

40th Anniversary of the Establishment of the Kyoto City Archaeological Museum

Publisher : Kyoto City Archaeological Museum
Cosponsor : Area council for Nishijin history
Supporter : Executive committee for Kyoto historical and cultural facility cluster

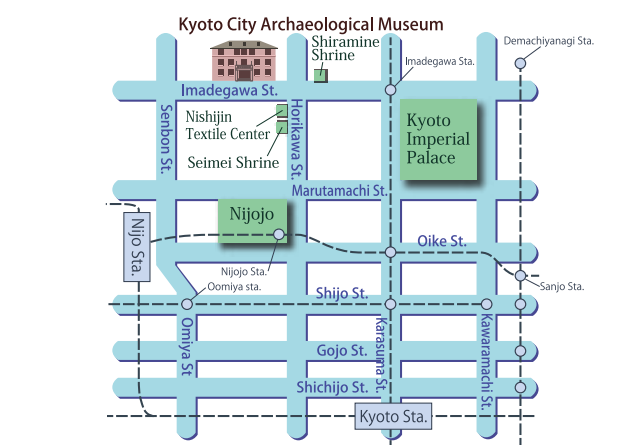
Supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal 2019



Kyoto City Archaeological Museum

With the aim of announcing and exhibiting the results of excavation studies in Kyoto, this museum was established in 1979 in a renovated building that was the former Nishijin textile center designed by the architect Seigo Motono in 1914. The building is designated a tangible cultural property by Kyoto City in 1984. The museum offers special exhibitions and a permanent exhibition, showcasing some 1,500 pieces. Apart from the relics on display, videos and computers are used to pass on Kyoto's historical knowledge from the paleolithic age to modern times.

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http://www.kyoto-arc.or.jp/museum/
Admission is free / Closed on Mondays (following day if Monday is a National Holiday)
Opening hours: 9:00-17:00 (entry by 16:30)
15-minute walk from Subway Imadegawa Station
Very close to Imadegawa-Omiya Stop of City Buses 101, 102, 201, 203 and 59



