

THE ARTS OF JAPAN – updated outline (as at 18 March 2024) – with links

THURSDAY 9 MAY: Arrive Tokyo, late afternoon, transfer to Hotel in Ginza

<https://www.gotokyo.org/en/destinations/central-tokyo/ginza/index.html>

<https://digjapan.travel/en/blog/id=12331> Itoya Hontren Ginza



FRIDAY 10 MAY: FULL DAY trip to Hakone & Odowara with Chiaki

<https://hakone-japan.com/things-to-do/museums/the-outdoor-museumtest/>

<https://www.odawara-af.com/en/enoura/>



SATURDAY 11 MAY: NEZU MUSEUM: <https://jonellepatrick.com/nezu-museum/>

We will have transport, but no guide, just us!



YAYOI KUSAMA MUSEUM: <https://yayoikusamamuseum.jp/en/about/museum/>

Minibus will drop us at the Mitsukoshi Department Store in Ginza for Lunch

[Art Aquarium Museum](https://www.artsytravels.com/asia/ginza-contemporary-art-hub-and-shopping-heaven-tokyo/) **OR FREE TIME:** <https://www.artsytravels.com/asia/ginza-contemporary-art-hub-and-shopping-heaven-tokyo/>

SUNDAY 12 MAY: Ginza & Nihonbashi District & LUNCH with Chiaki

Walking Tour: Taxis are plentiful and not expensive.

NIHONBASHI BRIDGE: <https://www.gotokyo.org/en/spot/44/index.html>

KIDAI SHORAN SCROLL: <https://www.gotokyo.org/en/destinations/waterfront/kidai-shoran-nihonbashi.html>



MONDAY 13 MAY: Shinkansen train to **KYOTO** – 2hrs (only essential luggage)

<https://www.edrawmind.com/article/history-of-kyoto.html>

The Cross Hotel: <https://cross-kyoto.orixhotelsandresorts.com/>

In Downtown Kyoto, near Pontocho and Gion Districts, we can walk to Nishiki Markets



MONDAY EVENING...with Tomoko, our Kyoto guide

[WALKING in GION](#)

[DINNER in PONTOCHO ALLEY](#)



TUESDAY 14 MAY: Day tour with **Tomoko** and **private transport**

TEMPLES, GARDENS, TEXTILES...<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e3910.html>

We are visiting quieter locations to avoid crowded hot spots

Daisen-in Temple Complex: https://kyoto.travel/en/shrine_temple/137.html

Next to Café Du Mon is a small bric-a-brac shop, a treasure house of old and new!



SHIGAMORI MIREI GARDEN MUSEUM:

<https://japanesegardens.jp/gardens/secret/mirei-shigemori-garden-museum-2/>

<https://www.curatedkyoto.com/blog/shigemori-mirei/>

Best prep for Japanese Gardens is Monty Don – two episodes!!

SHIBORI TEXTILE MUSEUM: <https://www.shibori.jp/>

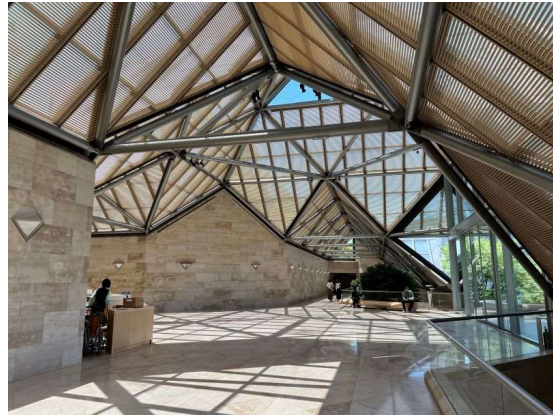
There are other Museums nearby: <https://www.kyoto-museums.jp/en/column/fabric/>

We can walk or taxi back to our Hotel from here, and shop on the way!



WEDNESDAY 15 MAY: Morning tour to **Miho Museum** with Tomoko:

<https://www.miho.jp/>



WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON: Optional: [NETSUKE \(HOUSE\) MUSEUM](#) with Judith



Another possibility: [KAWAI KANJIRO HOUSE MUSEUM](#)

THURSDAY 16 MAY: FREE DAY IN KYOTO with MANY OPTIONS...

