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Japan Unmasked
(11th September 2011)

INSIDE

Japan



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From the Directors

Firstly, thank you for booking your holiday with InsideJapan Tours. We started this company to give people the chance to enjoy the delights of Japan without paying through the nose for the pleasure. Japan has something to offer everyone, from the huge, buzzing cities, to the stunning beauty of the wild mountainous expanses that account for eighty-five percent of Japan's surface area. We'll help you see some of Japan's many different faces, to uncover more than just the tourist hot-spots.

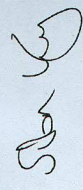
It is often far more enjoyable to discover something for yourself rather than be shown by someone else. We help you to do just that, to see what's out there and then to find it. In a country like Japan there's always something new to seek out and we could never possibly know everything. We aim for all our customers to come back with a different experience of the land of the rising sun, all with different stories of what surprise treats they came across. But even so, we're always here to make sure that your holiday is the best it can be. Whatever requests you have or problems you may come across, we're always here to help.

If you've booked one of our accompanied tours we look forward to meeting you in Japan. For those of you just stopping in Tokyo or taking a customised trip, we hope you have a great stay in this phenomenal country. Let us know some of your stories!

Thanks again.



Alastair Donnelly



Simon King

The Directors

Responsible Tourism

There is much in the media these days regarding the environmental (and other) effects of travel, and the concept of Sustainable Tourism, or ST. By encouraging customers to fly half-way round the world to experience Japan, we cannot claim to have zero negative impact on the earth and its environment!

However, we believe that the concept of ST goes beyond long-haul flights and arguments about carbon-offsetting. We give our customers the chance to really experience Japan and discover what makes the country and its people tick. In the General Information section of this Info-Pack you will find useful tips on how you can have a positive impact during your stay, along with details of our ST commitments.

You can also read about charities we have supported in the past, and our current campaign, raising money for Civic Force, a Japanese charity involved in the relief effort in the Tohoku region, devastated by the earthquake and tsunami in March 2011. If you enjoy your time in Japan you may like to consider donating, and will have the chance to do so on your return home.

Here you will find a summary day-by-day from your forthcoming tour. You will also find this on your tour dossier. This will give you a good idea of what to expect on your tour. It won't, however, tell you everything you will experience and everything you will see and do. Our tours are designed to be flexible so as to fit your interests as well as we possibly can. On the ground your tour leader will be providing you with destination by destination itinerary sheets which will fill in some of the finer details when you are in Japan.

Day 1 - Tokyo

The tour begins in Tokyo. If you arrive today, your included Japan Rail Pass will cover your airport transfer by direct airport train. We will have a group meeting in the evening, giving you the chance to meet your fellow group members and Tour Leader. After the meeting, you can join your Tour Leader as he heads out for an amazing meal at one of the many great restaurants nearby.

Day 2 Tokyo

Breakfast
Today your Leader will be leading an optional full day tour of Tokyo. There are so many fantastic things to do and see in this amazing city; museums, gardens, and shrines, and your Tour Leader will organise an itinerary for the day to suit everyone's taste. Of course, feel free if you want to head out and do your own thing - your Leader will be happy to assist with any plans. You will also have a Japan Rail Pass, should you wish to make one of the many exciting day trips out of the city.

Day 3 - Nagano

Breakfast
We leave this vibrant city behind in style as we set out by Japan's famous Shinkansen bullet train to Nagano. Nestled in the Japanese Alps, Nagano Prefecture is home to nine of Japan's twelve highest mountains, and was the site of the 1998 Winter Olympics. Nagano City's most famous attraction is Zenko-ji temple. Tonight will be a real highlight as we have the opportunity to stay overnight near this amazing 7th century temple in temple lodgings.

Day 4 - Matsumoto

Breakfast
An early morning today as we will wake up early to watch the monks chanting - a spine tingling experience. Following this you will have the option to make an excursion to Yudanaka Onsen to visit Japan's famous Snow Monkeys. These cheeky macaques come down from the surrounding hills to bathe in natural hot springs. We can guarantee plenty of amazing photo opportunities! After lunch we will make the short journey by train to Matsumoto. Home to one of Japan's most stunning original castles, it is often called 'Black Crow' castle owing to its unique black colour. Other attractions in Matsumoto include the Ukiyoe (woodblock print) Museum, and strolling through the old merchant's district.

