

A community information paper created and edited by people who live in Azabu.



## Fascinating Artistic Azabu ③〇

### A Beautiful Logotype of "ROPPONGI": Always Engaging Our Hearts and Minds

# ROPPONGI

Photo shot by Mr. UEHARA Isamu



Mr. KASAI Kaoru

Mr. KASAI is an art director, and was born in Sapporo City in 1949. He joined the Sun-Ad Co. Ltd. in 1973 to do advertisements and art direction for Suntory Whiskey and Oolong Tea, United Arrows, and Toraya.

Near Roppongi Crossing on the Metropolitan Expressway (\*1) No. 3 Shibuya Route viaduct side, a simple and unique logotype (\*2) really attracts attention.

The 'ROPPONGI' project to design a new logotype was commissioned in 2009 by the Roppongi Shopping District Promotion Association. This was a team effort together with Mr. KASAI Kaoru, Japan's most proud art director. This project was done as part of the local town planning that has been focusing on developing the art activities set up by the Roppongi Shopping District Promotion Association (\*3).

Mr. KASAI explained, "Before I designed the logotype, I imagined that Roppongi gives a vivid impression of a great place for a night on the town, with lots of bars and clubs. However, I designed it based on the idea of Roppongi as a town with a comfortable atmosphere, a place that whenever we visit, we can feel at peace and have many fulfilling moments.

"Roppongi means 'six trees.' So, I had the idea that the logotype should be designed like a row of trees. I was reminded of a duet by Nancy Sinatra & Dean Martin called 'Things' from 1968. This song is sophisticated and stylish, and really fits the image of Roppongi as a comfortable urban town."

How can a design be memorable for the people who see it? This is easily understood when we consider how the human brain perceives such things. In many cases, a simple design can most easily make an impression. When a representation has one standout main feature, it is easily remembered. Conversely, if it has several, it is less likely to be remembered. For example, when you remember "Sunflowers" by van Gogh you remember flowers, but not necessarily how many flowers there are in the vase, the color of the vase or even details of the background. Simple designs remain in our minds.

"I simply repeated and arranged the letters of 'Roppongi' symmetrically, so they appear as a row of trees, stretching into the sky. Hopefully, people are reminded of walking along a tree-lined street with excitement. The smaller letters appear farther away, and of course the larger ones appear closer, giving the logotype depth and greater impact. I hope that people feel fondness for our logotype whenever they come here."

The logotype was put up on the side of the Metropolitan Ex-

pressway in 2009, fourteen years ago. Mr. KASAI told us, "I was very, very happy that day" with a broad smile.

This carefully designed and well-presented gem still impresses us as it overlooks the road in Roppongi and adds value to the surroundings.

(\*1) Metropolitan Expressway Company Limited

(\*2) Logotypes are logos that involve text or letters, generally used to promote name recognition.



Roppongi Shopping District Promotion Association  
 Address: 2F, 4-5-13 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo  
 Tel: 03-6447-2540 <http://www.ractive-roppongi.com>

(\*3) This has a wide variety of shops open for business, including restaurants. The area is developed along Gaien Higashi-dori Avenue, with Roppongi Crossing at the center. The town planners actively promote the notion of Roppongi as a town of art and design.

● Research Support and Provision of Photos .....  
 Sun-Ad Co., Ltd., and Roppongi Shopping District Promotion Association

● References .....  
 "Tokyo Shopping District Grand Prize Case Studies" (issued by Local Industry Promotion Section, Commerce and Industry Division, Bureau of Industrial and Labor Affairs, Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 2019)

(Researched by OHBA Marika and TANAKA Yasuhiro, Written by OHBA Marika)

Main Logotype

ROPPONGI

Sub Logotype

ROPPONGI

Twin Logotype A

ROPPONGI ROPPOINGI

Twin Logotype B

ROPPONGI ROPPOINGI

There are actually four logotypes used for different purposes: the Main Logotype, as well as the Sub Logotype and the Twin Logotypes A and B.



