

Kokyo (Imperial Palace) Gaien National Garden



[Kusunoki Masashige]

Created in 1949 when part of the grounds of the former Imperial Palace was opened to the public as a national park, the garden is made up of the Kokyo Gaien centered on the Imperial Palace Plaza, the Kitanomaru Garden, to the north, and the moats surrounding the Imperial Palace. The Garden is an ideal place for a leisurely stroll or picnic lunch, and is recommended for small children. Each season offers its own delights, making the park enjoyable year-round.

1 [Kusunoki Restaurant] The Kusunoki Rest House is accessible and can easily accommodate wheelchair users.



2 [Wadakura Rest House] On the east side of Wadakura Fountain Park, this free rest house provides a sheltered space to eat and drink. From inside you can watch the water features and fountains or take in an exhibit about the Imperial Family and the Palace.



[Kitanomaru Park / Family Picnic Area] Approximately at the center of Kitanomaru Park's abundant natural beauty, this expanse of lawn is the perfect place to enjoy a picnic or a stroll. It's also a great sport for birdwatching!

Best for
Ages 0 to 10
Best in
All seasons



Kyoto Gyoen

A nearly rectangular national park surrounding Kyoto's Imperial Palace, Kyoto Gyoen spans about 700 meters east to west and 1,300 meters north to south. The area is closed to public traffic, making it an appealingly child-friendly environment. Visit the Mother and Child Forest, with its library of nature guide books, and gaze at the fresh greenery of the Japanese maples in spring or enjoy playing in fallen leaves in autumn. See the weeping cherry blossoms at the site of the former Konoe-tei Residence, then visit the nearby Children's Playground, which has swing sets and slides and is a fun spot to play.

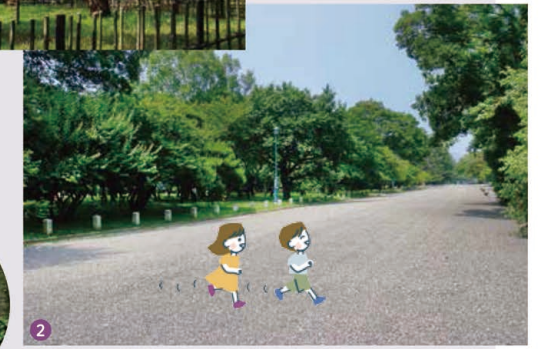


1 [A weeping cherry tree at the site of the former Konoe-tei Residence] This area in the northwestern part of the Gyoen belonged to one of Kyoto's Five Regent Families (go-sekke). Around 60 weeping cherries mark the site of the former residence of the Konoe family, many of whom served in important positions as regents (sessho) and chancellors (kanpaku).



Mother and Child Forest Learn about the seasonal variation of insect, bird, and plant species in nature guidebooks, or simply relax and read books from the forest library.

Best for
Ages 3 to 12
Best in
Spring and fall



2 Enjoy a leisurely stroll along the Gyoen's broad paths, listening to the crunch of gravel underfoot. Take a leisurely stroll and listen to the pebbles crunching underfoot.

Where will you go next?

Enjoy nature all year round!



Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden



A Gyoen is a garden belonging to the Imperial Family. Originally part of the residence of Edo-period daimyo Lord Naito Kiyonari, a vassal of the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, this former Gyoen is now a national park. Much of its natural heritage has been preserved over this long history, making the park rich in biodiversity. With three types of gardens and greenhouses, as well as a Mother and Child Forest like the one at Kyoto Gyoen, this is a perfect place to experience nature with kids.

Best for
Ages 0 to 15
Best in
Spring and fall



Mother and Child Forest Listen to birdsong to your heart's content in a grassy clearing beside a forest pond.



1 [Greenhouse] Standing prominently at the end of an expanse of lawn, the large glass building of the Garden's greenhouse is filled with many rare varieties of tropical plants.



"Stanhopea Shinjuku" orchids

Nasu Heisei-no-mori Forest



Once part of the grounds of the Nasu Imperial Villa, in 2008 the lush woods of Nasu Heisei-no-mori Forest were opened to the public as a space to connect with nature. Visit the woods in the company of one of our knowledgeable and passionate guides to learn about the workings of nature and the connections between living things. Borrow insect nets, field guides, magnifying glasses, and more, then set the kids free to learn on their own!



Best for
Ages 6 to 15
Best in
Summer and winter

1 [Guided walk] Take a guided nature walk accompanied by explanations from an expert park interpreter. Options include a tour of sites visited by members of the Imperial Family.



3 [Snowshoeing] Enjoy the crunch of the snow underfoot as you snowshoe through the park in winter. We'll teach you how to wear and walk with snowshoes, so even first-timers are welcome. (Winter only)

2 Wander freely through the wooded glades of Fureai-no-mori. Take a guided walk in Manabi-no-mori to fully experience the area's unspoiled natural environment.

Nasukogen Visitor Center



Get up close and personal with nature and learn about the rich natural, historical, and cultural heritage of the Nasu-Kashi area of Nikko National Park. Adults can learn about the park's links with the Imperial Family, while nature crafts are a big hit with younger visitors.



Best for
Ages 3 to 12
Best in
Summer and winter