

Event calendar❖

in SUGINAMI TOKYO

Events are subject to cancellation or change.
Please check with the organizer for the latest information.



Spring



● Koenji Street Performance Festival



● Asagaya Bar-hopping Festival

Summer

- Asagaya Tanabata Festival — P20-21
- Tokyo Koenji Awaodori Festival — P20-21

Autumn



● Asagaya Jazz Street



● Koenji Festival



● Suginami Festa



● Asagaya Bar-hopping Festival



● Ogikubo Classical Music Festival



● Trolls in the Park (Outdoor Art Festival)

Winter



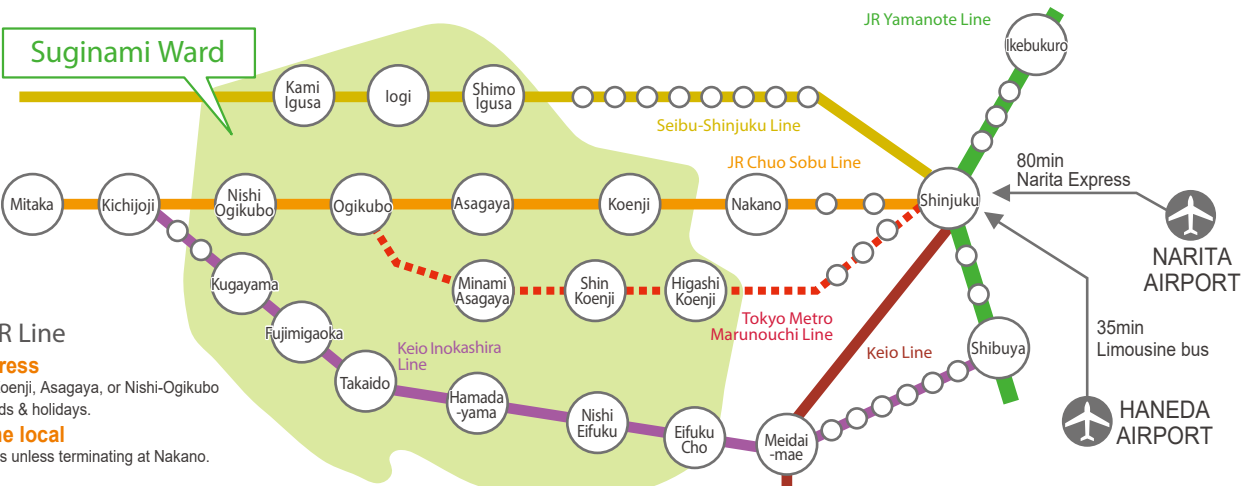
● Koenji Engei Festival

Exploring Japanese Culture❖

in SUGINAMI TOKYO

with Map





Attention: JR Line

Chuo line express

It does not stop at Koenji, Asagaya, or Nishi-Ogikubo Stations on weekends & holidays.

Chuo Sobe line local

It stops at all stations unless terminating at Nakano.



Due to COVID-19, opening hours of stores may differ. We recommend checking their latest information before visiting.

The information in this booklet is accurate as of March 2021.

About the booklet

This booklet introduces Japanese culture and Suginami, Tokyo.

We have selected 12 topics covering Japanese culture and places of interest where you can enjoy related experiences in Suginami, Tokyo.

We hope that the information in this booklet will enhance your knowledge of Japanese culture and spark further interest in Suginami.

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Sento - Public Bathhouse

The history of sento, public bathhouses, goes as far back as the 6th century, originating as part of temple culture in Japan. "Cleansing the impurity" was a duty for those who serve the Buddha. The beginnings of sento being established as "bathhouses" came in the Heian period (794-1185). By the time of the Muromachi period (1333-1573) temples opened their baths to the public and those who had baths at home invited people around to bathe and join banquets, and sento became closer to everyday life. By the 17th century, bathhouses spread to the degree that it was said that there was "a bathhouse in every town." Murals are often painted inside of sento, especially of Mt. Fuji, the beloved symbol of Japan.



