

Welcome to Tokyo!

If you are new to town I want to share some sites that you should find useful. When I arrived many people helped me adjust to life here and I want to pass that on to do my part to help everyone I can get settled in smoothly. Tokyo is a fantastic place to live but in all the years I have been here I have never found it an easy place to live. That may or may not make sense.

Many public places, parks etc. still have different schedules than are posted following Covid and hours posted on Google are often not up to date. Be sure to check before you go.

Details were updated on August 12, 2024.

Earthquake preparedness Storm tracking	Page 1
After school activities in English	Page 1
General info on Japan	Page 2
Tranportation	Pages 2, 3
Local areas	Page 3
Shopping	Page 4
Food	Pages 5, 6
Getaways from Tokyo	Page 7
Sports, buy & sell used items, banking	Page 8

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS-BE PREPARED!

https://www.bousai.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/book/pdf/en/02_Lets_Get_Prepared.pdf

STORM TRACKER

Register your email with TSR to receive the best updates available.

<https://www.tropicalstormrisk.com/>

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES IN ENGLISH

Pacific Aikido (since 1991)

<http://www.pacificaikido.com/>

British Football Academy Tokyo

<https://british-football-academy.com/>

Sid & his wife Paco run a great soccer...ah...football program.

Taiko Drumming (Miyashi Arabi Taiko)

Moko Sensei is absolutely fantastic and teaches all over Tokyo.

taikoschool@gmail.com

090-3689-2018

Dance & Drama

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

Tenie is one of the best teachers you can find anywhere.

JAPAN INFO

Everything about Japan, this site has it all.

<http://www.japan-guide.com/>

English speaking doctors & hospitals

<https://www.realestate-tokyo.com/living-in-tokyo/doctors-hospitals/>

Social Media Tokyo

Japan Info Network (formerly TEN, maybe the best site for foreigners living in Tokyo)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TokyoExpatriotNetwork>

The link will show you how to sign up for the new Japan Info Network

Tokyo Mothers Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TokyoMothersGroup/>

Tokyo Cheapo

<https://www.facebook.com/TokyoCheapo/>

English Friendly Japan

<https://www.facebook.com/EnglishFriendlyJapancom-404730722932692/>

Yokohama Expat Network (YEN, for our neighbours to the south)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/yokohamaexpatnetwork/>

A good list of apps to have in Tokyo.

<https://www.tokyoweekender.com/japan-life/essential-mobile-apps-tokyo-japan/>

The **Line app** is the most used here amongst Japanese. Each Ward will have a Line account that you can subscribe to in order to receive updates from your local ward office:

<https://line.me/en/>

TRANSPORTATION

Great for route planning, booking, trip ideas etc., website & app

<https://japantravel.navitime.com/en/>

Parking meter information

<https://japantravel.navitime.com/en/area/jp/around/category/0819/?spot=02011-00009098>

Point A to point B train info:

https://world.jorudan.co.jp/mln/?c=10&main_lang=en&sub_lang=ja

Subway info

<http://www.tokyometro.jp/en/>

Buses

The bus system here is fantastic.

<https://www.kotsu.metro.tokyo.jp/eng/services/bus.html>

On-street parking map

<https://parkingmeter.jp/>

Car sharing

This is a car sharing service that I use but you need someone with Japanese ability to help reserve. See below for other sharing options.

<https://plus.timescar.jp/>

We use this if we need to go to Costco for a few hours, run some errands when it's raining etc. ¥864 an hour including gas.

General info on car sharing options

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/10/06/reference/car-sharing-cheaper-alternative-owning-car-city/#.Vm4Tm_I96Uk

Car rental

Best prices but be warned, the Ebisu location has no customer washroom!

<http://www.21rentacar.com/price.html>

<https://www.nipponrentacar.co.jp/english/rental-locations/kanto.html>

<https://www.ones-rent.com/>

<https://www.2525r.com/sp-index.php>

LOCAL AREAS

Jingu Gaien Area

<http://www.meijijingugaien.jp/english/>

Sundays and holidays the streets are closed to traffic, you can cycle or walk all around the parks. Tokyo's best batting cage right there.

If you want to petition against this amazing area getting destroyed by hungry land developers and the gangster-run construction companies, go here:

<https://www.change.org/p/save-jingu-stadium-protect-this-historical-cultural-asset-and-sacred-baseball-site-surrounded-by-greenery?>

Great for kids! Fun park in central Tokyo

<http://www.meijijingugaien.jp/english/park.html>

From April through to September, half of the park is a beer garden.

