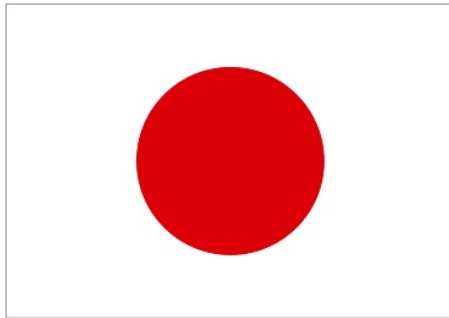


Explore Japan

A Trip to Tokyo, Kyoto, Kamakura and Mount Fuji

By:

Raman Srinivasan



Japan flag

Fremont, California 94555
www.raman-srinivasan.com

July 2008

Contents

1	Introduction	2
1.1	Facts about Japan	2
1.2	Trip details	2
2	Airticket Details	3
2.1	International Airticket	3
3	Day trips in Tokyo	3
3.1	Day 01, Tokyo free and easy	3
3.1.1	Shibuya	3
3.1.2	Asakusa	3
3.1.3	Akihabara	3
3.1.4	Shinjuku	4
3.2	Day 02, Mt Fuji day trip	4
3.3	Day 03, Tsukiji fish market	5
3.4	Day 04, Kyoto day trip	6
3.5	Day 05, Kamakura, Tokyo free and easy	6
4	Getting around in Tokyo	7
4.1	JR Yamanote	7
4.2	Shinkansen	8
5	Accommodation in Tokyo	8
6	Eating in Japan	9
6.1	Shinjuku	9
6.2	Shibuya	9
6.3	Roppongi	9
6.4	Kyoto	9
6.5	Kamakura	9
6.6	Mt Fuji	9
7	Appendix	10
7.1	Map of Japan	10
7.2	JR Yamanote line (most important line in Tokyo)	11

1 Introduction

1.1 Facts about Japan



Figure 1: Lonely Planet Tokyo map

The sheer level of energy is the most striking aspect of Japan's capital city. Tokyo is a place where the urgent rhythms of consumer culture collide with the quieter moments that linger from older traditions. It's hectic madness leavened by the most Zen-like of calms.

While it's true the exciting vibe has a somewhat depressing flip side - shoebox housing estates and office blocks traversed by overhead expressways crowded with traffic - Tokyo remains a glittering example of the 'miracle' of post-WWII Japan.

1.2 Trip details

<i>Date</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
15 Sept 2008	Monday	SFO to Tokyo, dept 1.30pm	Northwest Air 27
16 Sept 2008	Tuesday	Arrival at Tokyo, 2.10pm	Airport limousine transfer
17 Sept 2008	Wednesday	Newton visit	Business meeting
18 Sept 2008	Thursday	Newton visit	Business meeting
19 Sept 2008	Friday	Newton visit	Business meeting
20 Sept 2008	Saturday	Newton visit	Business meeting
21 Sept 2008	Sunday	Tokyo free and easy / Shinjuku	check in to hotel
22 Sept 2008	Monday	Tsukiji fish market / Kamakura	from Shinjuku
23 Sept 2008	Tuesday	Mt Fuji day trip	by bus from Shinjuku
24 Sept 2008	Wednesday	Kyoto day trip by Bullet train	from Tokyo station
25 Sept 2008	Thursday	Tokyo to SFO, depart at 4.05pm	Northwest Air 28

2 Airticket Details

2.1 International Airticket

Reservation no. JRPDVY

Northwest 27

15 Sept Depart 1.30pm San Francisco (SFO) to Tokyo (NRT) arrival at 5.05pm

Northwest 28

25 Sept Depart 4.05pm Tokyo(NRT) to San Francisco (SFO) arrival at 9.30am

3 Day trips in Tokyo

3.1 Day 01, Tokyo free and easy

3.1.1 Shibuya

Shibuya is one of Tokyo's most colorful and busy districts and birthplace to many of Japan's fashion and entertainment trends. Most of the area's large department and fashion stores belong to either Tokyo or Seibu, two competing corporations.

