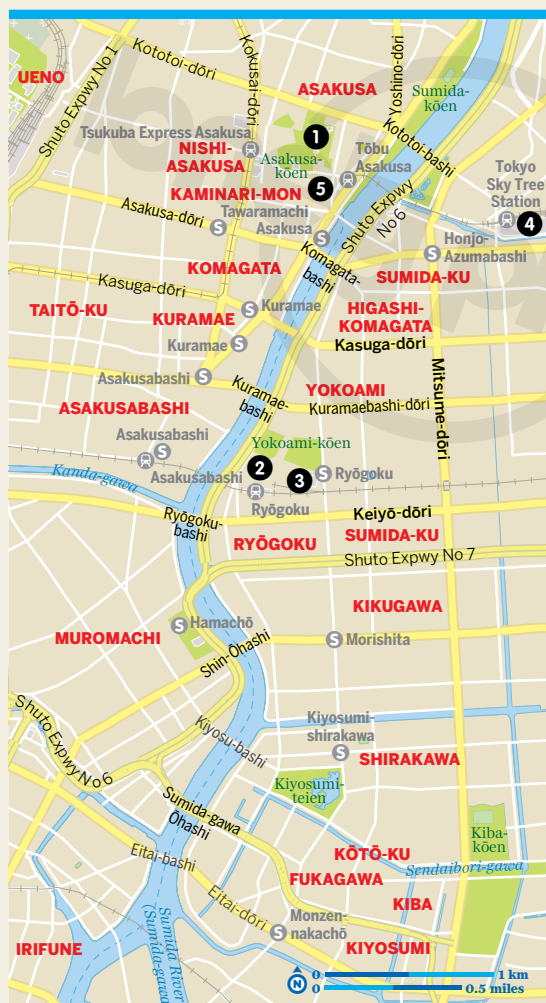


# Asakusa & Sumida River

ASAKUSA | OSHIAGE | RYÔGOKU | KIYOSUMI | FUKAGAWA



## Neighbourhood Top Five

- ❶ Soaking up the atmosphere (and the incense) at Asakusa's centuries-old temple complex, **Sensô-ji** (p166).
- ❷ Catching the salt-slinging, belly-slapping ritual of sumo at **Ryôgoku Kokugikan** (p175).
- ❸ Learning about life in old Edo at the city's excellent history museum, the **Edo-Tokyo Museum** (p170).
- ❹ Scaling the world's tallest tower, **Tokyo Sky Tree** (p168), and seeing the capital at your feet.
- ❺ Shopping for handmade goods in Asakusa's many traditional craft stores, such as **Bengara** (p174).

For more detail of this area, see Map p291 and p292 ➔

## Explore Asakusa & Sumida River

Welcome to Tokyo's east side, the area long known as Shitamachi (the 'Low City'), where the city's merchants and artisans lived during the Edo period (1603–1868). Asakusa (ah-*saku*-sah), with its grand temple complex, is one of Tokyo's principal tourist destinations. During the day, Sensō-ji is pretty much always jam-packed. Step off the main drags though and you'll find far fewer tourists, and the craft shops and mum-and-dad restaurants that have long defined these quarters.

The neighbourhoods east of the Sumida-gawa – Oshiage, Ryōgoku, Fukagawa and Kiyosumi – look much like they have for decades, having experienced little of the development seen elsewhere in the city. Tokyo Sky Tree, just across the river from Asakusa in Oshiage, is the exception. This is the city's newest tourist attraction, with a shopping and entertainment complex at its base. Make it your last stop of the day, to see the city all lit up at night.

Ryōgoku has two key sights, the sumo stadium and the Edo-Tokyo Museum. Further south, Fukagawa and Kiyosumi have a handful of worthy sights (a temple, a shrine, a garden and some museums) yet remain fairly off the radar. Walking around these neighbourhoods can give you a feel for the old-Tokyo culture of the city's east side.

## Local Life

- ➔ **Street food** Asakusa brims with street-food vendors (p173), especially along Nakamise-dōri.
- ➔ **Festivals** The 15th and 28th of each month are festival days at Fukagawa Fudō-dō (p171) and Tomioka Hachiman-gū (p171), with food stalls and a flea market.
- ➔ **Hang-outs** Escape the all-inclusive Tokyo Sky Tree complex and hang with the Oshiage locals at Shishimaru Shokudō (p172).

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Train** The Tsukuba Express stops at Tsukuba Express Asakusa Station, west of Sensō-ji. The Tōbu Sky Tree line leaves from Tōbu Asakusa Station for Tokyo Sky Tree Station. The JR Sōbu line goes to Ryōgoku.
- ➔ **Subway** The Ginza line stops at Asakusa. The Asakusa line stops at a separate Asakusa Station and at Oshiage. The Ōedo line connects the Ryōgoku, Kiyosumi and Fukagawa areas via Ryōgoku, Kiyosumi-Shirakawa and Monzen-Nakachō Stations. The Hanzōmon line also stops at Oshiage and Kiyosumi-Shirakawa.
- ➔ **Water bus** Tokyo Cruise and Tokyo Mizube Cruising Line ferries stop at separate piers in Asakusa; Tokyo Mizube Cruising Line also stops in Ryōgoku.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

### Tokyo Mizube Cruising

**Line** (東京水辺ライン; Map p291; [www.tokyo-park.or.jp/](http://www.tokyo-park.or.jp/) waterbus) water buses depart from Niten-mon Pier in Asakusa for Odaiba, via Ryōgoku. It's actually the most convenient way to get between Asakusa and Ryōgoku (one way 10 minutes, ¥310) and is the perfect way for travellers short on time to sample a river cruise.

### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Otafuku (p172)
- ➔ Irokawa (p172)
- ➔ Asakusa Imahan (p172)
- ➔ Rokurinsha (p172)

For reviews, see p171 ➔

### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Popeye (p173)
- ➔ Lucite Gallery (p173)
- ➔ Kamiya Bar (p173)
- ➔ 'Cuzn Homeground (p173)

For reviews, see p173 ➔

### Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Tokyo Hotarudo (p174)
- ➔ Bengara (p174)
- ➔ Soi (p174)

For reviews, see p174 ➔