

About Meiji Jingu

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Meiji Jingu



(Photo: Meiji Jingu *Naen*)

Welcome to Meiji Jingu!

Meiji Jingu is a Shinto shrine. Shinto is called Japan's ancient original religion, and it is deeply rooted in the way of Japanese life. Shinto has no founder, no holy book, and not even the concept of religious conversion, but Shinto values for example harmony with nature and virtues such as "*Magokoro* (sincere heart)". In Shinto, some divinity is found as *Kami* (divine spirit), or it may be said that there is an unlimited number of *Kami*. You can see *Kami* in mythology, in nature, and in human beings. From ancient times, Japanese people have felt awe and gratitude towards such *Kami* and dedicated shrines to many of them.

This shrine is dedicated to the divine souls of Emperor Meiji and his consort Empress Shoken (their tombs are in Kyoto).

Emperor Meiji passed away in 1912 and Empress Shoken in 1914. After their demise, people wished to commemorate their virtues and to venerate them forever. So they donated 100,000 trees from all over Japan and from overseas, and they worked voluntarily to create this forest. Thus, thanks to the sincere heart of the people, this shrine was established on November 1, 1920.

Facts about Meiji Jingu:

Enshrined deities: souls of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken

Foundation: November 1, 1920

Area: 700,000 m² (inner precinct)

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Main shrine building



The main shrine buildings

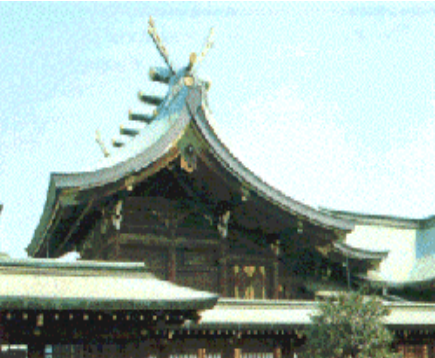
In 1945, the original shrine buildings (except for *Shukueisha* and *Minami-Shinmon*) were burnt down in the air raids of the war. The present shrine buildings date from November 1958. They consist of the main shrine building *Honden* (the main shrine building proper, the inner most Sanctuary of the shrine), built in the Nagarezukuri style, together with *Noritoden* (where Shinto liturgy is recited), *Naihaiden* (the inner shrine hall), *Gehaiden* (the outer shrine hall), *Shinko* (the treasure house), *Shinsenjo* (the consecrated kitchen for the preparation of the food offerings) and some buildings. The materials are mainly plain Japanese cypress with copper plates for the roofs.



(Photo: *Naihaiden*)



(Photo: *Noritoden*)



(Photo: *Honden*)

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Kaguraden



(Photo: *Kaguraden*, front entrance)

Kaguraden (Hall of Shinto Music and Dance)

The construction of *Kaguraden* was started in 1990 to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of Meiji Jingu. Supported by many donations, it was completed in October 1993. It follows a traditional architectural style, *Irimoya-Nagarezukuri*. It is a three-storey building, but only one floor is above the ground; the other two floors are below ground level. The front entrance with the reception and registration area is slightly below ground level. One flight of stairs leads down, and another flight of stairs leads up to the waiting area and the hall for ceremonies. This ground floor hall of 160 *Tatami* can seat 800. Upon request, prayer ceremonies are given here, offering *Kagura* (sacred music and dance) to the deities. Such a ceremony is called *Kigansai*.

Details about *Kigansai* can be found in the section "Your shrine visit": [Kigansai](#)
Please do not enter *Kaguraden* unless to register for or take part in a ceremony.

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Sukeikai



(Photo: *Sukeikai*, event on the occasion of a big anniversary)

Sukeikai ("Worshippers' Association")

The *Meiji Jingu Sukeikai* (The "Worshippers' Association") was organized in June 1946 by people who were worried about the social and spiritual confusion after the war and about the future of the nation. Since then, the *Sukeikai* has worked throughout the country promoting social stability and offering spiritual guidance based on revering the virtues of the enshrined deities. Presently, the *Sukeikai* has about 150,000 members who follow its basic precepts: to live with reverence for the deities and one's ancestors; to respect the Imperial Family and to pray for the peace of the world. The *Sukeika* is highly appreciated for its Shinto educational activities. Members receive the periodical, *Yoyogi*, invitations to the Spring and Autumn Grand Festivals, to the opening tournament of the professional baseball matches, and to the *Sumo* championship match, as well as free tickets for *Homotsuden* (the Treasure Museum), *Kaigakan* (the Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery at *Gaien*), and *Gyoen* (the "Imperial Gardens" at Meiji Jingu, including the Iris Garden).

Information (in Japanese):

The Meiji Jingu Sukeikai c/o Meiji Jingu

Address: 1-1 Yoyogi-Kamizono-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151-8557, Japan

Tel.: 03-3320-5700 (Japanese)

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Enshrined deities

The deities enshrined at Meiji Jingu are the souls of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken.



Emperor Meiji (**The 122nd Emperor of Japan**)
Emperor Meiji (1852 - 1912) is the 122nd emperor of Japan, the great-grandfather of the current Emperor. He ascended to the throne in 1867. When Japan was facing unprecedented conditions such as the opening of the country to the world after its long isolation and the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate, Emperor Meiji took the initiative to promote friendship with other countries, and to introduce Western civilization and developed technology from overseas while preserving Japanese identity, and thus laid the foundations of modern Japan.



Empress Shoken (**The consort of Emperor Meiji**)
Empress Shoken (1850 - 1914) not only supported the Emperor behind the scenes but also devoted herself to promoting national welfare and women's education. She was also concerned about world affairs, and she donated a fund, named after her, to the International Red Cross, which has been used for international welfare activities until today.

The sincere heart of the Emperor and Empress towards the people can be seen directly in the *Waka* poetry they composed throughout their lives. *Waka* poetry by Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken can be found on the pages about divine virtues: [Waka poetry](#)

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Divine Virtues

The divine virtues of the enshrined deities include their achievements and texts they issued such as edicts and poems.

They include:

- [The Imperial Rescript on Education](#)
- [The Charter Oath in Five Articles](#)
- [Waka poetry](#)

● The Imperial Rescript on Education:
Emperor Meiji was deeply concerned about the establishment of a national education system and the promotion of morality in order to build modern Japan. Thus, the "Imperial Rescript on Education" was issued to illustrate the moral principles that each citizen should follow.



(Photo: The text of the Imperial Rescript on Education with Imperial sign and seal)

English Translation of the Imperial Rescript on Education:

Know ye, Our subjects:

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded Our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; Our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated the beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of Our education. Ye, Our subjects, be filial to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters; as husbands and wives be harmonious, as friends true; bear yourselves in modesty and moderation; extend your benevolence to all; pursue learning and cultivate arts, and thereby develop intellectual faculties and perfect moral powers; furthermore advance public good and promote common interests; always respect the Constitution and observe the laws; should emergency arise, offer yourselves courageously to the State; and thus guard and maintain the prosperity of Our Imperial Throne coeval with heaven and earth. So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers. The Way here set forth is indeed the teaching bequeathed by Our Imperial Ancestors, to be observed alike by Their Descendants and the subjects, infallible for all ages and true in all places. It is Our wish to lay it to heart in all reverence, in common with you, Our subjects, that we may thus attain to the same virtue. The 30th day of the 10th month of the 23rd year of Meiji.
(Imperial Sign Manual. Imperial Seal.)

Your shrine visit

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Etiquette

How to pay respect at Meiji Jingu:
These actions express respect and are independent of religious beliefs.

At a *Torii* (shrine archway):



Bow

- 1. Bow once when entering.
- 2. Bow once when leaving.

At *Temizuya* (font):



Rinse hands and mouth

- 1. Rinse your left hand.
- 2. Rinse your right hand.
- 3. Pour water into your left hand.
- 4. Rinse your mouth.
- 5. Rinse your left hand again.
- 6. Rinse the dipper (allow the remaining water to run down the handle of the dipper).

Please do not touch the dipper directly with your lips, and please do not throw coins into the water.

At the main shrine buildings:



Paying respect

- 1. You may put some coins into the offertory box.
- 2. Bow twice.
- 3. Clap your hands twice.
- 4. You may make a wish if you like.
- 5. Bow once again.

Please do not take photos or videos close to the main shrine buildings.

Please preserve the dignity of this place.
Eating, drinking, or smoking in designated areas only.

Please do not take photos or videos from inside the halls (i.e. no photographing or filming when there is a roof above your head).
Photos from outside are permitted.

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Ema, Kiganbun

Ema

An *Ema* is a wooden tablet onto which wishes may be written. Such tablets can be obtained at the *Juyosho* (amulet offices). There are two main types of *Ema*: *Kigan-Ema*, which bear the crest of the shrine on their front and the word *Kigan* on their back, and *Eto-Ema*, which are depicting this year's *Eto* (zodiac).



(Photo: Camphor tree and *Ema*)

People either take such tablets home or hang them at one of the hooks provided (usually you will find them at around the camphor tree on the Eastern side in front of the main shrine building, but around New Year, there are hooks in various places).

Close to those hooks, you will find tables and pens to write wishes or thanks onto the tablets. You may write in any language.

Kiganbun

A *Kiganbun* is a letter to the deities. It may contain wishes or words of gratitude, and it may be written in any language.



(Photo: Writing a *Kiganbun*)

Usually, the letter is put into an envelope together with a monetary offering of any amount, and the envelope put into the offertory box provided. Paper, pens, and envelopes can be found in the vicinity of that offertory box (usually close to the big camphor tree on the Eastern side in front of the main shrine building, but around New Year, there are several locations for writing such letters).

