

Fushimi Inari, Kyoto



Report made by

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General information of the attraction

- **Name of the attraction:** Fushimi Inari
- **City and country:** Kyoto, Japan
- **Description:** As well as my favorite place in Kyoto, Fushimi Inari is an iconic Shinto shrine dedicated to an ancient rice deity with thousands of torii gates -red-orange wooden rectangular archways- forming tunnels that wind up through a forested mountain. Its magical atmosphere, specially in the early hours, where the sounds and colors of nature blend with the gates, will take you back to another era.
- **Opening hours:** It's open all year long, 24h a day as it's an outdoor open area. However, the elevator leading to the torii tunnels (there are alternative routes, although with accessibility issues -read below-) only operates between 9am and 3pm.
- **Getting there:** You can get there from either Kyoto or Osaka via the JR Inari Station (point 6 in Map 2 at the end of this report) located right next to the shrine or via Fushimi

Inari Station of the Keihan Main Line (point 7 also in Map 2), just a couple hundred meters away).

- **Discount:** Access is free for everyone, although offerings or purchases can be made at the shrine.
- **Buying the tickets:** No tickets are needed.

Accessibility information (you may check boxes + write small descriptions)

- **ACCESSIBLE ROUTE**

- **Moving around:** There is no bus system within the shrine complex, so all distances need to be covered on foot or on wheels (barring inaccessible areas). Maps 1 & 2 at the end of the report show the accessible torii tunnels in **yellow**, most accessible ways in **green** (read details below) and uneven paths with potential broken or wavy pavement (that may form a single small step if it has not been repaired) in **blue** (note that to access some of the accessible torii tunnels you have to cross this blue path -from points 3 to 4 in the maps-).

Special entrance: Yes. Although to get to point 1 in the maps below, which is the main entrance to the shrine area the regular routes from the stations are accessible. However, to get to point 2, which is the beginning of the torii tunnels, you have different options: **(a)** by means of the elevator operating between 9am and 3pm (it's the best option if you go during these hours); **(b)** following the green route in Map 1 to point 3 (it was accessible 5 years ago, although uphill and with one steep slope, but at the red dot marked with the “?” sign in the map, it seems that a former slope has reverted into really tiny and flat stairs (see Photo 4 below); **(c)** (this one is only for the adventurous that can manage 20cm high single steps) follow the red route on Map 3, although it has two separate small steps on the way, plus a dirt incline with uneven ground (see Photo 11 for the end of the dirt path that leads to point 2 in the map).

Inaccessible areas: The shrine hall building area (big red circle in the maps) is mostly accessible from the outside, although there are stairs to access some of the outer buildings. As for the torii tunnels, tunnels from points 2 to 3 and 3 to 11 are completely wheelchair accessible. Tunnels from points 4 to 9 and 9 to 5 are also wheelchair accessible if you manage to get to point 4. To get to point 4, from point 3, which is at the intersection where the initial torii tunnel splits in two, you have to follow the blue path on Map 1. Said path has uneven pavement with potential broken

or wavy pavement (that may form something similar to a single small step if it has not been repaired -see Photo 1 below). At point 4, there's the beginning of a new torii tunnel. It splits in two just as it starts. Take the left tunnel, the right one is full of steps. Finally, at point 5 there is a small shrine with fox guardian figures (Photo 10). From then onward there are unavoidable flights of stairs (see Photo 2 below). **If you can get to point 4, tunnels to point 5 are really worth it as they are wheelchair accessible and less crowded.**

Specific restrictions: Elevator operating hours: from 9am to 3pm.

- **PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY**

Ramps: There are ramps next to the stairs in the main hall area (red circle in the maps), although some of them are quite steep (see Photo 3 below) and may be troublesome for weak pushers without power assist.

Elevators: There's the aforementioned elevator (Photo 5) from the main hall area to the level of the beginning of the torii tunnels. It only works from 9am to 3pm.