Town's Tips

## A Soothing Green Space with Water has Appeared in Azabu A Place where Local Residents Can Meet and Gather is Open

This time we'll feature Ryomon in Minami-azabu 5-Chome along Gaien Nishi-dori Avenue, which opened in March 2021. This striking building looks like a museum or a hotel but is actually a temple with a columbarium. This building won the "Minato City Green Town Planning" Award in 2022. We visited Ryomon for this report when we heard that it's open to the public, and many events are to be held there.

### They hope to open their gates and make themselves accessible to the local people.

At first, we were surprised that Ryomon is in fact a temple. Its formal name is "Zuiké-in" of the Jodo (Pure Land) Sect, and it has a long history. Its founder was Tenyo-Ryomon Shonin, a holy priest, who later became the 5th Hossu high priest of the San-en-zan Zojo-ji Temple in 1492, in the Muromachi Period. San-en-zan Zojo-ji is Daihonzan (head temple) of the Jodo Sect, and Zuiké-in was created as its Shi-in (※) or sub-temple. The Zojo-ji Temple formed a strong connection to the Tokugawa Family in the Edo Period, and in 1900 Zuiké-in was moved to the present location because of improvements to the roads around the Shiba area. Before being moved, the temple sustained damage from fires and even a war. However, the statues of Amida Nyorai and Ryomon Shonin, which have been there since the establishment of the temple, along with numerous Buddhist scriptures, have been protected by a succession of chief priests.

We heard from FUKUI Ijin Shonin, the 80th chief priest of Zuiké-in. The founder, Ryomon Shonin, was of course

the first holy priest. Before it was rebuilt, the temple gate was located along the back street and was inaccessible to the general public. However, he told us, "We will open this place to the local people, and provide a space to care for people's bones, ashes and mortuary tablets. We would also like to welcome people who aren't users of this space as well." The impression one gets of a columbarium is actually a bit gloomy. Therefore, "We designed the building to be full of light, water, greenery and to have a general level of sophistication worthy of the town of Azabu." The building was completed on July 8, 2020, on the death anniversary of Ryomon Shonin, and very much lives up to these goals. It was opened in March the following year, in 2021. The opening of this door signaled a new era for the temple.

※ "Shi-in" means "sub-temple": A small temple located in the premises of the main temple and attached to the main temple.



The famous architect Mr. TAKEHARA Yoshiji designed this building. You can enjoy the excellent modern design both on the exterior and the interior on the first floor. (Photo shot on December 6, 2022)



FUKUI Ijin Shonin was born and raised in Azabu. "Please feel free to come to our temple."

### Winning the "Minato City Green Town Planning Award"

Next, shall we have a closer look at the building? It has seven floors above ground and one below, and is located close to the Kogai Elementary School west traffic lights. The front garden, with its beautifully arranged trees, surrounded by hedges, is outstanding. As we approach it, the bubbling sound of water can be heard, and with a glimpse of the spot where it's coming from, one naturally wants to pause. As we pass through the entrance, an open space appears, overflowing with light and green that can be seen through the windows. The organically arranged abundance of natural stones is remarkable.

Something noteworthy to mention at this point is that this building received the "Minato City Green Town Development Award" as one of the excellent works completed in the 2022 fiscal year. Please also refer to the description in the right column. In Minato City, from 1979 architectural plans submitted for approval had to include some plans for green space. This change was

made to form a cityscape full of greenery. The criteria are relatively strict for Tokyo, and the award is given to the best examples of this. This award was given to the Ryomon building because its green space and water areas are largely exterior rather than interior, and can be appreciated by everyone. This is highly regarded.



(Photo provided by Zuiké-in)

The Zuiké-in garden before it was rebuilt: There was a large pond, creating the image of a water garden.

### What is the "Minato City Green Town Development Award"?

The operational guidelines for this award were prepared in 2003 to reward building owners who had done the best job of realizing the green architectural plans they submitted. This was also introduced by Minato City to increase awareness of the initiative among local citizens, and to generally create a safe and livable city that coexists with nature. In 2022, 7 out of 97 works completed in 2020 were selected as candidates for the award, and of these, five works were finally selected by an examination committee of academic experts on greenery.



