

# TOKYO

FALL & WINTER GUIDE 2011 – 2012



## The best places to eat, sleep and play in Tokyo this fall and winter

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# INTRODUCTION



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## PACKING TIPS

1. **Winter in Tokyo** "is cold, indeed. I recommend you to **bring layers of thin clothes** instead of bringing one bulky jacket as it is very warm (or even hot) once you get a train or enter a building. I also suggest to buy **disposable hand warmers** at drug stores/convenience stores."—TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo
2. **Comfortable walking shoes.** "You will probably be doing a bit of walking, far more than you're used to doing at home. Pack a few band-aids or moleskin just in case you get a blister on your feet, too."—TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo
3. **A subway how-to guide.** "The numerous subway lines can be daunting to negotiate for a first-time visitor."—TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo
4. "There are many guide books for Tokyo. Two of the best are **Time Out Tokyo** and **Lonely Planet Tokyo**. Both of these have details beyond the standard travel guides and delve more deeply into lesser known venues."—TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo

## Inside TOKYO

Tokyo is a bustling, crowded, absolutely intoxicating city that's unlike any you'll experience anywhere else. The first thing you'll notice is the people. Some 12 million live within the city's 800 square miles—so forget about elbow room! But you won't really mind the close proximity, for the citizens of Tokyo are known for their politeness (you'll never be lost for long!), and the city is one of the safest in the world.

The next thing you'll notice is what's missing: parks, temples and shrines. Yes, there are a few, but not as many as you may be expecting. This ever-growing city uses every inch of available space, with the new sometimes squeezing out the old. But forget what's not there. What is there is spectacular. With no distinct downtown, wherever you are in Tokyo is the place to be. And make sure to go inside as many buildings as possible. They may look industrial, but the interiors are often as delightful as a jewelry box. Which can be a good thing, because the hot, humid summers or cold, gray winters may have you wanting to duck indoors. Spring and autumn bring more temperate climates for sightseeing.

# Top VIEWS



## TOKYO'S BEST VIEWS



You might be able to see **Mount Fuji** in the distance (on a clear day), but go right to the source to get the best view! "Mount Fuji (Fujisan) is Japan's highest mountain at 3,776 meters. It is a nearly perfectly shaped, dormant volcano that most recently erupted in 1707. You can visit Mount Fuji on a day trip from Tokyo (via Bullet Train)." —TripAdvisor Member

**Mount Fuji, Visitor Center: 663-1 Funatsu Kawaguchi-ko Town, Yamanashi, 5 5572 0259**

"On a clear day, go to the **Tokyo Metropolitan Government Towers** observation floor for views." —TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo

**Tokyo Metropolitan Government Towers, 2-8-1 Nishishinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, 3 5321 1111**

"...a nearly perfectly shaped volcano"

## Where to PLAY

### TOP 10 Attractions

1. Chinzanso Garden, 2-10-8 Sekiguchi, Bunkyo, 3 3943 1101
2. Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden, 11 Naito-cho, Shinjuku-ku, 3 3350 0151
3. Chidorigafuchi, 2, Kudanminami, Chiyoda, 3 3292 5530
4. Sensoji Temple, 2-3-1 Asakusa, Taito, 3 3842 0181
5. National Science Museum, Ueno Park, 3 3822 0111
6. Tsukiji Market, 5-2-1 Tsukiji, Chuo, 3 3542 1111
7. Meiji Jingu, 1-1 Yoyogikamizonocho, Shibuya, 3 3379 5511
8. Ginza, Ginza Chuo
9. Asakusa, Taito-ku, 3 3842 5566
10. Edo-Tokyo Museum, 1-4-1 Yokoami, Sumida, 3 3626 9974

## FAMILIES



Instead of saying "Don't touch that!" over and over again, let the kids bang away on drums at the **Drum Museum**. "Drums of all shapes and sizes are on display here. It's a great way to learn about acoustics, aesthetics and world cultures." —TripAdvisor Member

**Drum Museum, 2-1-1 Nishi-Asakusa, Taito-ku, 3 3844 2141**

"**Shinjuku** is like Times Square but more tightly compact, neater and more orderly. There's a lot to check out, from all the neat little alleyways packed with random shops to the arcades filled with pachinko machines to the karaoke joints. Yes, you must do karaoke when in Japan." —TripAdvisor Member, Arlington, Mass.

