

KAMAKURA, See it with your own eyes!!

KAMAKURA, Ancient city of “SAMURAI”



(Yabusame, horseback archery)

The great samurai leader, Minamoto-no Yoritomo decided to establish the first samurai government in Japan, and placed his headquarters in Kamakura in 1180.

Yoritomo founded an independent political system, known as Baku-fu or Shogunate, controlled by the samurai class in 1183. This system was to last about 700 years, and came to an end in 1867 with the Meiji Restoration when sovereign power was returned to the Emperor.

Geographical feature of KAMAKURA

Yoritomo chose Kamakura as his headquarters due to its geographical advantages. Kamakura was strategically easy to defend because of the steep hills on the east, west and north sides. From the south, it was only accessible by sea. From 1183, Kamakura was the ancient Shogunate capital of Japan for 150 years, and the spirit and life style of samurai during the period of the Kamakura Shogunate significantly influenced modern Japanese culture, such as Shintoism, Buddhism, architecture, works of art, as well as Japanese cuisine.

Temples, Shrines & Japanese Culture

Many Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines were built by the Shoguns and their clans to worship their deities, or to console the souls of their ancestors.

Many of them still remain and are maintained as part of the historical heritage of Kamakura.

Zen Buddhism was introduced from China in the late 12th century, and it received followers from among the samurai class and gained the patronage of the Kamakura Shogunate. Meanwhile, new Buddhist sects such as Ji sect and Nichiren sect were founded in the Kamakura period and preached to the general public. Thus, it could be said that the religious beliefs developed at this time were extremely influential in forming Japanese spiritual culture.



Tourism in Kamakura & Kamakura Welcome Guides

Kamakura is located about 30 miles (45km) southwest of Tokyo, and it can be reached in 55 minutes by train from Tokyo station on the JR Yokosuka Line. Due to its easy access, more than 18 million sightseers visit Kamakura every year to enjoy day trips or short stays.

We, **KAMAKURA WELCOME GUIDES**, are very pleased to welcome visitors from abroad or non-Japanese residents in Japan, and we hope you will enjoy a “Kamakura Walking Tour” with us, making your visit to Kamakura more pleasurable and memorable.



KAMAKURA WALKING TOUR

Half day tour, Full day tour and Free plan tours

Please choose any 2 sights for a half day 3-hour tour, or 3 sights for a full day 5-hour tour from the 8 recommended sights as follows. We also provide you with free plans at your requested time, length and places to visit.

The eight recommended sights

Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shinto Shrine

The biggest Shinto Shrine and one of the most popular tourist destinations in Kamakura. This shrine was founded in 1180 by the first shogun Minamoto Yoritomo. It's very famous for its Yabusame, (horseback archery) and a 1,000 years old ginkgo tree. Unfortunately, this huge and beautiful ginkgo tree was blown down by strong wind in March 2010.

(15-min. walk from Kamakura st.) Admission fee: free



Great Buddha(Daibutsu)

One of the biggest Buddha Statues in Japan. A seated Statue of Amida Buddha, cast in bronze in 1252. It is 11 meter-tall and 121 tons. He used to have his own house but it was washed away by a huge tsunami tidal wave in the 15th century. Since then he has been sitting alone in the open air. It is a national treasure.

(10-min. walk from Hase st.) Admission fee: 200yen



Hasedera temple

One of the oldest temples in Kamakura. The temple is famous for its 11 headed goddess of mercy which is 9 meters tall and covered with gold leaf. You can enjoy a great view of the Pacific Ocean from the top of this temple's grounds.

(5-min. walk from Hase st.) Admission fee: 300yen



Engakuji temple (Zen temple)

Established in 1282 to console the souls of the Japanese and Mongolian soldiers who died during the Mongolian invasion of Japan. The temple bell and Shariden(enshrined Buddha's relics) are a must see!

(1min-walk from Kitakamakura st.) Admission fee: 300yen



Kenchoji temple (Zen temple)

The first and oldest Zen monastery in Japan. It is more than 700 years old. And a lot of young monks still practice Zen meditation within its walls. It has a temple bell regarded as a national treasure and you can appreciate the minimalist simplicity of a typical Zen garden.

(15-min. walk from Kitakamakura st.) Admission fee: 300yen



Kamakura beaches

A breathtaking view of a dramatic sunset from Zaimokuza beach. If you are lucky enough on a clear day, you can enjoy the majestic form of Mt. Fuji behind Enoshima island from Zaimokuza beach or Inamuragasaki beach.

(You can walk to the beaches from most stations of the Enoden local line.)



Hokokuji temple (Zen temple)

This temple is known as the "Bamboo Temple" for the beautiful bamboo grove situated inside its grounds. Listen carefully to the sound of 2,000 bamboos trembling in the breeze as rays of sunshine filter through them. Attain peace of mind sipping Japanese Matcha green tea in this wonderful garden.

(15-min. bus ride from Kamakura St.) Admission fee: free

Bamboo garden admission fee :200yen Matcha green tea: 500yen



Zeniarai Benzaiten Shrine

One of the most popular shrines in Kamakura because of the unique myth associated with it. Legend has it that if you wash money in the shrine's water, you'll achieve financial success. Why not try it and become a millionaire?

(30-min. walk from the west exit of Kamakura St.) Admission fee: free



Examples of tours

A Half day tour: two sights in three hours

- A1 Essential Kamakura: Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine + Great Buddha
- A2 Hasedera temple + Great Buddha
- A3 Hokokuji temple + Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine
- A4 Zeniarai Benzaiten Shrine + Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine
- A5 Kenchoji temple + Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine
- A6 Great Buddha + Kamakura beach

B Full day tour: three sights in five hours

- B1 Kamakura authentic 1: Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine + Great Buddha + Hasedera temple
- B2 Kamakura authentic 2: Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine + Great Buddha + Zen temple (Engakuji temple or Kenchoji temple)
- B3 Great Buddha + Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine + Hokokuji temple
- B4 Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine + Zeniarai Benzaiten shrine + Great Buddha
- B5 Tsurugaoka Hachimangu shrine + Great Buddha or Hasedera temple + Kamakura beach

Free Plans:

We will design a tour to meet your needs. Just request a start time, desired tour length and tell us where you would like to visit, not limited to the eight sights, and we'll do the rest! Please note that tours are day time hour only and the maximum length is 5 hours. Please let us know your requests on your application form.

