

Northern Japan: Tokyo, Kamakura, Kyoto, Sapporo

Presentation by
Paul Pacter

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Japan's Four Main Islands



Japan has 6,852 islands. 260 are inhabited. 4 main ones are in red.

Comparing Japan and USA

Some Facts	JAPAN	UNITED STATES
Capital	Tokyo	Washington, DC
Area	145,000 sq mi	Whole USA: 3,718,000 sq mi Florida: 66,000 sq mi
Population	123,000,000	340,000,000 Florida: 22,000,000
States	47 Prefectures	50 States
Language	Japanese	English
President / Prime Min.	Sanae Takaichi (Since 2025)	Donald Trump (Since 2025)

Japan Brief History (1 of 2)

600 BC: Japan united (loosely) as single country. Regional warfare.

1500 AD: Europeans arrived. International trade began.

1603-1867: Edo period. Isolation from rest of world. Tokugawa Shoguns rather than Emperor.

1867: Civil War. Shogunate ended. Emperor restored (Meiji Restoration).

Japan Brief History (2 of 2)

1867-1890s: Modernization. Industry.

1890s-1945: Wars with neighbors – China, Russia, Korea, Vietnam, even USA (Pearl Harbor). **Defeated in WW2.**

1950s-1980s: Strong economic growth.

1900s-2000s: Economic slowdown.

Since 2010: Slow recovery. Ageing population.

Head of Government: Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi Since October 2025



- Leader of the majority party or majority coalition in the House of Representatives usually becomes Prime Minister.
- Cabinet: Prime Minister appoints.

Japan also has an Emperor. Emperor Naruhito.



- Hereditary.
- Succeeded his father who abdicated on April 30, 2019.
- Powers are ceremonial.
- No power in running the government.
- Defined in Japan's Constitution as "the symbol of the state and the unity of the people".

Bicameral Parliament (Diet):

House of Councillors:

- 242 seats.
- 6-year terms, half renewed every 3 years.

House of Representatives:

- 465 seats.
- 4-year terms.



Japanese Money

The Yen

Symbol ¥

¥158 = US\$1

So this 10,000 yen note is worth about US\$63.



Religion in Japan

“Religion does not play a big role in the everyday life of most Japanese people today.” www.japan-guide.com

Wikipedia: “Less than 40% of the population of Japan identifies with an organized religion”. Of that 40%:

- 35% Buddhism (imported from China).
- 3% to 4% Shinto (developed in Japan).
- 1% to 2% Christianity.

Japan Median Age:

Historical:	Projection:
1955 22.8	2030 51.5
1960 24.8	2040 53.0
1970 28.2	2050 53.6
1980 31.6	
1990 36.9	
2000 40.7	
2010 44.2	
2020 48.0	
2023 49.1	

Implications (Examples):

- Economy general: Labor and skills shortages.
- Declining productivity.
- Lower tax collections (fewer workers).
- Increased health-care and pension costs (34% of Japan's 2023 national budget).
- Increased dependency on carers.
- Migration.

- #2 in world after Monaco
- USA = 38.1

population.un.org/wpp/

Japan's Ageing Population

- 30% of population > age 65 (2023).
- 2nd highest in world (after Monaco).
- USA 18%. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator>

Due to ageing population, Japan actually sells more adult diapers than kids' diapers.



Economy

GDP 2026 (est): \$4.5 Trillion
(#5 after US \$31.8T, China \$20.7T, Germany \$5.3T, India \$4.5T).

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2025/10/14/world-economic-outlook-october-2025>

Public Debt as % of GDP (2024):
237% (USA 120%, China 88%, UK 101%, India 81%, Germany 64%).

https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/GG_DEBT_GDP@GDD/CAN/FRA/DEU/ITA/JPN/GBR/USA

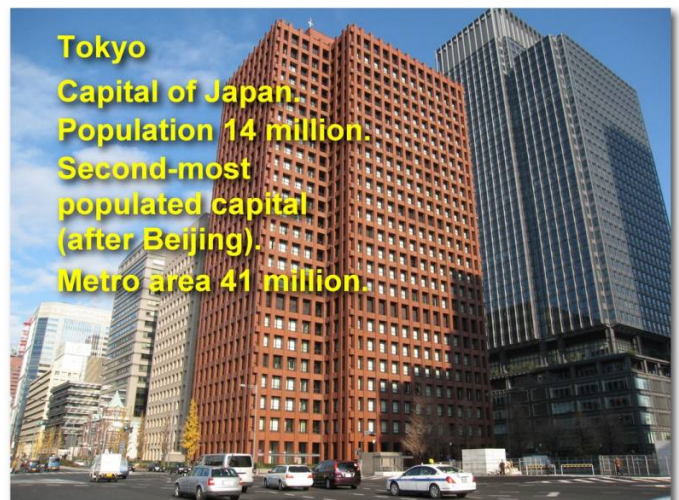
Energy: Nearly 100% dependent on foreign energy (oil, gas, etc).



