

The Imperial Palace



The Imperial Palace with its grounds is located on the site of the former residential palace of the successive Tokugawa Shoguns in the Edo Period. Following the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Emperor Meiji moved here from Kyoto which had been the Imperial capital for more than a thousand years. Since then, this is where the Emperor has resided and, as Imperial Palace, where the various Imperial ceremonies and functions have been held.

To replace the Meiji Palace burnt down in 1945, the present Palace was built and was completed in 1968.

The Imperial Palace grounds extend over an area of approximately 1,150,000 square meters, and are surrounded by a moat and rampart with eight gates.

1 Principal buildings can be seen during the tour

Fujimi-yagura

This three storied keep, reconstructed in 1659, was watch tower, and is one of the oldest remnants of Edo Castle. The rampart is about 14.5 meters in height and the keep itself is some 15.5 meters high. (Map ⑤) 📍 No.6, No.7



The Imperial Household Agency Bldg. (Kunaicho Chosha)

This building is the head office of the Imperial Household and was constructed in 1935. The third floor of the building was used as the temporary Imperial Palace for some years after World War II until the new Imperial Palace was built.(Map ⑥) 📍 No.9



Fujimi-tamon Defence-house and Hasuikebori

Fujimi-tamon (defense house) on top of the rampart is a type of donjon built for both defense and decorative purposes. It was also used as a repository and armory. (Map ⑤)

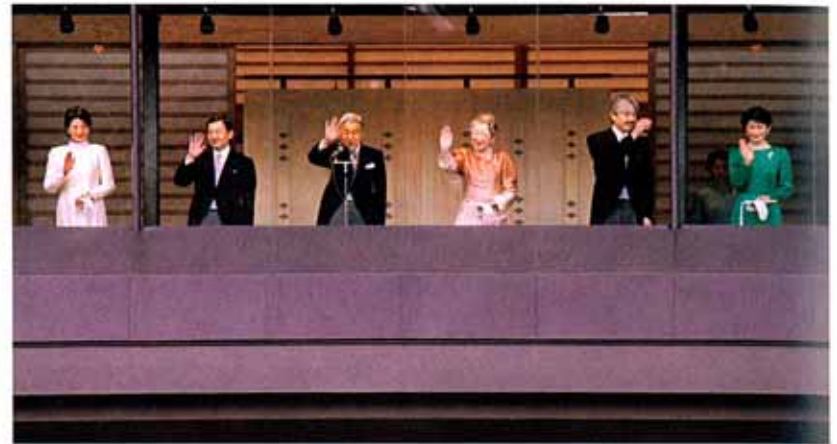
At the foot of the high stone wall, there is a moat called the "Hasuikebori (lotus moat)" where in summer lotus flowers bloom in profusion. (Map ④) 📍 No.8



Kyuden Totei Plaza

This plaza is located in front of Chowaden Hall of the Imperial Palace. On the occasion of New Year's Day and the Emperor's Birthday, the Emperor and Empress and Members of the Imperial family stand on a balcony temporarily installed outside the corridor of Chowaden Hall and receive the greetings of the people gathered in the plaza, to whom the Emperor delivers an address. (Map ⑦)