**Shinjuku, Shinjuku Station**

**Odaiba** is a "futuristic artificial city built on top of the Tokyo Bay landfill. There are multiple shopping malls, museums and parks, so you can enjoy a whole day there." —TripAdvisor Member, Australia

**Odaiba, Daiba Station, Minato-ku**

"Yes, you must do karaoke when in Japan."

## ROMANCE



Boasting extensive manicured gardens, seawater ponds and a Japanese teahouse, "**Hama Rikyu** provides a counter to the steel-and-glass sterility of the rest of the area." —TripAdvisor Member, London, England

**Hama Rikyu, 1-1 Hamarikyu Teien, Chuo-ku, 3 3541 0200**

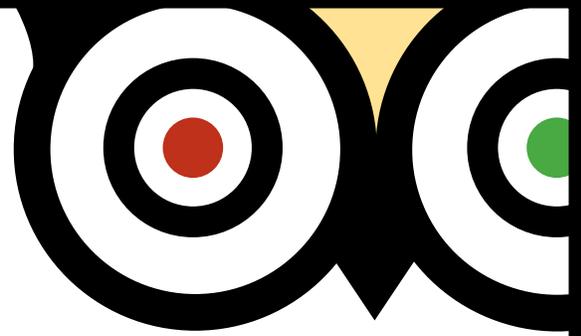
Take a romantic break to the top of **Tokyo Tower**, the tallest self-supporting steel tower in the world. "The tower offers you a breath-taking bird's-eye view of one of the greatest cities in the world. During a good weather day, you may be able to see Mount Fuji from the observatory deck." —TripAdvisor Member, Singapore

**Tokyo Tower, 4-2-8 Shiba-Koen, Minato-ku, 3 3433 5111**

"I have spent many very beautiful moments with my boyfriend at **Roppongi Hills**." —TripAdvisor Member, Slovakia

**Roppongi Hills, Roppongi, Minato-ku, 3 6406 6000**

# Where to PLAY



## BUDGET

“During cherry blossom time in **Ueno Park**, people spread plastic sheets on the ground beneath the flowering trees and have picnics—men in business suits sitting cross-legged on the ground while thousands of people walk past enjoying the brief blossom season! Amazing sights.”—TripAdvisor Member, Auckland, New Zealand

**Ueno Park, Next to Ueno Station, Taito-ku**

“Do not visit Tokyo without taking a trip to **Tsukiji Fish Market**. Arrive at 5:30 A.M. (preferably after a night out drinking!), and wander around and then have a delicious sushi breakfast and beer at one of the surrounding restaurants and retire to bed. Definitely not to be missed.”—TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo

**Tsukiji Fish Market, 5-2-1 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, 3 3542 1111**

Pay homage to Heian poet Michizane Sugawara at the **Yushima Tenjin Jinja Shrine**, “a beautiful hidden shrine in the backstreets of Yushima province. Definitely more laid-back than the larger temples in the area.”—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

**Yushima Tenjin Jinja Shrine, 3-30-1 Yushima, Bunkyo-ku, 3 3836 0753**

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## ADVENTURE

“**Yomiuri Land** features thrill rides, an aquarium, sea lion shows, six swimming pools, wave pools and other exciting water entertainment. Rides range from the exhilarating Bungee Jump and Looping Starship to the Giant Sky River, a huge water slide starting more than 24 meters high.”—TripAdvisor Member

**Yomiuri Land, 3294 Yanokuchi, Inagi-shi, 3294, 4 4966 1133**

Are you up for a hanging rollercoaster? Do you have the stomach for an indoor jet-coaster that spins and turns in darkness? Think you can handle something called the “Tower Hacker?” If you answered “yes” to all of the above, head over to **Tokyo Dome City**, “an amusement park filled with fun entertainment for kids of all ages.”—TripAdvisor Member

**Tokyo Dome City, 1-3-61 Koraku, Bunkyo-ku, 3 5800 9999**

“**Sensoji Temple** is a temple in a public market. The temple is interesting, though I found the market to be especially fun because of all the snacks and little trinkets along the way. If you're in a foreign place, you're adventurous, so definitely try some! Your tummy will thank you.”—TripAdvisor Member, Arlington, Mass.

