The Monocle guide to Tokyo

Tokyo is an ever-changing city that never ceases to surprise. The capital is filled with a dazzling mix of old and new, tradition and innovation in everything from food to architecture and art to fashion.

1. **Yanaka**
   - This Tokyo downtown area still retains its charming, old-fashioned cityscape.

2. **Harajuku**
   - The pop-culture epicentre sits next to a shrine and a national gymnasium.

3. **Aoyama**
   - Tokyo’s fashion capital also has museums, greenery, food and more.

4. **Kanda**
   - This northeast neighbourhood is attracting design and fashion businesses.

5. **Kuramae/Ryogoku**
   - Take a deep dive into the old Tokyo.

6. **Ginza**
   - Japan’s premium district is home to big businesses and cultural institutions.

7. **Nihonbashi**
   - Young talent in hospitality and retail is moving in.
Beyond Tokyo’s delights lies a network of clean streets and warm hospitality. Amid the changing landscape of 2020, the city is drawing on its strengths with an eye to welcoming visitors to the city. Initiatives include a guide to good manners while on the move, dining out or staying overnight. From a smart safety app to handy tips, Tokyo is supporting responsible travel.

For more information about Tokyo’s prevention measures and updates on coronavirus, visit: www.gotokyo.org/en/plan/coronavirus-information

1. SUITCASE, PASSPORT, COCOA – LET’S GO!
   Designed with safe travel in mind, the COCOA app sends notifications about possible contact with coronavirus. Download it before take-off.

2. PATIENCE PROVIDES PEACE OF MIND
   Don’t forget to wait for the next connection at a safe distance. The extra space provides a chance to relax, putting the mind at ease.

3. WISE ADDITION TO YOUR MORNING ROUTINE
   A temperature check might only take a moment but it helps ensure you start the day off on the right foot.

4. MASKS ARE A SMART APPROACH TO SAFETY
   Face coverings play an important role, putting you at ease in the company of others, while reassuring those around you.

5. TRAVEL OFF-PEAK AND ENJOY THE RIDE
   No one looks forward to an overcrowded bus or train. Plan ahead to avoid the bustle and be rewarded with a peaceful journey.

6. WASHING YOUR HANDS MAKES FOR A HEALTHY TRAVEL HABIT
   Responsible travel means taking your best manners with you. Throughout the journey, make clean hands part of your daily routine.

7. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THIS BADGE OF HONOUR
   Tokyo’s Covid-19 safety stickers are a sign that businesses of all types have taken measures to protect staff and customers.

8. RESERVING YOUR SPOT MAKES ENTRY A BREEZE
   Booking systems are being rolled out across the board for events and exhibitions so attendance numbers are well managed and trip planning is all the more convenient.

9. BREATH OF FRESH AIR
   Ventilation need not be a pain. Take the chance to appreciate a different side of your destination, whether it be fresh city views, sea breezes or the rhythms of nature.

10. BROWSE WITH YOUR EYES, NOT YOUR HANDS
    Japanese shops are known for their pleasing displays. Take in these aesthetic arrangements as you ponder your next purchase.
Yanaka moves at a different pace from much of Tokyo. Maybe it’s the presence of so many temples; Tennoji, the oldest in the area, was founded in 1274 and sits alongside the famous cemetery where Japan’s last shogun is buried. As the city has changed around it, Yanaka has retained its old-fashioned atmosphere. Vacant wooden buildings have been brought back to life with new businesses finding fresh purpose as cafés, noodle shops and galleries.
2. HARAJUKU

Harajuku is a neighbourhood of contrasts, home to the Meiji Shrine, which is surrounded by one of Tokyo’s largest green spaces, and a dense network of small streets packed with shops and cafés. Harajuku is a magnet for fashion followers, while Omotesando pulls in tourists and shoppers who come to enjoy the dazzling array of designer outlets.