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Omamori and Oduda

Omamori

An *Omamori* is a lucky charm, talisman, or amulet. They can be obtained at the *Juyosho* (amulet office).



(Photo: *Omamori*)

There are charms for all kinds of occasions and purposes, e.g. for traffic safety, for health, for successful studies, etc.

Such amulets can be kept in or attached to one's bag, pocket, or purse. They are usually kept until their purpose is fulfilled

The ones that look like a little bag are not supposed to be opened. Inside is a small emblem of the shrine (a small *Ofuda*).

Ofuda

An *Ofuda* is an emblem, distributed by a shrine. It bears the name of the shrine or the enshrined deities.

Ofuda may be made of paper, wood, or other materials.

Large *Ofuda* are usually put up at home on a *Kamidama*.

The drawing shows how many wooden *Ofuda* generally look like (circles indicate where inscriptions are placed): A wooden board, inscribed with the shrine's name, and bearing the shrine's red seal, is partly wrapped into white paper, which is held together by gold and silver *Mizuhiki* (paper strings), tied in a bow. The paper may be inscribed with a wish (e.g. "world-wide peace")



(Picture: Drawing of a wooden *Ofuda*)

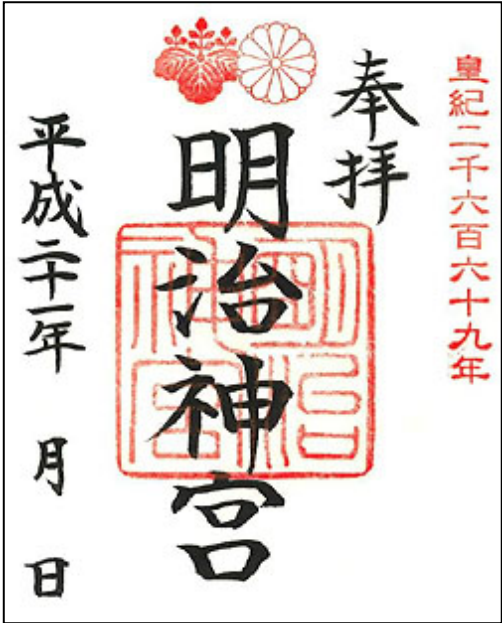
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Stamps and seals

There are various stamps and seals to remind you of your visit to Meiji Jingu.

Goshuin



You can have a *Goshuin* (Meiji Jingu Memorial Seal) stamped and hand-painted at *Kaguraden*.

(Photo: Meiji Jingu's *Goshuin* in a *Shuincho*)

Round stamp



(Photo: The round stamp of Meiji Jingu)

You can stamp a large round stamp (of Meiji Jingu) yourself for free at *Nagadono* or *Shukueisha*.

All stamps and seals contain the date of your visit.

Your shrine visit

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Omikuji



Omikuji

(Photo: English *Omikuji* drawn at Meiji Jingu)

Meiji Jingu has chosen ten *Waka* each from the works of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken in order to provide visitors at Meiji Jingu with the divine grace of the Imperial couple in the form of *Omikuji*. These *Omikuji* are available in Japanese as well as in English. For example, there is a box with English *Omikuji* at *Gehaiden*, right in front of the main shrine building.

Further information about the *Waka* poetry by Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken can be found on the pages in the section "About Meiji Jingu" on the pages about "Divine virtues": [Waka poetry](#)

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Kigansai

Kigansai is a special ceremony held at *Kaguraden* upon request. As part of the ceremony, *Kagura* (sacred dance) is performed.



(Photo: *Kigansai: Yamato-Mai*)

- [Kigan \(Wishes\)](#)
- [Kigan-Uketsuke \(Registration for Kigansai\)](#)
- [Shikishidai \(Order of the ceremony\)](#)
- [Kagura: Yamato-Mai \(The sacred dance Yamato-Mai\)](#)
- [Kigan \(Wishes\)](#)



(Photo: The hall inside *Kaguraden*)

Kigan usually refers to wishes, but it can also include all kinds of prayers, reports, or expressions of gratitude. There are various ways of delivering such *Kigan* (of making wishes or reports etc.). For example, *Kigan* can be written onto [Ema](#) or [Kiganbun](#), or they can be delivered silently when [paying respect at Honden](#) (the main shrine building). Upon request, a *Kigansai* (a *Kigan*-ceremony) is held, in which the *Kigan* are included the *Norito* (liturgy or prayer). Some frequent types of *Kigan* are:

Hatsumiya-Mode (The first shrine visit paid by a newborn baby)

A prayer for a new born baby's healthy growth. This takes place around one month after birth.

Yakuharai (Warding off evil)

For a happy and prosperous life, Yakuharai prayers are offered at certain ages, mainly for men at the age of 25 or 42 and for women at the ages of 19 or 33.

Prayer for Safety on the Road (including the purification of vehicles)

Prayers for safety on the road are offered as well as the purification of vehicles.

Besides these prayers, various kinds of prayers such as for the health of the family, the

safety of a house, for the success and long prosperity of a business, for success in examinations, for a safe journey, for worldwide peace, and for three, five or seven year-old children are offered upon request.

● *Kigan-Uketsuke* (Registration for *Kigansai*)



(Photo: Front entrance of *Kaguraden*)

If you wish to participate in such a ceremony, please come to *Kaguraden* between 9 am and 4 pm, fill in a request form in Japanese, and hand over a monetary offering (ceremonies are offered from 5000 Yen).

● *Shikishidai* (Order of the ceremony)



(Photo: *Suzu*: Bells used during *Kigansai*)

The order of the ceremony is as follows:

- *Temizu*: Please rinse your hands and mouth before entering the inner sacred area or before entering the Tatami room of Kaguraden (there is a font on the left-hand side in front of the room).
- Take off your shoes and enter the hall (in decent outfit, suits, socks). Priests will show you where to sit down.
- The drum is played.
- Purification rite: purification words are recited, and a purification wand is weaved three times (left, right, left) above your head. Please keep your head bowed during the weaving (if you can please sit on your knees during this procedure).
- A shrine maiden brings in *Ofuda* (the emblems with the names and wishes of all participants) and places them onto the table at the front.
- A senior priest recites a *Norito* (Shinto liturgy) including prayers for the personal requests of all participants. Please lower your head during the prayer (if you can, please sit on your knees).
- The sacred dance is performed by shrine maidens. (You may sit crossed-legged during the dance).
- Shrine maiden(s) pass with bells, distributing divine grace to the participants. (Please lower your head.)
- A shrine maiden takes the *Ofuda* (emblems) down.
- Everybody joins a priest to bow twice, clap hands twice, bow once again (please sit on your knees).
- The drum is beaten.
- Everyone proceeds to *Naorai* (drinking a sip of sacred rice wine; if you cannot drink it or do not want to drink it, please receive the cup, lift it to your lips symbolically, and put it down again).

- **Kagura: Yamato-Mai** (The sacred dance *Yamato-Mai*)
As part of *Kigansai*, *Kagura* (traditional ritual dance and music) are performed.



(Photo: *Yamato-Mai*)

Yamato-Mai

This sacred dance is based on a poem by Emperor Meiji saying that we owe our existence to the deities, so we should not forget paying respect to them.

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Wedding ceremonies



(Photo: Shinto wedding procession at Meiji Jingu)

Wedding ceremonies

When you visit Meiji jingu, you may witness the solemn procession of a Shinto wedding. This procession is part of the Shinto wedding ceremony. A typical procession is led by two priests and two shrine maidens, followed by the couple under a red umbrella, and finally family and friends. During the ceremony, the couple shares three cups of sacred rice wine (taking turns drinking). A priest recites Shinto liturgy, and a shrine maiden performs a sacred dance. The ceremony ends with another solemn procession.

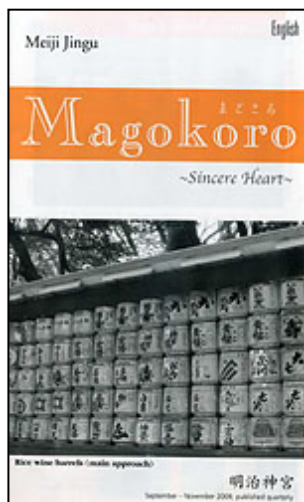
(When a procession passes, please clear the way and please help maintain the dignity of the moment. So, if you take pictures, please don't take close-ups and don't step into the way of the procession.)

If you would like to get married in a Shinto ceremony at Meiji Jingu, please contact the person in charge at *Bunkakan* or *Kinenkan* (in Japanese): [Getting married at Meiji Jingu](#)

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Meiji Jingu publications



"Magokoro-Sincere Heart"

Magokoro (sincere heart), is the title of a quarterly leaflet published by Meiji Jingu, containing general information about the shrine, as well as seasonal information about ceremonies, events, exhibitions etc.

Available at: each entrance, each *Temizuya*, *Gehaiden* and south *Juyosho* (amulet offices).

Editor and distribution: Meiji Jingu

Price: 0 Yen



"Waka Poetry of The Emperor Meiji"

30 *Waka* (traditional Japanese poems of 31 syllables), selected and translated into English from the about 100,000 *Waka* which Emperor Meiji composed during his lifetime. (More information about *Waka*: [Waka poetry](#))

Available at: *Juyosho* (the amulet offices).

