

lonely planet Hotels & Hostels

Want more Sleeping recommendations than we could ever pack into this little ol' book? Craving more detail – including extended reviews and photographs? Want to read reviews by other travellers and be able to post your own? Just make your way over to lonelyplanet.com/hotels and check out our thorough list of independent reviews, then reserve your room simply and securely.

SLEEPING

top picks

- **Westin Hotel Tokyo** (p211) – Tokyo's finest hotel, the choice of royals and Hollywood celebs.
- **Park Hyatt Tokyo** (p213) – Skyscraping luxury with stunning night views.
- **Ryokan Shigetsu** (p209) – Gorgeous traditional inn.
- **Sukeroku No Yado Sadachiyo** (p209) – Old-style hospitality in Asakusa.
- **Kimi Ryokan** (p216) – A very friendly, authentic ryokan experience for budget prices.

SLEEPING

Tokyo has thousands of places to sleep, and not all of them will cost you an arm and a leg. But if you've come here on a budget, expect some noise, less space and a longer walk from the train station. Check out Cheap Sleeps in Sanya (p209) for some sweet budget deals. If expense is not so much of an issue, choose from a myriad of decadent rooms – many boast incredible city views. Central neighbourhoods like Ginza, Shinjuku and Akasaka are ideal, with loads of high-end options.

Though most of the accommodation in Tokyo is Western style, there are a few traditional inns and hotels. For full definitions of each type of lodging, see [below](#). Note that most Tokyo ryokan (traditional Japanese inns) don't exactly fit the traditional mould found elsewhere in Japan.

Rack rates are quoted in this chapter, but prices can vary drastically. Most business and high-end hotels offer discounts, often significant ones, for reservations made in advance via phone or internet; check their websites for seasonal deals. Rates at budget places usually remain as quoted. Keep in mind that during Golden Week (29 April to 5 May) and other national holidays (see p249 for details), rooms may be booked out or, if available, very expensive.

ACCOMMODATION STYLES

Business Hotels

A common form of midrange accommodation is the so-called 'business hotel' – usually as functional and economical as the name would suggest. Geared to the lone traveller on business, the typical Tokyo business-hotel room will have pay TV and a tiny bathroom, and cost between ¥7000 and ¥12,000. Most accept credit cards, but you should always ask when you check in. Some of the nicer business hotels have large shared baths and saunas.

Capsule Hotels

Of course they're small, but they're roomy enough to recline in, and each capsule is fitted with a bed, reading light, TV and alarm clock. Despite the room's size, prices still range from ¥3500 to ¥5000; capsules are also cash only. Most of their business comes from drunken office workers who have missed the last train home, but their novelty value attracts the odd foreigner. Many capsule hotels have a well-appointed bath area similar to a good local *sentō* (public bath).

Gaijin Houses

If you're a budget traveller planning on settling in Tokyo, you might consider landing first at a *gaijin* (foreigner) house while getting your bearings. These are private dwellings that have been partitioned into rooms or apartments and rented out to *gaijin*. See [opposite](#) for reputable agencies.

Love Hotels

Love hotels are not always as naughty as they sound, but they do have their fair share of themed rooms ranging from Hello Kitty to African safari. Japanese couples use them for privacy and intimacy. They are distinguished by discreet, hidden entrances so that patrons can come and go anonymously. Posted outside love hotels are signs indicating the rates for a one- or two-hour stay, referred to as a *kyūkei* (literally 'rest'), and for an overnight stay, referred to as *tomari*. Overnight rates are fairly reasonable (around ¥8000; no credit cards accepted), but generally most love hotels will not allow you to check in for an overnight stay until around 10pm or 11pm.

Luxury Hotels

In the top-end bracket, you can expect to find the amenities of deluxe hotels anywhere in the world. Expect satellite TV beaming in CNN and the BBC, high-speed internet access and enough space to properly unwind. The staff speak English, the rooms are spotless and the service is impeccable. In addition, most of Tokyo's luxury hotels have several good restaurants and bars, many of which offer outstanding city views.

PRICE GUIDE

¥¥¥	over ¥16,000 a night
¥¥	¥6500 to ¥16,000 a night
¥	under ¥6500 a night

Minshuku

Similar to ryokan, but generally simpler in décor and cheaper, are *minshuku* (like Western B&Bs). These are private homes that accept visitors and offer food, usually both breakfast and dinner. *Minshuku* in Tokyo generally cost about ¥6000 to ¥8000 per person (cash only), including two meals, making these one of your better travel bargains. Few *minshuku* owners speak English, but they'll welcome you warmly.

Ryokan

For those who crave a really traditional Japanese experience with tatami (woven-mat floor) rooms and futon instead of beds, the ryokan (traditional Japanese inns) have it. Although the more exclusive establishments can charge upwards of ¥25,000, there are a number of relatively inexpensive ryokan in Tokyo. These places are generally more accustomed to foreigners than their counterparts in more remote parts of Japan and the rules tend to be a bit more relaxed as a result. The trade-off is that you don't usually get the strictly traditional experience, with Japanese meals and the diurnal stowing away of your futon.

Some ryokan offer rooms with private baths, but the communal ones are often designed with 'natural' pools or a window looking onto a garden. Bathing is communal, but sexes are segregated. Make sure you can differentiate between the bathroom signs for men and women (although ryokan will often have signs in English).

At traditional ryokan, dinner is usually laid out in the guest rooms. Along with rice, the meal usually includes standard dishes such as miso soup, *tsukemono* (pickles), *sunomono* (vegetables in vinegar), *zensai* (hors d'oeuvres), sashimi (fish either grilled or raw), and perhaps tempura and a stew. Meals at a ryokan can become flamboyant displays of local cuisine or refined arrangements of *kaiseki* (see p154 for more information). After dinner, the dishes are cleared and your bedding is prepared – a futon is placed on the tatami floor and a quilt put on top.

Although some ryokan will allow you to pay by credit card, you should always ask at check-in if you hope to do so. The ryokan listed in this book are generally budget and midrange; those wishing to stay in top-end ryokan should inquire at the Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO; p255).

top picks

RYOKAN

- [Sukeroku no Yado Sadachiyo](#) (p209)
- [Sawanoya Ryokan](#) (p208)
- [Kimi Ryokan](#) (p216)

Youth Hostels

Tokyo's youth hostels are much like youth hostels elsewhere: a bit noisy, not much atmosphere and a mixture of dorms and private rooms. On the plus side, they are used to foreigners and are cleaner than many of their overseas counterparts. A room in a typical youth hostel is about ¥3200, cash only. Membership is often not required.

Other Options

The JNTO (Japan National Tourist Organization; p255) can give you information about several other lodging options in and around Tokyo, including *shukubō* (staying on the grounds of a temple), *onsen* (hot-spring resorts) and converted farmhouses or *kokuminshukusha* (people's lodges). It also has information for travellers with special needs, such as seniors or travellers with disabilities, and those with children.

TAX

A 5% consumption tax applies to room rates across all accommodation categories, with the exception of *gaijin* houses (see [opposite](#)) and some of the other budget options. On high-end accommodation (generally rooms costing over ¥16,000), a 3% local tax is also added to the 10% to 15% service charge. Prices quoted in this chapter are not inclusive of these taxes. Finally, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government now tacks on a small per-person accommodation tax on all rooms costing more than ¥10,000: ¥100 for rooms costing up to ¥14,999 and ¥200 for rooms costing more than ¥15,000.

LONGER-TERM RENTALS

Renting an apartment in Tokyo can be a real challenge – expect a big deposit (often five months' rent) and an unwillingness to rent to foreign tenants. The deposit usually consists

of a one-month finder's fee for the real-estate agency, the landlord's *reikin* (key money – a 'gift' that is usually two months' rent), and a deposit for the last month as well as the first month's rent. Rooms with no *reikin* can be found, but check their age and distance from the closest station.

