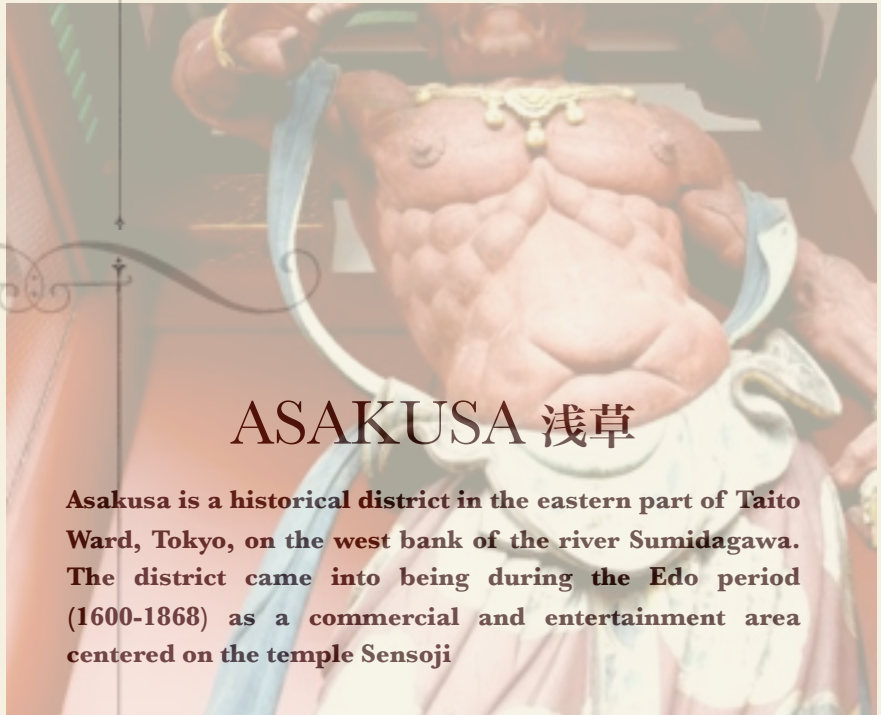


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KANTO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
3-2-2 HONMACHI SHIBUYA-KU
TOKYO 151-0071 JAPAN.
TELEPHONE +813 3376-2244 FACSIMILE +813 3376-5386

VISIT TO ASAKUSA • SENSOUJI



ASAKUSA 浅草

Asakusa is a historical district in the eastern part of Taito Ward, Tokyo, on the west bank of the river Sumidagawa. The district came into being during the Edo period (1600-1868) as a commercial and entertainment area centered on the temple Sensoji

It is said that Sensoji temple originated from the donated golden Buddha statue of 5.5 cm tall which was caught in casting net operated by two fishermen at the Sumida River and brought in by an intelligent priest of the area in 628 A.D.

Sensoji temple gradually gained popularity due to rumors that it brought many people a lot of wealth and good luck.

Sensoji Temple has three gates. The one you will be visiting first is called Kaminari mon. "Thunder Gate". On the right, you will see the Angel of the Wind, and on the left, the Angel of Thunder, both protecting the gate. Once going through the gates, look back and you will notice you are now in holy ground. Those guarding the gate look much friendlier!

Once through the gate you will be in Nakamise Shopping Arcade. The street is lined with colorful, lively stalls selling traditional knick-knacks, festival foods and rice crackers.

Most of these stores have been handed down and run by the same families for at least 5 generations.

Sensoji Temple dates back to 645, but with the original destroyed in the air raids of March 10 1945, today's building is a 1958 reconstruction. At the top of the steps, as a mark of respect, clap twice and bow your head. It's also customary to make a small offering by tossing coins into the wooden rack. As you get nearer the temple, look out for the large incense burners. Incense is wafted over the body as an act of purification. Also notice the large wooden fortune telling stand. To

