

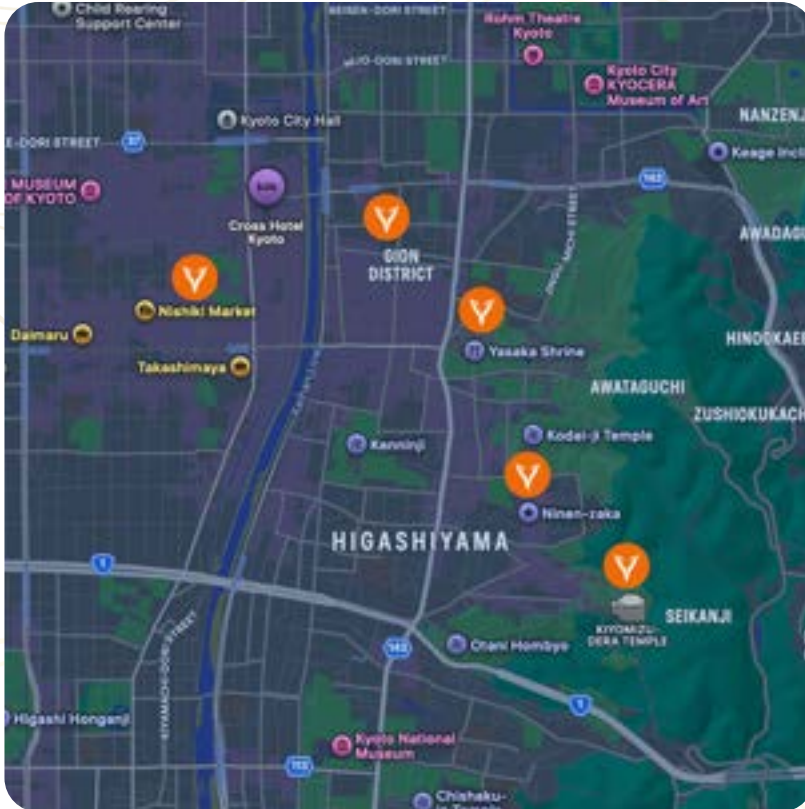
SELF
GUIDED
TOUR
**BLAALID &
ROWLESS**

OCTOBER
2025

HIGASHIYAMA KYOTO DAY 2

This route goes from central Kyoto out toward the quieter shrine areas. Along the way you'll pass Nishiki market, Gion, and local spots before reaching the more traditional side with temples and gates.

DAY 1 KYOTO ESSENTIALS



Code: 8989

Weather:

[CLICK HERE](#)

Day 2 starts at **Nishiki Market** to see local food and shops, then we walk through **Gion and Yasaka Shrine**. From there we head to **Kiyomizudera** Temple before ending the day with a night visit at **Fushimi Inari**. It's a mix of markets, old streets, and major temples that shows both Kyoto's daily life and its traditional side.

FRONT PAGE **01**

Introduction and Essentials, this is where you will find the google map link for the overview and Linktree links for food and shopping recommendation.

NISHIKI MARKET **04**

Browse Nishiki Market, Kyoto's lively food arcade filled with local snacks, pickles, and sweets, only a few minutes from Shijo Station.

GION DISTRICT **10**

Stroll through Gion—Kyoto's historic geisha district lined with teahouses, wooden machiya, and lantern-lit streets near Yasaka Shrine.

KIYOMIZUDERA **20**

Visit Kiyomizudera—Kyoto's famed hillside temple with sweeping views, a wooden stage, and historic streets.

FUSHIMI INARI **27**

Hike through Fushimi Inari, Kyoto's iconic shrine with thousands of red torii gates that lead up Mt. Inari, only a short walk from Inari Station. This will be your final stop for today.

MORNING (START)



NISHIKI MARKET

Our day starts at **Nishiki Market**, a narrow lane that's been Kyoto's food hub for over **400 years**. Once called Gusoku-koji or even "**Dung Alley**," it was favored early on for its naturally cold spring water, keeping fish fresh long before refrigeration. In 1615, the shogunate officially licensed three fish wholesalers here, setting Nishiki on its path.