A prominent landmark of Shibuya is the large intersection in front of the station (Hachiko Exit), which is heavily decorated by neon advertisements and giant video screens and gets crossed by amazingly large crowds of pedestrians each time the traffic light turns green.

3.1.2 Asakusa

Asakusa's main attraction is Sensoji, a very popular Buddhist temple, built in the 7th century. The temple is approached via the Nakamise, a shopping street that has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional, local snacks and tourist souvenirs for centuries.

Asakusa can be easily explored on foot. Alternatively, you can consider a guided tour on a rickshaw (jinrikisha, lit. "man powered vehicle"). A 30 minute tour for two persons costs around 8000 Yen. Shorter and longer courses are also available.

3.1.3 Akihabara

Akihabara (short: Akiba) is a district in central Tokyo, famous for its many electronics shops. In recent years, it has also gained fame as a center of the gaming, manga and animation culture. A major redevelopment of Akihabara Station and surroundings is nearing its completion, giving Akihabara a new face.

Electronics

Hundreds of electronics shops of various sizes can be found around Akihabara Station and along Chuo Dori (Chuo Avenue). They offer everything from the newest computers, cameras, televisions, mobile phones and home appliances to second-hand goods and electronic junk.

A few major stores, such as Ishimaru Denki, Sofmap and Laox operate multiple branch stores mainly along the main roads, while many smaller shops can be found in the narrow

side streets.

Note that some of the electronic appliances on sale are only suited for use in Japan due to voltage and other technical differences and limited warranty. However, several stores also feature a selection of products for overseas use and offer duty free shopping to foreign tourists on purchases of over 10,000 Yen (passport required).

3.1.4 Shinjuku

Shinjuku is one of the 23 wards of Tokyo, but the name commonly refers just to the large entertainment, business and shopping area around Shinjuku Station.

Handling more than two million passengers each day, Shinjuku Station is Japan's busiest railway station, served by six railway companies and about a dozen railway and subway lines, including the JR Yamanote Line.

West of the station is Shinjuku's skyscraper district, home to many of Tokyo's tallest buildings, including several premier hotels and the Metropolitan Government Office, whose observation decks are open to the public for free.

Northeast of the station lies Kabukicho, Japan's largest and wildest red light district, while department stores, subterranean malls and electronic shops surround Shinjuku Station on all four sides, including the recently redeveloped south, where the pleasant Southern Terrace is located. Redevelopment there is still ongoing.

Electronics stores in Shinjuku

1. Yodobashi Camera
2. Bic Camera
3. Sakuraya

3.2 Day 02, Mt Fuji day trip

Mount Fuji is stunningly impressive. At 3,716m (12,388 ft.), it's the tallest mountain in Japan, towering far above anything else around it – a cone of almost perfectly symmetrical proportions. It is majestic, grand, and awe-inspiring. To the Japanese it symbolizes the very spirit of their country. Though it's visible on clear days (mostly in winter) from as far away as 161km (100 miles), Fuji-san is, unfortunately, almost always cloaked in clouds. If you catch a glimpse of this mighty mountain, consider yourself extremely lucky. One of the best spots for views of Mount Fuji is Hakone .

Essentials

There are six ascents to the summit of Mount Fuji (and six descents), each divided into 10 stages of unequal length, with most climbs starting at the Go-go-me, or the 5th Stage. From Tokyo, Kawaguchiko Trail is the most popular and most easily accessible, as well as the least steep. Although the "official" climbing season is from mid-July to the end of August, you can climb Mount Fuji April through October, weather permitting.

