

What's Up Aichi

Timely Tourist Information On Aichi Prefecture And The Surrounding Central Japan Region

Exploring Nagoya on a Budget

Recession, depression, economic downturn, financial crisis, *kinyu kiki*... No matter how you say it, times are tough all over, and often among the first cuts to the family budget are long-distance travel plans, especially to destinations like Japan that are known for their high prices.

But Japan doesn't have to be expensive. After all, this is the country that brought you the economy car, cup ramen and capsule hotels. Fact is, Japanese people know how to live on the cheap, and the people of Nagoya and Aichi are some of the biggest yen-pinchers around.

In this special po' folks edition of *What's Up Aichi* we give you the low-down on keeping costs down and show you how to stretch your travel dollar in Nagoya.

Time is money, so let's get right to it!

Nagoya Jumps with Flea Markets

"One man's trash is another man's priceless souvenir." OK, we're paraphrasing a little, but you get the idea.

It's no secret that Japanese people are obsessed with the latest technology and consumer products—that is, except for the countless people who aren't. They know that in a country where most people jump to buy the newest products, the best deals are often to be had on barely used goods.

Miserly Nagoyans hit the city's many flea markets to find bargains on gently used items and to divest themselves of their own outgrown or outdated belongings. The flea markets can also be a fun option for the cost-conscious traveler looking for one-of-a-kind mementos of Japan or gifts for friends back home.

A statue of the Buddhist Goddess of Salvation is the most prominent figure at **Osu Kannon Temple** in the colorful Osu district, so perhaps it should come as no surprise that the temple grounds are the site for so many people trying to give their belongings a second chance at life. The temple hosts an **outdoor flea market** on

the 18th and 28th of every month. Arrive early and pray at the temple for good fortune as you haggle for the best deals on antiques, art and household items.

While it's usually reserved for the Chunichi Dragons and their doomed opponents, in the off season Nagoya's boys of summer lend their field to less wealthy, less athletic folks during the **Nagoya Dome Flea Market**, which is held twice a year. The colossal event boasts gifts for hobbyists and delicious snack items from all over the country, but perhaps the most unique among the flea market's attractions is the section where unclaimed items from the nationwide rail system's lost-and-founds resurface after their obligatory claim period has expired.



Bargain hunting is clearly not a spectator sport

Situated in the middle of the country's busiest rail corridor, Nagoya gets more than its fair share of unspoken-for treasures. Umbrellas are the most common items left behind, but there are also plenty of watches and eyeglasses to be picked through, and more valuable items are not unheard of. For the foreign visitor, it's the spectacle and size of the market itself that is truly unforgettable.

Tickets for the Nagoya Dome Flea Market are ¥800 at the door and kids get in free.

Port Messe Nagoya gives the dome a run for its money with its own giant flea market, held the first weekend of May. The **Mammoth Flea Market** is the place to pick up secondhand electronics, fashion items and nostalgic Japanese toys. All three exhibition halls will be utilized to accommodate 4,000 booths for the spring

market, so polish up your negotiating skills and plan to make a day out of it.

Doors open at 10:00 and day-of tickets are ¥1200 for adults.

The **Central Japan Flea Market League** (CJFML) holds regular flea markets throughout the region. Though smaller than the mega-markets held at the Nagoya Dome and Port Messe, the organization's events happen nearly every week. Ask a Japanese speaker to check the CJFML website (<http://www.cjfleamarket.com>) to find out if a flea market is scheduled during your trip, or contact our office in San Francisco for updated information before your departure.

First Dibs on Secondhand Kimono

Kimono, or traditional silk robes, are always high on the shopping lists of female travelers to Japan. The elegant garments are the perfect attire when visiting festivals or formal events during your travels, and they are increasingly finding their way into western wardrobes—even if in slightly altered form. But a new *kimono* can easily set you back over a thousand dollars, and a tight travel budget might force you to pass up the once-in-a-lifetime chance to buy the genuine article.



Hand-Me-Downs of a Geisha

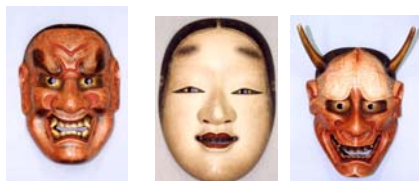
Nagoya's **Recycled Kimono Fair** is the perfect solution for the thrifty fashionista. Even Japanese people reserve wearing *kimono* for special occasions, so many of the items that you'll find at the fair are likely to be in near-new condition. With items starting at ¥100 and half of the *kimono* going for less than ¥2000, you can

justify wearing your finds only occasionally or experimenting with the delicate fabrics at home. The two-day fair is held twice a year on the fourth floor of the UNY Ozone building near Ozone station. The next event is planned for June.