Steep slopes: On the green way in Map 1 near point 3, there's a steep slope of about 15 meters. There is also a dirt and uneven steep slope to get to point 2 if you follow option (c) explained in the "Special entrance" section. The torii tunnels's ways (in yellow) are mostly flat or mildly uphill. The rest of the streets and paths in the area are uphill. The stations (6 & 7 in Map 2) are the lowest points.

- **Types of flooring:** Most of the streets leading to the main shrine hall area are either concrete or have stone-tiled pavement (quite smooth and even). The area around the main shrine hall has either the stone paths or shallow gravel (Photo 8). The first set of torii tunnels have stone tiles (see Photo 6) and further ones have concrete pavement (see Photo 7). Finally, the blue path in Map 1, plus some of the paths in option (c) are dirt paths and are quite uneven.

Steps and/or stairs: There are stairs to access some buildings in the main shrine hall area, as well as deeper in the mountain (from point 5 onward). There's the aforementioned really shallow staircase in option (b) as shown in Photo 4 below. Also, some of the torii tunnels have many steps (marked with red crosses in Map 1). Finally, the path on blue (from points 3 to 4) had broken, wavy and uneven pavement eventually forming something similar to a small step (see Photo 1 below). Also, point 8 in Map 2 is a level crossing that you may have to cross, so watch your step or front wheels when crossing the train tracks.

Narrow doorways/paths or tight turns: None.

Elements blocking the view: Some of the shrines have elevated daises or elevated platforms that make it difficult to see what's on top from a wheelchair.

Accessible toilet: Point 10 in Map 2 is a public accessible toilet. Toilets in point 9 (Map 1) are not wheelchair accessible (besides not having a specific accessible toilet, there are two steps at the entrance).

Rental wheelchairs: None.

- **Distance:** From Fushimi Inari station (point 7) to the end of the first set of accessible tunnels (point 11) there are 700m. From the same station (point 7) to the end of the second set of feasible tunnels there are 1000m. So, all in all, depending on your chosen route, the total distance will probably be between 2km and 3km.

Places to sit&rest: In some of the side buildings of the main shrine hall area or in the food stalls from the stations to the main shrine hall there are places to sit. Past the main shrine hall area, there are no benches or places to rest aside from the stairs that you may find along the way or the rocks that there may be in the woods beside the paths.

• **VISUAL ACCESSIBILITY**

Tactile paving: None.

Guiding system: None, although the level crossing has acoustic signals, as expected.

Audioguide: None.

Braille: None.

- **Contrast and size of signage:** Depending on the signs. Some of the messages in English have great black on white contrast with big lettering, but others, such as in some maps that you may find in the area (see Photo 9 below) have small lettering in English.

- **Contrast of architectural elements:** Contrast between steps at the main shrine hall area (see Photo 3 below) may be low depending on the sunlight.

Touchable 3D models: None.