Editor and distribution: Meiji Jingu

Price: 1,000 Yen



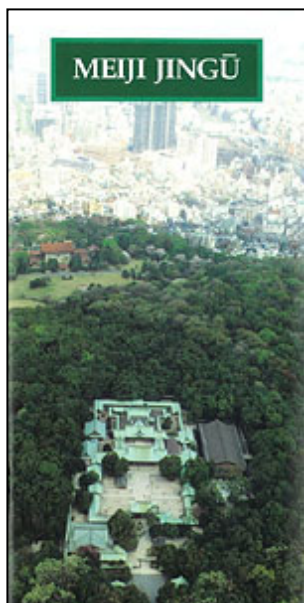
"Waka Poetry of The Empress Shoken"

30 *Waka* (traditional Japanese poems of 31 syllables), selected and translated into English from the about 30,000 *Waka* which Empress Shoken composed during her lifetime. (More information about *Waka*: [Waka poetry](#))

Available at: *Juyosho* (the amulet offices).

Editor and distribution: Meiji Jingu

Price: 1,000 Yen



"Meiji Jingu"

A pamphlet containing summarized information about the history of Meiji Jingu, the enshrined deities, their virtues and achievements, the shrine's architecture and buildings, ceremonies etc.

Available at: *Juyosho* (the amulet offices).

Editor and distribution: Meiji Jingu

Price: 100 Yen



"The Tradition of Japan—Budo: Path of Spiritual Refinement"

This is a book of Meiji Jingu *Budojo Shiseikan* (*Budo* training hall on the shrine grounds), transmitting the spirit of *Budo* in Japanese and English with plenty of photographs and a DVD with English subtitles.

Available at: the souvenir shop at *Bunkakan* or any bookstore

Editor: Meiji Jingu

Distribution: World Table Tennis Co. Ltd.

Price: 1,714 Yen + VAT

ISBN: 978-4-901638-29-6

Ceremonies and events

▶ Daily, monthly, annual ceremonies	
▶ Performances in honour of the deities & other events	▶ This year's anniversaries

Daily, monthly, annual ceremonies



(Photo: New Year at Meiji Jingu)

The following gives an overview of the main ceremonies at Meiji Jingu. *Honden* refers to the main shrine building. *Haraesha* refers to the purification hut opposite the South *Temizuya* (font).

2014 SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Ceremony	Explanation	Venue
Daily	8 am, 2 pm	Nikkusai	Sacred food offering and prayers for worldwide peace and everybody's prosperity	<i>Honden</i>
1st and 15th of each month	9 am	Tsukinamisai	Sacred food offering and prayers for worldwide peace and everybody's prosperity	<i>Honden</i>
Jan. 1	7 am	Saitansai	New Year's Day ritual	<i>Honden</i>
Jan. 5 -30	All day	<i>Shodoten</i>	Exhibition of winners' works in the calligraphy competition for elementary and junior high school students	Courtyard in front of <i>Honden</i>
Jan. 8	3:00 pm	<i>Dezuiri</i>	Sumo grand champion "ring entering" ceremony	Courtyard in front of <i>Honden</i>
Jan. 7	9 am	<i>Musashino-Goryo-Yohaishiki</i>	Emperor Showa Memorial Day rite	<i>Haraesha</i>
Feb. 11	10 am	Kigensai	National Foundation Day festival	<i>Honden</i>

Feb. 17	10 am	<i>Kinensai</i>	Prayer ceremony for agricultural fertility	<i>Honden</i>
Mar. 2	10:45 am	<i>Hinamatsuri</i>	Doll festival	<i>Honden</i>
Mar. 21 (vernal equinox)	9 am	<i>Koreiden-Yohaishiki</i>	Paying respect towards the Imperial Palace sanctuary <i>Koreiden</i>	<i>Haraesha</i>
April 3	9 am	<i>Unebiyama-Yohaishiki</i>	Emperor Jinmu Memorial Day rite	<i>Haraesha</i>
April 11	10 am	<i>Shoken-Kotaigo-Hyakunensai</i>	Empress Shoken 100th Anniversary Memorial Ceremony (to remember the virtues of Empress Shoken)	<i>Honden</i>
May 2	10 am	<i>Haru-no-Taisai</i>	Spring Grand Festival morning ceremony	<i>Honden</i>
May 2	2 pm	<i>Haru-no-Taisai</i>	Spring Grand Festival afternoon ceremony	<i>Honden</i>
May 3	10 am	<i>Haru-no-Taisai</i>	Spring Grand Festival morning ceremony	<i>Honden</i>
May 5	11 am	<i>Kodomo-no-Matsuri</i>	Children's Festival	<i>Honden</i>
May 5 (<i>Rikka</i> , first day of summer)	8 am	<i>Onzosai</i>	Ceremony of the changing of the divine robes	<i>Honden</i>
June 30	2 pm	<i>Oharae</i>	Great Purification (to cast out sins and impurities)	<i>Haraesha</i>
June 7	10 am	<i>Tanabata-Matsuri</i>	Star Festival	<i>Honden</i>
July 30	10 am	<i>Meiji-Tenno-Sai</i>	Emperor Meiji Memorial Ceremony (to remember the virtues of Emperor Meiji)	<i>Honden</i>
Sept. 15	10 am	<i>Chojukenko-Kigansai/Keirosai</i>	Ceremony for the health and longevity of the elderly	<i>Honden</i>
Sept. 23 (autumn equinox)	10 am	<i>Koreiden-Yohaishiki</i>	Paying respect towards the Imperial Palace sanctuary <i>Koreiden</i>	<i>Haraesha</i>
Oct. 1	10:30 am	<i>Dezuiiri</i>	Sumo grand champion "ring entering" ceremony	Courtyard in front of <i>Honden</i>
Oct. 5	10 am	<i>Ningyo-Kanshasai</i>	Festival to thank dolls	<i>Honden</i>
Oct. 17	9 am	<i>Jingu-Yohaishiki</i>	Ceremony on the same day as the Harvest Festival of Ise Jingu	<i>Haraesha</i>
Oct. 19	10 am	<i>Keneihikoshiki</i>	Ceremonial recital of poems	<i>Honden</i>
Nov. 1	10 am	<i>Chinzakinensai</i>	Meiji Jingu Enshrinement Anniversary Ceremony	<i>Honden</i>

Nov. 1	2 pm	Aki-no-Taisai	Autumn Grand Festival afternoon ceremony	<i>Honden</i>
Nov. 2	10 am	Aki-no-Taisai	Autumn Grand Festival morning ceremony	<i>Honden</i>
Nov. 3	10 am	Reisai	Ceremony to commemorate Emperor Meiji's birthday	<i>Honden</i>
Nov. 7 (<i>Ritto</i> , first day of winter)	9 am	<i>Onzosai</i>	Ceremony of the changing of the divine robes	<i>Honden</i>
Nov. 23	10 am	Niinamesai	Harvest Ceremony	<i>Honden</i>
Dec. 23	10 am	Tenchosai	Celebration of the current Emperor's birthday	<i>Honden</i>
Dec. 28	10 am	<i>Susuharai</i>	Ceremonial year-end cleaning of the main shrine buildings	<i>Honden</i>
Dec. 31	2 pm	Oharae	Great purification (to cast out sins and impurities)	Haraesha
Dec. 31	4 pm	Joyasai	Year-end ritual	<i>Honden</i>

There are several more events held at Meiji Jingu. During Spring Grand Festival (April 29 to May 3), *Bugaku* (traditional ceremonial dance and music), *Noh* (traditional theatre), *Sankyoku* and *Hogaku* (traditional popular music), *Hobu* (traditional popular dance), and *Kyudo* (archery) are performed. During Autumn Grand Festival, *Yabusame* (horseback archery), and *Budo* (martial arts) are performed in honour of the deities.

For details see [Performances in honour of the deities](#).

Details of some of the above ceremonies:



Nikkusai

(Daily 8 am and 2 pm)

Sacred food and prayers for worldwide peace and everybody's prosperity. The ceremony takes about 10 minutes.



Tsukinamisai

(1st and 15th of each month, 9 am)

Sacred food offerings and prayers for worldwide peace and everybody's prosperity. This ceremony takes about 50 minutes.



Saitansai: New Year's Day ritual

(January 1st, 7 am)

This is the first ceremony in the new year, and it is also the earliest ceremony (the only ceremony carried out at 7 am). It is hardly visible from outside, but the big drum is audible. Many Japanese go on *Hatsumode* (a "first shrine visit of the year") during the New Year season. More than 98 million people pay a visit to shrines or temples across Japan during the first three days of the new year (according to the National Police Agency). Among them, Meiji Jingu has been attracting the most visitors, more than 3 million. Everyone is welcome to come for a New Year shrine visit. At the *Juyosho* (the amulet offices), there are not only the usual *Ofuda* (emblems) and *Omamori* (lucky charms), but also special items for the new year, e.g. bells and *Ema* (votive tablets) featuring this year's *Eto* (zodiac animal).

● *Kigensai*: National Foundation Day festival

(February 11th, 10 am)

Kigensai is a ritual ceremony commemorating the foundation of Japan. It is said that Emperor Jinmu, the first Emperor of Japan, was enthroned at *Kashihara-no-miya* in Nara prefecture on this day more than 2600 years ago. During *Kigensai*, Shinto priests in festive attire offer food and recite prayers, and shrine maidens perform a sacred dance. There will also be a parade of many *Mikoshi* (portable shrines) on *Omotesando* towards Meiji Jingu, and the brass band of the "Association of Celebrating the Establishment of Japan" will play in honour of the deities.

● *Kinensai*: Prayer ceremony for agricultural fertility

(February 17th, 10 am)

This ceremony forms a set with *Niinamesai* (the Harvest Festival) in autumn. *Kinensai* contains prayers for a good harvest, and *Niinamesai* expresses the gratitude for a bountiful harvest.