Getting There – The easiest way to reach Kawaguchiko Trail's 5th Stage is by bus from Shinjuku Station; most trips require a change of buses at Kawaguchiko Station. There are some 13 buses a day in operation between Shinjuku and Kawaguchiko Station from mid-July to the end of August, with less frequent service April through mid-July and September through October. The bus ride from Shinjuku Station, with departures a 2-minute walk

from the west side of the station in front of the Yasuda Seimi no. 2 Building at bus platform no. 50, takes about 1 hour and 45 minutes and costs 1,700 (\$16) one-way to Kawaguchiko Station. Note that you must make a reservation for this bus through Keio Kosoku Bus Yoyaku Center (tel. 03/5376-2222) or a travel agency such as JTB. Less frequent buses depart from Tokyo Station's Yaesu south exit for the same price.

Bus stop locations:

Shinjuku to Kawaguchiko 5th Station:
Valid until June 30, 2008

Operated by: [Fujikyu Bus](#) and [Keio Bus](#)

	A	A
Shinjuku	08:45	10:55
Kawaguchiko 5th Station	11:10	13:20

	A	A
Kawaguchiko 5th Station	14:00	16:20
Shinjuku	16:00	18:20

A = operates on weekends and public holidays between April 7 and June 30

	one way
Shinjuku - Kawaguchiko 5th Station	2,600 yen

Seat reservations are mandatory.

Not covered by the [Japan Rail Pass](#)

Not covered by the [Fuji Hakone Pass](#)

Figure 2: Mt Fuji bus timing

Shinjuku:

Buses depart from the Keio Highway Bus Terminal on the west side of JR Shinjuku Station.

3.3 Day 03, Tsukiji fish market

Tsukiji Central Wholesale Market is a large market for fish, fruit and vegetables in central Tokyo. It is the most famous of over ten wholesale markets that handle the distribution of fish, fruit, vegetables, meat and flowers for metropolitan Tokyo.

Tsukiji Market is best known as one of the world's largest fish markets, handling over 2,000 tons of marine products per day. The sight of the many kinds of fresh fish, shellfish and other seafood and the busy atmosphere of scooters, trucks, sellers and buyers hurrying around, make Tsukiji Market one of Tokyo's major tourist attractions.

Just outside of the wholesale market is a thriving "outside market" of small retail shops and restaurants that cater to the public. Here you can find all sorts of food related goods, knives, vegetables and fish for sale in smaller (than wholesale) portions.

A visit to Tsukiji Market is best combined with a fresh sushi breakfast or lunch at one of the onsite or local restaurants. Restaurants typically open around five in the morning and close between 12:00 and 15:00.

The spectacular tuna auctions in the early morning hours are both a main attraction for visitors and the main source of frictions between market workers and tourists, due to the interference caused by the sheer number of spectators and cases of misbehaving tourists. To reduce the friction, please view the auctions only from the designated "visitor area" and do not use flash photography. The market is closed on Sunday and some Wednesday.

Getting there from Shinjuku Station

Take the Oedo Subway Line directly from Shinjuku Station to Tsukijishijo Station. The one way trip takes 20 minutes and costs 260 yen.

3.4 Day 04, Kyoto day trip

Kyoto was Japan's capital and the emperor's residence from 794 until 1868. It is now the country's seventh largest city with a population of 1.4 million people and a modern face.

Top sites in Kyoto to visit:

Kiyomizudera ("Pure Water Temple") is one of the most celebrated temples of Japan. It was founded in 780 and remains associated with the Hosso sect, one of the oldest sects within Japanese Buddhism. In 1994, the temple was added to the list of UNESCO world heritage sites.

How to get there:

Kiyomizudera can be reached from Kyoto Station in about 15 minutes by bus. Take bus number 100 or 206 and get off at Kiyomizu-michi or Gojo-zaka, from where it is a 10-15 minute uphill walk to the temple.

Sanjusangendo is the popular name for Rengeo-in, a temple in eastern Kyoto which is famous for its 1001 statues of Kannon, the goddess of mercy. The temple was founded in 1164 and its present structures date from 1266.

The main hall, which houses the statues, is with over 100 meters Japan's longest wooden structure. In its center sits one large Kannon, flanked on each side by 500 smaller statues, standing in neat rows side by side, each as tall as a human being.