The following are some English-speaking real estate agents in Tokyo who specialise in helping foreigners find rentals in *gaijin* houses. Rents may be a bit higher through these agencies because you're receiving the apartment without the hefty deposit. If you plan on staying in Japan for more than a year, it's worth paying the larger deposit to get a bigger place with lower rent.

Kimi Information Center (Map p122; ☎ 3986-1604; www.kimiwillbe.com; 8th fl, 2-42-3 Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku; ☉ Ikebukuro, west exit) Run by the family owning Kimi Ryokan (p216), Kimi Information Center can help you to find an affordable apartment. Kimi charges an agency fee equal to one month's deposit. Locations tend to be around working-class Ikebukuro.

Sakura House (Map p116; ☎ 5330-5250; www.sakura-house.com; 2nd fl, 7-2-6 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; ☉ Shinjuku, east exit) Sakura House has extensive listings of apartments that welcome foreigners. They have staff members who are fluent in English, Korean and Chinese, and they'll escort you to visit apartments or shared housing. The minimum occupancy is one month.

Serviced Apartments

If you're in Tokyo for more than a week or a month, serviced apartments can be more comfortable and affordable than a hotel. Look in the *Japan Times* or *Metropolis*. No key money is required, but you generally pay a one-month deposit. For nice digs in prime neighbourhoods, rent may be ¥100,000 to ¥180,000 per week.

The following offer serviced apartments: **Oakwood Worldwide** (☎ 5786-7800; www.oakwood.com) Oakwood Worldwide has nine serviced apartments in central Tokyo that are ideal if you're looking for a stylish place for at least a week. Daily rates start from ¥10,500.

BOOK ACCOMMODATION ONLINE

For more accommodation reviews and recommendations by Lonely Planet authors, check out the online booking service at www.lonelyplanet.com. You'll find the true, insider lowdown on the best places to stay. Reviews are thorough and independent. Best of all, you can book online.

Mori Building (☎ 6406-6654; www.moriliving.com) Mori Building runs a number of landmark structures catering to longer-term visitors, including the exclusive Roppongi Hills Residences.

IMPERIAL PALACE & MARUNOUCHI

At the doorstep of the Imperial Palace and the heart of the Marunouchi business district, the Tokyo Station area has a few fine hotels and some good midrange places designed for short-term business travellers. Though currently undergoing a major facelift with new shops and restaurants, it is quieter in the evenings. The area provides quick access to the rest of the city via the JR Yamanote Line, as well as Kyoto and other destinations via Shinkansen bullet trains.

PENINSULA HOTEL

Map pp52-3 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥
ザ・ペニンシュラ東京
☎ 6270-2288; <http://tokyo.peninsula.com>; 1-8-1 Yurakuchō, Chiyoda-ku; r from ¥60,000; ☉ JR Yamanote Line to Yurakuchō (Hibiya exit) or subway to Hibiya (exits A6 & A7); ☒ ☎
This superb new deluxe high-rise brings downtown decadence to dizzying heights. One almost gets a feeling of guilty extravagance when sprawling out in the vast rooms (starting at 51 square metres), which overlook the Imperial Palace and Hibiya Moat and have floor-to-ceiling windows. Latticed caramel woodwork, sumptuous marble bathrooms and a dark central atrium filled with luminous art unite in a delicious symphony of modern design. The Peninsula is a breath of fresh air on the Marunouchi hotel scene and offers several excellent wining and dining options as well as a very decadent spa.

PALACE HOTEL

Map pp52-3 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥
パレスホテル
☎ 3211-5211; www.palacehotel.co.jp/english; 1-1-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku; s/d from ¥25,200/30,450; ☉ Ōtemachi subway (exit C13b); ☒
Right by the Imperial Palace, the Palace Hotel has an old-fashioned atmosphere and sits on one of the most exclusive spots in Tokyo. The rooms, numbering nearly 400, are conventional but elegant, with large bathrooms. There is also a soothing garden of raked gravel.

MARUNOUCHI HOTEL

Map pp52-3 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥
丸の内ホテル
☎ 3215-2151; www.marunouchi-hotel.co.jp; Oazo Bldg, 1-6-3 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku; s/d from ¥23,300/31,385; ☉ Tokyo, Marunouchi (north exit)
Located in the recently built Oazo Building opposite Tokyo Station, this swanky business hotel deftly synthesises modern conveniences with Japanese style. Shōji (sliding rice-paper screens) over windows and gorgeous inlaid wood furnishings accent simple, unfussy rooms.

YAESU TERMINAL HOTEL

Map pp52-3 Business Hotel ¥¥
八重洲ターミナルホテル
☎ 3281-3771; www.yth.jp; 1-5-14 Yaesu, Chūō-ku; s/d ¥11,340/16,590; ☉ Tokyo, Yaesu (north exit)
This sleek little business hotel on cherry-tree-lined Sakura-dōri has contemporary lines and a minimalist look. Though room sizes are most definitely on the microscopic end, they're decently priced for this neighbourhood and very modern.

SAKURA HOTEL

Map pp52-3 Hostel ¥
サクラホテル神保町
☎ 3261-3939; www.sakura-hotel.co.jp; 2-21-4 Kanda-Jimbōchō, Chiyoda-ku; dm/s/d from ¥3780/6090/8200; ☉ Marunouchi, Toei Mita or Toei Shinjuku Line to Jimbōchō, exit A6; ☒
The Sakura Hotel is a great budget option with a sociable atmosphere. Staff are bilingual and helpful, and the rooms, though basic, are comfortable and clean. There's a 24-hour café, a laundry and internet access.

CENTRAL TOKYO

Central Tokyo is a much quieter base from which to explore the city compared to hubs on the Yamanote Line, and is especially worthwhile in spring when there are myriad cherry trees in bloom along the moats surrounding the Imperial Palace. Nightlife isn't far away, with the old geisha district of Kagurazaka near Idabashi and the salaryman pleasure zone of Akasaka close to Nagatachō.

HOTEL NEW ŌTANI

Map p56 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥
ホテルニューオータニ
☎ 3265-1111; www.newotanihotels.com/tokyo; 4-1 Kioi-chō, Chiyoda-ku; s/d from ¥31,000/36,000; ☉ Ginza or Marunouchi Line to Akasaka-mitsuke (Belle Vie exit); ☒

There's a whiff of pretension about the New Ōtani, but it's justified, loaded as it is with large, luxurious rooms (refurbished in 2007), upscale restaurants, boutiques and gift shops. This landmark has its own art museum and an immaculate 400-year-old garden (see p59 for more information).

GRAND PRINCE HOTEL AKASAKA

Map p56 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥
グランドプリンスホテル赤坂
☎ 3234-1111; www.princehotelsjapan.com; 1-2 Kioi-chō, Chiyoda-ku; s/d from ¥27,500/34,000; ☉ Ginza or Marunouchi Line to Akasaka-mitsuke, (exit 7) or Hanzōmon, Namboku or Yūrakuchō Line to Nagatachō (exits 5, 7 & 9); ☒
This tower, designed by architect Tange Kenzō to echo the shape of a Japanese fan, has over 700 spacious rooms, with most providing excellent views. The lobby is done up with marble and mirrors, while rooms are simple in design and large.

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL HOSTEL

Map p56 Youth Hostel ¥
東京国際ホステル
☎ 3235-1107; www.tokyo-ih.jp; 1-1 Kagurakashi, Shinjuku-ku; dm adult/child ¥3860/3360; ☉ Iidabashi (west exit); ☒
These clean, well-managed dorm rooms have some of the best night views in all of Tokyo, looking west over the old outer moat of Edo Castle. The design is rather institutional (there's even a conference room), but this is a model hostel outfitted with a cafeteria (for breakfast and dinner), laundry and internet access. Be sure to catch the sunset over one of Japan's most stunning budget views.