TOKYO

Tokyo

Capital of Japan.
Population 14 million.
Second-most populated capital (after Beijing).
Metro area 41 million.





Tokyo



Imperial Palace -- Tokyo

Public can tour grounds only



Asakusa Kannon Temple Entrance



Students at Asakusa Kannon Temple



**Asakusa Kannon Temple
Built 628 AD**



**Incense burning at Asakusa Kannon Temple
Buddhist (not Shinto)
Kannon = Chinese Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy)**



**Kane-ji Temple
Temple of Shokugawa Shoguns*
1625**

***Japan's military government
1603-1868**



**Yasukuni Shrine - 1869
Controversial because it honors
Japan's brutal occupation of its
Asian neighbors 1931-1945.**



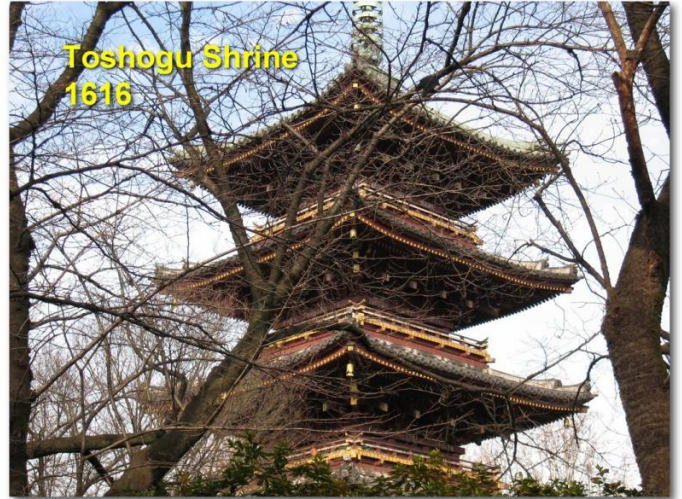
Ginza
Tokyo's main shopping street



Kabuki-za Theatre -- Tokyo



In Kabuki shows, all parts are played by men



Toshogu Shrine
1616

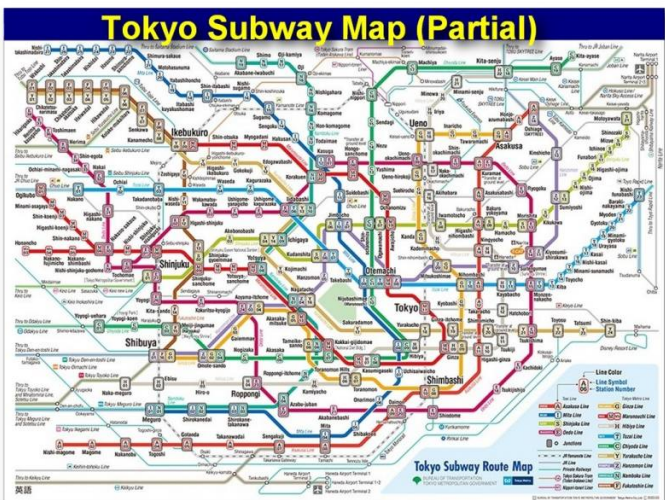


Shopping street in Ueno district



Smoking prohibited on Tokyo streets

Korean → 路上喫煙禁止
Chinese → 禁止在街上吸烟
Japanese → 路上喫煙禁止
English → Smoking on the street is prohibited



Tokyo Subway Map (Partial)



Tokyo Metro (subway train)



Tokyo Metro



Tokyo Metro



Japan National Museum
Largest Art Museum in Japan.
Over 120,000 artworks.



Japan National Museum



Japan National Museum



Japan National Museum



Japan National Museum

Tsukiji Seafood Market

- Until 2018 wholesale, retail and restaurants one place in central Tokyo.
- In 2018 wholesale (old inner market) moved 1.5 miles outside Tokyo.
 - Visitors watch from above behind glass.
 - Closed Sun and most Weds.
- Retail and restaurants (old outer market) still function in same old Tsukiji place.
 - 400 shops.
 - 5am-2pm ex Sun.



Oct 11, 2018: Wholesale (inner) part of market moved to Toyosu 1.4 miles to away from central Tokyo. Old outer (retail, restaurants) part of Tsukiji market remains as before. At Toyosu, visitors must watch auctions and activity from above behind glass.





