

Ueno & Yanesen

UENO | YANESSEN

Neighbourhood Top Five

1 Tokyo National Museum (p149) Getting schooled in Japanese art history at the finest collection of Japanese art and cultural artefacts in the world, home to samurai swords, *ukiyo-e* (woodblock prints) and gilded screens.

2 Rikugi-en (p152) Admiring the inspired views

across one of Tokyo's most beautiful formal gardens with its central pond, tea-houses, stone bridges and manicured foliage.

3 Ueno-kōen (p153) Strolling through this expansive park chock-a-block with museums, temples and a zoo.

4 Nezu-jinja (p154) Paying your respects at this

picturesque shrine with its corridor of mini red *torii* (gates) and azalea bushes, then explore the wider Yanesen area.

5 Ameya-yokochō (p158) Absorbing the sights, sounds and smells of this old-fashioned partially outdoor market; also a great spot for street food.



For more detail of this area see Map p284 ➔

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

While it's possible to get around Ueno and Yanesen on foot, the 'tōzai' (東西: east-west) route of the **Megurin** (www.city.taito.lg.jp/index/kurashi/kotsu/megurin) community bus does a helpful loop around the area. Useful stops include No 2, across from the Ueno Park exit at Ueno Station, No 9 in front of Yanaka Cemetery (Yanaka Rei-en Iriguchi) and No 12 for Yanaka Ginza (Yanaka Ginza Yomise-dōri). Stops are announced on the bus, which runs approximately every 15 minutes from 7am to 7pm.

Best Museums

- Tokyo National Museum (p149)
- Asakura Museum of Sculpture, Taitō (p154)
- Shitamachi Museum (p153)

For reviews, see p149. ➡

Best Places to Stroll

- Ueno-kōen (p153)
- Yanaka Ginza (p154)
- Ameya-yokochō (p158)
- Yanaka-reien (p154)

For reviews, see p153. ➡

Best Places to Eat

- Shinsuke (p155)
- Hantei (p157)
- Innsyoutei (p155)
- Kamachiku (p155)

For reviews, see p155. ➡

Explore Ueno & Yanesen

You could easily spend a whole day in Ueno-kōen (p153), one of Tokyo's top draws. Start at the Tokyo National Museum (p149) then wend your way southward, hitting a few other museums, the zoo and the centuries-old shrines and temples that dot the park. Temporary exhibitions can draw huge crowds, but you'll find the permanent collections of most museums blissfully quiet. Finish up at Ameya-yokochō (p158).

Within walking distance of Ueno is a trio of neighbourhoods that time seemingly forgot. Much of Yanaka, Nezu and Sendagi, collectively known as Yanesen, miraculously survived the Great Kantō Earthquake and the allied fire-bombing of WWII (not to mention the slash-and-burn modernising of the postwar years). Yanaka, in particular, has a high concentration of vintage wooden structures and more than a hundred temples and shrines. It's a fantastic place to wander and is popular with Tokyoites, too, so can get crowded on weekends.

Last but far from least, don't miss Rikugi-en (p152), in the northern neighbourhood Komagome, perhaps Tokyo's most spectacular traditional garden.

Local Life

➤ **Park Life** On weekends, look for buskers, acrobats and food vendors in Ueno-kōen (p153). The park is also Tokyo's most famous cherry-blossom-viewing place.

➤ **Night Market** Many casual restaurants in and around Ameya-yokochō (p158) open up onto the street. It's a fun place to dine in the evening.

➤ **Cycling** Join the locals getting around Yanesen by bicycle with a rental from Tokyobike Rental Service (p155). If you're staying nearby, many accommodations also have bicycles to lend.

➤ **Hang-outs** Join Yanesen's artsy crowd for coffee at Kayaba Coffee (p157) or cocktails at bookstore-bar Bousingot (p157).

Getting There & Away

➤ **Train** The JR Yamanote line stops at Ueno, Nippori (for Yanaka) and Komagome (for Rikugi-en) (p152). Keisei line trains from Narita Airport stop at Keisei Ueno Station (just south of JR Ueno Station).

➤ **Subway** The Ginza and Hibiya lines stop at Ueno. The Chiyoda line runs along the west side of Ueno-kōen (p153), stopping at Yushima, Nezu and Sendagi; the latter two stops are convenient for Yanaka. The Namboku line runs to Komagome for Rikugi-en.