● *Shoken-Kotaigo-Hyakunensai*: Empress Shoken 100th Anniversary Memorial Ceremony (to remember the virtues of Empress Shoken)

(April 11th, 10 am)

April 11, 2014, marks the one hundredth anniversary of the passing of Empress Shoken (empress consort to Emperor Meiji).

Meiji Jingu is dedicated to the divine souls of Emperor Meiji and his consort Empress Shoken.

Empress Shoken (28 May 1850-11 April 1914) not only supported Emperor Meiji behind the scenes but also devoted herself to promoting national welfare and women's education. She was also concerned about social welfare in the world.

Therefore, she not only continued to offer tremendous support to the Japanese Red Cross Society, but also donated one hundred thousand yen to the International Federation of the Red Cross in Geneva, expressing her wish for the Red Cross to be active in relief work during peace time. To commemorate the Empress's magnanimous heart the fund was named the Empress Shoken Fund and has been used for international welfare activities, funding about 10 projects (almost 400,000 USD) per year. The allocation of the grants is customarily announced on April 11th each year.

April 11th is the day that Empress Shoken passed away, and we will hold a ceremony in her honour. The ceremony will be carried out according to ancient Shinto rites: there will be a recital of Shinto liturgy, food offerings (including vegetables grown in the forest of Meiji Jingu), and the sacred dance *Kuretake-no-Mai*, which is based on a poem by Empress Shoken.

Kuretake-no-Mai

We pray that people / Be just unassuming / Like the bamboo, //
Which grows without pretension / Or unsightly gnarls.

(People do not have to be distinguished in the world; they need only to stand straight like the bamboo and remain *sunao*, or open, unblemished and honest.)

● *Haru-no-Taisai*: Spring Grand Festival

(May 2nd, 10 am and 2 pm; and May 3rd, 10 am)

It is the season of the Meiji Jingu Spring Grand Festival. From April 29th to May 3rd, Meiji Jingu will hold several solemn Shinto ceremonies including one of the largest rituals of the year at Meiji Jingu. These rituals are scheduled for 10 am and 2 pm on May 2nd, and the largest one for 10 am on May 3rd. Members of the Sukeikai, an organization which was established in 1946 for paying respect to the enshrined Kami and for supporting Meiji Jingu, attend those rituals in the inner courtyard of the main shrine buildings. Shrine maidens will perform "*Urayasu-no-Mai*", a *Kagura* (sacred dance) based on a poem which Emperor Showa, the last Emperor before the current Emperor, wrote praying for world-wide peace and wishing that nothing disturb the world's tranquility:

Urayasu-no-Mai

To all deities / Of heaven and earth I pray / For a tranquil world //
Without disturbances / -- like the sea in the morning.

On the occasion of this festival, various Japanese traditional performing arts are performed in honour of the deities on the stage in front of the main shrine building. Everyone is welcome to observe these performances such as *Bugaku* (ancient imperial court music), *Hogaku* and *Hobu* (classical Japanese dance), *Noh* and *Kyogen* (classical Japanese theatre), *Sankyoku* (traditional Japanese music), and *Satsuma biwa* (Japanese

lute). For details see [Performances in honour of the deities](#).

● *Oharae*: Great purification (to cast out sins and impurities)

(June 30 and December 31, 2 pm, at *Haraesha*)

Twice a year, on the last day of June and on the last day of December, a great purification ceremony is held in at *Haraesha*, the purification hall at the main approach (right opposite the South *Temizuya*, the font to rinse hands and mouth before entering the inner shrine area).

Anybody is welcome to take part in this ceremony (registration is not necessary).

Participants bow their heads while the grand purification words are recited, and they bow again when a purification wand (a branch of the *Sakaki*-tree) is waved three times and when small pieces of white paper are sprinkled three times for purification.

● *Meiji-Tenno-Sai*: Emperor Meiji Memorial Ceremony

(to remember the virtues of Emperor Meiji on his memorial day)

(July 30th, 9am)

The 30th of July is the memorial day of Emperor Meiji, whose soul is enshrined at Meiji Jingu. There will be a Shinto Ceremony in his memory from 9 am at the main shrine building. During this ceremony, the sacred dance *Meiji-Jingu-Yamato-Mai* is performed by a Shinto priest. This sacred dance is based on the following poem by Emperor Meiji:

Meiji-Jingu-Yamato-Mai

The spacious sky / Spans serene and clear / So blue above, //
Oh, that our soul could grow / And become so open!

(Like the blue sky that stretches onward over us, we ourselves should like to have a heart so large and open.)

When Japan was facing unprecedented difficult times, Emperor Meiji made a great effort to build modern Japan, including the establishment of the constitution and the opening of the Diet.

When Emperor Meiji passed away in 1912, condolences were offered from all over the world. Emperor Meiji was buried at the Imperial tomb of Fushimimomoyama in Kyoto, but following the strong wish of the population, Meiji Jingu was founded in 1920 to enshrine his soul.

On the Emperor Meiji Memorial Day, the 30th of July, *Homotsuden* (the Treasure Museum) and the exhibition at *Homotsu-Tenjishitsu* (the "Treasure Museum Annex" at *Bunkakan*) are free of charge.

● *Keneihikoshiki*: Ceremonial recital of poems

(October 19th, 10 am)

The "Ceremonial recital of poems" is part of the celebrations of Meiji Jingu Autumn Grand Festival. *Waka* (traditional Japanese poems of 31 syllables with the pattern 5-7-5-7-7) are granted by members of the Imperial Family and submitted by the general public, not only from inside Japan but also from abroad, amounting to a total of about 4,000 poems.

Among them, the *Waka* chosen by the judges of the "Meiji Memorial Joint Poetry Committee", which is composed of poets excelling each in their poetry circle or poetry association, are recited in a dignified manner before the deities according to the ceremonial way of reciting of the "Ceremony of the *Utaikai Hajime*" (Imperial New Year's Poetry Reading) at the Imperial Palace: For each poem, the *Dokuji* (master of ceremonies) presents the paper with the poem, the *Koji* (reader) reads it out aloud, the *Hassei* (lead singer) recites the poem in a chanting melody, and the *Kosho* (accompanying singers) join into this melodic recital from the second line of the poem. During the ceremonial recital itself, the chief priest of Meiji Jingu (assuming the role of the *Dokuji*) and the reciters of the *Utaikai Hajime* of the Imperial Palace sit in a circle, recite in a sonorous way the *Waka* chosen from the many poems submitted, and finally recite twice the *Waka* granted by the Imperial Family. Emperor Meiji composed about 100,000 *Waka* during his lifetime, and Empress Shoken has left us with a collection of nearly 30,000 of her own poems. The writing of *Waka* has been traditionally called "*Shikishima-no-Michi*", or the "Way of *Shikishima*" (*Shikishima* being a poetic name for Japan). If you happen to be at Meiji Jingu at this time, please enjoy this ancient ritual of Japan's traditional culture!

● **Chinzakinensai: Meiji Jingu Enshrinement Anniversary Ceremony**

(November 1, 10 am)

The souls of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken were enshrined at Meiji Jingu on the 1st of November 1920. This ceremony is celebrating the anniversary of this enshrinement. During the ceremony, the sacred dance *Yoyogi-no-Mai* is performed by shrine maidens. This dance is based on a poem by Emperor Meiji.

● **Aki-no-Taisai: Autumn Grand Festival**

(Several days around the beginning of November, mainly November 1st to 3rd)

On the occasion of the celebrations of the anniversary of Emperor Meiji's birthday and Meiji Jingu's enshrinement anniversary, various ceremonies are held (including *Chinzakinensai* and *Reisai*). Also, arts are performed in honour of the deities (see [Performances in honour of the deities](#)).

● **Reisai: Grand Shinto Ceremony commemorating the Anniversary of Emperor Meiji's Birthday**

(November 3, 10 am)

A grand solemn Shinto ceremony is held to commemorate the anniversary of Emperor Meiji's birthday. During the ceremony, *Yoyogi-no-Mai* is performed.

Yoyogi-no-Mai

Inspire into what befalls/Through ancient history.

And render clear the many doubts/That puzzle men Today!

(That means developing new ideas based on study of the past.)

● **Niinamesai: Harvest Ceremony**

(November 23, 10 am)

In gratitude for a bountiful harvest, vegetables and fruit are piled up in the shape of boats in front of the main shrine building, and a Shinto ceremony is held. During the ceremony, the sacred dance *Yoyogi-no-Mai* is performed. (See *Reisai* above for details about this sacred dance.)

● **Tenchosai: Celebration of the current Emperor's birthday**

(December 23, 10 am)

There is a solemn Shinto ceremony at the main shrine building.

● **Joyasai: Year-end ritual**

(December 31, 4 pm)

This is the last ceremony of the year, and it is also the latest (the only ceremony carried out at 4 pm). It is hardly visible from outside, but the big drum at the beginning and at the end of the ceremony is clearly audible, even from far away. On this day, Meiji Jingu does not close but stays open all night.

