



# Japan Travel News

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## Japan's Wooden World Heritage sites



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Yokoso! Japan 2  
Weeks

Useful 2  
websites

Gardens in 3  
Tokyo

What's on in 4  
Japan

Two of the Kansai  
Region's cultural World  
Heritage sites,  
Todai Temple's  
Nigatsudo Hall in Nara  
(left), and Himeji Castle.

Eleven sites in Japan have been designated UNESCO cultural World Heritage sites. Five of these sites are located in the Kansai Region. These are the Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area, Himeji Castle, Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto and Nara, and Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range.

In Western civilization, history has long revolved around stone culture, while the Japanese civilization is based on wood culture, born from the interaction of people and nature. The wooden World Heritage Listed structures of Japan are awe-inspiring symbols of Japanese culture.

On February 22, a special event showcasing these magnificent wooden structures will be held in Sydney. Japan's Ministry of Land,

Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, and the Japan Municipalities' Council of Wooden Structure World Heritages (Municipalities of Nara, Himeji, Ikaruga and Nanwa Wide Area Union) will host the **World Heritage Wooden Structure Tourism Forum** at the Shangri-La Hotel, as part of the Visit Japan Campaign.

Bookings are essential. Places are limited and are filling fast.

**Venue:** Shangri-La Hotel

**Time:** 6.00 pm  
(Doors open at 5.30pm)

**Admission:** Free

### Keynote Speech:

"Japan's World Heritage Wooden Structures" – The background, structure, and technology – Prof. Yukio Nishimura (The University of Tokyo), former Vice Chairman of International Council

on Monuments and Sites.

### Presentation:

"The Appeal of Japan's World Heritage Wooden Structures" Representatives of the municipalities of Nara, Himeji, Ikaruga and Nanwa Wide Area Union.

### Special Lecture:

"Shape and Heart of the Yamabushi" – Purifying the heart in the rigours of nature -

Rev. Kyozen Nakai (Chief priest of Kizo-in, sub-temple of Goji-in Temple of Mt Omine, Yoshino).

For bookings please contact **The Wooden Structure Secretariat** at Visit Australia.

**Email:** [visitaus@aussieroad.com](mailto:visitaus@aussieroad.com)

**Fax:** 02 9499 2799

Bookings close **February 8** or when places are filled.  
Rebecca Honda

## Yokoso! Japan Weeks 2008

Japan's major annual winter tourism promotion, Yokoso! Japan Weeks, will be held from January 20 to February 29, 2008. Now in its fourth year, Yokoso! Japan Weeks is a campaign conducted in Japan and overseas to improve recognition of Japan as an attractive and affordable tourist destination, and to raise the profile of the Visit Japan Campaign – a Japanese government initiative aiming to attract 10 million visitors per year to Japan by 2010.

During Yokoso! Japan Weeks, Japan will make a united effort to welcome international tourists with a variety of unique events held throughout the nation, special discounts and shopping events, and special language support services to facilitate communication with the locals.

The 2008 campaign will be focusing on two major themes: "Experiencing Japan" and "Shopping in Japan". Visitors will be able to experience Japan first-hand by participating in cultural activities and can enjoy savings on purchases at selected stores.

Japan's 180 Visit Japan Information Network centres (tourist information centres) will continue to provide regular multilingual services and 500 Yokoso! Japan Desks set up across the country especially for the campaign will provide tourist information. In addition, a language support service via a special call centre where visitors can call from a taxi, for example, to have a three-way telephone conversation through an interpreter, will be available. In Tokyo and Kyoto, free guided tours will be conducted to show visitors around the streets of these

two popular cities.

During Yokoso! Japan Weeks complimentary guidebooks detailing the campaign and related promotions will be available at main airports, Visit Japan Information Network centres and hotels across Japan. Guidebooks are also available from the JNTO Sydney office.

More at [www.yjw2008.jp/eng/index.php](http://www.yjw2008.jp/eng/index.php)



## Useful websites

### Hiroshima Prefecture

Hiroshima Prefecture's sightseeing website. Includes a four part series of articles themed 'Fun Walks with Professional Guides'. Articles about Hiroshima and Kure are already on the site, with Miyajima and Seto Inland Sea to come. Downloadable guides for Hiroshima City, Miyajima, Kure, Shimanami-Kaido and Tomonoura are also available.

