



PRESS RELEASE

MICHELIN GUIDE

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MICHELIN Key selection is now available in Japan! For its first edition, 108 hotels and ryokan have been rewarded

- For the first time, the MICHELIN Key selection is landing in Asia, starting with Japan, highlighting 108 outstanding hotels and ryokans.
- Selected by the MICHELIN Guide inspection team, hotels offering the world's most outstanding experiences are now bookable on the MICHELIN Guide digital platforms.
- The MICHELIN Guide's ambition is to become the first global independent booking platform for outstanding restaurants and hotels.

After its inaugural announcements in France, the US, Spain and Italy in April and May, Michelin is pleased to unveil today its very first selection of hotels awarded MICHELIN Keys in Japan. A total of 108 hotels have been awarded One, Two or Three MICHELIN Keys, highlighting the most outstanding experiences and stays throughout the country.

Offering an ever more comprehensive service, the MICHELIN Guide's hotel selection provides users with recommendations for a complete travel experience. Awarded by the MICHELIN Guide inspection team based on anonymous stays or visits — independently of existing labels, tourism stars and pre-established quotas — the MICHELIN Keys are a new international benchmark for travelers. They aim to guide them to accommodations that stand out for their unique hospitality concept, distinctive character, warm welcome and extremely high level of service.

108 hotels and ryokans receive One, Two or Three MICHELIN Keys in Japan

In this first Japanese selection, and first selection in Asia, 108 accommodations have earned distinctions out of 244 hotels recommended by the MICHELIN Guide across the country: 6 received Three MICHELIN Keys, 17 Two MICHELIN Keys and 85 One MICHELIN Key. This selection brings together a wide range of accommodations, from the most traditional Japanese hotels in historic ryokan, to trendy urban boutiques, relaxing and intimate hideaways in natural surroundings, and spectacular, world-renowned palaces.

Gwendal Poullennec, International Director of the MICHELIN Guide commented : "With this new distinction, the MICHELIN Guide has opened up a brand-new chapter in the service it provides for travelers, which has been its lifeblood for the past 124 years. Steadfast in our field-based



approach, the MICHELIN Guide inspectors drew up this unprecedented list to share their best hotel experiences in Japan. Every establishment awarded One, Two or Three MICHELIN Keys is a gem sculpted by talented professionals and a tribute to unparalleled hospitality. Our Japan Key selection, more than anywhere else, is a fascinating blend of hotel types, concepts and styles — from the most authentic ryokans, with their long and historic traditions, to the most outlandish architecture and design landmarks iconic city luxury hotels, and tiny accommodations far off the beaten path. Using the MICHELIN Guide digital platforms, travelers can filter their search and book awarded hotels for stays that we hope will be unforgettable.”

One, Two and Three MICHELIN Keys

Just like the Stars that indicate the best culinary experiences in the MICHELIN Guide restaurant selection, the MICHELIN Keys reveal accommodations in the Guide’s hotel selection that offer the most outstanding stays. They are a new benchmark for travelers, qualifying each hotel experience in broader terms than simple amenities.

One MICHELIN Key: a very special stay

This is a true gem with its own character and personality. It may break the mould, offer something different or simply be one of the best of its type. Service always goes the extra mile and provides significantly more than similarly priced establishments.

Two MICHELIN stars: an exceptional stay

Somewhere truly unique and exceptional in every way, where a memorable experience is always guaranteed. A hotel of character, personality and charm that’s operated with obvious pride and considerable care. Eye-catching design or architecture, and a real sense of the locale make this an exceptional place to stay.

Three MICHELIN Keys: an extraordinary stay

It’s all about astonishment and indulgence here – this is the ultimate in comfort and service, style and elegance. It is one of the world’s most remarkable and extraordinary hotels and a destination in itself for that trip of a lifetime. All the elements of truly great hospitality are here to ensure any stay will live long in the memory and hearts.

6 hotels awarded Three MICHELIN Keys establish themselves in the exclusive family of world’s most extraordinary places

Three MICHELIN Keys indicate an extraordinary stay, worthy of a special trip. Six hotels, located in Hakonemachi, Kyoto, Shima, and Tokyo, received the highest hotel accolade of the MICHELIN Guide.



