

# Nara City Sightseeing Guide

From 710 to 784 the capital of Japan, Heijokyo, was located in present day Nara City. As is shown by the number of extant historical Buddhist images and buildings around Nara City, Japanese culture flourished here under the reign of successive emperors and empresses during that era. Several historical sites have been registered on UNESCO's World Heritage List as "Historical Monuments of Ancient Nara". Undoubtedly Nara is a treasure house of ancient history and culture set in a beautiful natural environment.

## World Heritage Site Todaiji Temple



This temple is famous for the massive Vairocana statue, which is popularly known as Daibutsu (Great Buddha). Founded in the 8th century, the Daibutsuden hall which houses the statue was burned down twice in fires that broke out as a result of war. The present structure, which was rebuilt in 1709, was scaled down to two-thirds of the original size. Nevertheless it is the largest wooden structures in the world.  
Hours: 8:00-16:30 (Nov. to Feb.) 8:00-17:00 (Mar.) 7:30-17:30 (Apr. to Sept.) 7:30-17:00 (Oct.)

## World Heritage Site Kohfukuji Temple



Originally founded in the 7th century, 2010 marks the 1300 anniversary of the foundation of this temple. The five-story pagoda, a symbol of Nara City, was reconstructed about 500 years ago (1426) after it had burned down five times. A lot of national treasures and cultural treasures are exhibited at the temple's museum, Kokuhokan.  
Hours: 9:00-17:00 (Last admission at 16:45)

## World Heritage Site Kasuga Taisha Shrine



Both paths to this shrine are lined with approx. 2000 stone lanterns, and the eaves of the shrine itself are decorated with around a thousand hanging bronze lanterns. It is also impressive to see the vermilion colored shrine buildings with cypress-bark roof stand in harmony with the natural environment. For information regarding the origin of this shrine, please read "Why are there so many deer in the park?" in this leaflet.  
Hours: 9:00-16:00 (Homotsuden Hall and The Garden of Kasuga Taisha Shrine)

## World Heritage Site Toshodaiji Temple



This temple was founded by Chinese Buddhist priest Jianzhen, Ganjin in Japanese, in 759 as an institute dedicated to the learning of Buddhist commandments. Several buildings in this temple date back to the 8th century. Among them, the main hall is the structure of the 8th century remaining, and the lecture hall is a building used at Heijo Palace.  
Hours: 8:30-17:00 (Last admission at 16:30)

## World Heritage Site Yakushiji Temple



Originally founded in 680, this temple prospered under the patronage of the imperial court in the 8th century. Since that time, the temple was tragically lose all of its buildings to fire, with the exception of its east pagoda. Restoration work has continued since 1967, and today, visitors can see many buildings reconstructed by using traditional methods and techniques.  
Hours: 8:30-17:00 (Last admission at 16:30)

## World Heritage Site Heijo Palace Site



For about 70 years from 710, the capital of Japan was Heijokyo located in present day Nara City. Heijo Palace was situated at the northern end of the capital. Covering approx. 1.3 km from east to west and approx. 1 km from north to south, this site has been preserved as a special historic spot of Japan. Both of the Suzakumon Gate (1998) and Daigokuden Hall (2010) were restored.  
Hours: 9:00-16:30 (Last admission 16:00) It is closed on Mondays.

## World Heritage Site Gangoji Temple



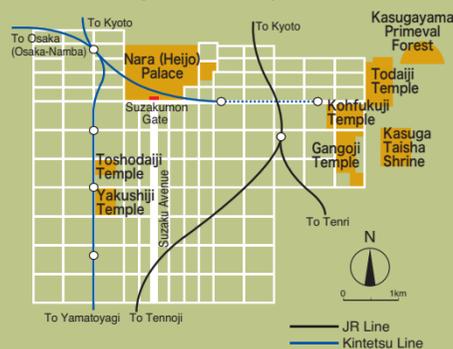
This temple was originally founded in the 6th century as the first Buddhist temple in Japan. Even today several 6th century-roof-tiles are used for its Gokurakubo and Zenshitsu halls. These halls are said to be the architectural remains of the 8th century dormitory for Buddhist monks.  
Hours: 9:00-17:00 (Last admission at 16:30)

## World Heritage Site Kasugayama Primeval Forest



This sacred forest extends behind the Kasuga Taisha Shrine. Since 841 when hunting and logging in this forest were banned, the forest has been preserved in the primeval condition. This has made the forest a sanctuary for various protected species.

