



JAPAN INFORMATION
AND CULTURE CENTER
在米国日本大使館広報文化センター

TEACHING TUESDAY

SKY TREE

The Sky Tree is the tallest structure in Japan, at 634 meters (2080 feet), the second tallest structure in the world, and the tallest tower in the world. Sky Tree was built as a replacement broadcasting tower for Tokyo Tower, which has since been dwarfed by high rises and is no longer able to adequately send signals to the Kanto region.

Opened in May 2012, Sky Tree is a major symbol of Tokyo, as well as a unique architectural feat. Despite its hi-tech structure, the tower still evokes many traditional Japanese ideas and techniques. For instance, the exterior coloring of the Sky Tree is called “Sky Tree white,” but it is based off the traditional Japanese white-color of aijiro (藍白). Also, the tower’s form incorporates techniques like the concave sori curves seen in traditional Japanese architecture, and the convex mukuri curves found in temple architecture. Sky Tree also utilizes shimbashira-seishin, or center column vibration control, the world’s first vibration control system, for earthquake resistance which was first found in Japan’s famous ancient five-story pagodas. The light designs, or illuminations, are also meant to express the Japanese spirit, through the patterns iki (粋 いき chic) and miyabi (雅 みやび elegance).

It has two observation towers: one at 350m (1148ft) and one at 450m (1480ft). The first deck offers a 360 degree panoramic view across the entire Kanto region. You can even see Mt. Fuji if the day is clear enough. The second observation tower features a 110m-long glass floor, to give you the feeling of walking on air. However, it’s definitely not for the faint of heart or those who are scared of heights!