

The Cross Experience Concierge Map

Concierge paper for walking in the city of Kyoto today.

KAMISAHAMONOGATARI | CROSS HOTEL KYOTO

~ The Four Symbols and Seven Lucky Gods Guardians of the City of Kyoto ~

With a history of over a thousand years, the land of Kyoto has a strong connection with various gods worshipped in hundreds of temples and shrines. Especially famous among them are the Four Symbols that guard the four sides of the capital, and the Seven Lucky Gods who are believed to have originated in Kyoto. Get in touch with sacred energy by visiting these spiritual sites and once you discover how these beliefs are a part of local life, you might find yourself even more in love with this ancient city.

Black Tortoise of the North
去武
玄武

Myōen-ji Temple

Commonly referred to as Matsugasaki no Daikoku-san among locals, the temple enshrines a statue of Daikokuten, the deity of fortune. Because the statue survived a fire that burned the temple down, it is also known as the Daikokuten who emerged from fire. The statue is revealed to the public every 60 days (in relation to the seven-year cycle). The temple is located about 35 minutes away from Kawaramachi Sanjo bus stop on Kyoto City Bus 43.

Sekizan-zenin Temple

Since the temple is situated in the ominous northeastern "front" gate (omote-kimon) of Kyoto city and the principal deity worshipped is Fukurokuju, the temple is known to protect the city and the Kyoto Imperial Palace. Highlights include the Aoi-no-Yashiro for lovers, lovebird-motif votive plaques, and miniature Fukurokuju figurines with fortune slips inside. The temple is located about 40 minutes away from Kawaramachi Sanjo bus stop on Kyoto City Bus 43.

Also famous for its beautiful maple trees in fall!

福祿壽
Seven Lucky Gods
Fukurokuju

Kamowakeikazuchi-jinja Shrine

Famously known as the Kamigamo Shrine, it is one of the most historical shrines in Kyoto and protects the city's northern direction along with the Black Tortoise of the Four Symbols. Registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the main shrine and temporary shrine (during renovations) are national treasures, and there are many important cultural properties on the premises as well. The annual Aoi Festival held on May 15th is one of Kyoto's three great festivals. The shrine is located about 40 minutes away from Kawaramachi Sanjo bus stop on Kyoto City Bus 4.

A flea market is held on the 4th Sunday of every month.

Yasaka-jinja Shrine

Just as the Azure Dragon of the Four Symbols guards the eastern direction of Kyoto city, the Yasaka Shrine, or locally revered as Gion-san, also offers directional protection. The Nishimom gate (important cultural property) at the eastern end of Shijo Street and the main shrine (national treasure) are popular tourist destinations. The month-long Gion Festival held in July every year is one of Kyoto's three great festivals. The shrine is located about 20 minutes on foot from Cross Hotel Kyoto.

Also visit its sub-shrine Utsukushi Gozensha that enshrines the goddess of beauty!

Rokuhara-mitsuji Temple

This temple is famous for its suone tablet that grants you one wish by turning it around, and a statue of a cow called Nadeushi to rub your hand on to help heal injuries or illnesses. There is also a hall designated to worship Benzaiten since the ancient times. In addition, washing your coins at the Zeniarai Benzaiten and keeping that coin inside a talisman is believed to bring you monetary luck. The temple is located about 20 minutes on foot from Cross Hotel Kyoto.

昇財天
Seven Lucky Gods
Benzaiten

Matsunoo-taisyā Shrine

Along with the White Tiger of the Four Symbols, this shrine is one of Kyoto's oldest shrines and protects the western direction of Kyoto. Known for the sacred well called Kamenoi for its spring water with restorative properties, the shrine is worshipped among sake producers. The three must-see wooden statues (important cultural properties) inside the Shinzōkan stately hall are believed to be the oldest of their kind in Japan. The shrine is located about 20 minutes away from Kyoto Kawaramachi station on the Hankyu Railway.

White Tiger of the West
白虎
Byakko

Kōdō Gyōgan-ji Temple

Also known as Kōdō, the temple is revered among those who work in the textile dyeing and weaving industry. With a history of over a thousand years, the temple enshrines Jurōjin, the god of longevity, as well as the rest of the Seven Lucky Gods. The main hall and the bell tower are registered as tangible cultural properties of Kyoto city. The temple is located about 10 minutes away from Kawaramachi Sanjo bus stop on Kyoto City Bus 43.

寿老人
Seven Lucky Gods
Jurōjin

Kyoto Ebisu-jinja Shrine

This shrine is one of the top three shrines in Japan that worships Ebisu, the god of fishery and commerce and a member of the Seven Lucky Gods. It is believed to be this shrine's original approach of appreciating the deity by incorporating bamboo branches, which later became a common item to use to worship him. The second torii gate has Ebisu's "twining" basket near the top, and people believe that your wish comes true if you can successfully throw your money offering inside it. The shrine is located about 20 minutes on foot from Cross Hotel Kyoto.

Don't miss the statue of Buddhist monk Kaya with six Amida Buddhas appearing from his mouth as he chants

Tō-ji Temple

One of Kyoto's top highlights, the temple is registered as a World Heritage Site and is famous for its five-story pagoda, Japan's finest wooden architecture. The Tobutsu Bishamonzen statue (national treasure), which was originally stored inside the second floor of the famous Rashomon, may be seen during the Hōmotsukan museum's special viewing event every spring and fall. Mini stationery papers with Tobutsu Bishamonzen illustrations sold at the shop inside are great for souvenirs. The temple is located about 35 minutes away from Kawaramachi Sanjo bus stop on Kyoto City Bus 205.

Enjoy a view of the pagoda with cherry blossoms in spring and red maple foliage in fall!

寿老人
Seven Lucky Gods
Bishamonzen

Jōnangū Shrine

Along with the Vermilion Bird of the Four Symbols, this shrine protects the southern direction of Kyoto city. It was built to provide directional protection for the city when Heian-kyō, or present-day Kyoto, became the new capital in ancient Japan. The vast garden is full of various plants and flowers associated with the Tale of Genji, entertaining the eyes of visitors. Their unique octagonal talisman for directional protection is a popular souvenir. The shrine is located about 15 minutes on foot from Ikada station on the Karasuma Subway Line (via Karasuma Ōike station on the Tozai Subway Line from Kyoto Shiyakusho-mae station).

Vermilion Bird of the South
朱雀
Suzaku

Manpuku-ji Temple

It is the head temple of the Japanese Obaku Zen sect. Hotel was a monk in ancient China who was believed to be an incarnation of Bodhisattva Miroku. The temple enshrines a golden Hotei, who is worshipped for monetary fortune, merrience to bring in good luck, and matrimonial happiness. Visitors may also enjoy a vegetarian meal in the precincts (reservation only). Fortune-telling figurines of Hotei are also offered. The temple is located about 40 minutes away from Keihan Sanjo station on the Keihan Railway.

Very interested in the vegetarian meal prepared with Kutzu and vegetable oil

布袋
Seven Lucky Gods
Hotei