**Sensoji Temple, 2-3-1 Asakusa, Taito-ku, 3 3842 0181**

“Your tummy will thank you.”



## EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

With over 100,000 works continuously rotating in its limited display space, the **Tokyo National Museum** “focuses on Japanese historical pieces but has some other Asian treasures as well. The grounds are beautiful.”—TripAdvisor Member, United States

**Tokyo National Museum, 13-9 Ueno Park, Taito-ku, 3 3822 1111**

“**Edo Tokyo Museum** is unique, with wonderful displays and reproductions. If you can join a tour, do so. There are volunteer tour guides who conduct tours in several different languages. I would really recommend this, because not every display has an English description.”—TripAdvisor Member, Houston, Texas

**Edo Tokyo Museum, 1-4-1 Yokoami, Sumida-ku, 3 3626 9974**

“**Yasukuni-jinja** is a controversial shrine where the souls of Japanese soldiers who died in war time are enshrined. For a historian, it's a unique chance to see Japanese war history from the perspective of a Japanese nationalist.”—TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo

**Yasukuni Shrine, 3-1-1 Kudankita, Chiyoda-ku, 3 3261 8326**



## RELAXATION

Stroll through the **East Gardens of the Imperial Palace**. “The moats, towers and gardens are popular for sightseeing and jogging. The walk around the perimeter is beautiful.”—TripAdvisor Member, San Francisco, Calif.

**East Gardens, Accessible from the Otemon, Hirakawamon or Kita-Hanabashimon gates, Chiyoda-ku, 3 3213 1111**

“Lovers of theatre should not miss going to a Kabuki-za show at **Shimbashi Enbujo**. The word kabuki is written with three Chinese characters: *ka* meaning music, *bu* meaning dance and *ki* meaning skill, and that says it all.”—TripAdvisor Member

**Shimbashi Enbujo Theatre, Ginza 6-18-2, Chuo-ku, 3 3541 2600**

“**Meiji Shrine** was the highlight of Tokyo for me. The wooden temple itself is lovely—very impressive and a remarkably peaceful place. The surrounding woods are very pleasant, too, and the empress's stuning garden is a must-see.”—TripAdvisor Member, Durham, U.K.

**Meiji Shrine, 1-1 Kasumigaokamachi, Shinjuku-ku, 3 3379 5511**



# What's the **TOUR** How to Get Around

"The **subway system (Toei)** can seem like an intimidating option, but you can pretty much count on a friendly, polite Tokyoite helping you find your way if you're lost. Subway maps are prominently displayed at all stations, and stations have their name in English as well as Kanji (Japanese script). It's a good plan to time your days to miss the morning rush hour—it is quite an experience."—TripAdvisor Member

**Toei Transportation, <http://www.kotsu.metro.tokyo.jp>**

"Thirteen **subway** lines (at last count), a **river bus** network, **streetcars**, private and national **railway lines** are just some of the ways Tokyo's millions of residents reach their destinations."—TripAdvisor Member

"For a great way to experience the city and a fast-paced tour, make your way around the loop of the above ground **Yamanote Line**. It's a miniature scale Great Train Journey that runs in a circle around central Tokyo, taking around three hours, from shiny futuristic city within a city, Shinjuku (where 'Lost in Translation' was filmed), through Harajuku, Odaiba and a slew of areas reclaimed from the Pacific and then through the old 'low city,' Shitamachi to Asakusa."—TripAdvisor Member

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## **WHERE** to eat

### FAMILIES

"My family and I really enjoyed our pork chops" at **Tonki**. "The best part is seeing the whole family at work in unison in the open kitchen."—TripAdvisor Member, San Francisco, Calif.

**Tonki, Shimo-Meguro 1-1-2, Meguro-ku, 3 3491 9928**

"What's wonderful about eating at **Mos Burger** is that it's fast-food but in a very unique way. For me, it quite sums up the Japanese psyche just eating there—no other fast-food quite like it."—TripAdvisor Member, Tokyo

**Mos Burger, Several Tokyo locations**

"My son ate a donut at **Mr. Donut** every day and was quite happy about it."—TripAdvisor Member, California

**Mr. Donut, Several Tokyo locations**

"...the must-stop for all visitors to Tokyo!"

