

Kyoto –

- Kyoto is much more compact than Tokyo but still spread out, with distinct districts and sightseeing areas. Public transportation is very useful, but you'll also rely on walking and occasional taxis, especially between temples. Taking the bus is sometimes easier than the subway, or a better option as well. Staying centrally (Kawaramachi/Gion area) or near Kyoto Station is recommended. Kyoto Station is especially convenient if you plan day trips or are arriving via Shinkansen.
 - o Ace Hotel Kyoto is where Shiho and I, and some guests will be staying. It is located in the Karasuma/Kawaramachi area, and connected directly to the subway.
 - o Kyoto imposes a mandatory accommodation tax on all overnight guests, which is applied per person, per night, and collected directly by your hotel or lodging provider. To manage overtourism, the city updated its tax to a tiered structure scaled to your nightly room rate
 - <https://kyoto.travel/en/news/tax-change/>
- If flying into Kyoto note that both airports (ITM & KIX) are in Osaka. It is recommended to fly into Itami Airport (ITM) as it is closer to Kyoto, about 45 minute drive. KIX is about 1.5 hour drive.
- Kyoto is more traditional and slower-paced than Tokyo—many restaurants, shops, and temples close earlier.
 - o Check google/Instagram for opening/closing times. Some restaurants decide to close early or randomly depending on the day.
- Popular areas to research/consider:
 - o **Gion / Higashiyama**
 - Traditional Kyoto, geisha district, historic streets (Hanamikoji, Ninenzaka/Sannenzaka), temples.
 - *Photography is strictly banned on private streets and alleys within Kyoto's historic Gion district, with violators subject to a fine of up to ¥10,000. This restriction was implemented to protect residents' privacy and prevent disrespectful behavior towards Geiko (geisha) and Maiko (apprentices)*
 - o **Arashiyama**
 - Bamboo Grove, scenic river, monkeys, temples (Tenryu-ji), more nature-focused
 - o **Fushimi Inari**
 - Famous torii gates, iconic hike up the mountain
 - o **Kawaramachi / Pontocho**
 - Dining, nightlife, scenic alleyways along the river, central location
 - o **Kiyomizu-dera area**
 - One of Kyoto's most famous temples, great views, very scenic and tourist-friendly streets
 - o **Philosopher's Path (Ginkaku-ji area)**
 - Peaceful canal walk, especially nice in cherry blossom season, temples and cafes
 - o **Nishiki Market**
 - Food market, local specialties, quick bites, great for casual exploration
 - o **Northern Kyoto (Kinkaku-ji / Ryoan-ji)**
 - Golden Pavilion, Zen gardens, quieter and more spread out sights
 - o **Uji (day trip)**
 - Matcha capital, Byodo-in Temple, short trip from Kyoto
 - o **Osaka (day trip)**
 - Vibrant food city known for street food (Dotonbori), shopping, and a lively, more casual atmosphere than Kyoto
 - o **Kobe (day trip)**

- Port city famous for Kobe beef, scenic waterfront, and a laid-back upscale vibe with mountain view
- o **Hiroshima (day trip)**
 - Historical site with Peace Memorial Park/Museum and nearby Miyajima Island (floating torii gate), one of Japan's most iconic views

Café/Coffee

- Slo
- Weekenders
Coffee
- +Coffee
- Yoshihara
- Koan
- Sanwa Coffee
- Ogawa Coffee
- Kurasu Ebisugawa
- Monna (Warabi
mochi)

Bars

- Bee's Knees
- Rocking Chair
- Shuta Yanagino
- Chrome Wine Bar
- Caam Bar
- Nokishita711
- Lab.Kyoto
- Cocktail Stand
Furek

Ramen

- Men-Ya Inoichi
- Kombu to Men
Kiichi (make
reservation online)
- Men ya Yukou
- Sugari

Gyukatsu (Beef cutlet)

- Gyukatso Katsugyu
Shijo

Yakitori

- Mihana
- Torisaki Jikou
- Yakitori Torito
- Yakitori Hitomi
- Haku

Soba

- Misoka-an
Kawamichiya

Sushi

- Gion Sushi
Tadayasu
- Sushi Saeki
- Kaiten Sushi Ginza
Onodera

Kaiseki

- Tokuha Motonari
- Sojiki Nakahigashi
- Ogata/Higashiyam
a Ogata
- Kiyama
- Kikunoi
- Oryori Hayashi

Pizza

- Enboca
- Monk

Yakiniku (bbq)

- Tenraku

Udon

- Ukiya

Tempura

- Tempura Matsu

Omurice (Egg Omelet over Rice)

- Kichi Kichi Omurice

Izakaya/Bistro

- Coppie
- Izakaya 2F
- Badu
- Yokocho
- Akagakiya

Fine Dining

- Lurra
- Gibier Miyama