Gora Kadan (in Hakonemachi), a one-time imperial family retreat, now a first-class ryokan inn, is located in the middle of the Hakone national Park, a rural idyll in the shadow of Mount Fuji. Mixing contemporary construction and traditional style, the property is surrounded by a magnificently framed view of the Hakone countryside. Inside, rooms are typical tatami styles, and some have their own open-air wooden or stone baths. The property also offers an exceptional mineral pool ringed with natural features and imposing boulders.

Built on the historic estate of the Mitsui family, **Hotel The Mitsui Kyoto** is a 160 room property designed by a team of Japanese artists and architects led by the renowned Andre Fu. To access the hotel, located just across from the Nijo-jo Castle, guests proceed through the landmark, 300-year-old Kajiimiya Gate. The hotel is organized around a 1,300 sqm magnificent courtyard garden, and offers its own onsen thermal spring baths.

In Shima, Mie, **Amanemu** is a modern interpretation of timeless Japanese pleasures. The architecture, by Kerry Hill, is at once utterly contemporary and totally Japanese. The nature reserve where it makes its home offers extraordinary beauty in every direction, and the suites and villas frame glorious views of the gardens and the waters of Ago Bay. Each of the 24 enormous suites comes with a private onsen bath — while the villas sleep up to six and span nearly 4,000 square feet. A must-try is their modern version of a traditional kaiseki dinner.

In the capital, **Palace Hotel Tokyo** is as close as guests can get to actually staying on the verdant grounds of the Imperial Palace, offering memorable views of the Palace grounds and the Citycity itself. The architecture and design are as perfectly sober and calm, and the modern-Japanese interiors feel are perfectly weighted, carefully considered, and expertly crafted. Part of the many amenities and services proposed byat the hotel, is athe unique Evian Spa. Meanwhile, With an impeccable location, **Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Otemachi** is has an impeccable location located in the high-rise financial district overlooking the East Gardens of the Imperial Palace. Here, tasteful interiors and lavish comforts is are combined with an elaborate spa — this one painstakingly Japanese in its décor and Zen inspiration — and a handful of very fine restaurants and bars.

A way to stay in the Japanese capital but to almost feel you're in Italy is the **Bulgari Hotel Tokyo**. AAtop a skyscraper close to both Nihombashi and Ginza, its rooms and suites offers faultless luxury in the modern Italian mode, combined with subtle Japanese accents. Iconic architects Patricia Viel and Antonio Cittero build on their work at the Italian Bulgari hotels with this stunning accommodation.

17 hotels are awarded Two MICHELIN Keys for delivering exceptional stays

Highlighting an exceptional stay, worthy of a detour, 17 hotels have been awarded Two MICHELIN Keys.



Located on a tiny, isolated island in the Inland Sea, **Benesse House** is a collaboration between the art collector Soichiro Fukutake and the Pritzker prize-winning architect Tadao Ando. They built this hotel around the love of art, with major work and site-specific installations by everyone from Jackson Pollock to James Turrell. Like no other hotel experience, it feels like spending a night in a museum. Guest rooms are in a western style with views of the island and sea.

Fufu Kawaguchiko is a modern, 32-room, ryokan-style hotel finely crafted and artfully composed. Guests can expect near-perfect tranquility, eco-friendly operations, natural and organic materials and private onsen baths. Another unique appeal of the place is that every room has a direct view of the Mount Fuji. The property serves ultra local kaiseki cooking that showcases the finest regional ingredients and classics of traditional Japanese cuisine.

Located on the Ishigaji Island, **Jusandi** consists of just 5 villas, surrounded by beautiful beaches, crystal-clear waters and a lush sub-tropical forest. This is the passion project of the architect Norihito Dan: a stunning natural setting framed thoughtfully, never ostentatiously, by a dwelling custom-tailored to its site. Luxury and minimalism go hand in hand here.

In Toyooka, we find one of the purest examples of an absolutely traditional Japanese country inn — **Nishimuraya Honkan** ryokan — with its stunning tatami rooms, kaiseki dinners and onsen baths.

ENOWA Yufuin styles itself a “botanical retreat,” and not without reason; this tranquil and luxurious escape lies at the edge of the city of Yufu and at the foot of the mountain of the same name. With a strikingly modern architecture that invites nature in, via vast windows and open-air spaces, the hotel is completed by a “farm-driven” cuisine, serving ultra-local ingredients from the hotel’s own farm.