Silver Temple & Philosopher's Path; Bamboo Forest...Textile hunting!

I will accompany anyone interested in visiting some of the iconic Kyoto sites that are too crowded for us to visit as a group

FRIDAY 17 MAY: Fast train to **OKAYAMA** 1:1/4hrs – **ONE NIGHT**
(small bag for 3 night stay, our bigger case will go on ahead to Tokyo)



OKAYAMA GARDEN – we can walk there from the [Granvia Hotel](#) and stroll around with an online map. KORAKU-EN is a quintessential Japanese Garden – one of Japan's three best.

<https://www.okayama-japan.jp/en/spot/91>

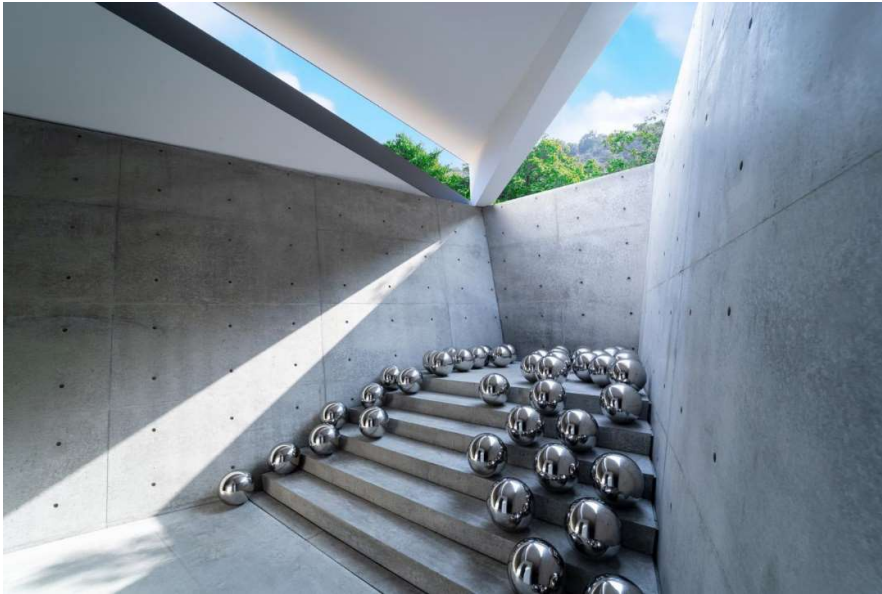
Shopping in Okayama: <https://sun-ste.com/okayama-ichibangai/en/>

SATURDAY 18 MAY: Bizen Pottery Village then transfer to [UNO PORT HOTEL](#)
BIZEN POTTERY & IMBE VILLAGE: <https://www.okayama-japan.jp/en/spot/1067>
TWO NIGHTS at Uno Port Hotel: **1:1/2hrs by bus**



SUNDAY 19 MAY: NAOSHIMA: Full day with English speaking guide

<https://blog.japanwondertravel.com/complete-guide-to-naoshima-19358>



[TADAO ANDO & YAYOI KUSAMA](#)

MONDAY 20 MAY: Uno Port to Okayama (1.1/2hrs) to Tokyo (3.1/2hrs), arriving mid-afternoon to be reunited with our luggage from Kyoto

LAST NIGHT: FAREWELL DINNER IN GINZA!

TUESDAY 21 MAY: Free Day till 3.00pm OR half-day with Chiaki to visit iconic Tokyo places...

Meiji Shrine/ Ota Museum/ Omotesando Avenue and **Oriental Bazaar**/ Mori Contemporary Art Museum...

3.00PM TRANSFER TO AIRPORT

WEDNESDAY 22 MAY: ARRIVE SYDNEY 6.10 AM

More Background Information

On Netflix:

Midnight Diner: (2014) a TV series set in a late-night diner in a quiet alley-way in central Tokyo. We meet the locals and the enigmatic owner as he quietly dispenses sage advice.

Midnight Diner: Tokyo Stories (2019) follow-up series – both are absolutely marvellous, totally addictive!

