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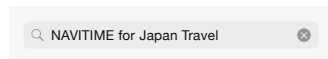
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OUR CREATIVE TOKYO

If you're looking for original experiences, Tokyo has just about everything, but they can still be difficult to find. Far from making the perfect guide, we set out to make the guide that we'd like to have ourselves.

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It's pretty much impossible to put Tokyo into a full book, let alone this small quarterly booklet that we make, so when we started we had no idea where to begin. Everyone has their own recommendations for our favorite megacity, but there's only so much space. After all, with something for everyone in Tokyo we didn't feel that we could do the city justice without being either too touristy or too obscure.

To start, we worked with our friends at *Tokyo Comic Con* to make a fun introduction to things you can actually do in the city, especially if you're looking for a little bit of everything. This issue is about media, entertainment, creativity, and experiences that you can only have in Japan, as well as being able to keep up to date with what's happening in this fast-changing metropolis. With so much choice it

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can be difficult to decide what to do on limited time, and the hardest thing for us is to be contemporary without suggesting spots that may not even exist in the next year or even in a few months time.

We hope you enjoy what we've put together, but even more we hope that you actually get a chance to go out and experience as much of it as you can!



TOKYO TECHNOPOLIS

Japan isn't just a creator and builder of new technology, but is truly integrating it into everyday life in tangible ways.

Flashing neon lights and jumbo screens around train stations are the obvious markers, but what's powerful about most of the technology that keeps Japan running is how firmly it's present in the daily lives of everyone, both seen and unseen.

While still very much a physical cash-based society, Japan has utilized electronic cash for trains for over a decade, which has completely changed the way people commute in large urban centers. Since its debut, that payment capability has extended to

vending machines, kiosks, convenience stores, and now many normal retail purchases can be made using the same card you use to go to work. The contactless payments that Apple is now deploying around the world have been possible on Japanese phones since before the first iPhone was even released.

You'll also have a chance to experience the future of global fast food, though with a sushi twist. Shops like **Genki Sushi** have foregone the chefs and wooden countertops, for digital ordering systems where you only interact with a screen while your selections are prepared by humans and machines in the back. Once ready, each plate is brought directly to you by an express conveyor belt. Population decline, it seems, is only a problem when you don't have enough robots to make your lunch.

For a glimpse at the future, there are few better places to look than the **Miraikan**, a family-friendly museum in Odaiba that has exhibits, shows, and experiences giving you a taste of our technological destiny. You can watch a live demonstration of Honda's ASIMO robot, try a personal electric vehicle hands-on, and learn about how all of this innovation actually works.

Though not in a typical tourist area, the **NTT InterCommunication Center (ICC)** in Nishi-Shinjuku is a more austere gallery that blends art, design, and technology into the space. There are always new, interesting, and thought-provoking artworks and interactive installations, ranging from realistic androids to projection mapping which merges your body with the art.

Interacting with technology here is unavoidable, so embracing all sides of it will help you see what Japan and the world are moving towards.

FEATURED LOCATIONS

GENKI SUSHI
24-8 UDAGAWACHO, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3461 1281

MIRAIKAN
2-3-6 AOMI, KOTO-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3570 9151

NTT INTERCOMMUNICATION CENTER
TOKYO OPERA CITY TOWER 4F,
3-20-2 NISHI-SHINJUKU, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5353 0800



MAKE SOME TIME

Japan's maker culture has always been strong but generally inaccessible to outsiders, so this is a great time to take in new experiences that are just now becoming available to everyone.

The classic Japanese lessons for tea ceremony, sushi rolling, and ikebana are going as strong as ever, but now that there are such a tremendous variety of niche workshops available, you may find it difficult to choose one.

You've probably noticed that lots of restaurants display fake food samples of their menu items that look incredibly realistic. While the more complex meals take plenty of time and skill, at **Ganso Shokuhin Sample-ya** in the Kappabashi "kitchen district", you can try your hand at making basic items like fried shrimp and cabbage with methods that will surprise you. If you like actual cooking, you can also take advantage of your time in Kappabashi to check out the massive range of specialty shops catering to chefs and restaurants.

If you fancy taking home an original souvenir, it's worth checking out **Juttoku**, an incense shop that also does small workshops where you can create your own combination of scents and shapes. Located in Kagurazaka, the shop is run by a brother and sister who can teach you the basics of Japanese incense mixing and molding so you can take home both knowledge and a beautiful piece of traditional craftsmanship.

The custom of *amezaiku* candy crafting dates back over a thousand years and is still alive at **Ameshin** in Imado, just next to Asakusa. At their workshop studio you can learn the techniques of heating and shaping candy to create your own sweet masterpieces. If you're just looking for gifts to bring home you can stop by their shop in

Solamachi, under Tokyo Skytree, and watch a live demonstration as well.

