

TOKYO RESTAURANT GUIDE

FOR THE CURIOUS.

Welcome, curious traveler. At Context, we believe that exploring a city's food is one of the most authentic ways to understand its culture. You're not just looking for a meal — you're hungry for the stories behind each dish, the traditions that shaped them, and the local flavors that make Tokyo unique.

Our experts have curated this guide to share their favorite food and drink spots in Tokyo. Whether it's a hidden ramen joint or a centuries-old sushi bar, each recommendation is handpicked to give you a deeper taste of the city's culinary soul.

Travel with Context and experience Tokyo's food scene through the eyes of those who truly know it — because every bite tells a story, and we're here to help you savor it.



Tips from a local Context Expert

Fabien is a wine educator and sake ambassador, with over 13 years of experience in the food and beverage industry.

What is a place that visitors can't miss and the dish you would recommend?

"The grilled Wagyu beef at Teppan Kitchen in Shibuya. This is a nice Teppanyaki restaurant located inside Shibuya Stream building."

What's a local dish or a local flavor that someone has to taste while they're in the area?

"The An-butter fluffy pancakes at Roasted Coffee Laboratory."

Is there a specific historical restaurant or establishment that you would recommend people visit?

"In Asakusa, the tempura restaurant San-sada, close to Kaminarimon Gate. They opened in 1837."

What sake bar do you recommend?

"Junmaishu senmon YATA. This standing sake bar has a great selection of Junmai type sake."

NOODLES

Ramen can be traced back to the late 19th century, although its roots can be found in Chinese noodle dishes. Ramen consists of wheat noodles served in a flavorful broth, often topped with various ingredients such as sliced pork, green onions, bamboo shoots, and seaweed. On the other hand, soba noodles are made with buckwheat flour — offering a bit different flavor.

Mazesoba Shichi | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Ordering at the machine is easy, but if it's your first time, you might want to watch a local order first. You can customize your meal by choosing your preferred spice level and quantity of noodles, depending on what you're craving.

Ginza Rōsokuya | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Located in Ginza, Tokyo's upscale shopping district, this noodle restaurant is a popular lunch spot. If you're able to handle heat, try the spice that makes your mouth numb. And don't worry, they have menus in English if your Japanese isn't strong.

Dashin So-an | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Serving mouth-watering soba, this quaint restaurant is tucked away and well off the beaten path. While in the area, check out the [Shimokitazawa flea market](#) if you have time.

Nagi | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

This small ramen restaurant, open 24 hours, is semi-hidden in a narrow alley in Shinjuku City. There may be a line depending on the time of day, but don't worry, it'll go quick. They don't take cards, so be sure to have some cash on hand.

IZAKAYAS

Tokyo is home to numerous izakayas, which are casual Japanese pubs that serve a wide range of dishes and drinks. For most of the izakayas in Tokyo, you'll probably need to book a day or two in advance. Most of them should have online booking in English.

Nakame no Teppen Honten | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

This local seafood izakaya offers unique dishes and a live view of the cooking, creating a distinctive experience you can only find here.

MAGOEMON | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

If you're looking for a good restaurant in Ebisu, this izakaya is loved by locals with high quality food carefully sourced and prepared.

Kanae | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

This izakaya might appear shabby at first glance, but this old establishment offers a truly authentic environment. It features an extensive selection of over 50 types of Japanese sake sourced from across the country.

Kiura | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Kiura is a hidden restaurant in the middle of Sangenjaya. When you arrive, look for the hidden door inside the liquor store. You won't find it if you don't know it's there!

Choiboshi-teppe | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Another hidden spot, this time tucked away in a narrow alley in Kagurazaka. The experience begins by hand-picking fresh vegetables to be grilled for you, and only improves from there.

STREET FOOD

While exploring Tokyo's bustling streets, keep an eye out for street food stalls and food markets. Tokyo's street food scene is vibrant and diverse, offering everything from savory snacks to sweet desserts. Delightful aromas waft through the air as you pass vendors selling yakitori, takoyaki, and okonomiyaki.