### ROMANCE

"We had a spectacular meal" at **Mon cher ton ton**. "The setting on the 52nd floor of the Sumitomo Building will impress. We enjoyed a dessert overlooking the lights of Tokyo, which extend as far as the eye can see."—TripAdvisor Member, Melbourne, Australia

**Mon cher ton ton, Shinjuku Sumitomo Bldg., 2-6 Nishishinjuku, 3 3344 6761**

"**The Peak Lounge** has floor-to-ceiling windows with fantastic views over Tokyo. We were there as the sun set and the lights came on around the city. It was absolutely beautiful."—TripAdvisor Member

**The Peak Lounge, Park Hyatt Tokyo, Shinjuku, 3 5322 1234**

"**New York Bar** is the must-stop place for all visitors to Tokyo. It offers panoramic views of the endless neon lights of Tokyo. It was a fantastic way to end our holiday. Worth every cent."—TripAdvisor Member, Brisbane, Australia

**New York Bar, Park Hyatt Tokyo, Shinjuku, 3 5322 1234**

"...a real taste of Japan"

### BUDGET

"Visit **Nakamise Arcade** for easy snacks, such as fresh baked cookies and waffles, available from stalls outside the arcade."—TripAdvisor Member

**Nakamise Arcade, Asakusa, Taito-ku**

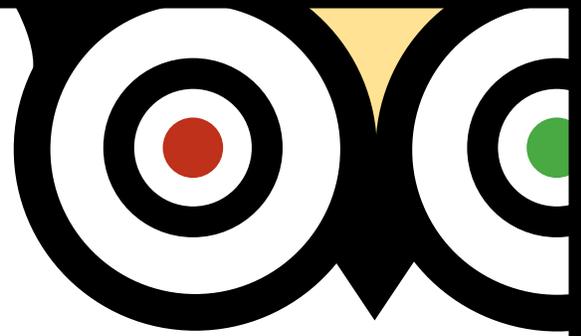
"To get a real taste of Japan, ask your concierge for the nearest **Izakaya** and to write down a couple of dishes for you to try. The menu will be most likely be in Japanese. They usually have everything from yakitori and tofu to salads and sashimi, and the prices are moderate!"—TripAdvisor Member

**Izakaya, Several Tokyo locations**

"The food at **Maisen** is excellent, especially the crispy pork cutlet and it's great value for money. Don't miss it if you're in Tokyo on a limited budget."—TripAdvisor Member, Luxembourg

**Maisen, 4-8-5 Jingumae, 3 3470 0071**

# WHERE to eat



## HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

Located within a family center and children's bookstore, the "vegetarian-friendly" buffet at **Crayon House** "has a good selection of vegetarian dishes," including "Japanese and French dishes, often using organic ingredients."—TripAdvisor Member, United States

**Crayon House, 3-8-15 Kita-Aoyama, Minato-ku, 3 3406 6477**

"If you are looking for a healthy and rejuvenating start to the day, look no further than the seasonal menu of tofu kaiseki at **Toufuya Ukai**."—TripAdvisor Member, Singapore

**Toufuya Ukai, Shibakoen, Minato, 3 3436 1028**

**Sushi Dai** is "incredible! The sushi was amazing. Super fresh and perfectly prepared. I don't want to eat sushi anywhere else after having eaten here."—TripAdvisor Member, Savannah, Ga.

**Sushi Dai, 4-5-1 Tsukiji, Tsujiki Fish Market, 3 3542 1111**

"...step back in time"

## HIDDEN GEMS

"Enjoy hip, modern sushi and nouvelle cuisine arrangements, like lone asparagus spears on nori and quivering raw egg yolk on rice, at **Tsukiji Fish Market**. Great for the adventurous."—TripAdvisor Member

**Tsukiji Fish Market, 5-2-1 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, 3 3542 1111**

"You step back in time as you enter **Kanda Yabu Soba**. Rustic walls, raised tatami floors and the ancient chanting of orders from the Okami herself. Soba is the star, but there are many other wonderful tasty tidbits."—TripAdvisor Member

**Kanda Yabu Soba, 2-10 Kanda Awaji-cho, Chiyoda, 3 3251 0287**

"**Ryugin** can be a bit hard to find but, it's well worth the effort. The piece de resistance was the -196 degree candy apple. When you strike it with your spoon, it shatters, and the inside is filled with frozen apple that just melts in your mouth. Super intense flavor."—TripAdvisor Member, Orange County, Calif.

