

# Stroll around the Higashiyama mountain range.

Stretch your imagination to lively forests 100 years from now.

We develop forests in Kyoto, and by doing so we are establishing our relationships with them in a new context.

Higashiyama Walking Map

The Council for Kyoto Traditional Forest Culture's forest development efforts are possible thanks to your support.

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Special thanks! Six Senses Kyoto

**Purpose of establishment and detailed activity information**

<https://kyoto-dentoubunkanomori.jp/>

**Check out our Instagram!**

[https://www.instagram.com/kyoto\\_den\\_bun/](https://www.instagram.com/kyoto_den_bun/)

**Donations and support for our activities**

<https://kyoto-dentoubunkanomori.jp/support/>

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## Transformation of the Three Mountain Ranges in Kyoto over Time



What is expected of Kyoto? Look for clues to forest development for the future while tracing the changes that these forests have undergone!

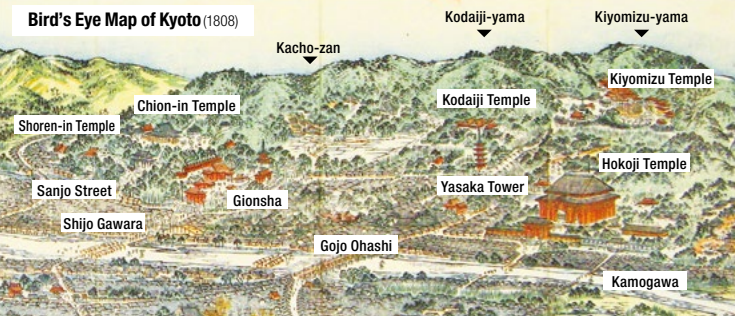
### Vegetation changes since the 9th century

Life in the capital and a tree culture nurtured by the forest

Timber for the construction of Heian-kyo was supplied from Keihoku in Ukyo-ku, transported by raft along the Hozu River. Firewood and charcoal for daily life were continuously provided from Kyoto's three surrounding mountain ranges and nearby areas. As the land became increasingly depleted, pine forests came to dominate the landscape, and these mountains became enduring symbols of Japanese culture.

- ca. 8th century Red pine and oaks began to increase.
- 9th century- Secondary groves of mainly red pine and oaks were formed due to commercial use of firewood and charcoal.
- 13th century- Distribution of red pine gradually increased.
- 17th century- The area was interspersed with red-pine-dominant groves and bushlands.

In the past, people used red pine and azalea logs as firewood. From the Kamakura period to the early Showa period, peddlers called *oharame*, who carried firewood on their heads, peddled around Kyoto. Even today, red pine from the forests is used for the five giant bonfires on the mountains and for the Kurama Fire Festival. But it is getting harder to collect firewood because of deteriorating forests.



In the Bird's Eye Map of Kyoto published in the late Edo period, pine trees can be seen around the summit of Kacho-zan, while few tall trees are depicted on Kodaiji-yama; bushlands and grasslands spread on hills to the north of Sanjo Street. (Owned by the Kyoto City Library of Historical Documents)

I see that the mountains changing their scenery every season have influenced works of poems, stories, and paintings. Art that culminated in the medieval period has indeed been passed down infallibly to date.



### A Turning Point Occurred 100 Years Ago

Forests began to deteriorate as soon as people ceased taking care of them.

Tree-felling in Higashiyama was banned when the forests were nationalized after the Meiji Restoration, and the area was abandoned from care by people. In addition, the relationships between humans and forests became increasingly weak due to the shift to fossil fuels, increased foreign timber imports, and lifestyle changes brought about by the economic boom.

- Around 1900 Forests dominantly interspersed with red pine, firewood forests, and silver grass lands. Forests owned by temples and shrines were nationalized and logging was restricted.
- Around 1930 Severely damaged due to the Muroto typhoon (1934). Demand for timbers grew for use in the recovery following World War II.
- Around 1960 Fuel revolution and the liberalization of timber imports took place. Red pine groves and broad-leaved forests consisting of oaks emerged.
- Around 1970 Rapid economic growth peaked, the area was designated as a nature preservation area, and the law for preservation of ancient cities was enacted.

Demand for firewood dropped, resulting in people scarcely caring for mountains.

## We aim for creating healthy forests unique to Kyoto.

Many trees live longer than humans. Indeed, quite a few tree species live more than 100 years. With a vision of the forests we want to preserve for future Kyoto, we are developing forests, establishing relationships between forests and humans in a new context.