1. MEIJI SHRINE
Pay your respects
This Shinto shrine is dedicated to the deified souls of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken. Arriving is a journey in itself: the route to the shrine passes through towering gates and a 100-year-old forest.
1-1 Yoyogi Kamizono-cho, Shibuya-ku
03-3379-5511
meijijingu.or.jp

2. SNOW PEAK LAND STATION HARAJUKU
Made in Japan
Snow Peak’s concept shop and café is deeply rooted in the land, highlighting lesser-known places, outdoor wares and products and flavours from around Japan.
With Harajuku, 1-14 Jingumae, Shibuya-ku
03-5843-1794
snowpeak.co.jp/landstation/harajuku

3. YOYOGI NATIONAL GYMNASIUM
Design vision
The Kenzo Tange-designed gymnasium has been a prominent feature of the Yoyogi Park area since 1964. With its signature suspension roof, its influence on architecture can be seen around the world.
2-1-1 Jinnan, Shibuya-ku
03-3468-1171
jpnsport.go.jp/yoyogi

4. AFURI RAMEN
Yuzu does it
Just a short stroll from Harajuku Station, Afuri is renowned for its yuzu shio ramen. The tiny yellow citrus plays a starring role here, adding a refreshing touch to the signature dish.
3-63-1 Sendagaya, Shibuya-ku
03-6438-1910
afuri.com

5. THINK OF THINGS
Pen pals
Stationery, notebooks and office supplies take centre-stage here. Stationery-maker Kokuyo curates some much-loved classics and also develops new releases for the shop.
Browse with a coffee from the in-store café.
3-62-1 Sendagaya, Shibuya-ku
03-6447-1113
think-of-things.com

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think-of-things.com

3. AYOYAMA

This residential neighbourhood also hosts upmarket fashion shops. Chic boutiques sit alongside one of the city’s most exquisite museums and the Tessen-kai Noh theatre, where actors perform centuries-old dance-dramas. Aoyama Cemetery is a green pocket that in spring puts on one of Tokyo’s finest cherry blossom displays.
1. **Y & SONS**
Tailor made

Alongside Kanda Myōjin is Y & Sons, a bespoke tailor that offers a fresh take on the kimono. A seasonal line-up of kimonos is joined by outerwear, shirts and accessories. For inspiration look no further than the staff's daily ensembles.

2-17-2 Sotokanda, Chiyoda-ku
03-5294-7521
yandsions.com

2. **YABU SOBA**
Soba so good

While the restaurant was rebuilt in 2014, its culinary heritage lives on through classic seiro soba, while seasonal highlights include soba with grilled matsutake mushrooms in autumn and oysters in winter.

2-10 Kanda Awajicho, Chiyoda-ku
03-3251-0287
yabusoeba.net

3. **MINÄ PERHONEN ELÄVÄ I AND II**
Well crafted

These two homeware shops capture the world of designer Akira Minagawa. Start at elävä I, before moving on to elävä II, where vintage furniture and pieces from the label’s archive await.

Elävä I, 1-3-9 Higashi Kanda, Chiyoda-ku
03-6825-3037
mina-perhonen.jp/elava

4. **KANDA MYOUJIN**
Count your blessings

Prosperity, good luck and marriage are at the heart of prayers at Kanda Myōjin. Constructed in the style of gongen-zukuri, the main Shinto shrine also serves as the focal point of the biannual Kanda festival.

2-16-2 Sotokanda, Chiyoda-ku
03-3254-0753
kandamyoujin.or.jp

4. **MAACH ECUTE KANDA MANSEIBASHI**
Under the arches

The former Manseibashi Station has found new life as a retail destination. Shops and cafés fill the restored building, where weaving under the viaduct arches is half the fun.

1-25-4 Kanda Sudacho, Chiyoda-ku
03-3257-8910
ecute.jp/maach

4. **KURAMAE/RYOGOKU**

With any luck you'll spot a sumo wrestler out and about in Ryogoku, the riverside neighbourhood that is home to Kokugikan, Tokyo's distinctive sumo stadium. Across the water is Kuramae, another old neighbourhood close to busy Asakusa and Tokyo Skytree, the city’s tallest structure. Kuramae has long been famous for its craft workshops and still hums with industry.

5. **MIZUSAI**
Shapely number

Ceramics are the main attraction at this craft shop and gallery. The minimal interior is home to a mix of sculptures and other works from artists across Japan. Regular solo exhibitions are a highlight.

3F, 1-6-2 Misuji, Taito-ku
03-5846-9118
mizusai.jp

5. **YUWAERU**
Nature’s bounty

Known for its wholesome nekase-genmai rice, Yuwaeru draws on Japan's ancient food culture. The restaurant bustles through lunch and dinner, while the adjacent grocery store stocks natural ingredients and kitchen essentials.