**Ryugin, 7-17-24, Roppongi Building, Minato, 3 3423 8006**

## SPECIAL EVENTS



After supping soup and sipping rice wine, Tokyoites gather at temples to achieve zen en masse on **O-Shogatsu (New Year)**. (January 1)

**O-Shogatsu (New Year), Various temples, including Meiji Jingu, Kawasaki Daishi Shrine and Senso-Ji Temple, 3 5211 2171 (Tourist Office), <http://www.tcvb.or.jp>**

Stalls of antiques, bric-a-brac, all sorts of attire and all standards of art jostle for your browsing attention at the **Antique Jamboree**. The best bargains beckon on Early Buyer Day. (January 7 – 8)

**Antique Jamboree, Tokyo Big Sight, <http://home.att.ne.jp/sun/jambokun/antique/e.html>**

The **January Bashi** gives new meaning to the term "heavyweight" as Sumo's big guns take to the circle of Kokugikan Sumo Hall and demonstrate some of the 70 throws and tricks that make up to venerable sport. (January 8 – 22)

**The January Bashi, Kokugikan Sumo Hall**

The festival of **Setsubun** waves a cheery goodbye to winter as soybean-hurling crowds stampede through Senso-Ji Temple exclaiming, "Fortune in! Devils out!" The centuries-old volley of beans is said to take out the demons' eyes. A procession also treks through the temple, scattering thousands of paper strips with text from the Hannyashingyo Sutra. The whole celebration makes for a fascinating sight. (February 3)

**Setsubun, Senso-ji Temple**

Good luck Daruma dolls bring good fortune to people and businesses on **Daruma Kuyo**, when last year's dolls are returned and burned in a Buddhist ceremony. People then buy new dolls to bring them luck for the ensuing year. (February 3)

**Daruma Kuyo, Nishi-Arai Daishi Temple**

One of Tokyo's most dramatic events, **Takao-san Fire-walking Festival (Hiwatari-sai)** takes place at Yakuoin Temple on Mount Takao. Barefoot believers and mountain priests walk over live coals – and everyone is invited to join in later in the day. (March 10)

**Takao-san Fire-walking Festival (Hiwatari-sai), Takaosan Yakuoin Temple, Takao**

# Where to STAY



## FAMILIES

“The **Imperial Hotel Tokyo** is an extremely large hotel that’s always swarming with activity. We stayed for four days, and there was a huge wedding or other large function each night. We enjoyed the activity, but those seeking a tranquil setting should stay elsewhere. The service is terrific.”—TripAdvisor Member, Greenwich, Conn.

**Imperial Hotel Tokyo, 1-1-1, Uchisaiwai-cho 1-chome, Chiyoda-ku, 3 3504 1111**

**Courtyard Tokyo Ginza** “is a good base for exploring Tokyo. Location is brilliant. We walked Ginza’s streets every night—it felt very safe. A stone’s throw away is a good choice of cafés and famous department stores, beautiful gardens and the metro.”—TripAdvisor Member, Carlisle, U.K.

**Courtyard Tokyo Ginza, 6-14-10 Ginza Chou-Ku, 3 3546 0111**

“We were surprised the **Peninsula** was so kid-friendly.” Our room had a “step stool, a crib with Mickey Mouse sheets, rubber duckies, kids’ bathrobes and homemade welcome snacks.”—TripAdvisor Member, Honolulu, Hawaii

**The Peninsula Tokyo, 1-8-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, 3 6720 2888**

Have questions about Tokyo? Get insider advice from local experts in our forums. The majority of questions are answered within 24 hours.



