only Westerner to date to earn the title of ‘toji’ (master brewer). Deguchiya is a great spot for learning more about the origins and producers of your favourite tipples.
Shibuya’s best DJ bars

Whether you’re into techno, house or jazz, Shibuya’s DJ bars provide the party – every day of the week. By Kunihiko Miki and Mari Hirasuka

IF YOUR IDEA OF a good night out involves a drink, good music – and perhaps a little dance, so-called DJ bars are your best bet. Smaller than full-on clubs, they’re comfy spots for whiling away the evening in style. Shibuya has a particularly impressive concentration of these little gems, so we’ve rounded up our faves here.

BAR MUSIC

Owned by songwriter and DJ Tomosaka Nakamura, Bar Music plays everything from jazz to Brazilian beats. Order an Espresso Cooler, made with coffee beans from Nakamura’s native Hiroshima, sit back and soak in the eclectic tunes. Consider browsing the myriad of records – if you find that one album tickles your fancy you’ll be able to buy it on the spot.

5F, 1-6-7 Dogenzaka, Shibuya. 03 6458 2487. tinyurl.com/ TFDBarmusic. 7pm-2am (last call 1am in Fri).

CAFÉ APRES-MIDI

Not many places in this fast-changing bit of town can lay claim to being a Shibuya golden oldie, but Café Apres-Midi can. Opened during the area’s original café boom in the late ’90s, it’s owned by Tora Hashimoto, a DJ known for his free spirit and expansive selection of CDs. An evening in his company involves kicking back with a glass of wine or a cocktail while listening to everything from oldie to hard rock.

B1F, 1-13-15 Jinnan, Shibuya. 03 6423 0644. tinyurl.com/ TOTapres. 11.30am-11.30pm (Fri until 1.30am, à la carte to 2.30am).

THE ROOM

This DJ bar in the backstreets of Jinnan is known for hosting the occasional secret set from big-name spinners. No matter who is playing to the small dance floor, 20 is a faves here.

5F, Tosei Bldg B1F, 1-6-5 Dogenzaka, Shibuya. 03 3461 1225. tinyurl.com/ TOTroom. Mon-Thu 9pm-5am, Fri, Sat 9pm-6am, closed Sun.

NIGHT CLUB TRUMP TOKYO

Opened in December 2016, Trump Tokyo (not to be confused with either fellow Shibuya club Trump Room nor any establishment owned by the US president) sits on a small street lined with restaurants and not far from the Mark City shopping complex. Enter the night’s inconspicuous door and you’ll find yourself in a luxuriously kitchy room filled with antique chandeliers and mirrors in which the assembled crowd can admire the shapes they are throwing.

7pm-12midnight (Sun from 4pm, Fri until late). TOTkoara1. Mon-Thu 9pm-5am, Fri, Sat 9pm-6am, closed Sun.

TRUMP TOKYO: KEISUKE TANIGAWA

Owned by members of Kyoto Jazz Massive, it’s a small venue split in two: one half is a concrete-walled bar, the other a near pitch-black dancefloor. The flavour is usually house to hard rock.

58

Bar Music

CAFE APRES-MIDI

The Room

Trump Tokyo

Nightlife

Pay a visit to the world-famous Robot Restaurant. By Kaila Imada

BE PREPARED TO go into absolute sensory overload at Shinjuku’s Robot Restaurant. Filled with powerful drumming, electrifying sparks and glittering sequins, this show experience that you’ll only find in Japan. Situated down the lively streets of Shinjuku’s Kabukicho district, the restaurant (it’s more like a theatre, really) is in a labyrinthine building. The flavours are here for the spectacle, not the food. Have you ever been to a show for an impressive five years and counting? Whether you’re thinking of going with friends or bringing your kids along, the show is the perfect place to start your city adventure.

BEFORE YOU START

Even if you’ve been to the show before, it doesn’t hurt to check it out again as it changes up every few months with new surprises in store. Curious yet? You’ll just have to experience it for yourself to find out what it’s really about!

HOW TO BOOK: Robot Restaurant is open for three shows daily, starting at 5.55pm, 7.50pm and 9.45pm (with an additional show at 3pm on weekends and holidays), and the format is changed every few months to keep things fresh. Nip more your seat a couple of days ahead by calling the number below between 9am and 10pm. The entrance fee is ¥8,000, excluding food and drinks. Note that the show might change due to maintenance.

$10,000 off

on page 57 with you

and get ¥1,000 off

the bill.
Flower power

One small Sendagaya café is making big waves with its unique employment policy.

By Yukako Izumi

MAY 2017 SAW flower shop and café Lorans Harajuku open on as one of the nation’s more hip Sendagaya-Kitasando area. But this aptly is not cut from the same cloth as its numerous hipster neighbours—decorated with lush plants, it specialises in smoothies, veg heavy lunches and vibrant flowers, all sold and served by people with mental illnesses and disorders.

Lorans is the passion project of Mizuki Fukuju, an energetic 28-year-old who currently employs around 20 people with disabilities. She says her aim is to pay all of her employees around $20 per hour – above the national average for workers with special needs. Such staff members at Lorans currently work from 20 to 30 hours every week, cooking, mixing smoothies, waiting tables and making bouquets. Despite her tender years, Fukuju also emphasises the importance of tailoring tasks to individuals’ strengths. ‘While many of my employees aren’t very good at multi-tasking, they work highly efficiently when given a single task to focus on,’ she says. ‘They’re also very good at picking up on customers’ feelings and understanding their needs.’