• **HEARING ACCESSIBILITY**

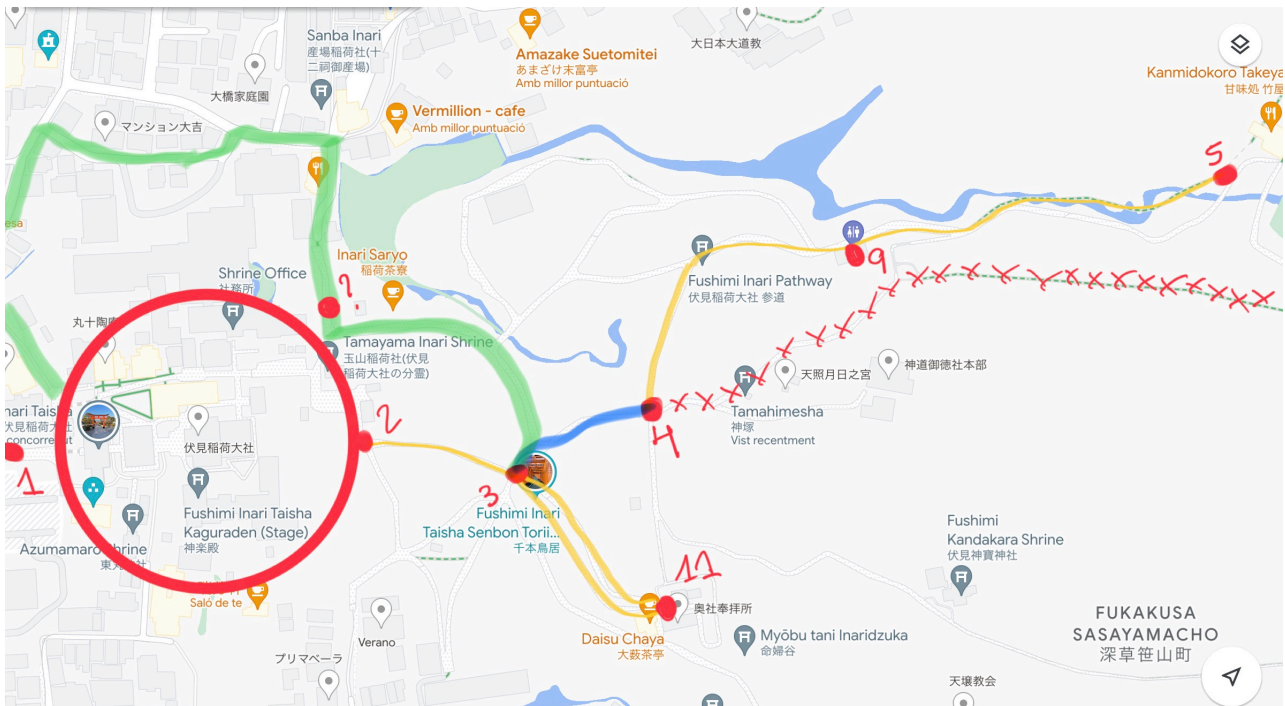
- Sign language:** None.
- Hearing loop:** None.
- Captions:** Not applicable, as there are no broadcasted messages.
- **COGNITIVE ACCESSIBILITY:**
 - Easy-to-read:** None.
 - Pictograms:** None.
- **SENSORY AND ORGANIC ACCESSIBILITY**
 - High noise level or loud sounds:** Noise levels are low from the main shrine hall onward, although streets around may be busy when crowds gather.
 - Potential issues with lighting:** None.
 - Bright colors:** Besides the bright reds and oranges of torii and shrine buildings, none others observed.
 - Strong smells:** None detected.
 - Need of interaction with other people:** There's no need to talk to anyone in the shrine area, although from 9am to 4pm main streets, the shrine hall area and initial torii tunnels tend to get really crowded. Getting there early in the morning is highly recommended.
 - Silent or sensory room:** None, but if you move to side streets, secondary paths (the blue path in Map 1 for instance) or later torii tunnels (from points 4 to 5) it's usually quite as you're in a forested mountain.
 - Food availability:** Streets leading from the stations to the main shrine hall area have many restaurants or food stalls. Once in the tunnels or the rest of the mountain there are none as far as we know.
- **EXTRA FEATURES OR BARRIERS:**
 - **Other:** Even though the elevator starts operating at 9am, if you can manage the shallow staircase on option (b) or feel comfortable with option (c) to access the torii tunnels, it is highly recommended to go there earlier in the morning to avoid crowds, move around more easily and enjoy in full the special atmosphere of the place. Winter is also a good time to go.
 - **URL to information:** [Accessible Japan review on Fushimi Inari.](#)