Kosugi-Yu

Open hours: 15:30-1:45

* On Saturday and Sunday, 8:00-1:45

Closed on Thursday

Address: 3-32-2, Koenji-Kita, Suginami

Web: <https://kosugiyu.co.jp/>

Twitter: @kosugiyu

Instagram: @kosugiyu_sento

Facebook: @kosugiyu



Tamano-Yu

Open hours: 15:00-1:00

Closed on Monday and Tuesday

Address: 1-13-7, Asagaya-Kita,



* Standard Tokyo sento fee:

¥ 470 for an adult, ¥ 180 for up to 12yrs,

¥ 80 for up to 6yrs

It has been said that various other subjects were taboo, such as monkeys ("saru" in Japanese, a homonym for the word to "leave", in this case referring to customers), the sunset (could be synonymous with a drop in business), or autumn leaves (could also refer to a decline in customers). In Suginami Ward there are currently 19 sento, including the historical Kosugi-Yu, founded in 1933. The building has been registered as a national tangible cultural property. Tamano-Yu (also founded in 1953) with its ceiling and antique clock has a very retro atmosphere. The popular medicinal baths use a blend of herbs that combat fatigue.

Beer in Koenji

Beer was first introduced to Japan during the Edo period, at Dejima, a Dutch trading post in Nagasaki. It was brought in by the Dutch for their own consumption. It was also offered to Japanese officials and interpreters but apparently was not well received. At the end of the Edo period, beer was widely promoted by Japanese scholars who were engaging in the research of Western civilisation. From 1869 onwards, several beer breweries opened in the foreign settlements of Yokohama. Initially, their business was for foreign nationals, however, beer gradually gained popularity among Japanese residents as well.

In 1899, Japan's first beer hall opened its doors in Ginza and over time, beer has grown to be a beloved beverage in Japan. Koenji's And Beer is a beer bar with an on-site brewery. You can pour the beer into your glass directly from the 6 taps on the wall. They aim to craft unique beers, taking advantage of their small-scale operation, and are always up for new challenges. As well as their original craft beers, apple cider and pale ale using oranges are available. Why not try and savour Koenji's own craft beers while relaxing on the lawn that spreads out in front of the bar?



The brewing facilities are also substantial. You can drink freshly made.



Beer made with domestic fruits and citrus-scented hops go well with curry.

And Beer

Open hours: 11:30-14:30/17:00-20:00 on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 11:30-20:00 Weekend and Public holidays

*Open hours and closed days may vary. Please check in advance via SNS.

Closed on Monday and Tuesday

Address: 105, 4-2-24, Koenji-Kita, Suginami

Web: <https://andbeer.jp/> Instagram: @andbeer_koenji Facebook: @andbeerkoenji

Source: Hiroyuki Aoi (2003) *Beer no Kyokasho* Kodansha, Gavin D. Smith and Tomoko Omachi (2014) *History of Beer* Hara Shobo

Traditional Bento Box

When it comes to lunchboxes, what kind of image springs to mind? Colorful plastic ones? Traditional Japanese lunch boxes are made of wood. For those made with the traditional wood bending technique called Magewappa, wood with a bactericidal property such as cypress or cedar is used. These lunch boxes are light and portable with many benefits including the fact that the wood absorbs moisture so the rice will not be spoilt quickly. The wood bending technique to make vessels began in China around 200 BC, and also in Japan by the late Jomon period, the prototype of Magewappa was already in existence. It has been in its current form for about 750 years.

Here are some stores where you can buy such a traditional lunch box at a reasonable price. A 7-minute walk from Asagaya Station, Kagoya has a variety of traditional containers and baskets. Their bamboo lunch boxes have nice natural colors and texture that go well with sandwiches or rice balls. Magewappa are often used for one person's portion. Made firmly, jointed by cherry bark, its natural and delicate feel is delightful. You can also get Magewappa with the scent of cedar at Cotogoto, 2 minutes from Koenji Station. Akita Prefecture's traditional craft "Odate Magewappa" using Akita cedar has a wonderful woodgrain.