Fukuju also emphasises the role of the workplace in helping people with mental illness find a job. ‘That realisation stayed with me, and later connected with my desire to work with flowers and employ people with disabilities,’ says Fukuju. ‘Some of the employees at Lorans say they never thought of being able to work at a flower shop and many have worked with Fukuju longer than with any other employer. ‘Maybe it’s the flowers, but here they can stay calm and continue working – a rarity for people with mental disabilities,’ she notes.

Her interest in a proactive employment policy dates back to a visit to a special school for the disabled, where she learned that only around 15 percent of Japanese people with mental disabilities ever find a job. ‘That realisation stayed with me, and later connected with my desire to work with flowers and employ people with disabilities,’ says Fukuju.

As the café’s success grew, Fukuju knew she needed a bigger space to expand her vision. Lorans Harajuku, as well as its more central Sendagaya sister café, opened in October 2017.

One of the employees at Lorans says she never thought of being able to work at a flower shop and many have worked with Fukuju longer than with any other employer. ‘Maybe it’s the flowers, but here they can stay calm and continue working – a rarity for people with mental disabilities,’ she notes.

Fukuju also emphasises the importance of tailoring tasks to individuals’ strengths. ‘While many of my employees aren’t very good at multi-tasking, they work highly efficiently when given a single task to focus on,’ she says. ‘They’re also very good at picking up on customers’ feelings and understanding their needs.’

When it comes to working in Japan, most people with disabilities are only offered positions at welfare facilities or simple tasks at companies that pledge to employ a set number of special needs staff. But such work is rarely considered meaningful by the people doing it and has little impact on social attitudes. ‘That’s why Lorans and places like it can make a difference – by demonstrating that flower shop clerks and baristas with disabilities are, in the end, just like any other flower shop clerks and baristas,’ Fukuju says. ‘Many customers have told me they didn’t even realise they were being served by people with mental disabilities,’ says Fukuju. Sure sounds like progress is already being made.

‘Many customers have told me they didn’t even realise they were being served by people with mental disabilities’

Her interest in a proactive employment policy dates back to a visit to a special school for the disabled, where she learned that only around 15 percent of Japanese people with mental disabilities ever find a job. ‘That realisation stayed with me, and later connected with my desire to work with flowers and employ people with disabilities,’ says Fukuju.

As the café’s success grew, Fukuju knew she needed a bigger space to expand her vision. Lorans Harajuku, as well as its more central Sendagaya sister café, opened in October 2017.

One of the employees at Lorans says she never thought of being able to work at a flower shop and many have worked with Fukuju longer than with any other employer. ‘Maybe it’s the flowers, but here they can stay calm and continue working – a rarity for people with mental disabilities,’ she notes.

Fukuju also emphasises the importance of tailoring tasks to individuals’ strengths. ‘While many of my employees aren’t very good at multi-tasking, they work highly efficiently when given a single task to focus on,’ she says. ‘They’re also very good at picking up on customers’ feelings and understanding their needs.’

When it comes to working in Japan, most people with disabilities are only offered positions at welfare facilities or simple tasks at companies that pledge to employ a set number of special needs staff. But such work is rarely considered meaningful by the people doing it and has little impact on social attitudes. ‘That’s why Lorans and places like it can make a difference – by demonstrating that flower shop clerks and baristas with disabilities are, in the end, just like any other flower shop clerks and baristas,’ Fukuju says. ‘Many customers have told me they didn’t even realise they were being served by people with mental disabilities,’ says Fukuju. Sure sounds like progress is already being made.

‘Many customers have told me they didn’t even realise they were being served by people with mental disabilities’

Her interest in a proactive employment policy dates back to a visit to a special school for the disabled, where she learned that only around 15 percent of Japanese people with mental disabilities ever find a job. ‘That realisation stayed with me, and later connected with my desire to work with flowers and employ people with disabilities,’ says Fukuju.

As the café’s success grew, Fukuju knew she needed a bigger space to expand her vision. Lorans Harajuku, as well as its more central Sendagaya sister café, opened in October 2017.

One of the employees at Lorans says she never thought of being able to work at a flower shop and many have worked with Fukuju longer than with any other employer. ‘Maybe it’s the flowers, but here they can stay calm and continue working – a rarity for people with mental disabilities,’ she notes.

Fukuju also emphasises the importance of tailoring tasks to individuals’ strengths. ‘While many of my employees aren’t very good at multi-tasking, they work highly efficiently when given a single task to focus on,’ she says. ‘They’re also very good at picking up on customers’ feelings and understanding their needs.’

When it comes to working in Japan, most people with disabilities are only offered positions at welfare facilities or simple tasks at companies that pledge to employ a set number of special needs staff. But such work is rarely considered meaningful by the people doing it and has little impact on social attitudes. ‘That’s why Lorans and places like it can make a difference – by demonstrating that flower shop clerks and baristas with disabilities are, in the end, just like any other flower shop clerks and baristas,’ Fukuju says. ‘Many customers have told me they didn’t even realise they were being served by people with mental disabilities,’ says Fukuju. Sure sounds like progress is already being made.
From the newest table tennis centre in town to a beginner-friendly roller skate rink, these are the top Tokyo spots for working out whatever the weather.