Overall score ★★★★★

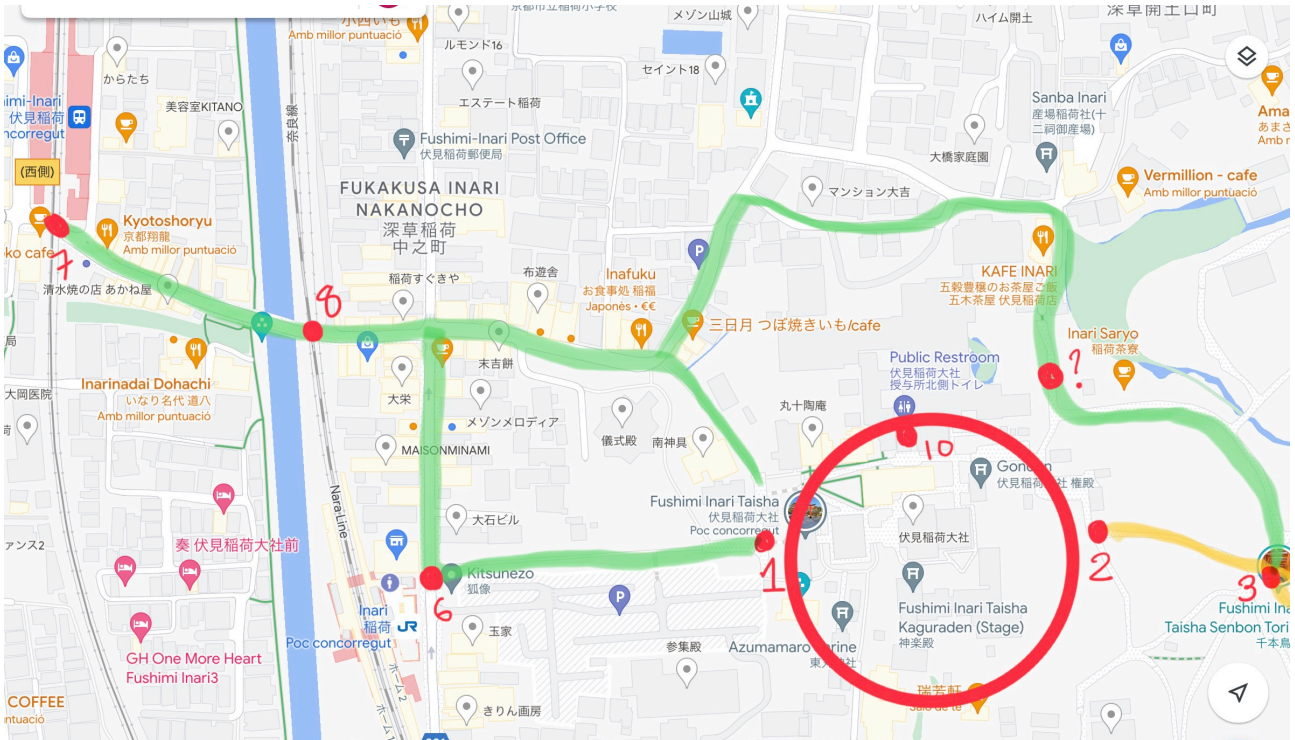
- Score: 2.5 stars.
- **Summary:** There are many areas in the mountain with stairs or steps that make the inner torii tunnels inaccessible to wheelchair users. Nevertheless, as nearby train stations are accessible and with the recently added elevator that takes you from the main shrine hall area to the beginning of the tunnels, visiting Fushimi Inari is feasible as accessibility has improved. Unfortunately, the elevator only works from 9am to 3pm and the best hours to visit to avoid crowds are either earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon or in winter season. There are alternative routes without the elevator, although with some shallow steps or steep slopes that some wheelchair users may or may not be able to sort through. Besides said elevator and some ramps in place, there are no other accessibility features. We highly recommend checking our maps in the full report (available at troublewithme.com) to see photos of the potential barriers and know the best routes beforehand, as, despite the accessibility issues, we think that Fushimi Inari and its unique torii tunnels are a must in Kyoto and, altogether, in Japan.

