

NEIGHBOURHOODS

top picks

- **Nanzen-ji** (p66)
A spacious temple with a fine Zen garden.
- **Fushimi-Inari-Taisha** (p59)
Tunnels of Shintō shrine gates lead you up a mountain.
- **Kurama-dera** (p85)
A mountaintop temple above a pair of quaint villages.
- **Ginkaku-ji** (p71)
A wonderful temple that is worth battling the crowds for.
- **Tenryū-ji & bamboo forest** (p80)
A surreal stroll under a bamboo sky.
- **Ōkōchi-Sansō Villa** (p81)
The loveliest house in all Kyoto.
- **Kiyomizu-dera** (p63)
A hillside temple with holy water and a 'love shrine'.
- **Tetsugaku-no-Michi** (p70)
A flower-lined Path of Philosophy.
- **Nishiki Market** (p50)
The best market street in Kyoto, hands down.
- **Pontochō** (p51)
The most atmospheric lane in the city by evening.

What's your recommendation? www.lonelyplanet.com/kyoto

NEIGHBOURHOODS

Kyoto is one of the easiest cities on earth to explore. It's basically a rectangle with mountains on three sides: east, west and north. This rectangle resembles a flat tray with three raised edges. In fact, this is exactly how many Kyotoites describe their city: they call it a *bon-chi* or 'tray land'.

Kyoto Station, where you'll first arrive in the city, is at the south end of the rectangle. There aren't many sights in the Kyoto Station area, but there are plenty of hotels, shops and restaurants. Kyoto Station is the transport hub of the city and many bus lines, a subway line and a private train line operate from here.

Downtown Kyoto is smack in the middle of the city and contains the main business, shopping, dining and entertainment districts. There are also several hotels in this part of town for those who like to be in the thick of things.

Surrounding the Downtown area is what we refer to as Central Kyoto, which is not so much a defined neighbourhood as it is a collection of amorphous zones surrounding the more distinct neighbourhoods. Several important sights can be found in Central Kyoto, including the enclosed Zen world of Daitoku-ji and one of Kyoto's oldest temples, Tō-ji, with its stunning pagoda. In addition, you will find a variety of accommodation here as well as some interesting dining and nightlife options.

The mountains that run the length of the east side are called the Higashiyama (literally, East Mountains). The districts at the base of these mountains are known as Southern and Northern Higashiyama and they contain many of Kyoto's most important sights, including the world-famous Kiyomizu-dera, the preserved streets of Ninen and Sannen-zaka, the Tetsugaku-no-Michi (Path of Philosophy) and the mossy paradise of Ginkaku-ji.

The mountains on the west side of the city are called the Arashiyama (Storm Mountains) and the district at their base is known as Arashiyama and Sagano. This is Kyoto's second-most popular sightseeing district. Foreign and domestic tourists flock here to see Tenryū-ji, with its stunning mountain backdrop, and the mysterious bamboo forest, in addition to a collection of small temples and a fine hilltop villa.

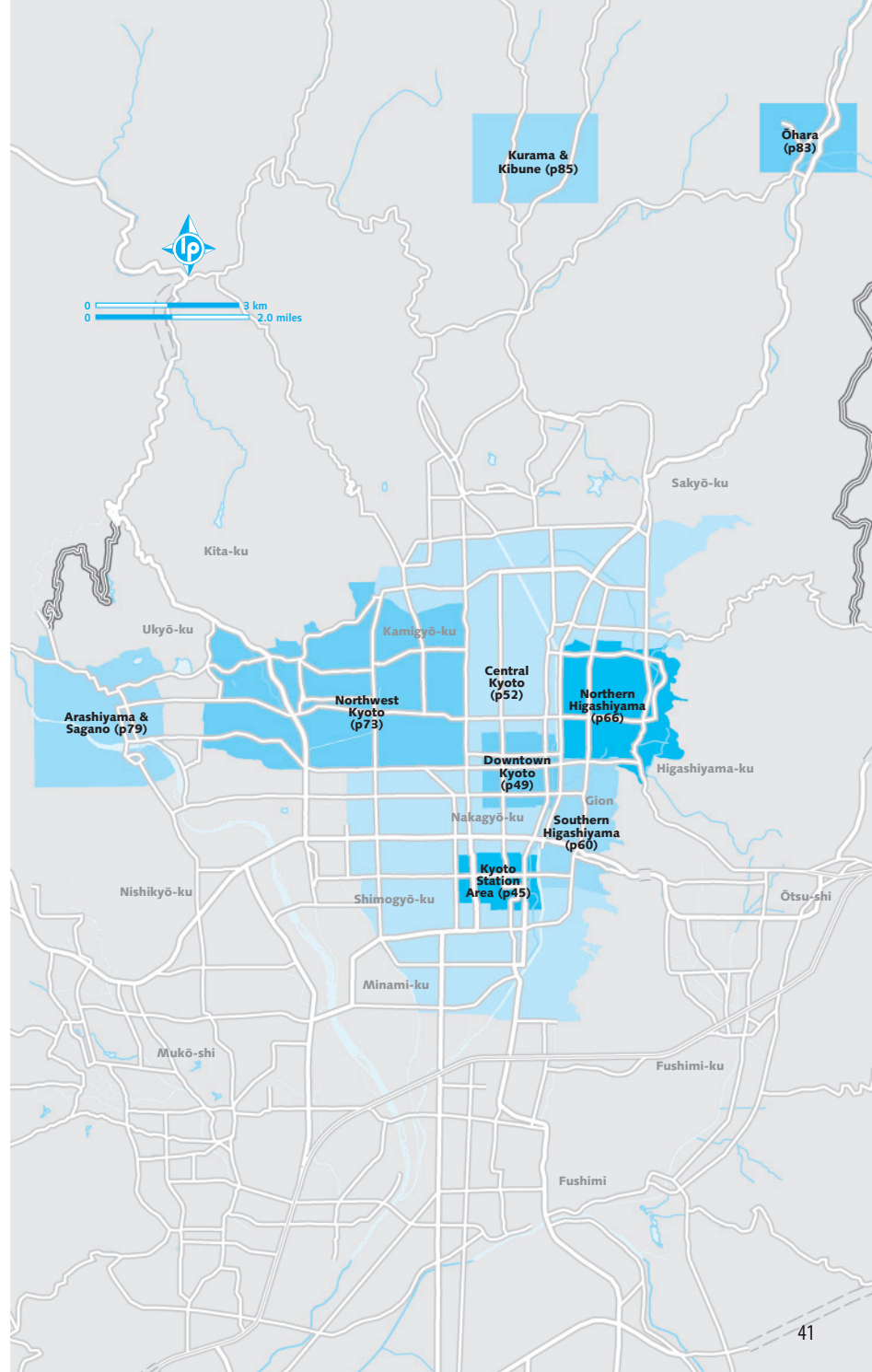
Northwest Kyoto is the next major sightseeing district, containing three of Kyoto's most important temples strung out along the base of the mountains that border the city.

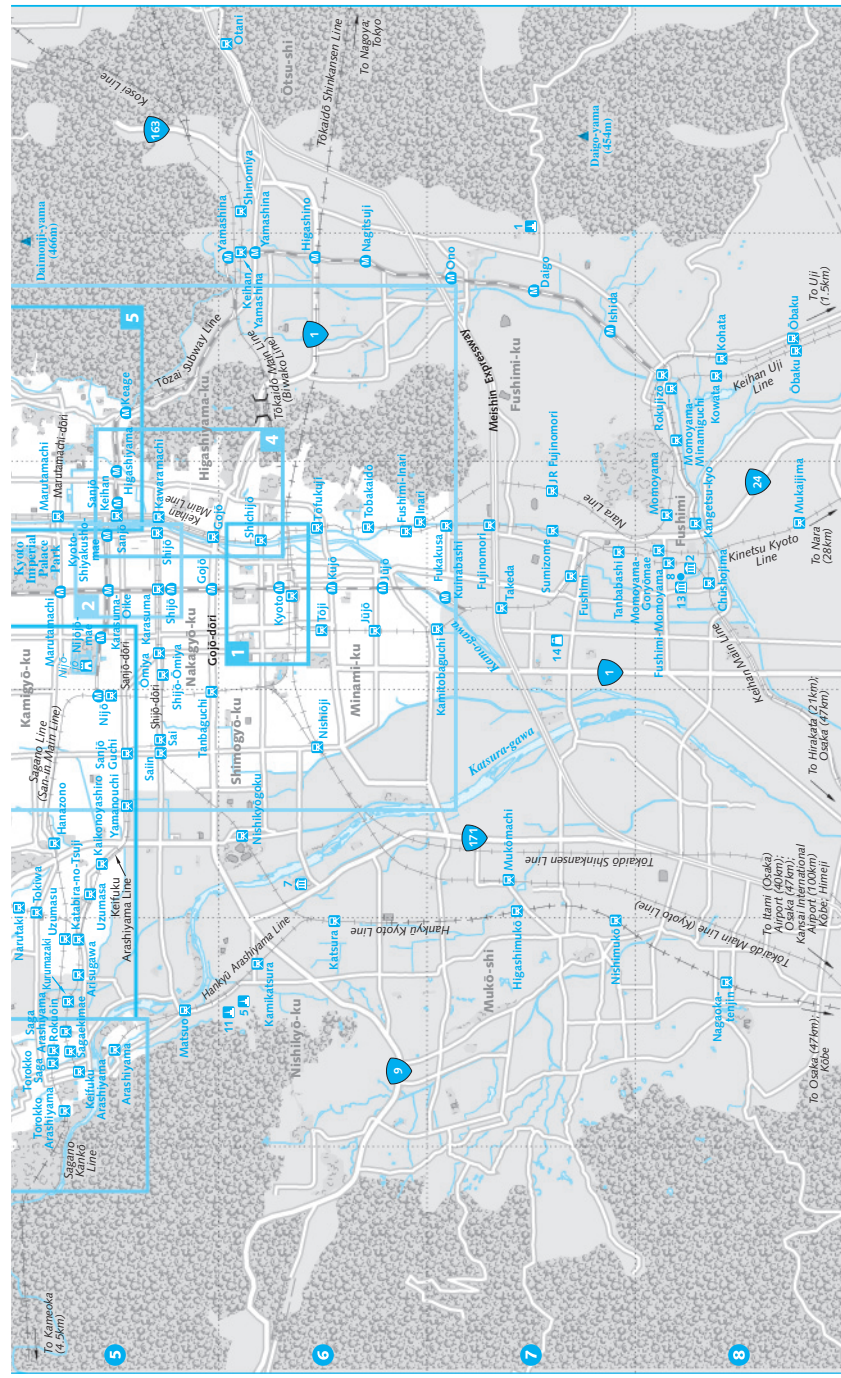
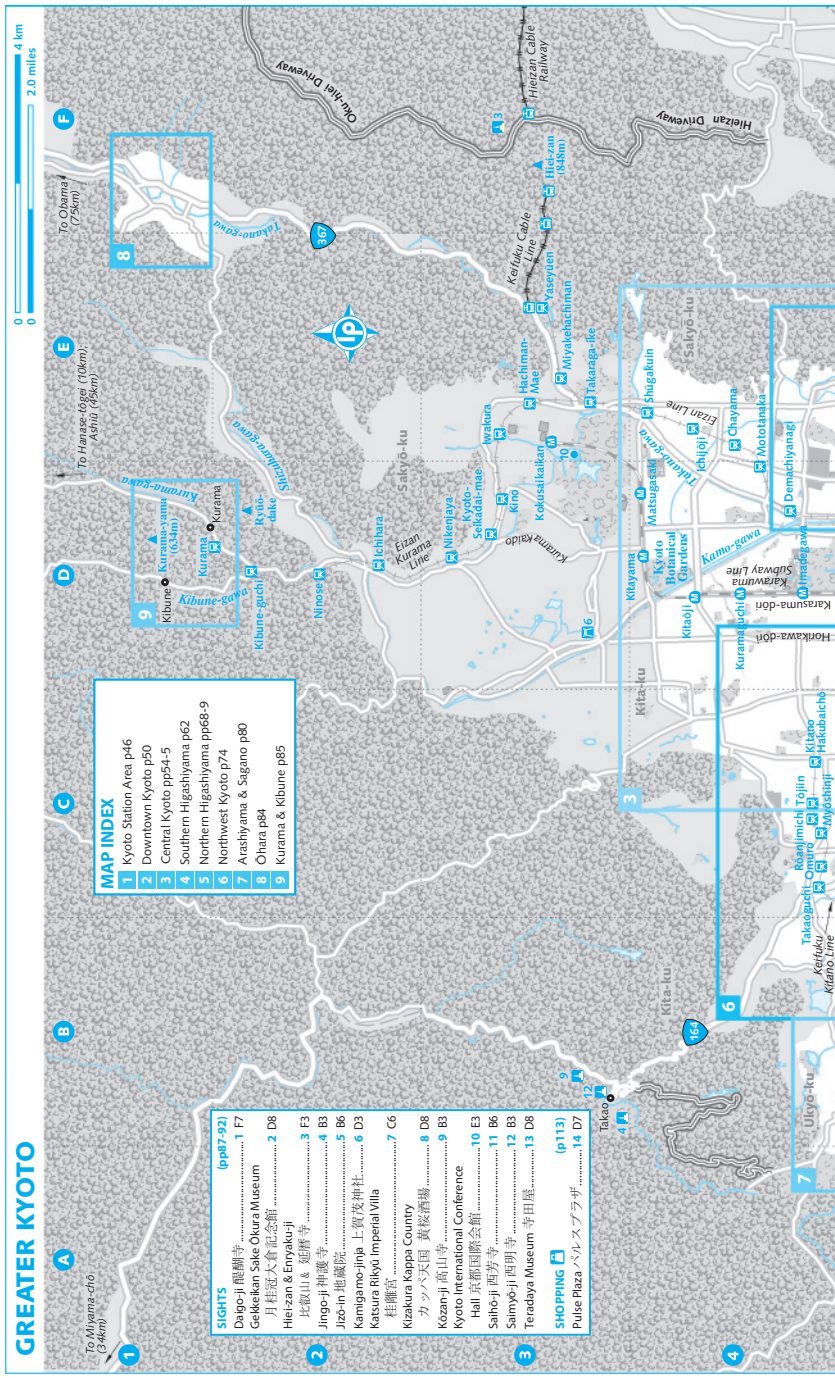
Looking north from many parts of Kyoto will reveal a solid wall of mountains. These are the Kitayama (literally, 'North Mountains'). Hidden in the valleys of these mountains are several small villages that make extremely rewarding day trips out of the city.

Finally, the area we refer to as Greater Kyoto in this book includes a number of attractions that lie on the outskirts of the city. To the southwest you'll find Byōdō-in, a fine temple in the town of Uji. To the southwest, you'll find Katsura Rikyū, a sublime imperial villa. To the northwest resides the mountain town of Takao, home to three fine temples, and to the northeast lies the imposing mountain hulk of Hiei-zan, on the shoulder of which sits Enryaku-ji, a mysterious ancient temple.

So, that's a lot of neighbourhoods! Finally, let's give you Kyoto in a nutshell: you'll find the most rewarding sightseeing in Southern and Northern Higashiyama, and in Arashiyama and Sagano (with some interesting outliers in both Central Kyoto and Southeast Kyoto); you will probably eat, sleep, drink and shop in Downtown Kyoto, the Kyoto Station area or the Higashiyama districts; and when you want a break from the city, you'll be wanting to head into the Kitayama.

'Foreign and domestic tourists flock here to see Tenryū-ji, with its stunning mountain backdrop, and the mysterious bamboo forest'





ITINERARY BUILDER

The table below allows you to plan a day's worth of activities in any area of the city. Simply select which area you wish to explore, and then mix and match from the corresponding listings to build your day. The first item in each cell represents a well-known highlight of the area, while the other items are more off-the-beaten-track gems.

| AREA | ACTIVITIES | Sights | Eating | Shopping | | | |
|----------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Kyoto Station Area | Kyoto Station | Kyoto Station (opposite) | Eat Paradise (p122) | Bic Camera (p107) | | | |
| | | Higashi Hongan-ji (opposite) | The Cube (p122) | Isetan Department Store (p107) | | | |
| Downtown Kyoto | Nishiki Market (p50) Pontochō (p51) | Kane-yo (p126) Kerala (p126) Yoshikawa (p122) | Nishiki Market (p108) Downtown Department Stores (p109) Morita Washi (p109) | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| Central Kyoto | Kyoto Imperial Palace Park (p52) Daitoku-ji (p53) Tō-ji (p57) | Den Shichi (p128) Manzara Honten (p127) Prinz (p128) | | | | | |
| Southern Higashiyama | Kiyomizu-dera (p63) Chion-in (p65) Shōren-in (p65) | Machapuchare (p131) Asuka (p131) Ōzawa (p130) | | | | | |
| Northern Higashiyama | Nanzen-ji (p66) Hōnen-in (p71) Ginkaku-ji (p71) | Hinode Udon (p135) Omen (p134) Ayatori (p135) | Kyoto Handicraft Center (p113) | | | | |
| Arashiyama & Sagano | Tenryū-ji (p80) Bamboo Grove (p79) Ōkōchi-Sansō Villa (p81) | Kameyama-ya (p137) Komichi (p137) Yoshida-ya (p137) | | | | | |

KYOTO STATION AREA

Eating p121; Shopping p106; Sleeping p148

Dominated by the eponymous Kyoto Station, this area is all about business: the business of funnelling people into and out of Kyoto. Apart from the stunning station building, this area is not particularly attractive, unless your tastes run towards concrete, neon and gaudy billboards. In fact, it looks pretty much like the station area of any other large Japanese city, and tourists arriving here often have a kind of perplexed look – you can see them thinking: 'Is this really Kyoto, the old capital of Japan?' If you're one of those people, we can only assure you that it gets better from here.

Looking north from the station, you'll have no problem picking out Kyoto Tower and the roofs of a pair of giant temples, Higashi Hongan-ji and Nishi Hongan-ji, which are worth exploring. But the real reason to spend any time here is either to lay your head in one of the many convenient hotels and guesthouses in and around the station or to check out the many shops or department stores nearby. In fact, the Kyoto Station area has been pulling Kyoto's centre of gravity southwards for years, stealing a lot of clientele from the traditional Downtown shopping district, a trend that will only increase with the opening of Bic Camera, one of Japan's largest electronics retailers, near the station.

The best way to explore the Kyoto Station area is on foot, and all the major sights are within 15 minutes' walk of the station. Indeed, considering the usual traffic congestion around the station, taking a taxi might actually be slower than walking to some nearby sights. Of course, a bicycle is also a good way to get around the station area.

KYOTO STATION Map p46

☎ 352-5441; Shimogyō-ku, Karasuma-dōri, Shiokōji sagaru, Higashishiokō-ji-chō; ② Kyoto Station, JR & Kintetsu lines & Karasuma subway line
The Kyoto Station building is a striking steel-and-glass structure – a kind of futuristic cathedral for the transport age. Unveiled in September 1997, the building met with some decidedly mixed reviews. Some critics assail the building as being not keeping with the traditional architecture of Kyoto; others love its wide-open spaces and dramatic lines.

Whatever the case, you are sure to be impressed by the tremendous space that arches above you as you enter the main concourse. Moreover, you will probably enjoy a brief exploration of the many levels of the station, all the way up to the 15th-floor observation level. And be sure to take the escalator from the 7th floor on the east side of the building up to the 11th-floor glass corridor that runs high above the main concourse of the station – not a good spot for those with a fear of heights!

Located in the station building, you will discover several **food courts** (see the boxed text, p122), as well as the **Isetan Department Store** (p107), the **Kyoto Prefectural International Center** (p195), the **Kyoto Tourist Information Center** (TIC; p199), the **Kyoto Tourism Federation** (p199), and an outdoor performance space.

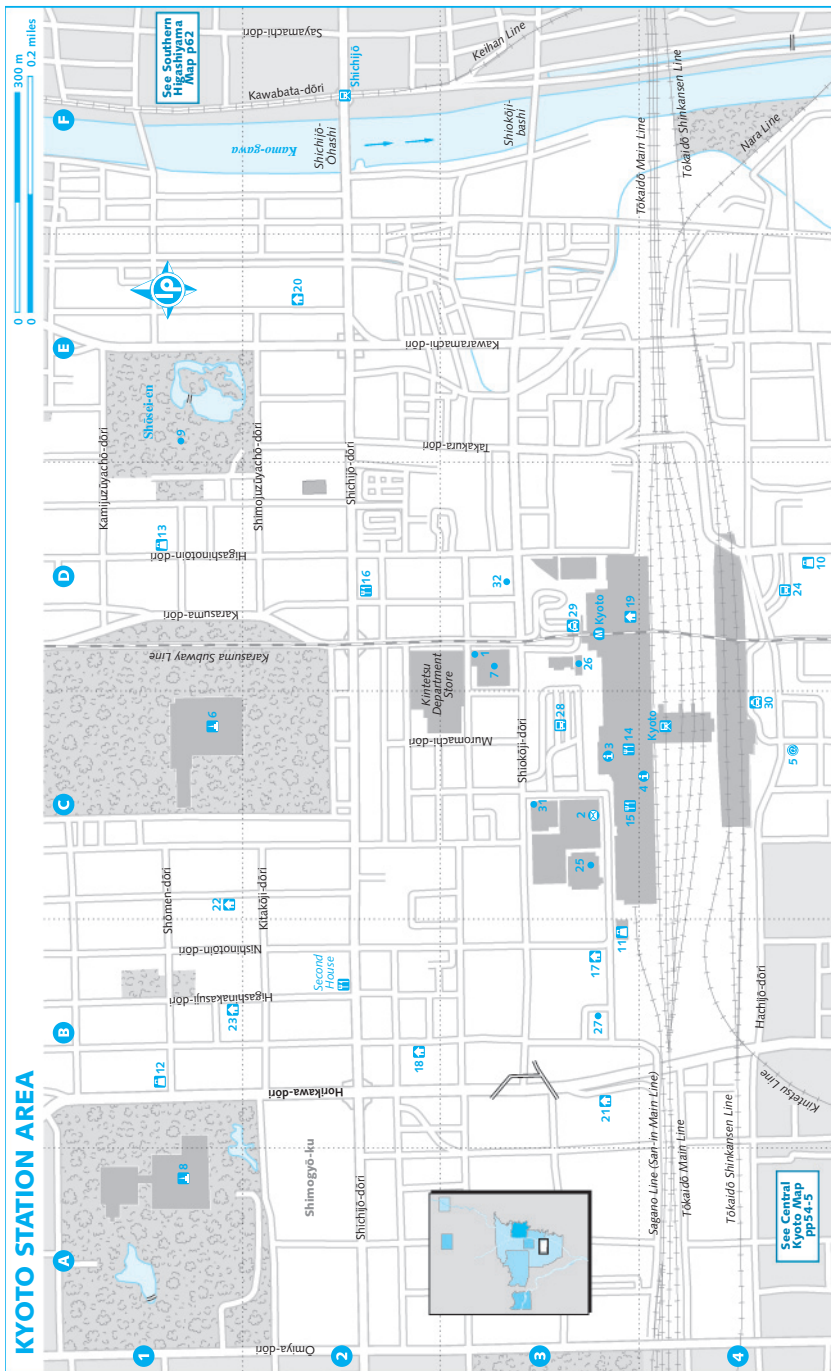
KYOTO TOWER Map p46

☎ 361-3215; Shimogyō-ku, Karasuma, Shichijō sagaru; adult ¥770, child ¥150-620; ☎ 9am-8.40pm; ③ 3min walk from central exit, Kyoto Station
If you want to orient yourself as soon as you arrive in town, this is the place to do so. Located right outside the Karasuma (north) gate of the station, this retro tower looks like a rocket perched atop the Kyoto Tower Hotel. The tower provides excellent views in all directions and you can really get a sense for the Kyoto 'bon-chi'. There are free mounted binoculars to use, and these allow ripping views over to **Kiyomizudera** (p63) and as far south as Osaka.

HIGASHI HONGAN-JI Map p46

☎ 371-9181; Shimogyō-ku, Karasuma-dōri, Shichijō agaru; admission free; ☎ 5.50am-5.30pm, 6.20am-4.30pm winter; ④ 5min walk from central exit, Kyoto Station
A short walk north of Kyoto Station, this temple is the last word in all things grand and gaudy. Considering the proximity to the station, the free admission, the awesome structures and the dazzling interiors, this temple is an obvious spot to visit if you find yourself in the area.

In 1602 when shōgun Tokugawa Ieyasu engineered the rift in the Jōdo Shin-shū (True Pure Land) school of Buddhism, he founded this temple as a competitor to **Nishi Hongan-ji** (p47). Rebuilt in 1895 after a



KYOTO STATION AREA

INFORMATION

| | |
|--|----------|
| International ATM 国際ATM | 1 D3 |
| Kyōsen-dō 京扇堂 | (see 13) |
| Kyoto Central Post Office 京都中央郵便局 | 2 C3 |
| Kyoto City Tourist Information Center 京都市観光案内所 | 3 C3 |
| Kyoto Prefectural International Center 京都府国際センター | (see 4) |
| Kyoto Tourism Federation 京都府観光センター | (see 3) |
| Kyoto Tourist Information Center (TIC) 京都ツーリスト インフォメーション | 4 C4 |
| Tops Café トップスカフェ | 5 C4 |

SIGHTS

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| Higashi Hongan-ji 東本願寺 | 6 C1 |
| Kyoto Tower 京都タワー | 7 D3 |
| Nishi Hongan-ji 西本願寺 | 8 A1 |
| Shōsei-en 渉成園 | 9 E1 |

SHOPPING

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Avanti アバンティ | 10 D4 |
| Bic Camera ビックカメラ | 11 B3 |

ISetan Department Store

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| 伊勢丹百貨店 | (see 4) |
| Kungyoku-dō 薰玉堂 | 12 B1 |
| Kyōsen-dō 京扇堂 | 13 D1 |

EATING

| | |
|-------------------|------------|
| Café du Monde | (pp115-38) |
| カフェデュモンド | 14 C3 |
| Cube キューブ | 15 C3 |
| Eat Paradise | (see 14) |
| limura いむら | 16 D2 |
| Rāmen Kōji 京都拉麺小路 | (see 15) |

SLEEPING

| | |
|---|-------|
| APA Hotel アパ ホテル | 17 B3 |
| Budget Inn バジエットイン | 18 B2 |
| Hotel Granvia Kyoto ホテルグランヴィア京都 | 19 D3 |
| K's House Kyoto ケイズハウス京都 | 20 E2 |
| Rihga Royal Hotel Kyoto リーガロイヤルホテル京都 | 21 B3 |
| Ryokan Shimizu 旅館しみず | 22 C1 |
| Tour Club 旅倶楽部 | 23 B1 |

TRANSPORT

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Airport Limousine Bus Stop 京都八条口アパシティ前 バス停 | (pp181-9) 24 D4 |
| Bicycle Parking Lot 京都駅前自転車駐車場 | 25 C3 |
| Bus Information Centre 京都バス案内書 | 26 D3 |
| Kyoto Cycling Tour Project 京都サイクリングツアー プロジェクト | 27 B3 |
| Kyoto Station Bus Terminal 京都駅前バスターミナル | 28 C3 |
| Kyoto Station Taxi Stand (North) 京都駅前タクシー のりば(北) | 29 D3 |
| Kyoto Station Taxi Stand (South) 京都駅前タクシー のりば(南) | 30 C4 |
| Nissan Rent-a-Car 日産レンタカー | 31 C3 |
| Tōkai Discount Ticket Shop トウカイ格安きっぷ売り場 | 32 D3 |

series of fires destroyed all of the original structures, it is certainly monumental but less impressive artistically than its rival. The temple is now the headquarters of the Ōtani branch of Jōdo Shin-shū.