Over time, this strip evolved into "**Kyoto's kitchen.**" **By the 1920s**, it spread beyond fish to **vegetables, yuba, pickles and sweets**. Look closely and you'll see wells still drawing that cool spring, street art honoring painter Ito **Jakuchū**, and shops tied to the same families for generations. A must visit if you're vegetarian or gluten intolerant.

MORNING (START)



Nishiki Market is more than a place to grab food. It's full of small stories once you slow down and look. There's a tofu shop that still draws water from a centuries-old well, a grilled eel stall run by the same family for five generations, and a sweet shop whose owner's great-grandfather once supplied mochi to the imperial court. As you walk, you might spot signs marking hidden wells or artwork inspired by Ito **Jakuchū**, a painter born right here in the market.

Some vendors still deliver to **ryotei** (a traditional, high-end Japanese restaurant) that only locals know, while others handcraft rice toppings and snacks you won't find anywhere else.

FOODS TO TRY AT NISHIKI MARKET



KYO NO ONIKUDOKORO HIRO

A popular **wagyu spot** offering high-grade beef sushi and grilled cuts. Their Nishiki Market stall is perfect for a quick bite, while nearby restaurants serve full yakiniku meals.

NOTOYO

A long-standing Nishiki Market stall known for **charcoal-grilled river fish like eel, ayu, and carp**. Grilled fresh over binchotan, each bite is smoky, tender, and full of traditional Kyoto flavor.

What to try:
Kabayaki Eel: Rich, sweet-salty glaze over perfectly grilled unagi.



FOODS TO TRY AT NISHIKI MARKET



NISHIKI MARKET KAI (錦市場 權 KAI)

A well-loved stall with seasoned rice toppings, pickled bites, and classic Kyoto snacks. Their most famous item is the quirky but delicious **tako-tamago**, a baby octopus with a quail egg inside.

KOFUKUDO NISHIKI

A historic wagashi stall in Nishiki Market specializing in colorful, handcrafted nerikiri and seasonal monaka treats for over 150 years.

What to try:

Gojo Giboshi Monaka: A crisp wafer filled with sweet bean paste, shaped after the ornate finials atop Gojo Bridge.



FOODS TO TRY AT NISHIKI MARKET

YAMAMOTO BABA SHOTEN

A long-standing Nishiki Market favorite that specializes in **live freshwater fish and river delicacies**. They prepare everything right behind the stall, from tiny grilled ayu to bite-sized eel rolls and simmered fish like carp and smelt, all caught locally.

What to try:

Salt-Grilled Ayu – a delicate river fish with a light, sweet flavor, best enjoyed fresh off the grill.



KIMURA FRESH FISH

A well-known seafood stall in Nishiki Market serving fresh sashimi skewers and grilled fish straight from Kyoto's morning market. Quick, flavorful, and perfect for snacking as you stroll.

What to try:

Tuna Skewer: Lightly seared for a tender, melt in your mouth bite.



MORNING (START)

WALKING
ROUTE



PONTOCHO ALLEY

(Pass by) This narrow lantern-lit alley runs parallel to the river, quiet in the daytime and lined with teahouses, bars, and hidden restaurants. Known as Pontocho, it dates back to the **16th century** and was once a thriving geisha district tied to Kyoto's performing arts and riverside culture. While it feels calm during the day, the **real charm begins after 5 PM** when the lanterns light up, doors slide open, and the alley fills with voices and the spirit of old Kyoto. I always suggest coming back at night, even just to wander and take it in.



GION DISTRICT

Next, step into the heart of Kyoto's old-world charm in the Gion District. This area is known for its **wooden townhouses**, **stone-paved alleys**, and the quiet presence of **geiko and maiko**, Kyoto's iconic entertainers. Walk slowly along Hanamikoji Street, where lanterns hang outside ochaya teahouses and the atmosphere carries a sense of elegance and history. Gion is not a museum, it is a living neighborhood where the past and present quietly meet.

If you come in the late afternoon or early evening, you may be lucky enough to see a maiko on her way to an appointment.

