

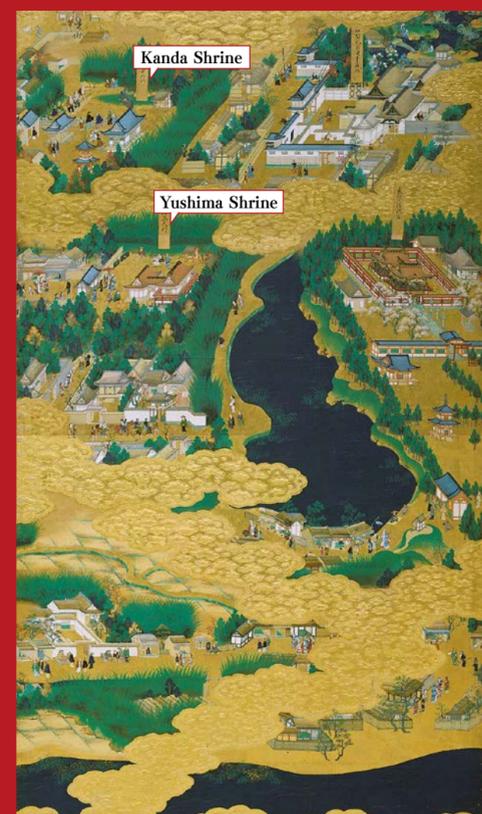
Yushima area walking map

Explore the spiritual culture of Old Tokyo

Yushima Shrine
Kanda Shrine
Yushima Seido
Nicolai-do Cathedral
Akihabara

Old Tokyo Walking Guide

English



Uncover the spiritual traditions of Yushima

Experience Edo and Tokyo culture on foot

“Old Tokyo” is a district in northeast Tokyo that contains much of the city’s richest cultural heritage from feudal, modern and contemporary times. The Yushima area at the heart of Old Tokyo is home to a variety of spiritual culture stretching back to ancient times.

A microcosm of Japan’s spiritual culture

Similar to Japan as a whole, Yushima contains a mix of both indigenous spiritual traditions and foreign culture: Shinto shrines over 1,000 years old, a feudal-era center of Confucian learning, an Orthodox cathedral that was an early symbol of Westernization, and the subculture paradise of Akihabara. Uncover Japan’s spiritual roots in the heart of Tokyo.



Spiritual culture route

A 2-hour walk from ancient times to the present

This route begins at Yushima Shrine in the north and follows the edge of Hongo Hill to Kanda Shrine and Yushima Seido, three sites of traditional spiritual culture dating from ancient times to the 17th century. Continue south across the Kanda River to find Nicolai-do Cathedral and Manseibashi Station, symbols of Japan’s 19th century modernization. The walk ends in Akihabara, the global Mecca of Japanese pop culture. Connect history, culture, and geography as you walk through this unique corner of the city.

Yushima spiritual culture route

Access: Yushima Shrine is a 5-10 minute walk from Ueno Park, JR Okachimachi Station, or Yushima Station on the Tokyo Metro Chiyoda Line.

Distance: 3 kilometers

Time needed: 2 hours

Two faces of high and low Tokyo

Tokyo’s cultural geography reflects the city’s hills and valleys. During the Edo Period (1603-1868), the western hills were home to sophisticated samurai culture, while a cosmopolitan commoner culture thrived in the eastern

Major festivals

Please check actual dates on the Web.

End of February~Beginning of March **Yushima Shrine**

Ume plum festival

Some 300 plum trees are in bloom between late February and early March.

March~April **Nicolai-do Cathedral**

Paskha (Easter)

Paskha is the most important holiday of the Orthodox Church. Ceremonies are held late at night on the Saturday and Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring equinox.

Fourth Sunday of April **Yushima Seido**

Confucius Festival

The Confucius Festival is a traditional ceremony of Yushima Seido held every April that commemorates Confucius and other Confucian scholars.