GINZA

Ginza and the recent revitalisation of nearby Shiodome offer some of Tokyo's poshest accommodation, all with easy transport access. Along with the ultraluxurious, however, are some sleek, midrange hotels. Expect rates to be higher than in the rest of the city – Ginza real estate is some of the priciest on the planet.

HOTEL SEIYŌ GINZA

Map p62 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥
ホテル西洋 銀座
☎ 3535-1111; www.seiyo-ginza.com; 1-11-2 Ginza, Chūō-ku; r ¥61,215-254,100; ☉ Yūrakuchō Line to Ginza-itichōme (exit 7), or Ginza Line to Kyōbashi (exit 2)

The Hotel Seiyō Ginza, which is part of the luxury Rosewood group and was refurbished in 2001, resembles a rambling mansion hosting several parties at once. Each of the rooms here has a personal butler (with 25 on staff altogether). The rooms are cavernous, with a homey yet tasteful décor. For those of you requiring rarefied isolation, the Seiyō can be your secret hideaway.

IMPERIAL HOTEL

Map p62 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

帝国ホテル
☎ 3504-1111; www.imperialhotel.co.jp;
1-1-1 Uchisaiwaichō, Chiyoda-ku; s/d from
¥31,500/36,750; ㊟ Chiyoda, Hibiya or Toei Mita
Line to Hibiya (exit A13); ㊟

The Imperial Hotel's present building is the successor to Frank Lloyd Wright's 1923 masterpiece, and small tributes to Wright – in the form of a chair or a modernist motif – adorn the lobby. Large rooms on the newest Imperial floor have been updated with features such as large-screen plasma TVs and high-speed internet.

MERCURE HOTEL GINZA TOKYO

Map p62 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

メルキュールホテル銀座
☎ 4335-1111; www.mercure.com; 2-9-4 Ginza,
Chūō-ku; s/d from ¥18,375/24,150; ㊟ Yūrakuchō
Line to Ginza-itichōme (exit 11); ㊟

This refreshingly designed little boutique hotel has chinoiserie prints, floral décor, snazzy red doors and leather chairs. A short walk from the department stores, it's popular with ladies from out of town who come in for Ginza shopping expeditions, but is equally suited to business travellers and tourists.

MITSUI URBAN HOTEL GINZA

Map p62 Business Hotel ¥¥

三井アーバンホテル銀座
☎ 3527-4131; www.granvista.co.jp; 8-6-15 Ginza,
Chūō-ku; s/d from ¥14,500/25,000; ㊟ JR Yamanote
Line to Shimbashi (Ginza exit) or Ginza Line to
Shimbashi (exit 3); ㊟

Renovated in 2007, the Mitsui Urban's rooms are presented in mahogany and caramel tones, with flat-screen TVs accenting the urban décor. Two floors of restaurants will cover you from breakfast to nightcap.

GINZA NIKKŌ HOTEL

Map p62 Business Hotel ¥¥

銀座日航ホテル
☎ 3571-4911; www.ginza-nikko-hotel.com; 8-4-21
Ginza, Chūō-ku; s/d from ¥13,960/27,920; ㊟ JR
Yamanote Line to Shimbashi (Ginza exit) or Ginza
Line to Shimbashi (exit 5); ㊟

Though this Ginza hotel has been around for some 50 years, it's looking fine and bright after a thorough renovation. The décor is a cut above business hotel generic, with commodious beds and full bathtubs.

SHIODOME

Revitalised Shiodome, a sliver of slick development between Shimbashi and Hama Rikyū Onshi-teien (Detached Palace Garden), provides an upscale, high-rise accommodation alternative to the smaller hotels of Ginza, and it's quieter in the evenings. Some rooms have great night-time views of Tokyo Bay and Rainbow Bridge.

Map p65 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

コンラッド東京ホテル
☎ 6388-8000; www.conradtokyo.co.jp; 1-
9-1 Higashi-Shimbashi, Minato-ku; s/d from
¥52,000/57,000; ㊟ JR Yamanote, Ginza or Toei
Asakusa Line to Shimbashi (Shiodome exit) or Ōedo
Line to Shiodome

One of the gigantic, glittery gems comprising the new Shiodome development adjacent to Hama Rikyū Onshi-teien, the Conrad Hotel is definitely a new contender for the attentions of upscale travellers looking for that central, supersophisticated base in Tokyo. The garden or city views are equally spectacular, as are the varnished hardwood interiors and floor-to-ceiling glassed-in bathrooms.

HOTEL VILLA FONTAINE SHIODOME

Map p65 Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルヴィラフォンテーヌ汐留
☎ 5339-1200; www.hvf.jp/eng/; 1-9-2 Higashi-
Shimbashi, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥10,000/14,000;
㊟ JR Yamanote, Ginza or Toei Asakusa Line to Shim-
bashi (Shiodome exit) or Ōedo Line to Shiodome; ㊟
Cone-shaped lanterns light the high-
ceilinged black marble lobby. Sculptural
red blobs and flame-themed art on the
walls lead to upscale rooms with internet,
TV and partial views of Hama Rikyū Onshi-
teien. This is an excellent deal in one of
Tokyo's newest neighbourhoods.

ALTERNATIVES TO SLEEPING

If you've missed the last train back to your hotel, that ¥3000 in your pocket might be better spent staying out all night than on a taxi ride home. Happily, nocturnal Tokyo has options for insomniacs. There's always a nearby manga (comic book) café. Full-night rates are a bargain, comparable to those at capsule hotels. For around ¥1000, you can while away the wee hours watching DVDs, reading manga, surfing the internet (around six hours' free access) and having a bite to eat (including free drinks) – or napping in your lounge chair.

Café J Net New New (Map p106; ☎ 5458-5935; Saito Bldg, 7th fl, 34-5 Udagawachō, Shibuya-ku; ☎ 24hr; ㊟ JR Yamanote Line to Shibuya, Hachikō exit)

Manga Hiroba (まんが広場六本木店; Map pp96–7; ☎ 3497-1751; Shuwa Roppongi Bldg, 2nd fl, 3-14-12 Roppongi, Minato-ku; ☎ 24hr; ㊟ Hibiya or Toei Ōedo Line to Roppongi, exit 3)

Manga@Café Gera Gera (インターネット&まんが@café グラゲラ; Map p116; ☎ 3204-8532; 1-27-9 Kabukichō, Shinjuku-ku; ☎ 24hr; ㊟ JR Yamanote Line to Shinjuku, east exit).

AKIHABARA & KANDA

Kanda is Tokyo at its most drab, but it does have some good midrange bargains because of the many salaried men thronging here. It's also a stone's throw from the electronics and pop culture mecca of Akihabara. Nearby are some of Tokyo's finest traditional restaurants (see p160 for listings) and Jimbōchō's millions of antique manuscripts (see p143 for more information).

YAMA-NO-UE (HILLTOP) HOTEL

Map p68 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

山の上ホテル
☎ 3293-2311; www.yamanoue-hotel.co.jp;
1-1 Kanda-Surugadai, Chiyoda-ku; s/d from
¥17,850/25,200; ㊟ JR Chūō or JR Sōbu Line to
Ochanomizu (Ochanomizu exit)

This grand old place from the 1930s exudes personality and charm, with antique wooden furniture and a wainscotted lounge. Mishima Yukio wrote his last few novels here. The older rooms in the main building come with antique writing desks and overstuffed chairs.

HOTEL MY STAYS OCHANOMIZU

Map p68 Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルマイステイズ御茶ノ水
☎ 5289-3939; www.mystays.jp/ochanomizu/, in
Japanese; 2-10-6 Kanda Awajichō, Chiyoda-ku; s/d
from ¥10,000/13,000; ㊟ JR Chūō or JR Sōbu Line to
Ochanomizu (Hijiribashi exit)

Reopened in 2007, this stylish business hotel stands out for its bold brown-and-white colour scheme, reasonable prices and extras like large Simmons beds. The Family Mart and modern European café OAKS on the ground floor are additional conveniences.