The Taishidō-mon gate stands 27m high and features giant doors made out of a single slab of wood. Wade through the sea of pigeons to the Hondō (Main Hall) – place your shoes in one of the plastic bags and carry them with you so that you can exit from the neighbouring building. This hall enshrines a 13th-century statue of Amida Nyorai (Buddha of the Western Paradise).

In the corridor between the two main buildings, you'll find a curious item encased in glass: a tremendous coil of rope made from human hair. Following the destruction of the temple in the 1880s, an eager group of female temple devotees donated their locks to make the ropes that hauled the massive timbers used for reconstruction.

The enormous Taishi-dō (Founder's Hall) is one of the world's largest wooden structures, standing 38m high, 76m long and 58m wide. The centrepiece is a self-carved likeness of Jōdo Shin-shū founder Shinran. Unfortunately, this building is presently under construction and will be under wraps until December 2008.

It only takes a few minutes to wander through the buildings; ask at the informa-

tion office just inside the main gate for an English information leaflet.

NISHI HONGAN-JI Map p46

☎ 371-5181; Shimogyō-ku, Horikawa-dōri, Hanaya-chō sagaru; admission free; ☎ 5.30am-5.30pm, open later summer; 🚶 15min walk from central exit, Kyoto Station

This temple makes for a nice change from the incessant crowds of Higashi Hongan-ji (p45). As with its counterpart, Nishi Hongan-ji is an easy walk from the station and it's free. The interior of the main hall here is both gaudy and sublime.

Nishi Hongan-ji was originally built in 1272 in the Higashiyama Mountains by the priestess Kakushin, daughter of Shinran, who was founder of the Buddhist Jōdo Shin-shū school. The temple complex was relocated to its present site in 1591, on land provided by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (16th-century shōgun). By then, the Jōdo Shin-shū had accumulated immense power and the temple became its headquarters. Tokugawa Ieyasu sought to weaken the power of Jōdo Shin-shū by encouraging a breakaway faction to found Higashi Hongan-ji in 1602. The original Hongan-ji then became known as Nishi Hongan-ji. It is now the headquarters of the Hongan-ji branch of Jōdo Shin-shū, which has over 10,000 temples and 12 million followers worldwide.

top picks

FOR CHILDREN

Japan is an extremely easy place to travel with children: it's safe, clean and easy to get around. The only problem for parents is that you can't expect your kids to enjoy the same things you do. While you might be content to contemplate a rock garden at a Zen temple for hours at a time, your kids will probably have other ideas. Luckily, Kyoto has plenty of attractions to keep them busy, some of which parents are likely to enjoy as well. The following is just a sample of activities and attractions that children will enjoy in Kyoto.

- **Arashiyama Monkey Park Iwatayama** (p79) Both kids and adults will find the antics of the monkeys here fascinating, and it's easy to combine this with a trip to the sights of Arashiyama.
- **Kamo-gawa** There's a river running through Kyoto and it's a great place to bring the kids for an afternoon picnic. On hot days they can wade in the river while you relax on the bank. The area around Demachiyanaagi (Map pp54–5) is one of the most popular spots for parents and children to play.
- **Kyoto Imperial Palace Park** (p52) The Central Park of Kyoto, this sprawling expanse of fields, trails, ponds and woods is a great place for a picnic, walk or bicycle ride with the kids.
- **Kyoto City Zoo** (p72) This small zoo is far from world class but it is quite convenient to the other sights of Northern Higashiyama. You can easily combine it with a trip to the temples, shrines and museums nearby.
- **Umekōji Steam Locomotive Museum** (p58) With 18 vintage steam locomotives, one of which you can ride, this museum is a must for train-crazy boys and girls.

The temple contains five buildings, featuring some of the finest examples of the architectural and artistic achievements of the Azuchi-Momoyama period (1568–1600). Unfortunately, the Goe-dō hall is presently being restored and won't reopen until 2010. The Daisho-in hall has sumptuous paintings, carvings and metal ornamentation. A small garden and Japan's oldest nō (stylised dance-drama) stages are connected to the Daisho-in hall. The dazzling Chinese-style Kara-mon gate displays intricate ornamental carvings and metalwork. The gate has been dubbed Higurashi-mon (Sunset Gate) by those who purport that its beauty can distract one from noticing the setting sun. Both Daisho-in and Kara-mon were transported here from Fushimi-jō castle in the south of the city.

The Goe-dō dates from 1636 and contains a seated statue of Shinran. The Hondō, last reconstructed in 1760, houses a priceless collection of painted sliding screens with images of the phoenix and peacock.

SHŌSEI-EN Map p46

☎ 371-9181; Karasuma-dōri-Kamijuzuyachō; admission free; 🕒 9am-3.30pm; 🚶 15min walk from central exit, Kyoto Station

About five minutes' walk east of Higashi Hongan-ji (p45), this garden is a nice green island in a vast expanse of concrete. While it's not on par with many other gardens in Kyoto, it's worth a visit if you find yourself in need of something to do near the station, perhaps paired with a visit to the temple. The lovely grounds, incorporating the *Kikoku-tei villa*, were completed in 1657. Bring a picnic (and some bread to feed the carp) or just stroll around the beautiful Ingetsu-ike pond.

DOWNTOWN KYOTO

Eating p121; Shopping p107; Sleeping p149

If you didn't give a hoot about temples, shrines and gardens, you might never leave Downtown Kyoto. It's got just about everything else you need: an incredible variety of accommodation, restaurants, nightlife, shopping and entertainment options. And, yes, there are even a few small temples, shrines and museums scattered about.

At the very heart of it all is a tight grid of streets and shopping arcades that is bounded by Kawaramachi-dōri and Karasuma-dōri on the east and west, and Oike-dōri and Shijō-dōri on the north and south. In this crowded grid you'll find a pleasant mix of tradition and modernity, with *machiya* (traditional Japanese town houses) crammed in between modern metal and concrete buildings. Many new businesses are opening in old *machiya*, which pleasantly blurs the borders between old and new.

You can wander endlessly in this area, poking around in the shops and arcades, content in the knowledge that whenever you get hungry or thirsty there'll almost always be a restaurant or café within a few steps. And don't forget Nishiki Market, Kyoto's finest food market, which runs through the southern edge of this district. Not far away, Shijō-dōri is thick with shops, including four of Kyoto's leading department stores.

And when night falls, you can head over to Kiyamachi, the city's bustling nightlife district, which centres on Kiyamachi-dōri. You can dine on any type of Japanese cuisine here and there's a pretty good selection of foreign food on offer as well. Afterwards, you'll be able to choose from an entire constellation of bars, clubs and karaoke joints. If you demand something a little more dignified, you can leave Kiyamachi and stroll over to Pontochō, an elegant and entrancing entertainment district (as long as you go there by night) positively packed with old-Japan atmosphere.

Downtown's Museum of Kyoto provides a reasonable introduction to the history of the city. Those with children will enjoy the Kaleidoscope Museum of Kyoto and those keen on Japanese pop culture will want to check out the Kyoto International Manga Museum.

The best way to get to this neighbourhood from Kyoto Station is by taking the Karasuma subway line to Karasuma-Oike Station. From here you can easily walk to all parts of the area, usually in less than 15 minutes. If you're on the east side of town (say, near the Kamo-gawa), you can take the Keihan line from the north or south to Sanjō or Shijō Stations and start your walk from there.

MUSEUM OF KYOTO Map p50

☎ 222-0888; Nakagyō-ku, Sanjō-dōri, Takakura agaru; adult/child ¥500/free, special exhibits extra; 🕒 10am-7.30pm, closed Mon; 🚶 5min walk from Karasuma-Oike Station, Karasuma subway line Housed in and behind the former Bank of Japan, a classic brick Meiji-period building, this museum is worth a visit for those with an interest in Kyoto's long history. The regular exhibits consist of models of ancient Kyoto, audiovisual presentations and a small gallery dedicated to the city's film industry. On the 1st floor, the Roji Tempō is a reconstructed Edo-period merchant area showing 10 types of exterior lattice work. This section can be entered for free; some of the shops sell souvenirs and serve local dishes.

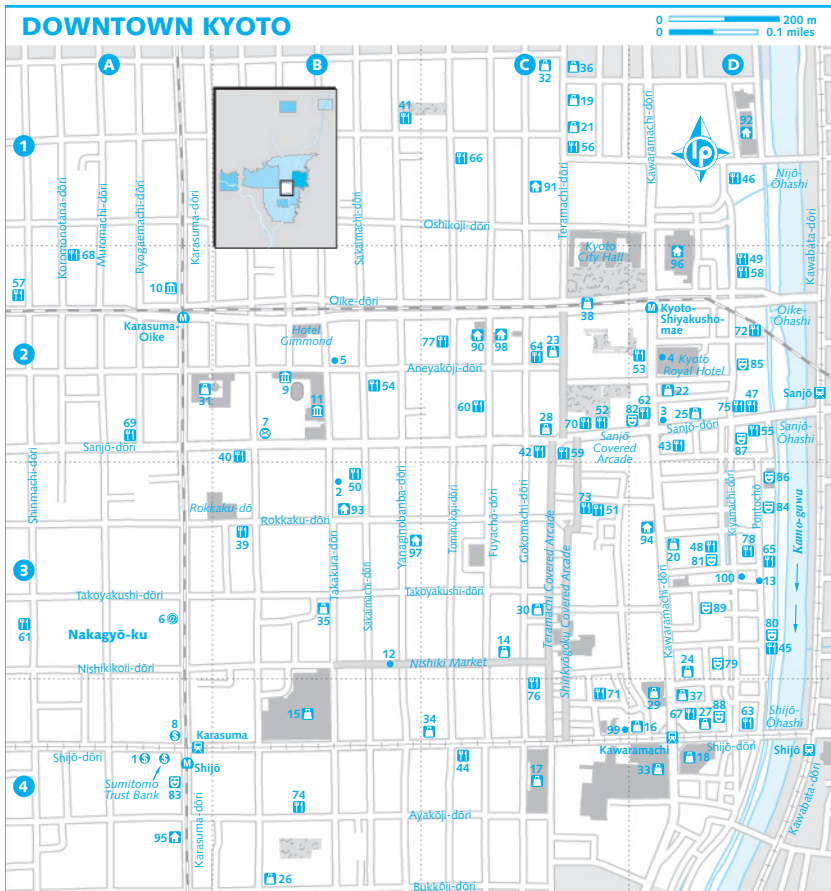
The museum holds special exhibits, most of which have nothing to do with Kyoto (including an exhibit on the treasures of the Ottoman Empire); however, they are often excellent. Check *Kansai Time Out* (p197) or ask at the TIC (p199) for details of upcoming shows.

KYOTO INTERNATIONAL MANGA MUSEUM Map p50

☎ 254-7414; www.kyotomm.com/english/; Karasuma-Oike; adult/child ¥500/100; 🕒 10am-8pm, closed Wed; 🚶 3min walk from Karasuma-Oike Station, Karasuma subway line

This brand new museum has a collection of some 300,000 manga (Japanese comic books). Set in an atmospheric building that used to house an elementary school, the museum is the perfect introduction to the art of manga. While most of the manga and the displays are, naturally, in Japanese, the collection of translated works is growing.

In addition to the galleries that show both the historical development of manga and original artwork done in manga style, there are beginners' workshops at weekends and opportunities to have your portrait drawn by manga artists. Visitors with children will appreciate the children's library and the humorous traditional Japanese



sliding picture shows (in Japanese or silent), not to mention the Astroturf lawn where the kids can run free. The museum hosts six month-long special exhibits yearly; check the website for details. While the collection is large, rest assured that it does not hold any of Japan's infamous *sukebe manga* (dirty comics) – trust us: a friend of ours has looked.

KALEIDOSCOPE MUSEUM OF KYOTO Map p50

☎ 254-7902; Nakagyō-ku, Aneyakōji, Takakura; adult/child ¥500/free, special exhibits extra; 🕒 10am-7.30pm, closed Mon; 📍 3min walk from Karasuma-Oike Station, Karasuma subway line This one-room museum is filled with unexpected wonders. Frankly, we had no idea of the variety and complexity in the

field of kaleidoscopes. We don't know who will enjoy this more, children or the adults trying to keep them entertained. It's right behind the **Museum of Kyoto** (p49).

NISHIKI MARKET Map p50

☎ 211-3882; Nakagyō-ku, Nishiki-kōji-dōri; 🕒 most stores 9am-5pm; 📍 5min walk from Shijō Station, Karasuma subway line Nishiki Market (Nishiki-kōji Ichiba in Japanese) is one of Kyoto's real highlights, especially if you have an interest in cooking and eating (and we guess that you do). If you want to see all the weird and wonderful foods that go into Kyoto cuisine, this is the place. It's in the centre of town, one block north of Shijō-dōri, running west from Teramachi-dōri. It's a great place to visit on a

DOWNTOWN KYOTO

| INFORMATION | | Takashimaya Department Store | | Tomizushi とみ寿司 | |
|---|----------|---|----------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Citibank シティバンク | 1 A4 | 高島屋百貨店 | 33 D4 | Tōsuirō 豆水楼 | 71 C4 |
| Honke Katsura 本家かつら | 2 B3 | Tanakaya 田中粥 | 34 C4 | Uontana 魚棚 | 73 C3 |
| IACE Travel IACEトラベル | 3 D2 | Tanakaya 田中屋 | 35 B3 | Uosue うすえ | 74 B4 |
| International ATM 国際ATM | 4 D2 | Teramachi Club 寺町倶楽部 | 36 C1 | Veggie Table ベジテーブル | 75 D2 |
| Kawara Juku | | Tsujikaya 辻倉 | 37 D4 | Yak & Yeti ヤック&イエティ | 76 C4 |
| 京都日本研究センター | 5 B2 | Zest Underground Shopping | | Yoshikawa 吉川 | 77 C2 |
| Kinko's キンコーズ | 6 A3 | Arcade ゼスト御池 | 38 C2 | Zu Zu 厨房 | 78 D3 |
| Mitsui Sumitomo Bank (SMBK Bank) 三井住友銀行 | (see 18) | | | | |
| Nakagyō Post Office 中京郵便局 | 7 B2 | EATING 🍴 (pp115-38) | | ENTERTAINMENT 🎬 (pp139-44) | |
| Rakushi-kan 楽紙館 | (see 11) | Anji あんじ | 39 B3 | A-Bar 居酒屋 A (あ) | 79 D3 |
| UFJ Bank UFJ銀行 | 8 A4 | Azami あざみ | (see 11) | Atlantis アトランティス | 80 D3 |
| | | Biotei びお亭 | 40 B2 | Ing イング | 81 D3 |
| | | Café Bibliotec HELLO! カフェ | | Jumbo Karaoke Hiroba | |
| | | ビブリオティックハロー | 41 B1 | ジャンボカラオケ広場 | 82 D2 |
| SIGHTS 🏛️ (pp49-51) | | Café Independants | | Kyoto Cinema 京都シネマ | 83 A4 |
| Kaleidoscope Museum of Kyoto | | カフェ アンデパンダン | 42 C2 | Marble Room マーブルルーム | 84 D3 |
| 京都万華鏡ミュージアム | 9 B2 | Cappriciosa カプリチョーザ | 43 D2 | McLoughlin's Irish Bar & Restaurant | |
| Kyoto International Manga Museum | | Doutor Coffee ドトルコーヒー | 44 C4 | マククラランス アイリッシュ | |
| 京都国際マンガミュージアム | 10 A2 | Fujino-ya 藤の家 | 45 D3 | バー & レストラン | 85 D2 |
| Museum of Kyoto | | Ganko Nijō-en がんこ二条苑 | 46 D1 | Orizzonte オリゾンテ | (see 96) |
| 京都文化博物館 | 11 B2 | Ganko Zushi がんこ寿司 | 47 D2 | Ponto-chō Kaburen-jō Theatre | |
| Nishiki Market 錦市場 | 12 B3 | Hati Hati ハチハチ | 48 D3 | 先斗町歌舞練場 | 86 D3 |
| Pontochō 先斗町 | 13 D3 | Ikumatsu 幾松 | 49 D2 | Rag ラグ | (see 85) |
| | | Inoda Coffee イノダコーヒー | 50 B3 | Rub-a-Dub ラブアダブ | 87 D2 |
| SHOPPING 🛍️ (pp105-14) | | Kane-ya かねや | 51 C3 | Sekisui 積水 | (see 92) |
| Aritsugu 有次 | 14 C3 | Katsu Kura かつくら | 52 C2 | World ワールド | 88 D4 |
| Daimaru Department Store | | Kerala ケララ | 53 D2 | Zappa ザッパ | 89 D3 |
| 大丸百貨店 | 15 B4 | Kōsendō-sumi 光泉洞すみ | 54 B2 | | |
| Erizen あり善 | 16 D4 | Kyō-Hayashiya 京はやしや | 55 D2 | SLEEPING 🛏️ (pp145-56) | |
| Fuji Daimaru Department Store | | Le Bouchon ルブション | 56 C1 | Hiragiya Ryokan 柗屋旅館 | 90 C2 |
| 藤井大丸百貨店 | 17 C4 | Lugol ルゴール | 57 A2 | Hiragiya Ryokan Annex 柗屋旅館別館 | 91 C1 |
| Hankyū Department Store | | Merry Island Café | | Hotel Fujita Kyoto ホテルフジタ京都 | 92 D1 |
| 阪急百貨店 | 18 D4 | メリアアイランドカフェ | 58 D2 | Hotel Matsui ホテル松井 | 93 B3 |
| Ippo-dō 一保堂 | 19 C1 | Mishima-tei 三嶋亭 | 59 C2 | Hotel Unizo ホテルユニゾ | 94 D3 |
| Junkudō ジュンク堂書店 | 20 D3 | Misoka-an Kawamichi-ya 晦庵河道屋 | 60 C2 | Karasuma Kyoto Hotel からすま京都ホテル | 95 A4 |
| Kamiji Kakimoto 紙司柿本 | 21 C1 | Mukade-ya 百足屋 | 61 A3 | Kyoto Hotel Okura 京都ホテルオークラ | 96 D2 |
| Kōjitsu Sansō 好日山荘 | 22 D2 | Musashi Sushi むさし寿司 | 62 D2 | Matsui Honkan 松井本館 | 97 B3 |
| Kyūkyō-dō 鳩居堂 | 23 C2 | Omen Nippon おめん 日本 | 63 D4 | Tawarayaya Ryokan 俵屋旅館 | 98 C2 |
| Matsuya 松屋 | 24 D3 | Park Café パークカフェ | 64 C2 | | |
| Meidi-ya Store 明治屋 | 25 D2 | Ponto-chō Uan 先斗町町壺 | 65 D3 | | |
| Morita Washi 森田和紙 | 26 B4 | Shin-Shin Tei 新進亭 | 66 C1 | TRANSPORT 🚆 (pp181-9) | |
| Nijūsan-ya 二十三元 | 27 D4 | Shizurō 志る幸 | 67 D4 | Discount Ticket Shop | |
| Nishiharu 西春 | 28 C2 | Shizen Restaurant Obanzai 自然派レストランおばんざい | 68 A2 | 格安さっぷ売り場 | 99 C4 |
| Nishiki Market 錦市場 (see 12) | | Shin-Puh-Kan 新風館 | 30 A2 | Pontochō Bicycle Parking Lot 先斗町駐車場 | 100 D3 |
| OPA オーパ | 29 D4 | Tadashiya 唯屋 | 32 C1 | | |
| Rakushi-kan 楽紙館 (see 11) | | | | | |
| Random Walk ランダムウォーク | 30 A2 | | | | |
| Shin-Puh-Kan 新風館 | 31 A2 | | | | |
| Tadashiya 唯屋 | 32 C1 | | | | |

rainy day or as a break from temple-hopping. The variety of foods on display is staggering and the frequent cries of '*irasshaimase*' ('Welcome!') are heart-warming.

PONTOCHŌ Map p50
Nakagyō-ku; 📍 2min walk from Kawaramachi Station, Hankyū line

There are few streets in Asia that rival this narrow pedestrian-only walkway for atmosphere. Not much to look at by day, the street comes alive by night, with wonderful lanterns, traditional wooden exteriors and elegant Kyotoites disappearing into the doorways of elite old restaurants and bars.

Once the city's red-light district, Pontochō is located between the Kamogawa and Kiyamachi-dōri. Many of the restaurants and teahouses can be difficult to enter, but a number of reasonably priced, accessible places can be found. Even if you have no intention of patronising one of the businesses here, it makes a nice stroll in the evening, perhaps combined with a walk in nearby Gion.

Pontochō is also a great place to spot geisha and *maiko* (apprentice geisha) making their way between appointments, especially on weekend evenings at the Shijō-dōri end of the street.

CENTRAL KYOTO

Eating p127; Shopping p111; Sleeping p150

Central Kyoto is not really one distinct neighbourhood but a collection of neighbourhoods. The area comprises the entire middle of the city (excepting Downtown Kyoto and the Kyoto Station area), including the traditional heart of Kyoto – the Kyoto Imperial Palace and the lovely park that surrounds it. To the north you'll find Shimogamo-jinja, a fine temple in a forest setting, and to the south the lovely Tō-ji, one of Kyoto's oldest temples. Central Kyoto is also home to Daitoku-ji, a self-contained world of Zen temples, gardens and lanes.

While there are some decent hotels in Central Kyoto and plenty of good restaurants, it's not really an area where one would hang out. You're more likely to visit to see a specific sight or to eat at a specific restaurant.

The best way to reach and explore Central Kyoto is by using the city's extensive bus network. Some of the area's best attractions are located on or near the Karasuma subway line, however, including the Kyoto Imperial Palace and surrounding park, Kyoto Botanical Gardens and Daitoku-ji.

KYOTO IMPERIAL PALACE Map pp54–5

☎ 211-1215; Kamigyō-ku, Kyoto gyōen 3; admission free; ⌚ 10min walk from Imadegawa Station, Karasuma subway line

The Kyoto Imperial Palace (Kyoto Gosho) is the heart of Kyoto, both spatially and metaphorically. It was built in 794 and has undergone numerous rebirths after destruction by fires. The present building, on a different site and smaller than the original, was constructed in 1855. Ceremonies related to the enthronement of a new emperor and other state functions are still held here.

The Shinsen-den (Ceremonial Hall) is an outstanding, single-storey structure thatched with a cypress-bark roof. Covered walkways connect it to the surrounding buildings. From outside you can see the *takamikura* (throne) where the emperor sat on formal occasions. It is covered with a silk canopy and on each side are stands to hold treasures such as swords, jewels and other imperial regalia. Just in front of the throne are two wooden *koma-inu* (mythological animals guarding Shintō shrines). The palace is full of other treasures, including priceless sliding screens adorned with Tosa school paintings. Though the hall initially was used as living quarters for the emperor, it was later set aside for ceremonial use only.

Twice-yearly, in spring and autumn, the palace grounds are chock-full when the inner sanctum is opened to the public for several days. Otherwise, it is necessary to visit as part of a guided tour (see the boxed text, p57). The tour guide will elaborate in English while you are led for

about one hour past the Shishin-den, Ko Gosho (Small Palace), Tsune Gosho (Regular Palace) and Oike-niwa (Pond Garden). Regrettably, it is forbidden to enter any of these buildings.

SENTŌ GOSHO Map pp54–5

☎ 211-1215; Kamigyō-ku, Kyoto gyōen; ⌚ 10min walk from Imadegawa Station, Karasuma subway line

A few hundred metres southeast of the Imperial Palace is the Sentō Gosho. It was originally constructed in 1630 during the reign of Emperor Go-Mizunō as a residence for retired emperors. The palace was repeatedly destroyed by fire and reconstructed; it continued to serve its purpose until a final blaze in 1854, after which it was never rebuilt. Today only two structures, the Seika-tei and Yūshin-tei teahouses, remain. The magnificent gardens, laid out in 1630 by renowned landscape designer Kobori Enshū, are the main attraction.

Visitors must obtain advance permission from the Imperial Household Agency (see p57) and be more than 20 years old. One-hour tours (in Japanese) start daily at 11am and 1.30pm.

KYOTO IMPERIAL PALACE PARK

Map pp54–5

☎ 211-6348; Kamigyō-ku, Kyoto gyōen 3; ⌚ 8min walk from Imadegawa Station, Karasuma subway line

The Imperial Palace is surrounded by a spacious park with a welcome landscape of trees and open lawn – it's Kyoto's very own Central Park. It's perfect for picnics, strolls and just about any sport that doesn't require retrieving balls over walls. Best of

all, it's free. Take some time to visit the pond at the park's southern end, with its gaping carp. The park is most beautiful in the plum- and cherry-blossom seasons (early March and early April, respectively). It is bounded by Teramachi-dōri and Karasuma-dōri on the east and west, and by Imadegawa-dōri and Marutamachi-dōri on the north and south.

DAITOKU-JI Map pp54–5

☎ 491-0019; Kita-ku, Murasakino, Daitokuji-chō 53; admission free; ⌚ dawn to dusk; ⌚ 15min walk from exit 2, Kitaōji Station, Karasuma subway line

Daitoku-ji is a separate world within Kyoto – a world of Zen temples, perfectly raked gardens and wandering lanes. It is one of the most rewarding destinations in this part of the city, particularly for those with an interest in Japanese gardens.

Daitoku-ji, the headquarters of the Rinzai Daitoku-ji school, contains an extensive complex of 24 subtemples – including *Daisen-in* (below), *Kōtō-in* (right), *Obai-in* (p56), *Ryōgen-in* (p56) and *Zuihō-in* (p56). If you want an intensive look at Zen culture, this is the place to visit.

The eponymous Daitoku-ji is on the eastern side of the grounds. It was founded in 1319, burnt down in the next century and rebuilt in the 16th century. The Sanmon gate (1589) has a self-carved statue of its erector, the famous tea-master Sen no Rikyū, on its 2nd storey.

Some sources say that Toyotomi Hideyoshi was so angry when he discovered he'd been demeaning himself by walking under Rikyū's effigy that he forced the master to commit *seppuku* (ritual suicide) in 1591.

If you enter from the main gate, which is on the east side of the complex, you will soon after find Daitoku-ji on your right.

