

The Traveler's Eye

Kyoto — Higashiyama



EP Allan

Welcome to the second DVD tour of The Traveler's Eye. On this tour we walk from The Heian Shrine to Kiyomizudera Temple stopping along the way at different shrines, temples and tourist shops. Once again I hope that this gives you some feel and ambience of this special area. So sit back with a cup of tea, some rice-crackers and enjoy the walking tour.
EP Allan.

Kyoto Higashiyama Map





The Heian Jingu Shrine

The shrine is most famous for its large, 30,000 square meter, garden designed and laid out during the Meiji Era. It is divided into 4 sections — East, West, Central and South. It is also spectacular during a short time in April when all of its cherry trees are in bloom. Open from 8:30 to 4:30. Entry fee 500 Yen.

Shoren-in Temple is one of the five 'Monzeki' temples of the Tendai Buddhist sect in Kyoto. In a 'Monzeki' temple the head priest is related to the imperial family. Shoren-in has also been known as 'Awata Palace' since the Heian period (794-1185). It is also a sacred place for the followers of the Jodo and Jodo-shin Buddhist sects. Furthermore, it was once used at a temporary imperial palace in 1788. The temple precinct is a national historic site and has a pleasant garden to stroll around in. This is also one of the few temples

you are allowed to take pictures inside. The entry fee is 500 Yen. For a little fun, visit:

<http://www.shorenin.com/english/>





Chion-in Temple

Large here is the key word. The main gate 'San-mon' is the largest surviving wooden structure in Japan. That is not all. It's bell is 10.8

feet tall, 9 feet wide and weighs 67.5 tons. Look at the sound ripples in the sand from when it is rung and you get the idea of its power. Besides that Chion-in also has some famous paintings on its sliding doors from the early Edo era (1600-1868), a large garden, and two guest houses (Ohojo and Kohojo) which are designated Important Cultural Properties. Be sure to come early as this temple gets bus loads of elementary school and junior high school children on class trips. The entry fee is 500 yen.



Yasaka Shrine

This shrine is the main Shinto shrine for the historic Goin area — the traditional place for Geisha and their apprentices. It also the center of the annual Goin Festival. There are hundreds of lanterns hung around the shrine with the names of their donors (mainly

Kyoto businesses and business men) which are lit at night. This shrine is for Gozu Tenno, a god said to protect Kyoto and its people from disease. There is a legend of a bottomless well called the “dragon’s lair” beneath the inner shrine. It is also believed that this well leads to the Palace of the Sea Goddess at the bottom of the sea.

The Goin Festival is from July 15th to 17th. Entry to the shrine is free, though you can offer money for health.

Kodaiji Temple The formal name for this temple is Kodaijusho-zenji. In 1605 it was built by the noblewoman Kita-no-Mandokoro as a memorial to her late husband Hideyoshi Toyotomi. The funding for the temple came from Ieyasu Tokugawa who went on to become the Shogun of Japan. Most of its buildings were destroyed by fire and only 4 of the original ones remain.



These are the Sanctuary, Founder's Hall, The Moon Viewing Pavilion, and the tea houses Kasa-Tei and Shigure-Tei. All of these buildings are important cultural properties. The garden is the original and is a place of historical importance.

Entry is 500 yen.



Entoku-in Temple
Entoku-in is across the street from Kodaiji and is a subtemple.

This is where Kita-no-mandokoro spent her final years. The temple has a large pleasant Momoyama period (1568-1600) garden and contains stones moved from Fushimi Castle's garden. In the

main hall the screen paintings by Hasegawa Tohaku are important cultural properties. For those interested there is an English web page <http://www.kodaiji.com/entoku-in/entokuin-e/intro.html> which has introductory essays on Zen Buddhism. Entry is 500 yen.



The route between Kodaiji Temple and Kiyomizudera Temple is lined with shops selling everything from bags to umbrellas with lots of tourist junk items in-between, toys candy and food.

Kiyomizudera Temple

Kiyomizudera, Pure Water Temple, is one of the most popular temples in Japan and is on the World Heritage list. It was founded in 780 and is associated with one of the oldest Buddhist sects in Japan, the Hosso sect. Below the terrace, you can drink the spring water which gives the temple its name. This water is supposed to have healing power. Behind the main hall is a shrine dedicated to the God of Love. Walking from one rock to the other with closed eyes is supposed to give you a lucky love life. The entrance fee is 500 yen.



Next there will be

The Traveler's Eye

Western Kyoto and the Central Market



The
Traveler's Eye:
Kyoto
Higashiyama



Music and Pictures by
EP Allan