PRESSO INN KANDA

Map p68 Business Hotel ¥¥

プレッソイン神田
☎ 3252-0202; www.presso-inn.com; 2-8 Kanda-
Tachō, Chiyoda-ku; s/d ¥7770/13,650; ㊟ JR Yamanote
Line or Chūō Line to Kanda (west exit); ㊟

The Presso Inn chain is very much a businessperson's hotel, with purely functional décor and few frills – rooms are cramped and institutional but fine for crashing. There is a complimentary breakfast of croissants baked on site.

NEW CENTRAL HOTEL

Map p68 Business Hotel ¥¥

ニューセントラルホテル
☎ 3256-2171; www.pelican.co.jp/newcentral
hotel/, in Japanese; 2-7-2 Kanda-Tachō, Chiyoda-ku;
s/d ¥7350/7875; ㊟ JR Yamanote Line to Kanda,
west exit

The New Central may be as generic as its salaryman clientele, but the homey communal bath facilities (separate for men and women) make it stand out. The location on a quiet side street makes this a worthwhile base.

UENO

Though it may be lacking the full-bore visual phantasmagoria and throbbing nightlife of Shinjuku and Shibuya, Ueno is a good base because of the Keisei Skyliner express trains running to Narita airport and the happy presence of Ueno Zoo (Ueno Dōbutsu-en), Ueno-kōen (park), an expansive smorgasbord of top-class museums, abundant cherry trees and a pond with paddleboats. Yanaka, which is perfect for temple walks, beckons to the north.

HOTEL PARKSIDE

Map p72 Business Hotel ¥¥

上野 ホテル パークサイド

☎ 3836-5711; www.parkside.co.jp; 2-11-18 Ueno, Taitō-ku; Western-style s/d from ¥9200/14,000, Japanese-style r from ¥18,000; ㊤ Ueno (Shinobazu exit)

This hotel offers some of the best midrange accommodation in Ueno, as well as views of the gigantic lily pads on Shinobazu Pond. Choose either a Western or Japanese room, but make sure it's above the 4th floor for the best views. The doubles were remodelled in 2005.

UENO FIRST CITY HOTEL

Map p72 Business Hotel ¥¥

上野ファーストシティホテル

☎ 3831-8215; www.uenocity-hotel.com; 1-14-8 Ueno, Taitō-ku; s/d from ¥8400/13,650; ㊤ Chiyoda Line to Yushima (exit 4)

Unlike most hotels, the tatami rooms here are the same price as the Western rooms. Rooms of both types are functional and clean. Look for a charming little Shintō shrine by the entrance dedicated to the god Inari.

SUIGETSU HOTEL ŌGAI-SŌ

Map p72 Business Hotel ¥¥

水月ホテル 鷗外荘

☎ 3822-4611; www.ohgai.co.jp; 3-3-21 Ikenohata, Taitō-ku; Western-style s/d ¥7980/11,550, Japanese-style r from ¥18,000; ㊤ Chiyoda Line to Nezu (exit 2); ㊤

Japanese literary great Mori Ōgai lived here in the late 1880s, and part of his lovely tiled wooden home still fronts the peaceful interior garden. Skip the cramped standard singles and go for the deluxe version instead, or sprawl out on tatami. The cypress baths are open to visitors for ¥1500.

RYOKAN KATSUTARŌ ANNEX

Map p72 Ryokan ¥

アネックス 勝太郎旅館

☎ 3828-2500; www.katsutaro.com; 3-8-4 Yanaka, Taitō-ku; s/d ¥6300/10,500; ㊤ Chiyoda Line to Sendagi (exit 2); ㊤

Opened in 2001, this spotless, efficient establishment seems more modern hotel than traditional ryokan. Though far from Ueno Station, it's ideal for exploring the old Yanaka district. The 17 tatami rooms, while rather small, have attached Western bathrooms.

RYOKAN KATSUTARŌ

Map p72 Ryokan ¥

旅館 勝太郎

☎ 3821-9808; www.katsutaro.com; 4-16-8 Ikenohata, Taitō-ku; s/d ¥5200/8400; ㊤ Chiyoda Line to Nezu (exit 2); ㊤

This older, more homey sister inn to Ryokan Katsutarō Annex has a more quiet and family-like atmosphere, with very affable managers. Though the building may be aged, the seven tatami rooms here have been renovated without ruining the inn's character.

SAWANOYA RYOKAN

Map p72 Ryokan ¥

旅館 澤の屋

☎ 3822-2251; www.sawanoya.com; 2-3-11 Yanaka, Taitō-ku; s/d from ¥5040/10,080; ㊤ Chiyoda Line to Nezu (exit 1); ㊤

The Sawanoya is a budget gem in quiet Yanaka, with very friendly staff and all the traditional hospitality you would expect of a ryokan, even origami paper cranes perched on your futon pillow in welcome. The shared cypress and earthenware baths are the perfect balm after a long day of walking.

SUZUKI RYOKAN

Map p72 Ryokan ¥

旅館 鈴木

☎ 3821-4944; www.itcj.jp; 7-15-23 Yanaka, Taitō-ku; s without bath from ¥3500, d with bath ¥8000; ㊤ JR Yamanote Line to Nippori (south exit) www.itcj.jp

This traditional but quirky house next to Yanaka Cemetery is weirdly charming, with green AstroTurf-like carpets and creaky stairs. Make reservations through the Welcome Inn Reservation Center (www.itcj.k), unless you speak enough Japanese to call the ryokan yourself.

ASAKUSA

If you are in Tokyo only for a short visit or if you want a glimpse of old Japan, Asakusa is a charming, laid-back anachronism with some good budget options. Though not the geographical centre of Tokyo, it is the heart of the old Shitamachi downtown quarter, which was depicted in the millions of *ukiyo-e* (wood-block prints) that were pressed here. You will also find two wonderful, classic ryokan near Sensō-ji.

CHEAP SLEEPS IN SANYA

Sanya is an old neighbourhood north of Asakusa notorious for its down-and-out day labourers. The 2002 Japan-Korea World Cup saw many budget travellers seeking accommodation here, and now there's a wealth of cheap places to bunk. However, most 'rooms' are barely large enough to stretch out in.

Hotel Accela (ホテルアクセラ; Map pp48-9; ☎ 3871-5568; www.accela.co.jp, in Japanese; 1-40-12 Nihonzutsumi, Taitō-ku; r ¥3350-4800; ㊤ Hibiya Line to Minami-Senju, south exit) This hotel, newly opened in 2007, is a tad institutional, but friendly and bright, with three-tatami-mat rooms, coin-operated showers and laundry, and a spacious shared bath. It's just past Namidabashi Crossing on the right.

Juyoh Hotel (ホテル寿陽; Map pp48-9; ☎ 3875-5362; www.juyoh.co.jp; 2-15-3 Kiyokawa, Taitō-ku; s/d ¥3200/6400; ㊤ Hibiya Line to Minami-Senju, south exit) The three tiny doubles and numerous three-tatami-mat singles fill up fast at this hospitable little spot. For reservations and directions, check the excellent website.

Hotel New Azuma (ホテルニューあづま; Map pp48-9; ☎ 6802-0716; www.gcc-web.net/azuma; 2-38-3 Kiyokawa, Taitō-ku; r ¥2900-3100; ㊤ Hibiya Line to Minami-Senju, south exit) Warm and quieter than other budget spots, the New Azuma has small tatami rooms, free internet access, laundry facilities and a shared bath and kitchen.

