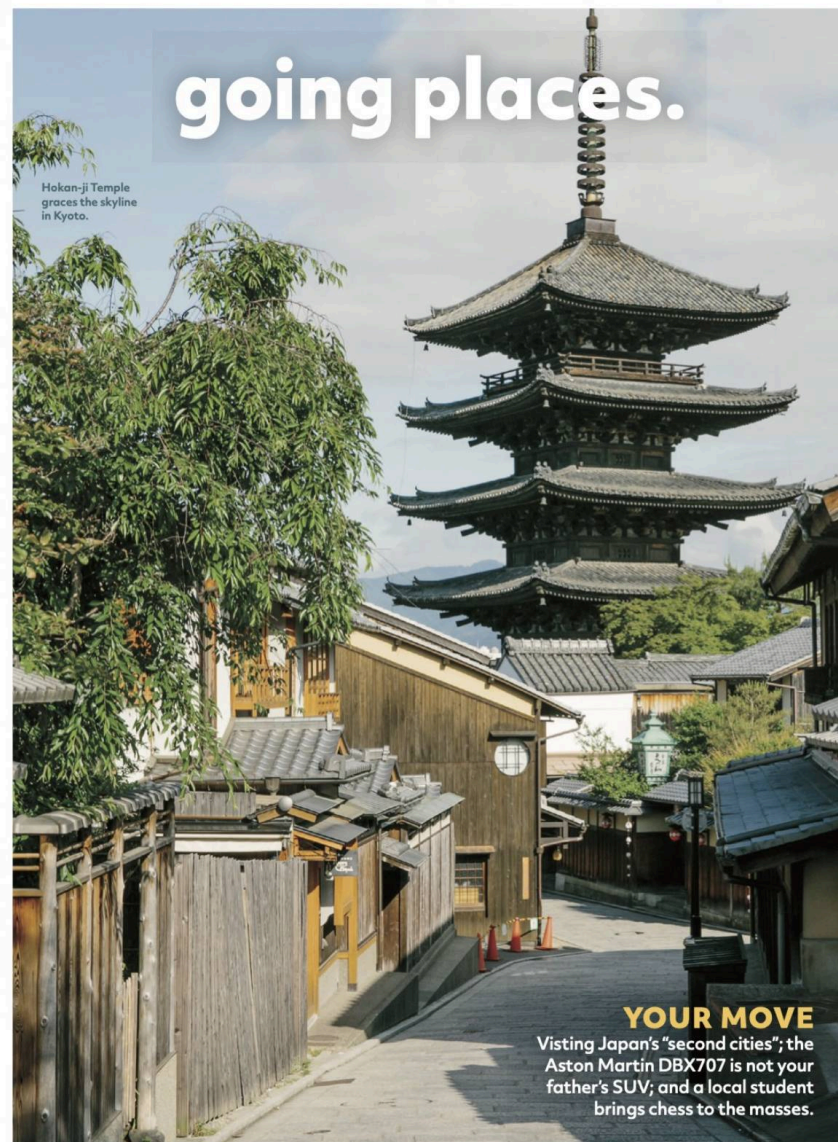


marin living.



GATHERINGS **AND** GETAWAYS

Kyoto Convention & Visitors Bureau (CCVB)



going places.

Hokan-ji Temple graces the skyline in Kyoto.

YOUR MOVE

Visting Japan's "second cities"; the Aston Martin DBX707 is not your father's SUV; and a local student brings chess to the masses.

voyager.



Kyoto, Japan

DESTINATION JAPAN

Discover sacred Shinto shrines and dine on street food favorites in **Kyoto** and **Osaka**.

By Keri Bridgwater

THE APPEAL OF JAPAN as a travel destination continues to soar, and connected by a 15-minute Shinkansen bullet train ride, two of its most sensational must-see “second cities” offer distinctly different experiences than megalopolitan capital Tokyo. With its ornate Buddhist temples and meditative Zen gardens, Kyoto provides a heart-and-soul snapshot of Old Japan, while port city Osaka stands out for its street food scene and neon-lit nightlife.

From a sake brewery tour and pottery workshop to a relaxing ofuro bath ritual in a skyscraping spa — here are some of the best things to see and do when planning a trip.

