


# Downtown Kyoto

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Walking through **Nishiki Market** (p56), marvelling at all the weird and wonderful ingredients that go into Kyoto cuisine. Nishiki is the perfect way to spend a rainy day in Kyoto, and it's a good antidote to an overdose of temples.
- 2 Taking an evening stroll along **Pontocho** (p57).
- 3 Delving into the world of manga at the **Kyoto International Manga Museum** (p57).
- 4 Getting lost in the department store food floors at **Takashimaya** (p65) or **Daimaru** (p65).
- 5 Shopping for the perfect gift in the shopping district around Shijō and Kawaramachi streets.



For more detail of this area, see Map p216 

## Explore: Downtown Kyoto

The downtown area is two subway stops north of Kyoto Station (about 2km). Downtown Kyoto is bounded by the Kamo-gawa (the river) to the east, Karasuma-dōri to the west, Oike-dōri to the north and Shijō-dōri to the south. In this relatively small square area, you will find the thickest selection of restaurants, shops, hotels and businesses in all of Kyoto.

While Downtown Kyoto does contain a handful of first-rate sights, sightseeing here is more about soaking up the vibe. Downtown Kyoto is easily reached from almost anywhere in town: the city's two subway lines serve the area, as does the private Hankyū line, and the private Keihan line, which stops just across the river. You could even walk from Kyoto Station to Downtown Kyoto in about half an hour.

The main streets of Shijō and Kawaramachi hold some of the biggest shops, but you'll also find a huge selection of shops in the area's four covered shopping streets (known as *shōtengai*): Sanjō (good for restaurants), Teramachi (a mix of art, religious items and tat), Shinkyōgoku (mostly tacky souvenirs for kids) and Nishiki Market (the city's main food market). But don't just explore these main shopping streets: also head into the maze of smaller streets west of Teramachi, where you'll find a great array of interesting boutiques and restaurants.

## Local Life

- ➔ **Hangout** (p67) The new Mina shopping complex, with branches of Uniclo and Loft stores, is popular with everyone.
- ➔ **Meeting Point** The Starbucks at Sanjō-Ōhashi is the preferred meeting spot for locals and foreigners alike.
- ➔ **Romantic Spot** Paris has the Seine and Kyoto has the Kamo-gawa. This is where local couples go for a bit of 'quality time'.

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Subway** The Karasuma subway line stops at Shijō and Karasuma-Oike stations.
- ➔ **Train** The Hankyū line stops at Karasuma and Kawaramachi.
- ➔ **Bus** Many city buses stop in Downtown Kyoto.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Finding a good place to eat in Downtown Kyoto can be confusing (there are almost *too many* places to choose from). If you want a lot of choices in a small area, hit one of the *resutoran-gai* (restaurant floors) at Takashimaya (p65) or Daimaru (p65).

### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Ippūdō (p58)
- ➔ Kane-yo (p59)
- ➔ Yoshikawa (p58)

For reviews, see p58 ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ McLoughlin's Irish Bar & Restaurant (p64)
- ➔ Sama Sama (p64)
- ➔ World (p65)

For reviews, see p64 ➔

### Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Mina (p67)
- ➔ OPA (p67)
- ➔ Takashiyama (p65)
- ➔ Daimaru (p65)
- ➔ Teramachi *shōtengai* (p56)

For reviews, see p65 ➔