Photo by Hisako Yanagihara

Kagoya (Takumi Seisakujo)
 Open hours: 11:00 to 17:00
 Closed on Saturday, Sunday and National Holiday
 *Open hours and closed days may vary.
 Please check in advance.
 Address: 3-44-10, Asagaya-Minami, Sugunami
 Web: <https://www.kagoya-onlinestore.jp/>
 Instagram: @kagoya_official

At Kagoya in Asagaya, you can get bamboo lunch boxes and wooden lunch boxes made by craftsmen. They can also be used for interior display.



Cotogoto
 Open hours: 11:00 to 19:00
 Address: 2F, 4-27-17, Koenji-Minami, Sugunami
 Web: <https://www.cotogoto.jp/>
 Instagram: @cotogoto.jp Twitter: @cotogoto_jp
 Facebook: @cotogoto

At cotogoto in Koenji, you can get magewappa and high-design tableware and kitchen tools. Traditional crafts that meet modern life are also fun just to admire.



Haruna-Ya

Open hours: 9:00-19:00

Closed on Sunday

Address: 3-6-22, Amanuma,
Suginami

Twitter: @harunaya

Instagram: @harunaya.ht

Usagi-Ya

Open hours: 9:00-19:00

Closed on Saturdays and the 1st &
3rd Friday of the month

Address: 1-3-7, Asagaya-Kita,
Suginami

Wagashi - Japanese Sweets

Sweets made with Japanese traditional methods are called "wagashi". Having developed alongside Sado, or Japanese tea ceremony, wagashi can be regarded as edible art which combines the joy of appreciating its aesthetics and flavor. Dried confectionery is served with light matcha while fresh Japanese sweets (usually containing red bean paste) are served with dark matcha. Especially Jo Namagashi made with "nerikiri" composed of simple ingredients, beans, grains and sugar, is a type of wagashi that has exquisite looks as well as taste, often paired with matcha.

Quite a few cultural figures have resided in Suginami and many local residents are fond of tea ceremony. As a result, there are not only many tea ceremony speciality shops but also wagashi shops in Suginami.

Five minutes on foot from Ogikubo Station is Haruna-ya where, if you are lucky, the proprietress clad in kimono may greet you. Their simple classic wagashi are so delicious and well reputed by locals. In Asagaya, Usagi-Ya, bustling with locals, has popular dorayaki as well as beautiful wagashi. Okashidukasa Shimada, 4 minutes on foot from JR Koenji Station is a long-established shop opened in 1922. Their sweets made with nerikiri are artistic. At Aoyagi in Eifukuchō, the wagashi made with nerikiri is available in original seasonal shapes, for example, watermelon in summer and Santa Claus in winter.



Okashidukasa Shimada

Open hours: 9:00-18:00

Closed on Tuesday

Address: 3-17-1, Koenji-Kita,
Suginami



Eifuku Aoyagi

Open hours: 9:00-19:00

Address: 4-4-2, Eifuku, Suginami

Web: <http://aoyagi.eifukucyo.com/>

Instagram: @eifuku.aoyagi

Facebook: @EIFUKU.AOYAGI

Source: Hajime Nakamura (2013) *Wagashi Kawade shobo*



Inkan - Seal Stamps

Japan's traditional culture of seal stamps began around the year 650. From the Meiji period (1868-1912) it was compulsory to use these stamps to affix one's seal on official documents. Even though this custom has a long history, because of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 from which working remotely has become recommended for safety, the Japanese government has been considering omitting the use of these traditional inkan stamps. However, these types of seals are also used as signatures in paintings and calligraphic works, as well as light-hearted fun designs, so there is no way the culture will be lost completely. Genro, in Kami Igusa of Suginami Ward sells designed seals that are so popular they are even purchased from customers overseas. Genro usually stocks around 200 varieties of their original designed seals, which are perfect for a casual gift. As they also sell inkpads and washi (handmade Japanese paper), so they can be your one-stop-shop to make fun and original cards. It is also possible for international tourists to make original design stamps while travelling. At Taiyo Dou near Minami Asagaya Station, the shopkeeper listens to customers' tastes and consults about what type of stamps to make. You can order from around 1,000 yen.



Hojin-In
For corporations. You may need to register it with the government office.