Finally, if you want to get a sense of how the global maker culture is thriving in Japan, the **FabCafe** in Shibuya is where you'll find laser cutters, 3D printers, and knowledgeable staff to show you the ropes. Group workshops are regularly held for everything from stamp design to laser-cut food, so best to check out their website if this is your thing.



GANSO SHOKUHIN SAMPLE-YA

3-7-6 NISHI-ASAKUSA, TAITO-KU, TOKYO

T/ 0120 17 1839

GANSO-SAMPLE.COM

01

JUTTOKU

23 BENTENCHO, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 6205 5211

JUTTOKU.JP

02

AMESHIN

1-4-3 IMADO, TAITO-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 5808 7988

AME-SHIN.COM

03

FABCAFE

1-22-7 DOGENZAKA, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 6416 9190

FABCAFE.COM/TOKYO

04



FASHION 109

Get in touch with Tokyo fashion – there’s something for every budget – but be prepared for variety you never could have imagined back home.

Getting a grip on Japanese fashion is particularly hard in a country that not only moves quickly through trends, but also imports them from all around the world. While there are always some clear trends that you’ll notice, fashion and lifestyle are also much more niche than you might expect.

For young women, there are few better places to keep your finger on the pulse than in the iconic **Shibuya 109** department store, which has been a fashion mecca for decades. It has eight floors packed with completely different brands and styles, staffed by clerks picked primarily as brand ambassadors for the legions of girls that frequent the building. The staff don’t just sell the fashion, but drive the trends and are featured in magazines and on social media as both models and influencers.

Fashion tends to trickle down via the dozens of magazines that, despite digital competition, still do quite well relative to those in most other global markets. Fashion magazines act as manuals for both fashion and lifestyle, connecting with readers on their own level, rather than being pretentious or above-it-all. After all, this is accessible fashion for real people, even when it’s wild or ostentatious.

Of course, while the fashion itself might not be your own taste, nail art is a great way to connect with the latest trends in an ephemeral way, and experience the Japanese dedication to detail at the same time. Nail salons can be found anywhere, but it’s best to make a reservation, especially for a more creative shop like **ET ARS** where they speak some English. You’ll be amazed at the detail and care, and be able to wear a bit of Tokyo style back home with you.

SHIBUYA 109

2-19-1 DOGENZAKA, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3477 5111

01

ET ARS

MEGURO-KU, TOKYO
RESERVATIONS: ETARS.NAIL@GMAIL.COM

02



TRENDING

If you want to get an idea of the cultural zeitgeist in Japan, look no further than these famous taste makers.

Bouncing around Tokyo can be exhausting, but there are a few places where you can just pop in and get a broad view of what's happening. Lucky for you, it's completely acceptable to flip through books and magazines when you're in shops, so bookstores are the perfect place to stay on top of your game and even discover new shops and locations that haven't made the foreign language guidebooks.

Aside from our suggestions, no trip is complete without visiting a massive electronics store like Yodobashi Camera in Akihabara, or to trendsetting department stores like Laforet in Harajuku, and Lumine in Shinjuku. Shopping in Japan really is entertainment, and you can browse and window shop to your heart's content. Even better, you'll get to know the country through the products the locals love the most.

BEAMS JAPAN

3-32-6 SHINJUKU, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5368 7300

A fashion and lifestyle trend driver for decades, BEAMS is a classic Harajuku street fashion brand that has stuck to its domestic roots. Their new BEAMS JAPAN flagship store in Shinjuku has eight incredible floors of retail space, including collaboration projects with other brands and designers. Be sure to check out Pop-Culture Japan on the fourth floor, a highly curated space aggregating the best of contemporary Japan all in one place.

TOKYU HANDS

12-18 UDAGAWAZCHO, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5489 5111

This self-described "Creative Life Store" has just about everything you need for your home and personal life. It's also great for interesting souvenirs, from the latest toys and gadgets to design goods, not to mention an extensive personal care floor with cosmetics and bath products. The most iconic branch is in the back side of Shibuya, but you'll find Tokyu Hands all around Japan. Just be sure to make enough time to explore!

01

BOOKS KINOKUNIYA

3-17-7 SHINJUKU, SHINJUKU-KU TOKYO
T/ 03 3354 0131

Japan's largest bookstore chain, Kinokuniya, is the perfect place to get an immediate grasp of what's happening in Japan just by browsing. If fashion is your thing you'll find the latest magazines for every style and genre, and the same goes for design and new products. There's also a selection of English language offerings including guidebooks and culture books available in their new Books on Japan shop at the main branch in Shinjuku.

02

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VILLAGE VANGUARD

B1, 33-1 UDAGAWACHO SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5728 4227

Containing books, comics, and all sorts of crazy products, Village Vanguard has long been a destination for finding offbeat and entertaining products, especially for young adults. This is where you'll find the more bizarre photo books that most stores won't carry, as well as toys and accessories that are more about making a statement and having fun than anything else. The product cycles here are so fast that there's always something new to discover.