By Mari Hiratsuka

DOUBLE BLUE

The only exclusively squash-focused facility in Tokyo, Double Blue opened this summer just off the main shopping street in Hiroo. Run by Med Support Systems, a company in the preventive medicine field that also owns the super-exclusive Esquisse restaurant in Ginza, it stands out with deep-blue walls and twin blue courts. They’re currently offering free racket and protective glasses rentals for anyone who signs up to play – a ten-minute session costs ¥580 per court (¥480 on weekdays between 10am and 6pm), no other fees are required and online bookings are taken. Just note that black balls and shoes with black soles aren’t allowed (white balls are sold at the counter). Since playing squash is an easy way to burn a lot of calories in a short time, Double Blue is the ideal autumn workout destination.


ROCKY BOULDERING GYM

SHINAGAWA

Bouldering – aka indoor rock climbing – requires both brains and brawn. Participants must plan the right route up an artificial cliff beforepulling themselves up to the summit. One of the biggest bouldering gyms in Tokyo is located in the corner of a container terminal half an hour’s walk from Shinagawa Station, but is certainly worth the trek – or the Shinagawa Pier bus ride from the station. Rocky features two areas with 13 long and highly varied walls, allowing climbers of all skill levels to find the route they want. The 30-minute ‘experience package’, available only on weekdays and without registration, includes shoes and chalk for a grand total of ¥1,500 – perfect for beginners.

Matsuoka Shinagawa Futo Bldg 103, 5-4-38 Konan, Minato (Shinagawa, Tennozu Isle stations). 03 6712 9538. rockyclimbing.com. Daily 10am–11pm.

T4 TOKYO

Ping pong, table tennis, whiff whiff – whatever you call it, fans of tiny tennis will love T4 Tokyo. This multifaceted complex opened in June 2017 complete with a restaurant, bar and shops, all of which are ping pong-centric. The shop sells gear from Victas, the preferred brand of the Japanese national men’s table tennis team, there’s a table tennis school staffed by professional players and, of course, enough tables to play to your batting heart’s delight. At in-house eatery The Rally Table you can play a quick round while enjoying drinks and desserts including a citrus sour complete with kumquats that look suspiciously like ping pong balls, and some racket-shaped ice cream. Of course the service is excellent.

1-12-16 Jinnan, Shibuya (Shibuya Station). 03 6452 5743. t-4.jp/tokyo. Restaurant and bar 11am–11pm, shops 11am–8pm, closed Tue.

TOKYO DOME ROLLER SKATE ARENA

If you’re aiming to charm your date on ice skates at one of Tokyo’s pop-up rinks this winter, best brush up your skills at a roller rink first. Located next to popular hot spring facility Spa LaQua and the Tokyo Dome baseball stadium, this spot has both a main arena with an oval rink and a smaller practice area. Although only offered in Japanese, free guidance and basic lessons are provided by the friendly staff, helping beginners stay on their feet. Equipped with a DJ booth, the venue occasionally hosts parties and other events. Admission starts at ¥1,200 for two hours on weekdays; you can either bring your own skates or rent a pair for ¥500.

Tokyo Dome City Yellow Bldg 4F, 1-3 Koraku, Bunkyo (Suidobashi Station). 03 3817 6196. www.tokyo-dome.co.jp/roller. Mon–Fri 11am–10pm, Sat 10am–10pm, Sun & hols 10am–9pm.

TOKYO DOME ROLLER SKATE ARENA: KEISUKE TANIGAWA

ROCKY BOULDERING GYM: SHINAGAWA

Bouldering – aka indoor rock climbing – requires both brains and brawn. Participants must plan the right route up an artificial cliff before pulling themselves up to the summit. One of the biggest bouldering gyms in Tokyo is located in the corner of a container terminal half an hour’s walk from Shinagawa Station, but is certainly worth the trek – or the Shinagawa Pier bus ride from the station. Rocky features two areas with 13 long and highly varied walls, allowing climbers of all skill levels to find the route they want. The 30-minute ‘experience package’, available only on weekdays and without registration, includes shoes and chalk for a grand total of ¥1,500 – perfect for beginners.

A big night out

Kosuke Shimizu points the way to the top LGBT nights at Tokyo’s clubs

HOME TO SHINJUKU NU-CHEME, one of the world’s largest LGBT neighbourhoods, Tokyo has an excellent scene for those seeking to stay up all night. In addition to the plentiful selection in Shinjuku, regular gay-friendly parties are taking over some of the capital’s biggest clubs. These are three of our favourite happenings, all of which are very welcoming for shy types.

SHANGRI-LA

One of the top gay nights in Asia and definitely the top LGBT nights at Tokyo’s clubs, SHANGRI-LA has been going strong since Christmas Eve 2002. Taking place at iconic waterfront mega-club AgeHa out in Shin-Kiba, it sees local spinning DJ’s/ emergency teams with first aid kit if required. Ni-chome is arguably the area’s hub. It hosts a diverse range of events, including the drag-queen-centric Queen’s Lounge on Wednesdays and Thursdays and a Ladies’ Night on the second and third Saturday of the month. More irregular happenings include an anime night and an ‘underwear only’ extravaganza. See full details for these on the club’s website. 2-12-8 Shinjuku, Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station). ¥4,000, non-Japanese ¥3,000, 29 and under ¥2,500. w.ageha.com/gn.

AISOTOPE LOUNGE

Although it hasn’t seen any mega-events over the past two years or so, Nu-chome has so many bars and clubs that it always feels like there’s a party going on somewhere. Aisotopen Lounge is arguably the area’s hub. It hosts a diverse range of events, including the drag-queen-centric Queen’s Lounge on Wednesdays and Thursdays and a Ladies’ Night on the second and third Saturday of the month. More irregular happenings include an anime night and an ‘underwear only’ extravaganza. See full details for these on the club’s website. 2-12-8 Shinjuku, Shinjuku (Shinjuku Station). aliving.net.