How to get there:

Sanjusangendo is a 15-20 minute walk or a short bus ride (lines 100, 206 or 208) from Kyoto Station.

3.5 Day 05, Kamakura, Tokyo free and easy

Kamakura is a coastal town in Kanagawa prefecture, less than one hour south of Tokyo. Today, Kamakura is a very popular tourist destination. Sometimes called the Kyoto of Eastern Japan, Kamakura offers numerous temples, shrines and other historical monuments. In addition, Kamakura's sand beaches attract large crowds during the summer months.

Top sites to visit in Kamakura

Daibutsu the Great Buddha of Kamakura is a bronze statue of Amida Buddha that is located on the grounds of the Kotokuin Temple. With a height of 13.35 meters, it is the second largest Buddha statue in Japan (the largest is located in the Todaiji Temple in Nara).

The statue was cast in 1252 and originally located inside a large temple hall. However, the temple buildings were washed away by a tsunami tidal wave in the end of the 15th century, and since then the Buddha stands in the open air.

How to get there:

The Great Buddha is located a 5 minute walk from the Enoden Railway Hase Station, the third station from Kamakura main station. The Enoden is a streetcar-like train that connects Kamakura with Enoshima and Fujisawa. Its terminal station in Kamakura is located just west of JR Kamakura Station.

Tsurugaoka Hachimangu is Kamakura's most important shrine. It was founded by Minamoto Yoriyoshi in 1063, and enlarged and moved to its current site in 1180 by Minamoto Yoritomo, the founder and first shogun of the Kamakura government.

The shrine is dedicated to Hachiman, the patron god of the Minamoto family and of the samurai in general. The deified spirits of the ancient Emperor Ojin who has been identified with Hachiman, Empress Jingu and Emperor Chuai are enshrined in the main buildings of the Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine.

How to get there:

The Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine can be reached from Kamakura Station either through the busy Komachi-dori shopping street, or along the Dankazura, a pedestrian path in the center of Wakamiya Oji street that is lined with several hundreds of cherry trees. The walk from Kamakura station takes about 10-15 minutes.

Getting to Kamakura from Shinjuku

From Shinjuku, direct trains on the JR Shonan Shinjuku Line require about one hour and cost 890 Yen to Kamakura. Only trains bound for Zushi, that is roughly every second train on the Shonan Shinjuku Line, provide a direct connection to Kamakura. Otherwise, a transfer of trains is required at Ofuna Station.

4 Getting around in Tokyo

4.1 JR Yamanote

The JR Yamanote Line is Tokyo's most important train line. It is a circular line which connects Tokyo's major city centers. A trip around the whole circle takes approximately one hour. Even though a single train on the Yamanote Line is roughly 200 meters long, there are departures about every two to four minutes in each direction. See details in the Appendix section.

4.2 Shinkansen

The Tokaido Shinkansen, connecting Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyoto and Osaka. The trains operating on the Tokaido/Sanyo Shinkansen are of the following three categories:

Nozomi: Nozomi trains stop only at the most important stations, and reach Osaka from Tokyo in about two and a half hours. The nozomi is one of the very few trains on the JR network that cannot be used with the Japan Rail Pass.

Hikari: Hikari trains stop a little bit more frequently than nozomi trains, and need roughly three hours to reach Osaka from Tokyo. On the Sanyo Shinkansen, the Hikari trains are known as "Hikari Railstar".

Kodama: The slowest category. Kodama trains stop at all stations.

5 Accommodation in Tokyo



Figure 3: Hotel in Tokyo

Shinjuku New City hotel Tokyo
4-31-1 Nishi-Shinjuku
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0023
Japan

6 Eating in Japan

6.1 Shinjuku

Court Lodge 10-9, Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku, Sri Lankan food, and order food take away in the front.

Food Court All large department stores have food court in their basement. Food is reasonably priced and ordering is a breeze.

