

Kyoto Guide Book

*Written by Professor Ido's seminar students at
Komazawa Women's University.*

*Thank you for your lovely comments!
We hope to make this project successful!*

Who we are

We are from Komazawa Women's University in Tokyo and studying under Professor Ido. Our University's policy is called Souto-syu in Buddhism. This religion teaches us that we need to be aware and know ourselves all the time. When we were fresh-women, we learned to meditate, so we practiced ZAZEN! ZAZEN is a beautiful meditation style. This has a good effect on you to understand your thinking and mind. You can preserve your calmness and relax.

Our university not only focuses on Japanese culture, but also studies other world cultures! The fact is that our major is international culture. We are interested in other cultures, languages, and

opinions. Some students study comparative culture, comparative literature, some students study other languages, other students study tourism. We love world cultures and we would love to know what other countries think about Japan.

We think that many Japanese don't clearly know their own good and bad points, and we should know and hear other opinions about Japan! To do this we decided to make a questionnaire. After doing this research, we will count the survey answers and elucidate how the world's opinion is different from our own image of Japan, and finally we would like to establish this fact.

If you want to know more about us, please check out our URL web site ;) thank you.

http://www.komajo.ac.jp/uni/window/international/news_13016.html

**We would like you to know
about Japanese culture and
explain the questionnaire,
so we made this guide book.
Please visit us here!**

☆Ginkaku (Jisho-ji)

Ginkaku was built in 1482 as a villa for Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa. Its formal name is Jisho-ji Temple. “Ji” means temple, so we can’t say Ginkaku-JI. The reliquary hall of Jisho-ji Temple "Ginkaku" is particularly famous, so it is generally called Ginkaku-ji temple.

It is said that Yoshimasa built Ginkaku on the model of Kinkaku. He practiced and expressed his aesthetic sense at Ginkaku throughout his lifetime, especially Sado (Japanese tea ceremony). Finally, Ginkaku was registered as a World Heritage Site in 1994.



★Heian Shrine

It is located in Sakyou-ku, Kyo-to-shi.

Inside, the enshrined deities are emperor Kanmu and emperor Koumei.

It was founded as a 1100 anniversary of the relocation of the Heian Palace.



☆Kinkaku(Rokuon-ji)

Kinkaku-ji temple was built in 1397 as a villa for Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu. Its formal name is Rokuon-ji temple. The reliquary hall of Rokuon-ji temple "Kinkaku" is particularly famous, so it is generally called Kinkaku-ji temple. Kinkaku is a three-story building covered in gold leaf. There is a gilded Chinese phoenix on the roof. Kinkaku was registered as a World Heritage Site in 1994. →

★Kitano-tenmangu

Kitano-tenmangu is dedicated to Sugawarano Michizane. The main shrine was built by Toyotomi Hideyori in 1607. There is the middle gate, the east gate and so on. This shrine is well-known for good academic achievements, so many students visit here and buy lucky charms.



☆Kiyomizu dera (temple)

Kiyomizu temple is located in Kiyomizu Higashiyama ward, Kyoto city, and Kiyomizu temple is the head temple of the Hossousyu sect. This temple is also known as ‘Seisui temple’ and ‘Kiyomi temple’ and was built by Enchinjounin in 778. Kiyomizu temple is well-known for good health, success in life, and good relationships. This temple was rebuilt in the Edo Era; it was registered as a World Heritage Site in 1994. ↓



★Nishi Hongan-ji

Nishi Hongan-ji was established in 1602 by the Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate. He split the main Hongan-ji in Kyoto into two, Nishi Hongan-ji and Higashi Hongan-ji, in order to diminish the power of the Jōdo sect. Nishi Hongan-ji is listed as one of the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto as a World Heritage Site. Jōdo Shinshū is a school of Pure Land Buddhism, and today Nishi Hongan-ji serves as its head temple. As with many sites in Kyoto, Nishi Hongan-ji and Higashi Hongan-ji have more casual names, and are known affectionately in Kyoto as Onishisan (Dear Mr. West) and Ohigashisan (Dear Mr. East)

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☆Nijou-jou

In 1601, Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered all the feudal lords in Western Japan to contribute to the construction of Nijou-jou, which was completed during the reign of Tokugawa Iemitsu in 1626. It was built as the Kyoto residence of the Tokugawa Shoguns. The Tokugawa Shogunate used Edo as the capital city. In 1867, the Ninomaru Palace was the stage for the declaration by Tokugawa Yoshinobu, returning the authority to the Imperial Court. Next year the Imperial Cabinet was installed in the castle. During this time, the Tokugawa hollyhock crest was removed wherever possible and replaced with the imperial chrysanthemum. In 1939 the palace was donated to the city of Kyoto and opened to the public the following year. The surface area of the castle is 275,000 square meters, of which 8,000 square meters is occupied by buildings.



★Sanjusangen-dou

Sanjusangen-dou is the temple built by a famous samurai, Kiyomori Taira. It is famous for the 1001 golden statues of Buddha. The reason why there are 1001 statues is because 1000 in Japanese means “infinity” and the 1001 stands for more than “infinite” peace. The scenery is like the “Buddha forest” and a breathtaking beauty.



☆Shimogamo-jinja

Shimogamo-jinja consists of 55 shrine buildings and a vast forest called Tadasu-no-mori. It is one of the oldest shrines in Kyoto and a registered World Cultural Heritage Site. The forest is filled with mystic air. In addition, Semi-river and Izumi-river runs between the trees. The shrine often appears in historical writings.