Ceremonies and events

- ▶ Daily, monthly, annual ceremonies
- ▶ Performances in honour of the deities & other events
- ▶ This year's anniversaries

Performances in honour of the deities & other events



(Photo: *Bugaku*)

■ Meiji Jingu Spring Grand Festival Performance in honor the deities 2014

11:00	Tue,29	Apr.	<i>Bugaku</i> at the main shrine building
11:45	Fri,2	May.	<i>Noh, Kyogen</i> at the main shrine building
15:45	Fri,2	May.	<i>Sankyoku</i> at the main shrine building
9:00	Sat,3	May.	<i>Kyudo</i> (<i>Japanese archery competition</i>) at <i>Shiseikan</i> (Martial Arts Hall)
12:00	Sat,3	May.	<i>Hogaku, Hobu</i> at the main shrine building
14:30	Sat,3	May.	<i>Satsuma biwa</i> at the main shrine building
13:00	Tue,6	May.	Ceremonial recital of poems at <i>Sansyuden</i>



Bugaku



Noh



Kyogen



Sankyoku



Kyudo



Hogaku, Hobu



Satsuma biwa



Ceremonial recital of poems

■ Meiji Jingu Autumn Grand Festival October 27 - November 3, 2013
The 161st Anniversary of Emperor Meiji's Birthday

11:00	Sun, 27	Oct.	<i>Bugaku</i> at the main shrine building
12:00	Fri, 1	Nov.	<i>Noh, Kyogen</i> at the main shrine building
15:45	Fri, 1	Nov.	<i>Sankyoku</i> at the main shrine building
11:45	Sat, 2	Nov.	<i>Hogaku, Hobu</i> at the main shrine building
9:00	Sun, 3	Nov.	<i>Japanese archery competition</i> at Budojo
9:00	Sun, 3	Nov.	<i>Aikido</i> at the west approach
10:00	Sun, 3	Nov.	<i>Kobudo</i> at the west approach
11:00	Sun, 3	Nov.	<i>Momote-shiki</i> at Tresure Museum
13:00	Sun, 3	Nov.	<i>Yabusame</i> at the west approach
14:45	Sun, 3	Nov.	<i>Satsuma biwa</i> at the main shrine building
Fri, 25 Oct.-Sat, 23 Nov.			<i>Kikkaten</i> (Chrysanthemum Exhibition) at the main approach



Bugaku



Noh



Kyogen



Sankyoku



Hogaku, Hobu



Japanese archery competition



Aikido



Kobudo



Momote-shiki



Kikkaten



Yabusame



Satsuma biwa

Ceremonies and events

► Daily, monthly, annual ceremonies

► Performances in honour of the deities & other events

► This year's anniversaries

This year's anniversaries

■ Meiji Jingu Spring Grand Festival 2014



It is the season of the Meiji Jingu Spring Grand Festival. From April 29th to May 3rd, Meiji Jingu will hold several solemn Shinto ceremonies including one of the largest rituals of the year at Meiji Jingu. These rituals are scheduled for 10 am and 2 pm on May 2nd, and the largest one for 10 am on May 3rd. Members of the Sukeikai, an organization which was established in 1946 for paying respect to the enshrined Kami and for supporting Meiji Jingu, attend those rituals in the inner courtyard of the main shrine buildings. Shrine maidens will perform "Urayasu-no-Mai", a Kagura(sacred dance) based on a poem which Emperor Showa, the last Emperor before the current Emperor, wrote praying for world-wide peace and wishing that nothing disturb the world's tranquility :

To all deities
Of heaven and earth I pray
For a tranquil world
Without disturbances
-Like the sea in the morning.

On the occasion of this festival, various Japanese traditional performing arts are performed in honour of the deities on the stage in front of the main shrine building. Everyone is welcome to observe these performances such as Bugaku(ancient imperial court music), Hogaku and Hobu (classical Japanese dance), Noh and Kyogen(classical Japanese theatre), Sankyoku(traditional Japanese music), and Satsuma biwa(Japanese lute).

April 29, Tuesday

11:00~ *Bugaku* [ancient imperial court music]

May 2, Friday

10:00~ Morning Ceremony

11:45~ *Noh, Kyogen* [classical Japanese dance]

14:00~ Afternoon Ceremony

15:45~ *Sankyoku* [traditional Japanese music]

May 3, Saturday

10:00~ Grand Ceremony

12:00~ *Hogaku, Hobu* [classical Japanese theatre]

14:30~ *Satsuma biwa* [Japanese lute]



Bugaku



Noh



Kyogen



Sankyoku



Hogaku, Hobu



Satsuma biwa

■ Empress Shoken 100th Anniversary Memorial Ceremony



The year 2014 marks the one hundredth anniversary of the passing of [Empress Shoken](#), the empress consort of Emperor Meiji and an enshrined deity of Meiji Jingu. At Meiji Jingu, various commemorative events will take place to pay respect to the outstanding virtue of Empress Shoken.

[Learn more](#)

■ Kigensai



February 11th is the day of the foundation of Japan, and ceremonies called "Kigensai" are held at the sanctuaries of the Imperial Palace and at Shinto shrines throughout the country.

The government made the day of Emperor Jinmu's enthronement as the first Emperor of Japan at Kashihara-no-miya in Unebi (the present Kashihara Jingu in Nara prefecture represents the remains of that place), which is recorded in the "Nihon Shoki" ("The Chronicles of Japan"), the starting point of time-reckoning and established it in 1873 as Japan's National Foundation Day.

Together with New Year and "Tencho-setsu" (the Emperor's birthday), "Kigen-setsu" was made one of the "three grand national holidays" (from 1927 "four grand national holidays" including Emperor Meiji's birthday "Meiji-setsu"), and memorial ceremonies were held at primary schools and all sorts of organizations nationwide.

In 1948 after the war (Japan was under occupation) it was extinct by the enactment of the "Act on National Holidays", but since the restoration of independence in 1952 voices demanding the revival of "Kigen-setsu" condensed into a national movement, and in 1966 the day was added to the national holidays as "National Foundation Day".

Let us celebrate the country's birthday today.

■ Kinensai



On February 17th, ceremonies called "Kinensai" are held at the sanctuaries of the Imperial Palace and at Shinto shrines throughout the country. Kinensai is a ceremony of praying for a bountiful harvest, for the prosperity of the Imperial Family, and for the stability of the nation. This ceremony forms a set with Niinamesai (the Harvest Festival), a ceremony of giving thanks for the harvest on November 23rd.

According to the episode "Tensonkorin" in ancient Japanese mythology, when Ninigi-no-Mikoto (the grandson of the sun deity Amaterasu Omikami) descended from Takama-no-Hara (the realm where Amaterasu Omikami resides) to Takachiho (in present-day Kyushu), he received from Amaterasu Omikami the Three Sacred Treasures (the Imperial regalia of Japan) and an ear of rice. It can be said that the rice cultivation, which goes back to mythological times, is the base of Japan's nation building and of Japan's culture. In spring, the Emperor sows rice seeds on the rice fields at the Imperial Palace, in early summer he plants the rice seedlings, and in autumn he harvests the rice ears, and offers the harvested rice at the Kannamesai (Ise Jingu's largest harvest festival held on October 17th) and at the Niinamesai at the Imperial Palace. These facts make us aware of the importance of rice cultivation and ceremonies. Given this background, today's ceremony provides an opportunity to remind us of the value of rice cultivation and agriculture as well as of the characteristics of Japan, which have continued since mythological times.

The Kagura (sacred dance) "Urayasu-no-Mai", which is performed during the ceremony, was composed and choreographed in 1940, commemorating the 2600th anniversary of the foundation of Japan. It is based on a poem which Emperor Showa, the last Emperor before the current Emperor, wrote praying for world-wide peace and wishing that nothing disturb the

world's tranquility:

To all deities
Of heaven and earth I pray
For a tranquil world
Without disturbances
—Like the sea in the morning.

■ Meiji Jingu Autumn Grand Festival October 27 - November 3, 2013
The 161st Anniversary of Emperor Meiji's Birthday

On November 3rd, the birthday of Emperor Meiji, the present Emperor sends an Imperial Messenger with his offerings to Meiji Jingu's solemn Shinto ceremony. In the course of the celebration, Japanese traditional performing arts such as Bugaku, Noh, Kyogen, and ancient Japanese martial arts will be presented in honour of the deities.

【Schedule of the Ritual Ceremonies】

10:00	Thu, 1	Nov.	Enshrinement Anniversary Ceremony
14:00	Thu, 1	Nov.	Afternoon Ceremony
10:00	Thu, 1	Nov.	Morning Ceremony
10:00	Sat, 3	Nov.	The 161st Anniversary of the Birth of Emperor Meiji

【Meiji Jingu Autumn Grand Festival Performance in honor the deities】

11:00	Sun, 27	Oct.	Bugaku at the main shrine building
12:00	Thu, 1	Nov.	Noh, Kyogen at the main shrine building
15:45	Thu, 1	Nov.	Sankyoku at the main shrine building
11:45	Fri, 2	Nov.	Hogaku, Hobu at the main shrine building
9:00	Sat, 3	Nov.	Japanese archery competition at Budojo
9:00	Sat, 3	Nov.	Aikido at the west approach
10:00	Sat, 3	Nov.	Kobudo at the west approach
11:00	Sat, 3	Nov.	Momote-shiki at Tresure Museum
13:00	Sat, 3	Nov.	Yabusame at the west approach
14:45	Sat, 3	Nov.	Satsuma biwa at the main shrine building
Fri, 25 Oct.-Sat, 23 Nov.			Kikkaten (Chrysanthemum Exhibition) at the main approach



Bugaku



Noh



Kyogen



Sankyoku



Hogaku, Hobu



Japanese archery competition



Aikido



Kobudo



Momote-shiki



Kikkaten



Yabusame



Satsuma biwa

Nature at Meiji Jingu

► Forest

► Meiji Jingu *Gyoen*

► Seasonal plants and animals

Forest



The forest

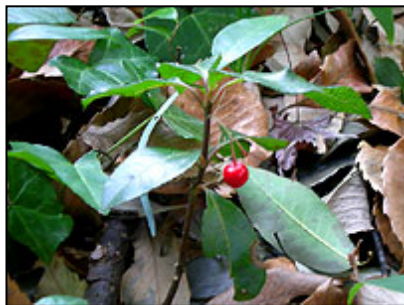
Meiji Jingu's forest was created in honour of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken, for their souls to dwell in and with every tree sincerely planted by hand. This forest was carefully planned as an eternal forest that recreates itself. Now after about 90 years it cannot be distinguished from a natural forest, inhabited by many endangered plants and animals.

