



## **4 DAY KYOTO**

## **ITINERARY**

**THEWANDERINGSUITCASE.COM**

Hello there, my friend!

I'm SO excited that you're planning a trip to Kyoto, Japan. Kyoto is one of my favorite cities in Japan - I've been many times, but still can't get enough!

I put together this Kyoto Itinerary for the first-time visitor Kyoto. You'll notice the itinerary doesn't jam pack everything into short periods of time. That's because here at The Wandering Suitcase, we love embracing experiences and slow travel. This way you have time to stop and enjoy things you see on your journey.

We've also included a downloadable map you can use on Google Maps during your vacation. This'll show all the places in this itinerary. You can download it here:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=17c3ra0a8K8NeZ\\_D0qWbrK0AL9uxiPHLK&usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/open?id=17c3ra0a8K8NeZ_D0qWbrK0AL9uxiPHLK&usp=sharing)

Happy travelin' my friends!



## Day 1 – Downtown Kyoto

On your first day, you might be tired from the journey or need to spend some time checking in at your hotel. Drop off your luggage and head to downtown Kyoto! Here you'll find arcades, museums, and adorable laneways. Highlights include:

**Nishiki Market:** browse the different foods and fresh ingredients at the market. The market is undercover, so if it's raining, this is a great place to spend a bit of time!

9.30 am – 6 pm daily | free entry

**Teramachi shopping arcade:** The Teramachi Shopping Arcade is a little touristy (think tourist stores and places you can stock up on cheap knick-knacks). It's a great place to visit if you want to go souvenir shopping, but you don't want to visit a department store.

10 am – 12 am daily | free entry

**Higashiyama District:** This area is one of the best places in Kyoto to experience the traditional architecture of Kyoto. Think narrow streets and small wooden shop fronts. The most popular (and photographic spot!) is between the Kiyomizudera and Yasaka Shrine.

24 hrs | free entry



## Day 2 – Fushimi-Inari Shrine & Kinkaku-ji Temple

Today is all about visiting Kyoto's most famous Shrines and Temples.

**Fushimi-Inari Taisha:** The Fushimi Inari-Taisha Shrine is one of the most well-known spots in Kyoto. This Shinto Shrine is dedicated to Inari, the Shinto god of rice. It's famous for the thousands of torii gates, donated by individuals and local businesses. It costs 400,000 yen (approximately \$3,500 USD) for a small sized gate, and the cost increases to over one million yen (roughly \$8,800 USD) for a large gate!

24 hrs | free entry

**Kinkaku-ji Temple:** No visit to Kyoto is complete with visiting the Kinkakuji Temple or the "Golden Pavilion." This Zen temple is famous for being covered in gold leaf and overlooks a large pond. The temple has been burned down a couple of times during his history, twice during a civil war and again in 1950 when it was set on fire by a fanatic monk. It was rebuilt to its current structure in 1955.

9 am – 5 pm daily | 400 JPY adults or 300 JPY for children



## Day 3 – Arashiyama District

**Arashiyama Bamboo Forest:** The Arashiyama Bamboo Grove is arguably one of the most photographed spots in Kyoto. The general area of Arashiyama is very popular, as the surrounding area has many beautiful shrines and temples.

24 hrs | free entry

**Tenryuji Temple:** A short walk from the Arashiyama Bamboo Forest is the Tenryuji Temple – one of the most famous temples in the Arashiyama district. This temple is registered as a world heritage site and is also the head temple of its school within the Rinzai Zen sect of Japanese Buddhism. The reason why most tourists visit, however, is its beautiful gardens which are still in their original form. Make sure you check out the pond with the backdrop of the Arashiyama Mountains!

8:30 am – 5:30 pm (spring – summer), 8:30 am – 5 pm (autumn – winter) | 500 JPY adults or 300 JPY for students (extra 300 JPY to visit the buildings)



## Day 3 – Arashiyama District (cont.)

**Rent a rowboat:** If you're visiting during the warmer months, make sure you rent a rowboat to escape the crowds. This is especially a must if you're visiting during the Cherry Blossom season or during Fall – the colors are spectacular from the Hozu-gawa River! Make sure you take plenty of photos (but be careful with your electronics!)