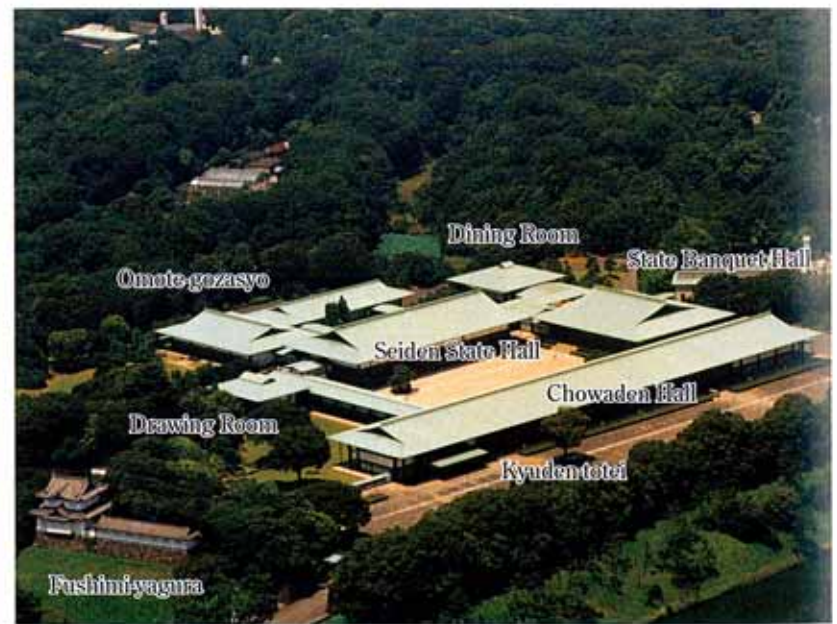
📍 No.13



The Imperial Palace (Kyuden)

The Imperial Palace completed in 1968 is a ferro-concrete structure and consists of 7 buildings, including Seiden State Function Hall, Homeiden State Banquet Hall, Chowaden Reception Hall and the Emperor's daily office. (Map ⑧)

📍 No.11, No.12



Seimon-tetsubashi Bridge (Nijubashi) and Fushimi-yagura Keep



Seimon-tetsubashi Bridge is commonly called "Nijubashi" and is loved by peoples. And it is said that Fushimi-yagura Keep was moved here from Fushimi-castle in Kyoto during the reign of the third Shogun Iemitsu early 17th century.

(Map 9・10) ④ No.16, No.18



Yamashita-dori Street

(Map 1)
④ No.24, No.25

2 Principal buildings in the East Gardens (excluded from the tour course)

Site of Tenshukaku Donjon, Honmaru

The main donjon of the Edo Castle was completed in 1607. At that time the rampart was about 14 meters high and on top of it the main donjon rose the greatest castle towers in Japan but it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1657. Since then it has never been reconstructed and only the stone wall that formed its foundation remains today, which is about 10 meters high now.

At the time of the construction of the new Imperial Palace building, Honmaru and Ninomaru areas were rearranged to make a garden. This garden is named "The East Garden of the Imperial Palace", and is now open to the public. (Map 1)



Tokagakudo Concert Hall

The Tokagakudo building is a concert hall and was constructed in 1966 in honor of the auspicious occasion of the 60th Birthday of Empress Kojun (deceased in 2000), who was a great lover of classical music. The roof is in the shape of a flower worked in colourful ceramic tiles. (Map 2)



Music Department (Gakubu), Archives and Mausolea Department (Shoryobu)

Music Department (Gakubu) is in charge of the preservation and performance of the Gagaku (ancient court dance and music classed as an Important National Cultural Property) as well as the performance of western-style music when a State Banquet is held at the Imperial Palace. (Map 3)

The Archives and Mausolea Department (Shoryobu) is in charge of administration for preserving important and official documents and books concerning the Imperial House and also the surveillance and maintenance of Mausolea and tombs of the Imperial Family located in various places in Japan. (Map 4)



Gagaku

Gagaku in Japan is the most ancient, classical music perfected generally in the middle of the Heian era (around 10th century). Gagaku Performance is held for the general public every autumn.



Ninomaru Grounds

Ninomaru Grounds consist of the strolling garden to which the original garden sited inside the Edo castle was restored, and the Ninomaru grove which reminds us of Musashino grove located on the outskirts of Tokyo.

Sannomaru Shozokan (The Museum of the Imperial Collections)

The collection of 6,000 art pieces owned and inherited by the Imperial family was donated to the Japanese government in 1989.

For the preservation and study of this collection, Sannomaru Shozokan (The Museum of the Imperial Collections) was built in 1992, and open to the public from 1993.