Tsukiji Market
Roe (fish eggs)



Tsukiji Market
Crabs



Tsukiji Market
Bulleye

Bulleye are NOCTURNAL. Live in DEEP WATER.
Large eye lets in enough light for them to see.



Tsukiji Market
Fresh wasabi (a radish)



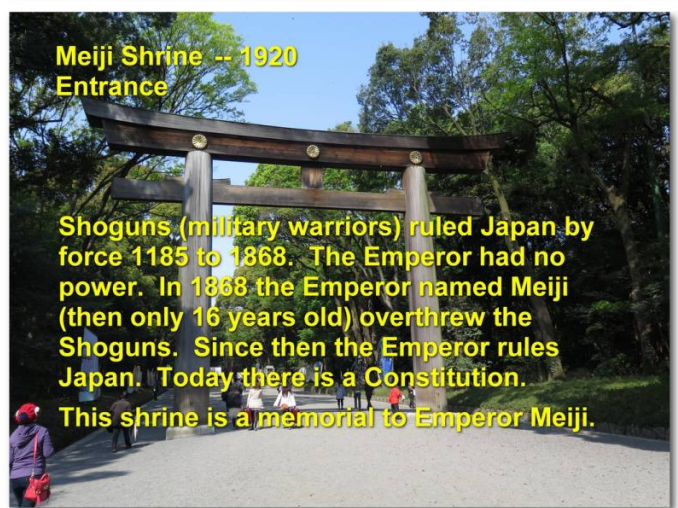
Tsukiji Market
Octopus



Typical Tsukiji Market Restaurant
Menu, Photos, Prices Outside
A Bit Chaotic



Some are a mix of
restaurant
and retail.



Meiji Shrine -- 1920
Entrance

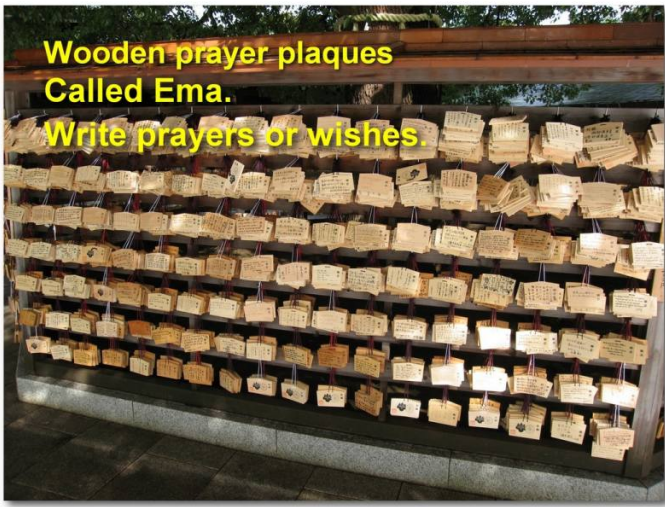
Shoguns (military warriors) ruled Japan by force 1185 to 1868. The Emperor had no power. In 1868 the Emperor named Meiji (then only 16 years old) overthrew the Shoguns. Since then the Emperor rules Japan. Today there is a Constitution. This shrine is a memorial to Emperor Meiji.



Sake drums
Entrance to Meiji Shrine
Sake = Fermented Rice Wine
Table Wine and Offering to Gods



Meiji Shrine
In honor of Emperor Meiji
1852 to 1912
122nd Emperor of Japan
Shinto



Wooden prayer plaques
Called Ema.
Write prayers or wishes.



Safely travel throughout the journey. Getting into a good university for all. Good health to everyone. World peace to all. Huiyi, Rachel, Patricia

Wish Tiffa a healthy and long life together with me forever. Wish all our families and friends to be healthy and happy. Partha & Tiffa



Meiji Shrine
Wedding
Shinto



Shinto Priests

Groom

Bride



Groom and Bride



Akihabara electronics district



Akihabara electronics district



Harajuku - Role playing



Harajuku - Role playing



Harajuku - Role playing



Harajuku - Role playing



KAMAKURA



Japan Rail Train
Tokyo to Kamakura
One hour.
950 Yen.

Kamakura was capital
of Japan 1183-1355.