Part of the front garden is owned by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, and the greenery and stones were arranged like a park after due consultation with them. The water garden is a refreshing and calming space amidst the hustle and bustle of Tokyo.

### Early Cherry Blossom Viewing in Tokyo

This building was completed when COVID-19 had just begun, so it was not clear how they could open the facility to the public. However, they had the idea for a cherry blossom viewing event where visitors could enjoy walking through rows of trees with cherry blossoms overhead, rather like a tunnel. This is a place where the cherry blossoms bloom early in Tokyo and can be viewed before many other places. So, they decided they would open the following spring. The world-renowned flower artist Mr. AKAI Masaru was appointed as producer. He appeared on the front page of The Azabu No. 34 in December 2015. There were about 600 visitors in 2021, and as its reputation spread, there were about 950 in 2022. In 2023, this event is being held from March 1st to the 5th. If you are interested in attending, don't hesitate to drop by!

Other than cherry blossom viewing, they provide seasonal events such as the Star Festival (Tanabata) and a memorial service at the end of December. They also provide culture courses including calligraphy and yoga classes for a fee. The hall on the 7th floor is open to anybody for prayer. This year, even a concert featuring classical music will be held. We can expect a variety of entertaining events to be held here regularly.

We would like you to keep an eye on this place, as it now adds more color to local lifestyles in Azabu.



This year, enjoy spring even more by coming a little earlier and walk through our "tunnel" of cherry blossoms (free entry). (Photo provided by Ryomon)

Ryomon  
5-1-4 Azabu, Minato-ku Toll-free No.: 0120-149-208 <https://ryomon.jp/>

#### Research Support

Zuiké-in Shonin Mr. FUKUI Ijin, Ryomon Co. Ltd. and its staff members  
Greenery Promotion Subsection, Environmental Section, Environment and Recycling Support Department

Cheerful News from Neighborhood Associations and Residents' Associations

03

Shinji-Kai



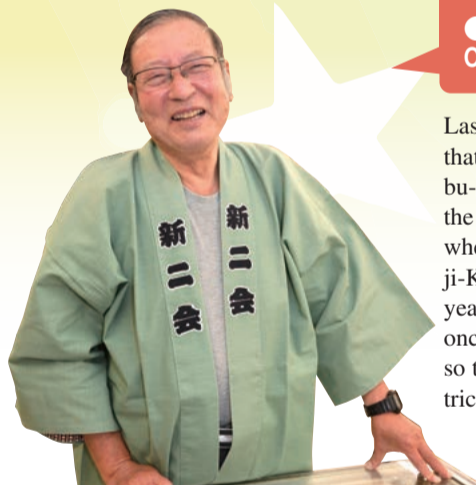
The Azabu-Juban Shopping District Association and the Happy Smiling People Living There

This is the third report in the series introducing the Neighborhood Associations and Residents' Associations in Azabu! We talked to some of the members of Shinji-Kai, the Neighborhood Association of Former Azabu Shin-Ami-Cho 2-Chome.



Neighborhood Association Data

- No. of Member Households: 60
- Annual Events
  - January New Year Party
  - April Spring Traffic Safety Campaign
  - May General Meeting
  - July Radio Calisthenics
  - September Autumn Festival, Celebration Party for Respect for the Elderly Day, Autumn Traffic Safety Campaign
  - November Azabu Area Comprehensive Disaster Prevention Drill
  - December Night Watch



● Mr. NISHIMOTO Ryoichi, Owner of the Nishimoto Clothing Store, and Chairman of Shinji-Kai

Last year (2022), the autumn festival was held for the first time in three years. At that time, the Children's Festival Float went for two lively laps around the Azabu-Juban Shopping District under a clear sky. Also, radio calisthenics were held in the morning for the first time in two years. We always try to help each other locally when there is an emergency by choosing a local venue to gather at. During Shinji-Kai events, I'm always happy to see how much the children have grown from the year before. Our Neighborhood Association holds an executive committee meeting once every two months, and we actively encourage the participation of local people so that they can express their opinions about how they feel about living in the district. All of our members do their best, as always.