Day 5 - Takayama

Breakfast & Dinner
We continue on our journey through the Japanese Alps to the market town of Takayama. Due to its remote position in the mountains, it was cut off from the rest of Japan for most of its history and thus has maintained a very unique and traditional atmosphere. We will experience one of our accommodation highlights here, staying in a traditional Japanese minshuku. We will sleep on futons laid out on traditional tatami flooring and be able to experience a steaming hot onsen bath to relax (or recharge - the choice is yours!) There are so many great experiences to be had in Takayama, from strolling through the preserved streets to visiting the museum that houses Takayama's famous Festival Floats. Dinner is included tonight at our accommodation.

Day 6 - Takayama

Breakfast
Today is free to further explore this charming town. First stop should be the lively morning market, offering lots of free tastes of the local fruit and vegetables. The Hida No Sato folk village, an open air museum of traditional Japanese farm houses, is not to be missed. Your Tour leader will be on hand to show you around, and will be more than happy to help you cap what is sure to be a fantastic day by taking you for some tastings at the local sake breweries.

Day 7 - Kanazawa

Breakfast
There will be time for some last minute shopping at the morning market before we head off by train to our next destination, Kanazawa. Located on the Japan Sea Coast, Kanazawa is a showcase of traditional Japan. Take a stroll through the beautifully preserved Nagamachi samurai district or the Chaya geisha district; explore the hidden rooms and secret trap doors in the ninja temple, or just sip a cup of green tea and contemplate life in the stunning Kenrokuen, one of Japan's top 3 gardens.

Day 8 - Hiroshima

Breakfast
Today we have a chance to enjoy the wonder that is the Japanese train network as we take a Limited Express from one coast of Japan to the other, then hit top speed on the Shinkansen hurtling along the San'yo Coast to Hiroshima. Known for all the wrong reasons, these days Hiroshima is a vibrant city which has chosen not to dwell in the past but to strive ahead for a better future. The Peace Memorial Museum and surrounding Peace Park manage to convey a sense of hope rather than despair, but are not all that Hiroshima has to offer. With some truly world class art galleries, a manga library, a beautifully restored castle and Japan's worst baseball team, your Tour Leader as always will be on hand to help you take in the sights you want to see. Hiroshima is famous for its local dish Hiroshima-yaki, a kind of as-you-like-it pancake cooked on a grill in front of you, so make sure you join your Leader as he takes you to his favourite restaurant!

Day 9 - Hiroshima

Breakfast
A free day to enjoy all that Hiroshima has to offer. You may choose to take a trip out to the sacred Miyajima island, home to shrines, temples, and deer but best known for one of Japan's top 3 views - the vermillion red floating torii gate. If cars are more your thing, your Tour Leader can arrange a visit to the Mazda Museum, where you can witness their fully automated production line. Tonight you can hit the town, as your Tour Leader takes you on a tour of Hiroshima's best bars.

Day 10 - Kurashiki

Breakfast
A short trip on the Shinkansen and local train takes us to the charming canal town of Kurashiki. Today you have the option of joining the tour leader for an optional bike ride on the Kibi Plains, one of the most beautiful and historical paved bike rides in Japan. You will pass through ancient burial mounds, rice fields, local temples and Buddhist cemeteries. Alternatively you can have the day free to explore some of the quaint local museums and renowned art galleries. Or maybe you can sit at one of the cafes lining the canals, sipping on a hot green tea as you ponder on the town's fascinating history.

Day 11 - Kyoto

Breakfast
Our next destination is Japan's cultural capital, Kyoto, a short train ride away. There is a whole host of things to see and do in Kyoto and as always, your Tour Leader will be on hand to assist.

Day 12 - Kyoto

Breakfast
A free day in Kyoto to explore this classic city. Bursting with temples, shrines, World Heritage sites, gardens, museums, geisha and everything that you ever associated with Japan, your Tour Leader will lead an optional tour of some of the famous sites and hidden gems. Of course, if you want to explore solo, then your Leader will be pleased to advise.

Day 13 - Yokohama

Breakfast
Today we take our final journey as we take the Shinkansen to our last destination, Japan's second city, Yokohama. We will speed past the iconic Mt Fuji, and if she is feeling bold, we may catch a glimpse! Yokohama is the perfect place to end what will have been a truly memorable holiday. Definitely the most scenic of Japan's big cities, our hotel is located a short walk from the picturesque waterfront. Today's options include visiting the very unique ramen noodle museum, munching on dumplings and sipping bubble tea in Japan's largest Chinatown, or heading to the top of Japan's tallest building, Landmark Tower. Your Tour Leader will take you out for one last amazing dinner, a chance to reminisce with your fellow group members over all the amazing experiences you have packed into the last 2 weeks.

