

Northern Higashiyama

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Immersing yourself in the green world of **Nanzen-ji** (p93). With wonderful gardens, intimate subtemples and a hidden grotto waiting in the woods, Nanzen-ji is one of Kyoto's most appealing temples.
- 2 Taking the bamboo-lined path to see **Ginkaku-ji** (p94), Kyoto's famed 'Silver Pavilion'.
- 3 Getting lost in thought on the flower-strewn **Path of Philosophy** (Tetsugaku-no-Michi; p96).
- 4 Escaping the crowds and finding yourself at the superb Buddhist sanctuary of **Hōnen-in** (p96).
- 5 Checking out the exhibits in Kyoto's museum district of **Okazaki-kōen** (p96).



For more detail of this area, see Map p216 and p217 ➔

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Visit the big-name sights here (Ginkaku-ji, Eikan-dō and Nanzen-ji) early on a weekday morning to avoid the crowds. Alternatively, go right before closing.

Best Places to Eat

- Omen (p99)
- Goya (p98)
- Falafel Garden (p98)

For reviews, see p98. ➡

Best Places to Shop

- Chion-ji Tezukuri-ichi (p100)
- Kyoto Handicraft Center (p100)
- Tōzandō (p100)

For reviews, see p100. ➡

Best Places for Kids

- Okazaki-kōen (p96)
- Heian-jingū (p98)
- Path of Philosophy (p96)

For reviews, see p93. ➡

Explore: Northern Higashiyama

Running along the base of the Higashiyama (Eastern Mountains) from Sanjō-dōri in the south to Imadegawa-dōri in the north, the Northern Higashiyama area is one of Kyoto's most important sightseeing districts. It contains a long strip of temples including Nanzen-ji, Eikan-dō, Hōnen-in and Ginkaku-ji, all connected by the lovely Path of Philosophy. It's also home to museums, parks and a few interesting Shintō shrines.

Northern Higashiyama can be divided into two main sections: the strip of temples located directly at the base of the mountains, most of which are accessible from the Path of Philosophy; and the museums/shrine district known as Okazaki-kōen (Okazaki Park), which occupies a wide swathe of the area between the mountains and the river.

It comprises a fairly large area and can be explored on foot, mostly over car-free walkways, making it one of the most pleasant areas for sightseeing in Kyoto. You can explore most of Northern Higashiyama in about half a day, but a full day allows a more leisurely pace.

Many people use Kyoto City bus 5 to access this area. This is convenient as this bus traverses the entire district, but keep in mind that this bus is often crowded and it can be slow. If coming from Kyoto Station or downtown, it's probably better to take the subway here. The Tōzai subway line will get you to Higashiyama Station, which is convenient for Okazaki-kōen, and Keage Station, which is convenient for Nanzen-ji and sights north. Unfortunately, there are no trains or subways convenient to the northern end of this district. A variety of buses will take you to downtown and Kyoto Station.

This is the best area in Kyoto for bicycling – a rental bike is one of the best ways to explore Northern Higashiyama.

Local Life

- **Hang-out** The pond behind the Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art (p98) is popular with local parents and couples for picnics and lazy afternoon naps.
- **Exercise** Local fitness buffs and nature lovers make a daily pilgrimage up Daimonji-yama (p96).
- **Freebie** The Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art (p97) hosts all kinds of special free exhibits.

Getting There & Away

- **Train** The Keihan line stops at stations on the west side of the district.
- **Bus** Kyoto City bus 5 traverses the district. Several other city buses stop here as well.
- **Subway** The Tōzai subway line is the best way to access Northern Higashiyama.