Outline of the Odoi Ramparts and Moats

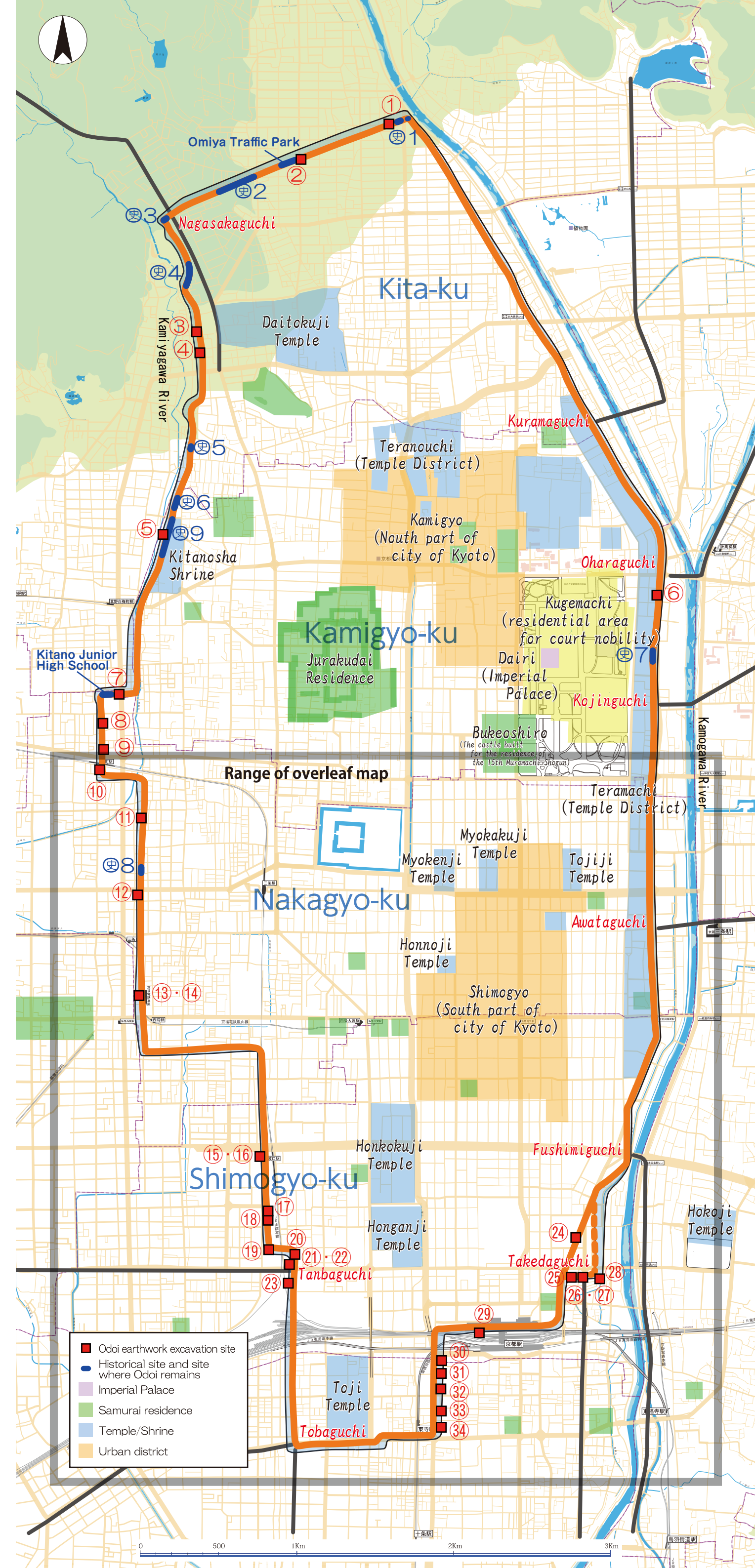
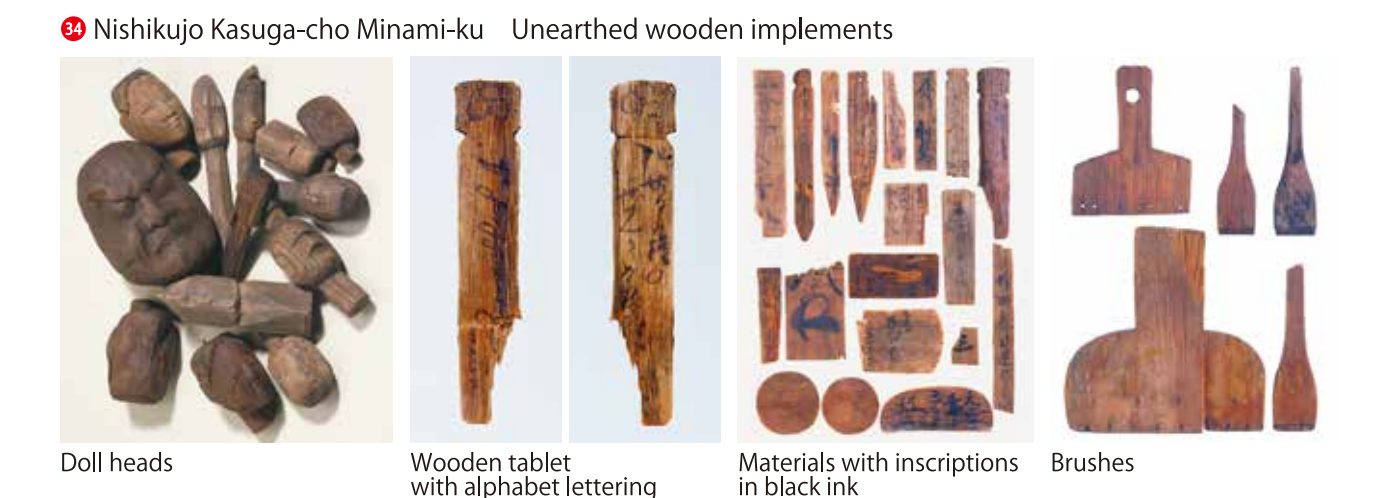
After the Honnoji Incident (1582), in which the powerful leader Oda Nobunaga died, Hashiba Hideyoshi moved quickly to become effectively the ruler of Japan and bring an end to the prolonged hostilities of the warring states. In 1585, Hideyoshi received the position of Kanpaku (chief advisor to the Emperor) and then was granted the prestigious family name of "Toyotomi" in 1586, paving the way for him to become Daijo-daijin (Grand Minister) and establish political power. He proceeded with the unification of Japan and a major reformation of Kyoto, the capital city of Japan at the time. Things seem to have been hectic in central Kyoto: Hideyoshi was building Jurakudai, his headquarters in Uchino (ruins of the Heian Palace, lost to a fire in 1227); placing the residences of his subordinate samurai around it; renovating the Imperial Palace and forming Kugemachi (a residential area around the Imperial Palace reserved for court nobility); conducting land surveying and ownership investigation in inner Kyoto (known as rakuchu kenchi); changing the grid street plan of the city (a process known as tensho jiwari); and forming Teramachi and Teranouchi, districts where Buddhist temples were moved to. As a finale to all of these came the grand project of building the Odoi earthwork.