GETTING THERE

Ni-chome is just a convenient trip, but note that the bus tends to get extremely crowded. To get there, take the shuttle from Shinjuku for ¥500. The shuttle runs every 20 minutes, so be patient while we work on the next print run.

Shinjuku Station is served by to o

Lost in Harajuku?

ASK THE LOCALS

All of these publications, along with issues of our magazine, are available at pickup at Shibuya Station’s tourist information centre, conveniently located in the underground passage on the basement floor of Shibuya Station. The English-speaking guides will help you stock up, provide sightseeing tips, and assist you in navigating the bowels of the cavernous station itself.

Get our maps and mag in Shibuya

Stop by the Shibuya Station Tourist Information Centre

TIME OUT READERS will know about our popular series of free maps: pocket-sized guides to the multifarious delights this city has to offer. They’re hard to miss these days – as well as our ever popular ‘100 things to do in Shibuya’ edition and the comprehensive ‘88 things to do in Tokyo’, we’ve come out with maps for nearly all the top areas including Roppongi, Shinjuku, Shibuya, Harajuku, Omotesando, Harajuku, Koenji and Ginzan.

Each edition squeezes the best of the capital into a compact pamphlet, complete with a city map, and we’ve included everything from offbeat art galleries and dataku mecca to ancient shrines and hipster hangouts.

We’ve also recently expanded the series to include places beyond Tokyo, launching special maps for those of you heading to Shimane or the temples of Nikko – both make for a great mini getaway.

Note: If you can’t find the map you’re looking for, this probably means we’ve temporarily run out of stock. Please be patient while we work on the next print run.

Please direct any advertising queries to sales@timeout.com.

Hotel that has Les Clefs d’Or Japan member concierge:

Bayside Hotel Shinjuku

Lodging:

The Peninsula Tokyo

Hotels that have Les Clefs d’Or Japan member concierge:

Holiday Inn Tokyo Shinjuku

CONRAD TOKYO

ALL BRITISH PUB HUB LOCATIONS IN TOKYO

Time Out Tokyo October–December, 2017

TIME OUT READERS will know about our popular series of free maps: pocket-sized guides to the multifarious delights this city has to offer. They’re hard to miss these days – as well as our ever popular ‘100 things to do in Shibuya’ edition and the comprehensive ‘88 things to do in Tokyo’, we’ve come out with maps for nearly all the top areas including Roppongi, Shinjuku, Shibuya, Harajuku, Omotesando, Harajuku, Koenji and Ginzan.

Each edition squeezes the best of the capital into a compact pamphlet, complete with a city map, and we’ve included everything from offbeat art galleries and dataku mecca to ancient shrines and hipster hangouts.

We’ve also recently expanded the series to include places beyond Tokyo, launching special maps for those of you heading to Shimane or the temples of Nikko – both make for a great mini getaway.

All of these publications, along with issues of our magazine, are available at pickup at Shibuya Station’s tourist information centre, conveniently located in the underground passage on the basement floor of Shibuya Station. The English-speaking guides will help you stock up, provide sightseeing tips, and assist you in navigating the bowels of the cavernous station itself.

Lost in Harajuku?

ASK THE LOCALS

All of these publications, along with issues of our magazine, are available at pickup at Shibuya Station’s tourist information centre, conveniently located in the underground passage on the basement floor of Shibuya Station. The English-speaking guides will help you stock up, provide sightseeing tips, and assist you in navigating the bowels of the cavernous station itself.

Get our maps and mag in Shibuya

Stop by the Shibuya Station Tourist Information Centre

TIME OUT READERS will know about our popular series of free maps: pocket-sized guides to the multifarious delights this city has to offer. They’re hard to miss these days – as well as our ever popular ‘100 things to do in Shibuya’ edition and the comprehensive ‘88 things to do in Tokyo’, we’ve come out with maps for nearly all the top areas including Roppongi, Shinjuku, Shibuya, Harajuku, Omotesando, Harajuku, Koenji and Ginzan.

Each edition squeezes the best of the capital into a compact pamphlet, complete with a city map, and we’ve included everything from offbeat art galleries and dataku mecca to ancient shrines and hipster hangouts.

We’ve also recently expanded the series to include places beyond Tokyo, launching special maps for those of you heading to Shimane or the temples of Nikko – both make for a great mini getaway.

All of these publications, along with issues of our magazine, are available at pickup at Shibuya Station’s tourist information centre, conveniently located in the underground passage on the basement floor of Shibuya Station. The English-speaking guides will help you stock up, provide sightseeing tips, and assist you in navigating the bowels of the cavernous station itself.

Lost in Harajuku?