## ROMANCE

“The legendary service of **Four Seasons** didn’t disappoint me. Everything was perfect from the first moment we arrived. In our room, we found a bottle of champagne with strawberries and a note from the staff to congratulate us on our wedding.”—TripAdvisor Member, Turin, Italy

**Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Marunouchi, Pacific Century Place, 1-11-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, 3 5222 7222**

“Don’t miss the **Mandarin Oriental Tokyo**. Staying here is a real experience. The rooms were flawless: perfectly comfortable bed, very nice and high quality furniture and a fantastic view from everywhere—including the bathroom!”—TripAdvisor Member, Weil am Rhein, Germany

**Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 2-1-1 Nihonbashi Muromachi, Chuo-ku, 3 3270 8800**

“The king-size bed at the **Conrad Tokyo** is so comfortable I slept in after breakfast (which they delivered to the room at no extra charge) and could not drag myself out of bed until 5:00P.M.! And the toilet is tres chic. I loved that large circular mirror with very flattering light at its perimeter. It makes you look like you are ready for your close up.”—TripAdvisor Member, Singapore

**Conrad Tokyo, 1-9-1 Higashi-Shinbashi, Minato-ku, 3 6388 8000**

## BUDGET

**Sunroute Plaza Shinjuku Hotel** was “excellent value” and has a “convenient location. It had everything we needed: a wonderfully comfortable bed, flatscreen tv, tea-making facilities, desk, bedside lights, a great bathroom. Even a shoehorn!”—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

**Sunroute Plaza Shinjuku Hotel, 2-3-1 Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku, 3 3375 3211**

**Hotel Asia Center** offers the “best low-budget deal in Tokyo. The room rates are at an unbeatable low price—a real bargain for a 3-star hotel in Tokyo! The money saved was spent on good Japanese food instead.”—TripAdvisor Member, Munich, Germany

**Hotel Asia Center, 8-10-32 Akasaka, Minato-ku, 3 3402 6111**

Price and service keep guests returning to **Ryokan Kamogawa Asakusa**. “Once again, we had a wonderful experience, enjoying their very traditional Japanese hospitality. All of the staff were unfailingly kind. We now tend to think of Hotel Kamogawa as our home-away-from-home in Tokyo.”—TripAdvisor Member, Los Angeles, Calif.

**Ryokan Kamogawa Asakusa, 1-30-10 Asakusa, Taito-ku, 3 3843 2681**

## LUXURY

“One expects high standards in Tokyo, and the **Ritz-Carlton** delivers in spades. The manager and staff somehow hold that bit of magic so many hotels claim to deliver, yet rarely do: removing the stress of airports and air travel and making you feel welcomed into a heavenly sanctuary.”—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

**Ritz-Carlton Tokyo, 9-7-1 Akasaka, Minato, 3 3423 8000**

Expect “nothing but the best” from **Park Hotel Tokyo**. “The location is perfect, and the staff is just a 10/10. The spa might not seem big but will do the job. The place is awesome.”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid, Spain

**Park Hotel Tokyo, Shiodome Media Tower, 1-7-1 Higashi-Shimbashi, Minato-ku, 3 6252 1111**

“Believe the hype—the **Park Hyatt Tokyo** is probably in the top of the best city hotels in the world. From the minute you step out of the cab and they all seem to know your name to when you reluctantly leave, the experience is well worth the money. Little things are done so well here.”—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

**Park Hyatt Tokyo, 3-7-1-2, Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, 3 5322 1234**

# Where to **STAY**



## HIDDEN GEMS

For a “good taste of traditional Tokyo,” **Ryokan Sawanoya** is “a good option at a reasonable price. The bathtub is nice, small and very well furnished, with a small window with a lovely view of a Japanese garden. You can lie in the tub and stay ages relaxing and staring at the rock statue of the frog. Pure inner-city Zen!”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid, Spain

**Ryokan Sawanoya, 2-3-11 Yanaka, Taito-Ku, 3 3822 2251**

“I would go back to **Ryokan Shigetsu** without hesitation, because it is hard to find a traditional ryokan in Tokyo. The ofuro (traditional Japanese bath) is a big plus; it is virtually impossible to find elsewhere in Tokyo. Sharing it with others is part of the fun, but if you are not prepared to do this, use it in off-hours (before dinner or just before closing).”—TripAdvisor Member, Montreal, Quebec

**Ryokan Asakusa Shigetsu, 1-31-11 Asakusa, Taito-ku, 3 3843 2345**

“We very much appreciated the area where **Annex Katsutaro** is located. A very nice and calm street, with real Japanese stores, a real Japanese ambiance, far from the busy and crowded streets of Tokyo, and a wide variety of restaurants—we’ve tasted our first onomiyaki!”—TripAdvisor Member, Toulouse, France

**Annex Katsutaro, 3-8-4 Yanaka, Taito-ku, 3 3828 2500**

“Pure inner-city Zen!”

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