● Mr. HIRANO Kazuo, Owner of the Hirano-ya Kami Bunguten Stationery Shop, and Chief Director of Azabu-Juban Shopping District Promotion Association

The area for our Neighborhood Association is the smallest of the neighborhood associations in Azabu. This is why we are more united and better organized for events such as festivals. In our town there are many different kinds of shops. For example, Starbucks, McDonald's, gas stations and book shops, etc. We even once had a public bath. Our Neighborhood Association may be small, but we are very productive and friendly. I am often involved in the activities of the shopping district in particular. For local safety and general peace of mind, we can't do anything without the support of the Neighborhood Association. We will do our best to make sure the Neighborhood Association and the Shopping District Association join forces, so that "A town we can live in safely: Azabu" will always be true.

The Origin of Azabu Shin-Ami-Cho

In 1707, part of Shiba Shin-Ami-Cho became Imperial Land, and another parcel of land in the area of Azabu Hommura Bummei was given to the residents living there; the town was then renamed Azabu Shin-Ami-Cho. Then, in 1723, the area from the center of the town to the east waterway became Imperial Land, and a different parcel of land was chosen for the residents—this was around Azabu Sakashita-Cho Omote-dori Main Street. The address of the area given in 1707 became Azabu Shin-Ami-Cho 1-Chome, and the area given in 1723 became Azabu Shin-Ami-Cho 2-Chome. After the Meiji Restoration, the town continued to develop, merging samurai land around the area with the Juban Horse Racing Ground and Iikura-Shimmachi. After more land readjustments that happened later, part of Azabu Shin-Ami-Cho 1-Chome in the Edo Period was included in 2-Chome and part of 2-Chome was included in 1-Chome.



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● Mr. HINAGA Haruki, Owner of Tanuki Senbei Rice Cracker Shop, and Vice Chief Director of the Azabu-Juban Shopping District Promotion Association

Last year, we were able to hold the autumn festival for the first time in three years. When I saw the Children's Festival Float cruising around, I realized once again that I love the festival very much. Also, it felt great to finally feel safe enough to take a step away from the abnormal situation that has been going on for the last three years. This didn't happen last year, but under normal circumstances the Women's Division holds a pre-festival vigil, which is one of the characteristics of our Neighborhood Association. The festival is held on a Friday, Saturday and Sunday in September. On Friday, a sacred sake place is set up and at night the Women's Division hold a meeting. No men are allowed! The festival can't be held without the support of the Women's Division. Everybody, including the chairman of the Neighborhood Association, understands this very well. So, we send our wives out to the festival-eve vigil and tell them, "I will look after the shop, so please go and join the event. Tonight, the husbands shall look after their shops!" All of the members are trusted friends, so we get along very well and meet each other often.





Editor's  
Azabu Enjoy  
Eating Report

# 6 Visiting the Ambassador of Spain's Chef

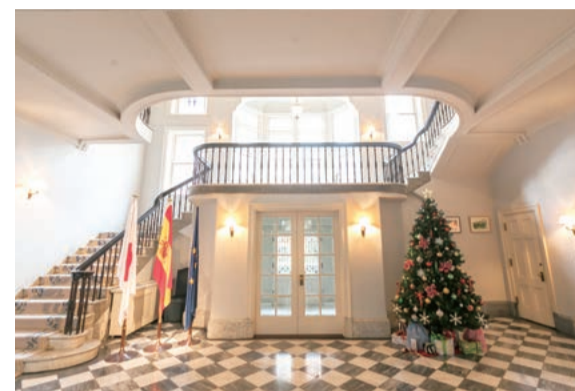


Most of Spain is a highland, about 700 m above sea level. The northern area has an oceanic climate with abundant precipitation. The central area has a continental climate and the eastern and southern areas have a Mediterranean climate.