The Odoi earthwork, comprising ramparts and moats, surrounded the city of Kyoto. With a total length of approximately 22.5 kilometers, its northern rim ran from Kamigamo to Takagamine, the southern rim was adjacent to To-ji Temple, the eastern rim ran along the Kamogawa River, and the western rim was along the Kamiyagawa River.

It extends 8.5 kilometers long from north to south, 3.5 kilometers wide from east to west. The Odoi likely had multiple roles including defense, flood prevention and public safety.

To form the earthwork, the moat was dug and the excavated soil piled up on the city side of the moat in a trapezoid shaped rampart, with bamboo planted on top. Although there are variations, the width of the moat tended to be about 20 meters and the depth some three to four meters. The earthen rampart was approximately 20 meters wide at the base and five meters wide at the top, and the height was about five meters. According to historical documents, construction began in January 1591 and was completed in March of the same year, clearly signifying a great rush.

As a result, a visually and structurally definitive border between the inner city (Rakuchu) and outer city (Rakugai) was created for the first time. It is said that the Odoi originally had ten entrances/exits, including the seven entrances to Kyoto (Kyo-no-Nana-kuchi), the seven junctions with major roads. The Odoi was strictly controlled by the Suminokura family and the Kyoto Shoshidai (deputy of the Shogun to govern Kyoto) during the Edo era. However, with time, the need for fortifications waned, and the ramparts blocking infrastructural development and hindering traffic were removed. This removal continued after the Meiji period. Then, in 1920, the Kyoto Prefecture Committee for Studies on Historical Sites and Scenic Spots undertook studies of the state of the Odoi, designating nine sections as National Historic Sites (eight of them in 1930 and another one in 1965).



Studies on the Odoi Ruins

After the Meiji Restoration, the Odoi earthwork was subject to development that was leading to its destruction. Concerned with the situation, the Kyoto Prefecture Committee for Studies on Historical Sites and Scenic Spots conducted the first academic study of the Odoi from 1918 to 1920. How much of the ramparts and moats were surviving then was thoroughly investigated, and the findings were published in Volume 2 of the Report of Kyoto Prefecture Committee for Studies on Historical Sites and Scenic Spots (1920). Later, the Department of Shrines and Temples of the Kyoto Prefecture conducted studies in 1929 and recommended eight sites where the Odoi was in a well preserved state to the Ministry of Education, with these becoming National Historic Sites in July 1930. The Odoi ruins surviving in the northwest part of the grounds of the Kitano Tenmangu Shrine were additionally recognized in 1965, making nine ruins recognized as National Historic Sites today. In addition to these, there are two more sites where the ramparts are preserved fairly well: one in the Omiya Traffic Park, Kita-ku, and the other within the grounds of Kitano Junior High School, Nakagyo-ku.

