YOKOHAMA

The port of Yokohama is a perfect example of Japan's trading ports, and the unique look of the town lends considerable charm to the area. But there is also an exciting atmosphere as new businesses along with shopping and entertainment centers are constructed one after another around the port. Japan closed its doors to world trade in the 17th century, and it was not until the end of the 19th century that the country opened its doors again, starting with the port of Yokohama. People arriving from overseas put down roots in Yokohama as an enclave for foreign residents and much of the overseas culture first came to Japan via Yokohama. After the Second World War, 90% of the port facilities and 27% of the urban area were taken over by the Allied Command. Reconstruction of the city was delayed, but by rapidly absorbing overseas culture, a new youth culture was born around jazz, rock music and movies. Enjoy the many sightseeing spots, old and new, based on the fascinating history of this port.
Minatomirai 21 area

Forty percent of the Minato Mirai 21 area where the Landmark Tower stands is reclaimed land. Shopping and entertainment facilities as well as gourmet spots are all gathered here, and about 210 shops including restaurants can be found in Queen's Square Yokohama. Entertainment facilities include the Yokohama Museum of Art that focuses on modern and contemporary art, the Mitsubishi Minatomirai Industrial Museum where you can learn about the universe and energy, and Warner Mycal Cinemas Minato Mirai multiplex movie theaters. The Cosmo World amusement park has the world's largest Ferris wheel, which also functions as a clock.

Landmark Tower

It may not be Japan's tallest building any more, thanks to the Tokyo Skytree, but it's still impressive standing at 296m high (70 storeys) and has one of the world's fastest lifts (45km/h). The Landmark Tower Sky Garden observatory is on the 69th floor; on clear days there are views to Tokyo and Mt Fuji, and you can get a glimpse into games at Yokohama Stadium.

Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse

This protected building is about 100 years old and contains restaurants, a jazz club and a gallery. Various events are held here utilizing its wonderful atmosphere. It is recommended for evening walks because the building is very romantic when lit up. To get there, walk along the Yamashita Rinkosen Promenade. This promenade uses the overhead freight line and provides a good view, so you can enjoy the port scenery from here.

Cruise around the Port of Yokohama

Enjoy a marine cruise on the Marine Shuttle or Marine Rouge. You can choose the length of cruise you want, from 40 minutes to 120 minutes. We recommend a twilight cruise for the exceptionally beautiful scenery when Yokohama Bay Bridge is lit up.
Fare: 40-minute trip 900 yen, 60-minute trip 1,400 yen (Marine Shuttle)
Yokohama Chinatown is not only the largest Chinatown in Japan but also in Asia and thanks mainly to the bountiful supply of restaurants, it has become one of the most popular tourist destinations in Japan. With the construction of the Minato Mirai line, access to Chinatown has become even more convenient allowing visitors to take a train directly from Shibuya in the heart of Tokyo to Motomachi Chukagai Station.

In the mid-nineteenth century, due to the opening of Yokohama Port and increased trade with the outside world, many Chinese traders settled in the area that is now Yokohama Chinatown. The area has gone through dramatic changes over the years because of the Great Kanto Earthquake and war between Japan and China and it wasn't until 1955 that the area became officially known as Yokohama Chinatown.

While it is fun to just stroll through Chinatown soaking up the atmosphere, food is really what puts it on the map. There are over 200 restaurants in the relatively small area that lies between Yamashita Park and Motomachi. Many restaurants, like the wonderful Manchinro, provide a luxurious atmosphere and huge menus. In fact there are restaurants that specialize in cuisine from just about every area in China so you could taste different parts of China every night for week if you wanted to. After you have dined, don't forget to visit the popular store, Kocho, which sells steamed dumplings prepared by champion chefs. They are a great gift to take home to your friends and family.
Negishi area

Sankei-en Garden

This is an extensive Japanese garden that opened about 100 years ago and covers an area of 175,000 square meters. Some of its buildings have been painstakingly moved from Kyoto and Kamakura and 10 of them are designated as important cultural assets. You can have matcha (green powdered tea) in the lobby of the Sankei Memorial where a collection of Japanese art is displayed. It takes about 90 minutes if you explore slowly.

Admission: 500 yen

From Yokohama Station (East Exit): About 35 minutes by bus number 8 or 125 to Honmoku Sankeien-mae. From there, Sankeien is another five minutes by foot
KAMAKURA

Kamakura is an ancient city. It has flourished since warlord Minamoto Yoritomo established a new government in 1192. Kamakura is surrounded on three sides by mountains and the south side faces the sea, so this landscape was highly suitable for constructing a fort. With its many historical temples and abundant natural scenery, the city is crowded with visitors throughout the year. At 08:00 and around 17:30, you can hear the sound of bells tolling at the temple. In order to protect this scenery, tall buildings are banned. As souvenirs, we recommend pigeon-shaped cookies called hato sabre, or wooden items carved and lacquered in the Kamakura-bori style.

The JR Yokosuka Line connects Tokyo Station directly with Kamakura Station. The one way trip takes just under an hour and costs 890 yen. Along the way, the trains also stop at Shinagawa Station, Yokohama Station and Kita-Kamakura Station among others.