04





SECONDHAND ADVENTURES

If you want to save some cash and find rare items during your shopping spree in Tokyo, be sure to check out some of the great secondhand stores in the city.

Many first time visitors to Tokyo are surprised by the quality of secondhand products on offer in Japan. Japanese people generally treat their things very well, and in many cases the price tag is the only clue if a product is new or not, as it's common to find used goods in pristine condition.

Another reason to hit up secondhand shops is their selection. You're almost guaranteed to have more products and variations to choose from than if you decide to go for new items. Limited runs, rare collector's items, or ambitious customized variants are also a common sight in many so-called "recycle shops".

Many shops offer warranties on used products too; this is particularly true if you're dealing with electronics, such as cameras and video games. The warranty period will most certainly not be as long as

for new items, but it should at least be long enough to let you find any hidden defects before it expires.

Several districts in Tokyo are famous for having clusters of certain types of secondhand shops - the most famous being Shimokitazawa which is well known for its abundance of vintage clothing shops. On the west side of Shinjuku Station there are several camera shops within minutes of one another, and Jimbocho is widely known as the place to go to if you're looking for old books, magazines, and maps.

There are also plenty of themed flea markets all over Tokyo. A space to keep an eye on is the area next to Yoyogi Park in front of the NHK head office, where people meet up to sell their used clothes every once in a while. In the area around the UDX building in Akihabara, there's a more geeky flea market with everything from anime t-shirts to figures and video games. At Oi Racecourse in Shinagawa you'll find one of the biggest flea markets in the entire Kanto area, where pretty much anything can be found for cheap. This flea market is open every Saturday and Sunday, but the schedules for the other flea markets are somewhat irregular, so it's good to check online if you're hoping to pay those a visit.



CLOTHES

THERE ARE COUNTLESS SHOPS SELLING USED CLOTHES ALL OVER TOKYO, WHERE EVERYTHING FROM VINTAGE T-SHIRTS TO HIGH-END FASHION CAN BE HAD FOR BARGAIN PRICES. SOME OF THE BEST AREAS ARE SHIMOKITAZAWA, SHIBUYA, KOENJI, AND HARAJUKU.



KIMONO

KIMONO TYPICALLY COST SEVERAL THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS, BUT YOU CAN GET THEM SIGNIFICANTLY CHEAPER IF YOU BUY SECOND HAND. TANSUYA IS A CHAIN WITH STORES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY DEALING IN USED KIMONO, AND SOME EVEN DO RENTALS AS WELL.



BOOKS

BOOK OFF STORES CAN BE FOUND ALL OVER JAPAN AND HAVE EVERYTHING FROM MANGA TO MAGAZINES FOR CHEAP. IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR OLDER BOOKS, HEAD OVER TO JIMBOCHO, WHERE CERTAIN STREETS ARE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY LINED WITH VINTAGE BOOKSHOPS.



VIDEO GAMES

AKIHABARA SHOULD BE YOUR FIRST STOP FOR ANYTHING GAMING RELATED. SUPER POTATO IS A GOOD PLACE IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR RETRO GAMES, AND BOOK OFF IS A BIG CHAIN WITH STORES ALL OVER TOWN STOCKING A LARGE SELECTION OF USED GAMES.



CAMERAS

SHINJUKU AND GINZA ARE HOME TO SEVERAL SECONDHAND CAMERA SHOPS, WITH OUR FAVORITES BEING MAP CAMERA IN SHINJUKU AND FUJIYA IN NAKANO. ELECTRONICS CHAIN SOFMAP ALSO HAS A GOOD SELECTION OF USED CAMERA GEAR.



DESIGNER ITEMS

JAPAN IS ONE OF THE BIGGEST MARKETS FOR LUXURY ITEMS IN THE WORLD, WITH A LARGE TURNOVER OF USED BAGS FROM MOST MAJOR BRANDS AT THE MANY RECYCLE SHOPS. DAIKOKUYA AND BRAND OFF ARE TWO CHAIN STORES THAT SPECIALIZE IN DESIGNER ITEMS IN GENERAL.



EXPERIENCE HISTORY

With humble beginnings, an insignificant hamlet called Edo came to flourish as the center of samurai culture, eventually blossoming into the futuristic metropolis that is Tokyo.

MARKY STAR

Edo-Tokyo Museum

No trip to Tokyo is complete without visiting the city's greatest history museum. Learn about the first shogun's transformation of Edo from a small fishing village into the largest city in the world in the 17th century. The art, culture, and daily customs evolved over the centuries even after the city was renamed Tokyo in 1868. The exhibits also cover the war years and subsequent recovery and transformation into the modern capital of an economic superpower. If the main museum isn't enough, there's an open air architectural annex in Koganei where real buildings are preserved.