Kamakura
Tokeji Temple -- 1185



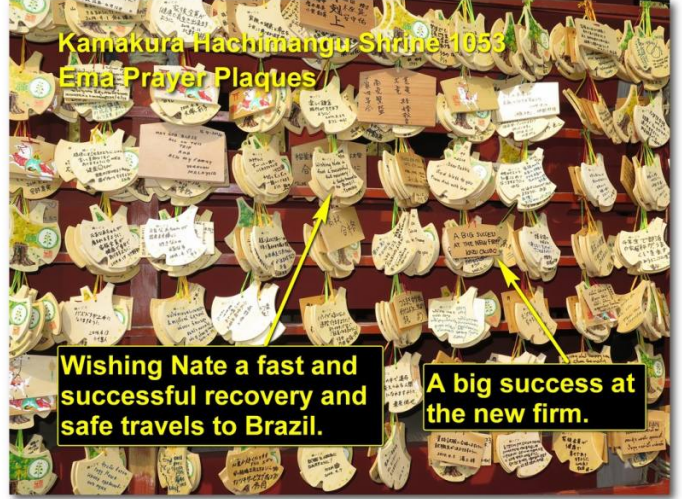
Kamakura
Jochiji Temple 1282



Kamakura
Kenchoji Temple
1253



Kamakura
Hachimangu Shrine 1053



Kamakura Hachimangu Shrine 1053
Ema Prayer Plaques

Wishing Nate a fast and successful recovery and safe travels to Brazil.

A big success at the new firm.



Hachimangu Shrine 1053
Small pagodas carried on special festivals



Daibutsu
Giant Buddha
Kamakura 1252
Bronze



Students on field trip to Kamakura



A kite is a kind of large bird of prey
Similar to a buzzard

BEWARE OF KITES

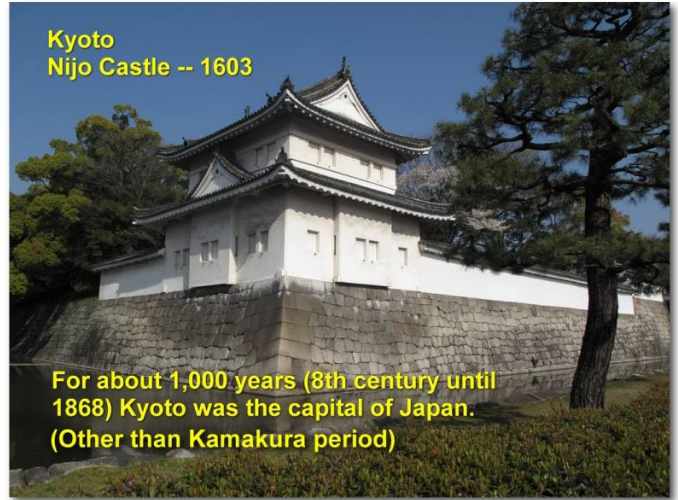
They'll aim for your food, fly from behind and come to take it.

Their sharp claws will injure you. Please be careful!



KYOTO

Kyoto
Nijo Castle -- 1603



For about 1,000 years (8th century until 1868) Kyoto was the capital of Japan.
(Other than Kamakura period)

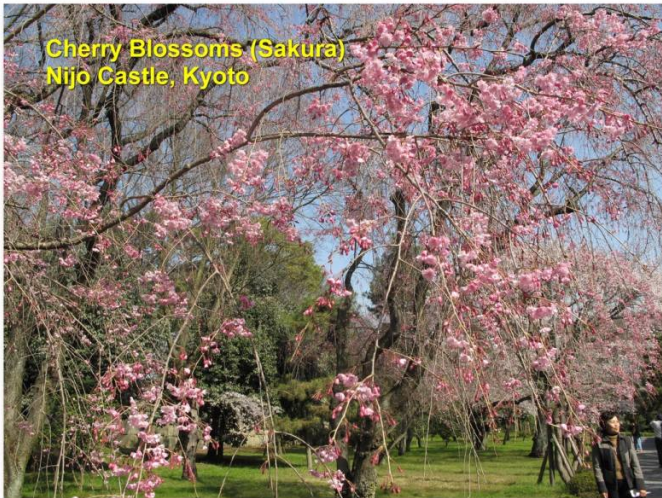
Nijo Castle
Kyoto - 1603



Nijo Castle Gardens
Kyoto



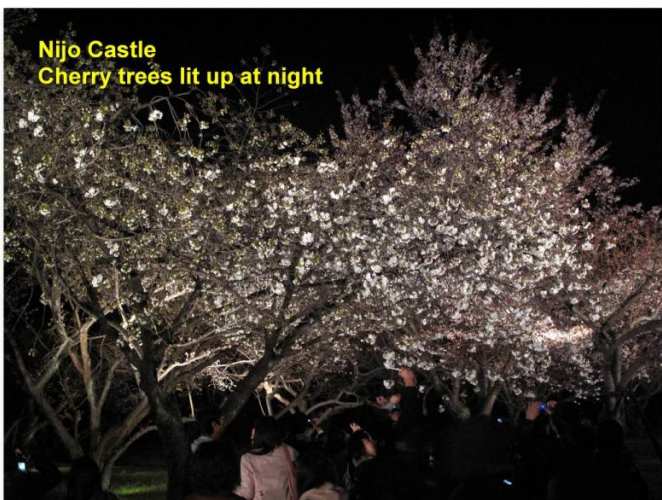
Cherry Blossoms (Sakura)
Nijo Castle, Kyoto