DAISEN-IN Map pp54–5

☎ 491-8346; Kita-ku, Murasakino, Daitokuji-chō 54-1; admission ¥400; ⌚ 9am-5pm Mar-Nov, to 4.30pm Dec-Feb; ⌚ 15min walk from exit 2, Kitaōji Station, Karasuma subway line

The two small Zen gardens in this subtemple of *Daitoku-ji* (above) are elegant examples of 17th-century *karesansui* (dry-landscape rock garden) style. Here the trees, rocks and sand are said to represent and express various spectacles of nature, from waterfalls and valleys to mountain lakes. It's one of

top picks

IT'S FREE

A quick glance through the pages of this chapter might convince you that sightseeing in Kyoto is going to require taking out a second mortgage on your home. Luckily, there are plenty of free things you can do. Indeed, you could fill at least a week with activities that cost you absolutely nothing. Here are just a few:

- **Temples** There is no charge to enter the grounds of many of Kyoto's temples, including *Nanzen-ji* (p66), *Chion-in* (p65), *Hōnen-in* (p71) and *Tōfuku-ji* (p59).
- **Shrines** Almost all shrines in Kyoto can be entered free of charge. A few good ones include *Fushimi-Inari-Taisha* (p59), *Heian-jingū* (p72), *Yasaka-jinja* (p64) and *Shimogamo-jinja* (p56).
- **Kyoto Imperial Palace Park** (opposite) Kyoto's Central Park is a treasure that many visitors overlook.
- **Kamo-gawa** (Map pp54–5) Like the Imperial Palace Park, this is a great place to spend a relaxing afternoon strolling and picnicking. In the summer you'll be treated to free fireworks shows as local youths hold impromptu *hanabi-taikai* (fireworks festivals).
- **Nishiki Market** (p50) It costs nothing to wander through this wonderful market. Of course, you might find something that you just *have* to buy...
- **Kyoto Station** (p45) Kyoto's station building is pretty impressive, and the view from the rooftop observatory is the best you'll get – short of paying to ascend Kyoto Tower or expending the energy to climb Daimonji-yama.
- **Festivals** (p15) There's nothing like a colourful Kyoto festival, and they're always free. If you're lucky, you might even be asked to participate.
- **Hikes** (p144) It doesn't cost anything to enjoy Kyoto's natural beauty. There are myriad hikes in the mountains that surround the city.
- **Imperial Properties** The *Kyoto Imperial Palace* (opposite), *Shūgaku-in Rikyū Imperial Villa* (p58) and *Katsura Rikyū Imperial Villa* (p89) can all be toured free of charge.

the more popular subtemples here, but not as rewarding as *Kōtō-in* (below) or *Obai-in* (p56).

KŌTŌ-IN Map pp54–5

☎ 492-0068; Kita-ku, Murasakino, Daitokuji-chō 73-1; admission ¥400; ⌚ 9am-4.30pm; ⌚ 20min walk from exit 2, Kitaōji Station, Karasuma subway line

On the far western edge of the *Daitoku-ji* (left) complex (you may have to ask directions

CENTRAL KYOTO



to find it), this sublime garden is one of the best in all Kyoto and it's worth a special trip. It's located within a fine bamboo grove that you traverse via a moss-lined path. Once inside there is a small stroll garden which leads to the centrepiece: a rectangle of moss and maple trees, backed by bamboo. Take some time on the veranda here to soak it all up.

ZUIHŌ-IN Map pp54–5

☎ 491-1454; Kita-ku, Murasakino, Daitokuji-chō; admission ¥400; 🕒 9am–5pm; 🕒 20min walk from exit 2, Kitaōji Station, Karasuma subway line Another subtemple of **Daitoku-ji** (p53), Zuihō-in enshrines the 16th-century Christian *daimyō* (domain lord) Ōtomo Sōrin. In the early 1960s, a landscape architect named Shigemori Misuzu rearranged the stones in the back rock garden into the shape of a crucifix! More interesting is the main rock garden, which is raked into appealing patterns that remind one of water ripples. It's roughly in the middle of the complex; once again, you may have to ask for directions.

OBAI-IN Map pp54–5

☎ 491-1454; Kita-ku, Murasakino, Daitokuji-chō; admission ¥400; 🕒 9am–5pm 6–31 Oct & 13 Nov–9 Dec; 🕒 20min walk from exit 2, Kitaōji Station, Karasuma subway line

If you are lucky enough to be in Kyoto during autumn when this subtemple of **Daitoku-ji** (p53) is opened to the public, then you should make an effort to visit. The subtemple is a world of interlinked gardens, including an incredibly rich moss garden and a starkly simple *karesansui*. Along with nearby **Kōtō-in** (p53), we rank this as one of the finest gardens in Kyoto. When you enter the Daitoku-ji complex via the east (main) gate, it's on the left.

RYŌGEN-IN Map pp54–5

☎ 491-7635; Kita-ku, Murasakino, Daitokuji-chō; admission ¥400; 🕒 9am–5pm; 🕒 walk from exit 2, Kitaōji Station, Karasuma subway line Ryōgen-in is yet another fine subtemple in the **Daitoku-ji** (p53) complex. It's got two pleasing gardens, one moss and one *karesansui*. The *karesansui* has an interesting island in its midst that invites lazy contemplation. When you enter the Daitoku-ji complex via the east (main) gate, it's on the left, just before **Obai-in** (above).

SHIMOGAMO-JINJA Map pp54–5

☎ 781-0010; Sakyō-ku, Shimogamo Izumigawa-chō 59; admission free; 🕒 6am–6pm; 🕒 1min walk from Shimogamo-jinja-mae bus stop, bus 205 from Kyoto Station

A long strip of forest sandwiched between the two rivers in the north of the city, Shimogamo-jinja is, like the Kyoto Imperial Palace Park, a good place to go when you need some space and greenery. While it's not worth a special trip, it's a nice place for a stroll if you find yourself in this part of town.

Shimogamo-jinja dates from the 8th century and is a Unesco World Heritage site. The shrine itself is approached along a shady path through the lovely **Tadasu-no-mori**. This wooded area is said to be a place where lies cannot be concealed and is considered a prime location to sort out disputes.

The shrine is dedicated to the god of harvest. Traditionally, pure water was drawn from the nearby rivers for purification and agricultural ceremonies. The Hondō dates from 1863 and, like the Haiden hall at its sister shrine, **Kamigamo-jinja** (p91), is an excellent example of *nagare*-style shrine architecture.

KYOTO BOTANICAL GARDENS

Map pp54–5

☎ 701-0141; Sakyō-ku, Shimogamohangi-chō; adult ¥200, child ¥80–150; 🕒 9am–5pm; 🕒 2min walk from Kitayama Station, Karasuma subway line One of Kyoto's most underappreciated sights, this vast garden, opened in 1914, occupies 240,000 sq metres and features 12,000 plants, flowers and trees. It is pleasant to stroll through the rose, cherry and herb gardens or view the rows of camphor trees and the large tropical **greenhouse** (adult ¥200). Pack a picnic and bring a Frisbee or a ball to toss and you've got the makings of a very pleasant afternoon on a warm day in Kyoto.

SUMIYA PLEASURE HOUSE Map pp54–5

☎ 351-0024; Shimogyō-ku, Nishishinyashikiageya-chō 32; adult ¥1000, child ¥500–800; 🕒 10am–4pm, closed Mon; 🕒 7min walk from JR Tanbaguchi Station; 🕒 10min walk from Umekōji-kōen-mae bus stop, bus 205 from Kyoto Station Shimabara, a district northwest of Kyoto Station, was Kyoto's original pleasure quarters. At its peak during the Edo period

RESERVATIONS & ADMISSION TO KYOTO'S IMPERIAL PROPERTIES

Permission to visit the **Kyoto Imperial Palace** (p52) is granted by the Kunaichō – the **Imperial Household Agency** (Map pp54–5; ☎ 211-1215; Kunaicho, Kyoto Jimusho; 🕒 8.45am–noon & 1–4pm Mon–Fri, closed holidays), which is inside the walled park surrounding the palace, a short walk from Imadegawa Station on the Karasuma line. You have to fill out an application form and show your passport. Children can visit if accompanied by adults more than 20 years of age but are forbidden entry to the other three imperial properties of **Katsura Rikyū** (p89), **Sentō Goshō** (p52) and **Shūgaku-in Rikyū** (p58). Permission to tour the palace is usually granted the same day (try to arrive at the office at least 30 minutes before the start of the tour you'd like to join). Guided tours, sometimes in English, are given at 10am and 2pm from Monday to Friday. The tour lasts about 50 minutes.

The Imperial Household Agency is also the place to make advance reservations to see the Sentō Goshō, Katsura Rikyū and Shūgaku-in Rikyū.

(1600–1867) the area flourished, with more than 20 enormous *ageya* – magnificent banquet halls where artists, writers and statesmen gathered in a 'floating world' ambience of conversation, art and fornication. Geisha were often sent from their *okiya* (living quarters) to entertain patrons at these restaurant-cum-brothels. By the start of the Meiji period, however, such activities had drifted north to the Gion district and Shimabara had lost its prominence.

Though the traditional air of the district has dissipated, a few old structures remain. The tremendous **Shimabara-no-Ōmon** (Map pp54–5) gate, which marked the passage into the quarter, still stands, as does the Sumiya Pleasure House, the last remaining *ageya*, which is now designated a National Cultural Asset. Built in 1641, this stately two-storey, 20-room structure allows a rare glimpse into Edo-era nirvana. With a delicate latticework exterior, Sumiya has a huge open kitchen and an extensive series of rooms (including one extravagantly decorated with mother-of-pearl inlay).

Special tours in Japanese (requiring advance reservations in Japanese, booked through Sumiya Pleasure House) allow access to the 2nd storey and are conducted daily. An English pamphlet is provided, but you might want to consider arranging a volunteer guide through the **TIC** (p199).

MIBU-DERA Map pp54–5

☎ 841-3381; Nakagyō-ku, Bōjō, Bukkō-ji Kita iru; admission free; 🕒 8.30am–4.30pm; 🕒 10min walk from Ōmiya Station, Hankyū line Mibu-dera was founded in 991 and belongs to the Risshū school. In the late Edo period, it became a training centre for samurai. Mibu-dera houses tombs of pro-shōgunate Shinsen-gumi members, who fought

bloody street battles resisting the forces that succeeded in restoring the emperor in 1868. Except for an unusual stupa covered in Jizō statues, visually the temple is of limited interest. It is, however, definitely worth visiting during *Mibu kyōgen* (comic drama) performances in late April, or the **Setsubun** (p15) celebrations in early February.

TŌ-JI Map pp54–5

☎ 691-3325; Minami-ku, Kujō-chō 1; adult ¥500, child ¥300–400; 🕒 8.30am–4.30pm; 🕒 15min walk from Kyoto Station

One of the main sights south of Kyoto Station, Tō-ji is an appealing complex of halls and a fantastic pagoda that makes a fine backdrop for the monthly **flea market** held on the grounds.

This temple was established in 794 by imperial decree to protect the city. In 823 the emperor handed it over to Kūkai (known posthumously as Kōbō Daishi), the founder of the Shingon school of Buddhism. Many of the temple buildings were destroyed by fire or fighting during the 15th century, and most of the remaining buildings were destroyed in the Momoyama period.

The Nandai-mon (Main Gate) was moved here in 1894 from **Sanjūsangen-dō** (p60) in Southern Higashiyama. The Kōdō (Lecture Hall) dates from the 1600s and contains 21 images representing a Mikkyō (esoteric Buddhist) mandala. The Kondō (Main Hall), rebuilt in 1606, combines Chinese, Indian and Japanese architectural styles and contains statues depicting the Yakushi (Healing Buddha) trinity. In the southern part of the garden stands the **gojū-no-tō**, a five-storey pagoda which, despite having burnt down five times, was doggedly rebuilt in 1643. Standing at 57m, it is now the highest pagoda in Japan.

The **Kôbô-san market fair** is held here on the 21st of each month. There is also a regular market that runs on the first Sunday of each month.

UMEKÔJI STEAM LOCOMOTIVE MUSEUM Map pp54–5

☎ 314-2996; Shimogyô-ku, Kannon-ji-chô; museum adult/child ¥400/100, train ride adult/child ¥200/100; 🕒 9.30am–5pm, closed Mon; 🚶 15min walk from Kyoto Station

A hit with steam-train buffs and kids, this excellent museum features 18 vintage steam locomotives (dating from 1914 to 1948) and related displays. It is in the former JR Nijô Station building, which was recently relocated here and thoughtfully reconstructed. You can take a 10-minute ride on one of the smoke-spewing choo-choos (departures at 11am, 1.30pm and 3.30pm).

SHISEN-DÔ Map pp54–5

☎ 781-2954; Sakyô-ku, Ichijôji, Monguchi-chô 27; adult ¥500, child ¥200-400; 🕒 9am–5pm; 🚶 5min walk from Ichijôji-kudari-matsu-machi bus stop, bus 5 from Kyoto Station

Most travellers to Kyoto don't venture beyond **Ginkaku-ji** (p71) when exploring the northern reaches of Higashiyama, but there are several other worthwhile temples in this part of town, including Shisen-dô and **Manshu-in** (right). These two temples make a nice combination and are usually ignored by the masses who descend on Kyoto's more popular temples. Note that it's too far to walk here from Ginkaku-ji; consider a taxi or the bus.

With a name meaning 'house of poet-hermits', Shisen-dô was built in 1641 by Ishikawa Jôzan, a scholar of Chinese classics and a landscape architect who wanted a place to retire to. Formerly a samurai, Jôzan abandoned his warrior status after a rift with Tokugawa Ieyasu and became a recluse, living here until his death in 1672 at the age of 90.

The hermitage is noted for its display of poems and portraits of 36 ancient Chinese poets, which can be found in the Shisen-no-ma room.

The **karesansui** white-sand garden is lined with azaleas, which are said to represent islands in the sea. The garden also reflects Jôzan's distinct taste for Chinese aesthetics. It's a tranquil place to relax.

In the garden, water flows from a small waterfall to the **shishi-odoshi**, or **sôzu**, a device designed to scare away wild boar and deer. It's made from a bamboo pipe into which water slowly trickles, fills up and swings down to empty. On the upswing to its original position the bamboo strikes a stone with a 'thwack' – just loud enough to interrupt your snooze – before starting to refill.

MANSHU-IN Map pp54–5

☎ 781-5010; Sakyô-ku, Ichijôji, Takenouchi-chô 42; adult ¥500, child ¥300-400; 🕒 9am–4.30pm; 🚶 20min walk from Shûgakuin Station, Eizan line About 30 minutes' walk north of **Shisen-dô** (left) you'll reach the stately gate of Manshu-in, a popular retreat of former emperors and a great escape from the crowds. The temple was originally founded by Saichô on **Hiei-zan** (p91) but was relocated here at the beginning of the Edo period by Ryôshôhō, the son of Prince Hachijōnomiya Tomohito (who built **Katsura Rikyû**; p89).

The graceful temple architecture is often compared with Katsura Rikyû for its detailed woodwork and rare works of art, such as **fusuma-e** sliding doors painted by Kanô Eitoku, a famed artist of the Momoyama period. The **karesansui** garden by Kobori Enshû features a sea of gravel intended to symbolise the flow of a waterfall and stone islands representing cranes and turtles.

SHÛGAKU-IN RIKYÛ IMPERIAL VILLA Map pp54–5

☎ 211-1215; Sakyô-ku, Shûgakuin, Yabusoe; admission free; 🚶 10min walk from Shûgakuinrikyû-michi bus stop, bus 5 from Kyoto Station Lying at the foot of **Hiei-zan** (p91), this superb villa was begun in the 1650s by Emperor Go-Mizunô, following his abdication; work was continued by his daughter Akeno-miya after his death in 1680. It was designed as a lavish summer retreat for the imperial family. The gardens here, with their views down over the city of Kyoto, are worth the trouble it takes to visit.

The villa grounds are divided into three enormous garden areas on a hillside – lower, middle and upper. Each has superb **tea-ceremony houses**: the upper, Kami-no-chaya, and lower, Shimo-no-chaya, were completed in 1659, and the middle tea-

house, Naka-no-chaya, was completed in 1682. The gardens' reputation rests on their ponds, pathways and impressive use of **shakkei** (borrowed scenery) in the form of the surrounding hills. The view from Kami-no-chaya is particularly impressive.

One-hour tours (in Japanese) start at 9am, 10am, 11am, 1.30pm and 3pm; try to arrive early. A basic leaflet in English is provided and more detailed literature is for sale in the tour waiting room.

You must make reservations through the Imperial Household Agency – usually several weeks in advance. See the boxed text, p57, for details.

TAKARA-GA-IKE-KÔEN Map pp54–5

Sakyô-ku, Iwakura, Matsugasaki; 🕒 10min walk from exit 5, Kokusaikaikan Station, Karasuma subway line

This expansive park is an excellent place for a stroll or picnic in natural surroundings. Far from the throngs in the city centre, it is a popular place for bird-watching and has spacious gardens. There is a 1.8km loop around the main pond, where rowing boats can be hired for ¥1000 per hour.

In the northeast of the park, the **Kyoto International Conference Hall** (Map pp42–3) is an unfortunate attempt at replicating Japan's traditional thatched-roof **gasshō-zukuri** style in concrete. Behind the conference hall, the **Hosho-an Teahouse** (designed by Soshitsu Sen, Grand Tea-Master XV of the Urasenke school) is worth a look.

TÔFUKU-JI Map pp54–5

☎ 561-0087; Higashiyama-ku, Honmachi 15-778; admission main temple/subtemples/grounds ¥400/400/free; 🕒 9am–4pm Dec-Oct, 8.30am–4.30pm Nov; 🚶 1min walk from Tôfuku-ji bus stop, bus 202, 207 or 208 from Kyoto Station; 🕒 15min walk from Tôfuku-ji Station (local train only stop), Keihan line

Tôfuku-ji stands at the heart of a world of Zen temples and subtemples. It's one of our favourite temples in Kyoto and it's usually quite peaceful, except in the November autumn-foliage season, when it becomes so crowded that we give it a miss.

Founded in 1236 by the priest Enni, Tôfuku-ji belongs to the Rinzai school. Since this temple was intended to compete with **Tôdai-ji** (p158) and **Kôfuku-ji** (p160) in Nara, it was given a name combining characters in each of these.

This impressive temple complex is considered one of the five main Zen temples in Kyoto. The huge San-mon gate is the oldest Zen main gate in Japan. The Hôjô (Garden Hall) was reconstructed in 1890. The gardens, laid out in 1938, are well worth a visit. The northern garden has stones and moss neatly arranged in a chequerboard pattern.

FUSHIMI-INARI-TAISHA Map pp54–5

☎ 641-7331; Fushimi-ku, Fukakusa Yabunouchi-chô 68; admission free; 🕒 dawn to dusk; 🕒 1min walk from Inari Station, JR Nara line, or 1min walk from Fushimi-Inari Station, Keihan line With seemingly endless arcades of vermilion **torii** (shrine gates) spread across a thickly wooded mountain, this vast shrine complex is a world unto its own. It is, quite simply, one of the most impressive and memorable sights in all of Kyoto.

The shrine was dedicated to the gods of rice and sake by the Hata family in the 8th century. As the role of agriculture diminished, deities were enrolled to ensure prosperity in business. Nowadays, the shrine is one of Japan's most popular, and is the head shrine for some 40,000 Inari shrines scattered the length and breadth of the country.

The entire complex, consisting of five shrines, sprawls across the wooded slopes of Inari-san. A pathway wanders 4km up the mountain and is lined with hundreds of red **torii**. There are also dozens of stone foxes. The fox is considered the messenger of Inari, the god of cereals, and the stone foxes, too, are often referred to as Inari. The key often seen in the fox's mouth is for the rice granary. On an incidental note, the Japanese traditionally see the fox as a sacred, somewhat mysterious figure capable of 'possessing' humans – the favoured point of entry is under the fingernails.

The walk around the upper precincts of the shrine is a pleasant day hike. It also makes for a very eerie stroll in the late afternoon and early evening, when the various graveyards and miniature shrines along the path take on a mysterious air. It's best to go with a friend at this time.

On 8 April there's a Sangyô-sai festival with offerings and dances to ensure prosperity for national industry. During the first few days in January, thousands of believers visit this shrine as their **hatsu-môde** (first shrine visit of the new year) to pray for good fortune.

SOUTHERN HIGASHIYAMA

Eating [p129](#); Shopping [p111](#); Sleeping [p152](#)

Southern Higashiyama, the area at the base of the Higashiyama Mountains, is rivalled only by Northern Higashiyama as the richest area in Kyoto for sightseeing. It is thick with temples, shrines, museums, traditional neighbourhoods and shops; the incredible sights range from Sanjūsangen-dō in the south to Shōren-in in the north. Once you ascend above the main artery of the area, Higashiōji-dōri (also known as Higashiyama-dōri), you will find that the area is very pleasant to explore on foot. There are many lovely little streets and pedestrian-only walkways, as well as parks and expansive temple grounds. All in all, you should consider making this the first area you seek out once you get settled in Kyoto. It has ample scope for several days of relaxed exploration.

Southern Higashiyama is also a great place to stay and many of Kyoto's traditional ryokan are located here. It's close enough to Downtown or Kyoto Station so that you certainly won't feel isolated.

With the exception of the rollicking Gion entertainment district, Southern Higashiyama is not particularly rich in restaurants or nightlife. Most of the restaurants here are for the purpose of serving tourists lunch as they make their way along the main tourist track. That isn't to say that they're not good; it's just that Kyoto's best dining and nightlife options are mostly downtown.

We start our coverage of the area at its southern end and work north, but it is possible, of course, to cover this area from north to south, or any direction you please. Note that the more northerly of the Higashiyama attractions, such as Ginkaku-ji and the Tetsugaku-no-Michi (Path of Philosophy) are covered under Northern Higashiyama ([p66](#)).

The best way to get to Southern Higashiyama from Kyoto Station is by taking the Karasuma subway line to Karasuma-Oike Station, switching to the Tōzai subway line for either Keage or Higashiyama Stations and walking south into the district. You can also take a variety of city buses to the area, including 206 and 207 from Kyoto Station. If you're near the Kamo-gawa, the Keihan line links to Sanjō and Shijō Stations. Once in the area, the best way to get around is on foot.

SANJŪSANGEN-DŌ [Map p62](#)

☎ 525-0033; Higashiyama-ku, Sanjūsangendōmawari-chō 657; adult ¥600, child ¥300-400; 🕒 8am-5pm in summer, 9am-4pm in winter; 🚶 1min walk from Hakubutsukan/Sanjūsangendō-mae bus stop, bus 206 or 208 from Kyoto Station; 🚶 10min walk from Shichijō Station, Keihan line

The sheer number of Buddhist images at this temple make it among the more interesting and visually arresting sights in Kyoto. It makes a logical starting point to a full-day exploration of Southern Higashiyama.

The original temple, called Rengeō-in, was built in 1164 at the request of the retired emperor Go-shirakawa. After it burnt to the ground in 1249, a faithful copy was constructed in 1266.

The temple's name refers to the 33 *sanjūsan* (bays) between the pillars of this long, narrow building. The building houses 1001 wooden statues of Kannon (the Buddhist goddess of mercy); the chief image, the 1000-armed Senjū-Kannon, was carved by the celebrated sculptor Tankei in 1254.

It is flanked by 500 smaller Kannon images, neatly lined in rows.

There are an awful lot of arms, but if you are picky and think the 1000-armed statues don't have the required number, you should remember to calculate according to the nifty Buddhist mathematical formula, which holds that 40 arms are the equivalent of 1000 because each saves 25 worlds.

At the back of the hall are 28 guardian statues in a variety of expressive poses. The gallery at the western side of the hall is famous for the annual *Tōshiya* ([p15](#)) festival, held on 15 January, when archers shoot arrows along the length of the hall. The ceremony dates from the Edo period, when an annual contest was held to see how many arrows could be shot from the southern to northern end in 24 hours. The all-time record was set in 1686, when an archer successfully landed more than 8000 arrows at the northern end.

KYOTO NATIONAL MUSEUM [Map p62](#)

☎ 531-7509; Higashiyama-ku, Chaya-chō 527; adult ¥500 (special exhibits extra), child free-¥130;

🕒 9.30am-5pm, closed Mon; 🚶 1min walk from Hakubutsukan/Sanjūsangendō-mae bus stop, bus 206 or 208 from Kyoto Station; 🚶 10min walk from Shichijō Station, Keihan line

The Kyoto National Museum is the site for some of Kyoto's most important special art exhibitions. It was founded in 1895 as an imperial repository for art and treasures from local temples and shrines. It is housed in two buildings opposite *Sanjūsangen-dō* ([opposite](#)) temple. There are 17 rooms with displays of more than 1000 artworks, historical artefacts and handicrafts. The permanent collection is excellent but somewhat poorly displayed; unless you have a particular interest in Japanese traditional arts, we recommend visiting this museum only when a special exhibition is on.

KAWAI KANJIRŌ MEMORIAL HALL

[Map p62](#)

☎ 561-3585; Higashiyama-ku, Gojō-zaka, Kanei-chō 569; adult/child ¥900/free; 🕒 10am-4.30pm, closed Mon; 🚶 3min walk from Umamachi bus stop, bus 206 from Kyoto Station

This small memorial hall is one of Kyoto's most commonly overlooked little gems; it's worth a look, though, especially if you have an interest in Japanese crafts such as pottery and furniture. The hall was the home and workshop of one of Japan's most famous potters, Kawai Kanjirō (1890-1966). The 1937 house is built in rural style and contains examples of Kanjirō's work, his collection of folk art and ceramics, and his workshop and a fascinating *nobori-gama* (a stepped kiln). The museum is near the intersection of Gojō-dōri and Higashiōji-dōri.

PRIVATE TOURS OF KYOTO

A private tour is a great way to see the sights and learn about the city without having to worry about transport and logistics. There are a variety of private tours on offer in Kyoto, including the following:

All Japan Private Tours & Speciality Services (www.kyotoguide.com/yjpt) This company offers exclusive unique tours of Kyoto, Nara and Tokyo, as well as business coordination and related services.

Chris Rowthorn's Walks & Tours of Kyoto & Japan (www.chrisrowthorn.com) Lonely Planet Kyoto author Chris Rowthorn offers private tours of Kyoto, Nara, Osaka and the rest of Japan.

Johnnie's Kyoto Walking (<http://web.kyoto-inet.or.jp/people/h-s-love/>) Hirooka Hajime, aka Johnnie Hillwalker, offers an interesting guided walking tour of the area around Kyoto Station and Higashiyama.

Naoki Doi (☎ 090-9596-5546; www3.ocn.ne.jp/~doitaxi/) This English-speaking taxi driver offers private taxi tours of Kyoto and Nara.

Windows to Japan (www.windowstojapan.com) Windows to Japan offers custom tours of Kyoto and Japan.

