

## Newsletter from DMO KYOTO

vol. 42

### Aoi Matsuri Festival Paid Viewing Seats

The Kyoto City Tourism Association (DMO KYOTO) is releasing newsletters introducing the latest information on Kyoto and DMO KYOTO's agendas.

#### Topics

#### Now on sale “Aoi Matsuri 2025” paid seating for festival parade



When the cherry blossoms fall and fresh greenery becomes vibrant, it's time for the Aoi Matsuri Festival. Held annually on May 15, the festival is one of Kyoto's "Three Great Festivals," along with Gion Matsuri and Jidai Matsuri, with a history that stretches back over 1,400 years.

The highlight of the festival is a grand procession, called the Roto-no-gi. Around 500 participants dressed in elegant Heian-period (794–1185) court attire parade along an 8-kilometer route from the Kyoto Imperial Palace to Shimogamo Shrine and finally Kamigamo Shrine. The procession features women in vibrant jūnihitoe robes, horseback warriors, ox-drawn carts, and more—offering a vivid recreation of a Heian court scene.

The Kyoto City Tourism Association offers paid seating that allows spectators to comfortably enjoy the parade up close. A portion of the proceeds supports the preservation and continuation of the festival. The seating comes with an official guidebook, an audio guide, and a commemorative card.

[Aoi Matsuri](#)

[Paid Viewing Seats](#)

#### Events

#### Special Openings for Green Maple Leaves Viewing

From spring to early summer, Kyoto becomes lush with vibrant new foliage, especially young maple leaves (*ao momiji*). Several temples and shrines offer special openings to appreciate this seasonal beauty.

#### Kitano Tenmangū – “Odoi historical site: Ao momiji garden viewing”



The maple garden at the historic *Odoi* site (the walls that surrounded the city) in the shrine precincts of Kitano Tenmangū is famous for its autumn foliage, but it also opens during the fresh green season. The vivid new leaves reflected in the waters of the Kamiyagawa River and the contrast with the vermilion color of the Uguisubashi Bridge create a picturesque scene.

**Dates:** April 10 – June 22

**Night Illumination:** April 25 – May 6

**Hours:** 9:00–16:00 (last entry 15:40)

**\*During illumination:** 9:00–20:00 (last entry 19:40)

[Kitano Tenmangū \(Japanese only\)](#)

#### Daitoku-ji Temple Ōbai-in – “Spring Special Opening”



Located in northern Kyoto, Ōbai-in is a sub-temple of Daitoku-ji with deep ties to renowned warlords like Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

Currently, it is open for a limited time, offering a rare chance to explore normally closed gardens and buildings. Its highlight is the Jikichu-tei Garden, designed by Sen no Rikyū, a central figure in the development of the Japanese tea ceremony. From mid-April, the temple grounds come alive with vivid green foliage and peonies blooming.

**Dates:** March 28 – May 18

**Hours:** 10:00–16:00 (last entry)

**Closed:** April 23–25

[Daitoku-ji Ōbai-in \(Japanese only\)](#)

#### Information

#### Limited Express Bus for Sightseeing



To make sightseeing in Kyoto more comfortable, the “Limited Express Bus” service is available. These buses stop only at major destinations such as Kiyomizu-dera Temple, Gion, Heian-jingu Shrine, and Ginkaku-ji Temple, significantly reducing travel time.

Using the Sightseeing Express Bus allows for smoother travel with fewer crowds and also helps ease traffic congestion in the city.

#### **Routes:**

○ EX100: From Kyoto Station to Kiyomizu-dera Temple, Gion, Heian-jingu Shrine, Ginkaku-ji Temple

○ EX101: Direct route from Kyoto Station to Kiyomizu-dera Temple

**Operation Days:** Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays, Obon holidays, and New Year's holidays

**Fare:** ¥500 per ride

\*The “Subway & Bus One-Day Pass” (¥1,100 for adults) provided by the Kyoto City Transportation Bureau is also accepted, making it a better value for multiple rides

**No Reservations Required:** Simply board at the designated bus stop

[Kyoto Station to Kiyomizu-dera](#)

[Kyoto Station to Gion, Okazaki and Ginkaku-ji Temple](#)

#### Media publications

#### Influencer (@trip\_chocho) from South Korea introduced the “Hidden Gems of Kyoto”



We have launched a project in which influencers chosen from all over the world introduce Kyoto's "Hidden Gems" areas as well as the guidelines for tourists. The latest post came from a South Korean influencer, who showcased the Ohara and Fushimi area, as well as detailed travel tips for Kyoto.

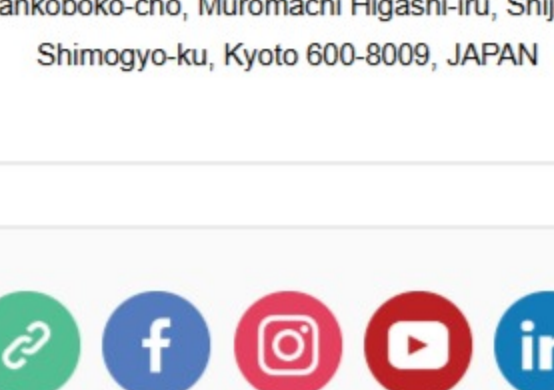
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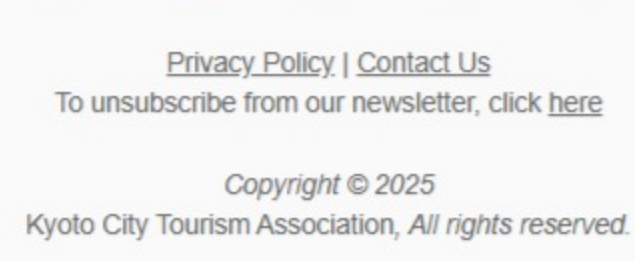
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