The Railway Museum

After a few hours in Tokyo, you will probably notice how integral trains are to daily life in the city. In fact, there are nearly 160 lines operating within

the Greater Metropolitan Area, forming the most extensive network in the world. Explore the history of trains, from the city's first steam locomotive in the 1870s to the world's premiere high speed trains, the shinkansen. Particularly cool are the private imperial passenger cars and the hands-on training simulators that let you "drive" some of the busiest lines, including the Yamanote and Tokaido.

Ooedo Onsen Monogatari

If it's relaxation you're after, you can still have a bit of history, albeit admittedly kitschy history. Here you can hang out while wearing traditional yukata in an Edo Period themed village featuring food, carnival games, and an outdoor foot bath garden. You can then enter the separate bathing area to try out a variety of hot springs and sauna. It's far from authentic, but it's all in good fun.

TimeSlip Taxi

Launched in autumn 2016, this service provides augmented reality historical tours of Tokyo from within the comfort of a Tesla Model S. A one hour tour will take you around Edo Castle, once the largest palace in the world and home of the shogun, while a longer three hour tour covers locations associated with the infamous 47 Ronin story, a samurai tale of loyalty, revenge, and ultimate sacrifice.

Museum of Yebisu Beer

If you've got an hour to kill and love beer, head over to Yebisu Garden Place, former Yebisu Beer Factory and namesake of Ebisu Station. You can learn about the history of Japan's first premium beer brand and its marketing over the years. The museum itself is free, but for 500 yen you get two tokens that you can exchange for beers at the end of the tour.

Tofuro - Yumemachi Koji

Tofuro is a chain of izakaya, but the branch located on the ground floor of Shinagawa Intercity is something special. The shop is designed like the city of Edo, complete with traditional bridges and architecture, and the lighting and ambience cycle through a typical 24 hour period so you experience

an entire day during your meal. At daybreak the droning of crickets is interrupted by roosters as the city slowly comes alive, and after the hustle and bustle of daytime, diners are treated to a fireworks display on the ceiling at sundown.

EDO-TOKYO MUSEUM

1-4-1 YOKOAMI, SUMIDA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3626 9974

EDO-TOKYO OPEN-AIR ARCHITECTURAL MUSEUM

3-7-1 SAKURACHO, KOGANEI, TOKYO
T/ 042 388 3300

THE RAILWAY MUSEUM

3-47 ONARICHO, OMIYA-KU, SAITAMA-SHI, SAITAMA
T/ 048 651 0088

OOEDO ONSEN MONOGATARI

2-6-3 AOMI, KOTO-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5500 1126

TIMESLIP TAXI

ONLINE BOOKING IN ENGLISH:
TIMESLIPTAXI.JP/LP/

MUSEUM OF YEBISU BEER

4-20-1 EBISU, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5423 7255

TOFURO - YUMEMACHI KOJI

INTERCITY, 2-15-2 KONAN, MINATO-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3450 8488

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The most downloaded app for visitors to Japan also features more in-depth content from around the country. The NAVITIME for Japan Travel app tells you exactly how to get where you're going,

from big cities to small villages, so you can be sure to have the most accurate timetables. Plus, with free wi-fi spot search and plenty of helpful tips you can make the most of your time in Japan.

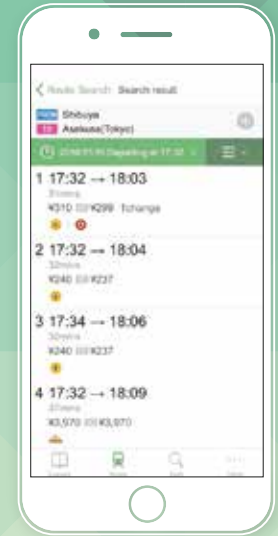


TRAVEL TIPS



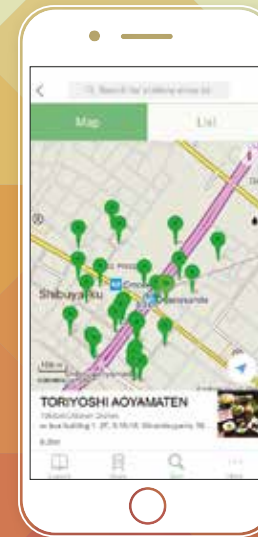
Tips on how to best navigate basic aspects of your trip, from dealing with your luggage to getting a car and hitting the road.

TRANSIT SEARCH



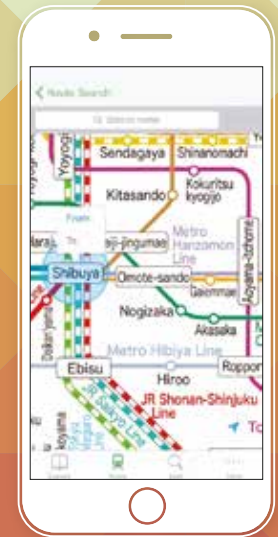
We provide the most up-to-date transportation data countrywide, including a free taxi fare calculator.