The JR Shonan Shinjuku Line provides a direct connection between Shinjuku Station and Kamakura Station. The one way trip takes about one hour and costs 890 yen. Only trains bound for Zushi, that is roughly every second train (about two departures per hour), provide a direct connection to Kamakura. Otherwise, a transfer of trains is required at Ofuna Station.

The cheapest way of visiting Kamakura is by Odakyu's Enoshima Kamakura Free Pass, which includes the round trip from Shinjuku to Kamakura and unlimited usage of the Enoden train for only 1430 yen. Note however, that when using this pass, the journey to Kamakura takes at least 90 minutes, compared to about an hour by JR.
Established in 1253, Kenchō-ji is Japan's oldest Zen monastery and is still active today. It once comprised seven buildings and 49 subtemples, most of which were destroyed in the fires of the 14th and 15th centuries. However, the 17th and 18th centuries saw its restoration, and you can still get a sense of its splendour. The central Butsuden (Buddha Hall) was brought piece by piece from Tokyo in 1647. Its Jizō Bosatsu statue, unusual for a Zen temple, reflects the valley's ancient function as an execution ground – Jizō consoles lost souls. Other highlights include a bell cast in 1253 and the juniper grove, believed to have sprouted from seeds brought from China by Kenchō-ji's founder some seven centuries ago.

If you follow the path and stairways for another 15-20 minutes into the hills behind Kenchoji's main grounds, you will eventually arrive at the Hansobo, a shrine for the protection of Kenchoji. There you will also find a small observation deck from which Mount Fuji can be seen on days with good visibility. If you climb even further (about another five minutes), you will reach a second observation deck with fine views over the entire temple grounds 100 meters below and the city of Kamakura. From there starts the Tenen hiking trail through the northern hills of Kamakura, which leads to Zuisenji Temple and takes about one hour to complete.

Kenchō-ji is a 15-20 minute walk from Kita-Kamakura Station on the JR Yokosuka Line, one station before Kamakura Station when coming from Tokyo. It can also be reached in about a 15 minute walk from Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine.
Daibutsu

Kamakura is renowned for the famous Daibutsu. Daibutsu means great Buddha statue and its formal name is Amida-nyorai-zazou. The Buddha statue here was made in 1252. Its height including the plinth is 13.35 m and it weighs 121 tons. It is a wonderful statue, not only for its size but also as a sculpture that has retained its appearance since it was cast.

It used to be housed inside a building, but the building was washed away by a tsunami at the end of the 15th century, and since then it has remained outside.

Sightseeing time: 40 minutes Admission: 200 yen
7-minute walk from Hase Station.

Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gū

The Tsurugaoka Hachiman-gu Shrine was built by shogun Minamoto Yoritomo after he established the Kamakura Shogunate in the 12th century. Within the extensive premises, you will learn of the various legends involving samurai warriors. If you ascend the stairs, you will have a full view of the city of Kamakura. A lucky charm in the shape of a pigeon, which is a symbol of this shrine, is very popular for its ability to make your dreams come true. Why not pay a visit to the Kamakura Kokuhokan (Kamakura Museum) with its impressive collection of the city's cultural assets.

Sightseeing time: approx. 60 minutes
Admission: 300 yen (Kamakura Museum)
Hase-dera Temple

The historical Hase-dera Temple was built in 736. Thousands of tourists come to visit in the season of autumn leaves when the temple is lit up. The main statue is the beautiful Hase Kan’non Statue 9.18 m (30.1 ft) in height. It is called Juichimen Kanzeon Bosatsu (11-headed Goddess Kannon) because it has 11 faces with different expressions: one on top of the head, one facing front, 3 facing to the right and left, at the back and at the apex in addition to the main face. This Bosatsu (Goddess) statue listens to the wishes of all people. In Amida-do (the Amitabha Hall), there is Amida-nyorai. Minamoto Yoritomo had this statue made in shining gold to dispel evil spirits. The temple is situated on a hill and has a lovely view of the sea. Its garden with a walking course is known for the beauty of the flowers. The Homotsukan museum (free) displays a collection of treasures from the temple and deserves a visit.

Sightseeing time: 60 minutes
Admission: 300 yen
To TOKYO

Minatomirai st ⇒ Shibuya st  30 min  Tokyu Toyoko Line

Minatomirai st ⇒ Yokohama st  4 min  Tokyu Toyoko Line

※Each station on the Tokyu Line sells a Minato Mirai ticket (round-trip from Shibuya 840 yen) with which you can get on and off as many times as you like between Yokohama Station and Motomachi Chukagai Station.

Yokohama st ⇒ Tokyo st  25min  JR Tokaido Line

Yokohama st ⇒ Shinjyuku st  28min  Shonan Shinjuku Line

Yokohama st ⇒ Yokohama st  21min  Keihin Kyuko Line

Yokohama st ⇒ Kamakura st  24min  JR Yokosuka Line

For more information

Train route finder(English)  http://www.jorudan.co.jp/english/norikae/


Lonely Planet Japan(Sights, Hotels Things to do)  http://www.lonelyplanet.com/japan

Gurunavi(Restaurant finder)  http://www.gnavi.co.jp/en/

Map of Kamakura 1

Map of Kamakura 2
