

## Tokyo Pulse | July 2026 vol.1

### Tokyo Sugoi! - Episode 15 by Steve Gillick

## Shinkyu Yugo: The fusion of New and Old in Takanawa, Minato Ward, Tokyo



Inside THE LINKPILLAR 1 SOUTH Tower, Takanawa Gateway City

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government's "TokyoTokyo: Old meets New" brand captures the city's alluring blend of tradition and innovation, a dynamic that attracted over 28 million international visitors in 2025. Takanawa Gateway City, located in Minato Ward, central Tokyo, is a powerful example of how *shinkyu yugo* — the fusion of old and new — is unfolding in dramatic fashion.

In 1603, Tokugawa Ieyasu founded the Tokugawa Shogunate and moved Japan's administrative capital from Kyoto to Edo. To link the old and new capitals, the Tokaido Road became a major highway, with the Takanawa Gate — relocated to its present site in 1710 — built to control access to Edo. This route stimulated commercial activity, as inns, stables, and teahouses lined the road, and some feudal lords also

built residences there. Today, remnants of the Great Wooden Gate can still be seen near the new Takanawa Gateway City development.



Takanawa Gateway City

Transitioning to modern transportation, the two main portals to Takanawa Gateway City are Takanawa Gateway Station on the JR East Yamanote Line and Sengakuji Station on the Toei Asakusa Line. The striking contemporary design of Takanawa Gateway Station was created by Tokyo architect Kengo Kuma's firm, KKA.



Sengakuji Temple, near the Metro station by Takanawa Gateway City



Tozenji Temple in the Takanawa neighbourhood

Sengakuji Station, meanwhile, complements Takanawa's temple culture, where spiritual life centered around Sengakuji Temple, the resting place of the legendary 47 Ronin. But the culture also included Tozenji Temple, the site of the residence of the first British Consul General in 1859, where a three-story pagoda now stands — along with Kofukuji, Genshoji, and Shoji temples.

Spiritualism was also reflected in a reverence for nature, a fundamental aspect of Shintoism. 18th and 19th -century woodblock prints known as *ukiyo-e* (meaning a *picture of everyday life in Old Japan*) depict moon- and sea-viewing gatherings on the

coastal highlands around Takanawa. In 1862, a series of woodblock prints entitled *Thirty-Six Beauty Spots in Edo* included scenes of the Takanawa coast. The name “Takanawa” was originally “Taka-nawate,” with “taka” referring to “height” along the *nawate-michi*, or narrow path.

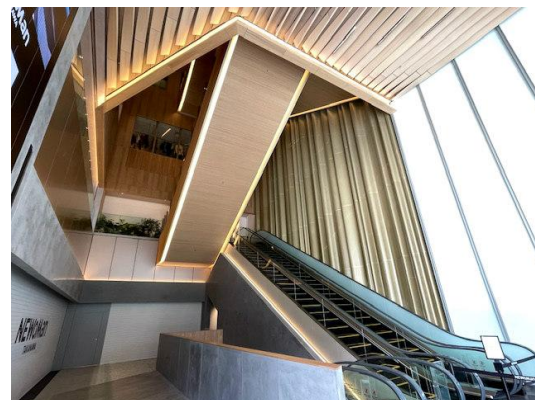


View of Mt. Fuji from JW Marriott Room 2431

One meaningful and impressive way to appreciate Takanawa’s temple culture is through a stay at the JW Marriott Hotel Tokyo, which opened in October 2025 on the 23rd to 30th floors of Takanawa Gateway City’s THE LINKPILLAR 1 SOUTH Tower. The hotel’s tasteful blend of historic and mythical design elements is inspiring. West-facing views from the Urban Deluxe Rooms showcase the surrounding temple neighbourhood and, in the distance, glimpses of Mt. Fuji. On the East side of the hotel, the Bay Deluxe and Mindful Rooms overlook the Rainbow Bridge spanning Tokyo Bay and connecting to Odaiba.



Hydrogen-powered, self-driving vehicles (iino)



Inside THE LINKPILLAR 1 SOUTH Tower, Takanawa Gateway City

The opening of Takanawa Gateway City in 2025 also unveiled the fountains of Gateway Garden, located between the two 30-story LINKPILLAR towers. Warm wood

paneling distinguishes the interior lobbies of the towers, alongside retail stalls and coffee shops. During our visit, a pop-up installation called the Imagination Garden invited guests to stand as close as possible to a projection screen; the nearer one stood, the more outcroppings of colorful flowers bloomed around them. Imagination here, it seems, knows no bounds where visitors can travel around the property using hydrogen-powered self-driving vehicles known as "iino".

Construction of Takanawa Gateway City concluded in the spring of 2026, with the completion of THE LINKPILLAR 2, the 3rd Tower building, and the opening of MoN Takanawa, The Museum of Narratives, designed by KKAA. The MoN acronym has two meanings. "Question" and "Gate," both of which invite visitors to learn, understand, and celebrate the evolving nature of culture, art, tradition, technology, technology and education through stories, live performances, digital theatre, and interactive installations.

The striking design of the Museum has been described as "an ascending spiral façade composed of wood and layered glass. Inhabited by more than 200 species of plants, it dissolves the boundary between inside and outside, reflecting the transient beauty of the changing seasons".

The transformation of Takanawa from old to new is a compelling example of Tokyo's commitment to celebrating the past while embracing the present and imagineering the future. It's all about *shinkyu yugo*, fusing the exciting "new" with Tokyo's irresistible "old".

\*All the photos in this article were taken by Steve Gillick, *Talking Travel*



**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 390 articles published in consumer and travel trade publications. To date he has explored 85 countries and over 770 destinations. He recently returned from his 23rd trip to Japan. Steve is the author of *A Symphony of Camels: Travel Adventures & Conversations Around the World*, available on Amazon.com

**Steve Gillick,**  
President,  
*Talking Travel*

[steve@talkingtravel.ca](mailto:steve@talkingtravel.ca)



TokyoTourism  
Connection

Follow Us!



Newsletter Archives: View this and previous newsletter editions [here](#).



---

Tokyo Tourism Rep. Canada office (Japan Communications) | 2 St.Clair Avenue West 18th Floor | Toronto,  
ON M4V 1L5 CA

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!