Cherry Blossoms,
Nijo Castle, Kyoto



Nijo Castle
Cherry trees lit up at night



Kyoto Bus

"Next: Horikawa Marutamachi"

Press for stop



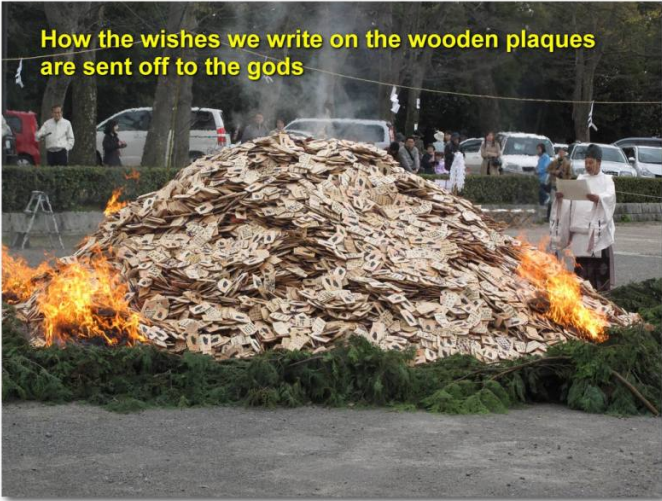
**Kitano Tenmangu Shrine
Kyoto, 947 AD
Shinto**



**How the wishes we write on the wooden plaques
are sent off to the gods**



**How the wishes we write on the wooden plaques
are sent off to the gods**



**Kitano Tenmangu Shrine
Kyoto, 947 AD
Shinto**



**Lanterns at
Kitano Tenmangu Shrine
Kyoto**



**Kinkakuji Temple
Also Called Golden Pavilion Temple
Kyoto**



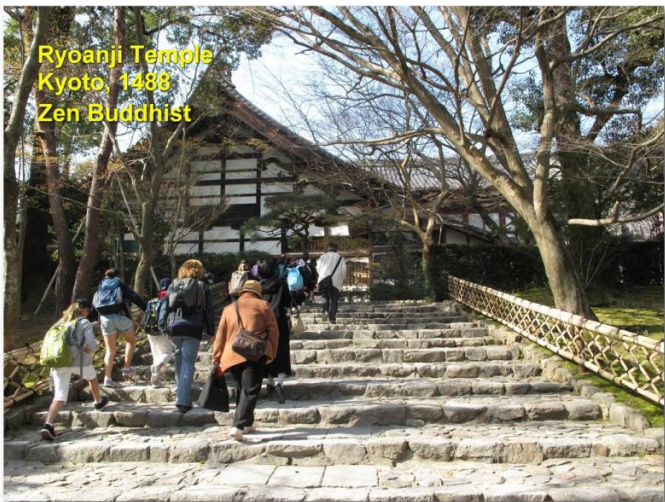
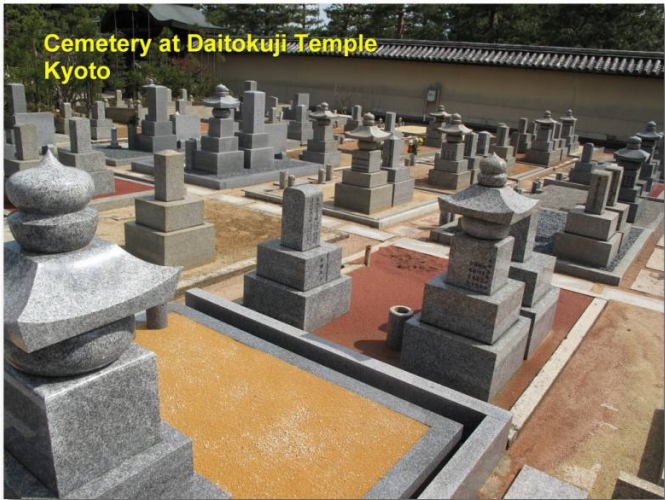
**Originally 15th century.
But in 1950, totally burned down by a
mentally ill novice monk.
So this temple was rebuilt 1955.**