ROKUHARAMITSU-JI [Map p62](#)

☎ 561-6980; Higashiyama-ku, Gojō-dōri-Yamatojōji agaru Higashi; treasure house adult ¥500, child ¥300-400; 🕒 8am-5pm; 🚶 5min walk from Kiyomizumichi bus stop, bus 206 from Kyoto Station

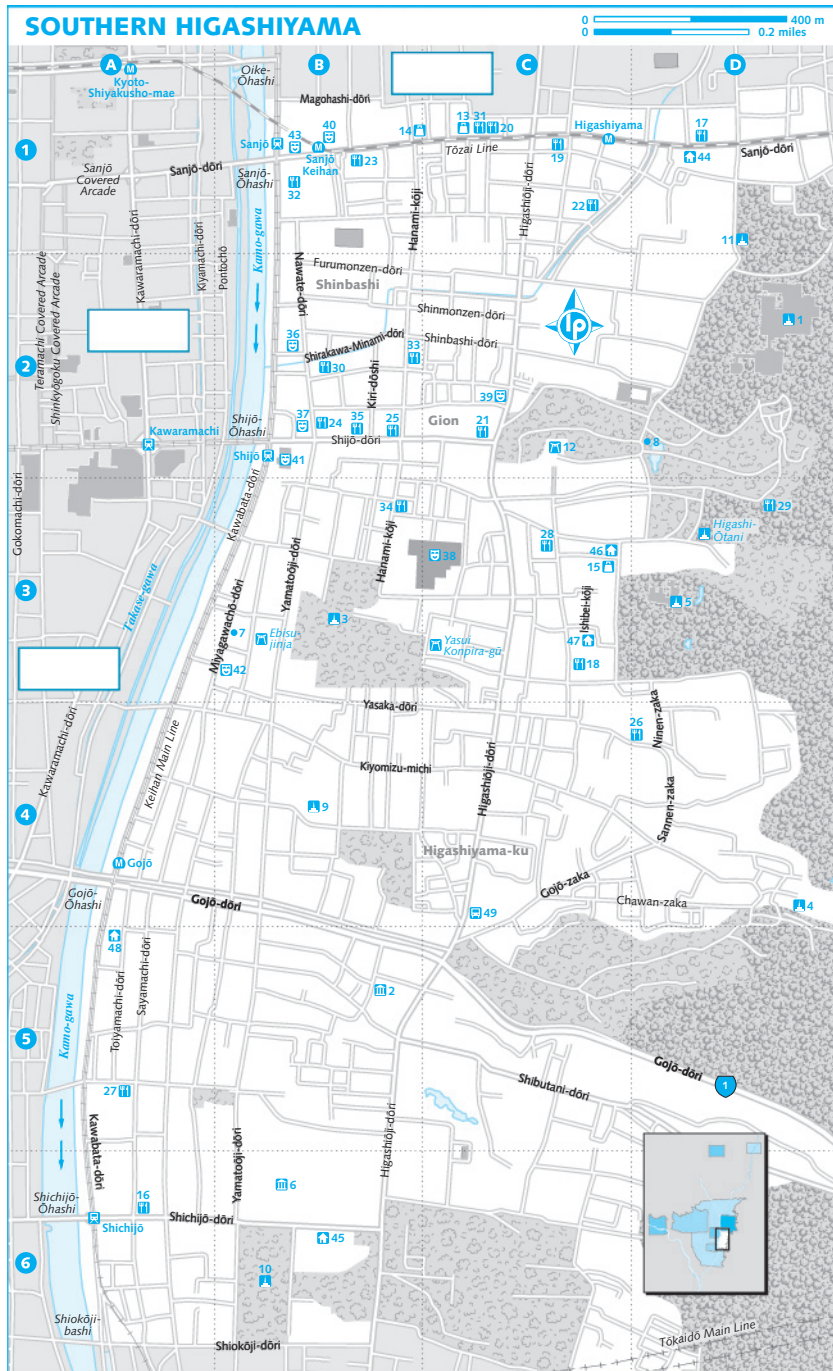
An important Buddhist pilgrimage stop, this temple was founded in 963 by Kūya Shōnin, who carved an image of an 11-headed Kannon and installed it in the temple in the hope of stopping a plague that was ravaging Kyoto at the time.

The temple itself is unremarkable but the treasure house at the rear contains a rare collection of 15 fantastic statues; the most intriguing is a standing likeness of Kūya, staff in hand and prayer gong draped around his neck, with a string of tiny figurines parading from his gums. Legend holds that while praying one day, these manifestations of the Buddha suddenly ambled out of his mouth.

KENNIN-JI [Map p62](#)

☎ 561-6363; Higashiyama-ku, Shijō-sagaru; adult ¥500; 🕒 10am-4pm; 🚶 10min walk from Shijō Station, Keihan line

Founded in 1202 by the monk Eisai, Kennin-ji is the oldest Zen temple in Kyoto. It is an island of peace and calm on the border of the boisterous Gion nightlife district and it makes a fine counterpoint to the worldly pleasures of that area. The highlight at Kennin-ji is the fine and expansive *karesansui* garden. The painting of the twin dragons on the roof of the Hōdō hall is also fantastic; access to this hall is via two gates with rather puzzling English operating instructions (you'll see what we mean).



SOUTHERN HIGASHIYAMA

| SIGHTS | | EATING | | GION CORNER | |
|------------------------------|----------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| (pp60-5) | | (pp115-38) | | | |
| Chion-in 知恩院 | 1 D2 | Amazon アマゾン | 16 A6 | Gion Corner | 38 C3 |
| Gion Corner | (see 38) | Asuka 明日香 | 17 D1 | Gion Kaikan Theatre | 39 C2 |
| ギオンコーナー | (see 38) | Aunbo 阿吶坊 | 18 C3 | 祇園会館 | 39 C2 |
| Gion Kōbu Kaburen-jō Theatre | (see 38) | Bamboo 晩 boo | 19 C1 | Gion Kōbu Kaburen-jō Theatre | (see 38) |
| 祇園甲部歌舞練場 | (see 38) | Daikichi 大吉 | 20 C1 | 祇園甲部歌舞練場 | (see 38) |
| Kawai Kanjirō Memorial Hall | | Gion Koishi 祇園小石 | 21 C2 | Jumbo Karaoke Hiroba | 40 B1 |
| 河井寛治郎記念館 | 2 B5 | Gion Morikō ぎをん森幸 | 22 C1 | ジャンボカラオケ広場 | 40 B1 |
| Kennin-ji 建仁寺 | 3 B3 | Ichi-ban 一番 | 23 B1 | Minami-za 南座 | 41 B2 |
| Kiyomizu-dera 清水寺 | 4 D4 | Issen Yōshoku 老銭洋食 | 24 B2 | Miyagawa-chō Kaburen-jō | |
| Kōdai-ji 高台寺 | 5 D3 | Kabizen Yoshifusa 健善良房 | 25 B2 | Theatre 官川町歌舞練場 | 42 B3 |
| Kyoto National Museum | | Kasagi-ya かさぎ屋 | 26 D4 | Pig & Whistle | |
| 京都国立博物館 | 6 B6 | Machapuchare マチャプチャレ | 27 A5 | ピッグ&ホイッスル | 43 B1 |
| Maika 舞舎 | 7 B3 | Oza-Ozawa おおざわ | 30 B2 | Tōzan Ban 登山バー | (see 45) |
| Maruyama-kōen 円山公園 | 8 D2 | Momiji-an 紅葉庵 | 29 D3 | SLEEPING | (pp145-56) |
| Rokuharamitsu-ji 六波羅蜜寺 | 9 B4 | Oza-Ozawa おおざわ | 30 B2 | Higashiyama Youth Hostel | |
| Sanjūsangen-dō 三十三間堂 | 10 B6 | Ryūmon 龍門 | 31 C1 | 東山ユースホステル | 44 D1 |
| Shōren-in 青蓮院 | 11 D1 | Santōka 山頭火 | 32 B1 | Hyatt Regency Kyoto ハイアット | |
| Tainai-meguri 胎内めぐり | (see 4) | Senmonten 泉門天 | 33 B2 | リージェンシー 京都 | 45 B6 |
| Yasaka-jinja 八坂神社 | 12 C2 | Wabiya Korekido 侘家古曆堂 | 34 B3 | Ryokan Motonago 旅館元奈古 | 46 C3 |
| | | Yagura やぐら | 35 B2 | Ryokan Uemura 旅館うゑむら | 47 C3 |
| | | SHOPPING | (pp105-14) | Seikōrō 晴鴨楼 | 48 A5 |
| | | Kagoshin 龍新 | 13 C1 | TRANSPORT | (pp181-9) |
| | | Onoechikuzaiten | | Gojō-zaka Bus Stop | |
| | | 尾上竹材店 | 14 B1 | 五条坂バス停 | 49 C4 |
| | | Tessai-dō てっさい堂 | 15 C3 | | |
| | | ENTERTAINMENT | (pp139-44) | | |
| | | Café Bon Appétit | | | |
| | | カフェ ボナベティ | 36 B2 | | |
| | | Gael Irish Pub | | | |
| | | ゲールアイリッシュパブ | 37 B2 | | |

KIYOMIZU-DERA Map p62

☎ 551-1234; Higashiyama-ku, Kiyomizu 1-294; adult ¥300, child ¥200-300; ☎ 6am-6pm; 🚌 10min walk from Gojō-zaka bus stop, bus 206 or 100 from Kyoto Station

Along with [Nijō-jō](#) (p73), [Kinkaku-ji](#) (p77) and [Ginkaku-ji](#) (p71), Kiyomizu-dera is one of Kyoto's most popular sights and is almost always swarming with Japanese people and foreign tourists. Fortunately, it's a large complex and it can absorb a lot of visitors. It's worth a visit for the views over the grounds and the city, and the fascinating features scattered around the main hall.

This temple was first built in 798 and devoted to Jūichi-men, an 11-headed Kannon. The present buildings – built under order of leimitsu, the third Tokugawa shōgun – are reconstructions dating from 1633. As an affiliate of the Hossō school, which originated in Nara, the temple has survived the many intrigues of Kyoto Buddhist schools through the centuries.

The main hall has a huge veranda that juts out over the hillside, supported by 139 15m-high wooden pillars. The terrace commands an excellent view over the city centre.

Just below this hall is [Otowa-no-taki spring](#), where visitors drink the sacred waters believed to have therapeutic properties (and

also thought to improve school test results). At [Jishu-jinja](#), the 'Love Shrine' north of the main hall, visitors try to ensure success in love by closing their eyes and walking about 18m between a pair of stones – if you miss, your desire for love won't be fulfilled! (Don't worry, there are instructions in English.)

Before you enter the actual temple precincts, we strongly recommend that you take a few minutes to check out one of the oddest 'sights' that we've come across at a Japanese temple: the [Tainai-meguri](#) (Map p62; admission ¥100; ☎ 9am-4pm), the entrance to which can be found just to the left (north) of the pagoda that is located in front of the main entrance to the temple (you may have to ask a temple official since there is no English sign). We don't want to tell you too much about this hall as it will take away from the experience. Suffice to say, by entering the hall, you are figuratively entering the womb of Daizuigu Bosatsu, a female Bodhisattva who has the power to grant any human wish. Once you get to the inner sanctum, you are meant to turn the large stone found there in a clockwise direction and make your wish. Be warned, there are several 90-degree turns to navigate in the darkness – walk slowly and keep a hand in front of you.

MAIKO COSTUME

If you ever wondered how you might look as a *maiko* (apprentice geisha), Kyoto has many organisations in town that offer the chance. **Maika** (Map p62; ☎ 551 1661; Higashiyama-ku, Miyagawa suji; 🕒 9.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-7pm public holidays; 🚶 10min walk from Shijō Station, Keihan line) is in the Gion district. Here you can be dressed up to live out your *maiko* fantasy. Prices begin at ¥6720 for the basic treatment, which includes full make-up and formal kimono (studio photos cost ¥500 per print and you can have stickers made from these). If you don't mind spending some extra yen, it's possible to head out in costume for a stroll through Gion (and be stared at like never before!). The process takes about an hour. Call to reserve at least one day in advance.

NINEN-ZAKA & SANNEN-ZAKA Map p62

Higashiyama-ku, Kiyomizu; 🚶 10min walk from Higashiyama-yasui bus stop, bus 206 from Kyoto Station

Just downhill from and slightly to the north of **Kiyomizu-dera** (p63), you will find one of Kyoto's most lovely restored neighbourhoods. The name refers to the two main streets of the area: Ninen-zaka and Sannen-zaka, literally 'Two-Year Hill' and 'Three-Year Hill'. These two charming streets are lined with old wooden houses, traditional shops and restaurants. If you fancy a break, there are many teahouses and cafés along these lanes.

KŌDAI-JI Map p62

☎ 561-9966; Higashiyama-ku, Kōdai-ji, Shimokawara-chō 526; adult/child ¥600/250; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🚶 5min walk from Higashiyama-yasui bus stop, bus 206 from Kyoto Station

Kōdai-ji is one of Kyoto's more popular and 'trendy' temples, attracting visitors with a variety of events including seasonal night 'light-ups'. It's a lovely spot but you'll often find yourself jostling with hordes of other visitors who are lured by the temple's unique attractions.

This temple was founded in 1605 by Kita-no-Mandokoro in memory of her late husband, Toyotomi Hideyoshi. The extensive grounds include gardens designed by Kobori Enshū, teahouses designed by the renowned master of tea ceremony Sen no Rikyū, and a lovely little grove of bamboo trees (which are positively otherworldly when illuminated at night).

MARUYAMA-KŌEN Map p62

Higashiyama-ku; 🚶 1min walk from Gion bus stop, bus 206 from Kyoto Station

Maruyama-kōen is a favourite of locals and visitors alike. This park is the place to come to escape the bustle of the city centre and amble around gardens, ponds, souvenir

shops and restaurants. Peaceful paths meander through the trees and carp glide through the waters of a small pond in the park's centre.

For two weeks in early April, when the park's cherry trees come into bloom, the calm atmosphere is shattered by hordes of drunken revellers having *hanami* (cherry-blossom viewing) parties under the trees. The centrepiece is a massive *shidare-zakura* cherry tree – one of the most beautiful sights in Kyoto, particularly when lit up from below at night. For those who don't mind crowds, this is a good place to observe the Japanese at their most uninhibited. Arrive early and claim a good spot high on the east side of the park, from where you can peer down on the mayhem below.

YASAKA-JINJA Map p62

☎ 561-6155; Higashiyama-ku, Gion-machi; admission free; 🕒 24hr; 🚶 5min walk from Shijō Station, Keihan line

This colourful and spacious shrine is down the hill from **Maruyama-kōen** (left). It's considered the guardian shrine of Gion. The present buildings, with the exception of the older, two-storey west gate, date from 1654. The granite *torii* on the south side was erected in 1666 and stands 9.5m high, making it one of the tallest in Japan. The roof of the main shrine is covered with cypress shingles. Among the treasures here are a pair of carved wooden *koma-inu* attributed to the renowned sculptor Unkei.

This shrine is particularly popular as a spot for *hatsu-mōde*. If you don't mind a stampede, come here around midnight on New Year's Eve or on any of the days following. Surviving the crush is proof that you're blessed by the gods!

Yasaka-jinja sponsors Kyoto's biggest festival, **Gion Matsuri** (p16).

GION DISTRICT Map p62

Higashiyama-ku, Gion-machi; 🚶 1min walk from Shijō Station, Keihan line

Gion is the famous entertainment and geisha quarter on the eastern bank of the Kamo-gawa. While Gion's true origins were in teahouses catering to weary visitors to **Yasaka-jinja** (opposite), by the mid-18th century the area was Kyoto's largest pleasure district. Despite the looming modern architecture, congested traffic and contemporary nightlife establishments that have cut a swath through its historical beauty, there are still some places left in Gion for an enjoyable walk. It looks quite drab by day, but comes alive with people and lights in the evening.

Hanami-kōji runs north to south and bisects Shijō-dōri. The southern section is lined with 17th-century traditional restaurants and teahouses, many of which are exclusive establishments for geisha entertainment. At the south end you reach **Gion Corner** (p142) and **Gion Kōbu Kaburen-jō Theatre** (Map p62).

If you walk from Shijō-dōri along the northern section of Hanami-kōji, you will reach **Shinbashi-dōri** and its traditional restaurants. A bit further north lie **Shinmonzen-dōri** and **Furumonzen-dōri**, running east to west. Wander in either direction along these streets, which are packed with old houses, art galleries and shops specialising in antiques – but don't expect flea-market prices here.

For more historic buildings in a beautiful waterside setting, wander down **Shirakawa Minami-dōri**, which is roughly parallel with, and one block south of, the western section of Shinmonzen-dōri.

CHION-IN Map p62

☎ 531-2111; Higashiyama-ku, Shinbashi-dōri, Yamatoōji Higashi iru 3, Rinka-chō 400; grounds free, inner buildings & garden adult ¥400, child ¥200-400; 🕒 9am-4pm Mar-Nov, to 3.40pm Dec-Feb; 🚶 10min walk from exit 2, Higashiyama Station, Tōzai subway line

The most impressive single sight in Southern Higashiyama, Chion-in is a must-see for those with a taste for the grand and glorious. It was built by the monk Genchi in 1234 on the site where his mentor,

Hōnen, had once taught and eventually fasted to death. Today it is still the headquarters of the Jōdo school, which was founded by Hōnen, and it is a hive of religious activity.

The oldest of the present buildings date from the 17th century. The two-storey San-mon gate at the main entrance is the largest in Japan, and prepares the visitor for the massive scale of the temple. The immense main hall contains an image of Hōnen and is connected with the Dai Hōjō hall by a 'nightingale' floor that squeaks as one walks over it.

After visiting the main hall, with its fantastic gold altar, you can walk around the back of the same building to see the temple's gardens. On the way, you'll pass a darkened hall with a small statue of Amida Buddha on display, glowing eerily in the darkness. It makes a nice contrast to the splendour of the main hall.

The Daishōrō belfry houses a bell that was cast in 1633, measuring 2.7m in diameter and weighing almost 80 tonnes – the largest in Japan. The combined muscle power of 17 monks is required to make the bell budge during the ceremony to ring in the new year.

SHŌREN-IN Map p62

☎ 561-2345; Higashiyama-ku, Awataguchi Sanjōbō-chō; adult/child ¥500/400; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🚶 3min walk from exit 2, Higashiyama Station, Tōzai subway line

This temple is hard to miss, with its giant camphor trees growing just outside the walls. Fortunately, many tourists manage to do just that, leaving the lovely garden relatively quiet, even when nearby attractions are mobbed.

Shōren-in, commonly called Awata Palace after the road it faces, was originally the residence of the chief abbot of the Tendai school. Founded in 1150, the present building dates from 1895 and the main hall has sliding screens with paintings from the 16th and 17th centuries. Often overlooked by the crowds, who instead descend on other Higashiyama area temples, this is a pleasant place to sit and think while gazing out over one of Kyoto's finest landscape gardens.

NORTHERN HIGASHIYAMA

Eating p132; Shopping p112; Sleeping p152

Strung out along the base of the green Higashiyama, Kyoto's most prominent mountain range, this area is arguably Kyoto's most scenic. It stretches from Nanzen-ji in the south to Ginkaku-ji in the north. The Tetsugaku-no-Michi, Kyoto's famed Path of Philosophy, runs almost the length of the area and is one of the city's best walks. Other main attractions are Hōnen-in, a quiet little temple that is one of our favourites in Kyoto, and the museums around Okazaki-koen.

If you are the sort of person who prefers a healthy dash of greenery with your sightseeing, then this might well be your favourite neighbourhood in Kyoto. Once you get into the precincts of Nanzen-ji, you can largely avoid cars and concrete until you get to Ginkaku-ji.

It's particularly conducive to those who want to do their exploring by bicycle. You could rent a bike on your first day and never have to get on public transport until you leave the city. It's flat, the roads are fairly wide and calm, and it's got some lovely cycle routes.

While there are enough restaurants here to keep you fuelled for sightseeing, particularly around Kyoto University and the Hyakumamben intersection, this isn't really the place for a night out. Northern Higashiyama has a few ryokan and hotels for those who want to be based here, however, and it's certainly a pleasant area in which to stay.

The best way to get to Southern Higashiyama from Kyoto Station is to take the Karasuma subway line to Karasuma-Oike Station, switch to the Tōzai subway line for Keage Station and walk north into the district. From Kyoto Station you can also take bus 5 to the area. If you're near the Kamo-gawa, take the Keihan line to either Sanjō or Marutamachi Station. Once in the area, the best way to get around is on foot.

NANZEN-JI Map pp68–9

☎ 771-0365; Sakyō-ku, Nanzen-ji, Fukuchi-chō; inner buildings & garden ¥1000; 🕒 8.40am–5pm; 🚶 10min walk from Keage Station, Tōzai subway line, or 20min walk from Sanjō Station, Keihan line This temple is one of the most pleasant in Kyoto, with its expansive grounds (that can be entered for free) and numerous sub-temples, including **Nanzen-in** (right), **Tenju-an** (opposite) and **Konchi-in** (opposite).

Nanzen-ji began as a retirement villa for Emperor Kameyama but was dedicated as a Zen temple on his death in 1291. Civil war in the 15th century destroyed most of the temple; the present buildings date from the 17th century. It operates now as the headquarters of the Rinzaï school.

At the entrance to the temple stands the San-mon gate (1628), its ceiling adorned with Tosa and Kanō school murals of birds and angels. Steps lead up to the 2nd storey (admission costs ¥300), which has a fine view over the city. Beyond the San-mon is the Honden (Main Hall), which contains the main Buddha figures of the temple.

Beyond the Honden, at the base of the mountains, the Hōjō hall has impressive screens painted with a vivid depiction of tigers. While you're in the Hōjō, you can enjoy a cup of tea (¥400) as you sit on tatami mats gazing at a small waterfall; ask

at the reception desk. Within the precincts of the same building, the **Leaping Tiger Garden** is a classic Zen garden well worth a look.

Perhaps the best part of Nanzen-ji is overlooked by most visitors: **Nanzen-ji Oku-no-in** (Map pp68–9), a small shrine hidden in a forested hollow behind the main precinct. To get here, walk up to the red-brick aqueduct in front of Nanzen-in. Follow the road that runs parallel to the aqueduct up into the hills, past **Kōtoku-an** (admission free; 🕒 dawn-dusk) on your left; be sure to stop in at this temple on your way. Continue up the steps into the woods until you reach a waterfall in a beautiful mountain glen. It's here at Nanzen-ji Oku-no-in that pilgrims pray while standing under the falls, sometimes in the dead of winter. Hiking trails lead off in all directions from this point; by going due north for 5km (about two hours' walk) you'll arrive at the top of **Daimonji-yama** (see p71); go east and you'll get to the town of Yamashina (also about two hours).

NANZEN-IN Map pp68–9

☎ 771-0365; Sakyō-ku, Nanzen-ji, Fukuchi-chō; adult ¥300, child ¥150–250; 🕒 8.40am–5pm; 🚶 10min walk from Keage Station, Tōzai subway line This subtemple of **Nanzen-ji** (left) is up the steps after you pass under the aqueduct. It has an attractive garden designed around

a heart-shaped pond. This garden is best seen in the morning or around noon, when sunlight shines directly into the pond and illuminates the colourful carp.

TENJU-AN Map pp68–9

☎ 771-0365; Sakyō-ku, Nanzen-ji, Fukuchi-chō; adult ¥300, child ¥100–200; 🕒 8.40am–5pm; 🚶 10min walk from Tōzai subway line, Keage Station

Another subtemple of **Nanzen-ji** (opposite), Tenju-an is located on the south side of San-mon, the main gate of Nanzen-ji. Constructed in 1337, Tenju-an has a splendid garden and a great collection of carp in its pond.

KONCHI-IN Map pp68–9

☎ 771-3511; Sakyō-ku, Nanzen-ji, Fukuchi-chō; adult/child ¥400/200; 🕒 8.30am–5pm; 🚶 5min walk from Keage Station, Tōzai subway line Just southwest of the main precincts of **Nanzen-ji** (opposite), this fine subtemple has a wonderful garden designed by Kobori Enshū. If you seek a good example of the technique of *shakkei*, look no further.

NOMURA MUSEUM Map pp68–9

☎ 751-0374; Sakyō-ku, Nanzen-ji, Shimokawara-chō 61; admission ¥700; 🕒 10am–4.30pm, closed Mon; 🚶 10min walk from Keage Station, Tōzai subway line

This museum is a 10-minute walk north of **Nanzen-ji** (opposite). Exhibits include scrolls, paintings, implements used in tea ceremonies and ceramics that were bequeathed by business magnate Nomura Tokushiki. If you have an abiding interest in the tea ceremony or in Japanese decorative techniques such as lacquer and *maki-e* (decorative lacquer technique using silver and gold powders), this museum makes an interesting break from temple hopping.

MURIN-AN VILLA Map pp68–9

☎ 771-3909; Sakyō-ku, Nanzen-ji, Kusakawa-chō; admission ¥350; 🕒 9am–4.30pm; 🚶 7min walk from Keage Station, Tōzai subway line Often overlooked by the hordes that descend on the Higashiyama area, this elegant villa was the home of prominent statesman Yamagata Aritomo (1838–1922) and the site of a pivotal 1902 political conference as Japan was heading into the Russo-Japanese War.

Built in 1896, the grounds contain well-preserved wooden buildings, including a fine Japanese tearoom. The Western-style annexe is characteristic of Meiji-period architecture and the serene garden features small streams that draw water from the Biwa-ko Sosui canal. For ¥300 you can savour a bowl of frothy *matcha* (powdered

THE LIVING ART OF THE GEISHA

Behind the closed doors of exclusive teahouses and restaurants that dot the backstreets of Kyoto, women of exquisite grace and refinement entertain gentlemen of considerable means. Patrons may pay more than US\$1000 to spend an evening in the company of a *geiko* (the Kyoto term for a fully fledged geisha). A *geiko* or *maiko* (apprentice geisha) is a kimono-clad woman versed in an array of visual and performing arts, including playing the three-stringed *shamisen* (banjo-like instrument), singing old teahouse ballads and dancing.

An evening in a Gion teahouse begins with an exquisite *kaiseki* (Japanese *haute cuisine*) meal that obeys very strict rules of etiquette for every detail, including the setting. While their customers eat, the *geiko* or *maiko* enter the room and introduce themselves in Kyoto dialect.

