



NEWSLETTER

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Tokyo Sugoi! - Episode 6 (Last Episode) by Steve Gillick

Tokyo Hidden Gems



Helicopter Ride over TOKYO SKYTREE®, Photo by Steve Gillick, Talking Travel

“Tokyo Hidden Gems” may be defined as unique sites and activities that can add a ‘wow’ factor to a Tokyo visit. With over 22 trips to the city (as of 2024), here are just a few special secrets to divulge!



Helicopter ride over Tokyo. Photo by Steve Gillick, Talking Travel

While Tokyo has many observation desks to enjoy panoramic views (TOKYO SKYTREE®, Tokyo Tower, the Metropolitan Building, Shibuya Sky, Tokyo City View and more, visitors can rise above them all with a sunset helicopter ride. The 15-minute adventure circles the Tokyo SkyTree and highlights several landmarks. It's an elevating thrill!

An after-hours “Gem” is a visit to Sensoji, Tokyo’s oldest temple. During the daytime, the hectic crowds are thick, but after dark, it’s a pleasure to stroll the almost empty grounds to see the peacefully illuminated Main Hall and the 5-Story Pagoda.





Details from the Ueno Toshogu Shrine, Photos by Steve Gillick, Talking Travel

The popular Ueno Park has some Hidden Gems. Ueno Tōshō-gū was built in 1627 to commemorate Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first Shogun. It was partly rebuilt in 1651 and has remained intact since then. Not far away is Hanazono Inari Shrine, also constructed in the 17th century, consisting of a stone Torii gate and a tunnel of smaller red Torii gates. Great photo opps!



Sunrise on Mt. Mitake, Okutama. Photo by Steve Gillick, Talking Travel



(left) The Musashi-Mitake Shrine, Okutama
(right) The morning Prayer Service at Musashi-Mitake Shrine, Okutama
Photos by Steve Gillick, Talking Travel

Outside the city in Okutama, Tokyo's nature getaway, enjoy an overnight shrine stay on Mt Mitake. Then, thrill to a panoramic sunrise from Musashi-Mitake-Jinja Shrine and partake in the morning prayer server. It uniquely moves the soul.



Accentuating the facial muscles and bones-Kabuki Workshop. Pictured Mitsuru Sasaki
Photo by Steve Gillick, Talking Travel

Hidden Gems can also be instructive, and there are opportunities galore in Tokyo. Over the years, we've learned to make traditional Bento Box foods, taken a sushi class at Tsukiji Cooking, enjoyed a plastic-food-making workshop in Kappabashi, and expanded our knowledge of the theatre with a Kabuki dance and make-up class. There are workshops on Samurai sword techniques, becoming a ninja, practicing the Tea Ceremony, and Ikebana, the art of Japanese flower arranging.

Consider putting some polish on your next trip by experiencing some of Tokyo's



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Steve Gillick loves to travel and loves to talk to people who love to talk about travel. He's been at it since 1967 when he visited nine European destinations on a school trip. Steve has had over 370 articles published in consumer and travel trade publications. To date he has explored 85 countries and over 770 destinations. He recently returned from his 22nd trip to Japan. Steve is the author of *A Symphony of Camels: Travel Adventures & Conversations Around the World*, available on Amazon.com

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