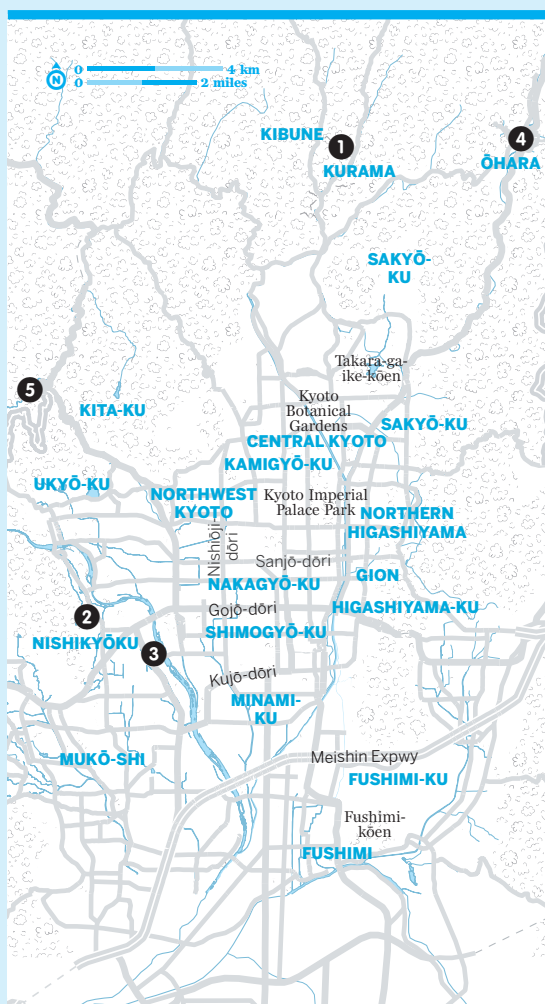


Kitayama Area & Greater Kyoto

OHARA | KURAMA | KIBUNE | SOUTHEAST KYOTO | FUSHIMI | UJI | SOUTHWEST KYOTO | TAKAO AREA
| NORTH KYOTO | NORTHEAST KYOTO



Neighbourhood Top Five

- ① Ascending to the mountain temple of **Kuramadera** (p122), one of the best half-day trips in Kyoto. If you have the energy, continue over the top of the mountain and down to the village of Kibune.
- ② Entering the green wonderland of **Saihō-ji** (p127).
- ③ Making a pilgrimage to the pinnacle of Japanese architecture, **Katsura Rikyū Imperial Villa** (p126).
- ④ Escaping to the quaint rural village of **Ōhara** (p121) to visit the Buddhist paradise of Sanzen-in and then walk the rural footpaths of the village.
- ⑤ Climbing to **Jingo-ji** (p127), a mountain temple where you can play 'karmic frisbee.'

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Avoid Ōhara on busy autumn foliage weekends in November. There's only one main road up there from Kyoto and you'll spend too much time sitting in traffic (and the temples will be crowded when you get there). Wait until Monday if you can.



Best Places to Eat

- Yōshūji (p123)
- Hirobun (p123)
- Seryō-jaya (p121)



Best Places to Hike

- Kurama-dera (p122)
- Takao (p127)
- Mt Hiei (p128)



Best Gardens

- Katsura Rikyū Imperial Villa (p126)
- Saihō-ji (p127)
- Sanzen-in (p121)

Explore: Kitayama Area & Greater Kyoto

The Kitayama Area & Greater Kyoto area encompass all the sites found at the periphery of the city. This includes four villages in the Kitayama (Northern Mountains) area: Takao, Ōhara, Kurama and Kibune. It also includes two first-rate sights in the southwest corner of the city: Saihō-ji ('Moss Temple') and Katsura Rikyū Imperial Villa. In the south, you'll find the sake-brewing centre known as Fushimi, and still further south you'll find the tea-growing centre known as Uji, which is also home to a fine Buddhist temple, Byōdō-in. Finally, in the northeast corner of the city, you'll find the mountain temple complex of Enryaku-ji, which sits atop Mt Hiei, the mountain that dominates that corner of the city.

Needless to say, due to their location, most of these sights require at least half a day to visit and you shouldn't try to link any of these areas into one day trip (with the exception, perhaps, of Uji and Fushimi).

All of the sights in this chapter can be reached by public transport. Kurama and Kibune are a very easy 30-minute trip from Kyoto via the Eizan Dentetsu line. Likewise, Ōhara is an easy 40-minute bus trip from central Kyoto (longer in autumn foliage season). Fushimi and Uji are both served by the JR line and the private Keihan line. Buses and trains serve the sights in Southwest Kyoto and buses and/or funiculars will get you up Mt Hiei to visit Enryaku-ji.

Local Life

➤ **Beat the Heat** Locals head to the *yuka* (dining platforms) over the river in Kibune (p123) to cool off when the Kyoto summer heat cranks up.

➤ **A Taste of Winter** Folks who love winter scenery head up to Kurama-dera (p122) after a snowstorm hits the area.

➤ **Foliage Treat** The village of Ōhara (p121) is loved by locals and other Japanese for its autumn foliage.

Getting There & Away

➤ **Train** The Eizan line will get you to Kurama and Kibune. The JR line and the Keihan line serve Fushimi and Uji.

➤ **Bus** Kyoto City buses and/or Kyoto buses (they're different) serve all the destinations in this chapter. JR buses also serve Takao.

➤ **Rental Car** A rental car is a good option for exploring the Kitayama area.