Mitome-In
Most general for personal use. They are also used to receive packages.



Taiyo Dou

Open hours: 10:00-18:00
Closed on Saturday and Sunday
Address: 1-14-3, Asagaya-Minami,
Suginami

GENRO

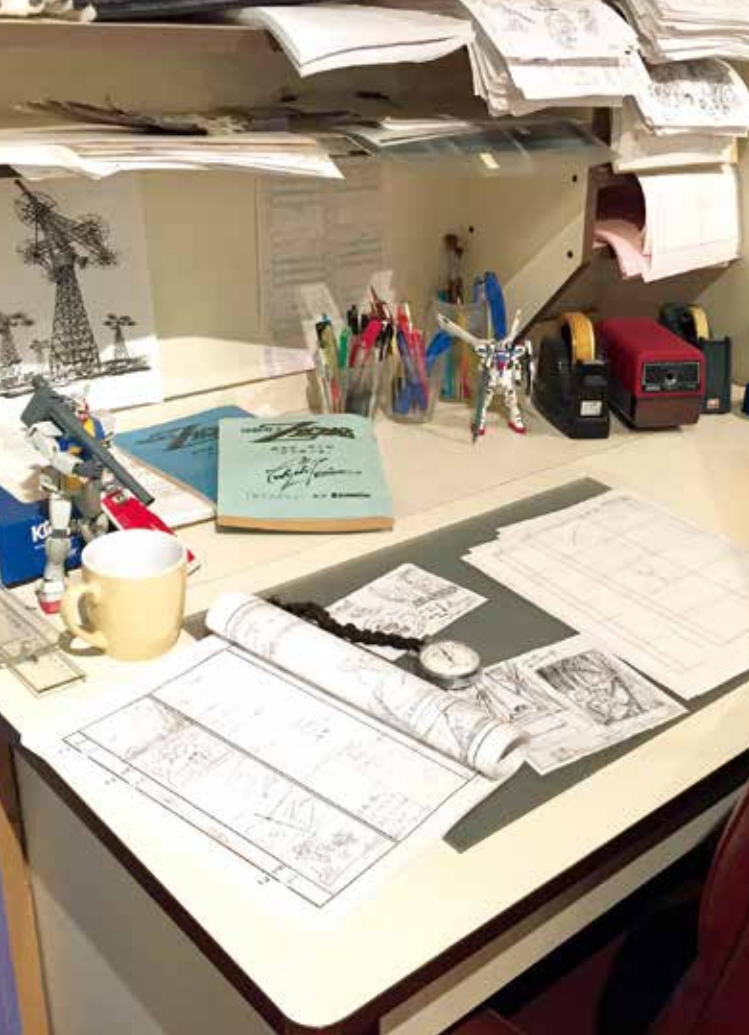
*Open hours and closed days may vary.
Please check in advance via SNS.
Address: 2-38-11, Kami-Igusa, Suginami
Instagram: @genrostamp
Facebook: @genro.stationery

Source: Insho Museum, Financial Services Agency

Japanese Anime

At the finale of the 2016 Rio de Janeiro summer Olympic games, the then-prime minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, took to the stage in a Nintendo costume of Mario, a Japanese video game character that has become recognized by the world. Video games and anime, a rich part of Japan's subculture, have become industries that are representative of Japan. Highly popular Japanese manga comics become anime TV series, or even animated films, and occasionally are made into video games. It can be said that one of the attractions to Japanese narrative works is their worldview of detailed and deep storytelling.

At the Tokyo Polytechnic University Suginami Animation Museum, visitors can come into contact with the splendor and roots of the Japanese animation industry. One reason this museum is located in Suginami Ward is because roughly 25% of Japanese animation companies are located in Suginami. Managed by the Association of Japanese Animation, their compelling displays that cross the boundaries of individual production companies are popular. The facility provides an enriching library, post-recording experience and workshop corner so that both children and adults can thoroughly enjoy visiting. Admission is free.



You can get a sense of the anime creators at work in the replicas of their studies.



