

**Japan National Tourism Organization, London Office
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Kyoto & Osaka – New Destinations for Gourmet Travellers

- **First edition of Michelin Kyoto Osaka released on 16th October 2009**
- **New foodie tours set to start in 2010**

Kyoto and Osaka are set to be Japan's new hot gourmet destinations with the first edition of the Michelin Guide Kyoto Osaka to be released on 16th October 2009. UK gourmet travellers can sample Kyoto's culinary delights on new gourmet tours to start to the city in 2010.

The Michelin Guide to Kyoto Osaka will offer a selection of the best hotels and restaurants in the two cities. The Michelin guide Kyoto Osaka will be available in two languages: Japanese and English. This is the second Michelin guide in Japan, following Michelin guide Tokyo whose second edition was launched last November.

Jean-Luc Naret, Director of Michelin guides commented, "We aim to continue our international development, by publishing the first edition of Michelin guide Kyoto Osaka in October 2009. One of the best Japanese gastronomy and the cooking traditions since more than 1,200 years are in Kyoto. As for Osaka, it's the second biggest city in Japan and it has a wide and diverse gastronomic scene."

Many Japanese see Osaka as the food capital of Japan. The locals are so passionate about food that they have an expression called "kuidaore," literally meaning "to eat till you drop." Osaka's regional specialities include takoyaki octopus balls and puffer fish sashimi. Any foodie visiting Japan should not miss Osaka's Dotonbori area, a neon-filled street where you can sample all the culinary delights that Osaka has to offer.

Kyo-ryori (Kyoto cuisine) is the template upon which Japanese culinary culture grows from. The cuisine places great import on seasonal ingredients and subtle flavours. Regional specialities of Kyoto include shojin-ryori, vegetarian dishes developed by Buddhist monks and kaiseki-ryori, cuisine stemming from the tea ceremony. A dining and cultural experience not to be missed in Kyoto is a night in a ryokan (traditional inn) complete with a kaiseki dinner.

Michelin Guide 2010 Kyoto & Osaka has added new features to reflect the two cities' traditional local culture. The guide will grade traditional Japanese inns as well as

Western-style hotels and will indicate, for example, whether inns it has assessed have traditional communal baths or a bathtub in each guest room and whether they have beautifully landscaped gardens.

Foodies inspired by Michelin to visit the cities can chose from a selection of new gourmet tours being launched by British tour operators in 2010.

Specialist tour operator Japan Journeys has launched its first ever gourmet tour after spotting a gap in the UK travel market. The ten-day itinerary will include a cookery class in Tokyo, as well as a tour of a sake brewery, a visit to the biggest fish market in the world and the opportunity to eat at one of Tokyo's Michelin-starred restaurants. The group will visit Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara, and have the chance to travel by Japan's famous bullet train and attend a sumo tournament. The first tour will depart in May 2010. www.japanjourneys.co.uk

JTB has launched a gourmet tour to allow travellers to sample some of Japan's best-known dishes - and enjoy some "hands-on" experience of preparing them too! On the Tokyo and Kyoto food tour you dine at a wide range of restaurants including sushi, tempura, okonomiyaki and steak, as well as having the chance to learn to make Japanese sweets and visit a local home to experience making teriyaki chicken or tempura and sushi. It's possible to extend the tour to visit Nagoya and see night fishing with cormorants on the Kiso River. JTB's food tours are now available for daily departures. www.accessjapan.co.uk

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