

Special Experience and Secret Spots

混雑を避けて桜鑑賞～梅や桃も忘れず・・・

Sakura away from crowd (and alternatives...)



Sakura cherry blossoms are very beautiful but their peak is short so tourist spots in Kyoto in the season are crowded. However, if you do not stick to see sakura and temple/shrine at the same time, you have more choices of fantastic sakura destinations with fewer people



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京都府立植物園の桜園

Sakura at Kyoto Botanical Garden

It is not only that you can enjoy Sakura without too many tourists but also that there are so many kinds here (colors, shapes, and timing). The garden is just in front of subway Kitayama station 地下鉄北山駅



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鴨川の桜 Sakura at Kamogawa-river

The tunnel of sakura is located in the north of the city near the subway Kitayama st. 地下鉄北山駅. Only local people visit here so you can enjoy a relaxing time along the river bank. Recommend to visit together with the Botanical Garden



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鴨川の枝垂桜 Weeping sakura tree at Kamogawa river

Good thing about this sakura promnade called Nakaragi-no michi (半木の道) are that there are few people on weekdays and that the peak is a week later than normal sakura. Located next to the Botanical Garden



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海津大崎の桜 Sakura at Kaizu-osaki

Located in the north of the Lake Biwa 琵琶湖 and is accessible by either boats/cruisers (recommended) or bus after taking JR about 1 hr or so from Kyoto. We are happy to help our guests plan this one day trip including train / ship reservations



梅の花 (2～3月)

Plum flowers (Feb - Mar)

Although most tourists flood to Kyoto during a short sakura season, plum flowers are equally cute and beautiful, have more variety in color, and last longer. Start blooming at the end of Feb and last till the beginning of sakura season



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5色の桃花 (3～4月)

Five colored peach flowers (Mar - Apr)

A couple of trees in the garden of one of the accommodations we are running. Happy to take our guests of either ones to this spot. Normally lasts longer than sakura and has its peak at a bit different timing with sakura's

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琵琶湖疎水

Lake Biwa Canal (Biwako Sosui)



琵琶湖疎水の桜 Sakura@Biwako Sosui (Lake Biwa Canal)

This is one of the spots where you can enjoy sakura away from crowd. 200 sakura trees are lined up on both sides



Biwako Sosui is a waterway that was built in 1890 to transport water from Lake Biwa 琵琶湖 to Kyoto and is a great destination especially in spring and autumn. Accessible from both Kyoto 京都 and Siga 滋賀 sides. Relatively fewer tourists in any season



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琵琶湖疎水船 Biwako Sosui-sen (Lake Biwa Canal Boat Tour)

The boat was back in operations in 2018 and available for tourists. Reservation required. Walking distance from Subway Keage 地下鉄蹴上駅 or JR Yamashina 山科駅 and Otsu 大津駅



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琵琶湖疎水の紅葉 Autumn leaves @Biwako Sosui (Lake Biwa Canal)

The canal is also a great place to enjoy colored leaves 紅葉 away from crowd

混雑を避けて紅葉鑑賞

Autumn leaves away from crowd



The autumn leave season is another set of a few weeks when Kyoto is really congested by tourists from Japan and around the world. Recommend to visit these places if you want to spend more quiete and relaxing time with your family and friends



京都府立植物園の紅葉 Autumn leaves in Kyoto Botanical Garden

The Botanical Garden has two advantages for autumn leaves. One is that there are more kinds of trees than in temples/shrines or other destinations. The other is that not many tourists visit here



マキノのメタセコイア並木

Metasequoia Avenue in Makino

400 seedlings were first planted in 1981 and later 100 more were added to make the total length of the avenue to reach 2.5 km. Ranked Japan's autumn leave #1 in 2017 and 2018. Happy to help guests to get here!

特別な植物の鑑賞も・・・

Art plants in various forms...



Kyoto is a city of great art as well. These are some examples of what we found were interesting and actually we installed some of these in our accommodations.



人工観葉植物 Artificial foliage plants

NONA is the shop we've been using for a few years to decorate the pavilions. Some are partially real or dried but others a completely artificial. Many hotels and ryokans in Kyoto use this wonderful vendor. Happy to take our guests to the shop in the north of the city!