Day 14 - Sayonara

Breakfast
Sadly, it is time to bid sayonara - for now! You can take the direct airport train from Yokohama station, located a short walk from our hotel, to Narita Airport.

Please note: The itinerary may diverge from the one outlined above.

Your Tour Leader



Liam Chawdhary

A former English and science teacher, Liam spent 3 years teaching in Northern Japan. Being the only foreigner in his town he quickly became accustomed to the Japanese way of life; and has even come to regard karaoke as a form of entertainment. Though don't let that fool you: he sings with all the subtlety and grace of Johnny Rotten.

Liam's passion is cooking (in fact he only got the job because of his fondness for bringing in homemade cakes). On tour he loves to introduce as much Japanese cuisine as possible and has ingeniously invented as least 3 new meal times to facilitate his quest to eat every food known to man.

Being a Bristolian, Liam knows just how entertaining Bristol City FC can be; and so has become an ardent fan of Sumo. If you're unlucky enough he'll try to convince you why there's considerably more skill to it than just consuming inhuman amounts of food.

Liam is a full time tour leader for InsideJapan Tours now living in Nagoya and sure to bring his wily sense of humour and infectious energy to our groups. A tour with Liam is always an interesting and enjoyable experience!

The first person to contact if you have any difficulties during your trip is your tour leader. They are there to make your holiday the best it can be and will be able to assist you. Your tour leader will provide you with their mobile phone number at the welcome meeting on day 1.

If for any reason you are unable to contact your tour leader then please use the contact details below to call or email either our office in Japan or our UK head office. Please remember that you will get a faster response from the Japan office during your stay in Japan.

Our Japan office is run by Miss. Ayako Koide. The team all speak English and can be contacted at all times. The phone may be answered in Japanese - please don't be put off by this as the staff do speak English!

InsideJapan Tours' Japan Branch

Lion Building 4th Floor, 3-19-1
Marunouchi
Naka-ku
Nagoya
460-0002

Tel: Japan (0)52 968 1135 (10am to 6pm Monday to Friday)

Fax: Japan (0)52 968 1136

Emergency Mobile Phone: Japan (0)80 6942 9362 - please use for emergencies only.

Emergency Email: insidejapantours-ngo@ezweb.ne.jp

Office Contact Email: japanoffice@insidejapantours.com
(not answered on holidays and weekends)

InsideJapan Tours' UK Office

Lewins House
Lewins Mead
Bristol
BS1 2NN

To reach the office in the UK by telephone you should dial one of the international access codes as listed in the info-pack, and then:

Tel: ++ 44 117 314 4620

Fax: ++ 44 117 314 4621

The UK office is open from 9am to 6pm Monday to Friday. If you call outside of these hours and no one is available to take your call please leave a voicemail message and we will get back to you as quickly as possible.

Listed on this page are all the addresses and phone numbers for the places you will be staying during the tour. If you get lost, jump in a taxi or ask a passer-by, show them the address and I am sure they point you in the right direction.

