

TOKYO SEA LIFE PARK

葛西臨海公園

HOURS: Tuesday – Sunday 0930 – 1700 (enter by 1600)

CLOSED: Monday (when the Japanese holiday falls on Monday, closed on Tuesday),
12/29 – 1/5

ADMISSION: ¥700 Adult, ¥250 Child (Child 6 and under and senior citizen 65 and older are free)

Tokyo Sea Life Park is just one stop before Tokyo Disneyland on JR KEIYO Line. It celebrates the theme of Tokyo's marine environs, which extend from the upper Bay Shore, where the park is situated throughout the vastness of Tokyo Bay, along Izu Island chain to the Ogasawara group, far out in the Pacific.

There's a panoramic shark tank that is the first creature the visitors see after descending into darkness via an escalator located under the park's prominent landmark, a futuristic dome. Effervescent sound effects and new age music completes the effect of the descent beneath the sea. The Deep Sea Theater presents a 7-minute 3D sub-aquatic mini feature representing the Tokyo marine environs theme. The waiting period to stand in line is about 20 minutes, so try visiting the theater in the early hours or on a weekday. Visitor participation is encouraged at a few of the exhibits, including the video/personal computer alcove where the public may view videotapes or access education software at a half dozen terminals. Hard copies of computer information are provided free of charge. The engineering is as impressive as the live displays themselves. One of the most innovative features is a 40-ft tall kelp forest tank with Plexiglas panes weighing almost three tons each. The pelagic (oceanic) roundabout is a Plexiglas ring that's 30 meters in diameter and 1-meter high, in the center of which spectators stand mesmerized by schools of tuna as they course in a never-ending circuit around a central amphitheater. Placing humans on the inside is just another innovation. While many new public aquaria feature touch tanks, here an entire tidal basin has been constructed with clear walls for subsurface views. There's also a sand pit and small rocky shore where there is a "touch pool" filled with marine invertebrates for hands-on experience. This environmental awareness is probably the most significant angle presented by the Tokyo Sea Life Park and it is demonstrated in a mezzanine where visitors can get a "back stage" perspective of the working of a great aquarium. From the upper level, the surfaces of the first floor's display tanks are visible, as are the pumps, filtration systems and other mechanics. There's also a mini lab where visitors can learn marine biology by direct observation, peering through microscopes or watching closed-circuit TV monitors. In fact, the entire facility can be regarded as a nature study park, situated as it is between the sandy shores of Tokyo Bay and a large tract of landfill that has been landscaped into a fresh water wildlife reserve. The overall effect is a macro/micro view of the Bay Shore environment, with a distinct message regarding our responsibility to preserve it.

☞ HOW TO GET THERE

From Yokosuka:

1. Go to YOKOSUKA CHUO 横須賀中央 station and buy a ¥970 transfer ticket for KASAI RINKAI KOEN 葛西臨海公園 station on JR KEIYO J R 京葉線 Line. Take either GREEN RED KANJI train to SHINAGAWA 品川.
2. At SHINAGAWA, transfer to JR YAMANOTE J R 山手線 Line to TOKYO 東京駅 station. Insert your ticket into the automatic wicket (or show to the clerk) as you pass through the gate leading to JR lines (bilingual signs show the way), but do not give it up, it will come back up from the wicket. Go up or down the stairs to take JR YAMANOTE line to TOKYO Station.

3. TOKYO station can be confusing but there are many bilingual signs to help you find your way. You will arrive at TOKYO station on track #4. Take any exit down and follow signs to YAESU EXIT 八重洲口.
4. JR KEIYO JR 京葉線 Line is identified on these signs by a plain red stripe. The passageway leading to JR KEIYO Line is behind the stairway for tracks #9 or 10.
5. As you approach JR KEIYO Line area, you will pass through a lounge marked “KEIYO PLAZA”. Take the stairs or escalator down from the rest area. The long hallway at the bottom of the escalator has 3 moving sidewalks to assist travelers along the way. At the end of the hallway is a second escalator that takes you to JR KEIYO station lobby.
6. A 3rd escalator (ride) down brings you to a smaller lobby. There you will see a bilingual electronic sign. Look for the departure time of a LOCAL 普通 train bound for SOGA 蘇我 on tracks #1 or 2. Take one final set of stairs down to reach the tracks where you can catch the LOCAL train. KASAI RINKAI KOEN 葛西臨海公園 station is the 5th stop for the LOCAL train. After through the wickets exit the station and will see the park entrance to your left.

From Ikego:

1. Go to JIMMUJI 神武寺 Station and purchase a ¥840 transfer ticket for KASAI RINKAI KOEN 葛西臨海公園 station on JR KEIYO J R 京葉線 Line (see instruction by the ticketing machine or ask at the window). Take a train to KANAZAWA BUNKO 金沢文庫, and then transfer to a GREEN or RED KANJI train to SHINAGAWA 品川 station.
2. Get off at SHINAGAWA station and go through ticketing wicket. Make sure to pick up the ticket from the wicket. **Continue with above #2.**

RETURN TO YOKOSUKA and IKEGO:

Basically follow the above in reverse. Please remind that you cannot purchase a ticket all the way back to YOKOSUKA CHUO or JIMMUJI station from the park. Purchase one for SHINAGAWA. At SHINAGAWA, you can purchase a ticket for YOKOSUKA CHUO or JIMMUJI at KEIKYU counter.

