

Official Map for Walking in Shinagawa-shuku

Shinagawa-shuku on the Tōkaidō: Guide to Famous Places of Edo

Official Map for Walking in Shinagawa-shuku (Supp.: Machizukuri Katsudō, community development activities) Completely revised edition in March 2024 (First edition: 1995). Issued by Kyō-Tōkaidō Shinagawa-shuku Shūhen Machizukuri Kyōgikai (TSCDC) Shinagawa City Edited/Designed by: Internedia/artpost, Translated by: SHIMBA Reiko Cover: From "Guide to Famous Places of Edo" issued in 1834 (the Edo period). Upper: Kibune Myōjin Jinja with the bridge present Shinagawa-bashi in the center, middle: Shinagawa-eki, present Aomono-Yokochō, and bottom: Suzunomori, present Suzugamori (Shinagawa Historical Museum)

12 wells of information

Shinagawa-shuku a bit in depth:

Well 1 It started from a harbor thousand years ago
Shinagawa-shuku is a post station and a town of temples as well, with as many as 30 temples in the area. Most of them were founded in the 13th - 14th centuries. It means that by that time, a community was formed with many residents.

Development of Shinagawa-shuku began about thousand years ago (the Heian period) from a natural harbor, offshore of Minami Shinagawa. When the major means of logistics was the sea transportation, the harbor was crucial infrastructure. Goods, people and information from the Kansai region, the center of politics, economy and cultures, were assembled at Shinagawa-shuku for distribution in the Kanto region. Shinagawa-shuku had a peak of prosperity as the center of logistics from the Kamakura through Muromachi periods (the 12th C - 15th C).

Well 2 Seaside town, seaside road
"Shinagawa-shuku is a seaside town, the Tōkaidō is a seaside road." These words explain the town very well. When you walk along the Tōkaidō road, you will notice that the streets on the eastern side are gently descending. The eastern side of the Tōkaidō is facing the sea (until the early Shōwa period (1930s)) while the western side rises. To go to the west, Gotanda, Ōsaki and Ōimachi areas, from Shinagawa-shuku, you need to climb up Goten'yama, Sengendai, Gongendai (the eastern limit of the Kanto Plateau), respectively. Flat roads are only those along the Megurogawa river. The Megurogawa eroded the Kanto Plateau, carrying and accumulating the soils on the seabed to form an alluvial fan long from north to south, where people gathered and built a community, Shinagawa-shuku.

Well 3 The Tōkaidō road is a historical heritage over 400 years
After TOKUGAWA Ieyasu had united Japan and established his government, a large-scale development began in Edo city and all over the country. Shinagawa-shuku was designated as the first main post station from Edo on the Tōkaidō road under the Shukueki Denma Seido (official transportation system). The Tōkaidō road constructed at that time remains as it is in width, shape, ups and downs even now after 400 years. "Susaki-michi" street passing in front of Yoriki Jinja shrine, the tutelary shrine of fishermen's village, and other Yokochōs (alleys, including Shimizu Yokochō, Daiba Yokochō, Aomono Yokochō) in Shinagawa-shuku also remain intact (except some parts expanded), miraculously in modern Tokyo.

Shinagawa-shuku could not escape from the changes such as land reclamation on the seaside area but its inland area remains almost unchanged. Nowadays, quite few towns remain as they were and this area with the Tōkaidō, Yokochō and many small alleys could be a very important historical heritage in Japan.

Well 4 A Major Leisure Land in Edo City
Shinagawa-shuku thrived as a post station in the Edo period but was not a simple post station. Firstly, the seaside area was a fishermen's town providing fresh fisheries from the bay of Edo. People could enjoy recreational clamming, boating and fishing. Secondly, it was a town of gourmets with busy restaurants serving crab dishes, etc. open 24 hours. Thirdly, the area had many houses lending rooms to enjoy with beautiful women of pleasure having high



Clam digging at low tide at Shinagawa-by UTAGAWA Hiroshige II (Shinagawa Historical Museum)

reputation as "Shinagawa in the south" competing against "Yoshiwara in the north." Moreover, Gotten'yama, Tosayama and some other hills were famous for viewing cherry blossoms, the moon, and colored leaves and, being an old town of temples, there were many religious festivals and events, which could be a kind of entertainment. Therefore, Shinagawa-shuku was offering many entertainment opportunities throughout a year, as a large leisure land in Edo city.

Well 5 Renowned water depicted in the Edo Meisho Zue (Guide to Famous Places of Edo)
Walking in Shinagawa-shuku, you will find water wells in many alleys. People could live here for thousand years thanks to this abundant water from the Kanto Plateau, without doubt. In Shinagawa-shuku, it has been said that the good water is available just by digging several meters since long ago. There was a business selling abundant good water to many ships going out to open ocean in old times. "Isono Shimizu (clear water beside the sea)" in the Guide to Famous Places of Edo depicts such a well of the renowned water.