You can learn a lot from the timeless animation history exhibition



Adults and children can enjoy the dubbing experience where you can add the lines of popular anime characters with your own voice.



Tokyo Polytechnic University Suginami Animation Museum

Open hours: 10:00-18:00

Closed on Monday or Tuesday if Monday is a national holiday

Address: Suginami Kaikan 3rd floor, 3-29-5, Kamiogi, Suginami

Web: https://sam.or.jp/english_home

Twitter: @suginami_sam

18 minutes on foot from Ogikubo Station. Buses available.

Source: The Association of Japanese Animation, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry





Koenji has a variety of vintage clothes shops from traditional to street styles. Whatever your fashion style, you will find clothes to your taste.

On a sunny day, some shops line up their clothes on the street.



Japanese Fashion and Koenji

In 1981, Yohji Yamamoto and COMME des GARÇONS by Rei Kawakubo made their debut in Paris Fashion Week. The mainstream fashion back then was designed to fit the body. Amongst that trend, they presented a collection of oversize shaped designs in solid black colour "the black impact", which shook the fashion world.

Forty years on, Japan is now promoting the cute and girly "KAWAII" fashion culture to the world along with music. Koenji has developed as one of the leading subculture towns in Tokyo since the 1970's, where musicians and creatives have settled, and there are many ethnic general stores and unique music venues.

Along the path from JR Koenji Station to Shin-Koenji Station on the Marunouchi Line, there are a plethora of vintage clothing shops as well as highly specialized and niche shops. Fashion lovers come here treasure hunting not only from Japan but also from overseas. Some people search for clothes to wear as they are and others buy them as material for upcycling. Sustainable fashion is advocated, and it is recommended for those who wish to practice circular economy that is still fashionable.



It is highly recommended to visit Koenji after 12:00 noon, because most of the vintage clothes shops open in the afternoon.



Go to the Festival in Yukata

Yukata, the casual version of kimono, was originally like a bathrobe worn to dry off moisture after bathing. By the end of the Edo period, it was becoming established as a summer casual wear but it was something like pyjamas and loungewear of the common people.

In modern times, regardless of such history, it has become commonplace to go to summer festivals wearing yukata with confidence. There are many types of material used for yukata such as cotton, linen or sheer silk gauze. In addition, once you get absorbed in the designs, dyeing methods, and coordination with obi and clogs, the choices are endless.

In Suginami Ward, there is the Asagaya Tanabata Festival where about 800,000 people gather every year, and another huge event is the Tokyo Koenji Awaodori with nearly 1,000,000 visitors and around 10,000 dancers. Men and women of all ages wearing yukata in style go out to see them.

If you wish to buy yukata, inexpensive mass-produced sets are available at supermarkets or online but you can also take the plunge and visit a specialty shop. Nishi Ogikubo is a town with many second-hand kimono shops. You can also get unique antique yukata at reasonable prices. When you come to Tokyo, why not head to the Suginami festivals in yukata?



Asagaya Tanabata Festival
is held the first weekend of every August. Many Tanabata decorations hang from the ceiling of the shopping street.



Tokyo Koenji Awaodori Festival
is held the last weekend of every August. Festival Dancers practice for this weekend. Many local restaurants set up a stall on the street.



Additional information "How to wear yukata" is available from the QR.

Source: Nagi Ishima (2006) *Iroppoi Kimono Kawade shobo shinsha*, Nanao Vo/3 (2005) President sha



Collect Goshuin Stamps

The collecting boom of Goshuin, shrines' scarlet seals, was sparked by TV programmes featuring shrines in 2013, when two major Sengu (relocation of the deity to a new shrine building) coincided: Ise Jingu Shrine's Shikinen Sengu and Izumo Taisha Shrine's Great Sengu of Heisei. People often collect these stamps as works of art or expecting good fortune. The origin of Goshuin dates back to the Muromachi period (1336-1573), however, the current stamps serving as proof of pilgrimage were named "Goshuin" in the early Showa period.

Fees called "Hatsuhoryo" ("Nokyoryo" for temples) for Goshuin are around 300 to 500 yen. Designs of Goshuin-cho, or Goshuin stamp books vary at each shrine or temple and some people have several Goshuin-cho for different purposes.