Hotel New Kōyō (ホテルニュー紅陽; Map pp48-9; ☎ 3873-0343; www.newkoyo.com; 2-26-13 Nihonzutsumi, Taitō-ku; r ¥2500-4800; ㊤ Hibiya Line to Minowa, exit 3) Very friendly and featuring some of Tokyo's cheapest rooms, the New Koyo has rooms like the golden, minute Samurai Suite, about the size of two tatami mats, and a large shared bath.

Tokyo Backpackers (東京バックパッカーズ; Map pp48-9; ☎ 3871-2789; www.tokyo-backpackers.jp; 2-2-2 Nihonzutsumi, Taitō-ku; d ¥2100; ㊤ Hibiya Line to Minami-Senju, south exit) Even though it was built in 2006, Tokyo Backpackers is still dirt-cheap. Modern, clean dorm rooms have six wooden bunk beds, and there is free internet and a ladies-only floor. The entire shuts from 11am-4pm daily for cleaning.

ASAKUSA VIEW HOTEL

Map p86 Luxury Hotel ¥¥

浅草ビューホテル

☎ 3847-1111; www.viewhotels.co.jp/asakusa/english; 3-17-1 Nishi-Asakusa, Taitō-ku; Western-style s/d from ¥15,000/29,400; ㊤ Tsukuba Express Line to Asakusa (hotel exit) or Ginza Line to Tawaramachi (exit 3); ㊤

If you're not into ryokan, the Asakusa View is the ritziest Western-style hotel around. From the lacquer-patterned elevator walls to the cypress and granite baths, the hotel is lavishly designed. While the spacious rooms aren't striking, large windows overlook Sensō-ji.

SUKEROKU NO YADO SADACHIYO

Map p86 Ryokan ¥¥

助六の宿 貞千代

☎ 3842-6431; www.sadachiyo.co.jp; 2-20-1 Asakusa, Taitō-ku; s/d ¥14,000/19,000; ㊤ Ginza or Toei Asakusa Line to Asakusa (exit 1), or Tsukuba Express Line to Asakusa (exit 1)

This stunning ryokan virtually transports its guests to old Edo. Gorgeously maintained tatami rooms are spacious for two people, and all come with modern, Western-style bathrooms. Splurge on an exquisite meal here, and make time for the *o-furo* (tradi-

tional baths), one made of fragrant Japanese cypress and the other of black marble. Look for the rickshaw parked outside.

RYOKAN SHIGETSU Map p86 Ryokan ¥¥

旅館 指月

☎ 3843-2345; www.shigetsu.com; 1-31-11 Asakusa, Taitō-ku; Western-style r ¥7665-14,700, Japanese-style s/d ¥9450/16,800; ㊤ Toei Asakusa or Toei Ōedo Line to Asakusa (exit 1) or Tsukuba Express to Asakusa (exit 4)

South of Sensō-ji, this spotless and atmospheric ryokan has mostly Japanese-style rooms. The entire inn is immaculate, with carpeted entrance halls and shōji-screened doors and windows. Absolutely required is taking at least one bath here.

CAPSULE HOTEL RIVERSIDE

Map p86 Capsule Hotel ¥

カプセルホテルあさくさりバーサイド
☎ 3844-1155; www.asakusa-capsule.jp; 2-20-4 Kaminarimon, Taitō-ku; capsules ¥3000; ㊤ Ginza or Toei Asakusa Line to Asakusa (exit 6)

The very clean Riverside sells an encapsulated night's sleep right by the river. Unlike most capsule hotels, it accepts both women and men, with the 8th floor reserved for female guests only.

TOKYO RYOKAN Map p86

Ryokan ¥

東京旅館
☎ 090-8879-3599; www.tokyoryokan.com;
2-4-8 Nishi-Asakusa, Taitō-ku; per person ¥3000;

☉ Ginza Line to Tawaramachi (exit 3); ☑
This tidy little inn, opened in 2006, has only three tatami rooms but tons of charm. There are touches of calligraphy, attractive woodwork and sliding screens. This is an authentic ryokan experience on the cheap.

SAKURA HOSTEL Map p86

Hostel ¥

サクラホステル

☎ 3847-8111; www.sakura-hostel.co.jp; 2-2-2 Asakusa, Taitō-ku; dm/tw ¥2940/8295; ☉ Tsukuba Express Line to Asakusa (exit A1); ☑

Billed as the largest in Tokyo, this new hostel in a modern, comfortable building has helpful staff and a great location near Sensō-ji. Rooms with wooden bunks overlook the aged Hanayashiki amusement park. There's no curfew, breakfast is only ¥315 and major credit cards are accepted. Check out the old-time shopping arcade behind it.

K'S HOUSE Map p86

Hostel ¥

ケイズハウス

☎ 5833-0555; http://kshouse.jp; 3-20-10 Kuramae, Taitō-ku; dm/d ¥2800/3400; ☉ Toei Ōedo or Toei Asakusa Line to Kuramae (exits A2 & A6); ☑

This is a homey, modern hostel that opened in 2006, quickly becoming a backpacker favourite. Just steps from the Sumida River and Sensō-ji, K's feels more like someone's apartment, with comfy sofas in the living room and a tatami common space.

KHAOSAN GUESTHOUSE

Map p86

Hostel ¥

カオサン東京ゲストハウス

☎ 3842-8286; www.khaosan-tokyo.com; 2-1-5 Kaminarimon, Taitō-ku; dm/tw ¥2200/5000; ☉ Ginza or Toei Asakusa Line to Asakusa (exits 4 & A2b); ☑

If you're visiting during the summer fireworks season in late July, this comfy hostel's rooftop terrace is a front-row seat for the popular river spectacle. But you'll get a warm welcome at all times of the year here, one of the cheapest spots in central Tokyo.

AKASAKA

Who knows how many behind-the-scenes political deals have been made in the hushed rooms of Akasaka's luxury hotels. This neighbourhood is pretty exclusive and geared to

salarymen, though you'll see a few functional, but not outstanding, options in the midrange bracket listed here.

HOTEL ŌKURA Map p92

Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

ホテルオークラ東京

☎ 3582-0111; http://tokyo.okura.com; 2-10-4 Toranomon, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥34,125/42,000; ☉ Ginza Line to Toranomon (exit 3); ☑

The Ōkura is an old-fashioned, elegant standby and the meeting place of Japan's political and business elite. Lovely and lived-in, the 1960s décor and low-lying architecture are matched by personable staff. The beautiful Japanese garden and top-notch restaurants complete the picture.

ANA INTERCONTINENTAL TOKYO

Map p92

Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

ANA インターコンチネンタルホテル東京

☎ 3505-1111; www.anaintercontinental-tokyo.jp; 1-12-33 Akasaka, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥22,100/36,750; ☉ Ginza Line to Tameike-sannō, (exit 13), or Namboku Line to Roppongi-itchōme (exit 3); ☑ ☎

A short walk from Roppongi, the plush 37-storey ANA Intercontinental has large, gorgeously designed rooms with LCD screens and fantastic night views. With an outdoor pool, a small gym and an excellent business centre, this remains a sleek and sophisticated choice.

HOTEL AVANSHELL AKASAKA

Map p92

Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテル アバンシェル赤坂

☎ 3568-3456; www.avanshell.com, in Japanese; 2-14-14 Akasaka, Minato-ku; s/d ¥15,750/19,950; ☉ Chiyoda Line to Akasaka (exit 2 & 5)

The rooms in this beautifully designed 2004 high-rise are laid out under themes such as 'zen' and 'primo', with zippy décor ranging from black leather couches and puffy white bedspreads to cool green tatami spaces. It's a visually appealing cut above most business hotels.

