The MONOCLE Travel Guide Series



Kyoto

Kyoto may be full of hushed streets steeped in tradition and hidden institutions run by kimono-clad custodians but don't be fooled: there's more to this captivating city than timeworn teahouses and graceful geiko. Japan's former capital has its own distinct identity, dialect and dishes, and beyond the Buddhist temples and Zen gardens you'll find a dynamic city that's constantly evolving. Slip off your shoes and step right in.

Need to know Kyoto calling

- OI House rules: If you're new to staying in a traditional ryokan (Japanese-style inn), don't expect to find a bed. After dinner, staff will roll out a futon mattress encased in crisp sheets and topped with a soft quilt.
- Local lingo: Like most Japanese cities, Kyoto has its own dialect. Known as Kyotoben or Kyo-kotoba, it has a delicate, elegant intonation and pronunciation.
- 03 By invitaiton only: The business of ichigensan okotowari - new customers not welcome without an introduction - has protected Kyoto's finest institutions and their loyal clientele for generations.
- Route finders: Although the city centre is laid out in a grid, directions can be confusing. Both locals and taxis tend to locate a place by its proximity to two intersecting streets.
- o5 Holey moley: There will be plenty of times where you're asked to take off your shoes upon entering ryokan, restaurants and temples. Don't embarrass yourself by padding around in socks riddled with holes.

Hotels Settle down



The Ritz-Carlton Kyoto, Central Riverside peace and quiet

Local artisans have brought an authentic touch to the Ritz-Carlton's design, which incorporates tranquil Zen gardens and a collection of 400 works of contemporary Japanese art.

Kamogawa Nijo-Ohashi Hotori, Nakagyo-ku +81 (0)75 746 5555 ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/japan/kyoto



Hoshinoya Kyoto, West

A modern reinterpretation of Japan's traditional ryokan, Hoshinoya Kyoto has 25 rooms with river views, western beds and cedar bathtubs. 11-2 Genrokuzan-cho, Arashiyama, Nishikyo-ku +81 (0)50 3786 1144 hoshinoyakyoto.jp



Genhouin, East Serene setting

This peaceful five-room Japanese inn is housed in a century-old wooden building renovated by

77 Okazaki Hoshoji-cho, Sakyo-ku +81 (0)75 752 1110 genhouin.co.jp

late architect Akira Watanabe.

Food and drink Plate expectations



Shiki Nakamura, North Solo effort

Masai Nakamura trained in kitchens around Kyoto and is now a one-man operation, serving multicourse lunches and dinners. The corn, orange juice, edamame and cucumbers he uses are all sent directly from his parents' farm.

491-40 Nakatsukasa-cho, Kamigyo-ku +81 (0)75 841 8515 shiki-nakamura.com



Monk, Northeast Wood-fired wonders

restaurant-monk.com

Monk serves inventive contemporary cuisine using local ingredients. A master of wood-fired cooking, owner-chef Yoshihiro Imai starts early every morning, visiting farms in Ohara for fresh

vegetables, herbs and flowers. 147 Jodoji Shimominamida-cho, Sakyo-ku +81 (0)75 748 1154

Honke Daiichi Asahi, Central All-day ramen

This decades-old shop is easily recognisable by its lengthy queue of diehard fans. They line up for the thick tonkotsu (ramen) with soy sauce - strong or weak - and green onion and beansprout toppings.

845 Higashi Shiokoji Mukai hata-cho, Shimogyo-ku

honke-daiichiasahi.com

+81 (0)75 351 6321

Rokuyosha, Central Coffeehouse-meets-bar

Rokuyosha was started by Minoru Otono and his wife in 1950 and today is run by their sons Takashi and Osamu. The ground floor opens at 08.30 to serve breakfast, while from 18.00 the wood-panelled basement becomes a bar.

36 Daikoku-cho, Nakagyo-ku

+81 (0)75 241 3026



Bar K-ya, Central

Whiskey a-go-go

Owner-bartender Junichi Kurono's extensive menu includes seasonal cocktails and Scottish and Japanese whiskies. Sit at the seven-metrelong African Bubinga wood counter and watch the exemplary bartenders in action.

103 Yaoya-cho, Nakagyo-ku +81 (0)75 241 0489

Retail Wondrous variety



45R, Central Dyeing to be worn

45r is famous for aizome (indigo) dyed clothes made in Japan. At the Kyoto branch you can find the brand's full line-up for men and women, including indigo-dye shirts, smartcasual tweed suits, Supima organic-cotton jeans and hand-woven Indian Khadi blouses. 61 Masuya-cho, Nakagyo-ku +81 (0)75 252 0045

45rpm.co.jp

Arts & Science, Central Mixed disciplines

South Korean-born, Hawaiian-raised Sonya Park made her name as a fashion stylist before founding Tokyo-based Arts & Science in 2003. She now has three shops in Kyoto, each offering thoughtfully made clothes and accessories.

459 Hinokuchi-cho, Nakagyo-ku +81 (0)75 253 0980 arts-science.com



D&Department Kyoto, Central

Selling "long-life" designs specific to Kyoto, this shop is a joint venture between D&Department, Bukko-ji Buddhist temple and Kyoto University of Art and Design. Among the items on offer are saké made in Fushimi by Fujioka Shuzo.

397 Shinkai-cho, Shimogyo-ku +81 (0)75 343 3217 d-department.com



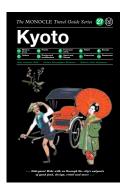
Naito Shoten, Central Brush with greatness

Sachiko Naito's shop near Sanjo Bridge sells a mix of handcrafted items, including traditional hand-tied scouring brushes made of shuro (hemp palm), brooms for sweeping tatami mats and artists' brushes made of sheep, boar and horse hair.

Sanjo Ohashi Nishizume, 112 Nakajima-cho, Nakagyo-ku +81 (0)75 221 3018

Vocabulary Talking the talk

- 01 Conbini: Convenience store
- Dori: Street
- Geiko/maiko: Geisha/trainee geisha
- Genkin/Kaado: Cash/card
- Kanpai: Cheers!



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