Suginami Ward is home to Omiya Hachimangu Shrine founded by Yoriyoshi Minamoto and Igusa Hachimangu Shrine where Yoritomo Minamoto prayed for victory in the Oshu conquest and co-enshrined the deity of Hachiman Shrine.

At Asagaya Shinmeigu Shrine, a few minutes' walk North of Asagaya Station, their Goshuin designs change annually and seasonally. Their 2019 edition adorned with embroidered cherry blossom motif added to the calligraphy design proved very popular. Autumn versions came with embroidery of red maple leaves or chrysanthemum crests. Such elaborate designs of Goshuin may ignite your collector's spirit.



Asagaya Shinmeigu Shrine
Address: 1-25-5, Asagaya-Kita,
Suginami
Web: <https://shinmeiguu.com/>
Facebook: @shinmeiguu



Igusa Hachimangu Shrine
Address: 1-33-1, Zenpukuji,
Suginami
Web: <https://www.igusahachimangu.jp/in dex2.html>
20 minutes on foot
from Nishi Ogikubo Sta.
Buses available.



Weather Wishes

Japanese people are very mindful of the weather. The Japanese weather forecast not only gives details about temperature and precipitation, but also is used to notify about daily life in relation to the weather such as estimated demand of beer and conditions for doing laundry. Yet it seems that Japanese also tend to carry the time-honored belief that God decides the weather, as they may pray regarding rainfall. A tradition continued often by children is that of making a white figure (from paper or cloth) called a “Teru-Teru Bozu” which is hung out to wish for clear weather, but can also be hung upside-down to wish for rain. Tossing Japanese wooden clogs, called geta, has also been a superstitious way to predict the weather since the Heian period (794-1185); if the geta landed right side up it meant it would be sunny, and the other side up would mean rainy, and so on.

Koenji is an area in Tokyo well known for its popular second-hand clothing district, but on the other hand it is also known for its many temples scattered about. The name “Koenji” in the first place actually comes from Koenji Temple in the area. In Koenji there is also the only weather specialty shrine in all of Japan, “Kisho Jinja”, within Koenji Hikawa Shrine. On the shrine grounds the “ema” wooden tablets are shaped like geta, in a nod to the Heian weather predicting game. People come to the shrine to pray for the weather, such as people who hope for a clear day for their wedding day or a mountain climbing excursion, or even weather forecaster hopefuls wishing to pass their exams. On the shrine grounds there are also many multi-colored Teru-Teru Bozu dolls. When out shopping in Koenji, this would be an interesting place to stop by.



There are colorful “Teru-Teru Bozu” in the shrine.



People come to pray for fine weather. However, maybe some people want their work to be canceled due to rain.

Koenji Hikawa Shrine

Opening hours: Early morning to 17:30 April to September
opens until 17:00 October to March
Address: 4-44-19, Koenji-Minami, Suginami
Web: <https://koenji-hikawa.com/en/> Twitter: @koenji_hikawa
1 minute from Koenji Station





Photo by Akira Kayamori

Cherry Blossom and Party

In Japan, school graduations are held in March, and the new school season starts in April, as well as many young adults starting new lives as new company recruits. Sakura, cherry blossoms, blooming during this season are a special flower for the Japanese, as full bloom seems as if to welcome the start of a new life, as the petals slowly and quietly are scattered about.

Ueno Park and Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden are the most popular places for cherry blossom viewing in Tokyo, so it can be quite difficult not only to appreciate the sakura there, but also to find a place to sit.

To leisurely enjoy the sakura with the mood of a picnic, we introduce Zenpukuji River Green Park, mostly unknown by overseas tourists. Only 10 minutes by train from bustling Shinjuku, there are even many Japanese surprised to find such a place here. About 1 kilometer of cherry trees continue along the river with a promenade, where there are many park areas and benches, as well as places selling bento lunchboxes, making it the perfect spot for friends and families to enjoy a light picnic lunch. You'll also see people jogging through essentially a tunnel of somei-yoshino blossoms, the most common type. The sakura here can be appreciated during the day while taking a stroll or on a quiet night. However, for Japanese, maybe the limited-time beauty of sakura is just a good excuse to party?