ASK THE LOCALS

All of these publications, along with issues of our magazine, are available at pickup at Shibuya Station’s tourist information centre, conveniently located in the underground passage on the basement floor of Shibuya Station. The English-speaking guides will help you stock up, provide sightseeing tips, and assist you in navigating the bowels of the cavernous station itself.
A WORLD AWAY FROM the maddeningly overcrowded commuter carriages of Tokyo, Japan’s many sightseeing trains leisurely crisscross the country, providing an alternative way of experiencing different regions’ cultures and flavours. The beautiful Sea of Japan side of the country, still too often neglected by travellers, has a particularly impressive selection of these trains. They are becoming increasingly popular among domestic tourists but are still all but undiscovered by visitors from abroad. Here are our five favourites, from a high-speed art exhibition, sip sake or feast on sushi all while taking in beautiful sightseeing trains are offering the opportunity to take in an art

FOR THE ART LOVER: GENBI SHINKANSEN
A bullet train designed specifically for the purpose of allowing passengers to enjoy cutting-edge Japanese contemporary art, the Genbi Shinkansen features different artworks in every carriage, a kids’ room where children can learn more about art, and even a slick café. After the one-hour trip between Echigo-Yuzawa and Niigata

www.jreast.co.jp/genbi
Route: between Echigo-Yuzawa and Niigata
Operated by: JR East, Joetsu Shinkansen

FOR THE SAKE-SIPPER: KOSHINO SHU*KURA
This boozy train was inspired by the renowned sake of Niigata, one of Japan’s most important stop-producing regions. At the in-train bar, passengers can sip on a selection of local sake and enjoy a variety of side dishes created with the finest local ingredients. The train also hosts pop-up tastings by Niigata breweries, talks, jazz performances and other events. There are three routes to choose from, so you can combine sipping with views over the majestic Sea of Japan on your way out, and return via the region’s lush mountains and valleys. You’ll also have the chance to strike up conversation with brewers over a topic. It all adds up to an enjoyably trippy trip only possible on the Koshino Shu*Kura.

www.tourj.com/jp/kyoto/kyoto/shukura.html
Route: between Echigo-Yuzawa and Niigata
Operated by: JR East

FOR THE FANTASY FAN: OKUZUMI OROCHI-Go
The legend of Yamato no Orochi tells the tale of banished Shinto god Susanoo, who slays the eight-headed serpent Yamata no Orochi and thus acquires the sacred Kusanagi sword, one of Japan’s three mythical imperial trophies. Said story takes place in the wilds of Okayama, which are best seen from the window of this old-school 'trolley train’. Although not quite as epic as in the legend, the area is culturally intriguing, with the iron manufacturing settlements dotting the landscape recalling Hayao Miyazaki’s anime masterpiece ‘Princess Mononoke’. Renowned on the train are the pedal specialities including grilled mackerel ‘oshizushi’ (a type of rectangular sushi and Nitagyu beef, plus pudding and cheese made from Kusugawa milk produced along the railway.

www.hiikawa-summit.info/orochi
Route: between Izumo and Bingo-Ochiai
Operated by: JR West, Kisuki Line

FOR THE PATIENT LUXURY LOVER: MIZUKAZE
A ten-car train with a maximum capacity of 84 passengers, the Mizukaze is a moving luxury hotel. With only six cars housing guest rooms, including suites that span an entire carriage, an all-inclusive restaurant and lounge, it’s the most exclusive train you’ll find, well, anywhere. Choose either the Sanyo route, which traverses historic regions including Kurashiki and Iwakuni or the Sanyo route which runs along the Sea of Japan coast through Tottori and Iwami. Both provide an in-depth, guided look at the nature and culture of each area you pass through, with special Mizukaze buses awaiting passengers at several stations, ready to ferry travellers to highlights inaccessible by train. The only catch is that you’ll need to wait for quite a while after making a booking: the Mizukaze is currently sold out all the way to February 2018.

www.jr-odekake.net/navi/kankou/berumonta
Route: between Himi, Takaoka and Johana
Operated by: JR West, Himi/Johana lines

FOR THE SUSHI CONNOISSEUR: BELLES MONTAGNES ET MER
Fondly referred to simply as Belles Monta, this retro train is perfect for gazing at dramatic coastal scenery while enjoying the best of the local seafood. Inside the moss green carriages the window frames are decorated like a picture frame and the hanging straps are crafted to resemble copperware from nearby Takaoka, a city renowned for its manufacturing legacy. But what really stands out here is the sushi display case found at the end of the train. A chef turns fresh from Toyama Bay into sushi right before your eyes. Those of you tired of selfies may want to ask one of the friendly conductors to snap a picture of you on the platform.

www.junichi-takahashi.com
Route: three routes in total, including between Istumomako and Edohama
Operated by: JR West, Kontan Main Line

FOR THE SUSHI CONNOISSEUR: JUNICHI TAKAHASHI

Travel & Hotels

On the right tracks

Japan’s railways are famed as the fastest in the world, but there’s more to the country’s tracks than speed. A new generation of sightseeing trains are offering the opportunity to take in an art exhibition, sip sake or feast on sushi all while taking in beautiful landscapes. "Nortico Maniva" jumps onboard
How do you go about beating jet lag? Mayumi Koyama checks in with six frequent fliers for their remedies and prescribes the right Tokyo hotel for each

**Marcus Webb, Time Out Tokyo’s consulting editor, recommends A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP**

*Your prescription:* heavenly beds at the Westin

When he lands with a woozy feeling from a long-haul flight, international food critic Matthew Lee makes sure he naps something healthy before passing out. Smoothies are a great option, nutritious enough to recharge you, but light enough to not interrupt sleep’s cycle. The Westin’s Heavenly Beds are designed especially for restorative sleep and feature top-of-the-line linen, including some of the comfiest pillows you’ll ever lay your head on. Peaceful sleep has never come easier.