硝子電球の中の小宇宙

Microcosm in a light bulb

Using moss as the basis, the artist creates innovative microcosms by adding trees, rocks, and even waste scraps. Visit replanter.com for more detail. We are happy to take you to this photogenic atelier in the north of the city.



ハーバリウム作り体験

Herbarium making experience

Herbarium is not necessarily unique to Kyoto but we have a local specialist of this and happy to set up a private class for your groups to make their own. Please let us know well in advance if you are interested

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夏と冬の体験

Summer and winter experience



Although more tourists visit the city in spring and autumn, there are a number of spectacular events and sceneries from the post sakura season through late summer and in the winter



近江高島の棚田 "Tanada", terraced rice fields, of Ohmi Takashima

Located in the west coast of Lake Biwa 琵琶湖, the rice fields are most beautiful in May (with water) and in September (with golden rice stalk) Happy to help guests to plan logistics to get these villages - 1.5 hr (JR + bus) from Kyoto



五山送り火見学

Okuribi Bon Fire Best Spot

The Bon Fire on Aug 16th in five mountains surrounding the city can be seen from many places but there is one special spot where you can actually hear and feel the fire. Happy to help guests to get there in the right time!



琵琶湖雪見船

Snow Viewing Cruising in Lake Biwa

Starting from Otsu 大津 (10 min by JR from Kyoto) and operating Sat - Mon in January and then everyday till early March, the cruiser makes a 3 hr voyage to Nagahama 長浜, the center of north Shiga 滋賀 for 3000 yen



葵祭 Aoi-matsuri Festival

One of the three major festivals in Kyoto along with Gion matsuri and Jidai matsuri. Relatively fewer spectators so easy to see the parade close along the entire course from Imperial Palace to Kamigamo-jinja shrine. Held on May 15th every year.



祇園祭山鉾巡行 Yamaboko Junko

Gion Festival (Processions of Floats)

Falls on July 17 and 24 every year. One of the three major festivals in Kyoto as well as in Japan. Although you can see from the street, reserved seats are available if you don't want to be crushed in the crowd



琵琶湖バレイ BIWAKO VALLEY

The largest ski resort in the region (within 1-1.5 hours from Kyoto) has five lifts and boasts the view of Lake Biwa from the ski slopes. Open from late January till early March. 10 min by bus from Shiga 志賀 station after a 40 min JR ride from Kyoto



Cooking support and class



和食 料理体験

Washoku cooking experience

Washoku was designated as the fifth intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2013. As the accommodation has a nice island kitchen, you can take your own private washoku cooking class in "your pavilion". Ask us for more detail!



鍋 Nabe (Hot pot) navigation

Nabe is a popular, easy, and healthy way to enjoy meat, seafood, vegetable, and other ingredients in the winter. Hundreds of ready-made broth for the hot pot are available these days. We are happy to help guests to cook nabe in your pavilion!



出張シェフ Home cheff cooking service

Enjoying a great food in the old wooden Kyoto townhouse should be a memorable experience. We are currently searching what types of foods are available in what price ranges. Feel free to ask us what we've found so far and could offer to guests...

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その他の体験

Other experience



To make your stay in Kyoto as valuable and fun as possible, we are ready to use our knowledge, experience, and network in the city! These are examples of what we could offer



お茶体験 Tea Ceremony

There are a couple of ways to enjoy tea experience. Please do let us know well in advance to make reservation. The photo is when I invite my guest to my friend's traditional Japanese house in the north of the city



京町家見学 Machiya townhouse tour

If you are interested in living or buying (for business) a machiya in Kyoto, we can provide an opportunity to take a tour to visit these houses and talk with local property agents and house builders from our network. One of my past guests built a house here leveraging this



上七軒歌舞練場ビアガーデン

Beer garden at Kamishichiken

Probably the easiest and reasonable way to meet and talk with a geisha (called geiko in Kyoto) or maiko apprentice. No contact with this elite world is needed but just make a reservation or show up in the beer garden