May (2017, 2019, 2021...) **Kanda Shrine**

Kanda Festival

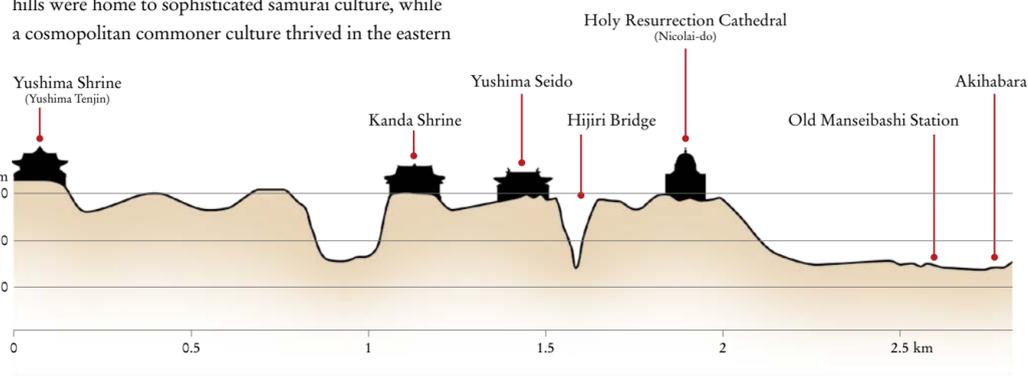
Kanda Festival is one of the major festivals of Tokyo held every other year in May, when tens of thousands of local residents parade through the streets to Kanda Shrine.

End of May **Yushima Shrine**

Yushima Shrine Grand Festival

The grounds of Yushima Shrine are filled with parade participants and revelers during this major festival.

lowlands. These two cultural zones intersect in Yushima, creating the area’s distinct local character.



Historical events in Yushima, Japan and the world

4th century	Partition of the Roman Empire (395)
5th century	Yushima Shrine founded (458)
8th century	Kanda Shrine founded (730)
9th century	Sugawara no Michizane, a Heian Era scholar, is born and remembered as a god of learning (845)
11th century	Beginning of Crusades (1096-1270)
14th century	Yushima Shrine enshrines Sugawara no Michizane (1355)
15th century	Columbus sails to the Americas (1492)
17th century	Tokugawa Shogunate formed in Edo (1603) Kanda River excavated as a outer moat of Edo Castle Kanda Shrine and Yushima Seido move to present locations (1690)
18th century	Yushima Shrine burns down in fire (1703) Yushima Seido rebuilt in present style (1799) French Revolution (1789)
19th century	Saint Nicolai of Japan, founder of Nicolai-do, arrives from Russia (1861) Meiji Restoration (1868) First modern exhibition in Japan held at Yushima Seido (1872) Nicolai-do completed (1891) Russo-Japanese War (1904) Manseibashi Station opens (1912) First World War (1914-1918) Great Kanto Earthquake damages Yushima Seido, Kanda Shrine, and Nicolai-do (1923) Hijiri Bridge erected as reconstruction project (1927) Nicolai-do and Yushima Seido reconstructed (1929,1935) Tokyo air raids (1944-1945) End of Second World War (1945) San Francisco Peace Treaty signed between Japan and Allies (1952) Nicolai-do listed as important cultural property (1962) Tokyo Olympics (1964) Tokyo designates main gate of Yushima Shrine as a cultural property (1970) Yushima Seido receives Confucius Statue from Taipei (1975) Yushima Shrine buildings rebuilt (1995)
20th century	



Locations introduced in this guide

Yushima Shrine
Address...3-30-1 Yushima, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0034
Phone...03-3836-0753
Admission...Free
Hours...6:00-20:00
WEB...http://www.yushimatenjin.or.jp/pc/index.htm

Kanda Shrine
Address...2-16-2 Sotokanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0021
Phone...03-3254-0753
Admission...Free
Hours...24 hours(Lights turned off at 23:00)
WEB...http://www.kandamyoujin.or.jp/

How to pray at a shrine
1 Wash hands Before entering the shrine, use a cup at the fountain to wash both hands, then wash your mouth
2 Two bows, two claps, one bow Ring the bell and toss an offering in the box. Then take two shallow bows, clap twice, and bow once again.