- [tinyurl.com/westin-bed](http://tinyurl.com/westin-bed)

**Carl Mitchell, flight attendant, recommends A FULL-BODY MASSAGE**

*Your prescription:* spa sessions at the Mandarin Oriental

When flying is your job, you can’t afford to lose a day or two to jet lag. His solution? Jogging. But pounding pavements at all hours can be a bit challenging in an unfamiliar city. Instead head to a gym with splendid city views, such as the fitness centre at the Mandarin Oriental in Nihonbashi. Located on the hotel’s 38th floor, the gym’s cardio machines all face the floor-to-ceiling windows, making you feel like you’re running in the sky above the capital. From working out with state-of-the-art machines to stretching your limbs with a private pilates session, there are plenty of fitness options to choose from.

- [tinyurl.com/MOT-fitness](http://tinyurl.com/MOT-fitness)

**Ili Saarinen, Time Out Tokyo’s editor, recommends A NICE SWEATY WORKOUT**

*Your prescription:* superfood smoothies at the Shangri-La Hotel

When he lands with a woozy feeling from a long-haul flight, international restaurant critic Matthew Lee makes sure he ingests something healthy before passing out. Smoothies are a great option, nutritious enough to recharge you, but light enough to not interrupt sleep’s cycle. The Shangri-La’s Lobby Lounge offers three great varieties, all packed with an abundance of organic ingredients. Each smoothie boasts its own unique benefits: the aloe and pineapple one is filled with antioxidants, the red beet, berry and ginger smoothie promotes blood circulation and apparently the Spirulina helps recovery from stress. The 400ml smoothies are available for both drink-in (¥1,700) and to go (¥2,200), so you can recharge yourself at any time, anywhere.

- [tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila](http://tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila)

**Mayumi Koyama, Time Out Tokyo’s executive editor, recommends A HOT BATH**

*Your prescription:* hot spring baths at Hoshinoya

When flying is your job, you can’t afford to lose a day or two to jet lag. His solution? Rogging. But pounding pavements at all hours can be a bit challenging in an unfamiliar city. Instead head to a gym with splendid city views, such as the fitness centre at the Mandarin Oriental in Nihonbashi. Located on the hotel’s 38th floor, the gym’s cardio machines all face the floor-to-ceiling windows, making you feel like you’re running in the sky above the capital. From working out with state-of-the-art machines to stretching your limbs with a private pilates session, there are plenty of fitness options to choose from.

- [tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila](http://tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila)

**Alex Plim, Time Out International’s head of global content, recommends A HOT BATH**

*Your prescription:* hot spring baths at Hoshinoya

When flying is your job, you can’t afford to lose a day or two to jet lag. His solution? Rogging. But pounding pavements at all hours can be a bit challenging in an unfamiliar city. Instead head to a gym with splendid city views, such as the fitness centre at the Mandarin Oriental in Nihonbashi. Located on the hotel’s 38th floor, the gym’s cardio machines all face the floor-to-ceiling windows, making you feel like you’re running in the sky above the capital. From working out with state-of-the-art machines to stretching your limbs with a private pilates session, there are plenty of fitness options to choose from.

- [tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila](http://tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila)

**Ili Saarinen, Time Out Tokyo’s editor, recommends A NICE SWEATY WORKOUT**

*Your prescription:* superfood smoothies at the Shangri-La Hotel

When he lands with a woozy feeling from a long-haul flight, international restaurant critic Matthew Lee makes sure he ingests something healthy before passing out. Smoothies are a great option, nutritious enough to recharge you, but light enough to not interrupt sleep’s cycle. The Shangri-La’s Lobby Lounge offers three great varieties, all packed with an abundance of organic ingredients. Each smoothie boasts its own unique benefits: the aloe and pineapple one is filled with antioxidants, the red beet, berry and ginger smoothie promotes blood circulation and apparently the Spirulina helps recovery from stress. The 400ml smoothies are available for both drink-in (¥1,700) and to go (¥2,200), so you can recharge yourself at any time, anywhere.

- [tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila](http://tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila)

**Mayumi Koyama, Time Out Tokyo’s executive editor, recommends A HOT BATH**

*Your prescription:* hot spring baths at Hoshinoya

When flying is your job, you can’t afford to lose a day or two to jet lag. His solution? Rogging. But pounding pavements at all hours can be a bit challenging in an unfamiliar city. Instead head to a gym with splendid city views, such as the fitness centre at the Mandarin Oriental in Nihonbashi. Located on the hotel’s 38th floor, the gym’s cardio machines all face the floor-to-ceiling windows, making you feel like you’re running in the sky above the capital. From working out with state-of-the-art machines to stretching your limbs with a private pilates session, there are plenty of fitness options to choose from.

- [tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila](http://tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila)

**Alex Plim, Time Out International’s head of global content, recommends A HOT BATH**

*Your prescription:* hot spring baths at Hoshinoya

When flying is your job, you can’t afford to lose a day or two to jet lag. His solution? Rogging. But pounding pavements at all hours can be a bit challenging in an unfamiliar city. Instead head to a gym with splendid city views, such as the fitness centre at the Mandarin Oriental in Nihonbashi. Located on the hotel’s 38th floor, the gym’s cardio machines all face the floor-to-ceiling windows, making you feel like you’re running in the sky above the capital. From working out with state-of-the-art machines to stretching your limbs with a private pilates session, there are plenty of fitness options to choose from.

- [tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila](http://tinyurl.com/TOTshangrila)
Going underground?
Welcome to the world's most efficient transport system

SURE, A SHINKANSEN may be faster, but if you're pinching pennies, both daytime and overnight highway (long-distance) buses are ideal for travelling around Japan. Here are some of the best ones, all of which offer booking services and information in English.