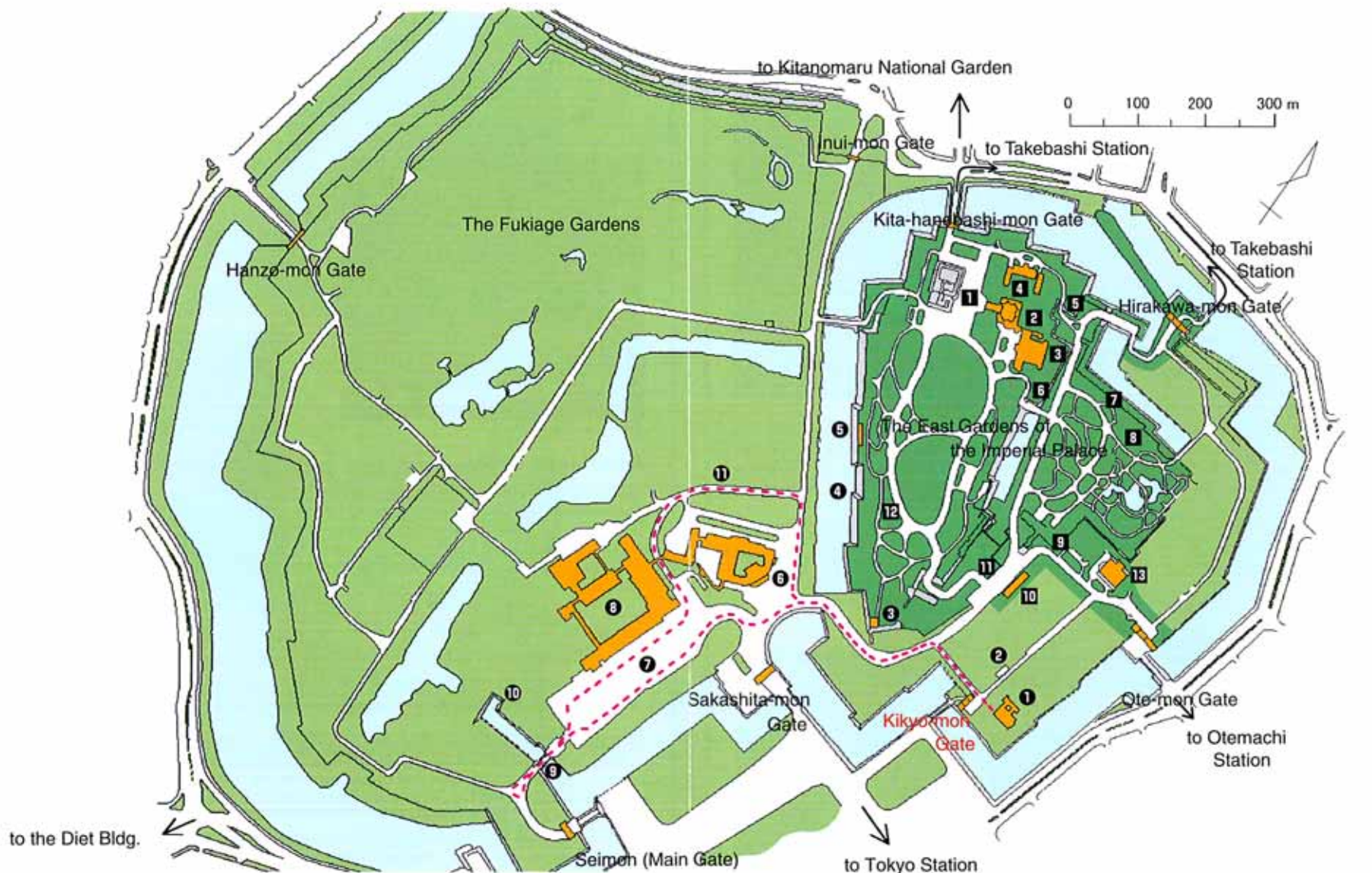
The collection of the Late Princess Chichibu in 1996, Empress Kojun in 2001, and the Late Princess Takamatsu in 2005 were added to the Museum collection.

