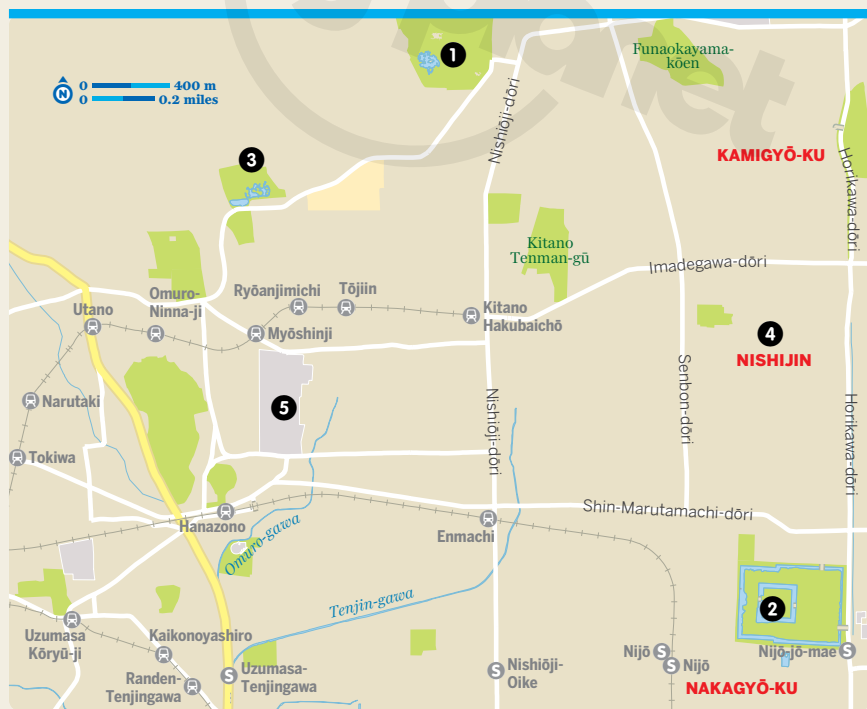


# Northwest Kyoto

## Neighbourhood Top Five

- ❶ Being dazzled by the single most impressive sight in all of Kyoto: the gold-plated main hall of **Kinkaku-ji** (p103), the famed 'Golden Pavilion'.
- ❷ Feeling the power of the shogun at **Nijō-jō** (p104).
- ❸ Meditating on the 15 magical rocks in the Zen garden at **Ryōan-ji** (p105).
- ❹ Searching for 'Old Kyoto' in the weaving district of **Nishijin** (p105).
- ❺ Strolling through the enclosed world of Zen temples at **Myōshin-ji** (p106).



For more detail of this area, see Map p220 and p221 →

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Since Ryōan-ji and Kinkaku-ji (the two most famous sights in Northwest Kyoto) and Arashiyama are all on the west side of town, it makes sense to visit these in one day. Take a taxi between Arashiyama and Kinkaku-ji or Ryōan-ji (or vice versa).

### Best Places to Eat

- Saraca Nishijin (p107)
- Kanei (p107)
- Toyouke-jaya (p107)

For reviews, see p107. ➡

### Best Places to Gaze on a Garden

- Myōshin-ji (p106)
- Taizō-in (p106)
- Ryōan-ji (p105)

For reviews, see p103. ➡

### Best Kyoto Culture Experiences

- Nishijin (p105)
- Orinasu-ken (p105)
- Urasenke Chadō Research Center (p106)

For reviews, see p103. ➡

## Explore: Northwest Kyoto

Northwest Kyoto comprises the section of the city that runs from Kyoto's main castle, Nijō-jō, all the way to the base of the mountains in the northwest corner of the city. This large area contains some of Kyoto's most celebrated temples like Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion) and Ryōan-ji (with its mystical rock garden), along with the awe-inspiring samurai castle of Nijō-jō, and the old weaving district of Nishijin.

Like the Central Kyoto area, the sights here are quite spread out and you shouldn't try to cover them all in one day. Rather, pick a few that are clustered close together and visit them in half a day, then consider spending the rest of the day in an adjoining sightseeing district. Many people visit Kinkaku-ji and Ryōan-ji in the morning, then continue by taxi down to the Arashiyama and Sagano area (p108), which is also on the west side of the city.

With the exception of sights in the inner part of this district (like Nijō-jō, which is on the Tōzai subway line), it's a bit time-consuming to see the sights in Northwest Kyoto. Most sights are best accessed by city bus. Myōshin-ji and nearby sights are also served by the Japan Railways (JR) line and by the private Randen Kitano line. If you're a keen cyclist, you can also explore the area on a bicycle, but keep in mind that there are some hills around Kinkaku-ji and Ryōan-ji, so you'll work up quite a sweat in summer.

## Local Life

- **With kids** Tōei Uzumasa Movie Village (p106) is popular with local families.
- **Market meeting** Tenjin-san Market (p107) is a popular meeting place for local expats and Kyoto residents.
- **Cherry blossom spot** In early April the Randen Kitano line between Narutaki and Utano Stations passes through a tunnel of blooming cherry trees.

## Getting There & Away

- **Train** The JR Sagano/San-in line stops near Myōshin-ji and Tōei Uzumasa Movie Village, while the private Randen Kitano line stops near Ninna-ji.
- **Bus** Kyoto City buses serve all the sights in this district.
- **Subway** The Tōzai subway line stops very close to Nijō-jō (get off at Nijō-jō-mae).