Tsunahachi They serve tasty tempura. Sit at the counter and order food. This place is near Mitsukoshi department store.

6.2 Shibuya

Bio cafe All you can eat desert cafe. They serve healthy vegetarian food. Lunch is priced around Y1400.

Kantipur Serve generous portion of Nepalese food.

6.3 Roppongi

Bengawan Solo Great Indonesian place for dinner

Erawan Thai cafe serving spicy food.

6.4 Kyoto

Kyoto station area Try the food court at 11th floor on the west side of the building.

Kerala Very reliable Indian lunch sets. They are near Kawaramachi-dori.

Yak and Yeti This place serves reasonably priced Nepali curry sets for lunch and dinner.

6.5 Kamakura

Station area The streets around Komachi-dori and Wakamiya-oji are happy hunting grounds for restaurants and snack stands.

6.6 Mt Fuji

Kawaguchi-ko Plenty of eateries near the 5th station.

7 Appendix

7.1 Map of Japan



Figure 4: Lonely Planet Japan map

7.2 JR Yamanote line (most important line in Tokyo)

Shinjuku	Shinjuku Station is Japan's busiest train station. It is located in the middle of the large Shinjuku business, entertainment and shopping district. Many suburban train lines commence at Shinjuku Station.
Yoyogi	The north entrance of the Meiji Shrine can be accessed from Yoyogi Station.
Harajuku	Harajuku is a shopping and entertainment district for young people, especially teenagers. The main entrance to Meiji Shrine is located next to Harajuku Station.
Shibuya	Shibuya is a large shopping and business district particularly popular among the younger generations. Several suburban train lines commence at Shibuya Station.
Ebisu	Closest station to Yebisu Garden Place .
Meguro	
Gotanda	
Osaki	
Shinagawa	The Tokaido/Sanyo Shinkansen trains stop at Shinagawa Station. Shinagawa is the closest JR station to Sengakuji Temple .

Figure 5: JR Yamanote line

Tamachi	
Hamamatsucho	Hamamatsucho is the closest JR station to the Tokyo Tower and Zojoji Temple . It is also the terminal station of the Tokyo Monorail, which connects central Tokyo with the domestic Haneda Airport .
Shimbashi	Shimbashi is a large business area and the closest JR station to the Tsukiji Fish Market , Shiodome Shiosite and Hama Rikyu Gardens .
Yurakucho	Yurakucho Station is the closest JR station to the Sakuradamon entrance gate of the Imperial Palace and to the famous Ginza shopping and entertainment district.
Tokyo	Tokyo Station is the terminal station of all shinkansen lines. It is located in the prestigious Marunouchi business district, the Imperial Palace and the Imperial Palace East Gardens . Many suburban train lines pass through or commence at Tokyo Station.
Kanda	
Akihabara	Akihabara Station is located just next to Akihabara Electric Town , a large shopping area for electronics.
Okachimachi	The Ameyoko shopping street starts at Okachimachi Station.