YAKINIKU (KOREAN BBQ)

Yakiniku, or what is known as Korean BBQ in the west, is believed to have flourished in Japan post-World War II. During the food shortages after the war, skilled Koreans obtained discarded beef and pork innards to open stalls in the black market. Grilled over an open fire, these dishes gained popularity and eventually led to the evolution of today's yakiniku restaurants.

Toraji | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

This restaurant has a modest exterior, but the interior has a nostalgic, old-fashioned charm that makes you feel right at home.

Yang-no-ie Shin-Okubo | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Featuring Korean home cooking, the menu may initially seem unassuming. However, rest assured that every dish is delicious, so feel confident in ordering anything that appeals to you.

Yukidaruma | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Actually a Mongolian lamb barbecue, this restaurant is a retirement project run by a former sumo wrestler, with generous portions to match.

BARS

Before a night out in Tokyo, it's essential to acquaint yourself with sake. Sake, a traditional Japanese alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice, holds a significant place in Japan's cultural heritage. Its history spans thousands of years, during which it has been integral to religious ceremonies, cultural celebrations, and social gatherings.

Tachinomi Nagi | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

A standing sake bar in Shibuya that only serves sake from Fukushima.

Kingyo | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

A tiny sake bar nestled in an alley of Nakano City, a quiet neighborhood loved by locals.

Eagle Suntory Lounge | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

Looking for a unique experience? Look no further. The chandelier-lit gem oozes 1930s charm.

Andaz Hotel, Rooftop Bar | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

The cocktails may be a bit pricey, but the view from the 45th floor more than makes up for it. Arrive just before sunset to watch the city lights come to life.

Nakano Beer Kobo | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

A tiny bar where you can try local craft beer, tucked in a backstreet of Nakano City.

Bin | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

A loft bar, whose entrance is down a tiny alley behind some air conditioning units. Have faith, you'll find the entrance.

GOURMET FOOD

Tokyo is a culinary paradise with a vast array of gourmet foods to indulge in. The city is home to a significant number of Michelin-starred restaurants, each providing unique dining experiences that push the boundaries of Japanese and international cuisines. For those who appreciate incorporating upscale experiences into their travels, Tokyo presents exciting opportunities.

Note: Plan ahead if you want to eat at gourmet restaurants in Tokyo, as many book reservations weeks or months in advance.

Ryugin | [Reservations](#) | [Location](#)

One of the most sought after bookings in Japan, Ryugin is located seven stories up with views over Hibiya Park and Tokyo.

Sushi Saito | [Reservations](#) | [Location](#)

Securing a reservation can be challenging, but if you manage to get a seat at the table, you'll enjoy some of the world's finest sushi.

Quintessence | [Reservations](#) | [Location](#)

A 3 star Michelin restaurant serving modern French cuisine. The menu changes daily, based on what ingredients are available locally.

Tempura Kondo | [Reservations](#) | [Location](#)

Tempura, a beloved Japanese dish of battered and fried seafood and vegetables, is the specialty at Tempura Kondo, a 2 Michelin star restaurant led by seasoned chef Fumio Kondo.

NIGHTTIME

We recommend spending an evening in Shinbashi, where Japanese "salarymen" go for an affordable drink and bite after work. [Hop on the train](#) to Shinbashi Station, exit at SL Square, and explore the nearby streets brimming with bars and izakayas.

Check out:

Musashi Shinbashi Robata | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

A local neighborhood landmark using the traditional robata-yaki – or simply 'robata' – cooking style, or 'fireside cooking' in English.

Fish & Sake Hanatare Shimbashi | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

This small restaurant accommodates only 12 guests and is renowned for its potato salad, which you mix together yourself.

Torishige | [Menu](#) | [Location](#)

This grill bar specializes in Yakitori, a Japanese style of skewered chicken. You can enjoy virtually any part of the chicken grilled on a skewer, including breast, thigh, mince, liver, gizzard, and skin.

While in the area, you can pay your respects at the wonderfully urban Karasumori Shinto Shrine. And if you want to keep going, dive into a subterranean warren of tiny bars underneath this building, with the slightly hidden entrance to this underground world here.

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