Yushima Seido
Address...1-4-25 Yushima, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0034
Phone...03-3251-4606
Admission...Free
Hours...9:30-17:00 (16:00 in winter)
*Interior of Taiseiden open from 10:00 AM on weekends and holidays
WEB...http://www.seido.or.jp/

Hijiri Bridge Address...4 Kanda Surugadai, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, next to Ochanomizu Station

Tokyo Holy Resurrection Cathedral Address...4-1-3 Kanda Surugadai, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0062
Phone...03-3295-6879
Admission...300 yen
Hours...13:00-16:00 (-15:30 Oct.-March)
WEB...http://nikolaido.jp/

Manners
● Please turn off mobile phones
● Please be silent in the cathedral and remove gloves and hats
● Please refrain from taking photos or eating inside
● Please cover immodest clothing

Old Manseibashi Station Address...1-25-4 Kanda Sudacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-00411 (Inside mAach ecute Manseibashi)
Phone...03-3257-8910
Admission...Free
Hours...11:00-22:00 (Stairway and platform. Open until 20:30 on weekends)
WEB...http://www.ejrcf.or.jp/mansei/

Akihabara Address...1 Sotokanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

History of Yushima

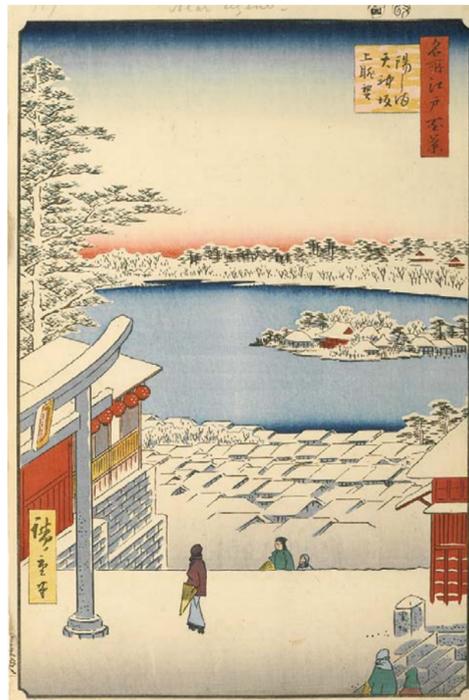
Yushima developed together with its spiritual culture. Learn the history that connects the area's different sites

1 Origins of Yushima's spiritual culture

► The ancient roots of Yushima Shrine

Yushima Shrine is the area's oldest religious site. Like many ancient shrines in Tokyo, it stands on a hill overlooking the lowlands that were once part of the sea when people first settled the region. People eventually began to live in the valleys and cultivate rice after the sea level declined, and in 458 CE Yushima Shrine was founded on top of the hill to protect the local village. For that reason, the original entrance faces the stairways to the east known as "Man's slope" and "Woman's slope."

A god of learning (Tenjin) was enshrined during feudal times and the shrine became a popular spot among literary scholars. Today the shrine is often filled with students who



"One Hundred Famous Views of Edo: View from the Hilltop of Yushima Tenjin Shrine," Utagawa Hiroshige(1856). It was once possible to see Shinobazu Pond from "Woman's slope."

write their prayers for entrance exams on wooden tablets that are left on the grounds.

Yushima Shrine has a longstanding connection to learning, but in the Edo Period the grounds were also filled with teahouses and became beloved by ordinary citizens who enjoyed the fine view of Shinobazu Pond from the edge of the hill.

