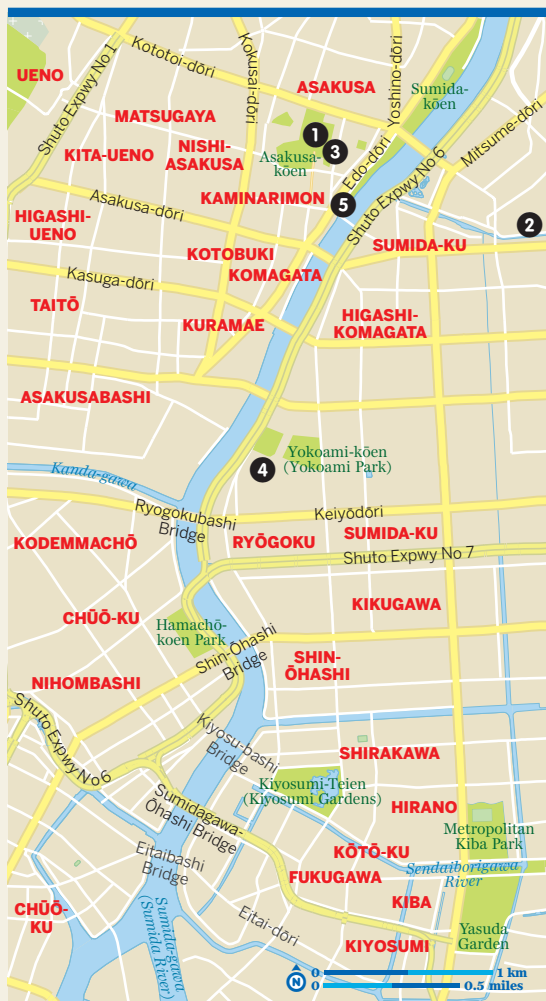


Asakusa & Sumida River

ASAKUSA | OSHIAGE | RYÔGOKU | KIYOSUMI & FUKAGAWA



Neighbourhood Top Five

- ➊ Entering the Thunder Gate, and walking shop-lined Nakamise-dôri to the great **Sensô-ji** (Sensô Temple; p168), grabbing an *age-manjû* (bean bun) en route.
- ➋ Scaling the world's tallest tower at **Tokyo Sky Tree** (p170) and seeing the capital at your feet.
- ➌ Stepping back in time in Asakusa's old-world **crafts shops** (see boxed text, p178).
- ➍ Heading ringside to watch the big boys slap each other silly in a sumô bout at **Ryôgoku** (p170).
- ➎ Sailing the Sumidagawa (Sumida River) by **Tokyo Cruise ferryboat** (see boxed text, p73).

For more detail of this area, see Map p302 ➡

Explore Asakusa & Sumida River

Asakusa (ah-*saku*-sah) is where the spirit of old Edo proudly lives, but it takes some old-fashioned footwork to get to know it. Replete with charming shops and restaurants, the district is well suited for walking and can take up a leisurely half-day. The outlying sights across and along the Sumida River, such as Ryōgoku, can take the rest of the day and into the evening.

Begin your journey through the historic Shitamachi district at Asakusa Station on the Ginza Line. Follow the signs to Kaminarimon (Thunder Gate), the magnificent entrance to the Nakamise-dōri shopping arcade leading to Sensō-ji (Sensō Temple). The temple itself and neighbouring Asakusa-jinja (Asakusa Shrine) are surrounded by a web of old-world streets and shopping arcades.

After a meal at one of Asakusa's traditional restaurants, head back towards the Sumida River to catch a Tokyo Cruise ferry heading downstream to the Shimbashi area or Odaiba, or head to Tōbu Asakusa Station and cross the river on the Tōbu Isesaki Line to go to Tokyo Sky Tree. The view from its observation decks is spectacular during winter months and sunsets.

Local Life

- ➔ **Snacking** Asakusa brims with great bun and cracker shops, many of which make their goodies on site.
- ➔ **Spectacles** Tokyoites flock to Asakusa for New Year's temple visits, spring festivals and summer fireworks.
- ➔ **Hanami** Line the banks of the river in Asakusa-kōen park for *hanami* (cherry-blossom viewing) in April.

Getting There & Away

Asakusa

- ➔ **Train** The Tōbu Isesaki Line stops at Tōbu Asakusa and Tokyo Sky Tree. The Tsukuba Express stops at a different Asakusa Station, west of Sensō-ji.
- ➔ **Subway** The Ginza Line stops at Asakusa. The Asakusa Line also stops at a separate Asakusa Station south of Sensō-ji.
- ➔ **Boat** Azuma-bashi is the northern terminus of Tokyo Cruise ferries.

Ryōgoku & Sumida River

- ➔ **Train** The JR Sōbu Line goes to Ryōgoku.
- ➔ **Subway** The Ōedo Line connects the Ryōgoku, Kiyosumi and Fukagawa areas via Ryōgoku, Kiyosumi-Shirakawa and Monzen-Nakachō Stations. The Hanzōmon and Tōzai Lines also serve the last two stations, respectively.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Asakusa Imahan (p175)
- ➔ Daikokuya (p175)
- ➔ Otafuku (p175)

For reviews, see p175 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Popeye (p177)
- ➔ Lucite Gallery (p177)
- ➔ Café Meursault (p177)

For reviews, see p177 ➔

Best Views

- ➔ Tokyo Sky Tree (p170)
- ➔ Lucite Gallery (p177)
- ➔ Tokyo Cruise ferries (p73)