WILLER EXPRESS
One of the most popular low-cost bus companies out there, Willer Express do great deals on overnight buses. They’re also the purveyors of the Japan Bus Pass, a little beauty which lets you ride to your heart’s content for three, five or seven days. You can use it on non-consecutive days, meaning that you can get all the way from Tokyo to Hiroshima and back for a measly ¥10,000 (on weekdays) and still have an extra day or night on a bus to spare. A one-way shinkansen ticket would be double that. There are some blackout dates (Golden Week and the Obon holidays in August), but other than that you can pretty much ride whenever you want within two months of your first journey. All you need to do is not be Japanese: the deal is only available to those with a foreign passport, including residents.

JR BUSES
Yes, it may stand for Japan Railways, but JR has its own fleet of highway buses too. Split into regional companies (JR Kanto, JR Tohoku and so on), they offer services up, down and across the entire country. Although JR buses are a bit pricier than the other companies listed here, their ubiquity means that you’re very likely to find one that will get you to your final destination. Just note that you may need to change to a regional carrier halfway through if you’re trying to get to the furthest corner of Kyushu or Hokkaido from Tokyo.

KANTO BUS
If you want to take a bus to save time and avoid paying for a night’s accommodation but don’t want to sacrifice the creature comforts, Kanto Bus has an option for you. Their Tokyo-Osaka buses boast private cubicles, each including a seat that folds down to a flat bed, a large foldaway table and other essentials to get you through the night for ¥20,000 one way. There’s even a powder room in the back. We’re pretty sure you’d be able to get a hotel room for less than that, but not one that transports you across the country. Kanto’s other routes are more reasonably priced (from around ¥6,000 one-way on weekdays) and can take you to some gorgeous spots including Kyoto, Nara and Okayama – albeit without those luxurious little cubicles.

KINTETSU BUS
This Osaka-based company is great mainly for its discount service options between Kansai and Kanto, including trips from Osaka or Kyoto to Tokyo for a laughably cheap ¥4,000 one way (mainly on weekdays). Their other routes have similar prices to those of other operators, including Kanto Bus, but if you’ve ended up in Kansai and are looking to travel back to the capital or further afield, Kintetsu is a good option.

JAPAN BUS ONLINE
A website rather than a bus company, Japan Bus Online is an English-language hub for those looking to book bus rides regardless of operator. Simply search for your preferred route and the website will spit out the available options; you’ll then be able to pay for your chosen ticket by credit card. Note that they have a segregated gender policy: if you’re travelling in a mixed-gender group, this means you might not end up sitting right next to each other.

Getting Around
On the road
How to navigate Japan’s long-distance bus systems. By Kirsty Bouwers

KANTO BUS
If you want to take a bus to save time and avoid paying for a night’s accommodation but don’t want to sacrifice the creature comforts, Kanto Bus has an option for you. Their Tokyo-Osaka buses boast private cubicles, each including a seat that folds down to a flat bed, a large foldaway table and other essentials to get you through the night for ¥20,000 one way. There’s even a powder room in the back. We’re pretty sure you’d be able to get a hotel room for less than that, but not one that transports you across the country. Kanto’s other routes are more reasonably priced (from around ¥6,000 one-way on weekdays) and can take you to some gorgeous spots including Kyoto, Nara and Okayama – albeit without those luxurious little cubicles.

KINTETSU BUS
This Osaka-based company is great mainly for its discount service options between Kansai and Kanto, including trips from Osaka or Kyoto to Tokyo for a laughably cheap ¥4,000 one way (mainly on weekdays). Their other routes have similar prices to those of other operators, including Kanto Bus, but if you’ve ended up in Kansai and are looking to travel back to the capital or further afield, Kintetsu is a good option.

JAPAN BUS ONLINE
A website rather than a bus company, Japan Bus Online is an English-language hub for those looking to book bus rides regardless of operator. Simply search for your preferred route and the website will spit out the available options; you’ll then be able to pay for your chosen ticket by credit card. Note that they have a segregated gender policy: if you’re travelling in a mixed-gender group, this means you might not end up sitting right next to each other.
Getting Around

Places for Instagram snaps

From the classics to the hidden gems, here are the best spots in town to up your Instagram game. By Kaila Imada

WE’RE NOT JUST SAYING this because we live here, but Tokyo is probably one of the most picturesque places in the world. From rooftop views and serene cafés to stunning shrines, there’s literally something on every corner to keep your Instagram followers envious. Here are the best of the best – make sure you tag #TimeOutTokyo to be featured on our Instagram page. Happy snapping!

1. **SHINJUKU OMOIDE YOKOCHO**
   - Not only a great place to grab a drink and a few snacks, this famed bundle of little alleyways hidden off the main streets of Shinjuku is also a popular spot for photographers looking to capture that authentic shot of Tokyo’s streetlife. What’s the appeal? Maybe it’s the mix of customers hustling through after work, or the smoke from the yakitori joints wafting through the streets. Either way, it makes for an essential Tokyo picture.

2. **THE SOHO ODAIBA**
   - Thirteen floors of open-plan office space doesn’t scream ‘snap me!’, but what makes The Soho an Instagram hotspot is its colourful exterior and numerous doorways which make the place look like a giant game of Tetris. Hot tip: catch it in the evening when it’s all lit up.

3. **TOKYU PLAZA OMOTESANDO**
   - A frenzy of mirrors, this mall entrance in the heart of Harajuku has become quite the popular photo op, tripping snappers out with its unique puzzle of reflections. Be aware: you might have to queue for your turn here.

