

# Asakusa & Sumida River

ASAKUSA | OSHIAGE | RYÔGOKU | KIYOSUMI & FUKAGAWA | ASAKUSA & OSHIAGE | RYÔGOKU, KIYOSUMI & SHIRAKAWA



For more detail of this area see Maps p286 and p287 ➔

## Neighbourhood Top Five

**1 Sensô-ji** (p161) Browsing the craft stalls of Nakamise-dôri and soaking up the atmosphere (and the incense) at Asakusa's centuries-old temple complex.

**2 Ryôgoku Kokugikan** (p168) Catching the salt-slinging, belly-slapping ritual of sumo at one of the city's four annual tournaments.

**3 Edo-Tokyo Museum** (p164) Learning about life in old Edo at this excellent history museum with full-scale reconstructions of famous buildings.

**4 Tokyo Sky Tree** (p163) Scaling the world's tallest communication tower, seeing the capital at your feet, then browsing the Solamachi mall at the base afterwards.

**5 Fukagawa Fudô-dô** (p164) Being blown away by the theatre of the fire ritual at this Shingon sect temple, which also has a trippy corridor lined with 9500 mini Buddhas.

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

**Tokyo Mizube Cruising Line** ([www.tokyo-park.or.jp/waterbus](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 (¥310, one way 10 minutes) and is the perfect way for travellers short on time to sample a river cruise.



### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Otafuku (p167)
- ➔ Kappō Yoshiba (p168)
- ➔ Asakusa Imahan (p167)
- ➔ Onigiri Yadoroku (p165)

For reviews, see p165. ➔



### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Popeye (p168)
- ➔ Café Otonova (p168)
- ➔ Camera (p169)
- ➔ 'Cuzn Homeground (p168)

For reviews, see p168. ➔



### Best Places to Shop

- ➔ Marugoto Nippon (p169)
- ➔ Tokyo Hotarudo (p169)
- ➔ Bengara (p170)
- ➔ Kakimori (p169)

For reviews, see p169. ➔

## Explore Asakusa & Sumida River

Welcome to 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 bustling temple complex, is one of Tokyo's principal tourist destinations. During the day, and especially at weekends, Sensō-ji (p161) is 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 (p163), just across the river from Asakusa, is the exception. 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 (p168) and the Edo-Tokyo Museum (p164). Further south, Fukagawa and Kiyosumi have a handful of worthy sights (a temple, a shrine and a garden) yet remain fairly off the radar. Exploring these peaceful 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 (p165), especially along Nakamise-dōri.
- ➔ **Festivals** The 15th and 28th of each month are festival days at Fukagawa Fudō-dō (p164) and Tomioka Hachiman-gū (p165), with food stalls and a flea market.
- ➔ **Parks** Sumida-kōen, on both sides of the river around Asakusa, is a cherry-blossom-viewing hot spot and also gets packed for the summer **fireworks festival** (隅田川花火大会, Sumida-gawa Hanabi Taikai).

## Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Train** 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 and Asakasa line stops at separate Asakusa stations. The Asakusa and Hanzōmon lines stop at Oshiage. The Ōedo line connects Ryōgoku, Kiyosumi (Kiyosumi-Shirakawa Station) and Fukagawa (Monzen-Nakachō Station).
- ➔ **Water Bus** Tokyo Cruise (p236) and Tokyo Mizube Cruising Line (p236) ferries stop at separate piers in Asakusa; Tokyo Mizube Cruising Line also stops in Ryōgoku.