Seasonal plants and animals

Please enjoy the nature at Meiji Jingu throughout the year. There are many seasonal plants and animals, so the ones below are only a small selection. Some of them are endangered, and all of them are part of this holy forest. Therefore, please do not take any plants (or parts of them) or animals home with you. Thank you very much.

[[Jan](#) | [Feb](#) | [Mar](#) | [Apr](#) | [May](#) | [Jun](#) | [Jul](#) | [Aug](#) | [Sept](#) | [Oct](#) | [Nov](#) | [Dec](#)]

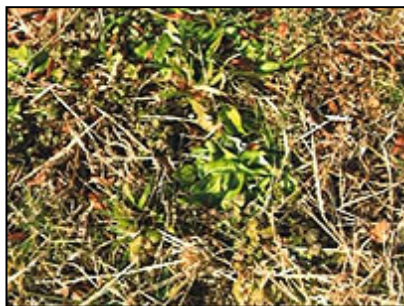
January



Ardisia japonica



Ice on the water



Gnaphalium affine D. Don
Jersey Cudweed



Capsella bursa-pastoris
Shepherd's-purse

Nature at Meiji Jingu

▶ Forest	▶ Meiji Jingu <i>Gyoen</i>	▶ Seasonal plants and animals	
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Meiji Jingu *Gyoen*



(Photo: Meiji Jingu *Gyoen* in Winter)

Meiji Jingu *Gyoen* (Meiji Jingu Gardens or Imperial Gardens)

Meiji Jingu *Gyoen* (Meiji Jingu Gardens) is the only part of *Naien* (the Inner Precinct) that had existed long before the establishment of Meiji Jingu. In fact Emperor Meiji designed the iris garden, small paths, and fishing spot specifically for Empress Shoken in order to give her fresh energy. Fresh verdure in spring, various kinds of flowers in summer, autumn leaves, and snow in winter give inexhaustible charms to the garden all the year round.

The four seasons at Meiji Jingu Gardens (*Gyoen*)

Spring



(Photo: Azaleas at *Kakuuntei*)

In spring, colourful azalea blossoms appear among the new green leaves. Their vivid beauty evokes a warm spring feeling. At *Gyoen*, there are globular trimmed azaleas in front of *Kakuuntei* (a tea house); and arching mountain azaleas at the "Azalea Garden". The azalea blossoms reach their peak in April.

Summer



(Photo: Irises at the Iris Garden)

At the beginning of June the irises start to blossom, they are in full bloom from mid-June to the end of June. There are about 1500 iris plants of 150 different kinds of irises in the "Iris Garden". Their blossoms are counted every day by the staff. The splendour of the iris flowers in full bloom has become well known both in Japan and abroad.

Autumn



(Photo: Japanese maple)

Japanese autumn leaves are famous for their bright colours and their delicate beauty seen for example in the fine dissected leaves of Japanese maple. Towards the end of November you can see the leaves changing colours at *Gyoen* as if you were in the mountains. Please enjoy the beautiful scenery of the garden.

Winter



(Photo: *Yukitsuri* at the fishing spot)

A *Yukitsuri* covers one of the black pine trees in *Gyoen* during winter in order to prevent its branches from breaking under the weight of heavy snow. Please enjoy the beautiful winter landscape in the garden.

Meiji Jingu *Gyoen* opens every day throughout the year. Opening hours are usually from 9 am to 4 pm, but they may vary slightly according to the season.

Opening hours(*Gyoen*) :
Open daily throughout the year.

Months:	Hours:
March to October	9 am to 4:30 pm
November to February	9 am to 4 pm
June	8 am to 5 pm(to 6 pm on Saturday and Sunday)

Contribution for maintenance
500 yen



Oenanthe
Water dropworts



Camellia

Homotsuden (Treasure Museum)

► Homotsuden Honkan and Homotsu-Tenjishitsu

► Current exhibitions, hours

Homotsuden and Homotsu-Tenjishitsu

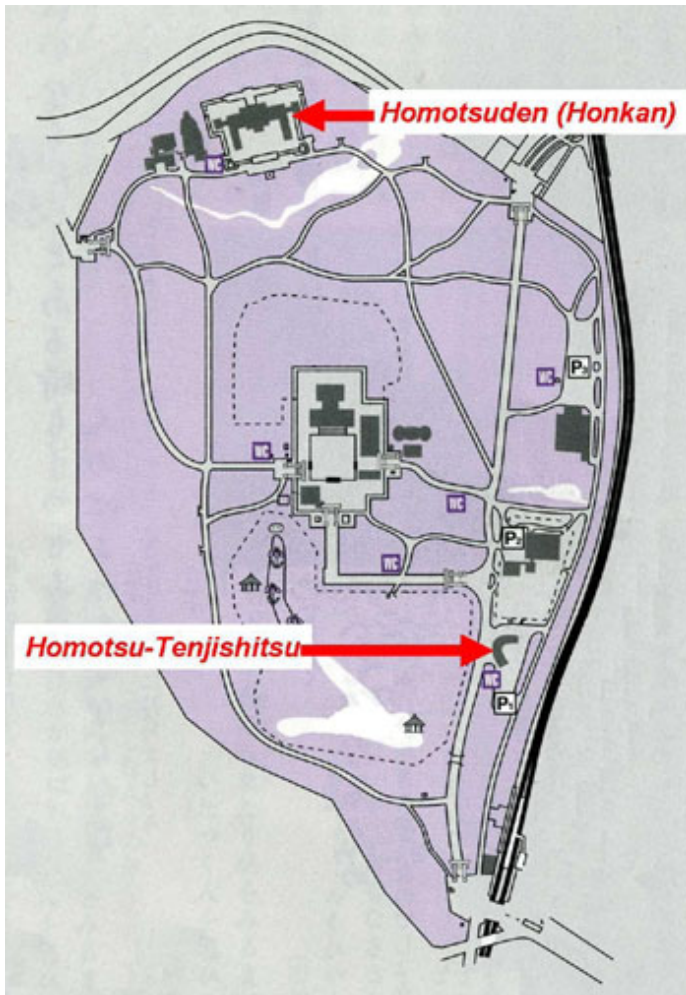
- Treasure Museum of Meiji Jingu was designated Important Cultural Property

Treasure Museum of Meiji Jingu was designated Important Cultural Property in June 2011. Please visit this magnificent building created by the passionate devotion of the people towards the Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken.

Closed on Monday from July 9 to September 25. (On September 19 (Mon) the museum is open, closed on the following day)

At Meiji Jingu *Naien*, there are two main facilities belonging to *Homotsuden* and dedicated to exhibitions open to the public:

- [Homotsuden Honkan](#) (also called *Homotsuden* or "Treasure Museum" and is located next to the *Budojo Shiseikan* in the northern part of Meiji Jingu *Naien*)
- [Homotsu-Tenjishitsu](#) (also called *Tenjishitsu* or "Treasure Museum Annex" or exhibition hall and is located inside *Bunkakan* in the southern part of Meiji Jingu *Naien*)



(Photo: Map illustrating the different locations, for a more detailed map see: [Map](#))

● *Homotsuden Honkan* (also called *Homotsuden* or "Treasure Museum")



(Photo: *Homotsuden Honkan* main building)

The main building of *Homotsuden* (the Treasure Museum) is a ferro-concrete building built in 1921. Its style, however, is a copy of the *Oyukazukuri* (high floor style) of *Azekurazukuri Shosoin* (the Japanese National Treasure House in Nara). In the building, various items used by Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken or closely related to them are exhibited.

[Link to the current exhibition](#)

● *Homotsu-Tenjishitsu* ("Treasure Museum Annex") at *Bunkakan*



(Photo: Entrance to *Homotsu-Tenjishitsu* at *Bunkakan*)

In addition to *Homotsuden Honkan* (the "Treasure Museum") in the north of *Naïen* (inner precinct), there is an exhibition hall called *Homotsu-Tenjishitsu* (or short *Tenjishitsu* or "Treasure Museum Annex") at *Bunkakan* in the south of *Naïen* (inner precinct). Note that although it is called "annex", the building is not physically connected with *Homotsuden Honkan*, but they are about 15 to 20 minutes walk apart.

Bunkakan is a circular building housing not only *Homotsu-Tenjishitsu*, but also the restaurant "Yoyogi", a snack bar, a souvenir shop, a wedding ceremony planning division, toilets, trash boxes,

vending machines, and a smoking area.