4. **MEIJI JINGU SAKE BARRELS**
   - Although the towering gates of Meiji Jingu are a great draw, another special sight inside the spacious shrine grounds are the rows upon rows of ‘kazaridaru’ (decorative sake barrels) lining the walkway. So why are there so many? Every year, the barrels are donated by sake brewers from all over Japan as offerings to the shrine deities at Meiji Jingu.

5. **ROPPONGI HILLS TOKYO CITY VIEW**
   - There’s no better spot to capture sprawling views of the city than up on the roof of Roppongi Hills. Offering spectacular eye candy, it lets you capture most of the city’s iconic sights, including Tokyo Tower, Tokyo Skytree and even, on super-clear days, Mount Fuji.

6. **RikUGIEN**
   - Nothing says zen quite like the peaceful surroundings of this beautiful Japanese garden. Rikugien’s scenery represents 88 miniature scenes from famous Japanese poems and features a central pond as well as a pretty little teahouse. Catch the weeping cherry blossoms in spring and the stunning foliage in autumn for the best photo opportunities. Hashtag with something about finding your inner selfie.

7. **RAINBOW BRIDGE**
   - The city’s most famous bridge was built in 1993 over Tokyo Bay and is shaped like, you guessed it, a rainbow. The 798-metre long crossing connects Shiba Park Pier with the Odaiba waterfront and makes for a stunning shot whether lit up in the evening or under a clear blue sky.

8. **TOKYO TOWER**
   - The Skytree may be taller, but good old Tokyo Tower is still the perfect spot to end your Instagram bonanza: there’s nothing more iconic in the capital than that glowing orange mast. Whether you’re around the tower during the day or night, up close or from afar, there’s nothing quite like getting an eyeful of Tokyo’s very own Eiffel Tower.

Time Out Tokyo October-December, 2017
You know you’re in Tokyo when...

ALCOHOLIC AND NON-ALCOHOLIC DRINKS
When in need of an ice-cold drink in summer or a warming tea or coffee on a freezing cold day, take your pick and roll your choice at the perfect temperature. For those looking for something a little more stimulating, keep an eye out for sake and beer dispensers. Whoever thought of putting alcohol in a vending machine was clearly a thoughtful person; since these are of course open in the early hours of the morning, even the hardest-working of salarymen can pick up a well-deserved drink on the way home after a late night in the office.

BOOKS AND UMBRELLAS
Book vending machines are a boon if you want to find a good read without sneery bookshop staff judging your taste in fiction. Most machines are manga-heavy and the books are generally in Japanese, but it could be a good way to practice if you’re learning the language. Alternatively they can double as a makeshift shelter should it start to rain. Although naturally you’re never too far from a vending machine selling umbrellas. Or earbuds. Or phone chargers. Or a small model train...

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD
Incredible culinary variety can be found inside Japan’s vending machines. You can get everything from tomato sauce, tofu and corn chowder to dashi (fish-based broth) and natto (fermented soybeans). Of course, it’s not just your alley, stick to the popcorn vending machines which serve up freshly popped kernels on demand. Once you’ve seen bread in a can (yes, honestly, it’s a real thing) you’ll begin wondering if there’s anything you can’t find in a vending machine.

OODLES OF NOODLES
Even Tsuta, the first ramen shop to earn a Michelin star, has a vending machine by its entrance. And it makes perfect sense. Simply pop in your money, pick what you want to eat, hand your ticket to the staff behind the counter and in minutes your food will be served. However, if you want to take robot-ramen to the next stage you can cut out the human chefs completely – there are some machines that’ll do all the work for you. Instant ramen vending machines will dispense a hot bowl of noodles right from the machine. Michelin judges are gently advised to go elsewhere.

HANKO AND OMIKUJI
If you live in Japan or are a repeat visitor to the country, you’ll probably know how a ‘hanko’ (personal seal) is more widely used than signatures when signing on documents and other important paperwork. Hanko machines can usually be found at ¥100 shops or even your local Don Quijote discount store, and it’s a great souvenir for tourists if you can find your name or kanji characters with the right meaning. At some shrines you may see vending machines selling ‘omikuji’ or random fortunes written on strips of paper, predicting your future in areas such as love, health and business. Allow us to predict your future: it involves pressing buttons.

In the next issue of Time Out Tokyo...

Winter in the big city
Your complete guide to staying warm, happy and well fed in Tokyo
Available across Tokyo from January 2018

IF THERE’S ONE country that knows how to do impersonal shopping properly, it’s Japan. With the highest per capita rate of vending machines in the world, it offers far, far more than your average press-and-go experience. Don’t expect to just see drinks and junk food – you’ll find almost all your human needs catered for, from piping hot soup to comic books, house and umbrellas, all just a button away.

You can buy just about anything from a vending machine

By Kaila Imada and Matthew Lee

Available across Tokyo from January 2018

You can buy just about anything from a vending machine

By Kaila Imada and Matthew Lee

Available across Tokyo from January 2018
CT200h "F SPORT" 4,400,000円

NX300 2WD "F SPORT" 5,060,000円

LEXUS SAFETY SYSTEM *

プリクラッシュ マークシステム + レーダーブレーキアラート + オートマチックパーキング + レーダークルーズコントロール+

CT. NXに予防安全パッケージ（LEXUS Safety System*）を標準装備

※実際の車両と異なり、外観は参考です。納車の状況（仕様等）により、各モデルの価格が異なる場合がございます。ご了承ください。