



Tour Name

Private Tokyo: Japan's Cultural Curiosities

Tour City

Tokyo

Tour Snapshot

No, we don't have a time machine, but you might think we do once you step back into Tokyo's past! On this private Tokyo tour, you'll explore hidden shops that sell traditional items not commonly found in modern-day Japan. With your own local guide to show you around on this private experience, you'll sample old-world sweet and savoury snacks, learn about the art of incense, visit a seaweed seller, and see a side of the city frozen in time, far from the bright lights of downtown.

This tour is priced for a minimum group size of two travellers. A solo traveller may still book this private experience but will be charged the base rate for two travellers.

Highlights

- Time travel back to old-world Tokyo on a private tour with your own local guide
- Wander through back alleys and uncover hidden shops that have stood for centuries selling handcrafted goods
- Snack on tasty traditional treats, from candies to crackers

- Learn about classic Japanese arts like music, calligraphy, and incense-making
- Shop for the perfect handmade souvenirs to take back home

Local Impact: How you will help the local community by joining this tour:

- On this tour you will visit various 100+ year-old family owned businesses and help maintain and support unique Japanese crafts, food and culture, which will help keep these important traditions alive.

Inclusions: Local English-speaking guide, food samplings (Japanese snacks, tea).

Exclusions: Additional food and drink, souvenirs and items of a personal nature, tips and gratuities for the guide.

Schedule details

- Duration:3 hours
- Meeting point:
Mechanical clock tower near McDonald's in Ningyocho (note there are 2 clocks — meet by the one on the same side as McDonald's). In Japanese: Ningyocho Karakuri Yagura Edo Rakugo.

View on [Google Maps](#)
- Find the exact meeting point with what3words: [///speaker.dreams.stays](https://www.what3words.com/?q=///speaker.dreams.stays)
- Starting time: 12.45 PM
- Ending point:
Mitsukoshimae Station (Ginza Line, Hanzomon Line)

Full Itinerary

Spend your day with us browsing for traditional souvenirs and goods – made right here in Japan! Gain some insight to the foods and snacks that Japanese people eat and the typical items they use in everyday life.

We'll start the tour in the neighbourhood of Ningyocho, a district known for its old traditions and, as you'll soon discover, some very tasty treats. We'll visit a number of shops that have been around for over 100 years, many of which are still family-owned and operated and specialise in unique goods made right here in Japan.

To kick things off, we'll try some Ningyoyaki cakes, a true Tokyo specialty. This is a small sponge cake with sweet red bean filling, and made in different shapes. We'll visit a bakery that has been around for 110 years, where the father and son welcome guests with open arms and enjoy sharing their knowledge about their cakes and craft.

We'll also visit a shop that specialises in a traditional snack: *senbei* (rice crackers), a favourite in many Japanese households, which is happily gluten and dairy free.

From there, we'll head to a local *tenugui* shop, where they sell woven hand towels depicting different traditional Japanese scenes. These towels are used for many things from wiping your hands to wrapping gifts, tea towels and decorations.

Your Tokyo tour will next lead you to one of the eight shrines in Ningyocho. We'll visit a shrine where virtue, longevity, learning and wealth are worshipped. You can offer a prayer here, and wash a coin to ensure a prosperous life.

Once we've exhausted Ningyocho, we'll visit another neighbourhood nearby, Nihonbashi. The district of Nihonbashi was a hub for merchants during the Edo period. Today, it is predominantly a financial district that houses trading firms and even the Tokyo Stock Exchange. And although Nihonbashi is very much a modern neighbourhood, it features many traditional Japanese shops hidden in its alleyways and even within its department stores.

We'll visit an old-fashioned stationery shop that was established in 1912. You'll get to browse through the display of calligraphy brushes, inks, traditional paints, handmade greeting cards, and little dolls that tie into Japanese wedding and New Year's customs.

We'll also discover a toothpick shop that has been in business since 1704, where you will be able to check out delicate handmade toothpicks, plus other handmade items carved from Kuromoji or *Lindera umbellata* trees.

Please note that this itinerary is subject to change. As most of the shops we visit are small, family-owned businesses, they sometimes unexpectedly close or alter their hours for the day. In such a case, we'll visit other nearby shops or attractions that still keep with the theme and essence of the tour.

(If you'd prefer to travel as part of a regular group experience, please book our [Cultural Curiosities group tour](#).)

This tour is priced for a minimum group size of two travellers. A solo traveller may still book this private experience but will be charged the base rate for two travellers.

Tour photos by [Ben McNamara](#)

Additional information

Inclusions: Local English-speaking guide, food samplings (Japanese snacks, tea).

Exclusions: Additional food and drink, souvenirs and items of a personal nature, tips and gratuities for the guide.

Dress standard: The tour includes a brief visit to a small shrine. Modest dress is highly recommended — shoulders covered, and pants or a skirt that covers the knees.

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.

Additional Information: You can access the meeting point from any of the following metro lines: Ningyocho station, Hibiya Line, Exit A1 (currently under reconstruction- Exit A2 is on the opposite side of the street- 4 min walk); Ningyocho Station, Asakusa Line, Exit A3 (7-minute walk); or Suitengumae Station, Hanzomon Line, Exit 7 (4-minute walk). While this tour is not physically demanding, it is a walking tour, and you will be on your feet and walking for all of the three hours.

Closure of sites: This tour includes visits to independent, family-run businesses, which may sometimes unexpectedly close or alter their hours for the day. In such a case, we'll visit other nearby shops or attractions that still keep with the theme and essence of the tour.

Child Policy: This is a child-friendly tour. Children between the ages of 6 and 11 inclusively are permitted on this tour at the rate listed above. Please select 'child' above when booking. Children under the age of 6 are permitted to join this tour free of charge. Please inform us at the time of booking if you'll be bringing a child under the age of 6. You can do so in the special request box on the checkout page.

Dietary Notes

Some allergies can be accommodated. Please contact us with any dietary restrictions at info@tokyourbanadventures.com

Local contact

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