NOON



HANAMIKOJI DORI

Once a path to **Yasaka Shrine**, Hanamikoji-dori became Gion's main stage for Kyoto's most refined nightlife. By the **Edo period**, **it was lined with ochaya, exclusive teahouses where geiko and maiko performed art, music, and quiet conversation.** The stone road you're walking has carried centuries of sandals, secrets, and stories.

It may feel like a film set, but this street is real, with locals still living and working here. Come around sunset for the best chance to see a **maiko** gliding past, dressed in silk and moving quickly between tradition and the present. Hanamikoji looks like a postcard, yet it remains a living world.

NOON

WALKING
ROUTE



At the edge of Gion, **Yasaka Shrine** has watched over Kyoto for more than **1,300 years**. Once called Gion-sha, it is the spiritual anchor of the district and **the birthplace of the famous Gion Matsuri**. The bright vermillion gate, glowing lanterns, and open courtyard give it a festive feeling throughout the year, yet its roots are firmly grounded in Shinto tradition.

Locals come here to pray for **health, love, and good fortune**, and the atmosphere changes with each season. Quiet in the morning and illuminated at night, Yasaka feels like the heartbeat of Kyoto, welcoming, alive, and just a little bit magical.

NOON



THINGS TO DO AT YASAKA SHRINE

- **Purify your hands** at the chozuya water basin before entering
- **Pray for good fortune** at the main hall
- Admire the lantern-lit stage, especially in the evening
- Walk through the smaller side shrines tucked around the grounds
- **Ring the love bell** (if available) at the **Okuninushi Shrine** for relationship luck
- Take photos at the vermilion gate and iconic lantern displays

NOON



MARUYAMA PARK

This is the route to **Kiyomizudera**, but along the way, you'll pass through **Maruyama Park**, Kyoto's oldest public garden and a **favorite local hangout**. Designed in the late 1800s, it blends classic strolling paths, ponds, and teahouses beneath a canopy of seasonal trees.

In spring, it's famous for its massive cherry tree, lit up at night like something out of a painting. But even outside sakura season, it's a peaceful stop to rest your feet, grab a snack, or watch Kyoto slow down around you.

FOODS TO TRY IN THE AREA



GION DUCK NOODLES

For a quick bite near Maruyama Park, try Gion Duck Noodles. Their **kamo soba** comes with tender duck slices and light handmade noodles, making it a simple but satisfying stop in between walks. Highly recommend!

GION TEMPURA RAMEN - KIRAKU

Gion Tempura Ramen Kiraku serves a **light soy broth with handmade noodles** and freshly fried tempura, usually shrimp and vegetables. The crunch blends into the soup as you eat, making it an easy and satisfying stop near Maruyama Park.



MY SECRET SPOT



SUSHI SAKURA 寿司さくら

If you want to have an unforgettable experience, try **Sushi Sakura (寿司さくら)**. This small counter-style shop focuses on **Edomae sushi**, where each piece is prepared in front of you and served at its peak. The rice is seasoned lightly, the fish is aged or marinated in traditional ways, and every bite reflects careful balance rather than flash. It's an intimate setting with only a few seats, where the chef guides you through seasonal flavors one piece at a time. More than just a meal, it feels like a quiet lesson in Kyoto's approach to sushi—precise, simple, and deeply personal.

If you want to have a reservation at Sushi Sakura, please let me know in advance. Seats are limited and the counter fills up quickly, so it's best to secure a spot early.

A TRUE HIDDEN GEM



Note: Rarely open, just have a peek on the sleeping buddah.

Just behind Maruyama Park is a hidden spot most travelers walk past, Daiun-in, home to the quietly **beautiful Bronze Pavilion**. Unlike the gold or silver pavilions, this one doesn't try to impress. It feels calm, aged, and balanced, Kyoto at its most honest.

The bronze roof has softened into a gentle patina, and the whole place feels stuck in time. You might even have it to yourself. Walk in slowly and you'll notice the pine scent, the mossy stone paths, and the kind of silence Kyoto rarely gives you in its busier areas. It's not on every must-see list, but for those who find it, the memory stays.

