Walking Tour: Yanaka

Yanaka is rare in Tokyo for having a high concentration of old wooden buildings, a vision of Tokyo from a century past; it also has lots of small quiet temples, winding alleys, galleries and ateliers.

Start: Tokyo National Museum
Distance: 3km
Duration: Two hours

1 SCAI the Bathhouse is a centuries-old public bathhouse turned contemporary art gallery.

2 See the works of long-time Yanaka resident and painter Allan West at his studio, Art Sanctuary Allan West (www.allanwest.jp; 1.30-4.30pm, from 3pm Sun, closed Thu).

3 This ancient, thick-trunked Himalayan cedar tree is a local landmark.

4 Enju-ji is typical of Yanaka’s many temples, but particularly popular with runners: it enshrines Nichika-sama, the ‘god of strong legs’.

5 Yanaka-reien is one of Tokyo’s most atmospheric and prestigious cemeteries (also a favourite sunning spot of Yanaka’s many stray cats).

6 Once the home studio of a local sculptor, the Asakura Museum of Sculpture, Taitō is now among Tokyo’s best small museums.

7 A perfect example of a mid-20th-century shopping street, Yanaka Ginza has food vendors and craft stores.

Classic Photo Yanaka Ginza from the Yūyake Dandan ‘Sunset Stairs’.

Take a Break There’s good coffee and a vintage vibe at Kayaba Coffee (http://kayaba-coffee.com; 8am-6pm, to 9pm Fri & Sat).