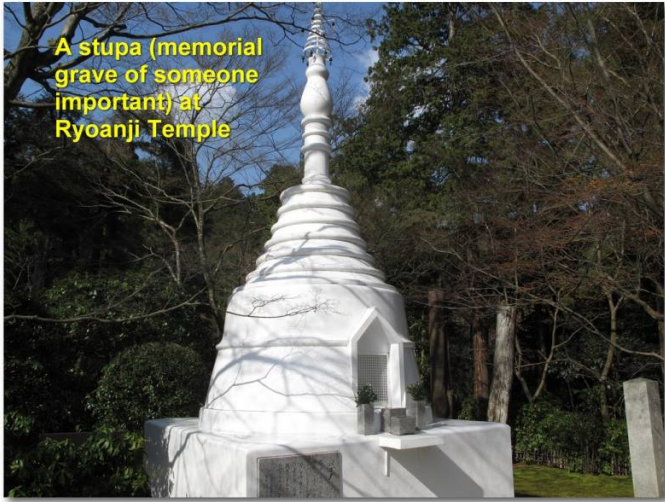
**Everyone wants
a photo in front
of the Golden
Pavilion.**



Kyoto Supermarket







A stupa (memorial grave of someone important) at Ryoanji Temple



Cherry blossoms at Ryoanji Temple, Kyoto



Cherry blossoms at Ryoanji Temple Kyoto



Ninnaji Temple Kyoto



Ninnaji Temple Kyoto



Ninnaji Temple Kyoto



Ninnaji Temple Kyoto



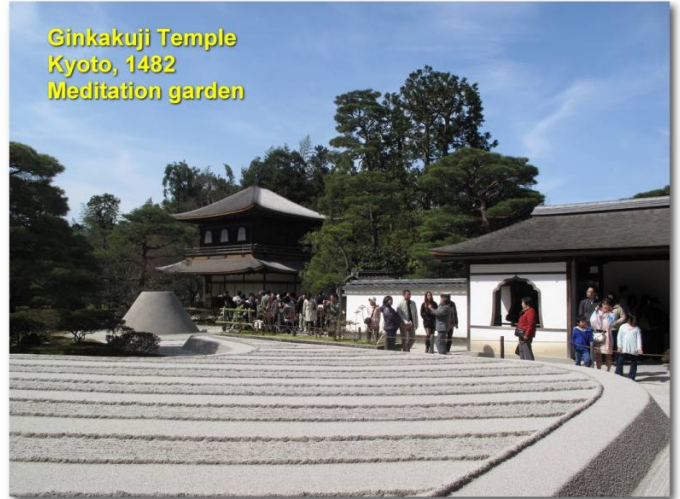
Ninnaji Temple



Ninnaji Temple
5-storied pagoda
1644



Philosopher's Path
Kyoto
30-minute walk along a canal
Built 1890



Ginkakuji Temple
Kyoto, 1482
Meditation garden



Ginkakuji Temple
Kyoto



Philosopher's Path
Kyoto



Chionin Temple
Kyoto, 1234

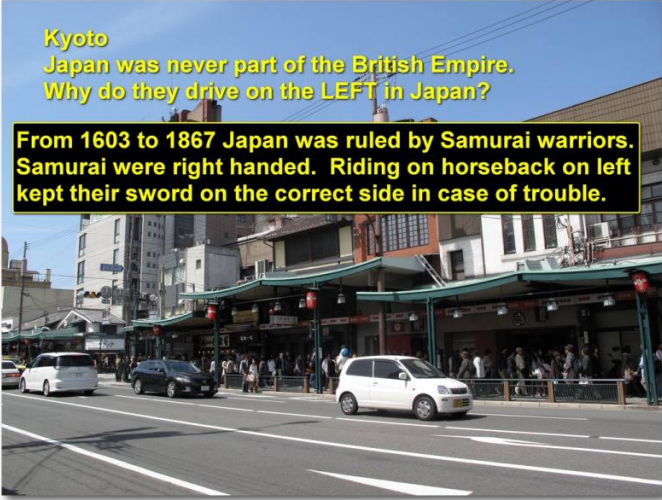


Chionin Temple -- Kyoto

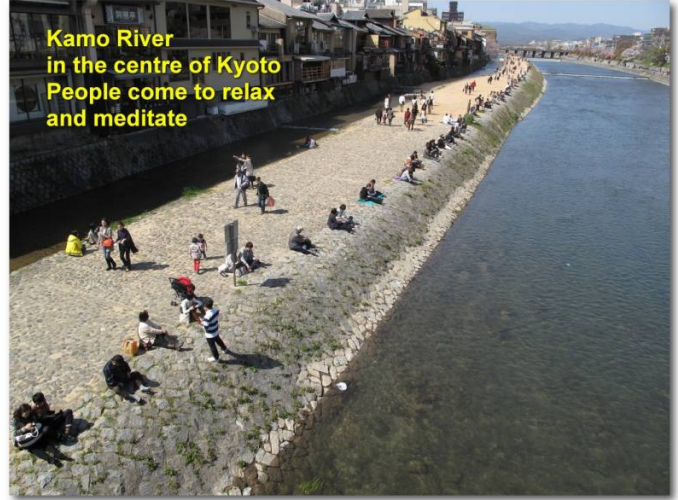
**Why do Asian religions burn incense?
Purify the surroundings.
Attract gods and buddhas to hear your prayers.**

Kyoto
Japan was never part of the British Empire.
Why do they drive on the LEFT in Japan?