RESTAURANTS



Looking for somewhere to eat? Our restaurant search button will give you the options around you.

METRO LINES VIEW



Not sure of the name of your station? We map out every Tokyo train line and station to give you the full view of the city.



GAME ON!

Video games have been a cornerstone of Japanese pop culture since the early days of the industry, and you can still find lively arcades near all the major train stations.

Arcades, or game centers, are ubiquitous in Tokyo, **Taito Station** being one of the biggest and best chains. The location next to Kabukicho in Shinjuku is a five story gaming paradise filled with crane games, gambling-based medal games, *purikura* photo booths, and of course the latest Japanese arcade games. If you're only able to visit one game center during your time in Tokyo, this location is a safe bet.

If you're more into retro games, **Mikado** in Takadanobaba is definitely the place for you. It's as much a game center as it is a museum where you can find several truly classic arcade cabinets in fully functional condition. How about a nostalgic round of *Space Harrier* or *Outrun*? They also have a wide range of vintage shoot 'em ups, as well as every fighting game worth mentioning (and a few that are not), spanning most of the history of gaming.

For those of you who prefer console gaming to arcade games, you'll wanna check out the **8bit cafe** in Shinjuku. This gaming bar is filled with the kind of games that took over people's living rooms during the 80s and 90s, including the Super Famicom (Super NES), Gameboys, and even a Sega Dreamcast. You can play whatever you want as much as you

want from their impressive collection, after paying a one time 500 yen table charge.

Retro games are a must-do, but to experience one of the quirkiest game centers in all of Japan, you need to cross the Tokyo border and head to **Anata no Warehouse** in Kawasaki (approximately 30 minutes from central Tokyo by train). The interior is inspired by the Kowloon Walled City, a *Blade Runner*-esque Hong Kong slum settlement. But it's not all about the interior, as Anata no Warehouse is a well-equipped arcade with everything from the latest and greatest games to some classics that are downright nostalgic. *Street Fighter*, anyone?

FEATURED ARCADES

TAITO STATION

3-22-7 SHINJUKU, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5362 5108

MIKADO

4-5-10 TAKADANOBABA, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5386 0127

8BIT CAFE

SHINJUKU Q BLDG 5F, 3-8-9 SHINJUKU, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3358 0407

ANATA NO WAREHOUSE

3-7 NISSHINCHO, KAWASAKI-KU, KAWASAKI-SHI, KANAGAWA
T/ 044 246 2360

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GET IN THE GAME

If Tokyo's game centers just aren't enough for you, take it to the next level and actually live the game!

Tokyo Joypolis in Odaiba has gone through many technological changes over the years, and now you can experience the most advanced total immersion, multiplayer, free-roam VR game in the world, Zero Latency's *Zombie Survival*. After that, take advantage of three floors of games and rides on the premises.

VR is one thing, but you can actually cut out the tech and get right on the road with **MariCAR**. It's crazy that racing around Tokyo in a go-cart while cosplaying is not only legal, but incredibly fun. You can stop at Tokyo Tower for a group photo and then cruise right through Shibuya Crossing. All you need to get in this game is an international driving permit.

Finally, **Real Escape Game** offers team based, real-time escape scenarios: *Escape from the Red Room*, *Escape from the Haunted Manor*, and a citywide limited edition *Tokyo Metro Underground Mysteries*. It's a great chance to problem solve with new friends. This genre is increasingly popular abroad, and now you can try it out where it all started.



TOKYO JOYPOLIS

DECKS TOKYO BEACH 3F, 1-6-1 DAIBA, MINATO-KU, TOKYO

T / 03 5500 1801

TOKYO-JOYPOLIS.COM

MARICAR

1-23-15 KITA-SHINAGAWA, SHINAGAWA-KU, TOKYO

T / 0120 819 999

MARICAR.COM

REAL ESCAPE GAME

1-17-2 AZUMABASHI, SUMIDA-KU, TOKYO

REALESCEPEGAME.JP

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FIGURE IT OUT

Figures and dolls have played an important role in Japanese culture for a long time. For contemporary collectors and enthusiasts, there are plenty of shops in Tokyo that specialize in figures and toys.

SAID KARLSSON

Back in the Edo Period (1600-1868), dolls were primarily sold to wealthy individuals to decorate their homes, and annual events like the Hina Matsuri doll festival are still celebrated by many Japanese families. Today, many modern figures and dolls are modeled after characters from manga and anime, and are popular with fans of all ages.