### The old map of Nara City



## Sightseeing spots

### Nara Park 奈良公園

Located in the central part of Nara City, this vast green area, popularly known as Nara Park, encompasses four world heritage sites of UNESCO. Their origins date back to at least the 8th century. In this park, history and nature blend in harmony. Another charm of this park is deer. Approx. 1200 wild deer roam around freely and they are so tame that you can make friends with them!

### ★Why are there so many deer in the park?

According to legend, when Kasuga Taisha Shrine was founded as a family shrine for the Fujiwaras, a dominant aristocrat clan in the 8th century, they invited a mighty god from Kashima Shrine (in present day Ibaraki Prefecture). The god is said to have come to Nara riding on a white deer. Since then, deer have been respected and protected as divine messengers by local people.



### ★Feed the deer Shika Senbei (deer crackers)!

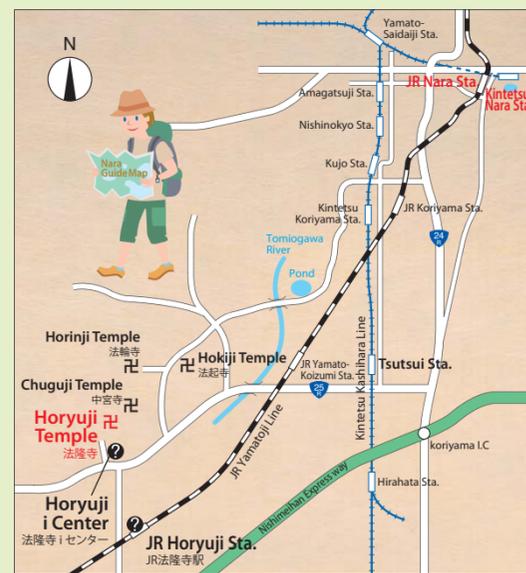
The deer in Nara Park eat grass, bamboo leaves and buds. But Shika Senbei (deer crackers) is their favorite food. You can buy these crackers at several spots in the park. The deer in this park are so polite that they bow to you when they ask you for Shika Senbei!

### Nara National Museum (9:30~17:00) 奈良国立博物館

This neo-classical building was constructed as the third national museum in Japan in 1895 in Nara Park. Today this building is open to the public as Nara Buddhist Sculpture Hall. In 1973 a new museum building was constructed, and is used for special exhibitions.

### Isuien Gaeden (9:30~16:30) 依水園

This garden is full of charms; ponds, stepping stones, tea houses, a watermill, seasonal flowers... One of the most impressive scenes is a view of the Nandaimon Gate of Todaiji Temple and Wakakusayama Hill from the garden. They are incorporated into the garden as if they were a part of it.

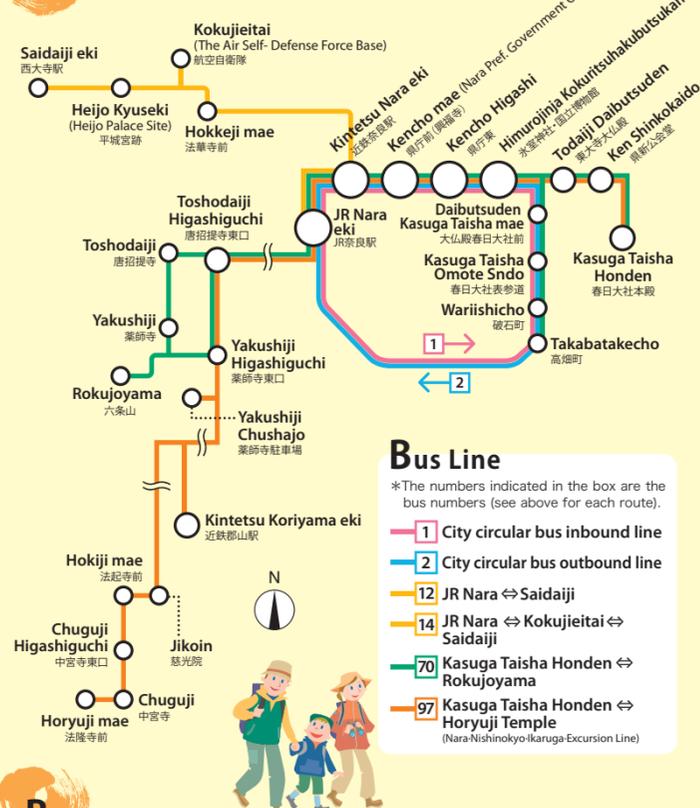


### Horyuji Temple

(8:00~17:00 (Feb.22 to Nov.3) / 8:00~16:30 (Nov.4 to Feb.21)) 法隆寺

This temple is famous for including the oldest wooden buildings in the world. Originally founded in 607, the temple buildings were reconstructed in the early 8th century after being lost in fire. The five-story pagoda, the main hall, and some of the buildings have remained intact since then. In addition, various historical treasures including Buddhist images are on display at the temple's museum, Daihozoden.

