

## 3 DAYS IN TOKYO-PART 2

If you read 3 Days in Tokyo – Part 1 and followed my advice, you'll have enjoyed some ridiculously fresh sushi, gone to the park to see how Tokyoites relax, and, hopefully, had an amazing adventure in Shinjuku, the details of which you can't wait to regale your friends with. Today will be completely different, but at least as interesting. Let's get to it.

### **Day 2 – The Excursion, Electric Town, and the Best Damn Cocktails in the World**

**8 am** – Swing by a 7-11 and grab breakfast on the way to the train station. Yes, I said it. 7-11 actually has good food in Japan. You can find hot hum bao, cold curried pork cutlet sandwiches with the crusts cut off, onigiri with tuna or salmon inside, and all sorts of other goodies.

**9 am** – Today you will leave the funky, crazy, overwhelming environs of Tokyo and head off to the small coastal town of Kamakura to see the Daibutsu (The Great Buddha). It's only an hour or so by train and well worth the trip. The Buddha is impressive and its location in a valley surrounded by trees and mountains is magnificent and calming. Enjoy the beauty of the Buddhist shrines that adorn this area and feel the history of this place. Kamakura was once the capital of Japan. Make sure you allocate plenty of time to walk around this coastal town and explore the various temples, shrines, and outdoor scenery.

**5 pm** – After returning from Kamakura, it's time for something totally different. Akihabara! The number of lights and items competing for your attention in this part of Tokyo will be a shocking contrast to the serenity of Kamakura.

Akihabara (Electric Town) is famous around the world for having the latest electronics. If you want to see what's coming to stores back home soon, you can find it here. My favorite of the electronics stores, which also has a location in Shinjuku, is Yodobashi Camera.

Akihabara is also the area where all the otaku (Japanese geeks) go for manga (Japanese Comics), anime, and maid cafes (places where you can be served coffee by young women dressed in maid outfits. Seriously.)

The wonderfully jarring differences between old-world, traditional Japan (Kamakura) and new, hyper-modern Japan (Akihabara) make it such an unusual and inviting travel destination. When you get exhausted from looking around, find a Japanese Curry Shop. Food tends to be expensive in Japan, but Japanese Curry is delicious and a good bargain. You'll get a fairly large portion and can continue shopping or head back to the hotel with your finds.

**8 pm** – Whatever your favorite Japanese food is, you should go eat that now because I don't want to be responsible for you not feeding your tempura addiction or not getting your fugu fix, or whatever your food fetish may be. (Yes, I would probably go to Yakitori Alley. Again. But that's just me). You may have a hankering for Chanko Nabe...how should I know? We don't even know each other that well.

It's after dinner that concerns me. Many folks will head to Roppongi, and experience the madness that is Gas Panic. If you want to be in a bar where the only real rule is that you must have a drink in your hand at all times or you will be kicked out, then be my guest.

However, if that's not your bag, Tokyo has a number of incredible cocktail bars. I like the chill atmosphere at Bar a Vins Tateru Yoshino inside the Park Hotel Tokyo in Shiodome (not to be confused with the Park Hyatt Tokyo in Shinjuku where you can drink at the bar that was used in *Lost in Translation*. Another good place to visit.).

The food here is great, including one of the best burgers in Tokyo. The main bartender, Jun, is amazing and will certainly take good care of you. Have him recommend a cocktail based on your preferences. He will carefully select the ingredients and mix your drink with intense precision.