Back in Tokyo, **The Capitol Hotel Tokyo** is one of the rare Tokyo hotels that puts guests in touch with nature. Designed by the architect Kengo Kuma, it offers the clean lines and minimalist aesthetic that typifies a certain Japanese style. In another example of that style, **JANU Tokyo** is one of the best new hotels in the city. The hotel, which is the youth-oriented sister brand of Aman, engages directly with its setting. Between its 8 restaurants, spa and wellness center, travelers can stay within the Janu tower and never run out of things to do.

85 hotels received One MICHELIN Key

Within the MICHELIN Guide hotel selection, One MICHELIN Key recognizes a very special stay.



Among the 85 establishments that received One MICHELIN Key, there is great diversity in both geography, concepts and style. The selection includes properties such as **Shishi-Iwa-House Karuizawa**, a collection of 3 houses from Japan's finest modern architects: Pritzker winners Shigeru Ban and Ryue Nishizawa. In an idyllic location, stunning guest rooms are divided between both western and tatami styles. In the capital city, the mythic **Tokyo Station Hotel**, located in Tokyo Train Station, has been freshly renovated. It is now a first-class modern business hotel, with all that label implies: large, stately, high-ceilinged guest quarters, a range of bars and restaurants from smart-casual to fine-dining, and a spa that is strikingly modern and minimal, in stark contrast with the hotel's classic red-brick elegance.

For a peaceful journey and unique escape, **The Hiramatsu Hotels & Resorts Ginoza** is located in a small town on the island of Okinawa. This quietly secluded villa-style resort on the point of its own peninsula is tucked neatly into a wooded area apart from the town. This is a low-key escape, but a luxe one, made up of a mere 19 rooms in plans that range from twin rooms to self-contained villas. At all levels, guests have a jacuzzi on their private terrace with a view out to sea, as well as access to a spa and a restaurant that combines Okinawan traditions with French and Italian flavors.

Promoting a committed and sustainable vision of hospitality, **Satoyama Jujo** is sequestered deep within enchanting mountainscape. It blends eco-conscious boutique sensibilities with the region's centuries-old *kominka* tradition: rural, wooden-frame homesteads designed to withstand harsh local winters while that nevertheless maintaining maintain the bright, clean, and tranquil benchmarks of classic Japanese interior design.

With some of the most incredible architecture and interior design in the country, **Genji Kyoto** is a hospitality design tour de force. Mixing a modern structure with traditional Japanese elements and unusual cross-cultural gestures, rooms are visually restrained and minimalist but with many touches implemented by Kyoto craftsmen and artisan. Architecturally, it is an evolution of the locally distinctive *machiya* townhouse form.

In a different architectural style entirely, **The Tower Hotel** in Nagoya is built in and around a 50's vintage television tower. The iron support beams cut diagonally through the walls, floors and ceilings of the rooms, perfectly integrating this old local landmark in the hotel design. **The Okura Tokyo** has been newly designed by Yoshio Taniguchi, the son of the original architect, and pays tribute to the Sixties, back when the original hotel was built. Rooms and suites are thoroughly contemporary in their construction and comforts. The hotel offers extraordinary, elevated views of the city, completed by a 25-meter swimming pool, expansive fitness center and a 26th-floor spa,



Finally, for a full MICHELIN Guide experience, **Kanamean Nishitomiya** is a ryokan located in a 19th century townhouse in central Kyoto. Here, owners have outfitted their antique home with contemporary touches. The highlight for a perfect journey is the dining experience, awarded One MICHELIN Star: an elaborate multi-course affair for which guests will be dressed in traditional garb and follow a carefully prescribed routine.

All MICHELIN Guide hotel recommendations are available for free on the MICHELIN Guide website and mobile application. On these digital platforms, all recommended hotels can be booked directly at the best market price. To assist travelers throughout their stay, the MICHELIN Guide also provides a concierge service run by travel experts employed by the MICHELIN Guide.

After France, the United States (Atlanta, California, Chicago, Colorado, Florida, New York, Washington DC), Spain, Italy and Japan, the MICHELIN Keys will be announced in Northern and Central America (the rest of the US, Canada, Mexico), in Thailand, and in Great Britain and Ireland. Other destinations will follow during the year.

Find the pictures of the Press Conference Announcement on the link:

<https://kyodo-pr.box.com/v/michelinkey-hotel0704>

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