[Link to the current exhibition](#)

Homotsuden (Treasure Museum)

▶ Homotsuden Honkan and Homotsu-Tenjishitsu

▶ Current exhibitions, hours

Current exhibitions, hours, fees

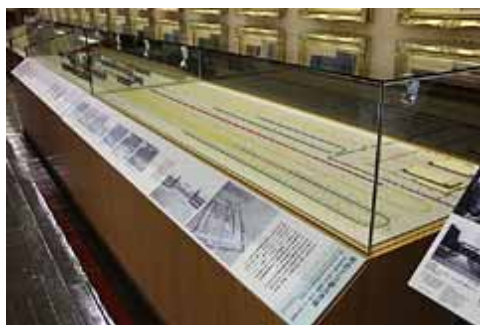
■ Commemorating the Empress Shoken Centennial Memorial 「The Empress of the Meiji Period — Empress Shoken's Life with Emperor Meiji」



Period	March 29 (Sat.) to May 28 (Wed.) (Closed only on April 17 and 18)
Hours	9 am to 4: 30 pm (last admission 4 pm)

Contribution for maintenance	
500 yen	

■ A Diorama Set of the Imperial Funeral Cortège for Emperor Meiji



This diorama set is displayed at the Tresure Museum (Homotsuden).

Period	From February 17
Hours	9 am to 4 pm (last admission 3:30 pm)

Contribution for maintenance
500 yen

- Current exhibition at *Homotsuden Honkan*
(also called *Homotsuden* or "Treasure Museum")

The museum's current exhibition includes the magnificent horse carriage used by Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken about 120 years ago on the day of the promulgation of the Constitution of the Empire of Japan, as well as items he used on a daily basis.



(Photo: The horse carriage used by Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken on their way to the parade held to celebrate the promulgation of the Constitution of the Empire of Japan on the 11th of February 1889)

This is displayed in the above Exhibition at the Tresure Museum Annex (Bunkakan) From February 17 , it will be displayed at Homotsuden Honkan (also called Homotsuden or "Treasure Museum")

Days	Open only on weekends and national holidays. Opening days and hours of Treasure Museum and Treasure Museum Annex are subject to change without notice.
Hours	Nov. to Feb.: 9 am to 4 pm(last admission 3:30 pm) Mar. to Oct.: 9 am to 4:30 pm(last admission 4 pm)

Contribution for maintenance
500 yen N.B.: The ticket is also valid for <i>Homotsu-Tenjishitsu</i> ("Treasure Museum Annex").

Director's Greeting

The Meiji Jingu Intercultural Research Institute was established in January 2008. In addition to spreading the virtues of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken and the cultivation of Shinto sensibilities, which had up to that point been the domain of another study group, the Institute's goal is to pursue academic exchanges, centering on research into Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken's virtues and Meiji Jingu history, as well as to enhance inter-religious dialogue and international exchanges between different cultures.

Shinto is ingrained in the living practices of the Japanese people, as can be seen in the first shrine visit of the New Year and the "Shichigosan" (Festival for children attaining 7・5・3 years of age), and it serves as a framework for strong traditions and culture. Meiji Jingu as the grove of a village shrine provides a place where Japanese people validate their own origins, but it also provides a precious place where large numbers of foreigners visiting the shrine can obtain a deep understanding of Japanese culture.



There is a poem by Emperor Meiji that says "Let us reveal to the world the beauty that is interwoven in Japan." The Institute aims to take a fresh look-in the context of the current era-at the "Japan" that our ancestors have been creating since the time of distant legends, and consider what role Japan should fulfill within the globalized world. Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken, who accomplished the modernization of Japan by way of opening up the country and the Meiji Restoration, are enshrined as deities at Meiji Jingu, which was built around 100 years ago through the devotion of our people. It is from this shrine that we carry out our mission.

■ Brief biography of the Director

Born in Tokyo in 1941. Spent three years of elementary school in France, and spent his high-school years in the United States.

After graduating from the Faculty of Economics at the University of Tokyo, joined the Bank of Tokyo (now the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ) and served as Deputy Director of the Paris branch and Director of the Brussels branch. Officially appointed as Chamberlain of His Majesty the Emperor at the Imperial Household in 1995, and officially appointed as His Vice-Grand Chamberlain in 2008.

Drawing on his abundant foreign experience, accompanied the Imperial Couple on official visits to 19 countries.

Retired from that office in June 2012 and took up his present position in September of that year.

Director	Masahiro Sato
Deputy Director	Tsutomu Kurita

■ International Affairs Division/Research Advancement Division Historical/Document Editing Division

The International Affairs Division carries out activities aimed at informing people about Meiji Jingu and Shinto through interdisciplinary and international exchanges.
The Research Advancement Division has three researchers, and undertakes research on areas such as the divine virtues of the enshrined deities, the history of Meiji Jingu, and Shinto and Budo (the martial arts).
The Document Editing Division is aiming to publish the "Hundred Year Record of Meiji Jingu" in 2020, the 100th year of the enshrinement. It studies and collates documents owned by Meiji Jingu.

Gaien (Meiji Jingu Outer Precinct)

Meiji Jingu Outer Precinct

Gaien (The Outer Precinct) was constructed with donation collected by "Meiji Jingu Hosankai", an organization of individual supporters formed to remember the virtues of the Imperial couple all through the ages. Completed on October 22, 1926, it was donated to Meiji Jingu.



(Photo: *Kaigakan*, the Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery in the centre of *Gaien*)

Kaigakan (Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery)

The *Kaigakan* (the Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery) is the centre of the precinct. It contains 80 wall paintings (3m x 2.7m) depicting the lives of Emperor Meiji and Empress Shoken.

Days: open daily throughout the year
 Hours: 9 am to 5 pm (last admission 4:30 pm)
 Admission: 500 yen,
 senior high school and university students 300 yen,
 junior high and primary school students 200 yen

Further facilities:

Gaien (The outer precinct) covers an area of 330,000 square meters with *Kaigakan* at its centre. Nearby are many sports facilities, such as the Jingu Baseball Stadium, the Second Baseball Stadium, the Golf Driving Range, the Softball Grounds, the Indoor Stadium for Ball Games, the Tennis Club, Ice Skating Rink. In the neighboring areas, there are the National Stadium, which was the main stadium for the Tokyo Olympics, the Chichibunomiya Football Stadium and the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium. In addition to providing these sports facilities, *Gaien* serves as a park, providing the public with excellent recreation opportunities. In autumn, a Gingko Festival is held at *Gaien*.



(Photo: Baseball stadium)



(Photo: Golf driving range)

Address: 1-1 Kasumigaoka, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo

Tel: 03-3401-0312 (Japanese)

Nearest stations: Shinanomachi and Sendagaya on the JR line,
Gaienmae, Kokuritsu-kyogijomae and Aoyama 1-
chome subway stations

URL: <http://www.meijijingugaien.jp/english/>

Kinenkan (Meiji Memorial Hall)

Meiji Memorial Hall



(Photo: *Kinenkan*, view of the central lawn)

Meiji Kinenkan (The Meiji Memorial Hall)

Meiji Kinenkan is the building in which the Constitution of the Empire of Japan was drafted. Later, it was donated to Meiji Jingu. Today, it contains a hall for Shinto weddings, restaurants, and other facilities.

Genuine Grace

Well designed ceremonial halls and high-tech facilities give grace to various kinds of ceremonies, banquets, concerts, fairs, seminars, meetings, and dining.

Address: 2-2-23 Moto-Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Tel: 03-3403-1171 (Japanese)

Nearest stations: Shinanomachi station on the JR line,
Aoyama-itchome on the Ginza, Hanzomon, Oedo
subway line.

URL <http://www.meijikinenkan.gr.jp/english/index.htm>

Glossary, Q&A

- Glossary
- Meiji Jingu Q&A
- Emperor Meiji / Empress Shoken Q&A
- Shinto Q&A
- Shrine visit Q&A

Glossary

Note: The explanations in this glossary are neither comprehensive nor official definitions. They are only attempted translations and rough descriptions of the meanings in the context of the internet pages of Meiji Jingu. These words may have different meanings in other contexts.

- Budo:** "the martial way", expression referring to traditional Japanese martial art(s)
- Budojo:** Training hall for traditional Japanese martial arts
- Bunkakan:** "culture house", circular building on the grounds of Meiji Jingu
- Dojo:** Training hall for a traditional Japanese art (a "way")
- Ema:** Wooden tablet(s), onto which wishes may be written
- Gagaku:** ancient Japanese Imperial court music
- Gaien:** Outer precinct (as opposed to "inner precinct" naien)
- Gehaiden:** Outer hall in front of the main shrine building
- Goshuin:** Memorial seal (stamp and calligraphy) of a Shinto shrine.
- Gyoen:** Imperial Garden
- Gyosei:** a poem composed by an emperor
- Guji:** chief priest (of a shrine)
- Harae:** purification
- Haraesha:** "purification hut" (at Meiji Jingu: opposite the South *Temizuya*)
- Higashi-Shinmon:** Eastern gate to the courtyard in front of the main shrine building.
- Homotsuden:** Treasure Museum
- Homotsutenjishitsu:** Exhibition hall belonging to the Treasure Museum (however, this exhibition hall is located at *Bunkakan*)
- Inner precinct:** The area containing the sacred forest and shrine buildings (as opposed to the outer precinct containing additional facilities)
- Jingu:** Shinto shrine. ("Jingu" is one of several terms referring to Shinto shrines.)
- Jingu Kaikan:** Assembly hall of the shrine
- Juyosho:** Amulet office(s). An Amulet office is a place where amulets, emblems, and other items are distributed.
- Kagura:** sacred Shinto dance
- Kaguraden:** Hall for sacred music and dance
- Kakuuntei:** name of the tea house inside *Gyoen*
- Kamidana:** Shinto house altar
- Kannushi:** Shinto priest
- Kiganbun:** Letter to the deities.
- Kigansai:** Ceremony including personal wishes, conducted at *Kaguraden*.
- Kitasando:** Northern approach. This expression refers to the main approach to the main shrine buildings from the North. It is also the name of the closest station to this approach (Fukutoshin line).
- Koto:** Japanese zither
- Kyudo:** "the way of the bow", Japanese archery, a discipline of Japanese *Budo*
- Magokoro:** sincere heart (This is also the name of a quarterly leaflet in English which is distributed at *Meiji Jingu*.)
- Main shrine building:** The central building of the shrine containing chambers for the enshrined deities.
- Meiji:** The posthumous name of Emperor Mutsuhito, and also the name of the era of his reign.
- Meiji Jingu:** Meiji Shrine.
- Miko:** shrine maiden
- Minamisando:** Southern approach. The main approach to the main shrine buildings from the South.
- Minami-Shinmon:** The Southern gate to the courtyard in front of the main shrine buildings. It is also called *Romon*.
- Miuta:** a poem composed by an empress
- Nagadono:** This is the name of the long *Juyosho* opposite *Kaguraden*.
- Naien:** Inner precinct (as opposed to "outer precinct" *gaien*)
- Naihaiden:** Inner hall in front of the main shrine building.
- Nikkusai:** ceremony at 8 am and 2 pm every day, offering sacred food and prayers
- Nishisando gate:** the West entrance of Meiji Jingu
- Nishi-Shinmon:** Western gate to the courtyard in front of the main shrine building.
- Ofuda:** Emblem (of a shrine).
- Omamori:** Lucky charm.
- Omikuji:** Lot(s) drawn for good fortune