### A discerning eye to put the right tree in the right place, in harmony with nature

Forest environments are not uniform. Ridges and gullies have different aspects of sunlight, wind, and soil quality. Different tree species are fond of different environments and grow at different rates. Because plants cannot move by themselves, humans who plant them have a substantial responsibility. Our tree planting efforts consider harmony with surrounding trees.



### Planting locally-born and -raised seedlings

Even the same tree species have genetic differences if their habitat regions differ. We plant seedlings that have been raised from seeds of local trees.



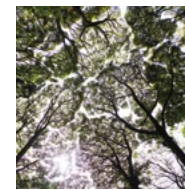
### Aiming for beautiful forests full of diverse life

Blossoming trees that tell of seasonal changes, trees that create shade in the summer, deciduous trees that make the autumn colorful, conifers that are attractive with snow, trees that bear blossoms, fruits, and nuts, and so on—we plant trees by combining various species at non-uniform, irregular intervals. A forest that grows a variety of tree species provides habitat for a variety of life forms, such as insects, birds, and small animals.



### Forests that prevent sediment disasters and ensure safety

Trees spread their roots deep in the earth and firmly retain the soil, preventing soil erosion and slope failure caused by rain. In recent years in Japan, landslides have occurred frequently due to torrential rain. Because of this, the role of forest development in disaster prevention has been a focus of attention.

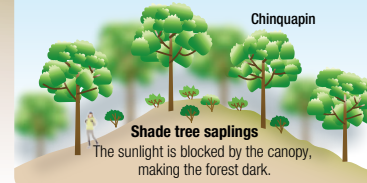


### Monitoring surveys and growth facilitation

We cut down trees that hinder the growth of planted seedlings and monitor new growth to verify the effectiveness of tree planting.



### A forest dominated by evergreen chinquapin



Shade tree saplings  
The sunlight is blocked by the canopy, making the forest dark.

### The perspective of cutting trees = revitalizing the forest

Some forests have been abandoned for a long span of years, becoming dark and losing diversity, which has led to their deterioration. A way of revitalizing such forests and making them healthy is to cut down excessive chinquapin trees and dead jolcham oak trees.

### 2020

The council published a book describing its philosophy and past activities in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the council.

*Forests and Culture of Kyoto*. Edited by the Council for Kyoto Traditional Forest Culture. Nakanishiya Shuppan, 2020.



### 2007

The Council for Kyoto Traditional Forest Culture was established.

The council worked on cultural value information dissemination projects, such as seminars and symposia, as well as forest development projects and citizen participation programs, gaining supporters and activity partners.



Chinquapin blossoms are in full bloom in Higashiyama. In front is the west tower gate of Yasaka Shrine.

### Rapid Changes in the Past 50 Years

Momentum for conservation activities rose in response to the devastating change in appearance of the three mountain ranges.

Vegetation succession continued in the forests uncared for by humans. Pine trees died, and chinquapin became dominant. In Higashiyama in early summer, patches of chinquapin blossoms increasingly spread each year, further transforming the landscape. Confronted by the strange look of the once-familiar three mountain ranges, we at last recognized the crisis.

#### Around 1970

Red pine trees began to die.



Red pine trees died because pine wilt nematode, a nonnative species, propagated in the tree and inhibited the flow of water from the roots to leaves.

#### Late 1970s

Evergreen, broad-leaved chinquapin trees became dominant.



In the red pine habitat, after red pine trees died, chinquapin became dominant. White-yellow chinquapin flowers stand out in verdurous Higashiyama.

#### Since 2000

Low trees eaten away by Japanese deer.



Deer feeding damage has become an issue throughout Japan. There is an increasing risk of disasters as soil and sand erosion risk increases.

#### Around 2010

Oak tree death increased sharply.



Jolcham oak and chinquapin trees turned reddish brown and died. A fungus transmitted by the oak ambrosia beetle is the cause.

The traditions and culture of Kyoto developed by drawing inspiration from the three mountain ranges. We can't overlook that these areas are in a crisis situation!

We have launched the forest development project envisioning the forests that we should preserve for future generations.



# Have Fun Strolling Around through Forests in Higashiyama

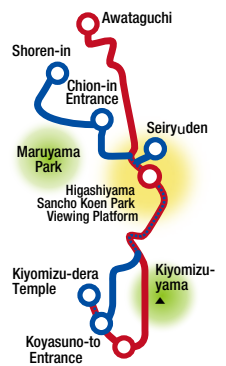
## HIGASHIYAMA WALKING MAP

The foot of Higashiyama Mountain is one of Kyoto's most popular tourist areas, embracing many shrines, temples, and cultural facilities. The ridgelines viewed from the foot of the mountain look just like those painted on folding screens. Once you step into the forest, you will find yourself awash in life, as you take a winding, sloped path to arrive at a viewing platform on a summit. While viewing the Kyoto basin, extend your imagination to the never-ending stories of forests and humans.



