



## Tour Name

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Total Kyoto Tour: Culture, Lanes & Lanterns

## Tour City

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Kyoto

## Tour Snapshot

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Experience an afternoon and evening packed with Kyoto highlights in the magical former capital of Japan. Take in a serene Buddhist temple and unique Shinto shrine, see where geishas brighten up dark backstreets, and explore beautiful lantern-lit laneways while enjoying some amazing local food.

### Highlights

- See the contrast of Kyoto by day and Kyoto after dusk
- Visit the famous Fushimi Inari Shrine with its many red torii gates
- Explore the famous Gion geisha district, and learn about where the geisha live and work
- Taste some of the best traditional local street snacks
- See some of the city's most iconic sites, as well as a few lesser-known gems

Inclusions: Local English-speaking guide, snacks and one drink during the evening portion of the tour, entrance fees for sights

mentioned in the itinerary, public transport fees during the tour.

Exclusions: Additional food and drinks, souvenirs and personal shopping, tips/gratuities for your guide.

### **Schedule details**

- Duration: 8 hours

- Meeting point:

In front of the Central Post Office on the north side of Kyoto station. "Chu-o yu-bin-kyo-ku" (Central Post Office) is less than a minute walk from the station. Please meet in front of the door with the vending machine and traditional red mail box.

View on [Google Maps](#)

- Find the exact meeting point with what3words: [///pulses.motivate.latter](https://www.what3words.com/pulses.motivate.latter)

- Starting time: 2.00 PM

- Ending point:

Shijo - Karasuma Station.

### **Full Itinerary**

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Experience the temples, shrines and gardens that make Kyoto Japan's capital of culture on this unique tour of the city. This Total Kyoto Tour is a combination of two of our best-selling Kyoto tours, [City of Culture](#) and [Lanes & Lanterns](#), giving you the ultimate local experience in one epic adventure!

Founded as the national capital more than 1,200 years ago, Kyoto originally developed as a centre of aristocratic culture, and is most famous for its zen gardens and geisha traditions.

On this full-day Kyoto tour, you'll discover some of the magic of the city through cultural explorations and local experiences. First we'll head to one of the city's must-see sights, the Tofukuji Temple. Originally built in the 13th century, and famous for its traditional yet modern garden, this is a great place to escape the city. Learn about the origin and inspiration for the garden, and what it means to the monks who continue to live and study here.

Next, we'll walk through a nice local residential neighbourhood to the Fushimi Inari Shrine. Home to a seemingly endless stretch of iconic red *torii* gates spread across a thickly wooded mountain, this shrine is a world unto itself. Walk through snaking corridors of red gates, made famous in the film "*Memoirs of Geisha*," stopping to admire the shrines and many fox statues. Major photo opportunity alert!

As the sun begins to set on the *toriis*, we leave behind the foxes and head to Gion, famously known as Kyoto's geisha district. This area was the model for *Memoirs of Geisha*, and it comes alive with people and lights in the evening. Stroll past the 17th-century traditional restaurants and teahouses, many of which are still exclusive establishments for geisha entertainment. See the theatres and traditional shops, and soak up the atmosphere of this historic quarter.

You'll have free time of about an hour to explore on your own before we regroup for the second half of our tour, exploring Kyoto by night. Walking through the old town's lantern-lit wooden streets is an otherworldly experience not to be missed!

We'll avoid the crowds and traverse the serene wooded backstreets through to Yasaka Shrine, where there's an explosion of light and noise. Famous Yasaka is eternally alive, brought to life by bright lights and buzzing crowds, and lined with street food stalls selling Japan's favourite evening snacks — everything from frozen bananas to skewered squid.

We'll then avoid the crowds a second time as we dart into the backstreets of northern Gion, walking through the narrow streets lined with smaller and more modern clubs and bars — a fascinating contrast to the quarter's old buildings and historical air.

Crossing the Kamo River, we'll take in the sprawling view of Kyoto's restaurant district as it stretches into the distance along the river, before crossing into Pontocho. A centuries-old entertainment district now lined with bars and restaurants, Pontocho is lit almost entirely by traditional Japanese lanterns of every shape and size.

From Pontocho, we'll cross to Teramachi, a traditional Japanese-style arcade strip that stretches off into the distance. Roofed with glowing, cathedral-like arches, Teramachi is home to a countless variety of merchants and restaurants, including traditional Japanese bookstores and the ubiquitous, brightly lit *Manga* comic shops. Here, you can find everything from statues of ancient gods at a *Butsudan-ya* (Buddhist altar shop) to high-quality sushi knives and vintage clothing.

Leaving Teramachi' arcade, we'll head past the Nishiki food market to check out a *tachinomiya* — translated in English, '*tachinomiya*' literally means 'stand and drink shop.' Bars with no seats offer locals a chance to enjoy drinks and light snacks en route to home or engagements elsewhere.

## **Additional information**

Inclusions: Local English-speaking guide, snacks and one drink during the evening portion of the tour, entrance fees for sights mentioned in the itinerary, public transport fees during the tour.

Exclusions: Additional food and drinks, souvenirs and personal shopping, tips/gratuities for your guide.

Dress standard: Please wear comfortable and modest attire as we will visit temples and shrines.

Your Trip: For your Urban Adventure you will be in a small group of a maximum of 12 people.

Confirmation of booking: If you have your voucher, your booking is confirmed. We'll see you at the start point. Get in touch if you have any concerns or require more information via the email address or phone number (business hours only) on your voucher.

Child Policy: Travellers under 20 years of age are not permitted to join this tour.

## **Dietary Notes**

This tour can be customised to accommodate vegetarians, however we cannot cater to vegans or gluten-free travellers. You are welcome to bring your own food or snacks on the tour.

## **Local contact**

Office phone number: +81 (0)50 5532 5110

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