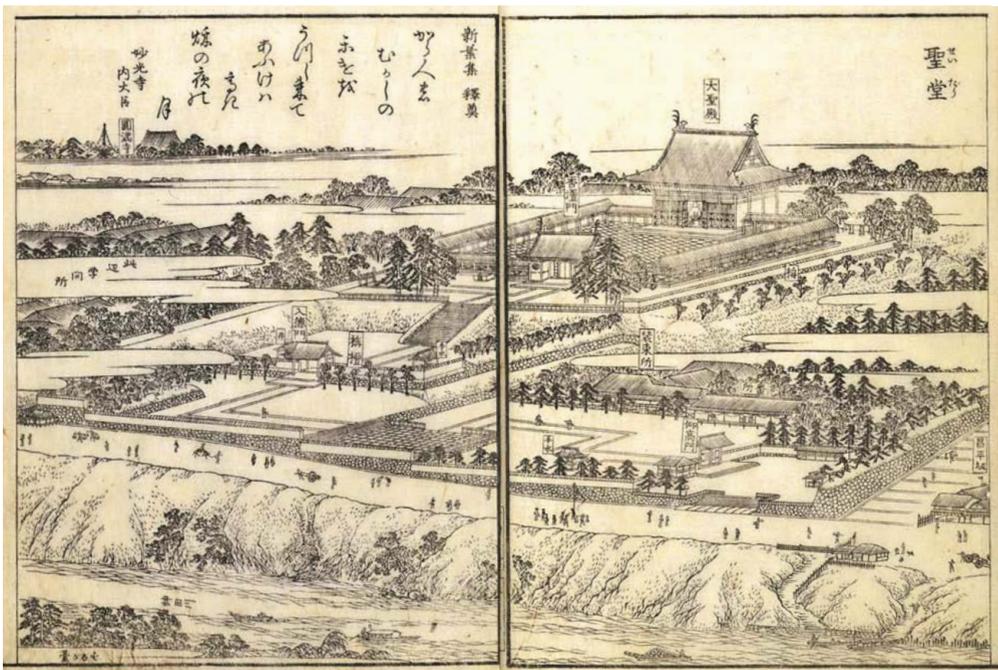
► Kanda Shrine, the spirit of Edo

Descend the stairs to the east of Yushima Shrine and walk south along the edge of Hongo hill for ten minutes, and another large set of stairs appears on the right. Above is Kanda Shrine. This shrine traces its roots to the 8th century, but it was moved to its current hilltop location in the 17th century to make way for the construction of Edo Castle. According to Chinese lore, the northeast direction was the "Devil's Gate" from which bad energy flowed, so Kanda Shrine and the large buddhist temple of Kanei'ji (now Ueno Park) were constructed to the northeast of Edo Castle to protect the city. Kanda Shrine came to be revered as the



"Famous Spots of the Eastern Capital: Kanda Shrine," Utagawa Hiroshige. Kanda Shrine and Kanei'ji Temple(now Ueno Park) were constructed to protect Edo from the ominous "Devil's Gate" to the northeast "Devil's Gate."

protector of Edo by everyone from the ruling Tokugawa family to ordinary people. Today, it remains the central religious facility for many surrounding neighborhoods. The Kanda Festival, held once every two years, is known as one of the three most famous festivals of Japan. Local residents dress in traditional clothing and carry portable shrines and floats through the surrounding area to Kanda



"Guide of famous Edo sites: Yushima Seido," Saito Choshu (1836). Yushima Seido flourished as the center of Confucian learning in Japan during the Edo Era (1603-1868)

Shrine. While preserving traditional Edo culture, the shrine is also, but is also a popular spot for Akihabara fans and businesspeople to pray for good business in the new year.

2 Edo's spiritual culture and the roots of modernity

► Center for samurai Confucian learning

Hidden in the quiet forest south of Kanda Shrine is the Confucian temple of Yushima Seido. Confucian ideas of social order became a state philosophy during the late Edo Period, and a center for Confucian learning was established here at the end of the 17th century by the acclaimed scholar Hayashi Razan. The present complex resembles the structure rebuilt at the end of the 18th century, when it was expanded and became an official government school. Samurai from across the country came here to study, and it earned a reputation as the highest institution of learning in Japan at the time.

► Start line of Japan's modernization

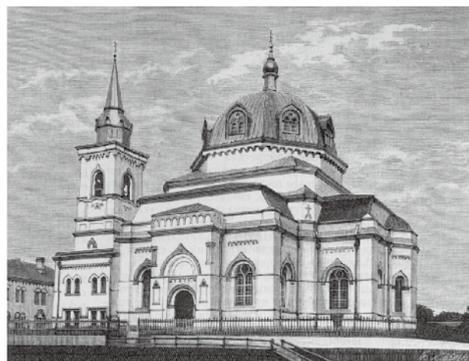
After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan began to import culture and social systems from the west and Tokyo rapidly modernized. At this time, Yushima Seido became home to the new government's education ministry, several major universities, and institutions that would later become the national library and museum. In 1872, Yushima Seido was the site of the first modern exhibition to take place in Japan. This history as a center of knowledge leaves its trace in the surrounding areas, such as the old book and publishing district of Jimbocho, and the universities located to the south on Suruga Hill.

