

English Guide

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Shinsengumi associated sites in Kyōto

英語の京都に新選組交の場所のガイドです

Tour Three: Southern Higashiyama
(Higashiyama-ku 南東山区), Kaikoji
Temple (戒光寺) and Teradaya Inn
(寺田屋)

誠

Flag Symbol of Shinsengumi – Character: Makoto (lit. sincerity)

Introduction

In 1853 Commodore Perry's Black Ships arrived in Yokohama Bay triggering a series of momentous events that between 1853 and 1867 shook the very foundations of Japanese society, ending their enforced isolation under the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and culminating in 1868 in the Meiji Restoration, (Meiji Ishin 明治維新), the abdication of Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川慶喜), the fifteenth and last of the Tokugawa Shōguns (徳川将軍), both of which heralded the end of the Japanese feudal era and its associated societal structure and the beginning of the industrial modernisation of Japan.



The Meiji Emperor
明治天皇



Tokugawa Yoshinobu
徳川慶喜



Commodore Matthew
Perry, USN

Old enmities can sometimes fester for a long time and this is evident in the way that during this, the Bakumutsu period (幕末), the factions and coalitions aligned themselves, either with the Meiji Court (明治) or the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府). These alliances had been forged nearly 300 hundred years before in the triumphs and defeats of the crucible of the Battle of Sekigahara (関ヶ原, known as Shinjitai 関ヶ原の戦い). Fought on 21 October 1600 (Keichō 5, 15th day of the 9th month) it established the Tokugawa as the supreme rulers of Japan for the next 265 years, from 1603, when Tokugawa Ieyasu (徳川家康) was appointed Shōgun (将軍), until 1868 when the Meiji Restoration was declared.

Supporters of the Meiji Court, the National Patriots, Ishin Shishi (維新志士), were formed mainly from the Tozama Daimyo (外様大名), the Outside Lords, those who had submitted to the Tokugawa only *after* their defeat at the battle of Sekigahara (関ヶ原) and who were predominantly made up of Chōshū Mori (長州の毛利氏), Satsuma Shimazu (薩摩藩の島津氏), a minority of radical Tosa (土佐藩), other han leaders and revolutionary courtiers. Their slogan was 'Revere the Emperor, Expel the Barbarians', (Sonnō jōi 尊皇攘夷)

The Pro Shōgunate supporters were comprised mainly of Satsuma Aizu (薩摩藩の会津) and Ise Kuwana (桑名藩) hans and the Shinsengumi, (Newly Selected Corps 新選組), a militia group made up of rōnin (浪人) and peasants turned warriors



Satsuma samurai during Boshin War (戊辰戦争 Boshin Sensō) period (Hand-coloured albumen silver print by Felice Beato, 1860s)

Many people who may have otherwise remained unknown to history emerged from this period either as heroes or villains, depending on your perspective. Recently the subject of a major television series, the dramatisation of the activities of the Shinsengumi, and their lives and deaths, by NHK (日本放送協会, Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation) has taken Japan by storm. This popular series has seen a resurgent interest in the Shinsengumi (新選組) not only amongst Japanese but also amongst non Japanese interested in the history and the lives of the warriors of Japan.

This guide is not an in depth historical narrative of the Shinsengumi (新選組). Rather, it is an attempt to bring to life, in the English language, the various characters and locations around Kyōto that are associated with the Shinsengumi.

A couple of areas have Shinsengumi (新選組) associated sites that are within walking distance of each other, around the district of Mibu (壬生) for instance, where the Shinsengumi (新選組) had their headquarters, around Kiyamachi Street (木屋町通, Kiyamachi Dōri) near Pontochō (先斗町) and Gion (祇園), and also in the Higashiyama district (東山区). However, one or two locations are fairly isolated but can be accessed using public transport.

Southern Higashiyama (Higashiyama-ku 南東山区), Kaikoji Temple (戒光寺) and Teradaya Inn (寺田屋)

The first part of this tour can be done on foot starting from Kiyomizu Dera (清水寺). There are many other sites that can be visited along the way. The final two sites, Kaikoji Temple (戒光寺) cemetery and the Teradaya Inn (寺田屋) can be reached quite easily via the south bound local Keihan line (Keihan-honsen 京阪本線) trains. The southern most locations were in areas generally used as gathering places for marshalling the military groups of the various factions

Starting Point – Kiyomizu Temple (Kiyomizu Dera 清水寺)

The Southern Higashiyama (Higashiyama-ku 南東山区) part of this tour can be walked. The final two locations, Kaikoji and the Terdaya Inn can be reached by good public transport links