Due to the deep connection with otaku culture, the fact that Akihabara has a lot of these figure shops shouldn't come as a big surprise to anyone. One of the biggest is **Liberty**, which has several shops in Akihabara alone, with their six story location at the end of Chuo-dori being the biggest. Another shop that any figure hunter shouldn't miss is **Volks Akihabara Hobby Tengoku**, located just one minute from the station. This store offers a wide range of both new and secondhand goods, with the first floor being something of an otaku themed flea market. Anyone can rent a box and sell whatever items they please (mostly figures), and some of them are rarities that can command surprisingly steep prices.

If your preference leans more towards retro toys from the Showa Era (1926-1988), a visit to **Mandarake** should be on the top of your list. Their stores in Nakano and Shibuya have impressive collections of vintage Japanese toys. Even if you're not actually planning on buying anything, just head there anyway and pretend it's a toy museum. Many of the staff cosplay at work, and you can spend all day browsing the rest of their selection of manga and rare otaku items.

Another way to get your hands on Japanese figures is through the many *gachapon* capsule toy vending machines scattered all over town. The cost of one capsule toy varies from 100 to 500 yen, but the quality of the toys inside is often higher than one would expect considering the low price.

Some like to build complex figures from scratch, but you can make your own in a simpler way at **Studio Uamou**. They arrange workshops regularly where you can design your own version of their cute little alien character. Pre-designed versions can also be purchased at their shop located at 2k540 Aki-Oka Artisan, a shopping street below the train tracks between Akihabara and Okachimachi station.

True collectors eventually run out of space for new figures, but throwing them in the trash just feels wrong. One way to retire old figures with respect is taking them to **Akihabara Shrine** where they are given their last rites by a real Shinto priest before being ceremonially "cremated" in the mountains.

LIBERTY

4-7-1 SOTO-KANDA, CHIVODA-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 5298 6167

VOLKS AKIHABARA HOBBY TENGOKU

1-15-4 SOTO-KANDA, CHIVODA-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 5295 8160

MANDARAKE

5-52-15 NAKANO, NAKANO-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 3228 0007

AKIHABARA GACHAPON KAIKAN

3-15-5 SOTO-KANDA, CHIVODA-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 5209 6020

STUDIO UAMOU

5-9 UENO, TAITO-KU, TOKYO

T/ 03 6240 1220

AKIHABARA SHRINE

5-9 UENO, TAITO-KU, TOKYO



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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

Whether you prefer your dinner served by maids or monsters, in Tokyo there's a restaurant for every fantasy world.

Tokyo is sometimes described as the world's biggest amusement park, and this particularly holds true when it comes to food. Sure, the metropolis may have the highest number of Michelin star restaurants in the world (200+!), but besides all the world-class

food, there's also an abundance of eateries that deserve your attention for another reason – their sheer craziness.

What started as a minor trend a decade ago has turned into big business, with some companies

totally focused on developing new concepts with quirky twists and experiences. We've picked a few of our favorites with the most interesting concepts and designs, but there are more opening up all the time to look out for across the country.



KAWAII MONSTER CAFÉ

4F, 4-31-10 JINGUMAE, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5413 6142

If you're into the mix of grotesque and cute, head over to Kawaii Monster Café in Harajuku. The interior is designed by Sebastian Masuda, creator of artist Kyary Pamyu Pamyu's videos, and founder of legendary Harajuku brand 6%DOKIDOKI. Expect bright colors, kitschy dance shows, and quirky dishes.



MAIDREAMIN

B1, 30-1 UDAGAWACHO, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 6427 8398

The number of maid cafes has exploded in the last decade or so. One that stands out is the Shibuya branch of Maidreamin, one of the major chains of maid cafes. This "digitized cafe and dining bar" draws inspiration from pixel graphics and sounds from old video games, and is complete with cute maids running around and performing.



THE LOCKUP

B2, 33-1 UDAGAWACHO, SHIBUYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5728 7731

Tokyo has several restaurants that do their take on the horror prison theme, and our favorite is The Lockup. The food is decent, the prices reasonable, and the crazy show that takes place every once in a while (we won't spoil it for you) is actually really entertaining. However, we would not recommend this place to anyone who is afraid of the dark.



GUNDAM CAFÉ

1-1 KANDA-HANAOKACHO, CHIYODA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3251 0078

Hungry robot lovers can kill two birds with one stone at the Gundam Café. This place is the only official Gundam-themed restaurant in the world. Both the interior and menu draw inspiration from the popular anime series dating back to 1979, and there's also a small souvenir shop next door for limited edition goods.



ALICE IN A FANTASY BOOK

B2, 1-6-2 KABUKICHO, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3207 9055

There are several Alice in Wonderland themed restaurants in Tokyo, and this one located in Shinjuku is decorated with illustrations from the book. The waitresses are dressed up as the protagonist, and the dishes are all inspired by the story as well. Advance reservations by phone or via their website are recommended.

AFTER THE LAST TRAIN

The trains may stop running early, but don't be fooled – Tokyo never sleeps. There's no shortage of fun stuff to do if you wanna keep the party going til the break of dawn.