Tokyo

Toyoko Inn Ikebukuro Kita Guchi 1

2-50-5 Ikebukuro
Toshima-Ku
TOKYO
171-0014

Front Desk: 03-5960-1045
Fax: 03-5960-1046

Nagano

Zenkoji Tokugyobou

448 Motoyoshi-Cho
NAGANO
Nagano
380-0851

Front Desk: 026-232-0264
Fax: 026-234-6297

Matsumoto

Toyoko Inn Matsumoto Eki-mae

Honmachi
2-1-23 Chuo
MATSUMOTO
Nagano
390-0811

Front Desk: 0263-36-1045
Fax: 0263-36-1046

Takayama

Iwatakan

4-166-3 Oshin-Machi
TAKAYAMA
Gifu
506-0851

Fax: 0577-34-8708
Front Desk: 0577 33 4917

東横INN池袋北口 1

〒171-0014
東京都
豊島区
池袋2-50-5

善光寺 徳行坊

〒380-0851
長野県
長野市
元善町448

東横INN 松本駅前本町

〒390-0811
長野県
松本市
中央2-1-23

民宿岩田館

〒506-0851
岐阜県
高山市
大新町4丁目166-3

Kanazawa

Garden Hotel Kanazawa
2-16-16 Honmachi
Kanazawa
Ishikawa
920-0853

Front Desk: 076-263-3333
Fax: 076-263-7761

Hiroshima

Toyoko Inn Hiroshima Heiwa Odori
5-15 Tanaka-Machi
Naka-Ku
HIROSHIMA
730-0026

Front Desk: 082-504-1045
Fax: 082-504-1046

Kurashiki

Hotel Resol Kurashiki
2-2-26 Chujo
KURASHIKI
Okayama
710-0046

Front Desk: 086-427-9269
Fax: 086-421-0335

Kyoto

Toyoko Inn Shijo Karasuma
28 Naginataboko-Cho
Shijo-Dori Karasuma-Higashi-Iru
Shimogyo-Ku
KYOTO
600-8008

Front Desk: 075 212 1045
Fax: 075-212-1049

Yokohama

Toyoko Inn Yokohama Sakuragi-cho
6-55 Honcho
Naka-Ku
YOKOHAMA
231-0005

Front Desk: 045-671-1045
Fax: 045-671-1046

ガーデןホテル金沢
〒920-0853
石川県金沢市
本町2丁目16-16

東横INN 広島平和大通
〒730-0026
広島市
中区
田中町5-15

ホテルリゾル倉敷
〒710-0046
岡山県
倉敷市
中央2-2-26

東横INN京都四条烏丸
〒600-8008
京都市下京区
四条通烏丸東入ル
長刀鉾町28

東横INN横浜桜木町
〒231-0005
横浜市
中区本町6-55

Japan Rail Pass

Your package includes 14 Day Japan Rail Pass(es). The voucher(s) for your Japan Rail Pass(es) are included with your Info-Pack. These will cover all of the journeys you will make during on the Japan Unmasked tour. IF you are arriving on day 1 it will also include your airport transfer. Please note that if you are arriving a day or more early then you will need to pay for your own airport transfer.

You will need to exchange the voucher(s) for an actual Rail Pass(es) at Tokyo Narita Airport when you arrive in Japan. Instructions on how and where to do this are in the Japan Rail Pass pamphlet provided.

Regardless of what day you arrive, it is very important that you specify the start date of your Japan Rail Passes as Sunday 11th September to make sure that they cover all of the journeys intended.

Airport Transfer

Make your way to the Travel Service Centre to change your Japan Rail Pass (see the enclosed pamphlet for location details).

Opening hours are:
Terminal 1 9:30am - 19:00pm
Terminal 2 10:00am - 22:00pm

If you arrive outside these hours, you can exchange your Rail Pass at the Japan Rail Ticket Office at each terminal.

Once you have exchanged your Japan Rail Pass voucher for the actual Pass, you can also reserve a seat on the Narita Express to Ikebukuro (the area of Tokyo that is home to our tour hotel). All seats on this train are reserved, so you must make a reservation.

If you have arrived in Japan a day or more early then you will need to purchase tickets for the Narita Express. The price is 2910 Yen per person.

Because of energy saving measures in Japan there are currently fewer than normal Narita Express services all the way to Ikebukuro. Below are the direct trains to Ikebukuro:

Train Name	Narita Airport T1 成田空港	Narita Airport T2 空港第2ビル	Ikebukuro 池袋
Ltd Express Narita Express 6 特急成田エクスプレス6号	08:13	08:16	10:02
Ltd Express Narita Express 8 特急成田エクスプレス8号	08:50	08:53	10:26
Ltd Express Narita Express 16 特急成田エクスプレス16号	10:45	10:48	12:19
Ltd Express Narita Express 18 特急成田エクスプレス18号	11:15	11:18	12:48
Ltd Express Narita Express 40 特急成田エクスプレス40号	17:16	17:19	18:53
Ltd Express Narita Express 44 特急成田エクスプレス44号	18:15	18:19	19:53
Ltd Express Narita Express 46 特急成田エクスプレス46号	18:48	18:52	20:22

If you have just missed a direct train, then please use your Japan Rail Pass to take the Narita Express to Tokyo or Shinjuku and then transfer to the JR Yamanote line to get to Ikebukuro. Trains on the JR Yamanote line run every 5 minutes and are non-reserved seating.