## Bus Route Map



### Bus Line

\*The numbers indicated in the box are the bus numbers (see above for each route).

- 1 City circular bus inbound line
- 2 City circular bus outbound line
- 12 JR Nara ↔ Saidaiji
- 14 JR Nara ↔ Kokujeitai ↔ Saidaiji
- 70 Kasuga Taisha Honden ↔ Rokujoyama
- 97 Kasuga Taisha Honden ↔ Horyuji Temple (Nara-Nishinokyo-Ikaruga-Excursion Line)

## Bus Stops



Kintetsu Nara Sta. Bus Stop	1	2	70	97
	8	70	97	
	9	1		
	13	12	14	

JR Nara Sta. Bus Stop	1	2	70	97
	7	12	14	
	10	70	97	
	11	1		

\*For indicated bus lines, see the map above.

## Souvenirs to suit your budget

~¥1,000	Amulet of various kinds; Handkerchief printed with the Shoso-in pattern; Deer antler goods. (key holders, paper-knives, etc.)
~¥2,000	T-shirts (printed with Sumo wrestlers or the Ukiyoe pictures); Japanese folding fans; fancy goods with a kimono pattern such as coasters, toiletry goods, pouches, etc.
¥2,000~	Linen goods (table center, curtains etc.); Yoshino cedar handicrafts (picture frames etc.); incense and burners; Nara fans, Nara dolls; Akahada-yaki earthenware goods.

\*The above-mentioned souvenirs can all be purchased at the shops introduced below.

### Souvenirs & Gifts

Along the Sanjo, Higashimuki and Mochiidoon streets are souvenir shops, secondhand Kimono shops, antique shops, Nara specialty shops, and others. You can enjoy shopping to your taste and on your budget.

The Nara National Museum has a museum shop on its basement floor. Visitors may drop in whether they have an admission ticket or not. Various items including books, picture cards, and fabrics with traditional patterns are available. At Kite-Mite Nara Shop near the Kintetsu Nara Station, a wide variety of local specialties of Nara Prefecture are available.