Figure 6: JR Yamanote line

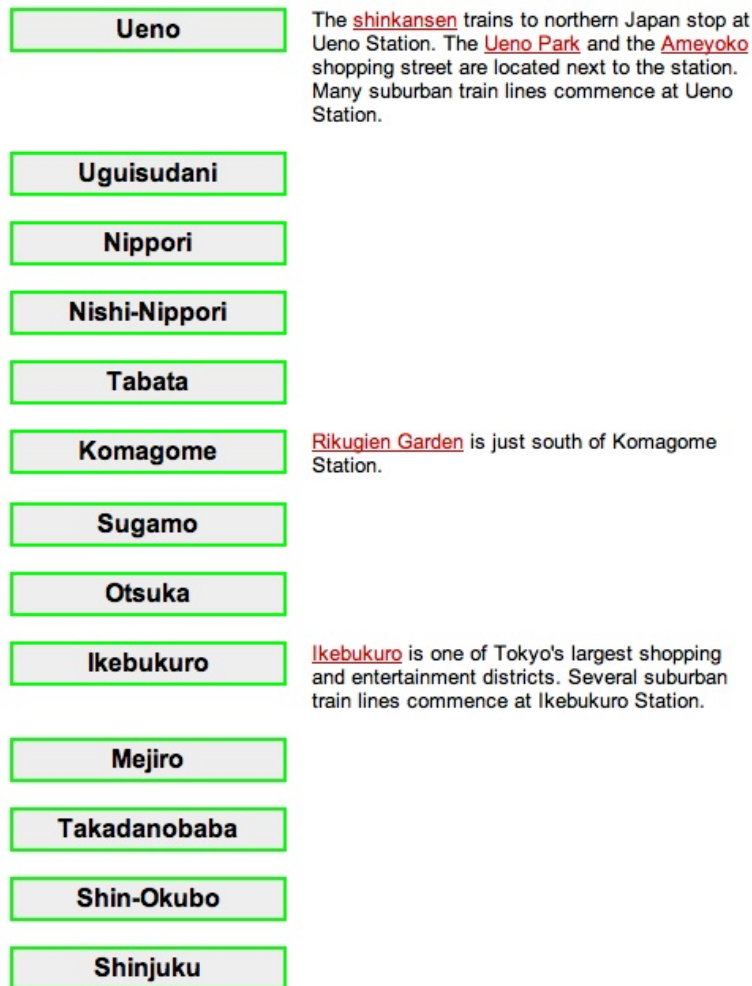


Figure 7: JR Yamanote line

Major JR train lines in Central Tokyo

The map below shows Tokyo's major railway stations and the five JR lines that are most relevant to people who travel within central Tokyo.

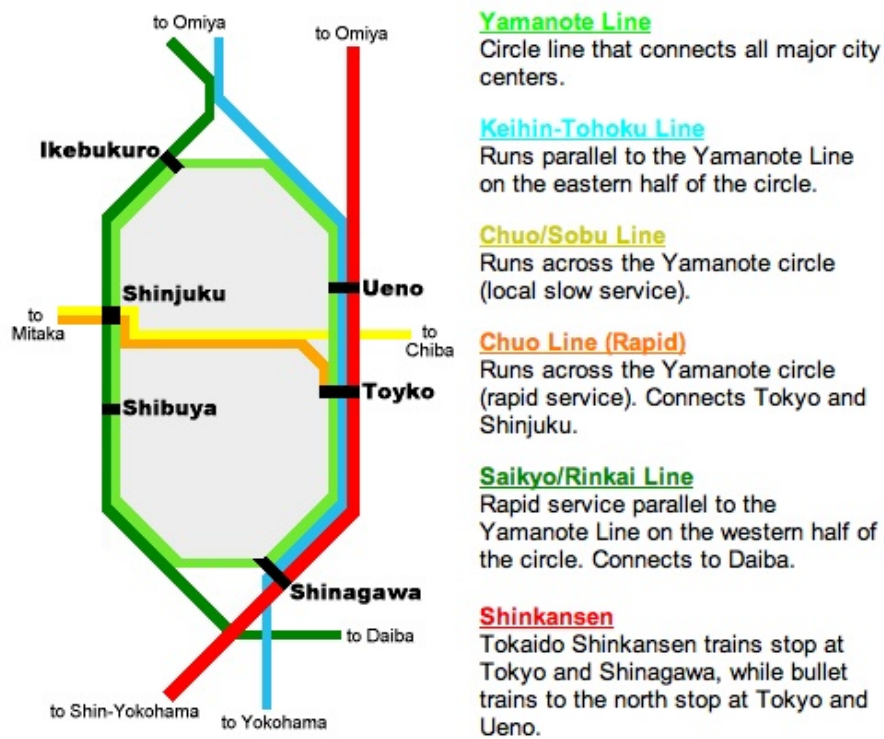


Figure 8: other major JR Yamanote line