Tokyo

Toyoko Inn
Ikebukuro Kita Guchi 1
2-50-5 Ikebukuro
Toshima-ku
Tokyo
171-0014
池袋2-50-5
東京都豊島区
池袋2-50-5
〒171-0014
東横INN池袋北口1

Tel: 03-5960-1045
Check-in: 15.00pm
Check-out: 10.00am



This hotel is in a great location for exploring this area of Tokyo with JR Ikebukuro station and a number of subway lines just a few minutes walk away giving you instant access to the rest of Tokyo.

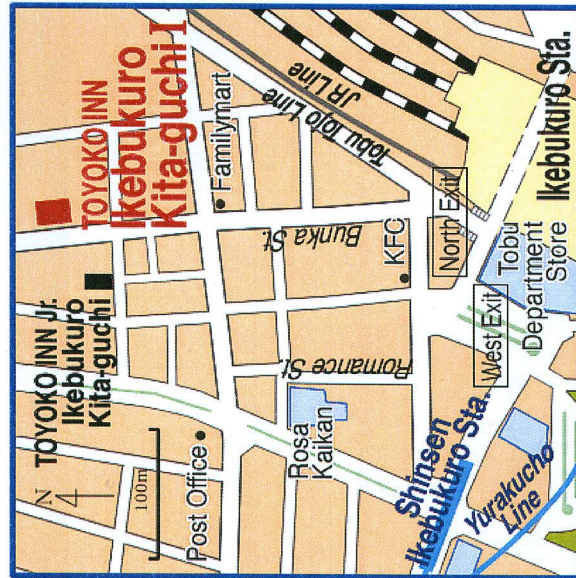
Please note that to activate the electricity in your room you will need to put the plastic key-fob into the slot just inside the door.

Check-in is strictly at 3 pm. You will not be able to have your room before then so please do not be offended if the staff refuse an early check-in request.

In the morning a 'light' Japanese breakfast is available in the lobby and there is a free internet computer here too. Hair dryers are available in each room and there is a coin laundry and vending machines on the ground floor.

Directions

The hotel is just a couple of minutes walk from the north exit of JR Ikebukuro Station. Please follow the signs for 'Central Gate 1' go through the ticket barriers and then follow the sign to the North Exit.



Nagano

Zenkoji Tokugyobou
448 Motoyoshi-cho
Nagano
380-0851
元善町448
長野県長野市
〒380-0851
善光寺 徳行坊

Tel. 026 232 0264

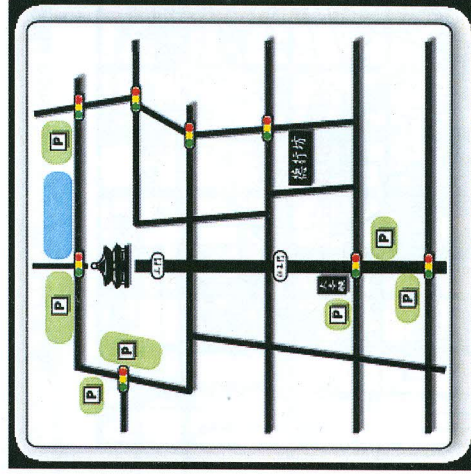


The Tokugyobou is a Shukubo (temple lodging) which forms part of the 7th century Zenkoji temple complex. This is a fantastic experience and you will get to see the daily workings of temple life. There is the chance to witness the ceremonies of the temple if you wish and you can join the monks at morning prayers (a small fee is asked for).

Rooms in the wonderful wooden building are beautifully decorated and the atmosphere is really special. Bathing and washing facilities are shared but this is a small sacrifice to pay for a unique experience and insight!

Getting There

The temple and lodgings are a 10 minute walk or short taxi ride from Nagano station.



Matsumoto

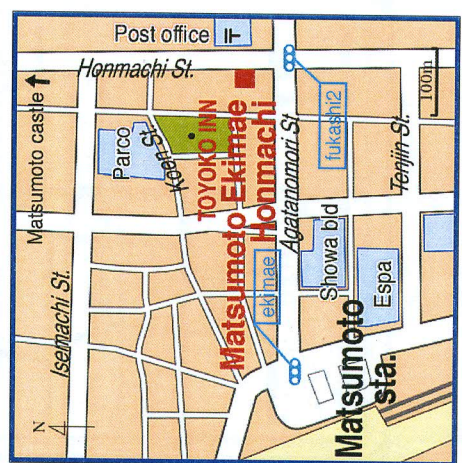
Toyoko Inn
Matsumoto Eki Mae Honmachi
 2-1-23 Chuo
 Matsumoto
 Nagano
 390-0811
 Tel: 0263-36-1045
 Check-in: 15.00pm
 Check-out: 10.00am



This is a new business style hotel situated very close to both the station and to Matsumoto Castle. The rooms are western style with en-suite bathroom facilities, television and refrigerator. The hotel provides free internet access in the lobby and a complimentary buffet breakfast is served in the lobby everyday.

