

## Food and drink

## Get the scoop

Next time you're hankering for an icy treat, do yourself a favour and ditch the soft serve. Instead, go for gloopy scoops of flavour-packed gelato, just like the Italians do. Here, in no particular order, are our favourites. *Buon appetito!*

Text: KS



Osaka

## Grom

The first thing you see when approaching Grom is the metres-long line snaking out of the store. Osakans have well and truly cottoned on to the delights of this gelateria, originally from Italy and now with stores globally, and with good reason. This is game-changing gelato. With impeccable standards - only seasonal fruit, no added colours, flavours or preservatives, and all ingredients, even the milk, being imported from Italy - Grom is producing gelato of astonishing quality. (Try the *crema di grom*, chunks of biscuit and choc chip bound in a delicious vanilla cream, to see what we mean.) And with strict adherence to Italian spelling on menus, plus classic Italian flavors like *fiordilatte* that are scooped out of deep tubs topped with cute silver lids, you'll feel like you're a world away from the shopping malls of Umeda.

- **Address:** basement level (BF1) of Lucua Mall, Umeda
- **Price:** small ¥490, medium ¥590, large ¥690
- **Number of flavours:** 18 plus one flavour of the month
- **Go-to flavour:** *crema di grom* or *lampone* (raspberry)
- **Web:** [grom.it/eng](http://grom.it/eng)

KS  
Pick

## Bar &amp; Gelateria Raffinato

It may feel like a nightclub, but this slick, marble-and-gold decorated shop in the new Grand Front mall is all about coffee and gelato. Over 20 flavours - ranging from grapefruit and blood orange, to gianduja and cassata - are served by staff dressed smartly in waistcoats and ties. Enjoy your gelato as is, or as a refreshing cocktail topped with spumante, in the outside seating area, then glide seamlessly into the jaw-dropping Panasonic lifestyle store just next door.

- **Address:** basement level (Umekita Hiroba BF1) of Grand Front, Umeda
- **Price:** 2 flavours ¥450, 3 flavours ¥550
- **Number of flavours:** 20
- **Go-to flavour:** pistachio, grape, *buntan* (pomelo)
- **Web:** [raffinato-ashiya.com/bg/umeda](http://raffinato-ashiya.com/bg/umeda)



Osaka





Osaka

### Gelateria Ruggeri

Tucked into a small alleyway opposite Namba Parks, this charming, pocket-sized shop is a must for gelato-lovers seeking adventure. Using fresh fruit and, more unusually, vegetables, Ruggeri fearlessly experiments with flavours to produce combinations that are totally unique (and at times downright strange) in the gelato microcosm. Of course there are the classics, but it's in Ruggeri's highly seasonal offerings that things get exciting. Think tomato and lemon combo in summer, pumpkin or maple walnut for autumn, sangria in winter, and sakura for spring. And best of all, you can sit at one of the shop's wooden benches, watching through a large window into the stainless steel kitchen as the owner hand-crafts each crazy combination.

- **Address:** Osaka, Naniwa-ku, Shikitsunishi 2-8-10
- **Price:** 1 flavour ¥280, 2 flavours ¥350, 3 flavours ¥450, 4 flavours ¥550
- **Number of flavours:** 13
- **Go-to flavour:** pistachio (plus ¥100), white peach (plus ¥50)
- **Web:** ruggeri.jp



Kyoto

### Caffellatte

The impassioned tones of the opera greet you as you enter Caffellatte. Italian owner Eddi Tormena and his wife run this gelateria, now in its seventh year, with an unshamed and unadulterated Italian fervour (look for the Vespa). "My recipes and methods are straight from Venice and I don't change them for local tastes," Eddi declares. "I make it every second day. We don't keep it any longer." His puritan stance may be a little stubborn, but the results are impressive: the flavours and textures are, as the Italians would say, *delizioso*.

- **Address:** 615-0061, Kyoto, Ukyo-ku, 70-1 Inui-cho Saiin, 1F Gemini building
- **Price:** single ¥320, double ¥480
- **Number of flavours:** 10 to 16
- **Go-to flavour:** pistachio, made with Italian nuts
- **Web:** caffe-llatte.com



Kyoto

### Shinpachi

Located in the heart of Arashiyama, Shinpachi has a view any tourist would appreciate, just metres from Katsura River, the Togetsukyo bridge, and the famous mountains. The shop is nearly part of the scenery: it has served gelato since 1986, picking up a couple of awards along the way. The gelato is excellent and its wide range of flavours – such as *sakura mochi* and Arashiyama tofu – will please those after something a little different. A savouring and suitable companion to the visual pleasures on offer.

