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Time Out Shortlist Kyoto



Synopsis

Kyoto, with its 200 Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, and its breathtaking gardens and palaces, is one of Japan's most seductive cities. The capital for over 1,000 years and currently the seventh largest city in Japan, it is also one of the most difficult to maneuver. Time Out Kyoto simplifies the process with local journalists' profiles of the best places to stay, play, and eat in every budget. Clear maps and photographs offer reliable guidance to and through Kyoto's array of attractions, from the International Manga Museum to the Iwatayama Monkey Park, where visitors get up close and personal with the monkeys.

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Customer Reviews

Founded in 1968, Time Out has grown from humble beginnings into the leading resource for anyone wanting to know what's happening in the world's greatest cities. Alongside our influential weeklies in London, New York, Chicago and Dubai, we publish more than 20 magazines in cities as varied as Beijing and Beirut; a range of travel books, with City Guides now joined by pocket-sized Shortlist series; and an information-packed website. The company remains proudly independent, still owned by Tony Elliott four decades after he launched Time Out London. Written by local experts, and illustrated with original photography, our books also retain their independence. No business has been featured because it has advertised, and all restaurants and bars are visited and reviewed anonymously.

Generally I found this book to be very helpful, well organized and with good information on the historic sites and museums around this city. I also had pretty good luck with the restaurants, enjoying the ones I found in the guide and decided to visit. However, I would add one note of caution. The book was published in 2009. I knew it, but I should have remembered it each time I selected a restaurant to try. One of them I tried to find had closed in 2012 or 2013. When I got back to the hotel I was able to read about this, but I'd suggest that anyone buying the book go online to see if the restaurant or bar or club they want to visit is still open in 2016. This shouldn't be a problem with the museums or temples, but you could still check to see if their hours had changed or if they were temporarily closed for renovation.

I bought this travel guide to Kyoto because it was one of the only smaller guides I found. It had some great recommendations for restaurants/etc, and I like the best of feature at the beginning. However, the directions were horrible and the maps lacked details. I found myself wandering around or asking directions more than once. One time I couldn't even find a store! So if I was going back to Kyoto again with this book, I would probably buy/look up some supplementary maps online.

This is, from my perspective and for my purposes, the worst travel guide I ever bought. The major world heritage sites are described in just one paragraph each, exactly the same amount of information as is given for each petty bar and cafe in the city (and that's dozens if not hundreds). Given the low quality of the english guides which you can buy at these sites themselves (huge pics of what you can see anyway plus one or two pieces of information mostly describing what you can see, e.g., "the shrine is 26.9 meters in width and 6.5 meters in height"), having bought this guide left me with almost no information on the cultural and historical background of the sites I was visiting. Btw, there are no guided tours in english in Kyoto, probably due to the fact that almost no Japanese at major Japanese world heritage sites speaks a decent English. Major information was lacking in this guide (e.g., closures around New Year), details simply incorrect (I tried two phone numbers, one for a restaurant, one for the major museum, both wrong). Without guessing you wouldnt be able to find even the one paragraph about some of the major sites at all, as the index is cursory (many sites missing) or uses the Japanese names (e.g. gosho instead of Imperial palace). The structure of the book based on the quarters of the city requires you to know where to find what in advance, as there is no overview plan. There are hardly any pics of the word heritage sites, but a whole lot of (paid?) pics of bars and hotels in the guide. The maps do not enable you to find sites quickly, the subway and bus stations are not on the maps. Overall, if you are in Kyoto to go to bars and restaurants, this

guide is your choice. If you rather go there to see and understand the major historical sites, stay away from this guide!

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