Cosplay Karaoke

Private karaoke rooms in Japan are something you have to try at least once. Recently, large chains like Karaoke no Tetsujin and some branches of Karaoke-kan offer free cosplay options that dial the silliness factor up to 11, and otaku-centric **Adores** in Akihabara is unique in that it features both cosplay and some cool concept rooms. Most spaces accommodate four to six people, but there are also large party rooms and even special booths if you



want to go solo. To sing non-Japanese songs, be sure to choose the DAM system; it has the widest selection of English songs as well as interface options in multiple languages.

Manga Cafes

The Japanese twist on the internet cafe is less about using the internet and more about creating the ultimate 24-hour private space for hanging out by yourself or as a couple. You get a private room with unlimited soft drinks and access to massive libraries of every kind of media, even console games. One of the higher-end chains, **Bagus**, offers multiple floors with darts, karaoke, billiards, ping pong, and



even golf simulators. Massage chairs and private showers are also available if you want to freshen up before heading out, so technically you can even stay overnight after missing the last train.



Izakaya and Pubs

In Tokyo, Japanese-style gastropubs, called izakaya, are often open until the trains start running again in the early morning. They're a great place to kick it with your friends and drink the night away while sampling different dishes. Izakaya tend to be group-oriented, so if you want to strike up conversation with locals and other travelers, a more western-style



pub or craft beer bar is a better choice for mingling with people until the wee hours. You can find these types of spots near major train stations, and they tend to have menus with photos of their most popular dishes so you can easily order anything you want even if the staff don't speak your language.

ADDRES

1-13-1 SOTO-KANDA, CHIYODA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5298 1331

GRAN CYBER CAFE BAGUS

DAINI-TOAKAIKAN 4F, 1-21-1 KABUKICHO, SHINJUKU-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 5155 5443

HOSHIGUMI FRIED KITCHEN

2-13-10 SANGENJAVA, SETAGAYA-KU, TOKYO
T/ 03 3487 9840

01

02

03



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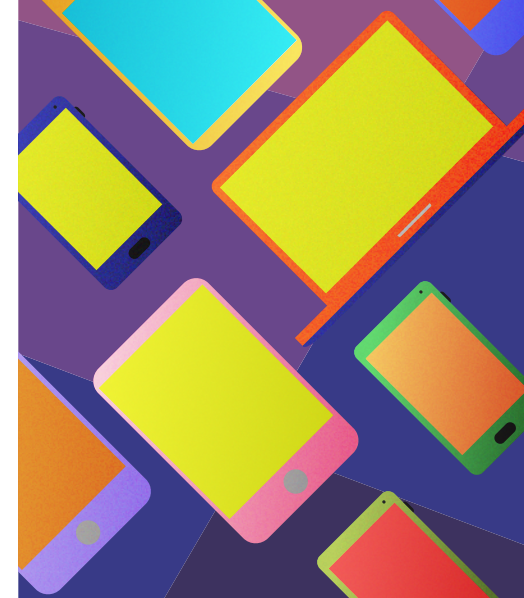
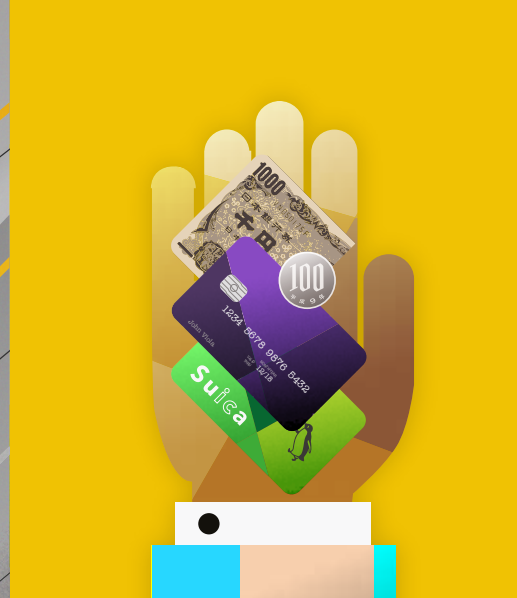
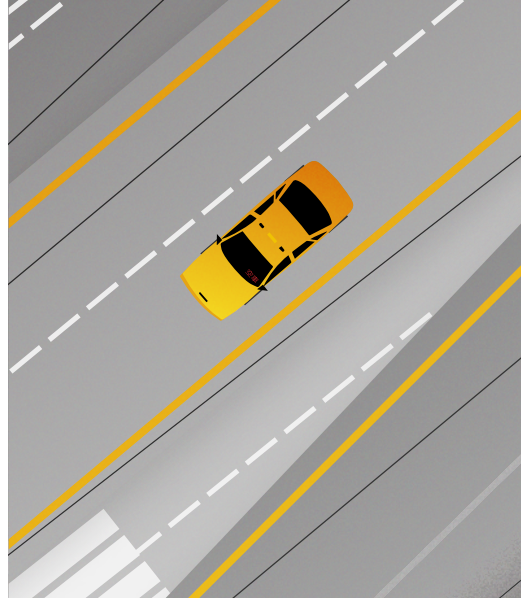
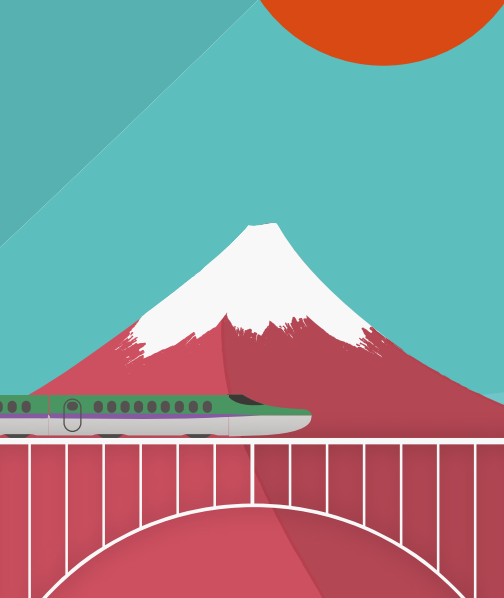
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PUBLIC TRANSPORT