Isono Shimizu (clear water beside the sea) from the Guide to Famous Places of Edo (Shinagawa Historical Museum)

Well 6 Town of the railway
May 7, 1872 (June 12 according to the current calendar) is the day to commemorate the opening of a railway for the first time in Japan and the first train departed from the Shinagawa Station (the first station was located just in the north of the present Yatsuyama overpass) toward Yokohama. It was only two and a half years after the new government had decided to construct the railway. The construction work was completed after many difficulties including construction of embankment in the sea, cutting through a hill, and bridging over rivers. It would not have been possible to complete, in deed, without the devotion of INOUE Masaru who directed the project and foreign specialists in government service from the UK and France, and the sleepless work of the workers.



Tokyo Takanawa Jōkishi Tetsudō-no zu (Steam Locomotive at Takanawa, Tokyo) by SHŌSAI, Ikkei (Shinagawa Historical Museum) Yatsuyama-bashi, the oldest bridge over railway in Japan

Well 7 Japanese Modern Industries began in Shinagawa-shuku
The first modern industry in Japan is said to be glass manufacturing, which started here in Shinagawa-shuku in 1873. Then, manufacturing of fire-proof bricks necessary for glass manufacturing followed and factories of paints, wool fabrics, airships, medicines, rubber, etc. were established along the Megurogawa river area. One novelty born in the area is corrugated board (1909). The oldest beer in Japan is supposed to be brewed at Hamakawa, south of Shinagawa-shuku, in 1869, earlier than in Yokohama.



"Shinagawa-ken Beer" revived

Well 8 Calendar is centered around the festivals in this town
In Shinagawa-shuku, everyone, young or old, male or female, says "my calendar is centered around the festival, festival is the life." The main event in the Kita-Shinagawa is that each mikoshis (portable shrines) of the block, one after another, goes up and down the 53 steps of the steeple stone stairway to the shrine and back to its home block. On the other hand, in Minami-Shinagawa, 13 mikoshis gather in front of the shrine along the Sakuragashi (riverside) and make a procession all together along the Tōkaidō road. Additionally, as one of the unique festivals of Edo city called "Kappa Matsuri," the mikoshi of Yoriki Jinja, a subordinate of Ebara Jinja, is carried into the sea at Odaiba and the Goshinmen carried on the mikoshi is put in the sea water to pray for the safety of ships and bountiful fishing and grain harvest. This is also one of the must-see events.

Well 9 Shinagawa native's spirit of formality
People in Shinagawa-shuku commonly use a word "Shinagawakko", meaning that they are not native of Edo city but outside, so Shinagawakko. It means that they live with strong pride of their native town, very happy people. Shinagawakko loves festivals above all. Their festivals are the annual festival of their tutelary deity at the top and Oeshiki (Buddhist memorial service for Nichiren) in autumn. Each festival has its formality. It covers traditional rules and tacit conventions among each group, from tangible rules like clothes and accessories to intangible ones like manners of movement and social activities. Once mastered the formality, you can be a fully-grown Shinagawakko. The formality seems uncomfortable but simply following it, you can make your life comfortable and easier. The spirit of Shinagawakko could be an intangible cultural property ...



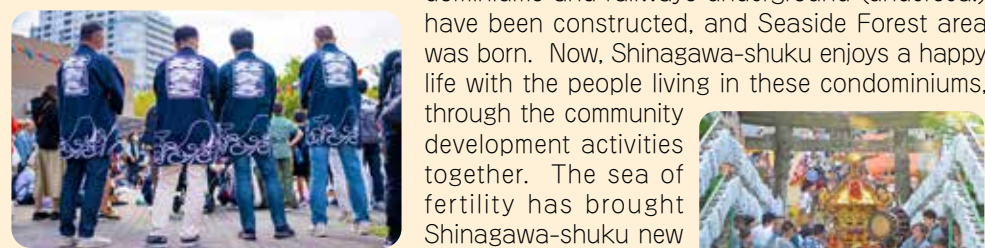
Shinagawakko grows through festivals.

Well 10 North-South issues in Shinagawa-shuku
Shinagawa-shuku is divided into the south (Minami-Shinagawa-shuku) and north (Kita-Shinagawa-shuku) areas by the Megurogawa river. Between the two areas there have been always conflicts across the river for ages. Each area has its own tutelary deity, celebrating own festival separately. There are many reasons for the conflicts such that Kita-Shinagawa-shuku is a town of the merchants while Minami-Shinagawa-shuku is of the craftsmen. Today, through the activities of the TSCDC, two areas are organizing "Shukuba Matsuri Festival" and coordinating the streetscape, to promote fusion of the areas. The conflicts, however, cannot be eased quickly. It is expected rather that the conflicts empower the competition to make the town further active. Anyway, the fact that there remain such conflicts in a corner of Tokyo still in the 21st century can be a very precious cultural heritage. Please think over this North-South issues when you across the Shinagawa-wabashi bridge.