Maps

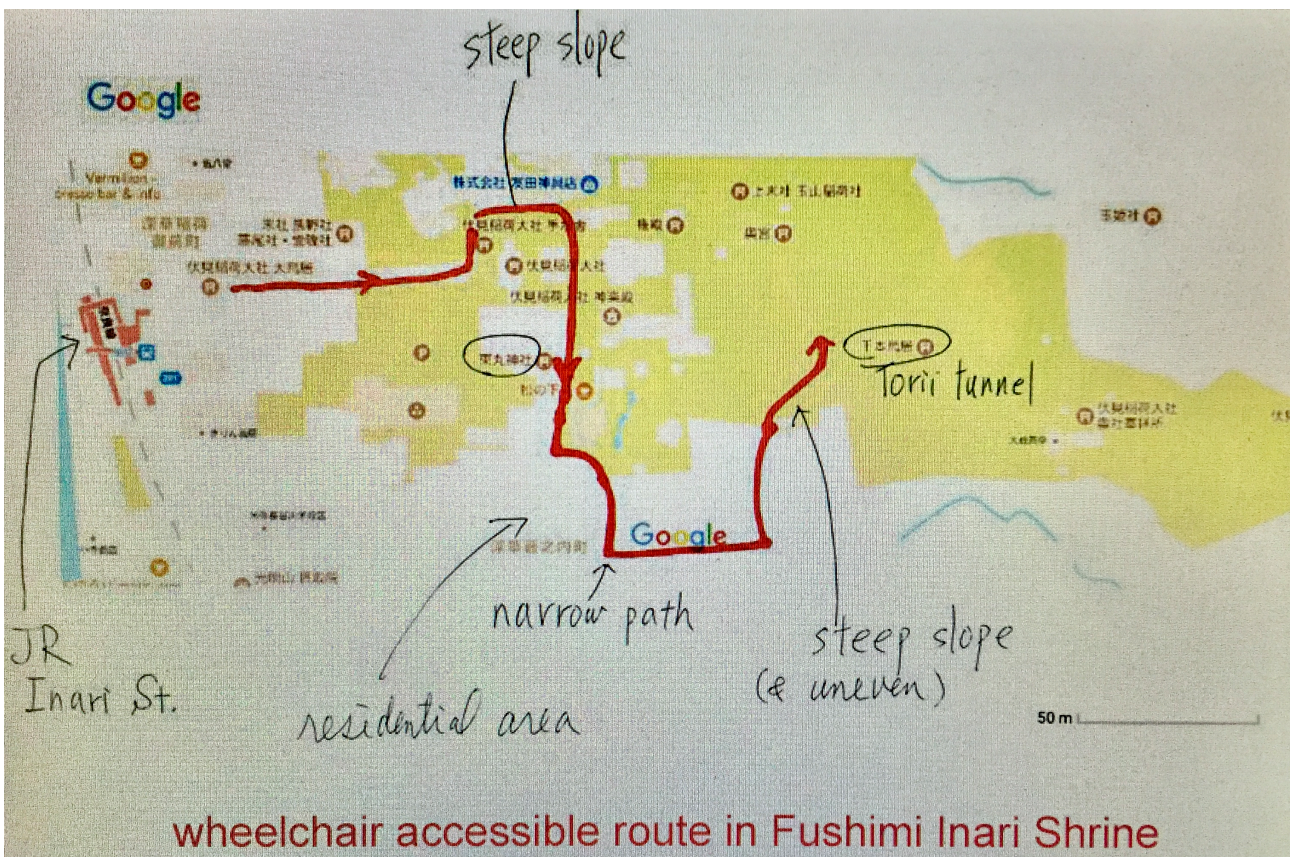
Map 1. Map of the most accessible routes -option (b) in green- and torii tunnels in yellow.



Map 2. Map of the most accessible routes (in green) from the station to the main shrine hall area (red circle).



Map 3. Map detailing option (c) route.



wheelchair accessible route in Fushimi Inari Shrine

Photos

Photo 1. Uneven stretch with step-like formations from the blue path on Map 1.



Photo 2. Stairs beyond point 5.



Photo 3. Stairs and steep ramp in the main shrine area.



Photo 4. Really shallow stairs on option (b).



Photo 5. Elevator to torii tunnels.

Photo 6. Stone tiles in the tunnels.



Photo 6. Concrete pavement in the tunnels.



Photo 8. Shallow gravel and stone tiles on side shrines in the main shrine area.



Photo 9. Signage with small lettering in English.

Photo 10. Shrine at point 5 with fox-shaped guardian statues.



Photo 11. Uneven dirt path with step at the end from option (c) leading to point 2.