ASIA CENTER OF JAPAN

Map p92

Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテル アジア会館

☎ 3402-6111; www.asiacenter.or.jp; 8-10-32 Akasaka, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥8200/10,800; ☉ Ginza, Hanzōmon or Toei Ōedo Line to Aoyama-itchōme (exit 4); ☑

The Asia Center covers the basics of a business hotel – the décor is generic and forgettable but the rooms are decently sized and staff are old hands at helping foreign visitors.

ROPPONGI

With its high concentration of foreigners and party people of all stripes, Roppongi is hardly typical of Tokyo. It's great for clubbing and bar hopping, but the area is a bit of a human zoo and accommodation is relatively pricey. But there are a few excellent midrange hotels handily placed close to Roppongi Crossing, in addition to the more upscale choices nearby.

GRAND HYATT TOKYO

Map pp96-7

Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

グランド ハイアット 東京

☎ 4333-1234; www.grandhyatttokyo.com; 6-10-3 Roppongi, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥50,400/55,650; ☉ Hibiya or Toei Ōedo Line to Roppongi (exits 1c & 3); ☑ ☎

Architecturally open and bright despite its somewhat labyrinthine layout, the Grand Hyatt is warmly, gorgeously chic. Smooth mahogany and natural fabrics give an organic flavour to the rooms, while its Roppongi Hills location imbues it with vibrant energy. Even the bathrooms feature rainshower fixtures and rough-cut stone, continuing a nature-in-architecture motif.

HOTEL IBIS Map pp96-7

Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルアイビス六本木

☎ 3403-4411; www.ibis-hotel.com; 7-14-4 Roppongi, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥13,382/16,285; ☉ Hibiya or Toei Ōedo Line to Roppongi (exit 4a); ☑

Ideally placed for those who want to be close to Roppongi nightlife, the Ibis is a comfortable spot to settle in after a night of debauchery. The singles are somewhat cramped, so go for the semi-doubles (¥16,023). Lighter sleepers should request a quiet room not facing the back.

ARCA TORRE Map pp96-7

Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルアルカトーレ六本木

☎ 3404-5111; www.arktower.co.jp/arcatorre/en/; 6-1-23 Roppongi, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥11,550/14,700; ☉ Hibiya or Toei Ōedo Line to Roppongi (exit 3)

Steps away from the Almond café, Roppongi's best-known meeting spot, the cosy Arca Torre is made for hard partiers and

heavy sleepers. The room décor is simple and beds are on the hard side, but even standard singles are furnished with semi-double beds (which are wider than normal single beds).

VILLA FONTAINE ROPPONGI ANNEX

Map pp96-7

Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルヴィラフォンテーヌ六本木アネックス

☎ 3560-5550; www.hvf.jp/eng/roppongi_annex.php; 3-2-7 Roppongi, Minato-ku; s/d from ¥9500/12,000; ☉ Namboku Line to Roppongi Ichōme (exit 1) or Hibiya or Toei Ōedo Line to Roppongi (exit 5)

Stylish, modern and reasonably priced, the new Roppongi Annex offers 140cm-wide beds, a complimentary buffet breakfast and free LAN access if you're lugging a PC. It's close enough to Roppongi's centre to experience its madness, but far enough away for a quiet sleep.

EBISU

Just up the JR Yamanote Line from Shibuya, Ebisu is a quieter neighbourhood that lacks the flair of the larger, neon-fringed hubs, but it still draws crowds for its pubs, restaurants and the Ebisu Garden Place shopping complex.

WESTIN HOTEL TOKYO

Map p102

Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

ウェスティンホテル東京

☎ 5423-7000; www.westin-tokyo.co.jp; 1-4-1 Mita, Meguro-ku; r from ¥57,750; ☉ JR Yamanote Line to Ebisu (Atré exit); ☑

The remodelled Westin is one of the finest hotels in Japan, and plays host to royals, celebs and business moguls from around the world. Rooms are opulent but tasteful, with a lovely, laid-back European panache, and the clientele is grown-up but hip. The hotel's Spa Parisien is a large, sumptuous sanctuary that can quickly melt all your stress. From the station, take the Skywalk to Ebisu Garden Place and head towards the road round back.

SHIBUYA

Clustered around heavily crowded Shibuya Station and the streets spoking away from it are a variety of great midrange and high-end hotels. Naturally enough, it's still the neighbourhood where visiting rock stars put

up camp after a big show at NHK Hall or a smaller gig at one of Shibuya's myriad live-music houses.

CERULEAN TOWER TÔKYŪ HOTEL

Map p106 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

セルリアンタワー東急ホテル
☎ 3476-3000; www.ceruleantower-hotel.com/en/; 26-1 Sakuragaokachō, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥30,607/41,580, Japanese-style s/d ¥75,075/77,385; 📍 Shibuya (south exit)

Sprawl out on the huge beds and drink deeply of the big views, because there's room to breathe in these enormous rooms. The sleek lobby looks out on a charming rock garden, an organic complement to the sleek modern aesthetic. Quality *nō* (dance-drama) occasionally takes place at the in-house theatre, and jazz club JZ Brat has lots of live shows (p189).

EXCEL TOKYU HOTEL

Map p106 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

エクセルホテル東急
☎ 5457-0109; www.tokyuhotelsjapan.com/en/; 1-12-2 Dōgenzaka, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥24,255/34,650; 📍 Shibuya, exit for Shibuya Mark City; 📍

This tower, right beside Shibuya Station, boasts excellent night views of Tokyo. Singles are spacious if bland, but at least you're right on top of the action. There's a very comfortable high-ceilinged lounge here, as well as 25th-floor restaurants with terrific skyline panoramas.

ARIMAX HOTEL

Map p106 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

アリマックスホテル
☎ 5454-1122; www.arimaxhotelshibuya.co.jp, in Japanese; 11-15 Kamiyamachō, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥22,145/27,920; 📍 Shibuya (Hachikō exit)

This plush little corner of European pomp is on a quiet shopping street. Neoclassical furnishings arranged in the lobby and its 23-room scale create its intimate atmosphere. Check out the wainscotted, old-school bar, perfect for a Scotch after a long day.

CRESTON HOTEL

Map p106 Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルクレストン
☎ 3481-5800; www.crestonhotel.co.jp/shibuya/, in Japanese; 10-8 Kamiyamachō, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥15,115/22,145; 📍 Shibuya (Hachikō exit)

Unassumingly chic and central to Shibuya without being in the middle of the party scene, the Creston has a laid-back, classy

ambience plus an excellent tofu restaurant. It's in an alley that won't get much pedestrian traffic but gives easy access to Shibuya's nightlife.

SHIBUYA TÔKYŪ INN

Map p106 Business Hotel ¥¥

渋谷東急イン
☎ 3498-0109; www.tokyuhotels.co.jp/en/; 1-24-10 Shibuya, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥14,910/23,100; 📍 Shibuya (east exit); 📍

This chain hotel has some style thanks to recent renovation, with clean lines and sliding window screens in primary shades. Spacious singles are a superb deal, and come with a modern work desk and a flat-screen TV.

SHIBUYA TÔBU HOTEL

Map p106 Business Hotel ¥¥

渋谷東武ホテル
☎ 3476-0111; www.tobuhotel.co.jp/shibuya, in Japanese; 3-1 Udagawachō, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥13,960/19,635; 📍 Shibuya (Hachikō exit); 📍

Roll into the smooth marble and wood-trimmed lobby to be greeted by a more airy, stylish atmosphere than at average business hotels. It's worth spending more for the nicer singles, which have bigger, more comfortable semi-double beds.

HOTEL METS SHIBUYA

Map p106 Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルメッツ渋谷
☎ 3409-0011; www.hotelmets.jp/shibuya; 3-29-17 Shibuya, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥11,000/18,000, wheelchair-accessible r ¥19,000; 📍 Shibuya (new south exit); 📍

Superconvenient and squarely comfortable, the Hotel Mets is inside Shibuya Station's quiet new south exit. It's worth laying out the extra ¥500 for a roomier deluxe single. Rates include free broadband internet and the rarity of a free buffet breakfast.