3 Birth, destruction, and rebuilding of modern city

► Western culture and modernity on Suruga Hill

Continuing south, Western culture comes into view after crossing the Kanda River. The Orthodox Cathedral known as Nicolai-do was constructed in 1891. Built with donations from Russian and Japanese believers, when finished the cathedral's tower and dome could be seen from afar, and became one of the city's well-known Western-style buildings.

Meiji Japan also adopted another Western belief: in technology and progress. As you descend the slope along the south side of the Kanda River towards the east, the JR Chuo Line runs along a red-brick arched structure. Manseibashi Station was built here in 1912, a luxurious western-style building and central terminal in early 20th century Tokyo.



When built, Nicolai-do was the tallest building in the area. The dome was reconstructed in a different style after the Kanto Earthquake.



Completed in 1912, Manseibashi Station was a symbol of Tokyo's modernization. The building was destroyed in the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake.



Hijiri Bridge was built in 1927 as a part of post-earthquake reconstruction projects.

► The Great Kanto Earthquake destroys Tokyo

The Great Kanto Earthquake of September 1923 did severe damage to Hongo, Yushima, and Kanda. Yushima Seido, Kanda Shrine, Nicolai-do and Manseibashi Station were destroyed by collapse or fire. Soon after, the area turned to rebuilding. Nicolai-do was reconstructed in 1929 with funds collected in Russia, while Yushima Seido and Kanda Shrine were rebuilt with concrete. A new bridge spanning the Kanda River between these religious sites was named Hijiri-bashi, or "sacred bridge."Although Manseibashi Station was destroyed by fire, the old viaduct survived and was recently renovated into shops.

4 Black market origins of Akihabara culture

► "Three sacred treasures" of the electric town

Cross the river to the north and a cluster of colorful signs announces Japan's pop culture Mecca of Akihabara. This area was a sprawling black market after World War Two, and because sellers of electronic parts gathered here, Akihabara grew into the city's largest electronics district in the 1950s. Tokyo residents flocked here to buy

Postwar Akihabara began as a black market before becoming Tokyo's biggest electronics district in the 1950s. The "Radio Center" still remains today.



the "three sacred treasures" of postwar consumerism: a TV, refrigerator, and washing machine. In later years, the area's commercial focus shifted away from appliances to computers, software, and eventually the anime and idol culture that is dominant today.

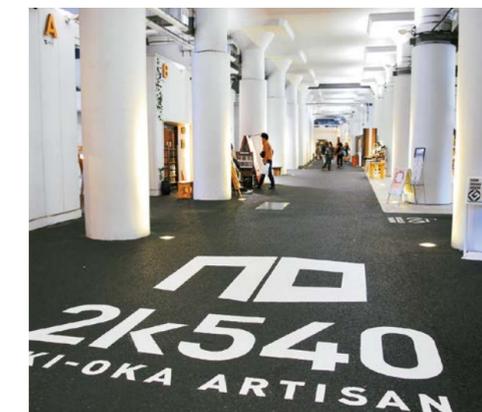
► Mecca of idol worship

Today fans around the world know Akihabara as the heart of Japanese pop culture, filled with speciality shops offering every variety of anime, manga, and video game subculture goods. "Maid cafes," where costumed women serve light meals, and the AKB 48 idol group have become symbols of Akihabara. Fans' intense enthusiasm for their interests may be Tokyo's newest spiritual culture.

5 Modern Yushima, area of culinary and artistic culture

► Towards a city of new culture

The Yushima area's rich cultural resources are not limited to spiritual facilities. Numerous old restaurants carry on Edo's culinary culture. Famous for its craftsmen in Edo, Yushima is once again becoming popular as an arts district. Arts Chiyoda 3331 is an art center containing galleries, offices, and a cafe in a renovated middle school, used for a wide variety of events and cultural activities (some paid). Akioka 2k540 is located underneath the train lines north of Akihabara, and contains around 50 shops selling handmade goods such as Japanese cloth, wooden crafts, pottery and other items.



AKIOKA 2k540 in Akihabara features workshops where visitors can experience Japanese craftsmanship.

Spot 1

A shrine to academic success, beloved for plum blossoms

Yushima Shrine (Yushima Tenjin)

Address: 113-0034 3-30-1 Yushima, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo
Phone: 03-3836-0753

Yushima Shrine is well known as home to a god of learning. Every year before exam season, the shrine fills with visitors who write prayers for academic success on the wooden tablets that fill the grounds. The shrine's main entrance now faces south, but the original entrance leads from the stairs on the eastern slope, which turns red with plum blossoms at the beginning of each spring.