For visitors who are not able to be in town during the Recycled Kimono Fair, the Osu Kannon district is the place to go. Several shops within a few blocks of each other offer deals on discounted used *kimono*.

Nō Money? Nō Problem

Centuries before Shakespeare picked up his first quill, Japanese theater enthusiasts knew that the play was the thing. The stage is alive and strong in Japan, and travelers have plenty of theatrical options to choose from. But even the most sophisticated fine arts aficionados could be forgiven for having misgivings about shelling out a hundred bucks or more for performances that even educated Japanese can find abstruse.



The **Nagoya Nō Theater** offers an economical option for those who want to get a taste of the ever-evolving traditional theater of Japan. The theater periodically stages free performances of *nō*, Japan's oldest dramatic genre. Amateur actors portray the characters, and the free performances are an excellent introduction to the art form. Patrons are free to come and go as they please, so you can take in an entire show and try to appreciate the complex characters and plot developments, or just get the gist of the art form and move on the next stop on your itinerary.

Performance times are not fixed, so call the theater at 052-231-0088 to inquire about upcoming free performances.

Money in the Bank

If there is any place that should know how to save you money, it's the bank. The Mitsubishi Tokyo UFJ Bank does just that with its free **Currency Museum**. The museum is not just a great bargain, but also the best place to learn more about the past and present of one of the world's

most important currencies.

Live out your international spy fantasies by picking up 100-billion-yen's worth of 10,000-yen bills, imagine cramming the world's largest coin into a vending machine, and see how much you'd be worth if your body weight were converted to cold, hard cash. The museum also boasts an extensive and colorful collection of currencies from around the world and regularly hosts fine art exhibits featuring some of Japan's best known artists.

The popular Currency Museum, which had until January been situated in a downtown branch of Mitsubishi Tokyo UFJ Bank, is taking a break until April 20, when it will re-open in its new home on Nagoya's Culture Street.

Ticket to Ride

Packing the most destinations possible into your travel itinerary requires a lot of busing, training and subways from place to place. All of that public transportation usage can add up quickly if you're not careful, but there are a few options to keep in mind when buying your tickets in Nagoya that can help to keep costs down.

If you expect to be using public transportation multiple times in one day during your stay in Nagoya, or if you just don't want to deal with the hassle of finding the exact change in an unfamiliar currency every time you board a bus or train, it might pay off to buy a one-day pass. The Nagoya Transportation Bureau offers three types of **all-you-can-ride one-day passes**: a bus only option (¥600) a train only option (¥740) and a combination pass (¥850). The passes can significantly ease stress levels heightened by negotiating the complex subway and bus system. The passes pay for themselves in just a few rides, and you'll have the added comfort of knowing that if you happen to get on a bus or train going in the wrong direction you will not have wasted your money on the ticket. Just keep in mind that the bus passes are only valid on city buses (including sightseeing routes) and are not accepted on private lines.

The **Eco Ticket** (*donichi eko kippu*) is an even better option for weekend visitors taking in the sights. Originated to keep weekend and holiday traffic levels down in the "Car Kingdom" of Nagoya, the ticket is ideal for foreign tourists who wouldn't be

driving anyway. At just ¥600 for adults, the ticket allows you unlimited one-day use of city buses and the subway. The Eco Ticket also gets you deep discounts and free items at participating Nagoya shops, restaurants and cultural institutions. The convenient pass is also available on national holidays and on the 8th of every month, which is citywide Environmental Protection Day.



For travelers looking to hit all of Nagoya's premier sights in one day, the **Me~guru Nagoya Sightseeing Route Bus** could be the way to go. The gold bus picks up and drops off every hour on weekdays (excluding Mondays) and every half-hour on weekends and holidays. Popular destinations on the bus route include Nagoya Castle, Tokugawa Garden and Museum, Noritake Garden, and the Toyota Commemorative Museum of Industry and Technology.

Travelers can purchase an all-day Me~guru ticket for ¥500 and board the bus at their leisure. Children's all-day passes are just ¥250 with single ride adult and children's tickets going for ¥200 and ¥100 respectively. One-day passes issued by the Transportation Bureau are also valid on the Me~guru bus.

Discount tickets are available in service stations located in major subway stations throughout Nagoya, including two outside of the Higashiyama and Sakura-dōri line entrances at Nagoya station.

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