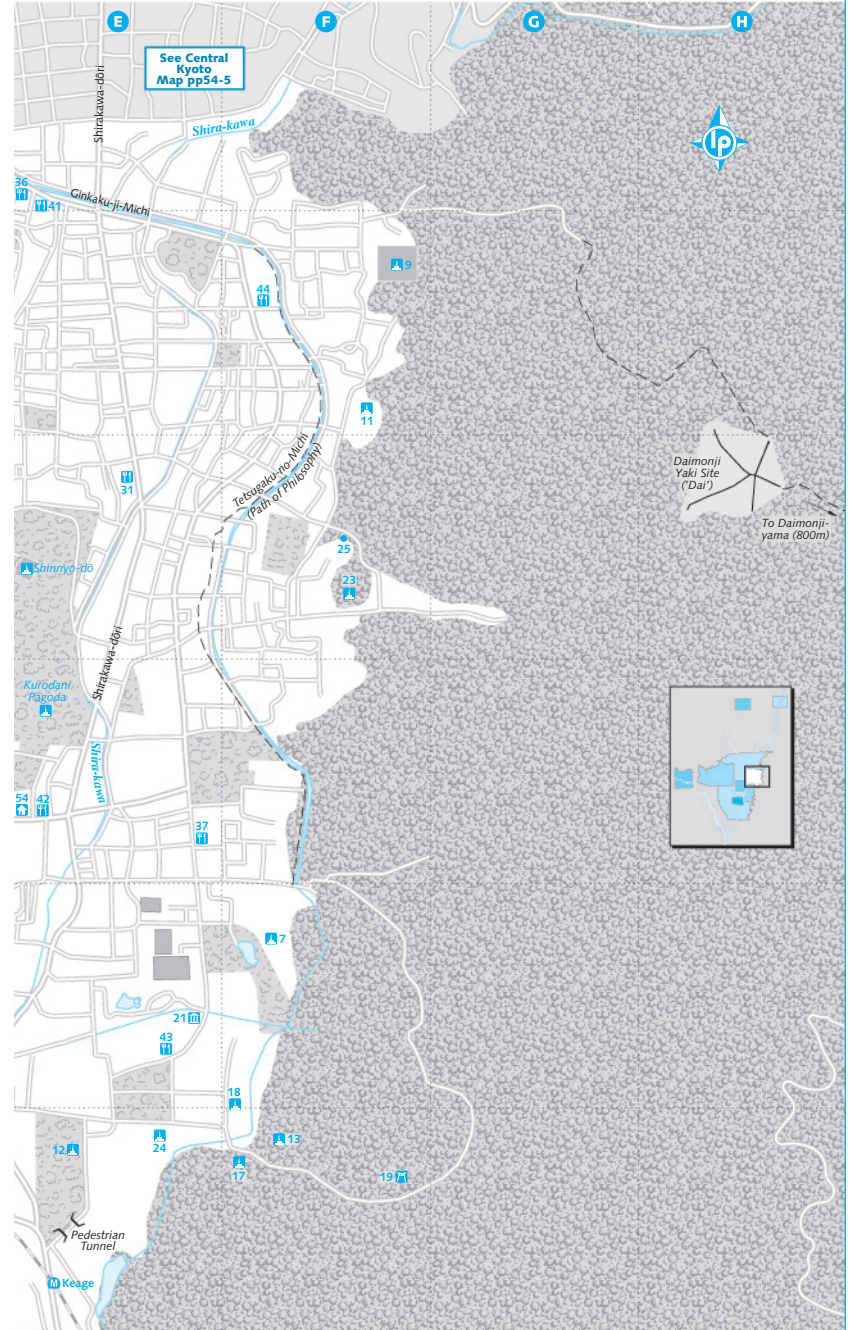
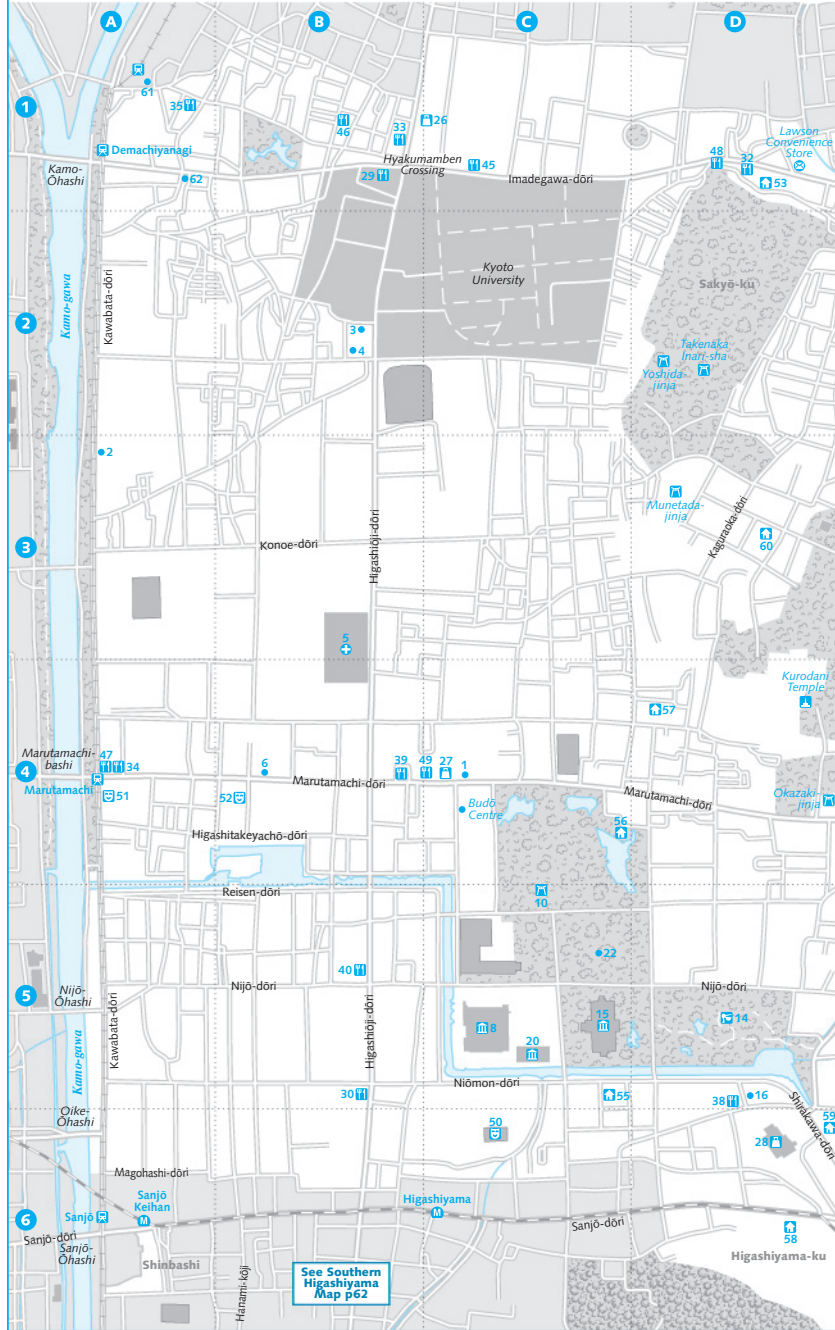
A *shamisen* performance, followed by a traditional fan dance, is often given, and all the while the *geiko* and *maiko* pour drinks, light cigarettes and engage in charming banter.

It is virtually impossible to enter a Gion teahouse and witness a *geiko* performance without the introduction of an established patron. With the exception of public performances at annual festivals or dance presentations, *geiko* perform only for select customers. Those geisha who decide to open their own teahouses once they retire at 50 or so may receive financial backing from well-to-do clients.

Knowledgeable sources estimate that there are perhaps 80 *maiko* and just over 100 *geiko* in Kyoto. Although their numbers are ever-decreasing, *geiko* and *maiko* can still be seen in some parts of the city, especially after dusk in the backstreets between the Kamo-gawa and Yasaka-jinja and along the narrow Pontochō alley. *Geiko* and *maiko* can also be found in other parts of the country, most notably Tokyo. It is thought, however, that there are fewer than 1000 *geisha* and *maiko* remaining in all Japan.

Geiko and *maiko* entertainment can be arranged through top-end hotels, ryokan and private tour operators (see the boxed text, p61).

NORTHERN HIGASHIYAMA



NORTHERN HIGASHIYAMA

INFORMATION

| | | |
|---|----------|----|
| Amita-honten アミタ本店 | 1 | C4 |
| Goethe Institute Kyoto | | |
| 京都ドイ文化センター | 2 | A3 |
| Institut Franco-Japonais du Kansai | | |
| 関西日仏学館京都 | 3 | B2 |
| Instituto Italiano di Cultura di Kansai | | |
| 関西イタリア文化会館 | 4 | B2 |
| Kyoto International Community | | |
| House 京都市国際交流会館 | (see 28) | |
| Kyoto University Hospital | | |
| 京都大学医学部附属病院 | 5 | B3 |
| Osaka Immigration Bureau | | |
| Kyoto Branch | | |
| 大阪入国管理局京都出張所 | 6 | B4 |

SIGHTS (pp66-72)

| | | |
|---|----|----|
| Eikan-dō 永観堂 | 7 | F5 |
| Fureai-kan Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts | | |
| 京都伝統産業ふれあい館 | 8 | C5 |
| Ginkaku-ji 銀閣寺 | 9 | F2 |
| Heian-jingu 平安神宮 | 10 | C5 |
| Hōnen-in 法然院 | 11 | F2 |
| Konchi-in 金地院 | 12 | E6 |
| Kot-Kōtoku-an 高徳庵 | 13 | F6 |
| Kyoto City Zoo 京都市動物園 | 14 | D5 |
| Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art | | |
| 京都市美術館 | 15 | C5 |
| Murin-an Villa 無鄰菴 | 16 | D5 |
| Nanzen-in 南禅院 | 17 | F6 |
| Nanzen-ji 南禅寺 | 18 | F6 |
| Nanzen-ji Oku-no-in | | |
| 南禅寺奥の院 | 19 | F6 |
| National Museum of Modern Art | | |
| 京都国立近代美術館 | 20 | C5 |

| | | |
|-------------------------|----|----|
| Nomura Museum 野村美術館 | 21 | E5 |
| Okazaki-kōen 岡崎公園 | 22 | C5 |
| Reikan-ji 霊鑑寺 | 23 | F3 |
| Tenju-an 天授庵 | 24 | E6 |
| Tetsugaku-no-Michi 哲学の道 | 25 | F3 |

SHOPPING (pp105-14)

| | | |
|--|----------|----|
| Chion-ji Tezukuri-ichi | | |
| 知恩寺手作り市 | 26 | C1 |
| Green e Books | | |
| グリーンeブックス | (see 47) | |
| Kyoto Handicraft Center 京都ハンディクラフトセンター | 27 | C4 |
| Kyoto International Community | | |
| House 京都市国際交流会館 | 28 | D6 |

EATING (pp115-38)

| | | |
|------------------------|----|----|
| Ayatori あやとり | 29 | B1 |
| Bouchon Cayenne | | |
| ブションカイエンヌ | 30 | B5 |
| Buttercups バターカップス | 31 | E3 |
| Café Carinho カフェ カリーニョ | 32 | D1 |
| Café Peace カフェピース | 33 | B1 |
| Earth Kitchen Company | | |
| アースキッチンカンパニー | 34 | A4 |
| Falafel Garden | | |
| ファラフェルガーデン | 35 | A1 |
| Grotto ごろっと | 36 | E1 |
| Hinode Udou 日の出うどん | 37 | E4 |
| Hyōtē 瓢亭 | 38 | D5 |
| Kaijishi カイラス | 39 | B4 |
| Karako 唐子 | 40 | B5 |
| Kushi Hachi 串八 | 41 | E1 |
| Okariba お祭り場 | 42 | A4 |
| Okutan 奥丹 | 43 | E5 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|----|----|
| Omen おめん | 44 | F2 |
| Shinshindō Notre Pain Quotidien | | |
| 進々堂 | 45 | C1 |
| Sunny Place サニープレイス | 46 | B1 |
| Torito とりと | 47 | A4 |
| Yatai 屋台 | 48 | D1 |
| Zac Baran ザックバラン | 49 | C4 |

ENTERTAINMENT (pp139-44)

| | | |
|-------------------------|----|----|
| Kanze Kaikan Nō Theatre | | |
| 観世会館 | 50 | C6 |
| Metro メトロ | 51 | A4 |
| Tos-Tōsuikai 踏水会 | 52 | B4 |

SLEEPING (pp145-56)

| | | |
|--|----|----|
| B&B Juno B&B じゅんの | 53 | D1 |
| Hotel Heian No Mori Kyoto | | |
| ホテル平安の森京都 | 54 | E4 |
| Kyoto Traveller's Inn | | |
| 京都トラベラーズイン | 55 | C5 |
| Three Sisters Inn Annex スリーシスターズイン 洛東荘別館 | 56 | C4 |
| Three Sisters Inn Main Building スリーシスターズイン 洛東荘本館 | 57 | D4 |
| Westin Miyako Hotel | | |
| ウエスティン都ホテル | 58 | D6 |
| Yachiyo Ryokan 八千代旅館 | 59 | D6 |
| Yonbanchi 番地 | 60 | D3 |

TRANSPORT (pp181-9)

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----|----|
| Demachiyanaagi Bicycle Parking | | |
| Lot 出町柳有料自転車置場 | 61 | A1 |
| Eirin 栄輪 | 62 | A1 |

green tea) while viewing the *shakkei* backdrop of the Higashiyama Mountains. It's particularly beautiful in the maple-leaf season of November.

EIKAN-DŌ Map pp68-9

☎ 761-0007; Sakyō-ku, Eikan-dō-chō 48; adult/child ¥600/400; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🚌 3min walk from Nanzen-ji Eikandō-michi bus stop, bus 5 from Kyoto Station

Perhaps Kyoto's most famous (and most crowded) autumn-foliage destination, Eikan-dō should probably be avoided in November, but is worth a visit at other times of year.

This temple is made interesting by its varied architecture, its gardens and works of art. A fabulous spot for viewing the autumn colours, the temple was founded as Zenrin-ji in 855 by the priest Shinshō, but the name was changed to Eikan-dō in the 11th century to honour the philanthropic priest Eikan.

In the Amida-dō hall at the southern end of the complex is a famous statue of Mikaeiri Amida Buddha glancing backwards.

From Amida-dō, head north to the end of the curving covered *garyūō* (walkway). Change into the sandals provided, then climb the steep steps up the mountainside to the **Tahō-tō pagoda**, from where there's a fine view across the city.

TETSUGAKU-NO-MICHI (PATH OF PHILOSOPHY) Map pp68-9

Sakyō-ku, Ginkaku-ji; 🕒 7min walk from Ginkaku-ji-Michi bus stop, bus 5 or 17 from Kyoto Station
The Tetsugaku-no-Michi is one of the most pleasant walks in all of Kyoto. Lined with a great variety of flowering plants, bushes and trees, it is a corridor of colour throughout most of the year. The path takes its name from one of its most famous strollers: 20th-century philosopher Nishida Kitarō, who is said to have meandered lost in thought along the path. Follow the traffic-free route along a canal lined with cherry trees that come into spectacular bloom in early April. It only takes 30 minutes to do the walk, which starts at Nyakuōji-bashi, above **Eikan-dō** (left), and leads to **Ginkaku-ji** (opposite). During the day you should be

prepared for crowds (especially in the cherry-blossom season); a night stroll will definitely be quieter.

REIKAN-JI Map pp68-9

Sakyō-ku, Ginkaku-ji; admission ¥500; 🕒 early Apr & 22-26 Nov; 🚌 7min walk from Ginkaku-ji-Michi bus stop, bus 5 or 17 from Kyoto Station
Only open to the public in spring and autumn, Reikan-ji is one of Kyoto's great lesser-visited attractions. During the spring opening, you will find the grounds positively rioting with camellia. In autumn, the brilliant reds of the maples will dazzle the eye. The small collection of artworks in the main building is almost as good as the colours outside.

HŌNEN-IN Map pp68-9

☎ 771-2400; Sakyō-ku, Shishigatani Goshonodan-chō 30; admission free; 🕒 6am-4pm; 🚌 10min walk from Jyōdō-ji bus stop, bus 5 from Kyoto Station

One of Kyoto's hidden pleasures, this temple was founded in 1680 to honour the priest Hōnen. It's a lovely, secluded temple with carefully raked gardens set back in the woods. The temple buildings include a small gallery where frequent exhibitions featuring local and international artists are held. If you need to escape the crowds that positively plague nearby **Ginkaku-ji** (right), come to this serene refuge.

Hōnen-in is a 12-minute walk from Ginkaku-ji, on a side street to the east of **Tetsugaku-no-Michi** (opposite); you may have to ask for directions.

DAIMONJI-YAMA CLIMB

Time Two hours

Distance 5km

Located directly behind **Ginkaku-ji** (above), Daimonji-yama is the main site of the **Daimon-ji Gozan Okuribi** (p16) festival. From almost anywhere in town, the Chinese character for 'great' (*dai*) is visible in the middle of a bare patch on the face of this mountain. On 16 August, this character is set ablaze to guide the spirits of the dead on their journey home. The view of Kyoto from the top is unparalleled.

Take bus 5 to the Ginkaku-ji-Michi stop and walk up to Ginkaku-ji. You have the option of visiting the temple first or starting the hike immediately. To find the trail head, turn left in front of the temple and head north for about 50m towards a stone *torii* (shrine gate). Just before the *torii*, turn right up the hill.

The trail proper starts just after a small parking lot on the right. It's a broad avenue through the trees. A few minutes of walking brings you to a red banner (warning of forest fires) hanging over the trail. Soon after this you must cross a bridge to the right then continue up a smaller, switchback trail. When the trail reaches a saddle not far from the top, go to the left. You'll climb a long flight of steps before coming out at the top of the bald patch. The sunset from here is great, but bring a torch. Note that the hike involves several fairly steep sections of steps and should only be attempted by those in reasonably good physical condition.

GINKAKU-JI Map pp68-9

☎ 771-5725; Sakyō-ku, Ginkaku-ji-chō 2; adult ¥500; 🕒 8.30am-5pm Mar-Nov, 9am-4.30pm Dec-Feb; 🚌 5min walk from Ginkaku-ji-Michi bus stop, bus 5 from Kyoto Station

With a sublime wooden hall overlooking an impressive stroll garden, Ginkaku-ji is easily one of Kyoto's most beautiful sights. Unfortunately, the beauty of the place guarantees that it is almost always swamped with bus loads of visitors from all over the world. We recommend visiting just after it opens, ideally on a weekday morning. Failing that, try coming just before it closes, as the setting sun casts its golden light over the hills above the temple.

Also known as Jishō-ji, the temple belongs to the Shōkoku-ji sect of the Rinzaï school of Zen. In 1482 shōgun Ashikaga Yoshimasa constructed a villa here, which he used as a genteel retreat from the turmoil of civil war. Although 'Ginkaku-ji' translates as Silver Pavilion, this is simply a nickname to distinguish it from Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion). The main hall was originally covered in black lacquer; at present it's simply a nice, weathered woody colour. After Yoshimasa's death it was converted to a temple.

The approach to the main gate runs between tall hedges before turning sharply into the extensive grounds. You will find walkways leading through the gardens, which were laid out by painter and garden designer Sōami. The gardens include meticulously raked cones of white sand known as *kōgetsudai*, designed to reflect

moonlight and enhance the beauty of the garden at night.

In addition to the Buddha image in the main hall, the Tōgudō (residence of Yoshimasa) houses an effigy of Yoshimasa dressed in monk's garb. The tiny tea room (closed to the public) is said to be the oldest in Japan.

OKAZAKI-KŌEN Map pp68–9

Sakyō-ku, Okazaki; 京都 京阪/比叡宮前 巴士站, bus 5 from Kyoto Station

Okazaki-kōen is an expanse of parks and canals that lies between Niōmon-dōri and Heian-jingū. Two of Kyoto's significant museums can be found here, as well as two smaller museums and a zoo. If you find yourself in Kyoto on a rainy day and need to do some indoor sightseeing, this area has enough to keep you sheltered for most of the day.

The **National Museum of Modern Art** (Map pp68–9; ☎ 761-4111; Okazaki, Enshōji-chō; adult ¥420, child free-¥130; 🕒 9.30am–5pm, closed Mon) is renowned for its Japanese ceramics and paintings. There is an excellent permanent collection, including many pottery pieces by Kawai Kanjirō. The coffee shop here overlooks a picturesque canal.

The **Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art** (Map pp68–9; ☎ 771-4107; Okazaki, Enshōji-chō 124; 🕒 9am–4.30pm, closed Mon) organises several major exhibitions a year. Adult admission varies by exhibit but children get in for free.

For a break from temple-gazing, pop into the excellent **Fureai-kan Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts** (Map pp68–9; ☎ 762-2670; Okazaki, Seishōji-chō 9-1; admission free; 🕒 9am–5pm). Exhibits include wood-block prints, lacquerware,

bamboo goods and gold-leaf work. It's in the basement of Miyako Messe (Kyoto International Exhibition Hall).

Those with children might want to stop by the **Kyoto City Zoo** (Kyoto-shi Dōbutsu-en; Map pp68–9; ☎ 771-0210; Okazaki, Hōshōji-chō; adult/child ¥500/300; 🕒 9am–5pm Tue–Sun Mar–Nov, to 4.30pm Dec–Feb). The zoo is home to about 1000 animals and has some decent gardens and groves of cherry trees.

HEIAN-JINGŪ Map pp68–9

☎ 761-0221; Sakyō-ku, Okazaki, Nishitenno-chō; shrine precincts free, garden adult ¥600, child ¥300-600; 🕒 6am–6pm, closes earlier winter; 🚶 1min walk from Kyoto Kaikan/Bijyutsukan-mae bus stop, bus 5 from Kyoto Station

One of Kyoto's more popular sights, this shrine was built in 1895 to commemorate the 1100th anniversary of the founding of Kyoto. The shrine buildings are gaudy replicas, reduced to a two-thirds scale, of the Imperial Court Palace of the Heian period (794–1185).

About 500m in front of the shrine is a massive steel *torii*. Although it appears to be entirely separate, this is actually considered the main entrance to the shrine itself.

The vast garden here, behind the shrine, is a fine place for a wander and particularly lovely during the cherry-blossom season. With its large pond and Chinese-inspired bridge, the garden is a tribute to the style that was popular in the Heian period. It is well known for its wisteria, irises and weeping cherry trees.

Two major events, **Jidai Matsuri** (p17) on 22 October and **Takigi Nō** (p16) on the first two days of June, are held here.

NORTHWEST KYOTO

Eating p136; Shopping p113; Sleeping p153

Northwest Kyoto is a mostly residential district that stretches from Central Kyoto all the way up to the base of the Kitayama and Arashiyama Mountains. Some of Kyoto's most important and impressive sights can be found here, including the ever-popular Nijō-jō with its almost rococo interiors, the dazzling golden hall of Kinkaku-ji, the fabled rock garden of Ryōan-ji and the enclosed world of the Myōshin-ji temple complex. You can walk between Kinkaku-ji, Ryōan-ji and Ninna-ji if you are reasonably fit. Few people stay in this part of town – it's more of a place that you visit for half a day before returning to the fleshpots of Downtown or Central Kyoto. The area lends itself to exploration by bicycle, if you're fit; unlike most of the rest of Kyoto, there are actually a few gentle hills out this way. Otherwise, buses serve the destinations here.

NIJŌ-JŌ Map p74

☎ 841-0096; Nakagyō-ku, Nijō-dōri, Horikawa Nishi iru, Nijōjō-chō 541; adult ¥600, child ¥200-350; 🕒 8.45am–4pm (gates close 5pm), closed Tue in Dec, Jan, Jul & Aug; 🚶 1min walk from Nijōjō-mae Station, Tōzai subway line

For those with an interest in Japan's feudal past and an eye for magnificent interiors, Nijō-jō is a fascinating destination. Keep in mind, though, that the castle is on the itinerary of every foreign and Japanese tour group and it can be packed. If you're after peace and quiet, try an early-morning or late-afternoon visit.

Nijō-jō was built in 1603 as the official residence of Tokugawa Ieyasu. The ostentatious style was intended as a demonstration of Ieyasu's prestige and to signal the demise of the emperor's power. To safeguard against treachery, Ieyasu had the interior fitted with 'nightingale' floors (intruders were detected by the squeaking boards) and concealed chambers where bodyguards could keep watch and spring out at a moment's notice. Fans of ninja movies will recognise these features immediately.

The Momoyama-era Kara-mon gate, originally part of Hideyoshi's Fushimi-jō in the south of the city, features lavish, masterful woodcarving and metalwork. After passing through the gate, you enter the **Ninomaru palace**, which is divided into five buildings with numerous chambers. Access to the buildings used to depend on rank – only those of highest rank were permitted into the inner buildings. The Ōhiroma Yonno-Ma (Fourth Chamber) has spectacular screen paintings.

Don't miss **Seiryu-en**, designed by Kobori Enshū. This vast garden comprises three separate islets spanned by stone bridges and is meticulously kept. The Ninomaru

palace and garden take about an hour to walk through. A detailed fact sheet in English is provided.

The neighbouring **Honmaru palace** dates from the mid-19th century. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the castle became a detached palace of the imperial household and in 1939 it was given to Kyoto City. It's only open for a special autumn viewing.

While you're in the neighbourhood, you might want to take a look at **Shinsen-en** (admission free), just south of the castle outside the walls. This forlorn garden, with its small shrines and pond, is all that remains of the original 8th-century Imperial Palace, which was abandoned in 1227.

NIJŌ JINYA Map p74

☎ 841-0972; Nakagyō-ku, Sanjō-Ōmiya-chō 37; adult/child ¥1000/800; 🕒 tours 10am, 11am, 2pm, 3pm, closed Wed; 🚶 10min walk from Nijōjō-mae Station, Tōzai subway line

A few minutes' walk south of **Nijō-jō** (left), Nijō Jinya is an interesting attraction, although it's not really geared to foreign visitors. This former merchant's home was built in the mid-1600s and served as an inn for provincial feudal lords visiting the capital. What appears to be an average Edo-period mansion, however, is no ordinary dwelling.

The house contains fire-resistant earthen walls and a warren of 24 rooms, and was ingeniously designed to protect the *daimyō* against possible surprise attacks. Here you'll find hidden staircases, secret passageways and an array of counterespionage devices. The main room's ceiling skylight is fitted with a trap door from where samurai could pounce on intruders, and sliding doors feature alternate panels of translucent paper to expose the shadows of eavesdroppers.

One-hour tours are conducted several times a day in Japanese and advance

NORTHWEST KYOTO

INFORMATION

- Orinasa-kan 織成館.....(see 10)
- Urasenke Chado Research Center 茶道資料館.....(see 15)

SIGHTS

- Funakoya Onsen 鞍馬温泉.....1 F1
- Kinkabaji 金剛寺.....2 D1
- Kyoto Tenman-gu 北野天満宮.....3 E2
- Koryūji 広隆寺.....4 B4
- Myōshin-ji 妙心寺.....5 D3
- Nijo Jinya 二条城.....6 F4
- Nijo-jo 二条城.....7 F4
- Ninna-ji 仁和寺.....8 C2
- Nishijin Textile Center 西陣織会館.....9 F2
- Orinasa-kan 織成館.....10 F1
- Ryōan-ji 龍安寺.....11 C1
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- Taichōin 退藏院.....13 D3
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- Kanei かね井.....16 F1
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reservations must be made. Those who don't speak Japanese are asked to bring a Japanese-speaking guide.

NISHIJIN Map p74

Kamiyō-ku, Horikawa-dōri, Imadegawa; 1min walk from Horikawa-Imadegawa bus stop, bus 9 from Kyoto Station

Nishijin is Kyoto's traditional textile centre, the source of all those dazzling kimono fabrics and obi (kimono sashes) that you see being paraded about town. The area is famous for Nishijin-ori (Nishijin weaving). There are quite a few *machiya* in this district, so it's a good place simply to wander.

NISHIJIN TEXTILE CENTER Map p74

☎ 451-9231; Kamiyō-ku, Horikawa-dōri, Imadegawa minami iru; admission free; ☎ 9am-5pm;

1min walk from Horikawa-Imadegawa bus stop, bus 9 from Kyoto Station

In the heart of the Nishijin textile district, this centre is a great place to observe the weaving of fabrics used in kimono and their ornamental obi. There are also displays of completed fabrics and kimono. The centre holds occasional kimono fashion shows and has a decent shop upstairs where you can buy goods that are made of Nishijin-ori.