Forest Beer Garden

<https://mbg.rkfs.co.jp/?lang=en>

Inokashira Park

https://www.kensetsu.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/jimusho/seibuk/inokashira/en_index.html

Flea Markets

https://livejapan.com/en/in-tokyo/in-pref-tokyo/in-tokyo_suburbs/article-a0002870/

Amusement Park in Tokyo

<https://www.tokyo-dome.co.jp/en/tourists/>

SHOPPING

Nissin International Supermarket

The absolute best place in town for meat and food you won't find elsewhere.

<http://www.nissinham.co.jp/nwd/>

The Meat Guy

Great meat, dry spices, breads etc. Order on-line and delivered right to your door.

<https://www.themeatguy.jp/en/>

Costco

The best Costco is the Kawasaki location, best layout and closest to central Tokyo.

<https://www.costco.co.jp/>

Don't go to the Makuhari location, it's terrible!

National Azabu Supermarket (near Hiroo station) mainly caters to the Embassy chefs in the area coming in to buy goods, the food prices are quite outrageous. The 2nd floor kitchen item prices are comparable to other locations.

<http://www.national-azabu.com/>

Shin-Okubo, Little Korea

An amazing collection of restaurants and small supermarkets. Always crowded.

FABRICS

Nothing tops Nippori. Everything you can possibly imagine all packed in to a few kilometers very close to the station. Try and go on a weekday if you plan to buy a lot. On weekends the lines to get fabric cut can be quite long.

Nippori Fabric Town

<https://www.nippori-senigai.com/en/>

Toa has great prices in town and an amazing selection.

<https://www.toa-ltd.com/>

Kappabashi Dougu Street, Japanese knife heaven, restaurant & kitchen supplies

<https://www.kappabashi.or.jp/en/>

Amazon Japan

https://www.amazon.co.jp/-/en/ref=nav_bb_logo

Apply for Prime, almost everything delivered free and it includes movies & TV shows.

If you plan to order regularly, apply for the Amazon MasterCard and earn points.

Amazon Fresh has great prices on daily items, milk, etc.

If you have a business apply for the business account for great savings.

ONLINE PRIVACY

Express VPN (Virtual Private Network)

<https://www.expressvpn.com/>

A must if you use public WiFi anywhere. You can also set to different countries to enjoy local content on Netflix etc. I have used Express VPN for over 15 years, it's excellent and can be installed on 5 devices.

FOOD

My two favourite restaurants in Tokyo.

Iseya Yakitori. The Koenten is the best location

<http://www.kichijoji-iseya.jp/publics/index/14/>

Andy's Fish. Reservations a must, English friendly, cash only.

<http://www.andysfish.com/>

The tebasaki gyoza (gyoza filling stuffed under the skin of a chicken with and deep fried) are a must. One of the best creations ever. The crab legs are pretty good too. Fresh seafood daily from the Fish Market in Toyosu.

Restaurant listings, recipes etc.

<http://www.bento.com/>

This site has been around longer than most and is a great reference.

Soba, the best I've ever had

<https://soba-fujiya.jp/>

The soba is hand-made daily and is absolutely delicious. They also have the best tempura I've ever eaten. Just a short walk from Nishi-Shinjuku station. My opinion may be biased as it belongs to my wife Tamayo's family and has been in the family for close to 100 years. It really is fantastic and I would not list it here if it were average.

Tonki, great tonkatsu, great experience

https://www.instagram.com/tonkatsu_tonki/?hl=ja

Ramen

Ramen is Japanese soul food. For all things ramen, refer to my old friend Frank at 5AM Ramen. His site lists the best Ramen by area, I use it to try new places and am never disappointed. Frank now also runs food tours.

<https://5amramen.com/>

<https://www.foodtourtokyo.com/tokyo-full-day-tours>

Hakata Tenjin. My all-time favourite ramen restaurant.

<https://ramen-otaku.blogspot.com/2009/02/hakata-tenjin.html>

They have 2 or 3 branches. ¥600 a bowl, simple and fantastic.

Kouya. My favourite Wonton-men (Wonton ramen).

<https://tabelog.com/tokyo/A1309/A130902/13000840/>

They also serve Karai Karai ramen. A monstrous bowl of ramen and likely the spiciest food you may ever eat. Not for the faint of heart. The steamed wonton are fantastic also and the cha-men (yakisoba) is very unique and one of the best I've ever tasted.

Vietnam Chan, the best Pho in Tokyo? Amazing lunch sets.

<https://tabelog.com/tokyo/A1304/A130404/13122530/dtlphotonst/1/smp2/D-normal/3/>

Right beside Okubo station.