Directions

The hotel is a 6 minute walk from Matsumoto station central exit.



Takayama

Minshuku Iwatakan
 4-166-3 Oshin-machi
 Takayama
 Gifu
 506-0851
 Tel: 0577 33 4917
 Check-in: 15.00pm
 Check-out: 10.00am
 Curfew: 23.00pm

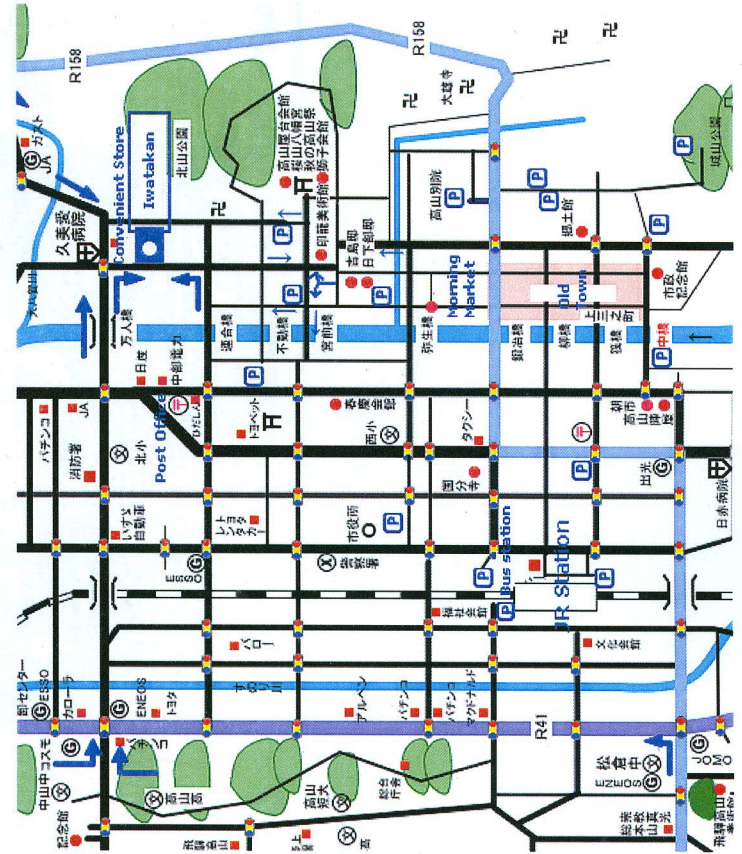


The Iwata-kan is a friendly little Minshuku located close to all the main sights on the town.

The Inn offers hot spring baths, comfortable tatami style rooms and traditional style Japanese meals. You can expect to be served cuisine unique to the town of Takayama such as the red pickled turnip, melt-in-the mouth Hida Beef and mountain vegetables.

Directions

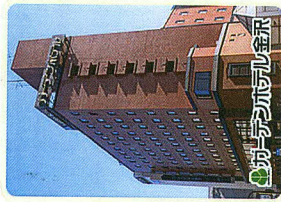
The Iwatakan is around 15-20 minutes walk from the station. However, a taxi will take around 10 minutes and cost approximately 1000yen



Kanazawa

Garden Hotel Kanazawa
 2-16-16 Honmachi
 Kanazawa
 Ishikawa
 920-0853
 Tel. 076-263-3333
 Check-in: 14:00pm
 Check-out: 11:00am