The total number of the collection now amounts to 9,500 pieces. (Map 13)



Map of the Imperial Palace Grounds

(Tour course;) Tour takes approx. one hr. and 15 mins.



Buildings can be seen during the tour

- | | |
|---|--|
| ① Someikan (Visitors' House) | ⑦ Kyuden Totei Plaza |
| ② The former Privy Council Bldg. | ⑧ The Imperial Palace (Kyuden) |
| ③ Fujimi-yagura (Mt. Fuji-view Keep) | ⑨ Seimon-tetsubashi Bridge (Nijubashi) |
| ④ Hasuikebori (Lotus Moat) | |
| ⑤ Fujimi-tamon Defence-house | ⑩ Fushimi-yagura Keep |
| ⑥ The Imperial Household Agency Bldg. (Kunaicho Chosha) | ⑪ Yamashita-dori Street |

Buildings in the East Gardens

- | | |
|---|---|
| ① Site of Tenshukaku Donjon | ⑦ Prefectural Tree Emblems |
| ② Tokagakudo Concert Hall | ⑧ Suwano-chaya Tea House |
| ③ Music Department (Gakubu) Bldg. | ⑨ Doshin-bansho Guardhouse |
| ④ Archives and Mausolea Department (Shoryobu) Bldg. | ⑩ Hyakunin-bansho Guardhouse |
| | ⑪ O-bansho Guardhouse |
| ⑤ Bairin-zaka Slope | ⑫ Site of Matsuno-o-roka Corridor |
| ⑥ Shiomi-zaka Slope | ⑬ Sannomaru Shozokan (The Museum of the Imperial Collections) |

Tour of the Imperial Palace Grounds

- The tours are generally conducted on weekdays. (10:00a.m.,1:30p.m.)
- Those wishing to join the tour must register for admittance at the office.
- Further information is available from the information office of the maintenance division. TEL 03-3213-1111 ext. 3485, 3486

※The tours are not organized on the following days;

- Saturdays, Sundays and National Holidays
- From December 28 to January 4 of new year
- Any day when Imperial Court functions are scheduled or other unavoidable circumstances occur.

★ <http://sankan.kunaicho.go.jp>

The East Gardens of the Imperial Palace (Higashi Gyoen)

Open;

- From 1 March to 14 April 9:00 a.m.– 4:00 p.m.
- From 15 April to the end of August 9:00 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.
- From 1 September to the end of October 9:00 a.m.– 4:00 p.m.
- From 1 November to the end of February 9:00 a.m.– 3:30 p.m.

Closed;

The Gardens are closed on the following days ;

- Mondays and Fridays [open on National Holidays except the Emperor's Birthday, Dec. 23. If open Monday for a holiday, closed Tuesday (except National Holidays)]
- From December 28 to January 3 of new year
- Any day when Imperial Court functions are scheduled or other unavoidable circumstances occur.

Entry and exit gates;

- Ote-mon Gate, Hirakawa-mon Gate and Kitahane-bashi-mon Gate
- Further information is available from the office.
From Tuesday to Thursday TEL 03-3213-1111 ext. 3621
Saturdays, Sundays and National Holidays TEL 03-3213-2050

Sannomaru Shozokan

Open;

- Same as the East Gardens of the Imperial Palace

Closed;

- Same as the East Gardens of the Imperial Palace
- Special periods; For preparation and arrangement of next display

Entry and exit gates;

- Same as the East Gardens of the Imperial Palace
- Further information is available from the office.
From Monday to Friday TEL 03-3213-1111 ext. 3602
Saturdays, Sundays and National Holidays TEL 03-3213-1177

Gagaku Performance in autumn

- To apply, use a double postcard (restricted to only one application per person.).
- In case of many applicants, visitors are selected by lottery.
- Further information is available from the Music Department.
TEL 03-3213-1111 ext. 3416

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