

Tokyo Study Center Newsletter: Autumn 2008



October and autumn has arrived in Japan. I hope that no one is dismayed by the end of hot and sticky summer weather. October will probably be the less hectic in terms of schoolwork, so this newsletter has been produced to encourage students to get out and enjoy Japan. The following information has been prepared to give a few ideas to those who want to sightsee but are conflicted as to where is best. Of course, if you want further information on touring Japan, feel free to drop into the study center or send an email message.

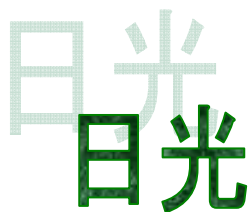
Also, please keep in mind that the UC Tokyo Study Center exists for helping its students, so please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any problems whatsoever. Don't wait until something small becomes serious!

Regards,
Parker Allen
Assistant, UCTSC



Day trips: Nature & Cultural

On weekends and days off school, some of you may wonder if it is possible to take a day trip outside of Tokyo to sightsee. I ensure you that it is not only possible, but also considerably less expensive than trips involving nightly stays. I suggest the following destinations for day tripping around the Kanto region.



-NIKKO-

Do you like Japanese shrines and temples? Want to see one of Japan's most famous waterfalls? If so, be sure to check this place out. It's a good couple of hours away from Tokyo, but the sights are definitely worth the travel. The following websites provide all of the details:

Wikitravel Nikko: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Nikko>

Nikko Tourist Organization: <http://www.nikko-jp.org/english/index.html>



鎌倉

-KAMAKURA-



Looking for shrines and temples a little closer to home? Kamakura is only an hour away from Shinjuku station and offers a wealth of Buddhist and Shinto goodness. Be sure to pay a visit to Kotoku-in, where you can find a behemoth Buddha large enough for groups of people to tour inside its bronze shell. Nearby Shonan has a beach popular among locals, but unfortunately is akin to Long Beach in terms of quality.

Wikitravel Kamakura:

<http://wikitravel.org/en/Kamakura>

Kamakura Guide:

<http://www.kanagawa-kankou.or.jp/english/area/kamakura.html>



箱根

-HAKONE-

Onsen, the Japanese word for hot spring, are public baths with water drawn from natural hot springs. If getting slow-cooked while looking at beautiful scenery is your idea of an awesome afternoon, it's time to hop on the next train to Hakone. Even if you don't feel comfortable being nude in the midst of others, the scenery here is breathtaking and there's one onsen amusement park where swimwear may be worn.

Wikitravel Hakone: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Hakone>

Hakone Travel Guide: <http://www.hakone.or.jp/english/index.html>

Yunessun Hot Springs Spa Resort:

<http://www.yunessun.com/english/yunessun.html>



高尾山

-MT. TAKAO-



Want to climb a mountain? Mt. Fuji is the famous one, but it's quite far away and in my opinion a bit overrated. If you take are one of our students who commute on the Chuo line, you have likely seen that most Chuo trains leaving Tokyo are bound for Takao. For those on a budget, Mt. Takao offers scenic views without scenic travel costs. Also, for those who like mountains but not mountain climbing, there's a cable car and ropeway to the summit for 900 yen round trip.

Wikitravel Mt. Takao: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Hachioji#Do>

Mt. Takao Info: <http://www.keio.co.jp/english/local/takao.html>

http://www.takaotozan.co.jp/takaotozan_eng1/index.htm



In and around Tokyo and Yokohama

Not satisfied by green tea and onsens? Tokyo and Yokohama, offer a vast variety of cool places to visit. I suggest the following places for shopping, food, and entertainment:

六本木

Roppongi skyscraper districts:



Tokyo Midtown <http://www.tokyo-midtown.com/en/>

- Upscale shopping, restaurants & delis, park annex with views of Tokyo Tower

Roppongi Hills <http://www.roppongihills.com/en/>

- Art museum, views of Tokyo from observatory, shops, food, and nice cinema

渋谷・原宿

Shibuya & Harajuku shopping:



Designer; Seibu Shibuya: <http://superfuture.com/city/reviews/review.cfm?ID=349>

Midrange: Shibuya Parco <http://superfuture.com/city/reviews/review.cfm?ID=343>

Harajuku style: Laforet <http://superfuture.com/city/reviews/review.cfm?ID=257>

Trendy areas in Ebisu & Daikanyama <http://metropolis.co.jp/vg/ebisu.html>

http://www.tcvb.or.jp/en/hot/mustsee/must_0202/mustsee_02.html

東京の緑

Green areas in Central Tokyo:



Strange young people in Yoyogi Park http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoyogi_Park



Shinto & Gardens in Meiji Shrine http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meiji_Shrine

Imperial Palace http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokyo_Imperial_Palace

Various museums in Ueno Park http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ueno_Park

Odaiba has affordable shopping malls <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Odaiba>



Yokohama Chinatown http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yokohama_Chinatown

Seaside entertainment in Minatomirai

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minato_Mirai

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Kyoto & Osaka

I have been to Kyoto and Osaka, and I don't have much to say about either. Below is some information that may be helpful in planning a trip:

Wikitravel Kyoto <http://wikitravel.org/en/Kyoto>

Official Kyoto Travel Guide <http://www.kyoto.travel/>

Wikitravel Osaka: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Osaka>

Osaka Information: <http://www.osaka-info.jp/en/>



→Shinkansen too expensive? Try JR Kanto overnight bus:

http://www.jrbuskanto.co.jp/bus_route_e/



If you do visit Osaka and would like to visit a historic mecca of Shingon Buddhism, I highly suggest taking a trip to Mt. Koya. <http://www.koyasan.or.jp/english/index.html>

*because of the distance, it may be best to spend the night in a *ryokan* (Japanese inn)

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Travel advisories

Trains & ID card – For those unfamiliar with the *inaka* rural areas outside major cities, there are a few things to keep in mind. Trains in rural areas run less often and tend to stop running as early as 6pm. It is highly advisable to pick up a train schedule to avoid getting stuck. Also, remember to have your Foreign Registration card on you at all times and notify the UC Study Center of your travel prior to departure.

Onsen etiquette – Read this if you are unfamiliar with Japanese bathing customs

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Onsen#Etiquette>

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Thanks for taking a look at the newsletter! I wish everyone the best in traveling Japan and hope your journeys will be most memorable. Once more, I will plug the UC Tokyo Study Center – I'm here to find answers to your questions and can do things like create travel schedules and make reservations if your Japanese is insufficient. Feel free to send an email to assistant@uctsc.org if you need any assistance.

Enjoy Traveling Around Japan!

All of the aforementioned locations in a Google map:

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&ll=35.128894,137.680664&spn=6.59335,9.887695&z=7&msid=106931441156552285470.000458a5173aa7c5c623a>