ORINASU-KAN Map p74

☎ 431-0020; Kamiyō-ku, Daikoku-chō 693; adult/child ¥500/350; ☎ 10am-4pm, closed Mon; 10min walk from Horikawa-Imadegawa bus stop, bus 9 from Kyoto Station

This museum is housed in a Nishijin weaving factory. It has impressive exhibits of Nishijin textiles. The *Susamei-sha* building

GARDENS BY DESIGN Marc Peter Keane

If you ask a Japanese gardener what the most important aspect of garden design is, they will often answer succinctly: *shiki*, the four seasons. All gardens in the world fall into one of two types – those built in harsh environments that attempt to ameliorate that condition (such as water gardens in arid regions) and those built in comfortable environments that revel in the natural world around them. The gardens of Kyoto are the epitome of the latter; incorporating the delights of the ever-changing natural world into their design is fundamental.

When creating a garden, there are some overarching principles that guide its design, beyond incorporating the seasons. Gardens in temples, for instance, often contain allegorical images that symbolise some aspect of the Buddhist worldview. In private homes, geomancy may be applied to ascertain how the garden should be laid out, though this is becoming less common these days. The function of the garden will be considered as well. One must decide if it will either be viewed as a work of art and not physically entered, such as the *karesansui* (dry-landscape) gardens, or if the way you move through the garden will be of great importance, such as with tea gardens and stroll gardens.

Once the overall theme of the garden is determined, the execution of the design will employ certain techniques that give the garden its distinctive quality. The balance of the design, such as that of an ikebana flower arrangement or *bokusuiga* ink painting, is purposefully off-balance. Empty space is punctuated by strong accents; important features are never placed on centre; symmetry is eschewed, as are neatly balanced groupings of even numbers. This gives the design a sense of motion and energy. For this reason, triangles or triads are often used as a basis for design – whether it's the shape of a pruned tree or a grouping of set stones – to give at once a sense of balance and of movement.

Because the Japanese garden is created with primarily natural materials – river boulders, irregularly pruned trees, hand-crafted fences and gates – the design cannot be completely determined on paper beforehand. Rather, it is created on-site from the details up, not from the master plan down. As the various materials are installed, the placement of each affects that of the next, and the overall design is shaped organically during the process of building. In this sense, it is more akin to painting than architecture.

Unlike gardens in Western countries, Japanese gardens are not seen as a place to gather and display a large assortment of plants. On the contrary, the palette of materials used is often very limited, and it is this rarefied palette that is the source of the quietude and subtlety one feels in a Japanese garden. In fact, plants are often less important than stones, the placement of which creates the 'bones' of the garden. The thousand-year-old treatise on garden-making called the *Sakuteiki* makes this clear in the first line when it refers to gardening as '*ishi wo taten koto*' – the art of setting stones.

Marc Peter Keane is the author of Japanese Garden Design, Sakuteiki (a translation of Japan's most ancient gardening text) and several other titles on Japanese culture and design. He lived in Kyoto for 20 years and is now based in Ithaca, New York.

IN HOT WATER

After a day spent marching from temple to temple, nothing feels better than a good hot bath. Kyoto is full of *sentō* (public baths), ranging from small neighbourhood baths with one or two tubs to massive complexes offering saunas, mineral baths and even electric baths. The following baths are worth a visit and could even double as an evening's entertainment. It's best to bring your own bath supplies (soap, shampoo, a towel to dry yourself and another small towel for washing); if you forget, though, you can buy toiletries and rent towels at the front desk. Washing buckets are available for free inside the bathing area.

Funaoka Onsen (Map p74; ☎ 441-3735; Kita-ku, Murasakino, Minami-Funaoka-chō 82-1, Kuramaguchi-dōri; admission ¥390; 🕒 3pm-1am Mon-Sat, 8am-1am Sun & public holidays; 🚶 5min walk from Senbon-Kuramaguchi bus stop, bus 206 from Kyoto Station) is our favourite *sentō* in Kyoto. This old bath boasts outdoor bathing and a sauna, as well as some museum-quality woodcarvings in the changing room (apparently carved during Japan's invasion of Manchuria). To find it, head west from Horikawa-dōri along Kuramaguchi-dōri. It's on the left, not far past the Lawson convenience store. Look for the large rocks out the front.

Gokō-yu (Map pp54-5; ☎ 841-7321; 590-1 Kakinomoto-chō, Gojō agaru, Kurumon-dōri; admission ¥390; 🕒 2.30pm-12.30am Tue-Sat, 7am-midnight Sun, closed Mon & 3rd Tue of each month; 🚶 3min walk from Ōmiya-Gojō bus stop, bus 43 or 206 from Kyoto Station), a popular bath, is another great spot to sample the joys of the *sentō*. It's a large two-storey bath with a wide variety of tubs. There's also a giant sauna with two rooms; one is merely hot, the other is incendiary! We also like the TV fish tank in the entrance (you'll see what we mean). Note that Gokō-yu is a little hard to find – turn north off Gojō-dōri at the store that sells charcoal and gas burners.

(recently restored) next door is also open to the public and contains a small café. Across the street, there is another hall with a good collection of Nishijin kimono (entry to this hall is included in the main admission fee). With advance reservations, traditional weaving workshops can be attended.

URASENKE CHADŌ RESEARCH CENTER

☎ 431-6474; Kamigyō-ku, Horikawa-dōri, Teranouchi agaru; admission ¥500; 🕒 9.30am-4.30pm; 🚶 15min walk from Kuramaguchi Station, Karasuma subway line
Anyone interested in tea ceremony should make their first stop the Urasenke Chadō Research Center. Urasenke is Japan's largest tea school and hosts hundreds of students annually who come from branch schools worldwide to further their studies in 'the way of tea'.

The gallery (admission ¥800; 🕒 9.30am-4.30pm, closed Mon) located on the 1st and 2nd floors holds quarterly exhibitions on tea-related arts; call to see if there is a show being held during your stay. The entrance fee entitles you to a bowl of *matcha* and a sweet.

The **Konnichi-an library** (☎ 431-6474; admission free; 🕒 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, to 3pm Sat, closed Sun & public holidays) has more than 50,000 books (about 100 in English) plus videos on tea, which can be viewed.

If you'd like more information, contact Urasenke's **Office of International Affairs** (Kokusai Yoku; ☎ 431-3111).

KITANO TENMAN-GŪ

☎ 461-0005; Kamigyō-ku, Bakuro-chō; admission free; 🕒 5am-dusk; 🚶 1min walk from Kitano Tenmangū-mae bus stop, bus 50 or 101 from Kyoto Station

The site of **Tenjin-San Market** (p113), one of Kyoto's most popular flea markets, this shrine is a nice spot for a lazy stroll and the shrine buildings themselves are beautiful. It's particularly pleasant here in the plum-blossom season of March.

Kitano Tenman-gū was established in 947 to honour Sugawara Michizane (845-903), a noted Heian-era statesman and scholar. It is said that, having been defied by his political adversary Fujiwara Tokihira, Sugawara was exiled to Kyūshū for the rest of his life. Following his death in 903, earthquakes and storms struck Kyoto, and the Imperial Palace was repeatedly struck by lightning. Fearing that Sugawara, re-incarnated as Raijin (god of thunder), had returned from beyond to avenge his rivals, locals erected and dedicated this shrine to him.

The present buildings were built in 1607 by Toyotomi Hideyori; the grounds contain an extensive grove of plum and apricot trees, which are said to have been Sugawara's favourite fruits.

Unless you are trying to avoid crowds, the best time to visit is during the Tenjin-san market fair, held on the 25th of each month – December and January are particularly colourful.

KINKAKU-JI

Map p74
☎ 461-0013; Kita-ku, Kinkaku-ji-chō 1; adult ¥400, child ¥300-400; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🚶 2min walk from Kinkakuji-michi bus stop, bus 205 from Kyoto Station

Second only to Mt Fuji as Japan's most famous sight, this temple is famous for its dazzling gold-covered main hall, which floats like an apparition over its surrounding pond. It's a stunning vision and most people find it to their liking, although some prefer the more subdued appearance of its counterpart, **Ginkaku-ji** (p71). Needless to say, the temple receives masses of visitors; as usual, we recommend an early-morning or late-afternoon visit.

Also known as Rokuon-ji, Kinkaku-ji belongs to the Shōkokuji school of Buddhism. The original building was constructed in 1397 as a retirement villa for shōgun Ashikaga Yoshi-mitsu. His son, complying with his father's wishes, converted it into a temple.

The three-storey pavilion is covered in bright gold leaf and features a bronze phoenix on top of the roof. The mirrorlike reflection of the temple in the Kyō-ko pond is extremely photogenic, especially when the maples are ablaze in autumn.

In 1950 a young monk consummated his obsession with the temple by burning it to the ground. The monk's story is fictionalised in Mishima Yukio's 1956 novel *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*.

In 1955 a full reconstruction was completed, which followed the original design exactly, but the gold-foil covering was extended to the lower floors. The temple may not be exactly to everyone's taste but it is nevertheless an impressive feat.

RYŌAN-JI

Map p74
☎ 463-2216; Ukyō-ku, Ryōan-ji, Goryōnoshitamachi 13; adult ¥500, child ¥300-500; 🕒 8am-5pm Mar-Nov, 8.30am-4.30pm Dec-Feb; 🚶 1min walk from Ryōan-ji-mae bus stop, bus 59 from Kawaramachi Station, Hankyū line

You've probably seen a picture of the rock garden here – it's one of the symbols of Kyoto and one of Japan's better-known

sights. There is no doubt that it's a mesmerising and attractive sight, but it's hard to enjoy amid the mobs who come to check it off their 'must-see list'. An early-morning visit on a weekday is probably your best hope of seeing the garden under contemplative conditions. If you go when it's crowded, you'll find the less-famous garden around the corner of the stone garden to be a nice escape.

This temple belongs to the Rinza school and was founded in 1450. The main attraction is the garden, an oblong of sand with an austere collection of 15 carefully placed rocks, apparently adrift in a sea of sand, enclosed by an earthen wall. The designer, who remains unknown, provided no explanation.

Although many historians believe the garden was arranged by Sōami during the Muromachi period (1333-1576), some contend that it is a much later product of the Edo period. It is Japan's most famous *hira-niwa* (a flat garden void of hills or ponds) and reveals the stunning simplicity and harmony of the principles of Zen meditation.

The viewing platform for the garden can become packed solid, but the other parts of the temple grounds are also interesting and less of a target for the crowds. Among these, Kyōyo-chi pond is perhaps the most beautiful, particularly in autumn.

NINNA-JI

Map p74
☎ 461-1155; Ukyō-ku, Omuro ōchi 33; adult/child ¥500/300; 🕒 9am-4.30pm; 🚶 1min walk from Omuro Ninna-ji bus stop, bus 26 from Kyoto Station

Few travellers make the journey all the way out to this sprawling temple complex, but most who do find it a pleasant spot. It's certainly a good counterpart to the crowded precincts of **Ryōan-ji** (left) and **Kinkaku-ji** (left). If you're after something a bit off the beaten track in Northwest Kyoto, this temple may fit the bill.

Originally containing more than 60 structures, Ninna-ji was built in 888 and is the head temple of the Omuro branch of the Shingon school. The present temple buildings, including a five-storey pagoda, date from the 17th century. On the extensive grounds you'll find a peculiar grove of short-trunked, multi-petal cherry trees called Omuro-no-Sakura, which draw large crowds in April.

Separate admission fees (an additional ¥500 each) are charged for both the Kondo and Reihōkan (Treasure House), which are only open for the first two weeks of October.

MYŌSHIN-JI Map p74

☎ 461-5226; Ukyō-ku, Hanazono 1; adult ¥500, child ¥100-300; 🕒 9.10am-3.40pm, closed 1hr at lunch; 🚶 10min walk from JR Hanazono Station As with [Daitoku-ji](#) (p53), Myōshin-ji is a separate world within Kyoto, a walled-off complex of temples and subtemples that invites lazy strolling. The subtemple of [Taizō-in](#) (below) contains one of the city's more interesting gardens.

Myōshin-ji dates to 1342 and belongs to the Rinzai school. There are 47 subtemples, but only a few are open to the public.

From the north gate, follow the broad stone avenue flanked by rows of temples to the southern part of the complex. The eponymous Myōshin-ji temple here is roughly in the middle of the complex. Your entry fee here entitles you to a tour of several of the buildings of the temple. The ceiling of the *hattō* (lecture hall) here features Tanyū Kanō's unnerving painting *Unryūzu* (meaning 'dragon glaring in eight directions'). Your guide will invite you to stand directly beneath the dragon; doing so makes it appear that it's spiralling up or down.

TAIZŌ-IN Map p74

☎ 463-2855; Ukyō-ku, Hanazono Myōshin-ji 35; adult/child ¥500/300; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🚶 10min walk from JR Hanazono Station

This subtemple is in the southwestern corner of the grounds of [Myōshin-ji](#) (above). The *karesansui* garden depicting a waterfall and islands is well worth a visit.

TŌEI UZUMASA MOVIE VILLAGE

Map p74

Tōei Uzumasa Eiga Mura; ☎ 864-7716; Ukyō-ku, Uzumasa Higashi Hachigaoka-chō 10; adult/child 6-18yr/under 6yr ¥2200/1300/1100; 🕒 9am-5pm 1 Mar-30 Nov, 9.30am-4pm 1 Dec-28 Feb; 🚶 13min walk from Uzumasa Station, Sagano line

In the Uzumasa area, Tōei Uzumasa Movie Village is a notorious tourist trap. It does,

however, have some recreations of Edo-period street scenes that give a decent idea of what Kyoto must have looked like before the advent of concrete.

The main conceit of the park is that real movies are actually filmed here. While this may occasionally be the case, more often than not this entails a bunch of bored flunkies being ordered around by an ersatz movie 'director' complete with megaphone and a vintage 1930s-era movie camera. This delights some tourists but left us a little less than convinced.

Aside from this, there are displays relating to various aspects of Japanese movies and regular performances involving Japanese TV and movie characters such as the Power Rangers. This should entertain the kids – adults will probably be a little bored.

KŌRYŪ-JI Map p74

☎ 861-1461; Ukyō-ku, Uzumasa Hachigoga-chō 32; adult ¥700, child ¥300-350; 🕒 9am-5pm Mar-Nov, to 4.30pm Dec-Feb; 🚶 2min walk from Uzumasa Station, Keifuku line

A bit out of the way, Kōryū-ji is easily paired with nearby [Myōshin-ji](#) (left) to form a half-day tour for those with an interest in Japanese Buddhism. It's notable mostly for its collection of Buddhist statuary and so a visit with a knowledgeable guide is a good way to learn about the different levels of beings in the Buddhist pantheon.

Kōryū-ji, one of the oldest temples in Japan, was founded in 622 to honour Prince Shōtoku, who was an enthusiastic promoter of Buddhism.

The Hattō to the right of the main gate houses a magnificent trio of 9th-century statues: Buddha, flanked by manifestations of Kannon.

The Reihōkan contains numerous fine Buddhist statues, including the Naki Miroku (Crying Miroku) and the renowned Miroku Bosatsu (Bodhisattva of the Future), which is extraordinarily expressive. A national upset occurred in 1960 when an enraptured university student embraced the statue in a fit of passion (at least, that was his excuse) and inadvertently snapped off its little finger.

ARASHIYAMA & SAGANO

Eating p136; Sleeping p154

Separated from the rest of Kyoto by a vast expanse of fairly drab residential district, Arashiyama and Sagano feels like a world apart. Tucked up against a lovely range of mountains and bisected by a scenic river, this area rivals Northern Higashiyama as the most scenic of Kyoto's sightseeing districts. It is a region of bamboo forests, wooded groves and temples surrounded by nature. That is, once you get out of central Arashiyama, which is a bustling tourist area, particularly around the famed Tōgetsu-kyō bridge. The view of the bridge over the Katsura-gawa with its backdrop of mountains has been in nearly as many Kyoto postcards as Kinkaku-ji and is the predominant attraction for local tourists.

The main bamboo grove, just outside the north gate of Tenryū-ji, is one of Kyoto's most famous sites and is a dead ringer for the bamboo forest in the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. Note that Arashiyama is wildly popular with Japanese tourists and can be packed, particularly in the cherry-blossom and maple-leaf seasons. The further north you go, the more you will escape the masses.

While you can stay here in a range of excellent ryokan and *minshuku*, you will definitely feel isolated from the rest of Kyoto if you do so and it'll be something of a hike to the dining and nightlife options of Downtown. Unless you have a reason for wanting to be based here, we recommend visiting the area as a full-day trip out from Downtown or other parts of Kyoto.

To get here, take bus 28 from Kyoto Station (¥240, 40 minutes) or bus 11 from Keihan line Sanjō Station (¥240, 45 minutes). The best rail connection is the ride from Shijō-Ōmiya Station on the Keifuku Arashiyama line to Arashiyama Station (¥230, 20 minutes).

You can also take the Sagano line (San-in main line) from Kyoto Station (¥230, 20 minutes) or Nijō Station (¥190, 12 minutes) and get off at Saga Arashiyama Station (be careful to take the local train; the express does not stop in Arashiyama).

ARASHIYAMA MONKEY PARK

IWATAYAMA Map p80

☎ 861-1616; Nishikyō-ku, Arashiyama, Genrokuzan-chō 8; adult ¥520, child ¥160-420; 🕒 9am-5pm 15 Mar-15 Nov, to 4pm 16 Nov-14 Mar; 🚶 10min walk from Keifuku Arashiyama Station, Keifuku Arashiyama line

If you want to spend some quality time with our simian cousins or entertain restless children, this park might fit the bill. Just be warned: it's a steep climb up the hill to get to the monkeys. If it's a hot day, you're going to be drenched by the time you get to the spot where they gather.

Though it is common to spot wild monkeys in the nearby mountains, here you can encounter them at a close distance and enjoy watching the playful creatures frolic about. It makes for an excellent photo opportunity, not only of the monkeys but also of the panoramic view over Kyoto. Refreshingly, it is the animals who are free to roam while the humans who feed them are caged in a box!

You enter the park near the south side of [Tōgetsu-kyō](#) (right), through the orange torii of Ichitani-jinja. Buy your tickets from the

machine to the left of the shrine at the top of the steps.

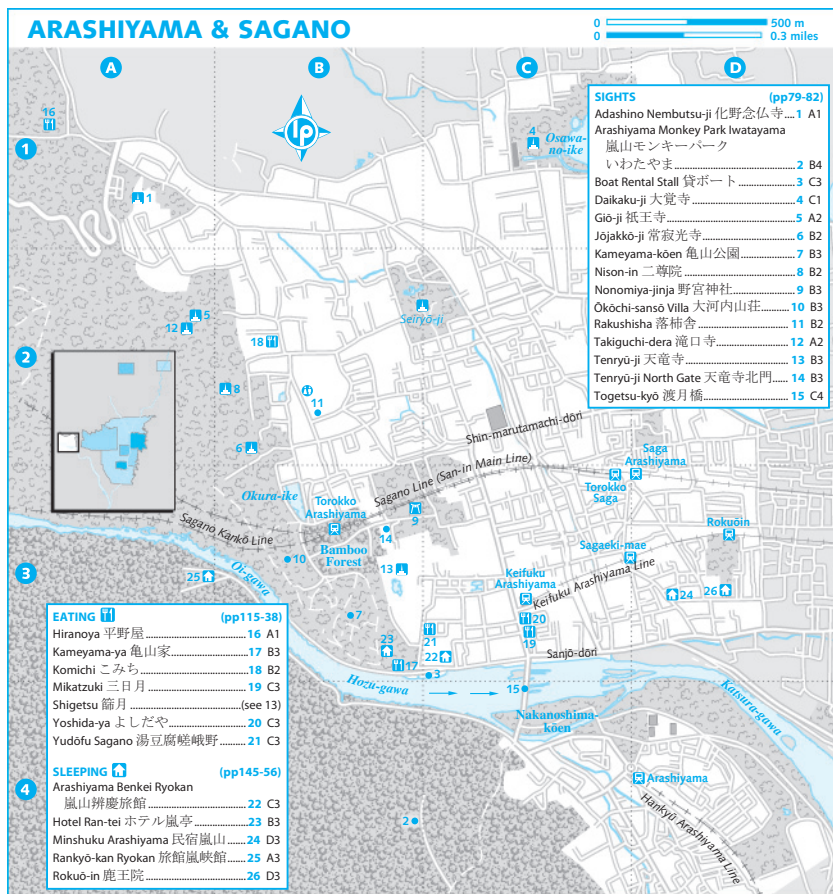
TOGETSU-KYŌ Map p80

Ukyō-ku, Saga Tenryū-ji, Susukinobaba-chō; 🚶 5min walk from Keifuku Arashiyama Station, Keifuku Arashiyama line

This bridge is the dominant landmark in Arashiyama and is just a few minutes on foot from either the Keifuku line or Hankyū line Arashiyama Stations. The original crossing, constructed in 1606, was about 100m upriver from the present bridge.

On 13 April *jūsan-mairi*, an important rite of passage for local children aged 13, takes place here. Boys and girls (many in kimono), after paying respects at Hōrin-ji and receiving a blessing for wisdom, cross the bridge under strict parental order not to look back towards the temple until they've reached the northern side of the bridge. Not heeding this instruction is believed to bring bad luck for life!

From July to mid-September, this is a good spot from which to watch *ukai* (cormorant fishing) in the evening. If you want to get close to the action, you can



pay ¥1700 to join a passenger boat. The **TIC** (p199) can provide more details.

You can also rent boats from the **boat rental stall** (per hr ¥1400; ☎ 9am-4.30pm) just upstream from the bridge. It's a nice way to spend some time in Arashiyama and kids love it.

TENRYŪ-JI Map p80

☎ 881-1235; Ukyō-ku, Saga Tenryū-ji, Susukinobaba-chō 68; adult/child ¥600/400; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm Mar-Oct, 8.30am-5pm Nov-Feb; Ⓧ 5min walk from Keifuku Arashiyama Station, Keifuku Arashiyama line

This fine temple has one of the most attractive stroll gardens in all of Kyoto, particularly during the spring cherry-blossom and autumn-foliage seasons. The main

14th-century Zen garden, with its backdrop of the Arashiyama Mountains, is a good example of *shakkei*. Unfortunately, it's no secret that the garden here is world class, so it pays to visit early in the morning or on a weekday.

Tenryū-ji is a major temple of the Rinza school. It was built in 1339 on the old site of Go-Daigo's villa after a priest had a dream of a dragon rising from the nearby river. The dream was seen as a sign that the emperor's spirit was uneasy and so the temple was built as appeasement – hence the name *tenryū* (heavenly dragon). The present buildings date from 1900. You will find Arashiyama's famous bamboo grove situated just outside the north gate of the temple.

HOZU-GAWA RIVER TRIP

The **Hozu-gawa river trip** (☎ 0771-22-5846; Kameoka-shi, Hozu-chō; adult/child ¥3900/2500; ☎ 9am-3.30pm, closed 29 Dec-4 Jan) is a great way to enjoy the beauty of Kyoto's western mountains without any strain on the legs. With long bamboo poles, boatmen steer flat-bottom boats down the Hozu-gawa from Kameoka, 30km west of Kyoto Station, through steep, forested mountain canyons, before arriving at Arashiyama.

Between 10 March and 30 November there are seven trips daily. During winter the number of trips is reduced to four per day and the boats are heated.

The ride lasts two hours and covers 16km through occasional sections of choppy water – a scenic jaunt with minimal danger. The scenery is especially breathtaking during cherry-blossom season in April and maple-foliage season in autumn.

The boats depart from a dock that is eight minutes' walk from Kameoka Station. Kameoka is accessible by rail from Kyoto Station or Nijo Station on the Sagano line (San-in main line). The **TIC** (p199) provides an English-language leaflet and timetable for rail connections. The fare from Kyoto to Kameoka is ¥400 one way by regular train (don't spend the extra for the express; it makes little difference in travel time).

Tenryū-ji is also a popular place to sample *shōjin ryōri* (Buddhist vegetarian cuisine).

KAMEYAMA-KŌEN Map p80

Just upstream from **Tōgetsu-kyō** (p79) and behind **Tenryū-ji** (opposite), this park is a nice place to escape the crowds of Arashiyama. It's laced with trails, the best of which leads up to a lookout over Katsura-gawa and up into the Arashiyama mountains. It's especially attractive during cherry-blossom and autumn-foliage seasons. Keep an eye out for monkeys, which occasionally descend from the nearby hills to pick fruit.

ŌKŌCHI-SANSŌ VILLA Map p80

☎ 872-2233; Ukyō-ku, Saga Ogurayamadabuchi-yama-chō 8; incl tea & cake adult ¥1000, child ¥500-900; ☎ 9am-5pm; Ⓧ 15min walk from Keifuku Arashiyama Station, Keifuku Arashiyama line

This is the lavish estate of Ōkōchi Denjirō, an actor famous for his samurai films. The sprawling stroll gardens may well be the most lovely in all of Kyoto, particularly when you consider the brilliant views eastwards across the city. The house and teahouse are also sublime. Be sure to follow all the trails around the gardens (the standard route is clearly marked). Hold onto the tea ticket they give you when you enter – you'll need it to claim the tea and cake that comes with entry.

JŌJAKKŌ-JI Map p80

☎ 861-0435; Ukyō-ku, Saga, Ogura-yama, Ogura-chō 3; adult ¥300, child ¥100-200; ☎ 9am-5pm;

Ⓧ 20min walk from Keifuku Arashiyama Station, Keifuku Arashiyama line

This temple is perched on top of a mossy knoll and is famed for its brilliant maple trees, which turn a lovely crimson red in November, and its thatched-roof Niō-mon gate. The Hondō was constructed in the 16th century out of wood sourced from Fushimi-jō.

RAKUSHISHA Map p80

☎ 881-1953; Ukyō-ku, Saga, Ogura-yama, Hinomyō-jin-chō 20; admission ¥200; ☎ 9am-5pm; Ⓧ 20min walk from Saga Arashiyama Station, Sagano line

This building was the hut of Mukai Kyorai, the best-known disciple of the illustrious haiku poet Bashō. Legend holds that Kyorai dubbed the house Rakushisha (literally 'House of the Fallen Persimmons') after he woke one morning following a fierce storm to find the persimmons he had planned to sell were all fallen from the trees in the garden and scattered on the ground.

NISON-IN Map p80

☎ 861-0687; Ukyō-ku, Saga, Nison-in, Monzenchōjin-chō 27; admission ¥500; ☎ 9am-4.30pm; Ⓧ 20min walk from Keifuku Arashiyama Station, Keifuku Arashiyama line

This is a popular spot with maple-watchers. Nison-in was originally built in the 9th century by Emperor Saga. It houses two important Kamakura-era Buddha statues side by side (Shaka on the right and Amida on the left). The temple features lacquered nightingale floors.