Spot Man slope and woman slope

To the east of the shrine, there are two stairways leading down to the low city. The steeper stairway is known as "Man's slope (*otokozaka*)" and the gentler slope is called "Woman's slope (*onnazaka*)." Since the Edo Period, this slope has been a popular spot to see plum blossoms from the end of February until the beginning of March.



"Woman's slope" (left) and "Man's slope" (right) lead to the original entrance to the shrine



Spot Ema tablets

Yushima Shrine overflows with *ema* tablets covered with the wishes for future success of high school, university, and professional exam takers.



Ema filled wishes for academic success

Spot Plum and chrysanthemum festivals

Plum blossoms have been a symbol of spring at Yushima Shrine since the Edo Period, and chrysanthemums are placed around the grounds in November.

Yushima Shrine grounds during the plum festival



Spot 2

Edo's 1,300-year-old guardian

Kanda Shrine

Address: 2-16-2 Sotokanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0021
Phone: 03-3254-0753

Kanda Shrine was founded in the 8th century and was beloved during the Edo Period by both the shogun and commoners. Today it remains the main shrine for 108 communities in Kanda, Nihombashi, Akihabara, Otemachi, and Marunouchi. The bi-annual Kanda Festival is counted as one of the three great festivals of Edo and of Japan.

Spot Auxiliary shrines

What are the many small shrines behind the main building of Kanda Shrine? These are known as auxiliary or under shrines, which were originally located elsewhere and later relocated to the grounds of Kanda Shrine. Behind the main shrine, it is also possible to see the great difference in height between the hills and lowlands in this area.

A small auxiliary shrine behind the main shrine buildings



Spot Subculture connections

Kanda Shrine has become popular among fans of Akihabara's popular culture. In addition to traditional amulets, the shrine sells charms to protect computers and mobile phones, and special anime-themed prayer tablets.



Manga-themed ema at the shrine

Floats enter Kanda Shrine during the 2015 Kanda Festival



Spot Kanda Festival

The Kanda Festival is held once every two years in May and is one of the largest festivals in Japan. Thousands of participants wear traditional clothing and carry portable shrines and floats through the surrounding area to Kanda Shrine.

Spot 3

From Edo's seat of higher learning to a center of modern knowledge

Yushima Seido

Address: 1-4-25 Yushima, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0034
Phone: 03-3251-4606

Yushima Seido was established by scholar Hayashi Razan as a Confucian temple and prestigious center of Confucian learning based on designs by exiled Chinese intellectual Zhou Zhiyu. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the government established institutions within Yushima Seido that would later become the Ministry of Education, universities including Tokyo University, Ochanomizu University, and Tsukuba University, libraries, and museums. Together with Yushima Shrine, it is a popular spot for students to visit before exams.

Spot Taiseiden

Taiseiden is the main building in the Yushima Seido complex. Meiji Restoration the building

The 1871 exhibition featured items that would later become the core of the Tokyo National Museum collection.



Taiseiden today. Burned down in 1923, the present building was rebuilt in 1935 and its striking black lacquer decoration is unusual among Japanese temple architecture.



hosted Japan's first modern exhibition, which gathered arts, crafts, and technology from across the country and proved extremely popular.

Spot Chinese pastiche tree

The Chinese pastiche was planted at Confucius' grave, and a scepter made of its wood was given to scholars who passed the civil service examinations in imperial China. Henceforth it has been known as a sacred tree of learning, and remains the namesake for a form of calligraphy.

Spot Confucius statue

The 4.57-meter-tall, 1.5-ton bronze statue of Confucius was donated in 1975 by the Lion's Club of Taipei, and is the largest bronze statue of Confucius in the world.

Bronze statue of Confucius



Spot 4

Connecting two sacred sites

Hijiri Bridge

Address: Between 4 Kanda Surugadai, Chiyoda-ku and 1 Yushima, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo
(Outside of the Hijiri-bashi Exit at Ochanomizu Station)



The Kanda River was cut through the hills in the 17th Century as the outer moat of Edo Castle. Hijiri-bashi, or “sacred bridge” was constructed after the earthquake of 1923. Its graceful arch was designed to be seen from the boats that frequented the river Today the bridge can be admired from the neighboring Ochanomizu Bridge.