Archaeological studies have been conducted mainly at the 34 sites shown in the map, showing that the Odoi ramparts were externally surrounded by moats, with berms configured at the skirts of the ramparts. Size differs between sites, but the ramparts have a height of four-to-five meters, and a base width, including the berms, of about 20 meters. The moats are said to be about 20 meters in width and two-to-three meters in depth. The eastern rim along the Kamogawa River does not show any signs of a moat having been included in the earthwork.

Earthen Rampart Except the nine historic sites and the two others mentioned above, there are hardly any traces of the earthen rampart left now. However, the archaeological studies have confirmed rampart remains at map excavation points ④, ⑤, ⑧, ⑨, ⑪, ⑬, ⑭, ⑰, ⑳ and ㉔. The ramparts discovered in studies were in a state of destruction, so all that could be confirmed was just the piled up earth or base formed from natural ground. The best-preserved earthen rampart (excavation ⑰) is approximately 2 meters thick. Also, two-to-three-meter-wide berms were made between the rampart and the moat (excavation points ④ and ⑪). The soil dug from the moat was used for banking the earthen wall and to build a bank on the inner side of the moat, which was made to function as an earth retainer by being made up of alternate layers of clay and gravel (excavation points ⑬, ⑭ and ⑰).

At the southeast rim of the Odoi, the Shosei-en garden was landscaped in the middle of 17th century. It is said that the rampart originally running in the northeast-southwest direction was replaced to the east-west direction following the creation of the garden. At excavation point ㉔, the base of a rampart running in the east-west direction was discovered. At this point, the south side of the rampart had not been dug to make a moat.

Moat The remains of the Odoi moat is only clearly recognizable at historic site 2. At historic sites 3, 4 and 9, records in the Kitano Shake Nikki (diary of a Kitano Shrine priest) show mention of the Kamiyagawa River being called Oohori (the big ditch). At all other sites, the moat has been filled in. The buried moat has been found at excavation points ④, ⑪, ⑬, ⑭ to ⑰, ㉑ to ㉔ and ㉔ to ㉔. At excavation point ④, the east shoulder of the moat was discovered. It was on the west bank of the rampart using the eastern cut-off of the fluvial terrace of the Kamiyagawa River. At excavation point ⑪ the moat was discovered. It measured more than 14 meters wide and 2.5 meters deep. Gravel had accumulated at the bottom, which means the Kamiyagawa River might have flowed through the moat. At this point, the moat remained until the end of the Meiji era (early 20th century); however, it was filled in with rampart earth in 1910. Conversely, at excavation points ⑮ to ⑰ and ㉔ to ㉔, the studies clearly confirmed that clayey soil had accumulated at the bottom of the moat, denoting that water stagnated in the moat. The artefacts designated as cultural assets by the City of Kyoto in FY2018 were unearthed at excavation points ㉔ to ㉔ (Nishikujo areas).