From 1603 to 1867 Japan was ruled by Samurai warriors. Samurai were right handed. Riding on horseback on left kept their sword on the correct side in case of trouble.



Kamo River
in the centre of Kyoto
People come to relax
and meditate



People playing GO in a Kyoto park.



19x19 grid. Put stones at intersections.
Object is to surround your opponent.

Look where they are sitting!



Most Japanese cities have streets
now closed to traffic and covered,
many blocks long.



Toji Temple
Kyoto, 796 AD



Toji Temple
Golden Hall, 16th c
Kyoto



Shimogamo Shrine
Kyoto, 6th c



SAPPORO

Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Held every year since 1950
Around 2 million visitors!



Sapporo is on the northernmost
main island of Japan: Hokkaido.
1.5 hour flight from Tokyo.

Sapporo Snow Festival 2016



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
3 locations in Sapporo
This one is Odori Park



Snow Sculpture of
St Paul's Church
Ruins, Macau



The Real
St Paul's Church
Ruins, Macau
16th Century
Destroyed 1835



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park
Anime Characters



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park



Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Skiing in Odori Park





**Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park at Night**



**Sapporo Snow Festival 2016
Odori Park at Night**

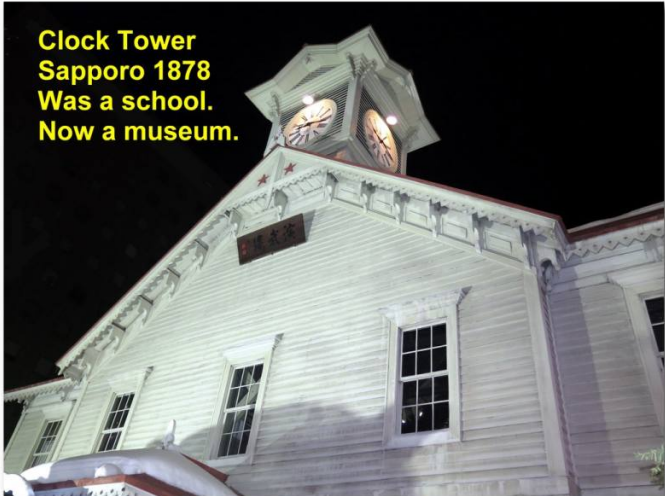


**Mountains Very Close to
Downtown Sapporo**



**TV Tower
Downtown
Sapporo.
Observation
Deck.**

**Sapporo
Population:
2,000,000.
Japan's 5th
largest.
Annual
Snowfall:
16 feet!
Annual Snow
Festival:
2,000,000
tourists.**



**Clock Tower
Sapporo 1878
Was a school.
Now a museum.**



**Nijo Fish Market
Sapporo**



**Nijo Fish Market
Sapporo -- Crabs
¥7,500 = US\$70
for 1 crab!**



**Nijo Fish Market
Sapporo**



"Sumo" oranges at Nijo Market



Nijo Fish Market Sapporo



Roe (fish eggs)
Nijo Fish Market
Sapporo



Tongu Shrine
1871



Downtown
Sapporo



Street tram in Sapporo



Ice Sculpture - Sapporo 2016



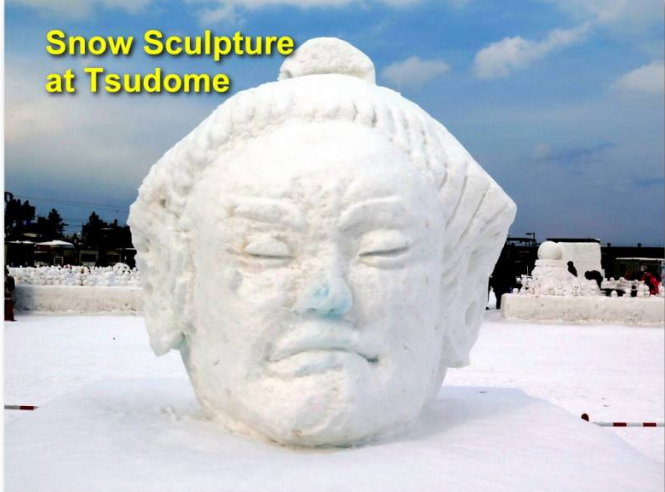
Ice Sculpture - Sapporo 2016



Last pickup times (24 hour clock):
Weekdays: 18:35
Saturdays: 16:55
Sundays and Holidays: 15:00



