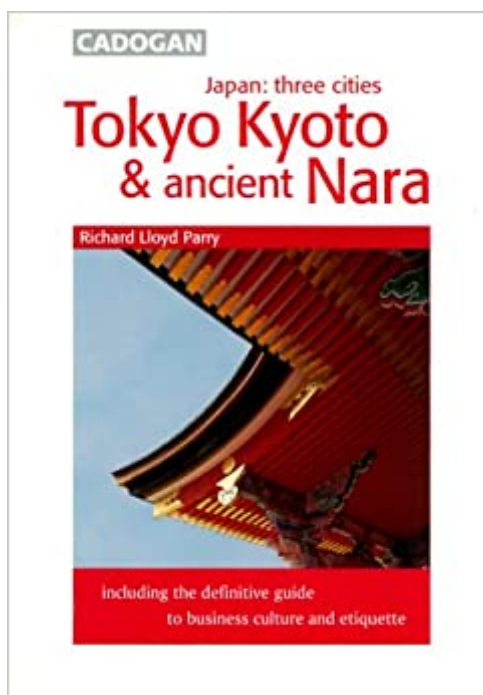


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Japan Three Cities: Tokyo, Kyoto & Ancient Nara



Synopsis

This guide to Japan explores the mountains, cities and even gardens of this exquisite and ancient land. The author's witty and informative commentary unfolds the mysteries of this often misunderstood land.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

From brash, vibrant Tokyo to bustling, haughty Kyoto and serene, cultured Nara, the Cadogan Guide to Japan's capital cities, past and present, reveals the legends and legacies of their courtly pasts. Partying in neon-lit Tokyo, contemplating Zen in Kyoto's rock gardens, or exploring the world's largest and oldest wooden temples in Nara, the witty, informative commentary unlocks the mysteries of this complex land. (5 3/4 x 8 1/4', 320 pages, maps, illustrations)

A compact, idiosyncratic, and information-filled view of three important Japanese cities. It's especially useful to have included Nara, which gives more of a sense of the Japanese past than the big buildings and department stores that swamp the past in Kyoto.

"Tokyo, Kyoto and Ancient Nara" is not a bad guidebook overall, but not great. It focuses on the cities of Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara rather than the prefectures, which is like buying a guidebook to Oklahoma and finding that it only covers Oklahomo City, ignoring the rest of the state. This book achieves a nice balance between history lesson and guiding, which is necessary for a Japanese

guidebook as you may not understand what you are seeing without some background. Maybe the first 100 pages are history/culture/etiquette type of thing. Anyone with a limited background in Japan would do well to read this section before making their trip. The city guides come in a little thin, but better than a general "Japan" guidebook, with maybe about 80 pages for Tokyo, 60 for Kyoto and 30 for "ancient" Nara, which befits the size of the three cities. There is a token 5 pages for Osaka, which is unhelpful as anyone coming to Nara and Kyoto are likely to visit Osaka as well, as it is close. It is enough information for a day or so in each city, and covers what you need for the major destinations and sights. Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara are all must-sees on any travel itinerary to Japan, so having them all in one book is convenient. Whereas Kyoto and Nara are close together in the Kansai region, Tokyo is relatively far away. If you have the money for it, however, the bullet train makes all distances irrelevant. The book is lacking of photographs of any sort, which makes the Eyewitness guides superior. Also missing is suggested day trips or walking tours. Which help to make for a great guidebook. The book is a nice size, however, and easily portable.

This is a good book but if you want to get a feel for a place before visiting, photographs are essential. The Dorling Kindersley Eyewitness Guide to Japan has photos; this one doesn't. So the Eyewitness guide ended up being the one that we carried about with us.

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