- **Address:** 616-8384, Kyoto, Ukyo-ku, 37-17 Sagatenryujitsukurimichi-cho
- **Price:** single ¥330-500 (depending on flavour), double ¥400
- **Number of flavours:** 16
- **Go-to flavour:** sakura mochi
- **Web:** sinpachi.com



### Gion Gelato

Tucked behind a comedy theatre, Gion Gelato is, as its name suggests, a gelateria in Gion. Its walls are plastered with autographs from celebrities who undoubtedly enjoyed the sweet desserts on offer. The range of flavours is a little less than the norm, with Kyoto soybean and black syrup being the standouts.



Kyoto

- **Address:** 605-0073, Kyoto, Higashiyama-ku, Gionmachi Kitagawa, Gion Centre, 1F, north side
- **Price:** small ¥300, medium ¥500
- **Number of flavours:** 14
- **Go-to flavour:** soybean, made from Kyoto soybeans
- **Web:** t-agent.co.jp/gion



Hyogo

### Milkissimo

Rome and Hakodate! They go together like... gelato and sunshine? Well, Milkissimo brags about the fact their head branch in Hokkaido is on the same latitude (41 degrees north) as the home of gelato. Whatever the blurb, the result: sweet Hokkaido milk mixed with some familiar Italian savoury flavours, such as tomato and basil. This 20-seater shop is dead easy to spot near the Gardens entrance, with its purple and pink decor and wavy mountains of gelato on display. Some flavours are also inside a revolving display case to make choosing a flavour all part of the adventure. Decide on a number of flavours instead of serving size, pay, then choose the flavours while a server makes you a mini gelato mountain in a cup. It's only a small shop but no-one lingers too long in the seated area; the stuff is too yummy to delay.

- **Address:** 1F Nishinomiya Gardens
- **Price:** 1 flavour ¥380, 2 flavours ¥460, 3 flavours ¥540
- **Number of flavours:** Around 20 on display, change seasonally
- **Go-to flavour:** milk is the #1 best seller, but one of the summer seasonal flavours, Haskapp, was a blood-red coloured tarty treat that went great with it.
- **Web:** milkissimo.com



## Events

# Come join the party people

What's the most happening city in the world?  
Kobe, says this social event organiser. Find out why.

Text: Daniel Tang

How do we recreate a New Year's Eve social atmosphere more than once a year? That was the question Kobe native **Manesh Gulrajani** asked himself as he walked around his beloved city in 2011.

"The image I had was of Kobe on December 31," Manesh said. "People walking in and out of bars and clubs, having a fun time, talking to people they just met. Everyone just having a great time. Why does this have to be only once a year?"

Manesh decided to be, as the popular saying goes, the change he wanted to see. In 2006, he started organising **KYKK** (*Kinyou no Yoru wa Kobe de Kimari*) gatherings, which were held every other Friday and included events such as dinners, after-parties and networking nights at various restaurants and bars. The concept steadily grew, with more friends starting to organise bigger events. It culminated in the first **KYKK 10,000 People Party** in 2011.

"The first year we had over 100 bars and restaurants participate," Manesh said. "In 2012 we took it up a notch to have the event for a week, with Octo-

ber 5 being the main day. This year we are taking it up again to another level with lots more going on."

Despite the huge scale of the event, Manesh wants fun to be the name of the game, which is why he's kept KYKK practicalities simple: everyone buys a wristband, and with it you can enter all the venues and get a special deal. There's also a main event hall with live events, fashion shows, stand-up comedy, DJ events and a lot more, along with more sub-event halls with more parties.

Manesh is so confident about this year's program, that he says: "On October 4, 2013, Kobe is going to be the most happening city in the world."

It's a big claim, but Manesh certainly has the feedback and numbers to substantiate it. There are stories of bar owners asking regulars to help them serve to keep up with demand, and a restaurant running out of food at 9pm when it had planned to serve until 5am.

Attendee feedback has also been positive, including quotes such as: "It was the best time I had in so many

years," and "I have never experienced a party like this before. Thank you!"

At the heart of its success is an emphasis not just on a hedonistic good night out, but on forging new friendships and social bonds.

"The people of Kobe have been so helpful and warm-hearted," Manesh said. "There is no way I could have done this alone. The members who help out are the key to this project. It takes so much time and effort to organize this event that it goes beyond our imagination, but the more we give, the more we get back."

### KYKK Essentials

Festivities start on **September 27** and will run for a week, ending on **October 6**. So far more than 200 establishments will participate.

Wristbands are ¥2,000 each and can be bought at any participating establishments in Kobe.

A full list is available at:

**project-kykk.com**

Volunteers are also needed.

Please email [info@project-kykk.com](mailto:info@project-kykk.com)