Renge-ji Temple Ogikubo, where the combination of the temple and the cherry blossoms is beautiful, is a true hidden gem. You can have the illuminations all to yourself at night.



Zenpukuji River Green Park is popular for its tunnel-like rows of cherry blossom trees that invite you to walk through.

Zenpukuji River Green Park

Get off at "Nishi-Eifuku" / "Hamadayama" on the Keio Inokashira Line, 15 minutes on foot, get off at Kanto Bus (JR Nakano Station-Kichijoji Station) "Zenpukuji-kawa Ryokuchi Koenmae", "Suginami Daini Shomae" and "Itsukaichi-kaido Sales Office" Get off at Sugimaru bus (Asagaya-Hamadayama) "Children's Traffic Park Entrance"



You can watch the video of a cherry-tree-lined path taken by a drone.

Japanese Martial Arts

There are a number of Budo, traditional martial arts that originated in Japan. Particularly, Judo and Karate have developed into sports having practitioner populations so large that competitions take place in Olympic games as well as in various international tournaments.

The objectives of many budo practices are not merely to build up physical strength but also to cultivate mental discipline, etiquette and decorum. It is also effective for training your concentration.

In Ogikubo, Suginami Ward, there is a place that offers visitors a Tate, or sword, fight experience. Tate is a series of sword actions used for the battle scenes in period films or dramas.

To enrol in a traditional budo dojo might be too intimidating but here you can gain an experience as if you are participating in a Samurai film. Through this workshop, swinging a bamboo sword for two hours and moving the whole body can help you recover from the weariness of everyday life. There is also a school in Ogikubo where you can learn authentic Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. The director and instructor, Mr. Hiroaki Otsuka, has a good reputation for teaching current international competitors, and many fans attend his lessons.



Daigo Ishimatsu Tate

Web: <https://ishimatsu-tate.jimdofree.com/>
Instagram: @ishimatsu.tate
Facebook: @tate.ishimatsu
*Workshops are only on Saturday.
Please email them directly.

Physical Space Academy Ogikubo

Address: 4F, 5-30-6, Ogikubo, Suginami
Web: <http://www.psogkb.com/ogikubo/>
*Open hours and closed days may vary.
Please check in advance via the webpage.



Emergency information

Police

☎ 110

Ambulance and fire service

☎ 119

Medical advice

(AMDA Medical Information center)

☎ 03-6233-9266

10:00 - 16:00, Monday to Friday



About Sugunami

Suginami is a 10-minute train ride to the west of Shinjuku. Here you will discover unique areas such as Koenji, Asagaya, Ogikubo and Nishi-Ogikubo. The city is a fusion of new and traditional, with a mix of cultures. We hope you enjoy Japanese culture in these areas of Sugunami, each of which has distinct cultural heritage and hospitality to offer.



Transportation

in
Tokyo

● The Welcome Suica

a prepaid e-money card for travelling and shopping.

no need to buy tickets every time from a ticket machine.

by touching your card at the ticket gate for JR, underground and buses, the fare is automatically deducted.

can be used for shopping at convenience stores and restaurants with the Suica logo.



About
Welcome Suica

● JR Tokyo Wide Pass

available exclusively to non-Japanese passport holders.

good for travelling around Tokyo and the outskirts if you stay in the Tokyo area.

allows 3 consecutive days of unlimited travel on trains and Shinkansen (exceptions apply).



About
JR Tokyo Wide Pass

WEB SITE

EXPERIENCE SUGINAMI TOKYO



The website EXPERIENCE SUGINAMI TOKYO offers sightseeing information about Sugunami, Tokyo. All year-round in Sugunami, you can enjoy various events and there are a variety of unique spots scattered about including restaurant, ramen shops, bars, second-hand clothing and book stores, antique shops and music venues. If you are headed out for some Tokyo sightseeing or wandering, please take a look at this website and by all means, get on the Chuo-Line and come to Sugunami.

■ web: <https://experience-suginami.tokyo>