Always tasty, home-cooked Thai food.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100036645441370>

Hainan Jeefan Shokudo, the best Singapore restaurant in Tokyo?:

<https://route9g.com/>

Bandara Lanka. Excellent Sri Lankan curry in a unique setting.

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

A friend from India says this is the best Indian restaurant in Tokyo.

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

Some of the best Indian food I've ever eaten, close to Motomachi-Chukagai station:

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/8aG2G7rJkeUiYXb27>

Deeneys. The best grilled cheese sandwich you'll ever eat.

<https://deeneys.jp/>

Suki yaki/Shabu shabu

One of our favourite places for suki-yaki and shabu shabu:

<http://www.mo-mo-paradise.com/>

Burgers

Japan now has some world class burger places.

Cruz Burgers is one of our favourites.

<https://tabelog.com/tokyo/A1309/A130902/13189090/>

C.O.D. Great hotdogs and burgers.

<https://www.instagram.com/cod.aoyama/>

World Breakfast all-day

<https://www.world-breakfast-allday.com/>

Down and across the street from C.O.D. above.

Very nice, home-made sandwiches.

<https://www.facebook.com/harryssandwichco/>

Hard to find a menu online...

Serinkan, world renowned pizza in Naka-Meguro

<https://theseirinkan.com/menu.html>

Shinki, quality authentic Hong Kong food in Yotsuya san-chome

<http://www.honkonmen-shinki.jp/>

Elio's, many consider this as the best Italian food in Tokyo

<https://www.elio.co.jp/Elio-Locanda-Home.html>

An interesting food channel by Nicolas Pettas, kickboxing legend and foodie:

<https://www.youtube.com/@JunkFoodJapan>

GETAWAYS FROM TOKYO

River rafting in Tokyo, only 90 minutes from Shinjuku

They have numerous locations in Japan and offer a wide range of outdoor activities. We used this great group in Okutama for several years, 10 minute walk from the station.
<https://www.gekiryu.com/en/okutama/>

This group runs in various locations around Japan, a few tours in Okutama, great outfit

<https://canyons.jp/en>

Cup Noodles Museum in Yokohama

<https://www.cupnoodles-museum.jp/en/yokohama/attractions/cr-factory/>

Make sure to reserve the Chicken Ramen Factory attraction.

La Posada Mexican Pension and Restaurant

Looking to get out of town and soak in a real onsen but worried about the food & language?

<https://www.laposada.jp/en/>

Worth the trip just for the food!

Kinokuniya Onsen in Hakone

A traditional Onsen in Hakone, fantastic place, 7 different tubs including one that you can reserve for the family to use in private:

<http://hakone-kinokuniya.co.jp/english/>

Fuji Q Highlands Amusement Park

<https://www.fujiq.jp/en/attraction/>

Some of the best roller coasters in the world

SPORTS

Jingu batting center, the best in Tokyo

<http://www.meijijingugaien.jp/english/batting.html>

Go-karting in Makuhari, Chiba

<https://www.harbor-circuit.com/indoor-about?lang=en>

A brand new course from Spring 2024. A little far from Tokyo but worth the trip.

Asia League Hockey

<https://asiaicehockey.com/>

The season runs from September to March.

Japanese Professional Baseball, catch a game at Jingu...it might disappear soon.

<https://npb.jp/eng/>

Japan's National Sport, Sumo

<https://www.sumo.or.jp/En/>

A must see live.

Check out my good friend's Sumo book, the best around: <https://tinyurl.com/muc58n6u>

BUY & SELL USED ITEMS

Tokyo Craigslist

<https://tokyo.craigslist.org/?lang=en&cc=us>

Tokyo Sayonara Sales

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/TokyoSSTO/>

Getting rid of items for free. Salvation Army Tokyo

<https://www.salvationarmy.or.jp/english-home/bazaar>

They have a flea market every Saturday. At the Sugunami location you can drive right in and drop off items, weekdays except Wednesdays. I haven't visited the Sumida branch so am not sure about driving in. You can arrange for pick-up also.

BANKING ETC.

Foreign friendly banks

Prestia: https://login.smbctb.co.jp/ib/portal/POSNIN1prestiatop.prst?LOCALE=en_JP

Sony Bank: <https://moneykit.net/en/>

Seven Bank: <https://www.sevenbank.co.jp/english/>

The best Japanese credit card for mileage points.

<https://www.jcb.co.jp/ordercard/teikei/mileageplus.html>

If you have any questions at all about this crazy place I'm happy to help. Email me directly if you need. (paul@pacificaikido.com)

Enjoy yourself and stay healthy,
Paul