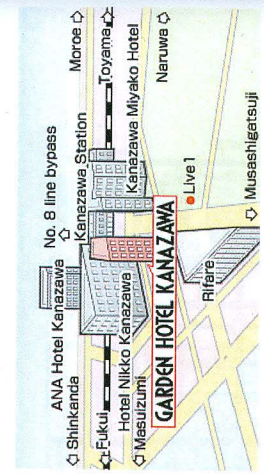
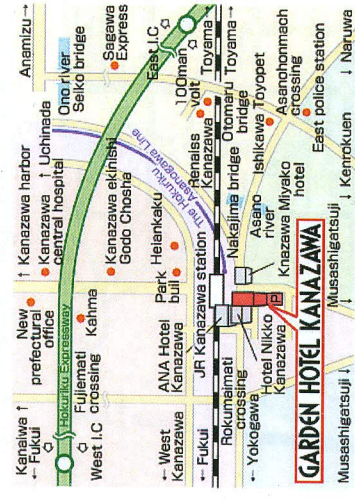
ガーデンホテル金沢
 〒920-0853
 石川県金沢市
 本町2-16-16



The Garden hotel is a modern business hotel situated directly in front of Kanazawa's impressive main station making it ideal for getting around all the main sights in the city. All the rooms are western style with en-suite bathroom and are of a moderate size.

Directions

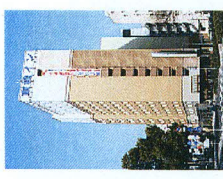
The hotel is located just outside the East Exit of Kanazawa station.



Hiroshima

Toyoko Inn Hiroshima Heiwa Odori
 5-15 Tanaka-machi
 Naka-ku
 Hiroshima
 730-0026

東横INN広島平和大通
 〒730-0026
 広島市中区
 田中町5-15

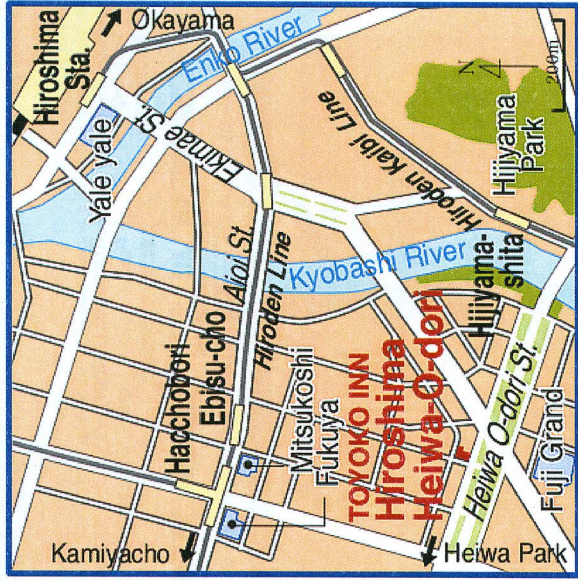


Tel: 082 504 1045
 Check-in: 15:00pm
 Check-out: 10:00am

This is a good quality and reliable business hotel located on Heiwa-dori (peace road) – a short walk from the Peace Park. A free light breakfast is available in the lobby in the morning.

Directions

From JR Hiroshima station we advise taking a taxi to get the hotel. Alternatively, the hotel is just a 7 minute walk from Ebisu station on the streetcar line.



Kurashiki

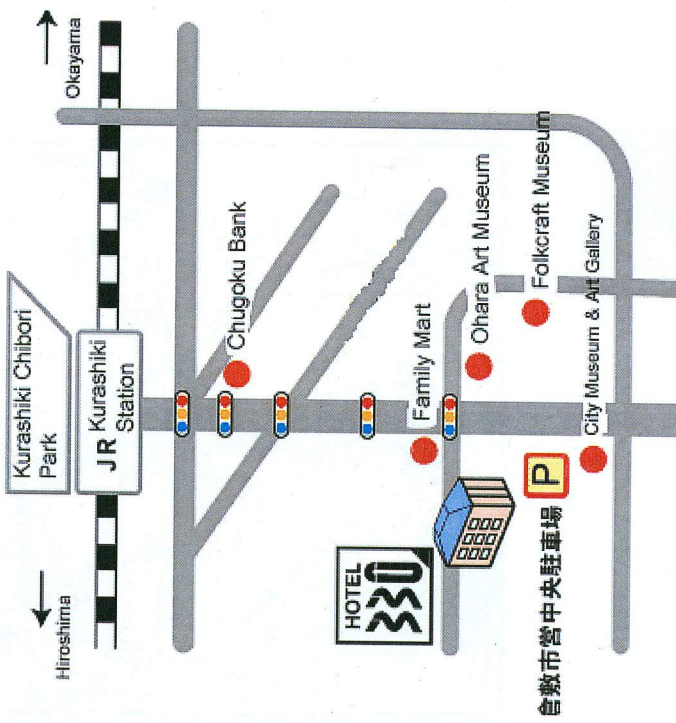
Hotel Resol Kurashiki
 2-2-26 Chuō
 Kurashiki
 Okayama
 710-0046
 Tel: 086-427-9269
 Check-in: 14.00pm
 Check-out: 11.00am

The hotel is good for sightseeing and business due to its location. It is just a 2-minute walk from the hotel to "Bikan area", where there is a row of traditional houses dating from the Edo period.