SHIBUYA CITY HOTEL

Map p106 Business Hotel ¥¥

渋谷シティホテル
☎ 5489-1010; www.shibuya-city-hotel.com, in Japanese; 1-1 Maruyamachō, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥9450/18,900, wheelchair-accessible r ¥14,800; 📍 Shibuya (Hachikō exit); 📍

This place is in the Love Hotel district, where couples seek intimacy, but it's not seedy. It's a short downhill roll from loads of good live-music venues and clubs. It

has spacious but simple rooms, a superb location and even a tricked-out wheelchair-friendly room.

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S CASTLE HOTEL

Map p110 Business Hotel ¥¥

こどもの城ホテル
☎ 3797-5677; www.kodomonosiro.or.jp/english/hotel; 5-53-1 Jingūmae, Shibuya-ku; Western-style s/d ¥7455/11,340, Japanese-style r from ¥31,500; 📍 Shibuya (east exit), or Ginza Line to Omotesandō (exit B2); 📍 📍

Though you may be disappointed to learn that it's not actually a castle, this small, uber-child-friendly hotel is perfect for families. Rooms are spiffy and clean, with fine views. The 'castle' itself is a paradise of play, with art projects, a swimming pool, puppet shows and endless amusements (see p71).

CAPSULE LAND SHIBUYA

Map p106 Capsule Hotel ¥

カプセルランド渋谷
☎ 3464-1777; www.capsule-land.com/shibuya/sinfo.html, in Japanese; 1-19-14 Dōgenzaka, Shibuya-ku; capsules from ¥3700; 📍 Shibuya (Hachikō exit)

This is a standard capsule hotel for men only perched atop Dōgenzaka hill. Extras include large shared baths, massage chairs, laundry machines and coin lockers. It's a clean, well-run place, and major credit cards are accepted.

SHINJUKU

If you have only a day in Tokyo and want the full-bore hyper-Japan experience, stay in this nonstop whirlwind of neon, crowds, pachinko parlours and hostess clubs. East and west Shinjuku are different worlds when it comes to accommodation. The west has the lion's share of luxury hotels, while the east generally offers the better deal and the more central location. Capsule hotels and manga cafés (p207) provide alternative accommodation.

PARK HYATT TOKYO

Map p116 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

パークハイアット東京
☎ 5322-1234; http://tokyo.park.hyatt.com; 3-7-1-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; r/ste from ¥55,650/68,250; 📍 Toei Ōedo Line to Tochōmae (exit A4)

The setting will look familiar, as it was the backdrop for the film *Lost in Translation*.

Views are stunning, day and night, and appear to be part of another world from these serene heights. Dignified but relaxed, the stylishly understated rooms are done in naturally finished wood, fabric and marble. Staff are gracefully, discretely attentive and the restaurants are some of Tokyo's best – check out the stunning views from the top-level New York Grill.

HYATT REGENCY TOKYO

Map p116 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

ハイアットリージェンシー東京
☎ 3348-1234; www.hyattregencytokyo.com; 2-7-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; s/d from ¥26,670/29,820; 📍 Toei Ōedo Line to Tochōmae (exits A7 & C4); 📍 📍

This marble behemoth holds its own as one of Shinjuku's best high-end options. Always housing a healthy population of international businesspeople, the Hyatt Regency has swank, new 'Regency Club' rooms and lounges. Other rooms are being renovated, but all offer excellent views of Shinjuku and, if you're lucky, Mt Fuji.

KEIŌ PLAZA HOTEL

Map p116 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

京王プラザホテル
☎ 3344-0111; www.keioplaza.com; 2-2-1 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; Western-style s/d from ¥22,000/26,000, Japanese ste from ¥80,000; 📍 Toei Ōedo Line to Tochōmae (exit B1); 📍 📍

The 47-storey Keiō Plaza has a mix of remodelled and older rooms. Updated ones feature the cleaner lines of more modern luxury hotels, but all have excellent city views. With a helpful business centre and free high-speed internet in every room, it also caters to busy travellers.

HILTON TOKYO

Map p116 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

ヒルトン東京
☎ 3344-5111; www.hilton.com; 6-6-2 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; r from ¥19,000; 📍 Maru-nouchi Line to Nishi-Shinjuku (exit C8), or Toei Ōedo Line to Tochōmae (exit C8); 📍 📍

The Hilton covers all the bases. Comforts like firm mattresses and full-sized bathtubs are complemented by aesthetically pleasing elements like shōji over the windows. A warren of shops, restaurants and bars lies downstairs, and stressed-out professionals can work it off in the indoor heated pool, tennis courts or gym.

SHINJUKU PRINCE HOTEL

Map p116 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

新宿プリンスホテル

☎ 3205-1111; www.princehotels.co.jp/shinjuku-e; 1-30-1 Kabukichō, Shinjuku-ku; s/d from ¥18,500/32,400; ㊤ Shinjuku (west exit); ㊤

Right by Shinjuku Station and the Kabukichō nightlife, this towering wedge has a location that can't be beat and snazzy rooms in mahogany and white that were renovated in 2006. Don't let the faded lobby throw you – ask for an upper-floor room and enjoy some of the best views in the city.

HOTEL CENTURY SOUTHERN TOWER

Map p116 Business Hotel ¥¥¥

ホテルセンチュリーサザンタワー

☎ 5354-0111; www.southerntower.co.jp/english; 2-2-1 Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥16,000/24,000; ㊤ Shinjuku (south & southern terrace exits); ㊤

This is one of the best deals for accommodation in Shinjuku. With winter views of Mt Fuji possible from one side and the green space of Shinjuku-gyōen on the other, this monolith is very reasonably priced for its central location.

HOTEL SUNLITE SHINJUKU

Map p116 Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルサンライト新宿

☎ 3356-0391; www.sunlite.co.jp/top-e.htm; 5-15-8 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; s/d from ¥8715/12,075; ㊤ Marunouchi or Toei Shinjuku Line to Shinjuku-sanchōme (exit C7)

Though the small rooms at the Sunlite are typical of lesser business hotels in its class, they're well maintained and comfortable. Small details like triangular bay windows and trapezoid-shaped rooms lend a funky air to an otherwise ordinary place.

SHINJUKU PARK HOTEL

Map p116 Business Hotel ¥¥

新宿パークホテル

☎ 3356-0241; <http://shinjukuparkhotel.co.jp>; 5-27-9 Sendagaya, Shibuya-ku; s/d from ¥7900/13,800, Japanese-style r ¥24,800; ㊤ Shinjuku (new south exit)

The low-key Park Hotel is a serviceable base on busy Meiji-dōri and has park views (be sure to request one) in addition to being close to several nearby shopping megaliths. The Japanese-style rooms here

are a steal, and the regular rooms, although staid and small, are comfortable.

CITY HOTEL LONESTAR

Map p116 Business Hotel ¥¥

シティホテルロンスター

☎ 3356-6511; www.thehotel.co.jp/en/lornstar; 2-12-12 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; s/d from ¥7350/9450; ㊤ Marunouchi or Toei Shinjuku Line to Shinjuku-sanchōme (exit C8); ㊤

The City Hotel Lonestar is a friendly, updated place to bunk with rooms that are small but cheery. In the heart of Tokyo's gay district, it is also known as the queerest lodging in the city. A basic continental breakfast is laid out in the mornings free of charge.

TOKYO BUSINESS HOTEL

Map p116 Business Hotel ¥¥

東京ビジネスホテル

☎ 3356-4605; 6-3-2 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku; s with shared bathroom from ¥5460, d with bathroom from ¥12,810; ㊤ Marunouchi Line to Shinjuku-gyōenmae (exit 1)

This no-frills hotel off Meiji-dōri is an older building and very simple in terms of décor and amenities, but you get a fairly large communal bath and some eye-popping night views of the skyscrapers in west Shinjuku. Go for the larger Type B singles (¥6300).