KYOTO: The Ancient Former Capital
Winding streets and traditional wooden teahouses make Kyoto’s historic Higashiyama district an enchanting place to visit, and the **Park Hyatt Kyoto** (from \$1,325 per night; www.hyatt.com) is an exceptional place to stay. Ryokan-inspired guest rooms are seamlessly arranged into the hillside, offering views of the temple-like garden, city and Yasaka Pagoda below the latter, which also serves as a striking backdrop to the hotel’s French-Japanese teppanyaki restaurant, Yasaka.

www.stock.adobe.com/Travelmania



From top: Goods for sale at POJ Studio; Koyamato Breakfast at Park Hyatt Kyoto

“Winding streets and traditional wooden teahouses make Kyoto’s historic Higashiyama district an enchanting place.”



Courtesy of: POJ Studio (top); Park Hyatt Kyoto (bottom)

Guests can also access exclusive cultural experiences, including a behind-the-scenes visit to Kiyomizu-dera (www.kiyomizudera.or.jp), one of the most celebrated temples in Japan. Numerous heritage sites are on your doorstep, but Shinto shrine Fushimi-Inari-Taisha (famed for its noble fox guardians and orange torii gates), Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion) and the Ryoan-ji temple rock garden are essential stops across the city.

South of town, Kyoto’s Fushimi district is renowned across Japan for brewing fine sake —

should an in-depth tour and tasting appeal, go with local experts from the Kyoto Insider Sake Experience (www.kyotosakeexperience.com). A center for Japanese arts and crafts for centuries, Kyoto is also a shopper’s paradise; explore old and new with a kintsugi workshop (the art of repairing broken pottery) at beautifully curated lifestyle store POJ Studio (www.pojstudio.com) or discover your favorite scent at the almost 200-year-old incense purveyor, Hayashi Ryushodo (www.hayashi-ryushodo.com).

voyager.

“
Osaka is often called ‘the nation’s kitchen,’ and for good reason. Food culture is massive here.”



OSAKA: The Buzzing Modern Metropolis

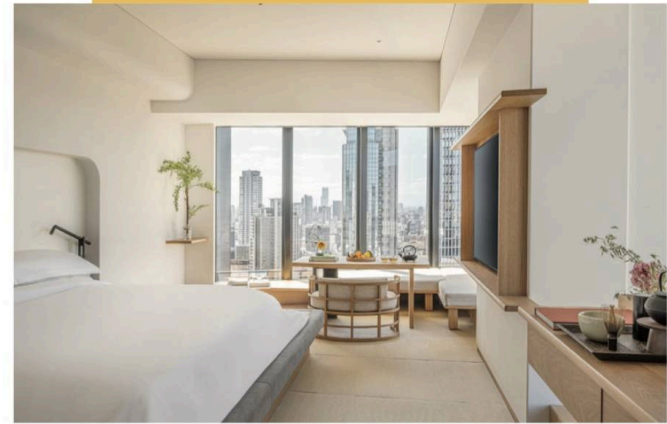
Osaka is often called “the nation’s kitchen,” and for good reason. Food culture is massive here, most notably in exuberant dining and nightlife district Dōtonbori, a futuristic cityscape best explored after dark where street food stalls and beloved restaurants, including Ajinoya Honten (ajinoya-okonomiyaki.com) and Takoyaki Dōraku Wanaka (www.takoyaki-wanaka.com), serve signature dishes like okonomiyaki (savory pancakes) and takoyaki (grilled octopus balls) respectively.

Osaka Castle played a major role in 16th-century Japanese history.

But first, hop on a Tombori River Cruise along the Dōtonbori Canal to get your bearings and snap a photo beside the famous Glico Running Man sign. Another must-visit is cultural landmark Osaka Castle, which dates to 1583 but has since been reconstructed several times and can be enjoyed equally well from the surrounding (and free to enter) park.

Courtesy of Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau

Courtesy of Four Seasons Hotel Osaka



Nearby, the **Four Seasons Hotel Osaka** (from \$700 per night; www.fourseasons.com/osaka) is one of the city’s most refined and buzzed-about new additions. Rooms across its soaring 49-story, sail-shaped tower skew ultra-modern, but welcome tea rituals and tatami suites feature a hotel-within-a-hotel modern ryokan concept on the special Gensui floor. Admire cinematic skyline views over cocktails

Gensui is an entire floor at the Four Seasons Hotel Osaka dedicated to ryokan-style accommodations.

at glamorous Bar Bota on the 37th floor, and if you only have time for one spa treatment, make it the ofuro bath ritual, a well-being tradition deeply rooted in Japanese culture. 🍵