(At Hijiri-bashi Exit of Ochanomizu Station) Hijiri Bridge after completion. Boats can still be seen on the river below.
(Photo courtesy of Society of Civil Engineers Library)



Spot 5

An Orthodox cathedral brought from Russia via Hakodate

Holy Resurrection Cathedral (Nicolai-do)

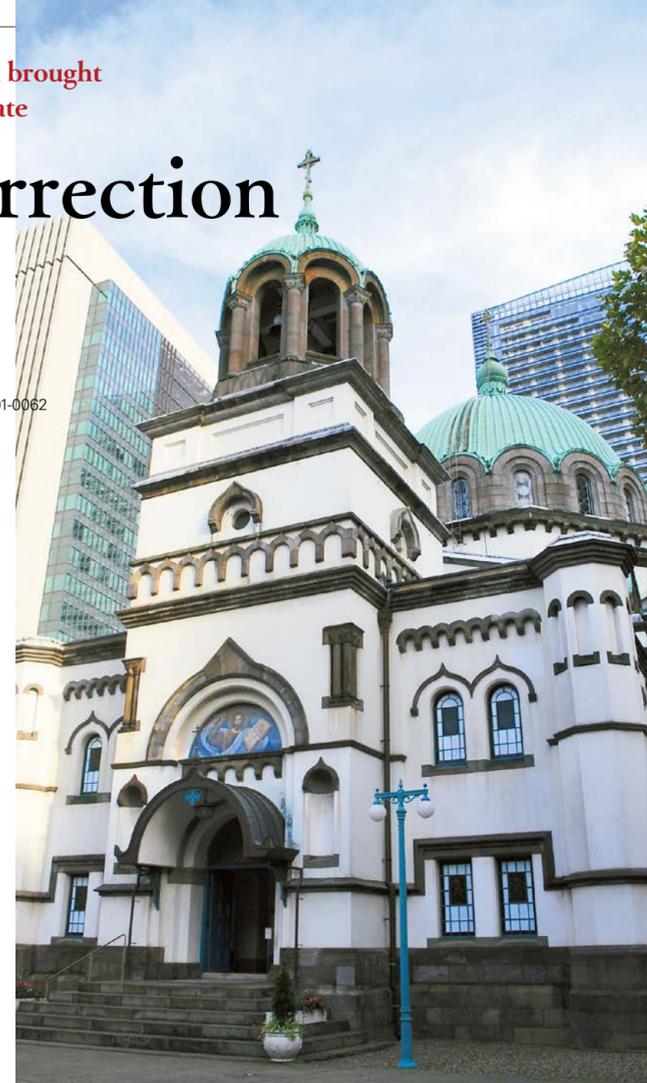
Address: 4-1-3 Kanda Surugadai, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0062
Phone: 03-3295-6879

The Holy Resurrection Cathedral, popularly known as Nicolai-do, was completed in 1891. The dome and bell tower collapsed in the earthquake of 1923 and were rebuilt in 1929. The cathedral is one of the few Byzantine-style structures in Japan and is now an important cultural property. Saint Nicolai of Japan first came to Hakodate as the Orthodox priest at the church of the local Russian Consulate. Nicolai died in 1912 and was buried in the Yanaka Cemetery. The building was designed by Josiah Conder, a British architect who designed many early modern buildings in Japan, including the Iwasaki Mansion just north of Yushima Shrine.

Spot Twice repaired

The cathedral’s dome and bell tower collapsed during the 1923 earthquake, and was rebuilt in 1929 in its current round shape. The main bell of the cathedral was brought to Tokyo from Hakodate after the earthquake. Close to the entrance, you can see detailed stonework. While most of Japan’s important cultural properties are constructed from wood, Nicolai-do is the oldest made of stone.

A chandelier in the sanctuary



Spot Eight-pointed cross

The eight-pointed cross is used at Slavic Orthodox churches, but rarely at Greek Orthodox churches.