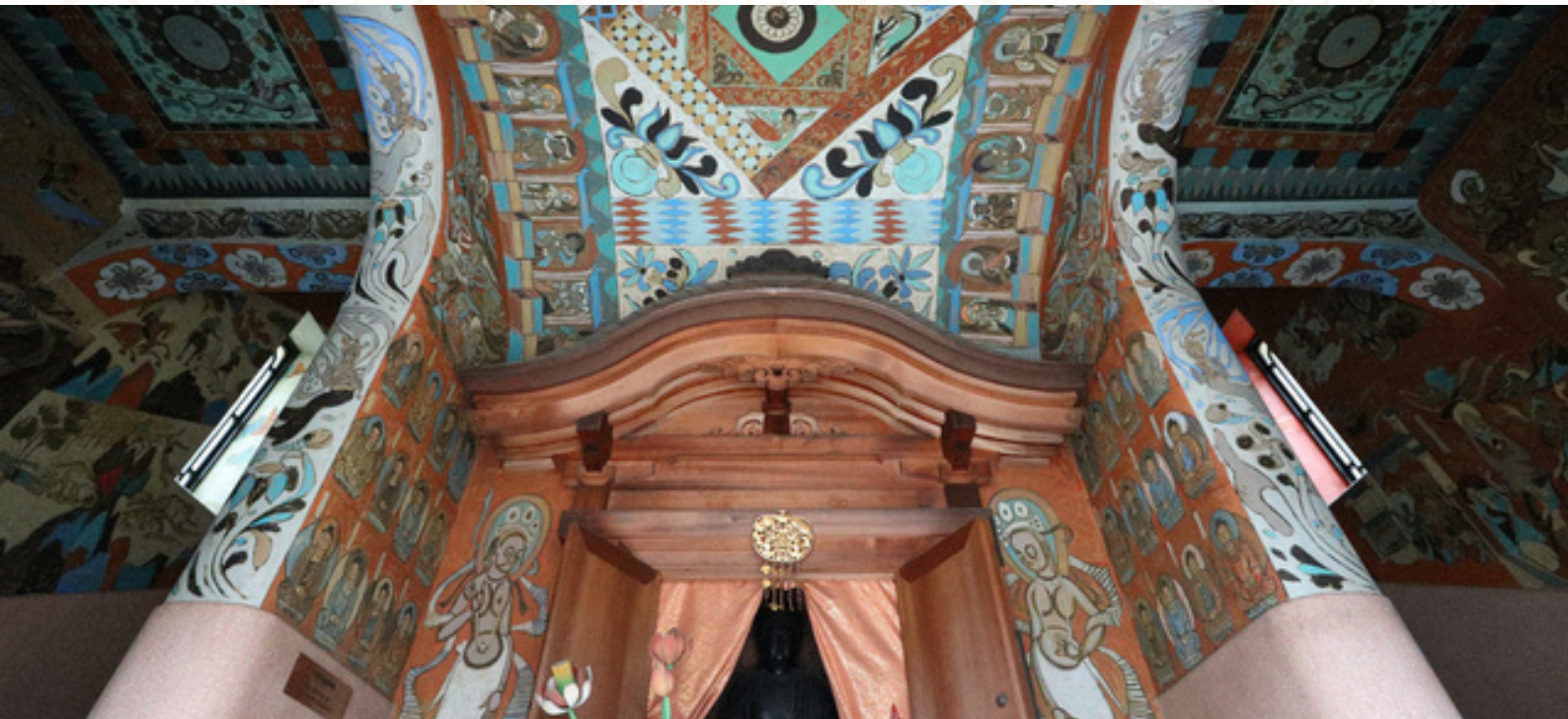
AFTERNOON



Inside the main hall you'll find something completely unexpected, walls and ceilings covered in **vibrant Buddhist murals inspired by the Mogao Caves of Dunhuang in China**. Painted with bold colors and intricate patterns, the space glows with symbolic imagery of celestial beings, guardian figures, and mandala-like motifs that seem to float above the altar.

This room was created not only as a place of worship but also as a form of **visual meditation, a bridge between ancient Buddhist art and Kyoto's spiritual heart**. Few visitors ever step inside, and even fewer realize how rare it is to find this kind of cave-style temple painting in Japan. It is one of those places where silence carries history and every surface tells a story.