Walk from the Togetsu-kyo Bridge on the north side of the Hozu-gawa River to find boat rental shops | 1400 JPY per boat per hr (at time of publication)

**Monkey Park Iwatayama:** This is a great place to visit if you're experiencing temple or shrine fatigue during your visit! The Monkey Park is home to 120 snow monkeys. It should be emphasized that this is a park, which means the snow monkeys (while they are still wild animals) are fed by tourists and park staff. You can feed them here too, with purchased snacks from the kiosks.

*Psst: make sure you wear your comfortable shoes! There is a bit of hiking involved here, and this potentially is not suitable for those who have injuries or are unable to hike uphill.*

9 am – 4:30 pm (reduced hours in autumn + winter) | 550 JPY

## Day 4 – Kiyomizu-dera temple & traditional Kyoto

**Kiyomizu-dera Temple:** This beautiful temple attracts many visitors seeking views of fall leaves and cherry blossoms. The Kiyomizu-dera is one of the most visited temples in Japan and is also a UNESCO world heritage listed site. Note: Kiyomizu-dera is undergoing construction at the moment, and part of the main hall is covered up.

*Psst: make sure you also visit the Tainai-meguri. This underground area is dark and symbolic of entering the womb of a female bodhi-sattva. Make sure to follow the handle in the darkness, and make a wish by spinning the rock.*

6 am - 6 pm daily | 400 JPY (adults), 300 JPY (students)

**Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts Fureaikan:** This museum is filled with bucket loads of information about Japanese arts and crafts. You'll learn how the material of kimonos are made and there are even live demonstrations! They have a great gift shop filled with traditional Japanese crafts too.

9 am – 5 pm daily | free entry



## Day 4 – Kiyomizu-dera temple & traditional Kyoto (cont.)

**Gion corner:** Gion is famous for being Kyoto's geisha district. A short walk from the Higashiyama District; the area is perfect to visit in the evenings. Filled with shops, restaurants, and teahouses, this is where Geisha and Miko (Geisha apprentices) entertain. Architecturally, the streets are filled with narrow wooden houses and lit by paper lanterns in the evenings. Gion comes alive in the evenings, which is when other tourists and visitors to Kyoto also flock to the area.

*Psst: There have been reports of Geisha being harassed by tourists. If you spot Geisha or Miko on the street, please be respectful! Don't touch the Geisha, be respectful when taking photos and try not to bother them when they leave/enter their place of work. They are people too, and deserve respect!*

## Where to stay in Kyoto

### For budget-travelers: Kotoha Kiyomizu

This guesthouse is just a 14-minute walk from the famous Kiyomizudera Temple and is super budget friendly. If you're traveling on a budget with a partner or friend, I'd highly recommend staying here. The nightly rate shared between 2 people is equivalent to a night in a hostel or capsule hotel. And for that budget-friendly price, you get your own private room, private bathroom and kitchenette (with has a stove top and microwave)!

[Read more on Tripadvisor here](#)

[Book at Booking.com](#) | [Book at Expedia](#)

### For Mid-range travelers: Kyoto Granbell Hotel

If you want to treat yo' self (without going broke), the Kyoto Granbell Hotel is a great option. The hotel is a mix of traditional Japanese design and modern architecture, making it a beautiful place to stay while you're in Kyoto. They've even got a public bath which is only available for guests (it even looks out onto a private garden!)

This hotel is only a 3-minute walk from Gion-Shijo Subway Station or an 8-minute walk to Yasaka Shrine, making it a super convenient base when you're in Kyoto. If you want to see more of the iconic Higashiyama District, this is a great place to base yourself.

Want to stay at the Kyoto Granbell Hotel? [Read more on Tripadvisor here](#)

[Book at Booking.com](#) | [Book at Expedia](#)

## Where to stay in Kyoto

### For Luxury travelers: Tomoya Residence Hotel Kyoto

If you're celebrating something special (like a birthday or anniversary), the Tomoya Residence Hotel is a great option in Kyoto. The architecture here is incredible – it's a mix of modern and Japanese influences.

Each of the rooms are decorated with modern Japanese influences (with western comforts) like shōji (the traditional Japanese paper screen sliding doors), a coffee machine and a big comfortable bed (sometimes hard to find in Japan!)

When picking your room, you even have the option to pick a room with a terrace and garden view!

Want to stay at the Tomoya Residence Hotel? [Read more on Tripadvisor here](#)  
[Book at Booking.com](#) | [Book at Expedia](#)