TAKIGUCHI-DERA Map p80

☎ 871-3929; Ukyō-ku, Saga, Kameyama-chō 10-4; adult/child ¥300/200; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🕒 35min walk from Keifuku Arashiyama Station, Keifuku Arashiyama line

The history of this temple reads like the romance of *Romeo and Juliet*. Takiguchi-dera was founded by Heian-era nobleman Takiguchi Nyūdō, who entered the priesthood after being forbidden by his father to marry his peasant consort Yokobue. One day, Yokobue came to the temple with her flute to serenade Takiguchi, but was again refused by him; she wrote a farewell love sonnet on a stone (in her own blood) before throwing herself into the river to perish. The stone remains at the temple.

GIŌ-JI Map p80

☎ 861-3574; Ukyō-ku, Saga, Toriimoto Kozaka-chō 32; admission ¥300; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🕒 15min walk from Saga Shakadō-mae bus stop, bus 28 or 72 from Kyoto Station

This quiet temple was named for the Heian-era *shirabyōshi* (traditional dancer) Giō, who committed herself here as a nun at age 21 after her romance ended with Taira-no-Kiyomori, the mighty commander of the Heike clan. She was usurped in Kiyomori's affections by a fellow entertainer, Hotoke Gozen (who later deserted Kiyomori to join Giō at the temple). Enshrined in the main hall are five wooden statues: these are Giō, Hotoke Gozen, Kiyomori and Giō's mother and sister (who were also nuns at the temple).

The main attraction here is the lush moss garden outside the thatch-roofed hall of the temple. It's a small spot that is often overlooked by visitors to Arashiyama.

ADASHINO NEMBUTSU-JI Map p80

☎ 861-2221; Ukyō-ku, Saga, Toriimoto, Adashino-chō 17; adult/child ¥500/400; 🕒 9am-4.30pm; 🕒 4min walk from Toriimoto bus stop, bus 72 from Kyoto Station

This rather unusual temple is where the abandoned bones of paupers without kin were gathered. More than 8000 stone images are crammed into the temple grounds, dedicated to the repose of their spirits. The abandoned souls are remembered with candles each year in the *Sentō Kuyō* (p16) ceremony held here on the evenings of 23 and 24 August. The temple is not a must-see attraction, but it's certainly interesting and the stone images make unusual photographs.

DAIKAKU-JI Map p80

☎ 871-0071; Ukyō-ku, Saga, Osawa-chō 4; adult/child ¥500/300; 🕒 9am-4.30pm; 🕒 15min walk from Saga Arashiyama Station, Sagano line

A 25-minute walk northeast of *Nison-in* (p81) you will find Daikaku-ji, one of Kyoto's less-commonly visited temples. It was built in the 9th century as a palace for Emperor Saga, who then converted it into a temple. The present buildings date from the 16th century and are palatial in style; they also contain some impressive paintings. The large Osawa-no-ike pond was once used by the emperor for boating and is a popular spot for viewing the harvest moon.

KITAYAMA AREA

Eating p137; Sleeping p155

Starting on the north side of Kyoto city and stretching almost all the way to the Sea of Japan, the Kitayama Mountains are a natural escape prized by Kyoto city dwellers and a green retreat for travellers who need a little break from modern life. The steep mountains here are intersected by a series of deep valleys, some of which contain incredibly picturesque villages. Attractions here include the village of Ōhara, with its pastoral beauty, and the fine mountain temple of Kurama. While you can stay in these villages, you'd really need some particular reason to do so, and you'd no doubt find it very inconvenient for sightseeing in the rest of Kyoto. Instead, we recommend choosing one of these worthy destinations and making it a special full-day trip out of central Kyoto.

Ōhara

Since ancient times Ōhara, a quiet farming town about 10km north of Kyoto, has been regarded as a holy site by followers of the Jōdo (Pure Land) school of Buddhism. The region provides a charming glimpse of rural Japan, along with the picturesque Sanzen-in, Jakkō-in and several other fine temples. It's most popular in autumn, when the maple leaves change colour and the mountain views are spectacular. During the peak foliage season (late October to mid-November) avoid this area at weekends as it will be packed.

From Kyoto Station, Kyoto buses 17 and 18 run to Ōhara bus stop. The ride takes about an hour and costs ¥580. From Keihan line's Sanjō Station, take Kyoto bus 16 or 17 (¥470, 45 minutes). Be careful to board a tan-coloured Kyoto bus, not a green Kyoto City bus of the same number.

SANZEN-IN Map p84

☎ 744-2531; Sakyō-ku, Ōhara, Raigōin-chō 540; adult ¥700, child ¥150-400; 🕒 8.30am-4.30pm Feb-Dec, 8.30am-4pm Jan; 🕒 10min walk from Ōhara bus stop, Kyoto bus 17 or 18 from Kyoto Station

Famed for its autumn foliage, hydrangea garden and stunning Buddha images, this temple is deservedly popular with foreign and domestic tourists alike.

Founded in 784 by the priest Saichō, Sanzen-in belongs to the Tendai school. Saichō, considered one of the great patriarchs of Buddhism in Japan, also founded *Enryaku-ji* (p91).

The temple's garden, *Yūsei-en*, is one of the most photographed sights in Japan, and rightly so. Take some time to sit on the steps of the Shin-den hall and admire the garden's beauty. Then head off to see Ōjō-gokuraku-in (Temple of Rebirth

in Paradise), the hall in which stands the impressive Amitabha trinity, a large Amida image flanked by attendants Kannon and Seishi (god of wisdom). After this, walk up to the garden at the back of the temple where, in late spring and summer, you can walk among hectares of blooming hydrangeas.

The approach to Sanzen-in is opposite the main bus stop; there is no English sign but you can usually just follow the Japanese tourists. The temple is located about 600m up this walk on your left as you crest the hill.

If you're keen for a short hike after leaving the temple, continue up the hill to see the rather oddly named *Soundless Waterfall* (Oto-nashi-no-taki). Though in fact it sounds like any other waterfall, its resonance is believed to have inspired Shōmyō Buddhist chanting.

JIKKŌ-IN Map p84

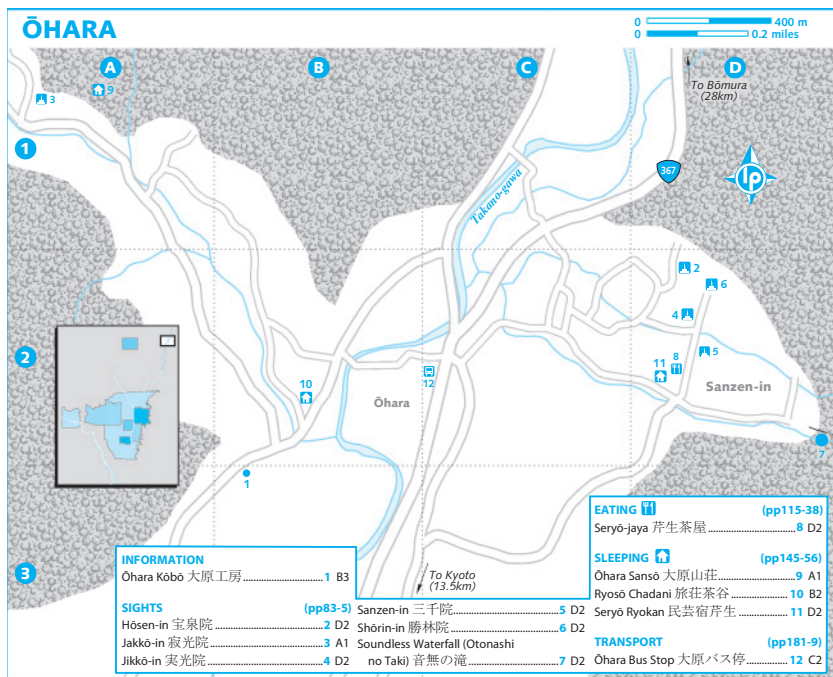
☎ 744-2537; Sakyō-ku, Ōhara, Shōrinin-chō 187; adult/child incl green tea & sweets ¥600/300; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🕒 10min walk from Ōhara bus stop, Kyoto bus 17 or 18 from Kyoto Station

Only about 50m north of *Sanzen-in* (left), this small temple is often praised for its lovely garden and *fudan-zakura* cherry tree, which blossoms between October and March. Jikkō-in is worth the visit if you want to escape the crowds that often plague Sanzen-in.

SHŌRIN-IN Map p84

☎ 744-2537; Sakyō-ku, Ōhara, Shōrinin-chō 187; adult ¥300, child ¥200-300; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🕒 15min walk from Ōhara bus stop, Kyoto bus 17 or 18 from Kyoto Station

This temple is worth a look, even if only through its admission gate, to admire the



thatched roof of the main hall. It's also a good option if you're trying to avoid crowds.

HŌSEN-IN Map p84

☎ 744-2409; Sakyō-ku, Ōhara, Shōrinin-chō 187; adult ¥800, child ¥600-700; ☎ 9am-5pm; 🚶 10min walk from Ōhara bus stop, Kyoto bus 17 or 18 from Kyoto Station

A quieter option than **Sanzen-in** (p83), this temple is just down the path west of the entry gate to **Shōrin-in** (p83). The main tatami room offers a view of a bamboo garden and the surrounding mountains, framed like a painting by the beams and posts of the building. There is also a fantastic 700-year-old pine tree in the garden. The blood-stained Chi Tenjō ceiling boards came from Fushimi-jō castle.

JAKKŌ-IN Map p84

☎ 744-2545; Sakyō-ku, Ōhara, Kusao-chō 676; adult ¥600, child ¥100-350; ☎ 9am-5pm; 🚶 10min walk from Ōhara bus stop, Kyoto bus 17 or 18 from Kyoto Station

Jakkō-in sits on the opposite side of Ōhara from the more famous **Sanzen-in** (p83). It's

reached by a very pleasant walk through a quaint 'old Japan' village. It's a relatively small temple that can't compete with the beauty of its popular neighbour, but it does make an interesting end point to a fine walk in the country.

The history of the temple is exceedingly tragic. The actual founding date of the temple is subject to some debate (it's thought to be somewhere between the 6th and 11th centuries), but it acquired fame as the temple that harboured Kenrei Mon-in, a lady of the Taira clan. In 1185 the Taira were soundly defeated in a sea battle against the Minamoto clan at Dan-no-ura. With the entire Taira clan slaughtered or drowned, Kenrei Mon-in threw herself into the waves with her son Antoku, the infant emperor; she was fished out – the only member of the clan to survive.

She was returned to Kyoto, where she became a nun and lived in a bare hut until it collapsed during an earthquake. Kenrei Mon-in was then accepted into Jakkō-in and stayed there, immersed in prayer and sorrowful memories, until her death 27 years later. Her tomb is located high on the hill behind the temple.

The main building of this temple burned down in May 2000 and the newly reconstructed main hall lacks some of the charm of the original. Nonetheless, it is a nice spot.

Jakkō-in is west of Ōhara. Walk out of the bus station up the road to the traffic lights, then follow the small road to the left. Since it's easy to get lost on the way, we recommend familiarising yourself with the kanji for Jakkō-in (see the map key) and following the Japanese signs.

Kurama & Kibune

Located just 30 minutes north of Kyoto, Kurama and Kibune are a pair of tranquil valleys that have been long favoured as places to escape the crowds and stresses of the city. Kurama's main attractions are its mountain temple and *onsen* (mineral hot spring). Kibune, an impossibly charming little hamlet just over the ridge, is a cluster of ryokan overlooking a mountain river. Kibune is best in summer, when the ryokan serve dinner on platforms built over the rushing waters of Kibune-gawa, providing welcome relief from the heat.

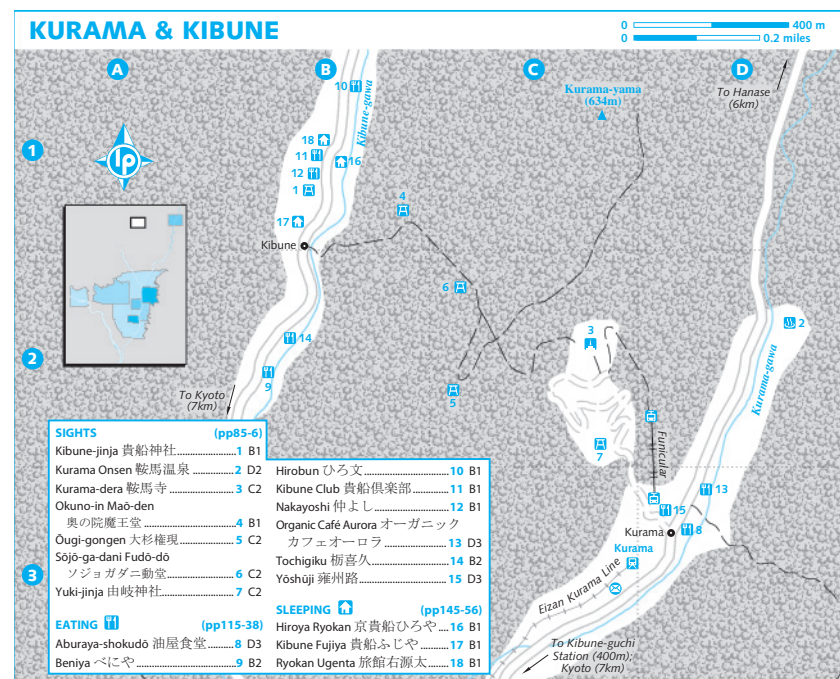
The two valleys lend themselves to being explored together. In winter, you can start from Kibune, walk 30 minutes over the ridge, visit Kurama-dera, then soak in the *onsen* before heading back to Kyoto. In summer, the reverse route is best: start from Kurama, walk up to the temple, then down the other side to Kibune to enjoy a meal suspended above the cool river. Either way, a trip to Kurama and Kibune is probably the single best day or half-day trip possible from Kyoto city.

If you happen to be in Kyoto on the night of 22 October, be sure not to miss the **Kurama Hi Matsuri** (p17) fire festival. It's one of the most exciting festivals in the Kyoto area.

To get to Kurama and Kibune, take the Eizan line from Kyoto's Demachiyanagi Station. For Kibune, get off at the second-to-last stop, Kibune-guchi, take a right out of the station and walk about 20 minutes up the hill. For Kurama, go to the last stop, Kurama, and walk straight out of the station. Both destinations are ¥410 and take about 30 minutes to reach.

KURAMA-DERA Map p85

☎ 741-2003; Sakyō-ku, Kurama, Honmachi 1074; admission ¥200; ☎ 9am-4.30pm; 🚶 3min walk from Kurama Station, Eizan line



Located high on a thickly wooded mountain, Kurama-dera is one of the few temples in modern Japan that still manage to retain an air of real spirituality. This is a magical place that gains a lot of its power from its brilliant natural setting.

The temple also has a fascinating history: in 770 the monk Gantei left Nara's Toshōdai-ji in search of a wilderness sanctuary in which to meditate. Wandering in the hills north of Kyoto, he came across a white horse that led him to the valley known today as Kurama. After seeing a vision of the deity Bishamon-ten, guardian of the northern quarter of the Buddhist heaven, Gantei established Kurama-dera just below the peak of Kurama-yama. Originally belonging to the Tendai school of Buddhism, Kurama has been independent since 1949, describing its own brand of Buddhism as Kurama-kyō.

The entrance to the temple is just up the hill from Kurama Station. A tram goes to the top for ¥100 or you can hike up in about 30 minutes (follow the main path past the tram station). The trail is worth taking (if it's not too hot), since it winds through a forest of towering old-growth cryptomeria trees, passing [Yuki-jinja](#) (Map p85) on the way. Near the peak, there is a courtyard dominated by the Honden; behind this a trail leads off to the mountain's peak.

At the top, you can take a brief detour across the ridge to [Ōsugi-gongen](#) (Map p85), a quiet shrine in a grove of trees. Those who want to continue to Kibune can take the trail down the other side. It's a 1.2km, 30-minute hike from the Honden to the valley floor of Kibune. On the way down are two mountain shrines, [Sōjō-ga-dani Fudō-dō](#) (Map p85)

and [Okuno-in Maō-den](#) (Map p85), which make pleasant rest stops.

KURAMA ONSEN [Map p85](#)

☎ 741-2131; [Sakyō-ku, Kurama, Honmachi 520](#); adult/child from ¥1100/700; 🕒 10am-9pm; 🚶 10min walk from Kurama Station, Eizan line
One of the few *onsen* within easy reach of Kyoto, Kurama Onsen is a great place to relax after a hike. The outdoor bath has fine views of Kurama-yama and costs ¥1100/700 per adult/child. For ¥2300/1600 you get to use the indoor bath as well, but even with a sauna and locker thrown in, it's difficult to imagine why you would opt for indoors. For both baths, buy a ticket from the machine outside the door of the main building (instructions are in Japanese and English).

To get to Kurama Onsen, walk straight out of Kurama Station and continue up the main street, passing the entrance to Kurama-dera on your left. The *onsen* is about 10 minutes' walk on the right. There's also a free shuttle bus between the station and the *onsen*, which meets incoming trains.

KIBUNE-JINJA [Map p85](#)

Halfway up the village of Kibune on the west side of the street, Kibune-jinja sits at the top of a flight of steps. It's a very charming spot, especially in the November maple-leaf season. The shrine predates the 8th-century founding of Kyoto. It was established to worship the god of water and has been long revered by farmers and sake brewers.

From Kibune you can hike over the mountain to [Kurama-dera](#) (p85); the trail starts halfway up the village on the east side.

GREATER KYOTO

Shopping p113

On the fringes of the city you'll find a host of worthwhile sights and districts. To the southeast lies the town of Uji, home to the fine ancient temple of Byōdō-in, and the sake-brewing district of Fushimi. To the southwest you'll find the brilliant Katsura Rikyū Imperial Villa and Saihō-ji (also known as Moss Temple). To the northwest you'll find the mountain town of Takao with its three fine temples and to the northeast you'll find the temple complex of Enryaku-ji atop Hiei-zan.

Buses and trains provide the best means of transport for the Greater Kyoto region. These are described in detail for each sight.

SOUTHEAST KYOTO

Southeast Kyoto contains the town of Uji, home to the lovely temple hall of Byōdō-in, and Fushimi, Kyoto's main sake-brewing district. Over a low mountain range, also to the southeast of the city, you'll find Daigo-ji, a sprawling temple complex with trails that lead up to a mountaintop hall.

DAIGO-JI [Map pp42-3](#)

☎ 571-0002; [Fushimi-ku, Daigo Higashiōji-chō 22](#); admission to grounds during cherry-blossom & autumn-foliage seasons ¥600; 🕒 9am-5pm; 🚶 10min walk from exit 2, Daigo Station, Tōzai subway line

Daigo-ji was founded in 874 by Shobo, who gave it the name Daigo (meaning 'the ultimate essence of milk'). This refers to the five periods of Buddha's teaching, which were compared to the five forms of milk prepared in India – the highest form is called *daigo* in Japanese.

The temple was expanded into a vast complex on two levels, Shimo Daigo (lower) and Kami Daigo (upper). Kami Daigo is atop Daigo-yama, behind the temple. During the 15th century those buildings on the lower level were destroyed, with the sole exception of the five-storey pagoda. Built in 951, this pagoda is treasured as the oldest of its kind in Japan and is the oldest existing building in Kyoto.

In the late 16th century, Hideyoshi took a fancy to Daigo-ji and ordered extensive rebuilding. It is now one of the Shingon school's main temples. To explore Daigo-ji thoroughly and at a leisurely pace, mixing some hiking with your temple-viewing, you will need at least half a day.

The subtemple [Sampō-in](#) is a fine example of the amazing opulence of that period. The Kanō paintings and the garden are special features.

From Sampō-in it's a steep and tiring 50-minute climb up to Kami Daigo. To get here, walk up the large avenue of cherry trees, through the Niō-mon gate, out the back gate of the lower temple, up a concrete incline and into the forest, past the pagoda.

To get to Daigo-ji, take the Tōzai line subway east from central Kyoto to the Daigo stop, and walk east (towards the mountains) for about 10 minutes. Make sure that the train you board is bound for Rokujizō, as some head to Hama-Ōtsu instead.

Fushimi

Fushimi, home to 37 sake breweries, is one of Japan's most famous sake-producing regions. Its location on the Uji-gawa made it a perfect location for sake production, as fresh, high-quality rice was readily available from the fields of neighbouring Shiga-ken and the final product could be easily loaded onto boats for export downriver to Osaka.

Despite its fame, Fushimi is one of Kyoto's least-attractive areas. It's also a hard area to navigate due to a lack of English signage. It's probably only worth a visit if you've got a real interest in sake and sake production.

To get to Fushimi, take a local or express (not a limited express) from Sanjō Station on the Keihan line to Chūshojima Station (¥260, 20 minutes). Alternatively, you can take the Kintetsu Kyoto line from Kyoto Station to Momoyama-Goryōmae Station (¥250, 11 minutes). You'll find a useful map on a pillar outside Chūshojima Station that you can use to orient yourself.

GEKKEIKAN SAKE ŌKURA MUSEUM

[Map pp42-3](#)

☎ 623-2056; [Fushimi-ku, Minamihama-chō 247](#); adult/child ¥300/100; 🕒 9.30am-4.30pm, closed Mon; 🚶 10min walk from Chūshojima Station, Keihan line

The largest of Fushimi's sake breweries is Gekkeikan, the world's leading producer of sake. Although most of the sake is now made in a modern facility in Osaka, a limited amount is still handmade in a Meiji-era *sakagura* (sake brewery) here in Fushimi.

The Gekkeikan Sake Ōkura Museum houses a collection of artefacts and memorabilia tracing the 350-year history of Gekkeikan and the sake-brewing process. Giant murals depicting traditional methods of brewing adorn the walls and there is the chance to taste (and of course buy) some of the local brew.

If you are travelling with a tour group that is larger than 20 people and if you call two weeks in advance (☎ 623-2001), you can arrange a guided English tour of the brewery. Otherwise, ask at the **TIC** (p199) about joining a tour given in Japanese.

The museum is a 10-minute walk north-east of Chūshojima Station on the Keihan line. To get here from the station, go right at the main exit, take a right down an unpaved road, a left at the playground, cross the bridge over the canal and follow the road around to the left; the museum is on the left.

KIZAKURA KAPPA COUNTRY

Map pp42-3

☎ 611-9919; Fushimi-ku, Shiōya-chō 228; admission free; ☎ 11.30am-2pm & 5-9.30pm Mon-Fri, 11am-10pm Sat & Sun; ⌚ 6min walk from Chūshojima Station, Keihan line

A short walk from its competitor, **Gekkeikan** (p87), Kizakura is another sake brewery worth a look while you're in the neighbourhood. The vast complex houses both sake

and beer breweries, courtyard gardens and a small gallery dedicated to the mythical (and sneaky) creature Kappa. The restaurant-bar is an appealing option for a bite and a bit of fresh-brewed ale.

TERADAYA MUSEUM

Map pp42-3
☎ 611-1223; Fushimi-ku, Minamihama-chō; adult ¥400, child ¥200-300; ⌚ 10am-3pm; ⌚ 10min walk from Chūshojima Station, Keihan line
Famed as the inn of choice for rebel samurai Sakamoto Ryōma (1834-67), today Teradaya operates as a museum. Fans of Ryōma faithfully make the pilgrimage here to see the room where he slept.

You might have to ask a passer-by for directions, as the way is poorly marked. There is a sign out the front in English that reads: 'The site of the Teradaya Feud'.

Uji

About 20 minutes south of Kyoto Station by train, the small city of Uji is rich in Heian-period culture. Its main claims to fame are Byōdō-in and Ujigami-jinja (both Unesco World Heritage sites) and tea cultivation. The Uji-bashi Bridge, originally all wood and the oldest of its kind in Japan (it is now constructed of concrete and wood), has been the scene of many bitter clashes in previous centuries, although traffic jams seem to predominate nowadays.

If you've exhausted the sights in the main part of Kyoto and feel like a pleasant half-day trip out of town, Uji is a decent choice.

Uji can be easily reached by rail from Kyoto on the Keihan Uji line (¥460, 30 minutes) from Sanjō Station (change at Chūshojima) or the JR Nara line (¥210, 20 minutes) from Kyoto

UJI TEA

The mountains that surround the town of Uji are perfect for growing tea, and the town has always been one of Japan's main tea-cultivation centres. In fact, tea is usually the first thing most Japanese associate with the name Uji. You won't see any of the plantations unless you rent a car and drive into the mountains to the south, but you will see plenty of shops selling tea in Uji town. As you might expect, this is also a great place to try a simple Japanese tea ceremony.

On the river bank behind Byōdō-in stands the delightful **Taihō-an** (☎ 0774-23-3334; info@kyoto-uji-kankou.or.jp; Uji-shi Uji Araragi-gawa; admission ¥500; ⌚ 10am-4pm; ⌚ 10min walk from Uji Station, Keihan Uji line). The friendly staff conduct a 30-minute tea ceremony (ask for the tatami room, unless you've got knee trouble). Casual dress is fine here and no reservations are necessary. Buy your tickets at the **Uji-shi Kanko** centre next door.

Another stop for a taste of Uji's famed green tea is **Tsūen-jaya** (☎ 0774-21-2243; www.tsuentea.com/engindex.htm; Uji-shi Uji Higashiuchi; ⌚ 9.30am-5.30pm; ⌚ 10min walk from Uji Station, Keihan Uji line), located just across from the station. Japan's oldest surviving tea shop, Tsūen-jaya has been in the Tsūen family for more than 830 years. The present building, near Uji-bashi, dates from 1672 and is full of interesting antiques. You can try fresh *matcha* (powered green tea), including a sweet, for ¥680.

Station. To get to Byōdō-in from Keihan Uji Station, cross the river on the bridge right outside the station; immediately after crossing the bridge, take a left past a public toilet (don't take the street with the large stone *torii*), and continue straight through the park.

BYŌDŌ-IN

off Map pp42-3
平等院
☎ 0774-21-2861; Uji-shi, Uji renga 116; admission ¥600; ⌚ 8.30am-5.30pm Mar-Nov, 9am-4pm Dec-Feb; ⌚ 10min walk from Uji Station, JR Nara line
If you happen to have a ¥10 coin in your pocket, dig it out now and have a look at it. The building depicted on the coin is the main hall of this lovely temple in the centre of Uji. Overlooking a serene pond, the hall is one of the loveliest Buddhist structures in Japan.

This temple was converted from a Fujiwara villa into a Buddhist temple in 1052. The **Hōō-dō** (Phoenix hall), the main hall of the temple, was built in 1053 and is the only original building remaining. The phoenix used to be a popular mythical bird in China and was revered by the Japanese as a protector of Buddha. The architecture of the building resembles the shape of the bird and there are two bronze phoenixes perched opposite each other on the roof.

The Phoenix hall was originally intended to represent Amida's heavenly palace in the Pure Land. This building is one of the few extant examples of Heian-period architecture, and its graceful lines make you wish that far more had survived the wars and fires that have plagued Kyoto's past. Inside the hall is the famous statue of Amida Buddha and 52 *bosatsu* (Bodhisattvas) dating from the 11th century and attributed to the priest-sculptor Jōchō.

Nearby, the **Hōmotsukan Treasure House** (admission ¥300; ⌚ 9am-4pm 1 Apr-31 May & 15 Sep-23 Nov) contains the original temple bell and door paintings and the original phoenix roof adornments. Allow about an hour to wander through the grounds.