### Council for Kyoto Traditional Forest Culture's area of activities

#### State-owned Kodaiji-yama forest Recommended strolling trails



From Kiyomizu-dera Temple through the viewing platform to Awataguchi

Traverse a course with sun shining through tree leaves

about  
3.5km  
100min.

From Shoren-in through Seiryu-den to Kiyomizu-dera Temple

Historic Kyoto Course

### For your safe and pleasant strolling

- Forests are alive. Never cause damage to animals or plants!
- Smoking, open fire, and fireworks are prohibited because they may cause a fire!
- Take all your trash away.
- Wear clothes suitable for trekking and carry equipment in case of sudden changes in the weather.

Caution! Although walking trails are laid down in the forests, there are some blocked points at dangerous locations. Read information boards and cautions along the path to enjoy strolling at your own responsibility.

### Please Note!

#### Have fun along winding paths through a cypress grove

As you take the ascending path from Awataguchi, you first enter a cypress grove. Since ancient times, Japanese cypress trees have been extensively used as quality timbers to build shrines and temples. Their bark serves as a thatching material. Phytoncide, a fragrant component of cypress, has a relaxation effect. As you look back at the middle of the slope, you will find the Heian Shrine Torii Gate.

### Please Note!

#### Restoration of indigenous kikutanigiku

*Kikutanigiku* loves sunny and dry gullies. This species of chrysanthemum was native to the Kikutani gully in Kodaiji-yama but became extinct as people abandoned caring for the gully, and chinquapin became dominant, blocking the sunlight. With the aim of restoring indigenous *kikutanigiku*, our council cuts down chinquapin trees to give the gully more sunshine, gaining support from local people.

### Please Note!

#### From a dimly lit grove to a radiant, sunny grove

While some trees love sunshine, others can live in shady places. They have different leaf shapes and grow roots differently. The first step in developing a forest in which diverse animals and plants flourish is to create a variety of habitats. Our council cuts down excessively abundant chinquapin trees to create more brightly lit spaces and then plants diverse tree species such as azaleas, maples, cherries, and Japanese cypress.

### Utilizing logged trees, while planting and raising new trees to reestablish close relationships between forests and humans

Our forest development efforts include disseminating information on the current state of the three mountain ranges to many people and drawing their attention to the forests. Indeed, people's fading interest in forests is one reason for the current state of the area. There were times when people entered forests frequently and took care of them to continue to use and benefit from them. With those times in mind, our council endeavors to develop forests in cooperation with local people.



### Please Note!

#### Sanjo Keihan

The Sanjo Keihan is located along the approach to Yasaka Shrine, the patron shrine of the Gion Festival. The shrine's main hall, a national treasure, is thatched with Japanese cypress bark. From the Gion shopping street, where tourists come and go, you will see the Higashiyama ridge-line over the shrine's west gate.

### Gion Shopping Street

The Gion shopping street is located along the approach to Yasaka Shrine, the patron shrine of the Gion Festival. The shrine's main hall, a national treasure, is thatched with Japanese cypress bark. From the Gion shopping street, where tourists come and go, you will see the Higashiyama ridge-line over the shrine's west gate.

### Otani Sobyō Temple

The Otani Sobyō Temple is an enclave of Higashi Honganji and serves as the burial site of Shinran Shinon. The main hall and the Gobyō Karamon gate, both constructed during the Genroku era (1688-1704), are the oldest surviving buildings owned by Higashi Honganji.

### Yasaka Shrine

The Yasaka Shrine is one of the three Monzeki temples of Enryaku-ji, the Shoren-in Temple was built in the Heian period (794-1185). The big Japanese cinnamon tree in front of the temple's gate is said to have been planted by Master Shinran himself.

### Chion-in Temple

Chion-in Temple is one of the seven gateways to Kyoto. From the late Heian period onward, swordsmiths settled in this area. During the Edo period, it became known for producing Awata ware, a type of pottery fired here.

### Shogunzuka Seiryuden

Shogunzuka Seiryuden stands at the summit where Emperor Kanmu (737-806) made the decision to choose Kyoto as the capital. The big veranda commands a full view of the city of Kyoto. The hall houses the painting of the Blue Fudo, a Buddhist deity. The garden grows hundreds of trees, including maples, cherries, and wisterias.