With the most efficient, yet easily most complex public transport in the world, it takes a lifetime to master Japan's train system. Still, there are a few things to make your time here on the rails much easier.

- 01 Japan's railways are a mix of private and public companies all working together, but that also means all-day passes for one rail system won't work on another one, so be sure of your plans in advance.
- 02 Rather than buy passes or individual tickets per trip, get a Pasma, Suica, or the regional equivalent e-money card. Your unused cash is refundable, and makes moving around frictionless.
- 03 Getting on and off trains can be quite simple, as most people politely line up and wait their turn. Be aware of areas for elderly and pregnant passengers, and if you aren't sure just follow the crowd.
- 04 Knowing which trains to take and when is the hardest part of getting around. Of course we suggest our smartphone app, with the most up-to-date schedules making for a stress-free experience.

TAKING TAXIS

Depending on how far you're going, taking a taxi may be one of the more expensive things you do during your trip, but there are a few ways to make the most of them.

- 01 Have the address for your destination ready, and in Japanese if possible. Cities here are dense and drivers most likely won't know your location unless it's a common point of interest.
- 02 Not every taxi takes credit cards, though it's more common these days. Look for a sticker on the window with the card you want to use, and if you aren't sure just ask the driver in advance.
- 03 No need to ever touch the door! Your driver will always open and close it himself, mostly to prevent you from opening it onto an unfortunate cyclist or nearby car.
- 04 Taxis can be quite expensive if you're taking a long trip. Our app provides a simple taxi fare search to give you the best estimate for your journey.

Read more on www.navitimejapan.com/traveling

MONEY TIPS

It's hard to get by on just one form of money during your time in Japan. In fact, you will most likely be dealing with three of them rather often.

- 01 While credit cards are becoming more readily accepted, Japan is still very much a cash-based country, so you'll need to have a decent amount on you for walking around. The easiest place to get cash is at 7-Eleven convenience stores, providing international ATM services with zero fees. We also have an ATM search feature in our smartphone app.
- 02 Even when using credit cards, there's no guarantee that smaller shops will accept your particular brand. Best to make sure it's accepted when you first arrive, or you'll soon be making a quick run to the ATM.
- 03 E-money cards like Suica and Pasma are our favorite form of money. They also double as payment systems for riding public transportation. Not only that, but you can make purchases directly from vending machines and convenience stores without getting a lot of loose change in return.

GETTING CONNECTED

Even though Japan is a highly connected country, getting online as a visitor can be frustrating. Even just for basic mapping and information searches, having a reliable connection can be a challenge.

- 01 While it's nice to imagine being offline during a holiday, it's hard to get by without features like mapping and transit search. We recommend renting a portable Pocket Wifi during your trip, especially if you want to share the connection with someone else. They're fast, lightweight, and allow you to connect any kind of device that supports wifi.
- 02 If you're set on using a SIM card for your phone or tablet, you can now find data SIMs in electronics stores, convenience stores, and even vending machines. While they don't provide you a phone number, you'll be online in a snap.
- 03 It can be good to find wifi spots when you want to save on mobile data costs. Some companies like Docomo provide countrywide wifi on public networks, but more locations are offering it as well. It's best not to bank on having wifi or you'll get frustrated when you can't find it when you need it.

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ABOUT

NAVITIME for Japan Travel is the most downloaded smartphone app for travellers visiting Japan, available in English, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, and Korean languages.

Featuring Japan's most popular train route search functionality, the app also includes multimodal route search, navigation, real-time train timetables, and offline search for free wifi spots.

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