

A Taste of Traditional Japanese Living

The Museum of Life in the Showa Era preserves the typical lifestyle of the ordinary city dweller of Tokyo in the 1950s-1970s

Open for you to experience first hand

What is the traditional lifestyle of Japan? It can be hard to find these days. Rooms floored with tatami mats and partitioned with fusuma and shoji panels; seating on zabuton cushions and heating using charcoal-fueled hibachi; meals eaten on low, foldable tables called chabudai-today such furnishings are more often seen in movies, TV dramas, and manga comics than in ordinary homes.

The Museum of Life in the Showa Era keeps this era of Japanese tradition alive in a house just it was lived in by an ordinary family of Tokyo between 1951 and 1996. Located on its original site in a residential neighborhood of Ota ward, not far from Haneda Airport, the house preserves the way people lived from the end of World War II through the 1950s until the beginning of rapid economic growth.

Visitors are free to enter all the rooms of the house. You can see what it is like to sit at the small round chabudai at which families gathered for meals. You can try stretching out on a tatami floor. You can rest on the veranda at the edge of the garden to enjoy a cup of tea and savor a time-slip journey back to life sixty years ago.