Bus or taxi



Snowboarding at Tsudome



Tubing on the Snow at Tsudome



Towed on Rubber Rafts at Tsudome



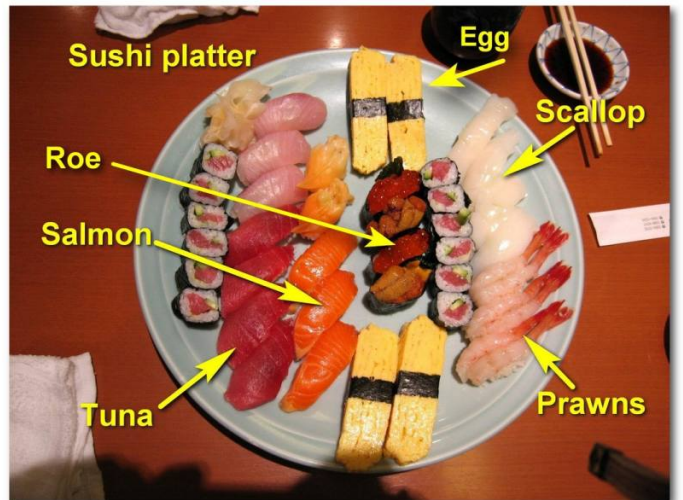
Deicing Our Plane at Sapporo



Spray chemicals that stop snow from sticking to wings

A novelty for Hong Kong people!

JAPANESE FOOD SPECIALTIES



Revolving carousel-sushi

Price depends on color of the plate

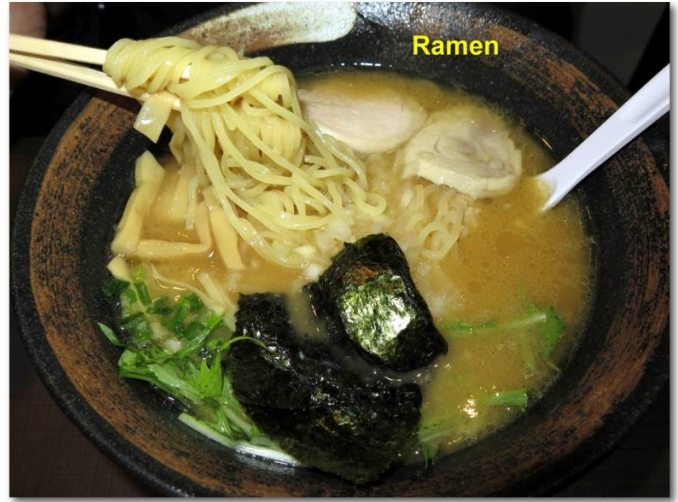


Yakitori -- skewers of meat or veggies





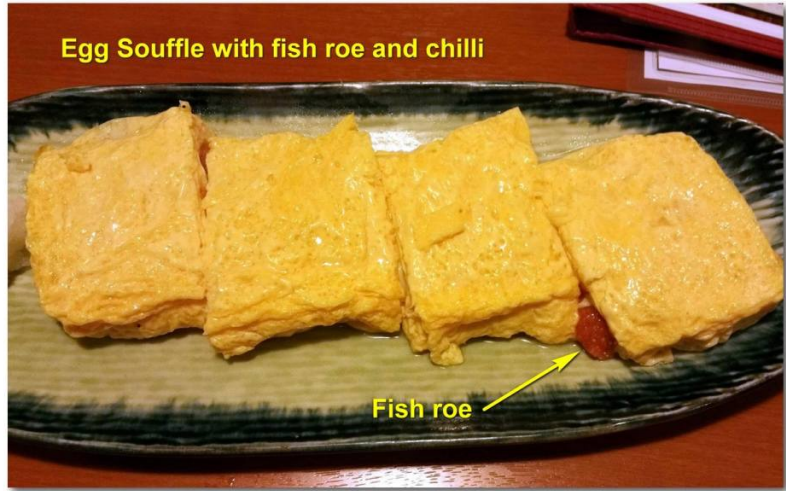
Broiled squid



Ramen



Okinomiyaki -- pancake made of flour, eggs, cabbage, pork, other things



Egg Souffle with fish roe and chilli

Fish roe



Most restaurants have menus in English or with pictures



Plastic menu display in restaurant window



Plastic menu display in restaurant window



Red bean buns



Cooking tuna with a blowtorch at your table!