AFTERNOON



At the center of the Bronze Pavilion, a small altar room reveals a surprising blend of Buddhist devotion and artistic detail. **The ceiling is filled with mandala-like patterns**, bordered by vivid geometric designs and celestial figures painted in the **style of Silk Road cave art**.

A **seated Buddha** rests quietly within a wooden frame, surrounded by guardian spirits and heavenly attendants. It is not a grand hall, but a space of focused beauty meant to steady the mind through color, symmetry, and sacred form. This kind of immersive mural work is rare in Japan, and the room feels more like a hidden sanctuary than a public temple. You're extremely lucky if they are open.

AFTERNOON

WALKING
ROUTE



WALK- THROUGH

Ninenzaka and **Sannenzaka** are two gently sloping stone paths that lead toward Kiyomizudera and feel almost unchanged for centuries. Lined with traditional wooden townhouses, these streets were once part of a pilgrimage route, their names meaning “**Two-Year Slope**” and “**Three-Year Slope.**” Legend says that slipping here could bring bad luck, so people have always walked carefully.

Today the paths are filled with teahouses, craft shops, and sweet stalls, yet the spirit of old Kyoto lingers in every detail.

FOODS TO TRY IN THE AREA



祇園 哉屋

Tucked in a quiet Gion alley, Eel Noodle Kanaya is a hidden gem serving **grilled unagi** with handmade rye noodles in a rich dipping broth — a bold twist on Kyoto tradition.

SHALOM BISTRO

An absolute must-try, Shalom Bistro is a hidden gem in Kyoto offering a unique fusion of **French and Shanghai cuisine**. Renowned for its A5 Omi Wagyu dishes and warm, attentive service, this cozy bistro provides an unforgettable dining experience.



FOODS TO TRY IN THE AREA



MACHA HOUSE

100% recommended! They mix traditional and modern matcha in one spot. Perfect stop after Kiyomizudera.

KYO YASAKA PUDDING

Most people miss this. Kyo Yasaka Pudding is silky and creamy, made with rich Kyoto eggs and fresh milk, giving it that perfect balance of light sweetness and depth.



ABSOLUTE MUST-TRY



KYOTO KIYOMIZU WARABIMOCHI MONNA

Please don't miss this! **Kyoto Kiyomizu Warabimochi Monna** is a true gem. Their specialty is fresh warabimochi, a delicate, **jelly-like sweet that's completely different from the firmer mochi most visitors know**. It's soft and silky, melting almost right away when it touches your tongue. They sprinkle it with roasted kinako and pour over rich **kuromitsu syrup**, giving it a nutty sweetness that's satisfying without feeling heavy. What makes it stand out is how fresh it is, made daily so the texture stays smooth. After walking up to Kiyomizudera, sitting down here with chilled warabimochi feels like a perfect Kyoto moment.

AFTERNOON



Perched on a hillside with phenomenal views of Kyoto, **Kiyomizu-dera** is one of Japan's most iconic temples. Founded in **778**, it's known for its massive wooden stage, built without nails, that extends over the valley below. The temple's name means "**Pure Water**," taken from the sacred **Otowa Waterfall** below that still flows at its base.

The air here carries the scent of incense and the sound of quiet footsteps. Whether you come for the view, the history, or just the feeling of the place, Kiyomizu is something that stays with you long after you leave.

AFTERNOON



To get the full view of Kiyomizu-dera, the stage surrounded by trees and the city skyline, you'll need to **buy a ticket** and go inside. It's worth it. From there you can see how the massive wooden structure was built without using a single nail.

Long ago, people used to say “**to jump off the stage at Kiyomizu**” as a way of saying “**take a leap of faith.**” Some actually did, and about **85% survived**, believing that if they lived their wish would come true. These days, it's best to just enjoy the view.

AFTERNOON (4:00PM LAST ENTRY)

WALKING
ROUTE



SANJŪSANGEN DŌ

Sanjūsangen-dō may look plain from the outside, but once you step in, it takes your breath away. The name means “**Hall of Thirty-Three Spaces**,” which comes from the way its long wooden columns divide the massive interior. Built in the **1200s**, the hall holds **1,001 statues of Kannon**, the goddess of compassion. Each one is hand-carved, each with small differences, and all lined up in perfect rows.