UJIGAMI-JINJA

off Map pp42-3
宇治上神社
☎ 0774-21-4634; Uji-shi, Uji Yamada 59; admission free; ⌚ 9am-4.30pm; ⌚ 5min walk from Uji Station, Keihan Uji line
Ujigami-jinja holds the distinction of being Japan's oldest shrine. Despite its historical

significance, the shrine is the least interesting of Kyoto's 17 Unesco World Heritage sites.

According to ancient records, Uji-no-waki-Iratsuko, a 5th-century prince, tragically sacrificed his own life to conclude the matter of whether he or his brother would succeed the imperial throne; needless to say his brother, Emperor Nintoku, won the dispute. The main building was dedicated to the twosome and their father, Emperor Ōjin, and enshrines the tombs of the trio.

The shrine is across the river from Byōdō-in and a short walk uphill; take the orange bridge across the river. On the way, you'll pass through **Uji-jinja** (admission free; ⌚ dawn-dusk), which is actually better looking than its more famous neighbour.

MAMPUKU-JI

off Map pp42-3
萬福寺
☎ 0774-32-3900; Uji-shi, Gokashō, Sanbanwari 34; admission ¥500; ⌚ 9am-4pm; ⌚ 5min walk from Ōbaku Station, JR Nara line

For something totally different while in the Uji area, you might consider a side trip to the unusual Mampuku-ji, a seldom visited temple a little bit north of the centre of Uji.

Mampuku-ji was established as a Zen temple in 1661 by the Chinese priest Ingen. It is a rare example in Japan of a Zen temple built in the pure Chinese style of the Ming dynasty. The temple follows the Ōbaku school, which is linked to the mainstream Rinza school but incorporates a wide range of esoteric Buddhist practices.

SOUTHWEST KYOTO

The southwest area of Kyoto is a sprawling residential and commercial area that few foreign tourists ever visit. Despite the relatively drab surroundings, however, there are three very worthwhile sights here: Katsura Rikyū Imperial Villa; the stunning Saihō-ji, Kyoto's famed Moss Temple; and Jizo-in, a quaint little temple with a tiny moss garden.

For transport to and from this area, see the transport information for the following sights.

KATSURA RIKYŪ IMPERIAL VILLA

Map pp42-3
☎ 211-1215; Nishikyō-ku, Katsura misono; admission free; ⌚ 7min walk from Katsura Rikyū-mae bus stop, bus 33 from Kyoto Station
Katsura Rikyū, one of Kyoto's imperial properties, is widely considered to be the

pinnacle of Japanese traditional architecture and garden design. Set amid an otherwise drab neighbourhood, it is (very literally) an island of incredible beauty and well worth the troublesome application process required to make a visit.

The villa was built in 1624 for the emperor's brother, Prince Toshihito. Every conceivable detail of the villa – the tea-houses, the large pond with islets and the surrounding garden – has been given meticulous attention.

Tours (in Japanese) start at 10am, 11am, 2pm and 3pm, and last 40 minutes. Try to be there 20 minutes before the start time. An explanatory video is shown in the waiting room and a leaflet is provided in English.

You must make reservations, usually several weeks in advance, through the **Imperial Household Agency** – see the boxed text, p57, for details.

SAIHŌ-JI Map pp42-3

☎ 391-3631; Nishikyō-ku, Matsuo Jingatani-chō 56; admission ¥3000; 🚶 5min walk from Kokedera bus stop, Kyoto bus 28 from Arashiyama Station, Hankyū line

The main attraction at this temple is the heart-shaped garden, designed in 1339 by Musō Kokushi. The garden is famous for its luxuriant mossy growth – hence the temple's other name, Koke-dera (Moss Temple). It is a truly lovely garden but it costs a fair bit and advance reservations are required (see the boxed text, below).

RESERVATIONS FOR SAIHŌ-JI

To visit *Saihō-ji* (above), you must make a reservation. Send a postcard at least one week before the date you wish to visit and include your name, number of visitors, address in Japan, occupation, age (you must be over 18) and desired date (choice of alternative dates preferred). The address:

Saihō-ji,
56 Kamigaya-chō,
Matsuo, Nishikyō-ku,
Kyoto-shi 615-8286
JAPAN

Enclose a stamped self-addressed postcard for a reply to your Japanese address. You might find it convenient to buy an Ōfuku-hagaki (send and return postcard set) at a Japanese post office.

JIZŌ-IN Map pp42-3

☎ 381-3417; Nishikyō-ku, Yamadakitano-chō 23; adult/child ¥500/300; 🚶 9am-4.30pm; 🚶 5min walk from Koke-dera bus stop, Kyoto bus 78 from Arashiyama Station, Hankyū line

This delightful little temple could be called the 'poor man's Saihō-ji'. It's only a few minutes' walk south of *Saihō-ji* (left) in the same atmospheric bamboo groves. While the temple does not boast any spectacular buildings or treasures, it has a nice moss garden and is almost completely ignored by tourists, making it a great place to sit and contemplate.

From the parking lot near Saihō-ji, there is a small stone staircase that climbs to the road leading to Jizō-in (it helps to ask someone to point the way, as it's not entirely clear).

TAKAO AREA

The Takao area is tucked far away in the northwestern part of Kyoto. It is famed for autumn foliage and a trio of temples: Jingo-ji, Saimyō-ji and Kōzan-ji.

To reach Takao, take bus 8 from Nijō Station to the last stop, Takao (¥500, 40 minutes). From Kyoto Station, take the hourly JR bus to the Yamashiro Takao stop (¥500, 50 minutes). To get to Jingo-ji, walk down to the river and climb the steps on the other side.

JINGO-JI Map pp42-3

☎ 861-1769; Ukyō-ku Takao-chō; adult/child from ¥500/200; 🚶 9am-4pm; 🚶 20min walk from Yamashiro Takao bus stop, JR bus from Kyoto Station

This mountaintop temple is one of our favourites in all of Kyoto. It sits at the top of a long flight of stairs that stretch from the Kiyotaki-gawa to the temple's main gate. The Kondō (Gold Hall) is the most impressive of the temple's structures, located roughly in the middle of the grounds at the top of another flight of stairs.

After visiting the Kondō, head in the opposite direction along a wooded path to an open area overlooking the valley. Here you'll see people tossing small disks over the railing into the chasm below. These are *kawarakenage*, light clay disks that people throw in order to rid themselves of their bad karma. Be careful, it's addictive and at ¥100 for two it can get expensive (you can buy the disks at a nearby stall). The trick is to flick the disks very gently, convex side up, like a Frisbee. When you get it right, they

fall all the way down the valley – taking all that bad karma with them (try not to think about the hikers down below).

SAIMYŌ-JI Map pp42-3

☎ 861-1770; Ukyō-ku, Umegahata Togano-chō; admission free; 🚶 9am-5pm; 🚶 10min walk from Yamashiro Takao bus stop, JR bus from Kyoto Station

About five minutes upstream from the base of the steps that lead to Jingo-ji, this fine little temple is another one of our favourite spots in Kyoto. See if you can find your way around to the small waterfall at the side of the temple. The grotto here is pure magic.

KŌZAN-JI Map pp42-3

☎ 861-4204; Ukyō-ku, Umegahata Togano-chō; admission ¥600; 🚶 8.30am-5pm; 🚶 30min walk from Yamashiro Takao bus stop, JR bus from Kyoto Station

Hidden amid a grove of towering cedar trees, this temple is the least accessible of the three temples in Takao. It's famous for the *chujū giga* scroll in its collection, an ink-brush depiction of frolicking animals that is considered by many to be the precursor of today's ubiquitous manga. The temple is reached by following the main road north from the Yamashiro Takao bus stop or, more conveniently, by getting off the JR bus at the Toga-no-O bus stop, which is right outside the temple.

NORTH & NORTHEAST KYOTO

In the north of Kyoto lies Kamigamo-jinja, a fine Shintō shrine, and the imposing bulk of Hiei-zan with its mountaintop temple complex of Enryaku-ji. Note that attractions further to the north in the Kitayama mountains are covered separately under Kitayama Area (p83).

TRANSPORT: HIEI-ZAN & ENRYAKU-JI

You can reach Hiei-zan and Enryaku-ji by train or bus. The most interesting way is the train/cable-car/ropeway route. If you're in a hurry or would like to save money, the best way is a direct bus from Sanjō Keihan or Kyoto Stations.

Train Take the Keihan line north to the last stop, Demachiyana, and change to the Yaseyūen/Hiei-bound Eizan line train (be careful not to board the Kurama-bound train that sometimes leaves from the same platform). Travel to the last stop, Yaseyūen (¥260; about 25 minutes from Demachiyana Station), then board the cable car (¥30, nine minutes) followed by the ropeway (¥310, three minutes) to the peak, from which you can walk down to the temples.

Bus Take Kyoto bus (not Kyoto city bus) 17 or 18, both of which run from Kyoto Station to the Yaseyūen stop (¥390, about 50 minutes). From there it's a short walk to the cable-car station from where you can complete the journey (see above).

Alternately, if you want to save money (by avoiding both the cable car and ropeway), there are direct Kyoto buses from Kyoto and Keihan Sanjō Stations to Enryaku-ji, which take about 70 and 50 minutes respectively (both cost ¥800).

KAMIGAMO-JINJA Map pp42-3

☎ 781-0011; Kita-ku, Kamigamo, Motoyama 339; admission free; 🚶 8am-5.30pm; 🚶 5min walk from Kamigatomisonobashi bus stop, bus 9 from Kyoto Station

Kamigamo-jinja is one of Japan's oldest shrines and predates the founding of Kyoto. Established in 679, it is dedicated to Raijin, the god of thunder, and is one of Kyoto's 17 Unesco World Heritage sites. The present buildings (more than 40 in all), including the impressive Haiden hall, are exact reproductions of the originals, dating from the 17th to 19th centuries. The shrine is entered from a long approach through two *torii*. The two large conical white-sand mounds in front of Hosodono hall are said to represent mountains sculpted for gods to descend upon. It's not one of Kyoto's leading sights but it's worth a look if you find yourself in the north.

HIEI-ZAN & ENRYAKU-JI Map pp42-3

☎ 077-578-0001; Shiga-ken, Ōtsu-shi, Sakamoto Honmachi 4220; adult/child ¥550/350; 🚶 8.30am-4.30pm, closes earlier in winter

A visit to 848m-high Hiei-zan and the vast Enryaku-ji complex is a good way to spend half a day hiking, poking around temples and enjoying the atmosphere of a key site in Japanese history.

Enryaku-ji was founded in 788 by Saichō, also known as Dengyō-daishi, the priest who established the Tendai school. This school did not receive imperial recognition until 823, after Saichō's death; however, from the 8th century the temple grew in power. At its height, Enryaku-ji possessed some 3000 buildings and an army of thousands of *sōhei* (warrior monks). In 1571 Oda Nobunaga saw the temple's power as a

threat to his aims to unify the nation and he destroyed most of the buildings, along with the monks inside. Today only three pagodas and 120 minor temples remain.

The complex is divided into three sections: Tōtō, Saitō and Yokawa. The **Tōtō** (eastern pagoda section) contains the Kompon Chū-dō (Primary Central Hall), which is the most important building in the complex. The flames on the three dharma lamps in front of the altar have been kept lit for more than 1200 years. The Daikō-dō (Great Lecture Hall) displays life-sized wooden statues of the founders of various Buddhist schools. This part of the temple is heavily geared to group access, with large expanses of asphalt for parking.

The **Saitō** (western pagoda section) contains the Shaka-dō, which dates from 1595 and houses a rare Buddha sculpture of the Shaka Nyorai (Historical Buddha). The Saitō, with its stone paths winding through forests of tall trees, temples shrouded in mist and the sound of distant gongs, is the most atmospheric part of the temple. Hold on to your ticket from the Tōtō section, as you may need to show it here.

The **Yokawa** is of minimal interest and a 4km bus ride away from the Saitō area. The Chū-dō here was originally built in 848. It was destroyed by fire several times and has undergone repeated reconstruction (most recently in 1971). If you plan to visit this area as well as Tōtō and Saitō, allow a full day for in-depth exploration.

(Continued from page 92)

WALKING TOURS

HILLS, TEMPLES & LANES IN SOUTHERN HIGASHIYAMA

1 Tainai-meguri Just to the left of the ticket window of Kiyomizu-dera, this subterranean walk through the darkness easily qualifies as Kyoto's most unusual attraction. We won't say too much about **Tainai-meguri** (p63) – just try it.

2 Kiyomizu-dera At the top of Chawan-zaka, this grande dame of Kyoto temples commands an impressive view over the city. While you're visiting **Kiyomizu-dera** (p63), be sure to check out **Jishu-jinga** (p63), home of the famous 'Love Shrine', and take a sip of the holy water from the spring below the main hall.

3 Kasagi-ya On the left just after you start down Sannen-zaka, **Kasagi-ya** (p132) is a charming little teahouse and the ideal place to stop for a cup of hot *matcha* in winter or an *uji kintoki* (shaved ice with sweetened green tea) in summer. Be prepared to ask a local shop owner to point it out.

4 Ishibei-kōji After you descend Sannen-zaka and Ninen-zaka and start along Nene-no-Michi (just past the public toilet), you will find the entrance to this atmospheric pedestrian-only lane on your left. There is no English sign, so be prepared to ask someone, or keep an eye out for the Japanese script (石塀小路). This is Kyoto's single-most attractive street.

5 Kōdai-ji At the top of a flight of steps on the right off Nene-no-Michi, you will find **Kōdai-ji** (p64), a highly attractive temple famous for interesting evening illuminations of its gardens. The bamboo forest here at night is surreal.

6 Maruyama-kōen This park is wonderful for an alfresco lunch along this route, or just a quick can of coffee or tea (only in Japan). If you are at **Maruyama-kōen** (p64) during cherry-blossom season, be prepared for a rollicking scene.

7 Yasaka-jinja Below (west) of Maruyama-kōen, you will find this attractive open-plan shrine. **Yasaka-jinja** (p64) is usually busy with passing worshippers. If you are here on New Year's Eve or the first three days of the new year, be ready for throngs of people.

8 Chion-in A vast Pure Land Buddhist temple, **Chion-in** (p65) is like the Vatican of Japanese Buddhism – grand in every way. Take off your shoes and enter the main hall and spend some time soaking up the atmosphere. It's free.

9 Shōren-in A nice counterpoint to Chion-in, **Shōren-in** (p65) is a fine Tendai sect temple with a wonderful garden and a lovely little bamboo forest. You can sip a cup of *matcha* while gazing over the garden. Look for the giant camphor trees over the front.

WALK FACTS

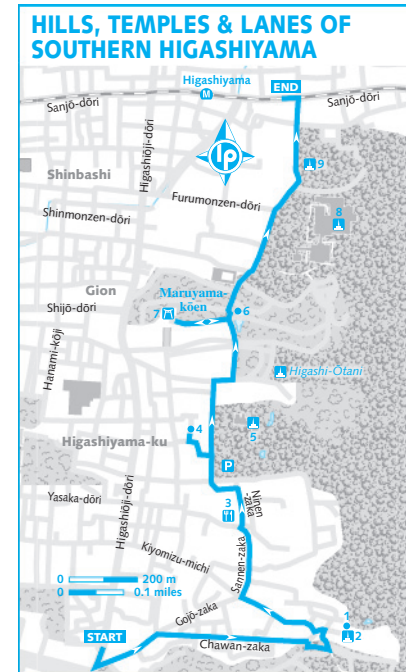
Start Gojō-zaka bus stop on Higashioji-dōri (bus 18, 100, 206 or 207)

End Jingū-michi bus stop on Sanjō-dōri (bus 5 or 100); Higashiyama-Sanjō Station on the Tōzai subway line

Distance About 5km

Duration Four hours

Fuel stop Kasagi-ya



(Continued on page 101)

NIGHT WALK THROUGH THE FLOATING WORLD

1 Yasaka-jinja Overlooking Gion, **Yasaka-jinja** (p64) is a popular shrine, where many in the neighbourhood pray for a successful evening.

2 Tatsumi-bashi bridge After crossing Shijō-dōri and the gaudy hostess club–studded region, you find yourself in an alley of traditional wooden buildings. From here you come out on Tatsumi-bashi bridge, perhaps the most scenic spot in all of Kyoto (at least at night).

3 Tatsumi shrine Just opposite the bridge, you'll find this quaint little shrine on a triangular plot in the middle of Gion's most beautiful district. Note the hostesses and *mama-sans* praying for a good evening.

4 Ōzawa At the western end of Shirakawa-Minami-dōri, over a small footbridge, you will find **Ōzawa** (p130), a wonderful little tempura restaurant. Time your walk to have dinner here.

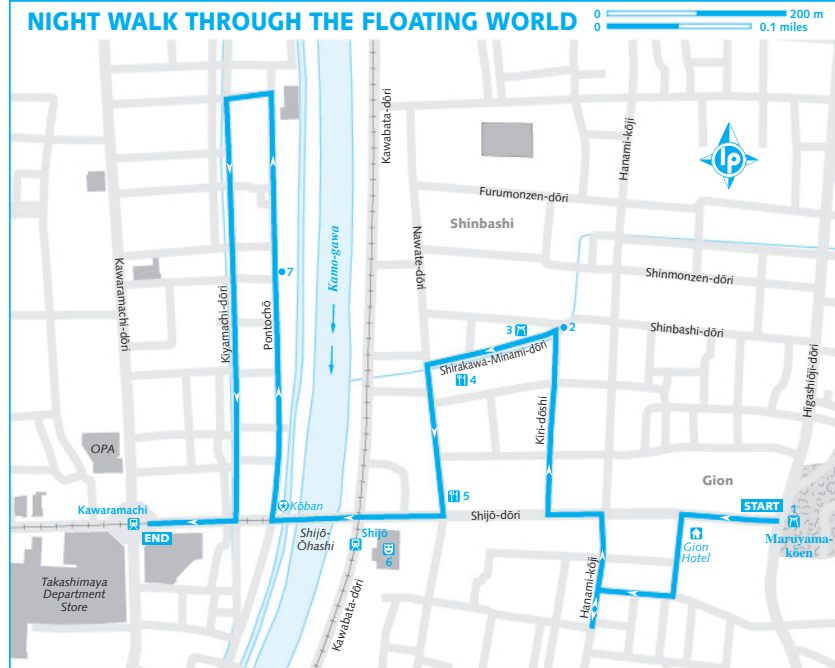
5 Issen Yōshoku If you want a snack instead of dinner, head to **Issen Yōshoku** (p131), this popular, pebeian *okonomiyaki* joint.

6 Minami-za Finding yourself back on Shijō, you will soon see the towering façade of the **Minami-za** (p142) grand kabuki theatre on your left. Look for the colourful posters advertising forthcoming performances.

7 Pontochō After crossing the Kamo-gawa via Shijō-Ōhashi, you will pass a police box and then immediately find the entrance to this fantastic pedestrian-only lane. **Pontochō** (p51) is incredibly atmospheric in the evening and the best place to spot geisha or *maiko*. From there you can head down Kiyamachi-dōri for a few drinks or straight to Kawaramachi Station for the trip home if you prefer.

WALK FACTS

Start Yasaka-jinja (at the intersection of Shijō-dōri and Higashioji-dōri), a 10-minute walk from Keihan Line Shijō or Hankyū line Kawaramachi Stations
End Hankyū Kawaramachi Station, at the intersection of Shijō-dōri and Kiyamachi-dōri
Distance About 3km
Duration Two hours
Fuel stop Ōzawa or Issen Yōshoku for food; Pontochō and Kiyamachi-dōri for drinks



A PHILOSOPHICAL MEANDER

1 Konchi-in Starting from the Westin Miyako Hotel, look up the hill to find the pedestrian tunnel. Walk through the tunnel to get to **Konchi-in** (p67). This small temple with its fine Zen garden is your first stop. It's on the left about 150m after the tunnel.

2 Nanzen-ji Kyoto's **Nanzen-ji** (p66) is a vast Zen temple that easily ranks as one of our favourite temples in the city. There is so much to see here and much of it is free.

3 Kōtoku-an From the main hall of Nanzen-ji, walk under the brick aqueduct and turn left up the hill. You will soon come upon the entrance to the fine subtemple of **Kōtoku-an**, which can be entered for free.

4 Nanzen-ji Oku-no-in Facing the main hall of Kōtoku-an, if you look to your right, you will see a small doorway leading to a dirt path. Take a left up the dirt path and walk uphill into the woods. Follow the steps until you reach the small waterfall of Nanzen-ji Oku-no-In, a fine grotto in the forest.

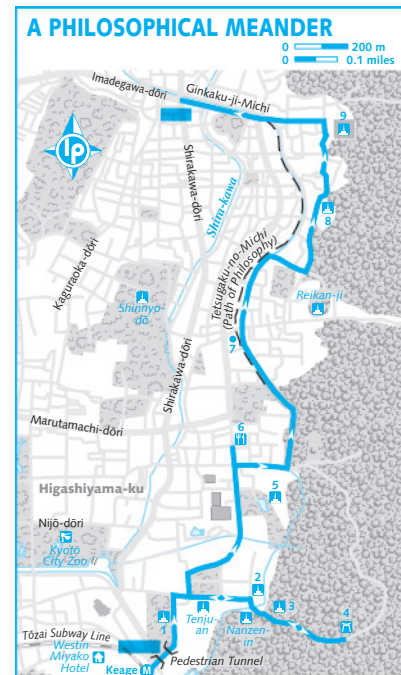
5 Eikan-dō Return back through Nanzen-ji and work your way north past a school until you reach this fine, sprawling temple. **Eikan-dō** (p70) is famous for its maples and gets packed with admiring crowds in autumn.

6 Hinode Udon If you leave Eikan-dō and walk straight north for a few minutes, you will find this fine noodle shop on your right (there are usually a few taxis parked nearby). **Hinode Udon** (p135) is a good choice for a lunch stop.

7 Tetsugaku-no-Michi (Path of Philosophy) Backtrack from Hinode Udon and you will find the sign pointing to the start of the famous **Tetsugaku-no-Michi** (p70) canalside walkway. It's one of Kyoto's more scenic walks.

8 Hōnen-in Continue along the Tetsugaku-no-michi until you see signs pointing off the path to **Hōnen-in** (p71). This small temple is one of Kyoto's finest and has free admission. Do not miss it.

9 Ginkaku-ji Leave Hōnen-in and work your way through the narrow streets north to **Ginkaku-ji** (p71). The route jogs right and left – just try to keep heading basically north. This Unesco World Heritage Site is usually crowded but nonetheless impressive.



WALK FACTS

Start Keage Station on the Tōzai subway line
End Ginkaku-ji-Michi bus stop, near the intersection of Shirakawa-dōri and Imadegawa-dōri (bus 5, 56, 100, 203 or 204 from Kyoto Station)
Distance About 6km
Duration Four hours
Fuel stop Hinode Udon

AMBLING THROUGH BAMBOO GROVES & TEMPLES

1 Tenryū-ji Start at **Tenryū-ji** (p80), a popular Zen temple that has one of the loveliest views in all Kyoto – the temple's garden and pond are backed by the mountains of Arashiyama.

2 Bamboo Forest Leave the north gate of Tenryū-ji and, after a brief detour down to **Nonomiya-jinja**, walk up through the brilliant bamboo forest, one of Kyoto's incredible sights.

3 Kameyama-kōen After reaching the top of the bamboo forest, turn left and walk for 100m into the grounds of scenic **Kameyama-kōen** (p81), a fine park on a hillside above Arashiyama.

4 Ōkōchi-Sansō Villa After briefly detouring into Kameyama-kōen, return the way you came and then, just opposite the top of the main walkway through the bamboo forest, you will see a slope leading diagonally up the hill past a small shack (which is a ticket office). This is the entrance to the brilliant and unmissable **Ōkōchi-Sansō Villa** (p81).

5 Jōjakkō-ji Atop a grassy knoll, **Jōjakkō-ji** (p81) is the first of the main temples after Tenryū-ji and boasts brilliant maples in November.

6 Rakushisha The famed haiku poet Bashō stopped at this quaint little thatched-roof hut called **Rakushisha** (p81). It's worth a quick look.

7 Nison-in Have a look through the entrance of **Nison-in** (p81) as you go by. If the maples are working, consider entry.

8 Takiguchi-dera After the main road curves to the left, you'll see four stone way-marks that show the way up to **Takiguchi-dera** (p82) and Giō-ji.

9 Giō-ji With a fine little moss garden and a thatched-roof main hall, this cute little temple

has a peculiar charm. You can sometimes get lucky and have **Giō-ji** (p82) all to yourself (but not in busy times of spring or autumn).

10 Adashino Nembutsu-ji Thousands of stone statues create a truly unique atmosphere at the unusual temple of **Adashino Nembutsu-ji** (p82).

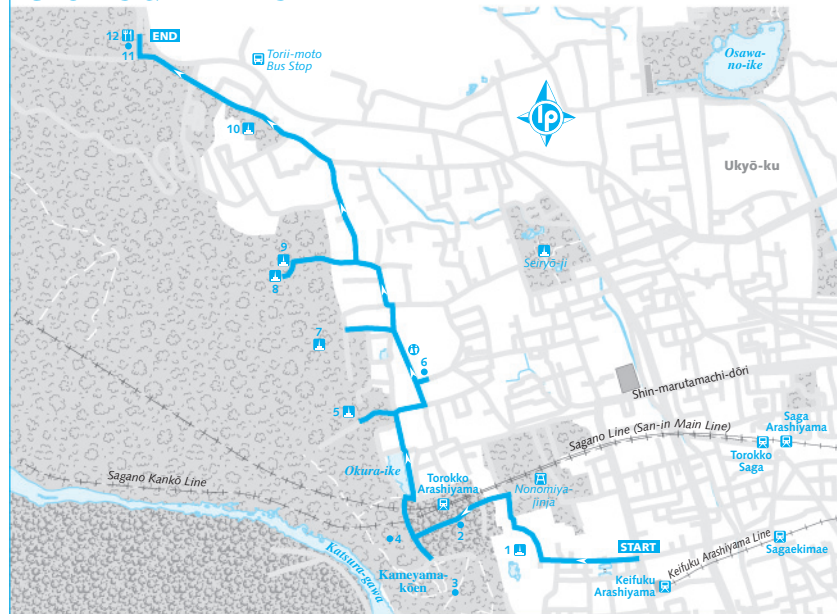
11 Atago Torii This large *torii* marks the end of the walk. The thatched-roof houses here are incredibly evocative.

12 Hiranoya For a quick cup of hot *matcha*, try this fine old restaurant. **Aya Chaya Hiranoya** (p136) is a great way to reward yourself for completing the walk.

WALK FACTS

Start Arashiyama bus stop (bus 11, 28, 61, 62, 71, 72 or 93); Keifuku Arashiyama Station or Torokko Arashiyama Station
End Torii-moto bus stop (bus 62 or 72)
Distance About 4km
Duration Four hours
Fuel stop Aya Chaya Hiranoya

AMBLING THROUGH BAMBOO GROVES & TEMPLES



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