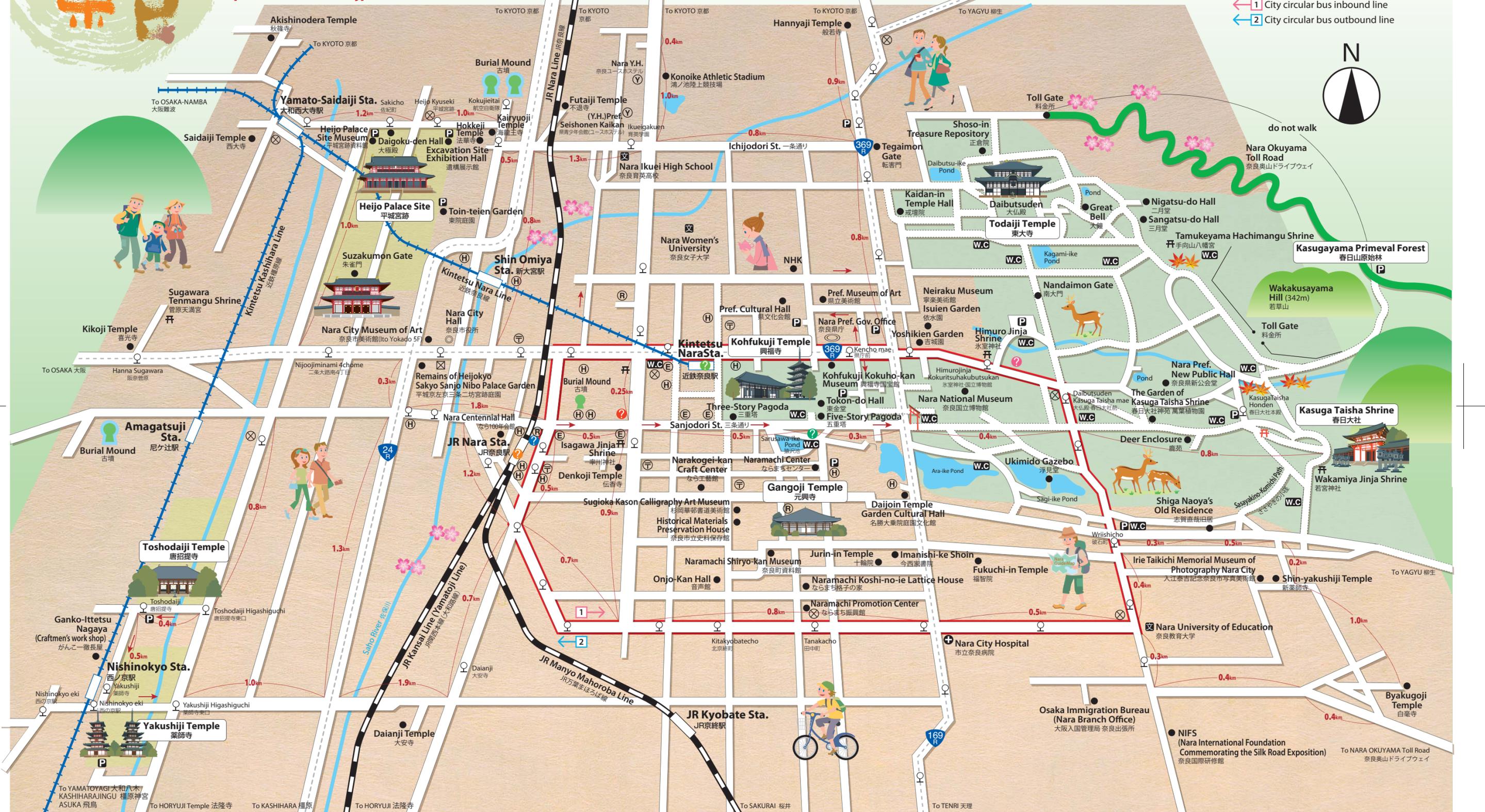
\*Beside these two shops, there are many other shops, such as the ¥100 stores, recycled stores and souvenir shops located in Sanjo-dori street, Higashimuki, and Mochiidoon shopping streets.

# Nara Sightseeing MAP

■ <http://narashikanko.jp/en/index.html>

**Legend**

- Nara Prefectural Gov. Office
- Nara City Hall
- ⊗ Police Station
- ⊗ Koban (Plice Box)
- ♀ Bus Stop
- ⚓ Shrine
- Ⓜ Post Office
- Ⓜ Hotel
- Ⓜ Exchange (Bank)
- Ⓜ Rent-a-Cycle
- Ⓜ Youth Hostel
- Ⓜ School
- Ⓜ Hospital
- Ⓜ Lavatory
- Ⓜ Parking
- Nara Park
- City Loop
- JR Line
- Kintetsu Line
- 1 City circular bus inbound line
- 2 City circular bus outbound line



**Telephone**

NARA CITY HALL ..... TEL. (0742)34-1111  
 NARA PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE ..... TEL. (0742)22-1101  
 NARA POLICE STATION ..... TEL. (0742)33-0110  
 NARA PREFECTURAL HOSPITAL ..... TEL. (0742)46-6001  
 NARA CITY HOSPITAL ..... TEL. (0742)24-1251

**Nara City Tourist Information Centers**

1 Nara City Tourist Information Center (Sanjodori St.)  
 Hours:9:00-21:00  
 (Closed for the year-end and new-year holidays) ..... TEL. (0742) 22-3900

2 JR Nara Station Hours:9:00-17:00

3 Kintetsu-Nara Station Hours:9:00-17:00

4 Sarusawa Information Hours:9:00-17:00 (Closed for the year-end and new-year holidays)

5 Nara City Tourist Information Center (Next to JR Nara Station)  
 Hours:9:00-21:00 ..... TEL. (0742) 27-2223

Left Luggage office .....available time:9a.m.-7p.m.  
 ●open every day of a year ●cost:400 yen/1baggage

6 Nara Prefecture Tourist Information Center Hours:10:00-17:00

**Free Tours in English**

Nara S.G.G.Club ..... TEL. (0742)22-5595 FAX. (0742)22-5595  
 Nara Student Guide ..... TEL. (0742)26-4753 FAX. (0742)26-1991  
 Nara YMCA Goodwill Guides ..... TEL. (0742)45-5920