From the front of Kiyomizu Dera (清水寺) walk down the main temple road immediately in front of the main temple entrance. Take the first main right turn onto Sannenzaka (三年坂) and walk down the steps. Akebono Tei (明保野亭) is easily found with its large four hundred year old cherry tree. On the wall by the steps into the restaurant is a photo of Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬)

1) Akebono Tei teahouse (明保野亭)



Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) patronized the Akebono Tei (明保野亭), sometimes staying in a room on the second floor. This was where he met with a man called Otazu from the Tosa Clan to discuss how a negotiated settlement between Shōgun and Emperor might be brought about

On the 10th June 1864, five days after the Ikedaya Incident, the Shinsengumi (新選組), thinking that Chōshū men were assembled here attacked instead Asada Tokitaro, a Tosa (土佐藩) han official from the Tosa Clan (土佐藩) House in Kawaramachi (河原町). When Asada tried to flee Shiba Tsukara stabbed him. To appease the Tosa Clan (土佐藩) a Shinsengumi (新選組) member, Chisa Jirō committed seppuku (切腹) at the Tosa Clan (土佐藩) House and Asada Tokitaro committed seppuku (切腹) in shame at not having fought Shiba Tsukara (see www.shinsengumihq.com/Timeline1861-1870.htm)

2) Gokoku Shrine (京都霊山護国神社) burial place of Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬)



The burial place of 1,043 people who dedicated themselves to the Meiji restoration which heralded the beginning of modern Japan including Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬)

Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) brokered an alliance between the Satsuma (薩摩藩), Chōshū (長州藩) and Tosa (土佐藩) Hans and on 9 November 1867, with the resignation of Tokugawa Yoshinobu (徳川 慶喜), the power of the Meiji Emperor (明治天皇 Meiji-tennō) was restored (大政奉還 taisei hokan) signalling the end of the Tokugawa (徳川)

On 15 November 1867 Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) and Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) were attacked at the Ōmiya Soy Sauce shop (近江屋) where they were hiding out. Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) died two days later from his wounds. Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬) is buried here at the Gokoku Shrine (京都霊山護国神社) and Nakaoka Shintaro (中岡 新太郎) at his family gravesite along with his wife and parents (中岡家墓地 - 松林寺境内)

Though the Shinsengumi (新選組) were suspected of the murders Iwakura Tomomi (岩倉具視) and Ōkubo Toshimichi (大久保利通) of the Satsuma (薩摩藩), who had wanted to inflict a military defeat on the Tokugawa (徳川)

but whose plan had been thwarted by the successful peace brokered by Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬), were strong suspected of orchestrating the murder

However, in February 1870, Imai Noburō (今井信郎), a former member of the Mimawarigumi (京都見廻組), confessed to a Military Judiciary Panel that he and other Mimawarigumi (京都見廻組), including Sasaki Tadasaburo (佐々木只三郎), had committed the murders. Given that Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本 龍馬) had shot a Tokugawa (徳川) samurai (侍) at the Teradaya Inn (寺田屋) the year before his murder (今井信郎), Sasaki Tadasaburo (佐々木只三郎) and other Mimawarigumi (京都見廻組) were deemed to have been carrying out of the orders of the then Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and therefore legal. They were released

There is still some controversy over who was responsible

3) Ryozen rekishi-kan History Museum (霊山歴史館)



Ryozen rekishi-kan History Museum (霊山歴史館) is opposite the Gokoku Shrine (京都霊山護国神社) and is dedicated to the events of the Bakamutsu (幕末) period between the overthrow of the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and the Meiji Restoration (大政奉還 taisei hokan). Most explanations are in Japanese

4) **Gesshin-in (月真院)** former headquarters of Goryo Eji (御陵衛士) Guards of Emperor's Tomb



From the Ryozen rekishi-kan History Museum (靈山歴史館) walk back down the road that led here and turn right up the lane that passes the front of Kōdai-ji Temple (高台寺). The entrance to Gesshin-in (月真院) is short distance past the main stone staircase on the right leading to Kōdai-ji Temple (高台寺)

Until relatively recently Gesshin-in (月真院), a sub temple of Kōdai-ji Temple (高台寺), used to also function as a shukubo (しゆくぼ), or temple lodging but no longer seems to offer accommodation. Concerts are held here from time to time