Nicolai-do’s eight-pointed Orthodox cross



Spot 6

mAAch shopping center enlivens beautiful brick archway

Old Manseibashi Station

Address: 1-25-4 Kanda Sudacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0041



Manseibashi Station opened in 1912 when the JR Chuo Line was extended from western to central Tokyo. Designed by Tatsuno Kingo, who also designed Tokyo Station, the building included many western design elements, and was a symbol of the modern city for a decade until it was destroyed in the Great Kanto Earthquake.

The terrace at Cafe and Bar N3331 on the old train platforms allows you to watch passing commuter trains



Spot 7

The Mecca of Japan’s pop culture

Akihabara

Address: 1 Sotokanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

In the 19th century, Akihabara was left as an empty field to protect the city from fire. A shrine to Akiha, a god of fire protection, was erected at its center and gave the area its name (“field of Akiha”). Today the area has grown into a subculture Mecca bustling with fans from across the world who make pilgrimages to enjoy all forms of anime, manga, video games, and idols.

Japan’s indigenous Shinto religion is said to be a form of animism. As the word “anime” suggests, Akihabara’s manga and video game characters, figurines, and idols are at the center of a modern-day animism. The god of fire protection Akiha has been reborn as the god of subculture “Akiba,” as the area is known among its fans.

Spot Traces of the postwar electric town

Under the tracks to the west of the station, the Akihabara Radio Center, filled with electronic component vendors, retains some of the atmosphere of the postwar “electric



town.” Consumers once came to this area to buy the “three sacred treasures” of postwar society.

Spot Anime and manga shops

Numerous anime and manga shops are located to the west of the station and alongside Chuo Boulevard. The maid cafes advertised by costumed women in the street offer another unique taste of Akihabara culture.

Spot AKB48 Cafe and Shop

Address: 1-1 Kanda Hanaokacho, Chiyoda-ku 101-0028 ▶ See ★ on map
Phone: 03-5297-4848

AKB48 is one of the most popular idol group in Japan. The AKB48 Cafe and Shop in their hometown of Akihabara sells goods of each of the group members.



AKB48 Cafe and Shop faces the plaza at Akihabara Station and sells original goods of the AKB48 idol group

Art, crafts, and souvenir spots

Explore more of Yushima

3331 Arts Chiyoda

3331 is an arts center that occupies a renovated middle school. Featuring art galleries, a cafe, and other spaces, the center hosts various cultural activities and is a popular resting place. A free space is available for anyone to use, and some exhibitions are free to enter. Visit the 3331 homepage for event information.

Address: 6-11-14 Sotokanda, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0021 ▶ See ★ on map
Opening hours: 10:00-21:00 (Restaurant and galleries differ)
Open everyday (Restaurant and galleries differ)
Free admission (some exhibits require admission)
Website: www.3331.jp



Origami Kaikan

The Origami Kaikan is located a few minutes walk from Kanda Shrine and Yushima Seido. Founded in 1858, the Origami Kaikan hosts exhibitions, events, and workshops as well as a shop where origami products and paper can be purchased.

Address: 1-7-14 Yushima, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo 113-0034
Opening hours: 9:30-18:00 Closed Sunday and holidays Free admission
Website: http://www.origamikaikan.co.jp/



2k540 AKI-OKA ARTISAN

A shopping center focused on craftsmanship underneath the JR train tracks north of Akihabara. Around 50 shops sell a rich selection of hand-made goods from all across Japan, including fabric, wood, ceramics, clothing, and accessories. Some stores include workshops where visitors can observe the production process.

Address: 5-9 Ueno, Taito-ku, Tokyo 110-0005 ▶ See ★ on map
(Beneath the Yamanote Line tracks between Akihabara and Okachimachi stations)
Opening hours: 11:00-19:00 Closed Wednesday Free admission
Website: www.jrtk.jp/2k540



Explore Old Tokyo
The Tokyo Cultural Heritage Alliance

The Tokyo Cultural Heritage Alliance (TCHA) brings together business, academic, and government actors to promote the rich and varied cultural heritage located in north-central Tokyo (“Old Tokyo”) and bring new cultural vitality to the area (launched in April 2015). This pamphlet was produced to introduce visitors to a unique route that ties together the area’s varied cultural heritage.

Cover image © The cover image is a part of the “Edo-zu Byobu” screen painting that depicts 17th century Edo (Collection of the National Museum of Japanese History)

Publisher&Contact © the Tokyo Cultural Heritage Alliance
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