* The Megurogawa not easy to across (Opening ceremony of the Shinagawabashi bridge, 1991)

Well 11 New Shinagawakko from the sea of fertility
Following the end of the peaceful Edo period that lasted about 300 years, Shinagawa-shuku had drastic changes. Preparing for the arrival of the Black Ships, the government reclaimed the offshore of Shinagawa and the bay of Edo to build gun batteries. To fill in the sea, a large volume of earth and sand of Gottenyama hill were used and the hill famous for cherry blossoms vanished. Then, after the disaster in Kanto region in 1923, canals were constructed in the coast area and the reclaimed land was expanded following the industrialization of Japan, creating Keihin Industrial Area. To host the Tokyo Olympic Games in 1964, a monorail line and express highways were constructed. On this occasion, the fishermen's town abandoned the fishing right, Shinagawa-shuku lost the sea finally, and only factories are left. However, the factories were gradually moved to the provinces and, further, overseas. Just before the 21st century, tall office buildings and condominiums and railways underground (undersea!) have been constructed, and Seaside Forest area was born. Now, Shinagawa-shuku enjoys a happy life with the people living in these condominiums, through the community development activities together. The sea of fertility has brought Shinagawa-shuku new Shinagawakko. Many thanks to the sea!



"Shinagawa Canal Festival" organized by the new Shinagawakko (Nagisa-no Kai Group)

Well 12 Community development to hand down "Mikoshi-Dako (callus caused by Mikoshi carrying)"
Mikoshi (portable shrine) in Shinagawa area is large on the thick bars to carry. Since every carrier puts his shoulder under the bar to raise the mikoshi, he has big callus between the neck and shoulder. The callus is called "Mikoshi-dako", a decoration and pride of Shinagawakko who loves the mikoshi. With key words "community development to hand down Mikoshi-dako to the next generation" aiming at succession of the Shinagawakko's pride, "Machizukuri Kyōgi-kai (TSCDC), since 1988, is now working for creation of the environment with a theme "to connect the community possible to continue the festivals to the children in Shinagawa-shuku after 100 years."



* This is the Mikoshi-dako.

"Machizukuri Kyōgikai" (TSCDC, officially, Tōkaidō Shinagawa-shuku Community Development Council) coordinating activities in the area since 1988

Its motto: "Welcome everyone, any ideas, we are open to all!"

In Shinagawa-shuku, all the town blocks and all the shopping streets are participating in the community development activities in both soft- and hardware. If you are interested in this town, please join our activities. Let's enjoy community development together! (Monthly management meeting: on the last Tuesday at 20:00 every month. Please ask for the schedule in advance.)



Activities are based in Shinagawa-shuku Kōryūkan

Further in depth! Please visit the website of the Machizukuri Kyōgikai, and enjoy "Shinagawa-shuku Machizukuri" program on YouTube channel, too. <https://www.toukaido-shinagawashuku.com/>



Activities of Machizukuri Kyōgikai (TSCDC)

Tōkaidō Shinagawa-shuku Kōryūkan
1F: Honshuku Oyasumi-dokoro (resting place) and a sweets shop Mata-Ashita
2F: Gallery for learning the history and culture of Shinagawa-shuku
Address: 2-28-19, Kita-Shinagawa, Shinagawa-ku, 140-0001 Tokyo, Phone: 03-3472-4772
E-mail: machikyoo@west.cts.ne.jp Closed on Mondays (if it falls on a holiday, closes the next day)
Open hours: 10:00 - 16:00

- Connecting people and people, people and area
The TSCDC operates Shinagawa-shuku Kōryūkan (including Honshuku Oyasumi-dokoro and sweets shop Mata-Ashita) and the former Kōban (ex. local police office, Information Center for Minami-Shinagawa Sakuragashi), providing places and opportunities where visitors can encounter the local history, culture and people.
- Connecting friendship, pine trees on the Tōkaidō
The TSCDC is promoting friendship exchanges with the post stations on the Tōkaidō road, cities of Geneva, Kagoshima, Sōka, Kōriyama, etc.
- Connecting the town sceneries, connecting lights
Based on the townscap planning, the TSCDC coordinates to produce unique environment to Shinagawa-shuku with integral images. In the "Tōrō (lantern) project" children put lantern lights in the alleys.
- Connecting Shinagawakko, connecting the areas
Cooperating with various people involved in the community activities in Shinagawa-shuku, the TSCDC fosters the next generation of Shinagawakko to continue the community development.
- Connecting the waterfronts, connecting the cultures
The TSCDC communicates the history and culture of Shinagawa-shuku and passes down the traditional pastimes and plays among Shinagawakko.
- Connecting through sports
Let's enjoy the community life with sports together! The TSCDC is working for the community development through the sports such as junior football and activities of "Shinagawa Hockey Fan Zone."
- Connecting activities
Publication of newsletters for the members "Mikoshi-dako" (twice a year), home page, "Walking Map," various leaflets, and public relations activities.