Early in 1867 Ito Kashitaro (伊東甲子太郎武明) and some of his colleagues left the Shinsengumi (新選組) and formed the Goryo eji (御陵衛士, Guards of Emperor's Tomb), eventually basing themselves at Gesshin-in (月真院). On the 13 December that same year Kondō Isami (近藤勇) invited Ito to a party and then had him assassinated by the Shinsengumi (新選組) as he left the party, dying just outside the gate of Honkoji (本光寺); the infamous Aburanokoji Incident or Jiken (油小路事件)

5) Kaikoji Temple (戒光寺) Burial place of Ito Kashitaro (伊東甲子太郎) and other members of (御陵衛士) Guards of Emperor's Tomb

From Gesshin-in (月真院) walk north towards Yasaka Shrine (Yasaka-jinja 八坂神社). Then turn west towards Gion corner. At Gion corner take a south bound Keihan line (Keihan-honsen 京阪本線) train from Shijō Station to Tōfuku-ji (東福寺駅 Tōfuku-ji) station



Turn south when leaving the station and then left onto the main road. Follow the main road to the next main junction and turn right. Just near the large gate to the temple area on the left is a small entrance to the cemetery



On the 18th November 1867 Itō Kashitarō (伊東甲子太郎武明), who earlier that year had left the Shinsengumi (新選組) to form Goryo Eji (御陵衛士), Guards of Emperor's Tomb, was invited to the house of Dayu Miyuki (深雪太夫), the mistress of Kondō Isami (近藤勇) supposedly to pick up the money Ito had requested from Kondo to fund a spying campaign against the Chōshū. Ito

proceeded to get drunk and as he left and was walking south along Aburanokōji (油小路町) towards Shichijo (七条) he was ambushed by other Shinsengumi (新選組) members including Ōishi Kuwajiro (大石 次郎), Miyagawa Nobuyoshi (宮川信吉 aka Nobukichi のぶきち) and Saitō Hajime (齋藤, who is one of the two main characters in the award winning film, 'When the Last Sword is Drawn', 'Mibu Gishi Den 壬生義士伝'). He collapsed and died by the gate of Honkō-ji Temple (本光寺), further along Aburanokōji (油小路), south of Shichijo (七条). His body was dragged to the crossroads of Aburanokōji (油小路町) and Shichijo (七条). When others from Goryo Eji (御陵衛士) attempted to retrieve the body they were attacked by a group of between 30-40 Shinsengumi (新選組). Three of the Goryo Eji (御陵衛士), Hattori Takeo (服部武雄), Mōnai Kanmotsu (もーない かんもつ aka Mōnai Arinosuke もーない 有のすけ) and Tōdō Heisuke Yoshitora (藤堂平助宜虎), were killed. This is their burial place, in this small cemetery near Kaikoji Temple (戒光寺)

6) Teradaya Inn (寺田屋)

Retrace your steps to Tōfuku-ji (東福寺駅 Tōfuku-ji-eki) station and catch a south bound local Keihan line (Keihan-honsen 京阪本線) train to Fushimi-Momoyama Station (伏見桃山駅 Fushimi-Momoyama-eki)



Walk west out of the station along the covered shopping mall. Keep going until the covered mall comes out into the open and turn immediately left just before the greengrocers. Keep going south until you reach the river and turn right

Teradaya Inn (寺田屋) was a boat lodge located next to the Satsuma headquarters (薩摩藩) in Fushimi (伏見) and a place where supporters of the Emperor gathered.

On the 23rd April 1862 between 60-70 pro Imperial anti Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) Satsuma Clan (薩摩藩) members who met here to plan seizing the Imperial Palace (京都御所) in Kyōto (京都) fought other Satsuma Clan (薩摩藩) members sent here to bring them into custody by Shimazu Hisamitsu (島津久光), Daimyo of Satsuma (薩摩藩の大名), who had been given an Imperial Order to put paid to the rōnin (浪人) problem in Kyōto (京都)

On 8 March 1866 Sakamoto Ryōma (坂本龍馬) and a friend from Chōshū (長州藩), Miyoshi Shinzo (三吉慎蔵), both fought their way out of a Shinsengumi (新選組) ambush here with a Smith and Wesson revolver after the concluding the Satsuma-Chōshū (薩摩藩 長州藩) alliance (dōmei, 薩摩長州同盟) which would ensure the end of the Tokugawa Bakufu (徳川幕府) and the restoration of the Meiji Restoration (大政奉還 taisei hokan). They escaped via the back stairs during a lull in the fighting. The Inn can be visited and revolver and sword marks that were made during the fight can be seen upstairs. Guests can also stay here

Location photographs by the author

Acknowledgement – Maps by Google