Old Enough: reality TV series about young Japanese children going out on their first solo errands. Set mostly outside big cities – also addictive – short episodes

Cooking for the Maiko House: TV series set in **Gion in Kyoto** – great introduction to the history of Geisha culture

YouTube & BBC:

Monty Don: Around the World in 80 Gardens: China & Japan - prepare for multiple viewings!

Shogun on Disney Plus

Books:

The Hare with Amber Eyes, Edmund de Waal. Background to netsuke

Wabi-sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers, Leonard Koren. Don't be put off by the highfaluting title! If this one is not available, grab whatever is in the Library. **Wabi-sabi** is the Japanese life-value that prioritises the beauty of transience and imperfection, an essential outlook for those of us aware of our mounting imperfections!

Death in Tokyo, Keigo Higashino "On the **Nihonbashi Bridge in Tokyo** stands the statue of a mythic beast – a kirin. One evening a man staggers onto the bridge and collapses beneath the winged creature. The patrolman on watch goes to rouse the man, who he presumes to be drunk – only to discover that the man had been stabbed in the chest. He is dead."

Claws of the Cat, Susan Spann. **May 1564:** When a samurai is brutally murdered in a **Kyoto** teahouse, master ninja Hiro has no desire to get involved. But the beautiful entertainer accused of the crime enlists the help of Father Mateo, the Portuguese Jesuit Hiro is sworn to protect, leaving the master *shinobi* with just three days to find the killer in order to save the girl and the priest from execution.

The Guest Cat, Takashi Hirade. A cat begins to visit a young couple living in a quiet part of Tokyo and has an unexpected impact on their lives. This small book won a prestigious literary award in Japan and was a best seller in France and the US. Not just for cat lovers!

A (VERY) Short History of Japan

Feudal history – pre-1604 - Two centuries of provincial **Daimyo** (warlord) fighting – **Samurai** powerful – Warlords invade Korea – artisans abducted

Shintoism – Zen Buddhism – Confucianism – Christianity outlawed

1604 – Daimyo **Tokugawa** seizes control and is granted a special title by the Emperor: **Shogunate**. His lands are in **EDO**, present day **TOKYO**. He keeps the peace, subjugates the other daimyo, **keeps them poor**, decommissions a lot of samurai. His descendants build a bridge in Edo (**Nihonbashi**) and the small fishing village quickly expands into the most populous city in the world. **The Emperor remains in Kyoto**, is visited by the Shogun who builds his own palace and gardens. The Edo Shogun insists other Daimyo travel to Edo every two years and build residences and gardens there. Decommissioned samurai move to Edo and bring with them their social status, cultural knowledge, e.g. tea ceremony practices, geisha parties, fashion, and slowly Imperial Court high culture begins to filter down the social classes: art, theatre, literature, education. As the city grows, wealthy merchants and small traders open shops in Nihonbashi and a strong mercantile economy is born. Edo becomes a hot house for the spread of a national culture, supervised by the Shogun. “Period of Isolation”.

1853 – Commodore Perry, US armed steamers arrive and force Japan to “open up” to Western trade. Shogun’s control is diluted, other Daimyo jostle for power.

1868 – Emperor Meiji is reinstated by disgruntled daimyo and moves his court to **Tokyo**, and restoration of Imperial Palace and Gardens begins in Kyoto

1905-1940s – short period of internal party politics. Japan defeats Russia, invades China and annexes Korea. Signs pact with Hitler, invades China again – build up of military rule

1940 – military takeover

1941 – surprise attack on Pearl Harbour

1942 – Japan begins occupations of Indo-China, the Philippines, East Indies, Burma and Malaya, and advances into the Pacific Region.

1945 - Atomic Bombs - Constitutional Monarchy

1952 – Japan regains Independence but US remains in Okinawa.

1956 – Japan joins United Nations

1964 – Tokyo Olympics

1982 – Honda opens its first plant in US

1997 – economic recession

2011 – Fukushima earthquake and tsunami – nuclear plant meltdown

2019 - Emperor Akihito abdicates in favour of his son, Crown Prince Naruhito.

2020 – Pandemic and Olympic Games

2024 – Small group of Australian Art & Cultural enthusiasts travel to Japan!