Month	Date	Event	Location
January	1st	New Year's visit to a shrine	Every shrines
	2nd	New Year's Mochitsuki-Taikai (Mochi Pounding)	Shinagawa Jinja
28th every month		Goennichi Hōrōkuyū (moxibustion ritual)	Isshinji
February	3rd	Mamemaki (a ceremony scattering beans to celebrate the coming of spring)	Shrines
	February 11 or Sunday closest to the first day of horse	Hatsu-uma, a festival of Inari Jinja to pray for a fat year	Inari Jinja
March	27 and 28	Sentai Kōjin Taisai (a main festival in spring for the god of kitchen)	Kaiunji
April	Early April	Shinagawa Unga Matsuri (Canal festival)	Higashi-Shinagawa Kaijō Kōen Shinagawa Jinja
	Sunday after April 15	Spring festival, Dai-Dai Kagura (Traditional dance and music for gods)	Shinagawa Jinja
	Saturday & Sunday closest to April 13 April 30	Main festival in Spring for Kokuzōson Shiimori-kō <Ōkunitama Jinja Kaijō Misogihara-shiki> (a ceremony to collect sea water for the festival of Ōkunitama Jinja in Fuchō city)	Yōganji Ebara Jinja
May	Friday - Sunday in late May - early June	Minami-no Tennō-sai Kita-no Tenno-sai (Festivals for the heavenly king in the south and north areas of Shinagawa-shuku, respectively)	Ebara Jinja Shinagawa Jinja
June	30	Ōharai, Chinowa-kuguri (a purification ritual passing through a ring of thatch)	Ebara Jinja/ Shinagawa Jinja
July	1st	Shinagawa Fuji Yamabiraki (Opening of Mt. Shinagawa-Fuji)	Shinagawa Jinja
	Late July - August	Bon-Odori (Folklore dance gathering in every area summer evening)	
September	Last Saturday & Sunday	Shinagawa Shukuba Matsuri (A festival of Shinagawa-shuku)	From Yatsuyama to Aomono Yokochō on the Tōkaidō road
		Hiwatari Aragyō (a ritual walking over the fire)	Honsenji
October	14 16	Jūya Hōe (10th night Buddhist ceremony) Oeshiki Mandō-kuyō (Buddhist memorial service for Nichiren, lantern festival)	Gangyōji Tenmyōkokuji
November	Tori-no-hi Saturday & Sunday closest to November 13 23	Torinoichi (a fair on the rooster days) Main festival in autumn for Kokuzōson	Ebara Jinja Yōganji
		Niiname-sai, Dai-Dai-Kagura (a harvest festival of Shinto with traditional dance and music for the god)	Shinagawa Jinja
December	27, 28 31	Sentai Kōjin autumn main festival Ōharai, Chinowa-Kuguri (a purification ritual at the year end) Joya-no Kane (New Year Eve's Bell)	Kaiunnji Ebara Jinja/ Shinagawa Jinja Each temple

* Dates are subject to change.

● Pilgrimage for Tōkai Shichi-Fukujin (seven-lucky-gods of Tōkaidō) January 1st thru 15 and February 3 (the first day of spring)
To visit Shinagawa Jinja (Daikokuten), Yōganji (Hotei), Isshinji (Jurōjin), Ebara Jinja (Ebisu), Honsenji (Bishamonenten), Tensō-Suwa Jinja (Fukurokuju), and Iwai Jinja (Benzaiten, 2-20-8, Ōmori-Kita, Ōta-ku). This New Year's custom was proposed by ARISAKA Yotarō, a toy researcher, who had a laboratory at Minami-Shinagawa.

● Shinagawa Shukuba Matsuri festival
Started in 1990, the largest event in Shinagawa-ku takes place on the Tōkaidō in 2 km between Kita-Shinagawa and Aomono-Yokochō. It is attracting about 100 thousand visitors with the parade in Edo-period fashion, stalls of specialties all over Japan, Hiwatari Aragyō, etc. every year.

● Shinagawa Unga Matsuri festival
The members of Nagisa-no Kai of new Shinagawakko started a waterfront festival at Higashi-Shinagawa Kaijō Kōen in 2008. Participants enjoy cruising on the Megurogawa river, food stalls and events on a stage with cherry blossoms in spring and fireworks in autumn.