[www.kankou.pref.hiroshima.jp/global/english/index.htm](http://www.kankou.pref.hiroshima.jp/global/english/index.htm)

### Niseko Higashiyama + Niseko TV

Keep up to date with what is going on year round in Niseko with these two websites.

[www.niseko-higashiyama.co.jp/english/](http://www.niseko-higashiyama.co.jp/english/)  
[www.niseko-higashiyama.co.jp/niseko\\_tv/](http://www.niseko-higashiyama.co.jp/niseko_tv/)

### Ishikawa Prefecture

Ishikawa Prefecture have renewed their English tourism website. The site includes information on approximately 100 sightseeing spots popular among international visitors, tourist information centre locations, model courses, maps, and links to accommodation websites in English.

<http://hot-ishikawa.jp/f-lang/english/index.html>

### HIS Experience Japan

Tokyo based experiential travel company H.I.S. Experience Japan (H.E.J.), have launched a new website to provide information about its cultural programs and travel services for international independent travellers.

<http://hisexperience.jp/>



Fireworks at Miyajima's annual fireworks festival.

## Gardens in Tokyo: chill out in the big city

Gardens are open from 9:00 to 17:00. Last entry is 16:30. There is no charge for primary school children and younger, and junior high school students living or attending school in Tokyo.

### Hamarikyu Onshi Teien

Address: 1-1 Hamarikyu Teien, Chuo-ku

Access: Otemono-guchi: Seven minute walk from Toei Oedo Line Shiodome Station, Tsukijishijo Station, Yurikamome Shiodome Station. Nakanogomon-guchi: Five minute walk from Toei Oedo Line or Yurikamome Line Shiodome Station. Boat: Water bus (Ryogoku ⇒ Hamarikyu ⇒ Kasai)

Closed: Dec 29 - Jan 1      Entry: 300 yen ( 65 & over 150 yen)

### Kyu Shiba Rikyu Onshi Teien

Address: 1-4-1 Kaigan, Minato-ku

Access: One minute walk from North Exit of JR Hamamatsucho Station; Three minute walk from Toei Asakusa/Oedo Line Daimon Station

Closed: Dec 29- Jan 3      Entry : 150 yen ( 65 & over 70 yen)

### Koishikawa Korakuen

Address: 1-6-6 Koraku, Bunkyo-ku

Access: Two minute walk from Toei Oedo Iidabashi Station      Closed: Dec 29 - Jan 1      Entry : 300 yen ( 65 & over 150 yen)

### Kyu Iwasaki-tei Teien

Address: 1-3-45 Ike-no-hata, Taito-ku

Access: Three minute walk from Tokyo Metro Chiyoda Line Yushima Station

Closed: Dec 29 - Jan 1      Entry: 400 yen ( 65 & over 200 yen)

### Rikugien

Address: 6-16-3 Hon-komagome, Bunkyo-ku

Access: Seven minute walk from JR/Tokyo Metro Namboku Line, Komagome Station

Closed: Dec 29 - Jan 1      Entry: 300 yen ( 65 & over 150 yen)

### Mukojima Hyakkaen

Address: 3-18-3 Higashi-Mukojima, Sumida-ku

Access: Eight minute walk from Tobu Isesaki Line Higashi Mukojima Station

Closed: Dec 29- Jan 3      Entry : 150 yen ( 65 & over 70 yen)

### Kiyosumi Teien

Address: 3-3-9 Kiyosumi, Koto-ku

Access: Toei Oedo Line/Tokyo Metro Hanzomon Line Kiyosumi-Shirakawa Station

Closed: Dec 29 - Jan 1      Entry: 150 yen ( 65 & over 70 yen)

### Kyu Furukawa Teien

Address: 1-27-39 Nishigahara, Kita-ku

Access: Seven minute walk from JR Keihin-Tohoku Line Kami-Nakazato Station and Tokyo Metro Namboku Line Nishigahara Station

Closed: Dec 29 - Jan 1      Entry: 150 yen ( 65 & over 70 yen)

### Tonogayato Teien

Address: 2-16 Minami-cho, Kokubunji-shi

Access: Two minute walk from South Exit of JR Chuo Line Kokubunji Station

Closed: Dec 29 - Jan 1      Entry: 150 yen ( 65 & over 70 yen)