At the center is a towering thousand-armed Kannon, surrounded by fierce guardian deities and celestial beings. The air inside feels quiet and almost heavy. Photos aren’t allowed, which makes the memory even stronger.



FUSHIMI INARI

Our final stop for the day is **Fushimi Inari Taisha**. One of Kyoto's most iconic and unforgettable sites. Famous for its **endless path of vermilion torii gates**, this shrine honors Inari, the Shinto god of rice, prosperity, and good fortune. The gates, donated by individuals and businesses, stretch up the forested slopes of Mount Inari, creating a tunnel-like trail that feels both sacred and surreal.

AFTERNOON (FINAL STOP)



The trail is divided into several segments. Most visitors hike to the first and second viewpoints, which take around **30–40 minutes** round-trip. You'll pass small sub-shrines, rest areas, and scenic spots with sweeping views of Kyoto. These early sections offer the best mix of beauty and accessibility.

No need to reach the summit unless you're feeling adventurous. But if you do continue, the full loop takes around **2 hours**. Many say the climb brings extra blessings, and the crowds thin the higher you go. Either way, walk slow, breathe deep, and let the mountain guide you.

DINNER OPTIONS



SHABU- SHABU HARU-HARU

A local favorite, **Shabu-shabu Haru-Haru** serves tender slices of beef with fresh vegetables that you cook right at the table. The broth is light, the sauces are full of flavor, and the whole experience is warm, comforting, and authentic.

until 11:00 PM.

YAMAFUKU

Another famous spot. Yamafuku is known for its rich **motsunabe hotpot, made with beef or pork offal** simmered in a flavorful broth. the soup is hearty yet still light, filled with cabbage, garlic, and chives, then finished with noodles or rice to soak up the flavor.



Until 12:00AM

DINNER OPTIONS



GYUKATSU KYOTO KATSUGYU

An absolute must-try, Gyukatsu Kyoto Katsugyu is a **local favorite** for crispy beef cutlets, served rare with flavorful dipping sauces and a Kyoto-style touch.

Until 10:30PM

SUGARHILL KYOTO

An absolute must-try, Sugarhill Kyoto is a cozy local favorite blending Japanese and Western flavors. Known for dishes like chicken teriyaki and Kyoto vegetable salad, it offers a warm atmosphere with jazz tunes and gluten-free options. Located near Kiyomizu-Gojo Station, it's perfect for a relaxed evening.



Until 10:00PM

DINNER OPTIONS



UNAGI SORA

Unagi sora serves perfectly grilled eel over rice, smoky on the outside and tender inside. the **tare sauce is rich but balanced**, bringing out the natural flavor of the eel. it's a simple dish done with care, and one of the best ways to taste a true Unagi (kyoto style)

Until 8:30PM

いぶし鳥 一香

simple yet exploding flavors
— いぶし鳥 一香 (**ibushi dori ikka**) is all about perfectly smoked chicken, juicy inside with that rich, savory char that keeps you wanting more. served with simple sides and a cold drink, it's the kind of spot that feels casual but unforgettable.

Until 10:00PM





KYOTO DAY 2 HIGHLIGHTS

- **Nishiki Market** – local snacks, pickles, tofu, and Kyoto flavors
- **Pontocho Alley** (pass by) – lantern-lit alleys with riverside charm
- **Gion District** – old teahouses and a chance glimpse of a geisha
- **Yasaka Shrine** – bright, open shrine full of local life and energy
- **Maruyama Park** – seasonal beauty and a slow stroll to the hills
- **Daiun-in** (pass by) – Bronze Pavilion temple hidden in plain sight
- **Ninenzaka & Sannenzaka** – scenic steps lined with shops and history
- **Kiyomizu-dera** – grand temple stage with sweeping views
- **Sanjūsangen-dō** – 1,001 Kannon statues in solemn silence
- **Fushimi Inari** – vermillion torii trail into Kyoto's sacred mountain