GREEN PLAZA SHINJUKU

Map p116 Capsule Hotel ¥

グリーンプラザ新宿

☎ 3207-5411; www.hgpshinjuku.jp/hotel/, in Japanese; 1-29-2 Kabukichō, Shinjuku-ku; capsules from ¥4300; ㊤ Shinjuku (east exit); ㊤

Smack in the middle of sleazy Kabukichō, Green Plaza Shinjuku offers 630 standard-issue capsules for men only. However, the ladies' sauna on the 9th floor allows women to check in for the night (¥3400).

IKEBUKURO

Ikebukuro lacks the charm of other busy neighbourhoods in Tokyo and often seems like a poor cousin to Shinjuku. There are many cheap hotels here, but the trick is to avoid the flea pits in favour of spots near the station for quick access to more happening 'hoods. Takadanobaba is a student zone to the south with lots of great ethnic restaurants.

WORTH THE TRIP

Though the bulk of Tokyo's accommodation is located in the central neighbourhoods we've listed, those looking to get a bit further afield might seek out these options.

Four Seasons Hotel Chinzan-sō (フォーシーズンズホテル 椿山荘; Map pp48-9; ☎ 3943-2222; www.fourseasons.com/tokyo); 2-10-8 Sekiguchi, Bunkyo-ku; s/d from ¥50,000/55,000; ㊤ Yūrakuchō Line to Edogawa-bashi, exit 1a) Ridiculously opulent with Japanese antiques and a European feel, the Four Seasons Chinzan-sō is built on the grounds of a Meiji-era ornamental garden. It abuts the Kanda-gawa canal, which is very pleasant during cherry blossom season.

Hotel Bellclassic (ホテルベルクラシック; Map pp48-9; ☎ 5950-1200; www.hotel-bellclassic.co.jp); 3-36-6 Minami-Ōtsuka, Toshima-ku; s/d ¥14,700/23,100; ㊤ JR Yamanote Line to Ōtsuka, south exit) One stop from Ikebukuro, this churchy-looking business hotel has immaculate, plain-vanilla rooms that are a smidge wider than those at standard business hotels. Room rates go down in low season.

Andon Ryokan (行燈旅館; Map pp48-9; ☎ 3873-8611; www.andon.co.jp); 2-34-10 Nihonzutsumi, Taitō-ku; r per person ¥8190; ㊤ Hibiya Line to Minowa, exit 3; ㊤) Fabulously designed in form and function, the minimalist and modern Andon Ryokan has tiny but immaculate tatami rooms. Pluses include free internet access, DVD players, cheap breakfasts and laundry facilities. This gem is run by the same people who established the more down-market New Koyo (p209).

Ryokan Sansuisō (旅館山水荘; Map pp48-9; ☎ 3441-7475; www.sansuiso.net); 2-9-5 Higashi-Gotanda, Shinagawa-ku; s/d from ¥4900/8600; ㊤ JR Yamanote Line to Gotanda, east exit) This sweet, seven-room ryokan gets a bit of rail noise from the JR tracks nearby, but with that comes the experience of staying in a real Japanese home.

CROWNE PLAZA METROPOLITAN HOTEL

Map p122 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

ホテルメトロポリタン

☎ 3980-1111; www.metropolitan.jp; 1-6-1 Nishi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku; s/d from ¥18,000/24,000; ㊤ Ikebukuro (west exit); ㊤

The commodious rooms here, being renovated at the time of writing, make it a worthwhile high-end hotel. Upgraded rooms have a clean, modern look.

SUNSHINE CITY PRINCE HOTEL

Map p122 Luxury Hotel ¥¥¥

サンシャインシティプリンスホテル

☎ 3988-1111; www.princehotels.co.jp/sunshine; 3-1-5 Higashi-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku; s/d from ¥17,400/23,100, Japanese-style r ¥169,300; ㊤ Ikebukuro (east exit); ㊤

Right on the Sunshine City mall complex and close to the manga shops on Otome Rd, this 1,166-room landmark has superb views of Tokyo, even if the singles are cramped and the décor evokes vintage Laura Ashley. This is a decent alternative if you want to spend time exploring Sunshine City.

HOTEL STRIX TOKYO

Map p122 Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルストリックス東京

☎ 5396-0111; www.strix.jp, in Japanese; 2-3-1 Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku; s/d from ¥15,000/20,000;

㊤ Ikebukuro (west exit), or Yūrakuchō Line to Ikebukuro (exit C5); ㊤

Renovated and renamed in 2005, the Strix has some very appealing, modern rooms with wide beds, cosy couches and spacious bathrooms. High-speed internet is available in all rooms. Navigate towards its teal-coloured roof; it's just steps from the C5 subway station exit.

HOTEL SUNROUTE TAKADANOBABA

Map p122 Business Hotel ¥¥

ホテルサンルート高田馬場

☎ 3232-0101; www.sunroutehotel.jp/takadanobaba; 1-27-7 Takadanobaba, Shinjuku-ku; s/d from ¥9500/16,800; ㊤ JR Yamanote Line to Takadanobaba (Waseda-dōri exit); ㊤

Renovated in 2005, the Sunroute is clean and no-nonsense. High-speed internet access is zapped into all of the blandly comfortable, small rooms, and the place is surprisingly quiet for a neighbourhood buzzing with students.

TOYOKO INN KITA-GUCHI NO. 1

Map p122 Business Hotel ¥¥

東横イン

☎ 5960-1045; www.toyoko-inn.com/eng; 2-50-5 Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku; s/d ¥6800/8800; ㊤ Ikebukuro (north exit); ㊤

The Toyoko Inn Kita-guchi No. 1 (there's another nearby) is one of the most appealing

© Lonely Planet Publications

choices of the standard business hotels here. Rooms are tidy, if tiny, and Japanese rooms with tatami mats are available. It even throws in a simple Japanese breakfast.

HOUSE IKEBUKURO Map p122 Ryokan ¥

池袋之家

☎ 3984-3399; www.housejp.com.tw; 2-20-1 Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku; r ¥5000-12,000; ㊤ Ikebukuro (west exit), or Marunouchi or Yūrakuchō Line to Ikebukuro (exit C1); ㊦

Spotless tatami rooms are the rule at House Ikebukuro, a rather institutional but very clean place run by Taiwanese and catering mainly to Asian backpackers. It's a busy, well-run establishment, often fully booked. All singles share bathrooms, but some doubles have private ones.

KIMI RYOKAN Map p122 Ryokan ¥

貴美旅館

☎ 3971-3766; www.kimi-ryokan.jp; 2-36-8 Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku; s ¥4500, d ¥6500-7500; ㊤ Ikebukuro (west exit); ㊦

Easily one of the best budget ryokan in Tokyo, this convivial inn provides a welcoming base for travellers discovering the city. The friendly proprietor's ikebana works adorn the rooms. Fragrant tatami rooms are small but not cramped, and the large, wood-floored lounge area is a comfortable place to meet fellow travellers over green tea. Clean showers and toilets are shared, and there's a lovely Japanese cypress bath. Book well in advance.

TAMA RYOKAN Map p122 Ryokan ¥

多摩旅館

☎ 3209-8062; www.tamaryokan.com; 1-25-33 Takadanobaba, Shinjuku-ku; s/d ¥4500/8000; ㊤ JR Yamanote Line to Takadanobaba (Waseda-dōri exit)

Four traditional tatami rooms fill out the second floor of this older private home, kept by a sweet couple. The ryokan is up a small alley – look for the Starbucks to the right of it on the road. While it lacks a traditional bath, there's a local *sentō* located nearby.

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'