For more information on gardens and parks in Tokyo, visit the Tokyo Park Association at [www.tokyo-park.or.jp/english/index.html](http://www.tokyo-park.or.jp/english/index.html)



In the heart of Tokyo, Hamarikyu Onshi Teien



### MICHELIN Guide Tokyo 2008

Michelin have published the first edition of MICHELIN Guide Tokyo which offers a selection of the best hotels and restaurants in the centre of Tokyo, a total of 178 establishments of which 28 are hotels and 150 restaurants. One hundred and fifty restaurants in Tokyo were awarded Michelin stars, Tokyo was awarded 191 stars for its restaurants – more than any other city in the world. The book which is available in Japanese and English, went on sale in Japan in November 2007 and is now available at selected bookstores in Australia.



## JAPAN NATIONAL TOURIST ORGANIZATION

Level 18 Australia Square Tower  
264 George St, Sydney NSW 2000 Australia  
Tel: 02-9251-3024 (2:00-5:00pm Tuesday & Thursday)  
Fax: 02-9251-3031  
E-mail: [jnto@tokyonet.com.au](mailto:jnto@tokyonet.com.au) Web: [www.jnto.go.jp/syd](http://www.jnto.go.jp/syd)  
For general information, maps and brochures for travel to Japan contact the JNTO Sydney office.

## The Visit Japan Campaign

An initiative of the Japanese government, the Visit Japan Campaign (VJC) aims to attract 10 million visitors per year to Japan by the year 2010. In 2007, Japan received more than 8 million visitors. In 2005, Australia became a target market for the VJC. JNTO supports this campaign and encourages you to visit the VJC's Japan Welcomes You website which has been incorporated into the JapanTravel Info.com website.

[www.japantravelinfo.com](http://www.japantravelinfo.com)



## Japan's national holidays for 2008

Japan has 15 national holidays. The dates for 2008 are listed here.

January 1	New Year's Day
January 14	Coming of Age Day
February 11	National Foundation Day
March 21	Spring Equinox Day
April 29	Showa Day
May 3	Constitution Day
May 4	Greenery Day
May 5	Children's Day
July 21	Marine Day
September 15	Respect for Senior Citizen's Day
September 23	Autumn Equinox Day
October 13	Health and Sports Day
November 3	Culture Day
November 23	Labour Thanksgiving Day
December 23	Emperor's Birthday



## - WHAT'S ON IN JAPAN -

### TOKYO and vicinity

- Jan 26 - Mar 16** **Yugawara Plum Orchard "Ume no Utage", Makuyama Park, Yugawara, Kanagawa Prefecture**  
The opening ceremony of the 4000 red and white plum tree orchard at the foot of Mt. Makuyama was held on January 26, with Yugawara Onsen geisha dances and modern taiko drumming, among the festivities. The orchard will be illuminated nightly from February 23 through March 9.
- Feb 2 - April 6** **Art Is for the Spirit: Works from the UBS Art Collection, Mori Art Museum, Roppongi Hills, Mori Tower, Tokyo**  
The exhibition features 140 works by 60 prominent international artists from the UBS Art Collection.  
[www.mori.art.museum/english/contents/art/index.html](http://www.mori.art.museum/english/contents/art/index.html)
- Feb 6 - 11, 16, 17, 21** **2008 Shunsetsu, Yokohama Chinatown**  
A celebration of the Lunar calendar New Year. On New Year's Eve (Feb 6), a countdown and firecracker display, and lion dances will take place from 11.30pm. Other attractions during the festival include traditional parades, Zatsugi acrobatics and Chinese Opera.
- Feb 17** **Tokyo Marathon 2008**  
Starting at the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building, participants will make their way Odaiba's Tokyo Big Sight via Ginza and Asakusa.  
[www.tokyo42195.org/index\\_en.html](http://www.tokyo42195.org/index_en.html)
- March 27 - 30** **Tokyo International Anime Fair, Tokyo Big Sight**  
[www.tokyoanime.jp](http://www.tokyoanime.jp)

### KANSAI AREA

- March 9 - 23** **March Grand Sumo Tournament, Osaka Prefectural Gymnasium, Osaka City**  
[www.sumo.or.jp/eng/](http://www.sumo.or.jp/eng/)

### NATIONWIDE

- Feb 11** **National Foundation Day (national holiday)**  
**March 3** **Doll's Festival**  
**March 21** **Spring Equinox Day (national holiday)**