★Ryouan-ji

The main attraction at Ryouan-ji is the rock garden of “karesansui” style. There are 15 rocks arranged in the garden, but it's impossible to see all the rocks from any angle. It is said that only those who attain spiritual enlightenment, as a result of deep Zen meditation, can see all the rocks.



☆Yasaka-jinja

It is located in Higashiyama-ku, Kyoto-shi. In 1871, it was renamed as Yasaka Shrine. People believe a guardian deity wards off evil fortune, epidemics and brings good business.



★What is the difference between a temple and a shrine ?

First, what is a temple? Buddhist temples are places where priests and nuns reside to practice ascetics, hold Buddhist ceremonies, and where Buddhist images are enshrined. At all the entrances are two-story temple gates, then next come buildings such as the main temple, an auditorium, a pagoda, and a bell tower. Almost all the roofs are tiled. Also, people's graves in Japan are generally located in temple grounds.

People go to temples during the Bon festival and equinoctial weeks to make visits to the graves of their ancestors, and relatives gather on the anniversaries of their dead and have priests recite sutras in the temple. On the other hand, there are numerous temples in Kyoto and Nara that have more than 1,000 years of history and have been identified as places of sightseeing interest. People

visit such temples for the pleasure of appreciating the structures and the Buddhist images.

Second, what is a shrine? Shinto shrines are where Shinto deities are enshrined. At the entrances, Shinto shrine archways indicate the shrine precincts, and then lead on to the main sanctuary and other facilities. The floor of the main building is elevated and roofs are generally thatched with reeds and Japanese cypress bark.

On New Year's Day, virtually all Shinto shrines are thronged with worshippers for the first visit of the New Year. In addition, the Shinto shrine is a place of deep affinity for the Japanese people, even for those who are not Shinto believers. They pay their respects on occasions such as the newborn's first shrine visit for a blessing, or to celebrate the special day for children of three, five and seven years of age, and offer prayers.

☆What is Polytheism?

Polytheism is the worship or belief in multiple deities usually assembled into a pantheon of gods and goddesses, along with their own religions and rituals. It is a religious construct and a type of theism. Within theism, it contrasts with monotheism, the belief in a singular God. Polytheists do not always worship all the gods equally, but can be henotheists, specializing in the worship of one particular deity. Other polytheists can be kathenotheists, worshiping different deities at different times.

Polytheism was the typical form of religion during the Bronze Age and Iron Age, up to the Axial Age and the gradual development of monotheism or pantheism, and atheism. It is well documented in historical religions of Classical antiquity, especially Greek polytheism and Roman polytheism, and after the decline of Greco-Roman polytheism in tribal

religions such as Germanic paganism or Slavic mythology.

In Japan, it is called “Shinto”. It means literally “the way of the gods”, and has been the Japanese religion from ancient times, centering on the ideas of Japanese intimacy with nature and ancestor worship. All things on earth were brought forth and ruled over by the gods who reside throughout all nature. From ancient times, Japan has had a religious culture based on polytheism (*yao yorozu no kami*: eight million gods) worshiping nature or spirits like shamanism or animism including the Shinto religion. Mountains and trees often become objects of worship, and Shrine archways and sacred Shinto ropes mark sacred areas. Ordinarily, when shrines are built, objects of worship in which a god or gods reside are enshrined there. Shinto constitutes the foundation of the sensibility of the Japanese people, but most present-day Japanese,

rather than placing faith in Shinto, feel their cultural identity through it.

Shinto meanwhile supported the Emperor system in a religious sense, and even now its ancient customary practices remain as the religion of the Imperial Family.

★What is ZAZEN(坐禅)?

Zazen(坐禅) is the basic Zen Buddhism training for concentrating the mind by sitting in a special Zen posture. Zazen's thinking is different from Zen Buddhism. Rinzaishu takes the position of the Kannazen lead to realize by Zazen while questioning. On the other hand, Sotoshu uses sitting as a means to an end in meditation, Zazen's objective, due to the position of Mokushozen, is to focus on one's thought while sitting. From these thoughts, facing oneself is the most important feature of Zazen. The way of Zazen is not so difficult.

At first, we choose a quiet place. The best place to do Zazen is in a moderate temperature (not too hot, not too cold). Second, we sit in front of a wall with good posture, and calming our heart and breathing. When we sit, we use a Japanese cushion called a Zafu, or a normal cushion. If we use a normal cushion, we should fold it in half. Then we sit on the Zafu, and cross our legs with our knees touching the floor. Also, we place our right foot on our left thigh and our left foot goes up on our right thigh. Thirdly, our hands are turned up. Then, we cup our left palm onto our right palm. Both thumbs are folded in a little circle. Fourth, our eyes are half open and look forward 1 meter in front. Next, our chins should be pulled back a little. Our shoulders pulled back. We then stretch our spines. Next, we must pull our hips back, and our stomach pushed out a little. Our nose and navel come almost into the same line. Then, we breathe naturally. We do Zazen

as a unit for 45 minutes to an hour. If someone during Zazen can't concentrate, a supervisor who patrols behind the sitters will hit his shoulder using Keisaku, a flat paddle, and gives a warning to focus more deeply.



Thank you for reading this!

*We hope that you spend a
great and wonderful time in
Japan!*

From Komazawa Women's University students.