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♥ Kyoto Imperial Palace

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The Kyoto Imperial Palace (京都御所, Kyōto Gosho) used to be the residence of Japan's [Imperial Family](#) until 1868, when the emperor and capital were moved from [Kyoto](#) to [Tokyo](#). It is located in the spacious [Kyoto Imperial Park](#) (京都御苑, Kyōto Gyoen), an attractive park in the center of the city that also encompasses the [Sento Imperial Palace](#) and a few other attractions.



The current **Imperial Palace** was reconstructed in 1855 after it had burnt down and moved around town repeatedly over the centuries. The complex is enclosed by long walls and consists of several gates, halls and gardens. The enthronement ceremonies of Emperors Taisho and Showa were still held in the palace's main hall, but the present Emperor's ceremony took place at the [Tokyo Imperial Palace](#).

The palace grounds can be entered only on guided tours (in English or Japanese) held by the Imperial Household Agency. Tours take about one hour and lead past the buildings and gardens, but none of the buildings can be entered. Advance reservations (see details below) are mandatory and can be made online or

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at the Imperial Agency Office, which is also located within the Kyoto Imperial Park.



The Hall of State Ceremonies within the Kyoto Imperial Palace

Besides the Imperial Palace and the [Sento Palace](#) grounds, a few **other historic sites** are located within Kyoto Imperial Park, including the Kaninnomiya Mansion, a former residence of court nobles that is open to the public in the park's southwestern corner. Not far away stands a small branch shrine of [Miyajima's](#) famous [Itsukushima Shrine](#) on a small island of a pond.

The 1300 meter long and 700 meter wide park also serves as **recreational space** for both tourists and residents, featuring attractive, broad gravel paths, lawns and tree groves. A pretty group of weeping [cherry trees](#) stands beside Konoe Pond in the park's northwestern corner and is usually in bloom for two to three weeks from late March to mid April.



People walk and cycle along the gravel paths of the Kyoto Imperial Park

Any Questions? Ask them in our [question forum](#).

How to get there

Kyoto Imperial Palace is a ten minute subway ride from [Kyoto Station](#) along the Karasuma Subway Line. Get off at Marutamachi or Imadegawa Station. Imadegawa Station is closer to the Imperial Agency Office and the entrance gate of the Imperial Palace.

[How to get to and around Kyoto](#)



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To book a tour, you need to apply in advance with your passport at the Imperial Household Agency Office in the northwestern corner of Kyoto Imperial Park. Reservations are often possible for the same day. The office is open Monday to Friday from 8:45 to 12:00 and from 13:00 to 17:00.

Additionally, a small number of tour spots are available for reservation over the agency's website (see links below), however, these often get booked out far in advance. Online reservations must be completed several days before the intended visit.

For a few days in spring and autumn, Kyoto Imperial Palace can be entered without advance reservation and without joining a tour. The next opportunity will be from April 4 to 8, 2013 from 9:00 to 15:30.

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Hotels and Ryokan

Kyoto offers a wide range of accommodation for all budgets and tastes, including historic [ryokan](#), Western style hotels and low-budget hostels. Among the most attractive districts to stay are the [Kyoto Station](#) area, the city center around Shijo Street and the [Higashiyama District](#).

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Japanese hotel, Ryokan Nishiyama

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Ryokan Hirashin

3min walk to Shijo Karasuma Sta. Spacious Japanese-style rooms. 140 years of history. Public baths renovated in 2006.



Guest house Yahata

Bed and breakfast with dormitories from 2500yen. One stop from Kyoto Station by subway. Walking distance to downtown Kyoto.



Hotel Sugicho

A ryokan in the center of Kyoto town. From 4000yen. 4 train stations are within walking distance. Try the Kyoto Kaiseki.

Recommended Hotels around Kyoto - with lowest rates by selected hotel reservation websites

Backpackers Hostel Ks House Kyoto

One of Kyoto's most popular hostels. A ten minute walk from Kyoto Station. Reserve through [Agoda](#)

Hotel Granvia Kyoto

Located inside Kyoto Station, this is Kyoto's most convenient 4-star hotel. Reserve through [Agoda](#) or [Japanican](#)

Hotel Hokke Club Kyoto

Inexpensive, no-frills business hotel conveniently located across Kyoto Station. Reserve through [Agoda](#) or [Japanican](#)

Hyatt Regency Kyoto Hotel

Elegant luxury hotel located near Sanjusangendo Temple. Reserve through [Agoda](#) or [Japanican](#)

New Miyako Hotel Kyoto

Just across the street from Kyoto Station, this is a very convenient 3-star hotel. Reserve through [Agoda](#) or [Japanican](#)

Tours and Packages



[Kyoto Tours](#)

Various tours and travel packages for Kyoto and surroundings.

User Ratings

Ratings for Kyoto Imperial Palace:

japan-guide.com Rating:  **outstanding**
 User Rating (by 770 users): **82/100** **recommended**

Best rated sights nationwide (out of 732):

259. Arima Onsen (Kobe)	82/100
260. Kongobuji Temple (Mount Koya)	82/100
261. Nagasaki Kunchi (Nagasaki)	82/100
262. Tokyo Tower (Tokyo)	82/100
263. Engakuji Temple (Kamakura)	82/100
264. Kyoto Imperial Palace (Kyoto)	82/100
265. Bunraku Theater (Osaka)	82/100
266. Lake Chuzenji (Nikko)	82/100
267. Yubatake (Kusatsu Onsen)	82/100
268. Imperial Palace (Tokyo)	82/100

Most visited sights nationwide (out of 860):

33. Shinjuku Gyoen (Tokyo)	1647
34. Himeji Castle (Himeji)	1598
35. Tsukiji Fish Market (Tokyo)	1583
36. Fushimi Inari Shrine (Kyoto)	1504
37. Marunouchi (Tokyo)	1489
38. Kyoto Imperial Palace (Kyoto)	1488
39. Arashiyama (Kyoto)	1487
40. Tokyo Dome City (Tokyo)	1389
41. Heian Shrine (Kyoto)	1386
42. Itsukushima Shrine (Miyajima)	1373

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[Imperial Household Agency](#)

Official English website.

[Application for Visit](#)

English application page.

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Official website.

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Japanese application page.

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