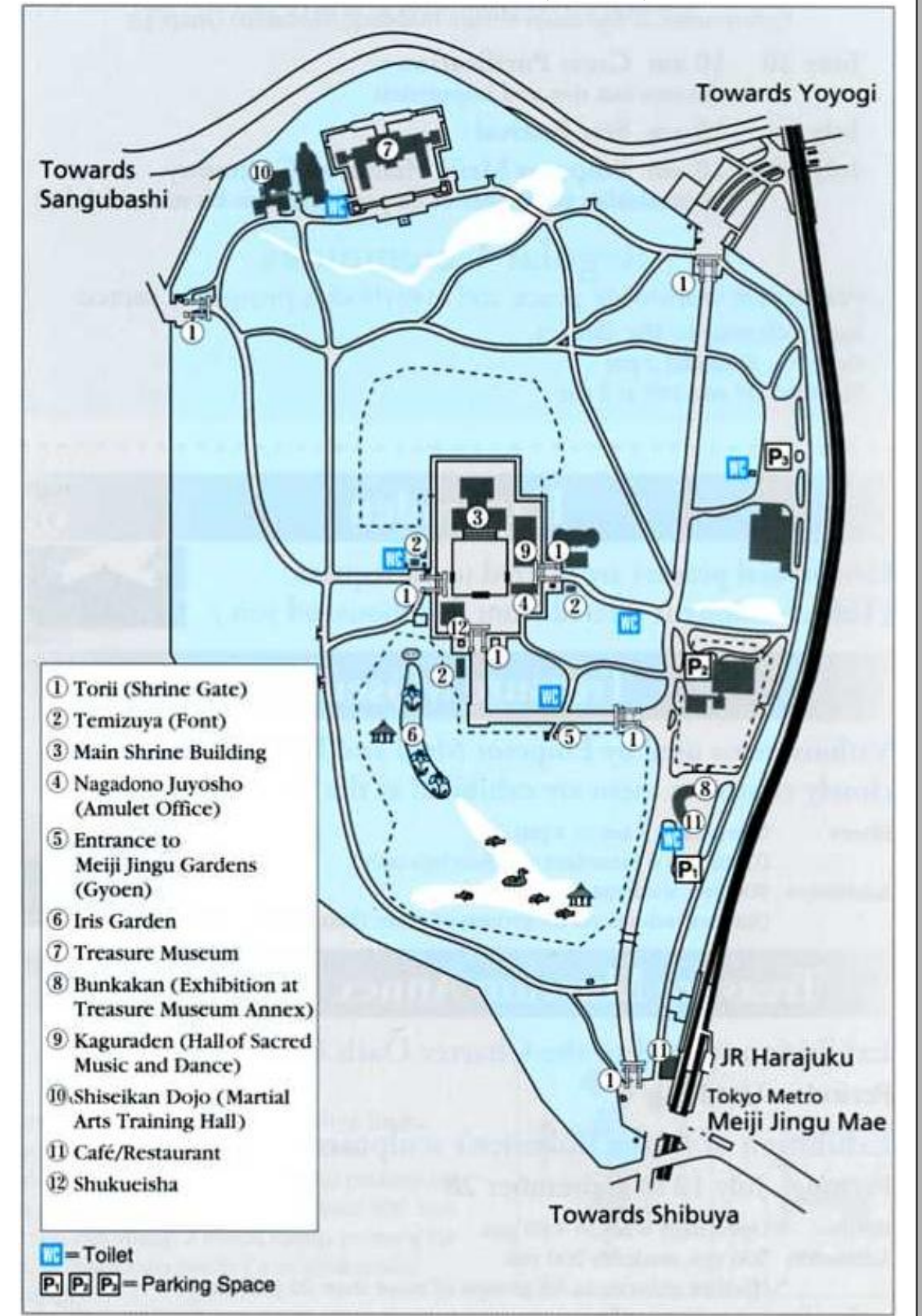
Omotesando: name of the main street approaching Meiji Jingu
Outer precinct: Outer area of the shrine, containing additional facilities
Purification wand: A long object used for purification. It is swayed three times (left, right, left) above the persons or items to be purified. Often, a branch of the *Sakaki* tree is used as a purification wand, or a stick with lots of white paper streamers.
Saikan: building where priests and shrine maidens change into their robes (no access)
Sakaki: *Cleyera japonica*. This is a Japanese tree that is sacred in Shinto and is therefore often used as a *Purification wand* or as a *Tamagushi*.
Sake: Japanese rice wine
Sangubashi: name of the station in the West of Meiji Jingu
Sanpai: visiting a shrine, paying respect at a shrine
Sanshuden: meeting hall on the shrine grounds
Satsuma-Biwa: a special type of *Biwa*
Seishiki-Sanpai: formal greeting ceremony at a shrine
Shamusho: Shrine office
Shiseikan: the name of Meiji Jingu's *Budojo*
Shoken: The name of Emperor *Meiji's* wife.
Shubatsu: purification rite
Shukueisha: This is the name of the building opposite the South *Juyosho* at Meiji Jingu.
Tatami: rice straw mat (standard size approximately 90 cm x 180 cm). Please take off your shoes and wear socks when you step onto Tatami. Thank you.
Temizu: action of rinsing hands and mouth for purification before entering a sacred area or participating in a ceremony
Temizuya: Font at the entrance to the inner area of a shrine, containing water and dippers (ladles) to rinse hands and mouth.
Torii: Shrine gate
Tsukinamisa: Regular monthly ceremonies (in the case of Meiji Jingu on the 1st and 15th of every month)
Urasando: name of the street connecting *Naien* and *Gaien*
Waka: traditional Japanese poem of 31 syllables (5-7-5-7-7 syllables)

Map, contact, opening hours

▶ Map	▶ Access	▶ Contact	▶ Opening hours
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Map [\(This map is clickable\)](#)

Please find some maps below to help you find your way around the shrine grounds. Clicking onto the various places and buildings on this first map will lead you directly to related web pages.



Welcome to Meiji Jingu!

This is a Shinto shrine.
You are entering a
sacred area, so please
observe the following:



No smoking



No food/drink



No jogging



No pets



Stay on paths



Don't enter forest



Don't collect plants/animals

WC

P₁

P₂

P₃

Bench

Smoking area

Exceptions:



Food/drink ok



No photos



Be quiet



Food/drink ok



Shops



Smoking area



Food/drink ok



Main approach
Pedestrians only



Drive way

(Photo: Extended map of *Naien*)

Parking space for bicycles is provided at each of the three entrances to the shrine. Please do not cycle on the shrine grounds.

Wheelchairs can be borrowed at *Bunkakan*.

This month's highlights

▶ This month ▶ Previous months

This month

■ Iris Special Feature



Photo: Irises in full bloom(June 12, 2013)



OOZORA

【Iris garden】

The Irises in this garden were planted by the order of Emperor Meiji for Empress Shoken in 1893. There are 150species/1,500 roots with flowers blooming in its season. The specialty of the Irises at Meiji Jingu is that they are surrounded by a deep forest and they make you forget that you are in the megacity. The elegant scenery including small winding paths and gazebo with a thatched roof has been loved by many artists. As the flowers are associated with the enshrined deities, Meiji Jingu is taking special care of them, and you can also see there the iris “Sho-ou flower” produce d by the famous flower artist in Edo period, Sadatomo Matsudaira or so-called Sho-ou.

【Opening Hours】 All throughout the year

Months	Hours
March to October	9 am to 4:30 pm
November to February	9 am to 4 pm
June	8 am to 5 pm (to 6 pm on Saturday and Sunday)

Contribution for maintenance

500 yen

Access

Five-minute walk from Harajuku Station (JR Yamanote line) or Meiji-jingumae (harajuku) Station (Tokyo Metro Chiyoda line, Fukutoshin line)

Ten-minute walk from Yoyogi Station (Toei Oedo line), Sangubashi Station (Odakyu line), or Kita-sando Station (Tokyo Metro Fukutoshin line)

■ 「Emperor Meiji—In remembrance of His era—」 at Tresure Museum Annex (Bunkakan)



Period	June 9 to September 21
Hours	9 am to 4: 30 pm (last admission 4 pm)
Contribution for maintenance	
500 yen	