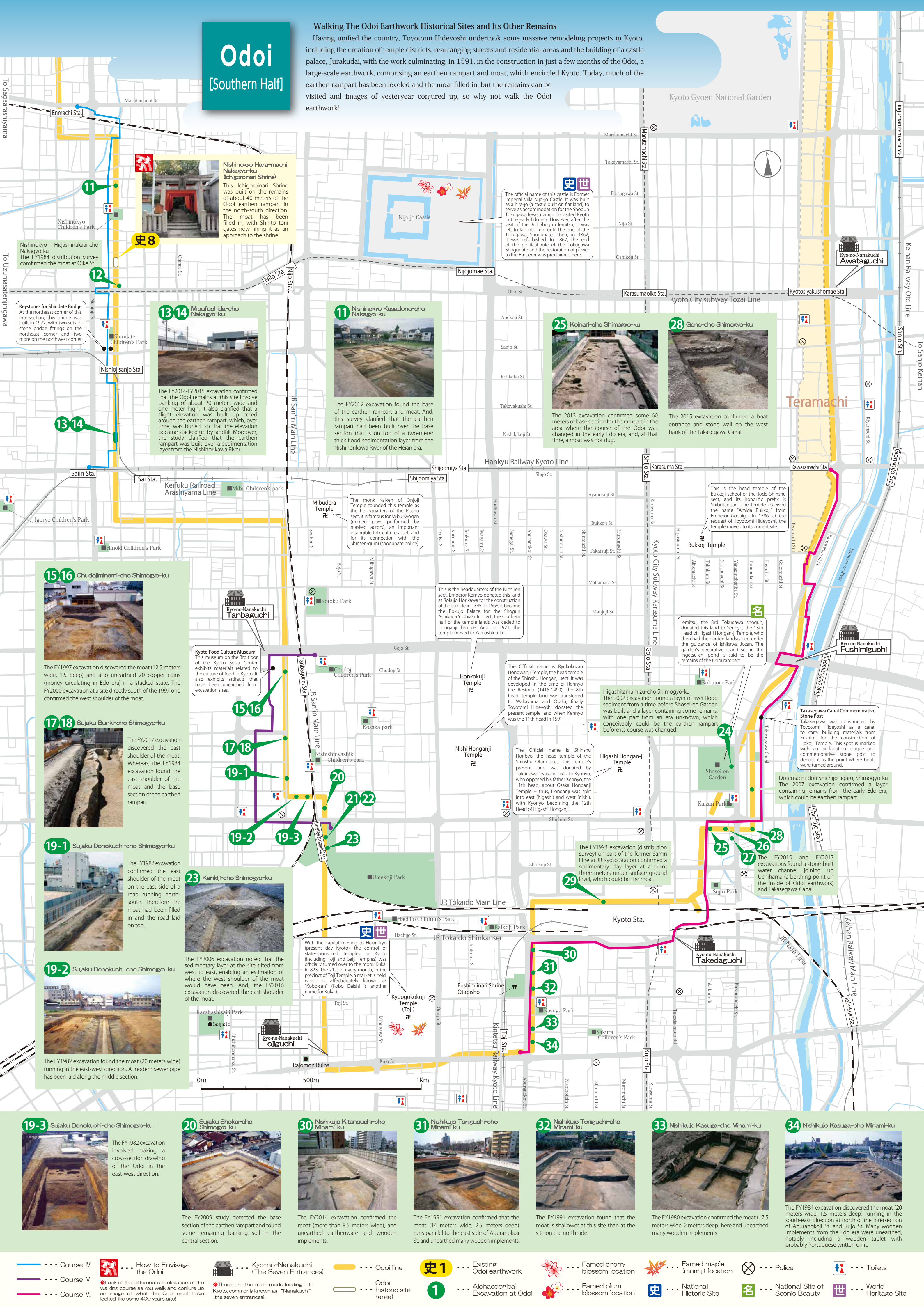


Source : Provided by Kyoto City Archaeological Research Institute

[Southern Half]

—Walking The Odoi Earthwork Historical Sites and Its Other Remains—

Having unified the country, Toyotomi Hideyoshi undertook some massive remodeling projects in Kyoto, including the creation of temple districts, rearranging streets and residential areas and the building of a castle palace, Jurakudai, with the work culminating, in 1591, in the construction in just a few months of the Odoi, a large-scale earthwork, comprising an earthen rampart and moat, which encircled Kyoto. Today, much of the earthen rampart has been leveled and the moat filled in, but the remains can be visited and images of yesteryear conjured up, so why not walk the Odoi earthwork!

 . . . How to Envisage the Odoi

✖ Look at the differences in elevation of the walking course as you walk and conjure up an image of what the Odoi must have looked like some 400 years ago!



※These are the main roads leading into Kyoto, commonly known as “Nanakuchi” (the seven entrances).



 . . . Odoi
 historic site
 (area)



1 ... Archaeological
Excavation at O



... Famed plum blossom location



 . . . National
Historic Site



 ... National Site of
Scenic Beauty



 ... World Heritage Site