There is a restaurant on the first floor that serves Japanese and Western food.

Directions

The hotel is an 8-minute walk from JR Kurashiki train station to the hotel. It is 4 minutes drive from the station to the hotel by taxi.



Kyoto

Toyoko Inn Kyoto Shijo Karasuma
 28 Naginataboko-cho
 Shijo-dori
 Karasuma-higashi-iru
 Shimogyo-ku
 Kyoto
 600-8008
 Tel: 075 212 1045
 Check-in: 15.00pm
 Check-out: 10.00am

東横INN京都四條烏丸
 〒600-8008
 京都市下京区
 四條通烏丸東入ル
 長刀鉈町28

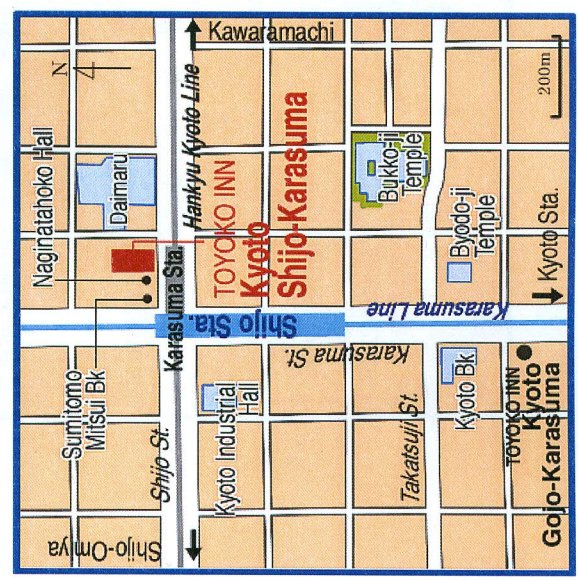


The Toyoko Inn is situated just one minute's walk from Shijo-Karasuma crossing in the centre of Kyoto and is very close to Kyoto's Geisha area and main restaurants area. The fascinating Nishiki food market is in the back streets behind the hotel and you are also within walking distance of the Kyoto Museum and Yasaka Shrine. A simple Japanese breakfast is provided free of charge at the hotel and coin laundry facilities are available. Internet access is provided free of charge in the lobby and there are also LAN ports in the rooms.

NOTE: Guestrooms are cleaned between 10am and 4pm. During this time it is not possible to have access to your room. If you think you will need access during this time you should ask the front desk staff for "no-cleaning" (掃除なしをお願いします) when you go out in the morning. They will still provide clean towels, left just outside your room.

Directions

From Kyoto Station take a taxi to the hotel (10 minutes) or take the subway to Shijo Station. The hotel is 30 seconds walk from Exit 20. From Shijo-Karasuma crossing walk in the direction of Kawaramachi and the hotel is situated on the right hand side of the road.



Yokohama

Toyoko Inn
Yokohama Sakuragi-cho
6-55 Hon-cho
Naka-ku
Yokohama
Kanagawa
231-0005

Tel: 045-671-1045

Check-in: 15.00pm

Check-out: 10.00am

東横INN横浜桜木町
〒231-0005
神奈川県横浜市
中区本町6-55



The Toyoko Inn Sakuragi-cho is located in the bay area of Yokohama and prides itself upon its cleanliness, safety, and simplicity. The rooms have good-sized beds and ample space. 5 minutes walk from Sakuragi-cho station. Within walking distance of Minato Mirai, Yamashita Park, and Bashamichi, this hotel has an ideal location for business or sightseeing.

A simple Japanese style breakfast is provided free of charge and rooms are equipped with hairdryers, refrigerators and air conditioning as standard. Soap and shampoo as well toothbrushes and night gowns are also provided and all the rooms have a free LAN internet socket.

Directions

This hotel is a 5 minute walk from Sakuragi-cho station on the JR Negishi line, Tokyu Toyoko, and Subway Lines or a 1 minute walk from the No.3 exit of Bashamichi Station on Minato Mirai Line.

