Nara
City

Nara, a city even older than Kyoto, has the distinction of being the first permanent capital of Japan. Previously, the capital had moved to the palace of what is now Hiroshima.

But from Ptolemy to 8th century, with other 10 years at nearby Nagaokakyo — Nara was a large metropolis of palaces, temples, shrines and dwellings. The arts, crafts and indusyry were flourishing and Nara had become Japan's cultural heart, a status that it would keep for the next 400 years. But it is also the oldest wooden building in Japan.

Nara was founded in 710, in order to consolidate the rule of the newly ascended Emperor Kammu. Although the capital was destroyed in the 8th and 9th centuries, a number of buildings and Buddhist images designed National Treasures have survived to the present day. These include the, the Kofukuji Temple, one of the most famous sites of the ancient capital city of Nara.

Nara Park

Nara Park is a 50% wooded area more popula-

By JR train:

From Kansai International Airport: 

45 min. by Limited Express “Hikari” to JR Kyoto Station.

From Osaka International Airport: 

35 min. by Nankai Limited Express “Rapi:t” to Nara Station. 28 min. by JR train from Nara Station to Kyoto Station.

Getting Around

An extensive bus and subway network covers the city. Fares start from ¥230 for buses and from ¥210 for subways, with fares starting from around ¥450 for the first class. The comprehensive Kyoto International Conference Center is just across the street from the Kyoto Station. The Kyoto International Congress Center is also a popular destination for business travelers. The Kyoto International Conference Center is located in the northwestern part of the city is also a convenient transportation hub.

Accommodations

Kyoto is a paradise for food lovers and it is known for its traditional style of cooking. It is also a great place to shop for traditional Japanese souvenirs. The Kyoto International Congress Center is located in the northwestern part of the city is also a convenient transportation hub.

Kyoto

Kyoto was the imperial capital of Japan for over a thousand years. It was the site of the ancient capital of Nara, which was founded in 710. Kyoto was also the cultural and artistic center of the nation — a position it still holds today as one of the political capitals.

The more than 1,600 Buddhist temples and 300 shrines are an important part of the city's agricultural and economic landscape. The comprehensive Kyoto International Conference Center located in the northwestern part of the city is also a convenient transportation hub.

Kyoto, called Heian-kyo. — Capital of Peace — doesn't live up to its name. Kyoto is the largest city in Japan with a population of 4.5 million. It is also the largest city in the world. Thriving electric, machinery and chemical plants are numerous. The comprehensive Kyoto International Conference Center located in the northwestern part of the city is also a convenient transportation hub.

Shinkansen

Eyes on Kyoto — eyes on Kyoto

A city that was once the heart of Japan is now a major tourist destination.

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Cultural Experience

Kyoto is a city of contrasts. Its past is a living museum, in which you can glimpse the splendor of the ancient imperial capital. But today, its face is a blend of old and new, where cutting-edge technology and artistry sit side by side.

Kyoto is also a center of classical culture. Whether you’re interested in traditional arts like calligraphy, pottery, or tea ceremony, or modern innovations like Kyoto’s cutting-edge film industry, there’s something for everyone.

Walking Tour Routes

Some of the most pleasant experiences in Kyoto are reserved for those who have the time and patience to walk certain parts of the city. Below are a few recommended walking routes.

- **Higashiyama Area**
  - **Sangenjaya Temple** — This temple, located on a small hill overlooking the city, was built in 1180 as a memorial for the Empress Shoken, who died here. The temple complex includes a beautiful rock garden and a small museum.

- **Nishi-Honganji Temple** — This temple, once the headquarters of the Tendai school of Buddhism, is considered one of the most important Buddhist temples in Japan. It was founded in 1383 by the monk Bungen Shonin and is located in the heart of the Higashiyama district.

- **Howard Japonica Plaza** — This shopping center is located in the heart of the city and offers a great mix of traditional and modern shops.

For more information on cultural experiences in Kyoto, please visit the official Kyoto Tourism website.

CENTRAL KYOTO

**Gion-Honganji Temple** (Kasuga-dai) — The largest wooden building in Kyoto, it was founded in 1602 and is the current headquarters of the Tendai school of Buddhism. The temple is located in the Gion district, which is known for its traditional shops and restaurants.

**Nijo-jo Castle** — This castle was the residence of the shogun during the Edo period. It was built in 1601 and is located in the Nijo-jo district. The castle is open to the public and offers great views of the city.

**Kiyomizu-dera Temple** — This temple is famous for its large wooden stage and beautiful location overlooking the city. It was founded in 798 and is located in the Higashiyama district.

**Kinkaku-ji Temple** — This temple, also known as the Golden Pavilion, is one of the most famous temples in Japan. It was built in 1397 and is located in the Higashiyama district.

**Shinnyo-do Temple** — This temple is located in the Nishi-Honganji district and is known for its beautiful views of the city.

**Tofuku-ji Temple** — This temple is known for its large wooden stage and beautiful views of the city. It was founded in 1339 and is located in the Nishi-Honganji district.

EASTERN KYOTO (Higashiyama)

**Kiyomizu-dera Temple** — Known for its beautiful views of the city, it was founded in 798 and is the current headquarters of the Tendai school of Buddhism. The temple is located in the Higashiyama district.

**Shokokuji Temple** — This temple is known for its beautiful views of the city and its traditional architecture. It was founded in 1315 and is located in the Nishi-Honganji district.

**Shisendo Temple** — This temple is located in the Nishi-Honganji district and is known for its beautiful views of the city.

**Tenryu-ji Temple** — This temple is known for its beautiful views of the city and its traditional architecture. It was founded in 1339 and is located in the Nishi-Honganji district.

**Kasuga Taisha Shrine** — This shrine is located in the Higashiyama district and is known for its beautiful views of the city.

**Shrine of the Stone Pagoda** — This shrine is located in the Higashiyama district and is known for its beautiful views of the city.

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Note for Imperial Palace and Villa Visitors

Kyoto Imperial Palace is now open to the public throughout the year (except on Mondays, the period before the Emperor’s birthday, and on days when Imperial Court functions are scheduled).

**Open Hours:**
- April to August: 9 am - 5 pm (Last entry 4:30 pm)
- October to February: 9 am - 4 pm (Last entry 3:30 pm)
- Closed on Fridays (except during the period before the Emperor’s birthday)
- Closed on Wednesdays

**Visiting the Imperial Palace:**
Visitors must be 18 years of age or older and provide ID. No Kagura or Kyogen performances are presented inside the gate, and all cameras and electronic devices must be checked at the entrance. Visitors are also required to follow certain dress codes.

**How to Apply:**
Visitors are distributed on-site at each location from 10 am to 5 pm. After completing all procedures, visitors are given entrance tickets and an explanation of the site.

For more information on Imperial Palace regulations, please visit the official Kyoto Imperial Palace website.