2-14-14 Kuramae, Taito-ku
03-5829-9929
yuwaeru.co.jp

5. **RYOGOKU KOKUGIKAN**
Sumo mania

Sumo wrestling is a battle of strength, wits and finesse. This 11,000-seat stadium is the sport’s spiritual home and hosts three major tournaments per year. The on-site museum provides a further taste of its rich history.

1-3-28 Yokoami, Sumida-ku
03-3623-5111
sumo.or.jp/kokugikan

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**MONOCLE**

**TOKYO METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT**
First-timers to Ginza will be struck by its crowded pavements, impressive department stores and line-up of glossy luxury labels. But head to the back streets and this area offers a riveting mix of exceptional bars, galleries and small shops that have attracted visitors for decades. This was where Tokyo’s westernisation began in the 19th century and a Ginza stroll – once known as Ginbura – is as popular as ever.

1. TORAYA GINZA
Hats off
Toraya has been selling hats for more than a century. The Ginza branch channels this wealth of knowledge, with personalised service to help you navigate a space filled to the brim with European classics and seasonal styles.
2-4-5 Ginza, Chuo-ku 03-3535-5201 ginza-toraya.com

2. GINZA SIX
Retail therapy
Ginza Six brings together luxury maisons, retailers and cultural offerings, under one roof. The retail complex also has some surprises, from a traditional Noh theatre to art installations and a tea-inspired cocktail bar.
6-10-1 Ginza, Chuo-ku 03-6891-3390 ginza6.tokyo

3. KABUKI-ZA THEATRE
Dramatic tension
This Ginza landmark has been hosting kabuki for more than 150 years. The theatre combines tradition and modernity, retaining the classic tiled roof and other signature elements. Performances are held on most days.
4-2-15 Ginza, Chuo-ku 03-3545-6800 kabukiweb.net

4. ITOYA
Paper trail
Itoya’s flagship shop is an essential stop for lovers of stationery. Spread across two buildings, themed floors are staffed by teams of specialists, while bespoke services allow you to add personal touches to selected items.
2-7-15 Ginza, Chuo-ku 03-3561-8311 ito-ya.co.jp

5. CAFÉ DE L’AMBRE
Counter culture
A coffee at Café de L’ambre is a moment worth savouring. Founded in 1948, this backstreet kissaten serves a range of in-house specialty roasts. Soak up the atmosphere as your order is hand-dipped at the counter.
8-18-15 Ginza, Chuo-ku 03-3571-1551 cafedeflambre.com

6. KAIBOKU NIHONBASHI
Local delicacy
Founded in Fukuoka, Kaiboku specialises in the art of dashi inari. Slices of tofu skin are fried, simmered in broth and wrapped around sweetened rice. Enjoy the flavourful treats at the counter or order some to go.
Coredo Muromachi Terrace, 1F, 3-2-1 Nihonbashi
Muromachi, Chuo-ku 03-3541-8311

7. NIHONBASHI
Nihonbashi has deep roots in business: the Tokyo Stock Exchange and Japan’s first banks were founded there. The bridge that gives the area its name was first built more than 400 years ago but Nihonbashi has had a recent makeover. The old flavour persists, though, and department stores Mitsukoshi and Takashimaya are still landmarks.

8. HUMAN NATURE
Bottle shop
Human Nature was born from Shinichi Takahashi’s passion for wine culture. With a selection of 900 natural wines, the shop is perfect for a handpicked recommendation or a casual chat with a glass in hand.
9-7 Nihonbashi Kabutocho, Chuo-ku 03-6434-0353 humannature.jp

9. K5
Multiple functions
The K5 complex is breathing new life into a former bank, sparking fresh interest in the Kabutocho area. The 1920s building is now home to a 20-room boutique hotel, Cavean restaurant and a beer hall called B.
3-5 Nihonbashi Kabutocho, Chuo-ku 03-5962-3885 k5tokyo.com

10. HAIIBARA
In fine form
Haibara has been supplying high-quality paper since 1806. From gampi papers to celebratory mizuhiki envelopes and stationery adorned with woodblock prints, its products are deeply intertwined with Japanese customs.
1-7-1 Nihonbashi, Chuo-ku 03-3572-3801 haibara.co.jp
THE LAST WORD IN CITY LIVING
Tokyo performs a miracle every day. The clean metropolis runs flawlessly in the most organised manner possible, defying all expectations of what it feels like to live in and move around a densely populated city.

For more information visit: tokyotokyo.jp