

# Discover Tokyo in 2020

With the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games around the corner, Japan's capital will be in the spotlight.

The scale of Tokyo might seem intimidating to a first-time traveller, but it is very easy to get around the city. Thanks to its extensive and efficient transport system, visitors can access all places of interest without too much of a walk. In fact, walking is one of the best ways to get a feel for Tokyo. Tokyo is a patchwork of neighbourhoods, each with its own atmosphere. Many Australians have already visited Tokyo, but there is no shortage of areas to explore and there will always be something new to discover.

Tokyo is one of those remarkable places that seem to be forever renewing. Novel architecture makes its mark on the city, but often with a nod to the past or a traditional technique. Since 2017, one

corner of the famous Ginza 4-chome crossing [photo a] has a building whose façade was inspired by *sukashibori*, a type of traditional latticework. One of Tokyo's most fascinating characteristics is the way that the old and new co-exist.

The massive stone walls of the Imperial Palace in central Tokyo make for an intriguing contrast with the modern office blocks across the parkland of pine trees [photo b]. Japanese gardens such as Hamarikyū or Shinjuku-gyoen provide similar contrasts and are oases of calm green. If you want to take a break and get back to nature, mountain and forest walks are a short train trip away from central Tokyo. Further afield, but still within Tokyo's 'city limits', the 11 inhabited 'Islands of Tokyo' include tropical beaches and the UNESCO World Heritage listed Ogasawara Islands, which are more than 1,000km from central Tokyo.

While we are measuring distances—Nihonbashi, which lies in the centre of Tokyo, was the commercial heart of Edo-period Tokyo [1603-1867]. During that time, all five major roads of Japan began at Nihonbashi [photo c]. Distances from Tokyo are still measured from this point. Today the location of the original Nihonbashi bridge is under two elevated highways. You get a sense of the layering of history as you stand on today's somewhat overshadowed Nihonbashi bridge, then walk down the main street lined with major department stores and impressive buildings, and turn off to explore narrow back streets, where you will find specialty restaurants and small traditional shops—some have been in business for several centuries.

Whether it's eating, shopping, art, history, or entertaining the kids, Tokyo makes for a great holiday destination. The difficulty is choosing what to do each day!

A great source for ideas and information to help you get the most out of your trip is [Go Tokyo: The Official Tokyo Travel Guide](#).

The website has area guides and a really useful walks-and-tours section.

[www.gotokyo.org/en/index.html](http://www.gotokyo.org/en/index.html)

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## Olympics 24 Jul - 9 Aug ~ TOKYO 2020 ~ Paralympics 25 Aug - 6 Sep

A total of 33 Olympic Sports and 22 Paralympic Sports will be contested at the Tokyo 2020 Games. This year will be the second time for Tokyo to host the Summer Olympiad. In the lead-up to the Games, the organisers are using a range of international events to help test preparations. Some events are special READY, STEADY, TOKYO events; others are events that are part of the international sporting calendar.

The Tokyo Marathon 2020 will be held on 1 March and be the final qualifying opportunity for Japanese marathon athletes. A 10km race is also run as part of the event, as well as the wheelchair marathon and wheelchair 10km.