### Kiyomizu-dera Temple

The main hall's large veranda, a national treasure, is made completely of wood; no nails are used. The veranda, constructed of Japanese cypress timbers, is supported by 18 Japanese zelkova columns approximately 2.3 m in circumference and 12 m in height.

### Koyasuno-to

Koyasuno-to is a traditional Japanese building. It is a place where you can enjoy the view of the Kyoto basin from the top of the mountain.

### Kiyomizu-yama

Kiyomizu-yama is a mountain peak with a viewing platform. It offers a panoramic view of the Kyoto basin.

### Kiyomizu-dera Temple

Kiyomizu-dera Temple is a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is a place where you can enjoy the view of the Kyoto basin from the top of the mountain.

#### Map Legends

- 00 Kyoto Trail (location number)
- Viewpoint
- Required time
- Forest development area
- Gate (shrine grounds boundary)
- Signs installed by the Council for Kyoto Traditional Forest Culture
- Toilet

### Higashiyama Forests Adorned with Colorful Plants

★ Blossoming season ◇ Fall tourism season ● Fruiting season

- Koba-no-mitsuba-tutuji**, a deciduous shrub of the Ericaceae family, often occurs on sunny ridges and blooms vivid pink flowers in early spring. Its slowly burning logs were once used as torches. ★Apr.
- Uwamizu-zakura**, a tall deciduous tree of the Rosaceae family, bears dense clusters of brush-like white blossoms, which have a sweet fragrance. Its fruit turns red in the summer. Its timbers were used for divination purposes in ancient times. ★Apr. to May ●Sep. to Oct.
- Ginnryo-so**, a perennial herb of the Ericaceae family, has no chloroplasts and is characteristically white and translucent. The plant obtains nutrients via parasitic fungi from trees that cohabit with the fungi. ★Apr. to May
- Koba-no-gamazumi**, a deciduous shrub of the Viburnaceae family, bears dense clusters of small white flowers. It bears red fruit in the fall, which is beautiful and loved by wild birds. ★Apr. to May ●Nov.
- Kakumi-no-sunoki**, a deciduous shrub of the Ericaceae family, blooms small bell-shaped flowers in early spring. Its angular fruit ripens red in the summer. ★Apr. to Jun. ●Jul. to Aug.
- Murasakisikibu**, a deciduous shrub of the Rosaceae family, is an opposite-leaved plant. It is found along strolling paths and bears purple fruit, which is loved by wild birds. ●Oct. to Nov.
- Nanakamado**, a tall deciduous tree of the Rosaceae family, is common in cool mountain areas and, thus, is relatively rare in Higashiyama. The plant was much prized because it was processed into quality hard charcoal. ★May to Jul. ◇Nov. to Dec.
- O-aridoshi**, an evergreen shrub of the Rubiaceae family, blooms funnel-shaped flowers in the spring and bears eye-catching red fruit in the fall. ★Apr. to May ●Nov. to Jan.
- Kakure-mino**, an evergreen tall tree of the Araliaceae family, has young leaves that sprout in the spring and summer and old leaves that turn yellow. Its leaves have varied shapes.
- Ko-ji**, an evergreen tall tree of the Fagaceae family, is common and thrives in Higashiyama, covering the mountain range. It blooms all at once around May and sends its odor to surrounding areas. Its fruit is mildly bitter and easy to eat.
- Tarayo**, an evergreen tall tree of the Aquifoliaceae family, is dioecious. Its female plant bears clusters of red fruit in the fall. Scratching the back of its leaf leaves black marks.
- Taka-no-tsume** is a tall deciduous tree of the Araliaceae family. In the winter, the plant has sharp buds, reminiscent of hawk's claws. Its buds are edible. It blooms from May to June and bears blackish-purple fruit on the female plant. Its yellow leaves are beautiful. ◇Nov. to Dec.
- Koshi-abura** is a tall deciduous tree of the Araliaceae family. Its buds are edible. It blooms from August to September and bears blackish-purple fruit in late fall. Its timbers are soft and easy to work with. ◇Nov. to Dec.
- Izu-senryo** is an evergreen shrub of the Primulaceae family. The plant is dioecious. It blooms white-yellow flowers from April to June. Its female plant bears white fruit, which deer hate and do not eat.
- Aoki** is an evergreen shrub of the Aucubaceae family. The plant is dioecious. It blooms March to May, but its flowers are inconspicuous. The leaves of the plant are bitter and have a stomachic effect. They are used for folk medicine and are loved by deer.
- Fuyu-ichigo** is an evergreen liana-like shrub. Its fruit is edible. The plant blooms from August to September, uncommon to the genus of *Rubus*. ●Nov. to Jan.