In the Ambassador of Spain's residence, on a hilltop in Roppongi 1-Chome, the elegant atmosphere is immediately noticeable, despite being surrounded by buildings. It was in these impressive surroundings we were able to interview Mr. Etienne Sonntag, the Ambassador's Chef. This was towards the end of 2022, and the building stood among beautiful trees full of autumn leaves. The Ambassador's Chef is more commonly called the "Food Diplomat," and the opportunity to meet him is a rare one. He told us about what inspired him to become a chef, and about his job as the Ambassador's Chef.



Spanish Style Ambassador's Residence Building designed by Mr. J. M. Gardener around 1927



The meticulously renovated entrance hall, which has been used carefully

Mr. Etienne Sonntag in the kitchen of the Ambassador's Residence

## The Ambassador's Chef

Etienne not only prepares meals for the Ambassador, but is also solely in charge of banquets for the Ambassador's guests and delegations from Spain to Japan. We asked him how he manages to do such big jobs alone. He told us, "For large-scale parties, my friends and other chefs working at other embassies help me. Many embassies have only one chef, so we often help each other. Actually, I went to another embassy just yesterday to help a chef friend of mine."

He said that for many banquets, elements of Japanese cuisine are introduced for guests from Spain, and typical Spanish dishes are often prepared for Japanese guests. "For example, in Spain, we have many dishes that use rice, and I often make paella. In Japan, paella is mostly thought of as a seafood dish. However, rabbit or chicken is more commonly used in the eastern Valencia region. I always hope our guests enjoy experiencing the differences. I use round Spanish rice and serve it a little more al dente than is common in Japan. Differences in food culture is a great dinner topic, and of course a good opportunity to exhibit my skills as the Ambassador's Chef."

## His father's cooking inspired him to become a chef.

Etienne was born and raised in France. In Europe, it is customary for the father to cook for his family on weekends. His father was fond of using local ingredients for his delicious dishes, and his Christmas dinner in particular was fantastic. Growing up with such great cooking, it is not surprising that the young Etienne aspired to become a great chef at home for his children, as well as professionally. When he was a child, he and his family spent several weeks on summer vacation in Spain every year, and became familiar with a variety of Spanish dishes.

Later, he went to culinary school for three years and worked in various countries, including the UK, Luxembourg, and Germany. Then, about 20 years ago in Switzerland, a Japanese colleague asked Etienne to come to Tokyo and help him

open a Spanish restaurant, and so he came to Japan for the first time. We were very surprised to hear that he started focusing mainly on Spanish dishes only after coming to Japan. In this restaurant he was able to expand his skills with Spanish cuisine using wonderful ingredients such as olive oil and dry-cured ham. The former Ambassador of Spain visited the restaurant frequently, and because of this connection he was offered the job as the present Ambassador's Chef.

## The Appeal of Spanish Cuisine

We asked him what the appeal of Spanish cuisine is specifically, and he answered with a big smile, "Most of it is very healthy, and a lot of vegetables are used. We don't use butter so much, but instead use olive oil. We put olive oil on our bread, not butter. Extra virgin olive oil in particular is very versatile, and can even be used in desserts. Also, our tomatoes are exceptionally flavorful. We put sliced tomato on bread with olive oil and a pinch of salt, and if we add some ham, it is perfection!"

"Spanish dry-cured ham not only tastes good, but is also healthy because of its low-fat content. Iberian pigs are raised on a natural diet of acorns and only Iberian pork can be eaten raw. I am French, but I will say that top-shelf Iberian dry-cured ham is the best in the world. Also, I'm quite fond of "Fabada," which is a delicious Spanish dish made with white beans," he added enthusiastically.

We tried his recommendation of Spanish extra virgin olive oil with chorizo. In the kitchen, he has a line-up of more than 10 types of olive oil. The olive oil tasted almost like a delicious juice, and we realized that this was our first time trying the real thing. We really enjoyed the chorizo with the rich taste of pork.

We asked him how he feels about Japanese cuisine, and he said, "Japanese cuisine is very healthy and a good source of ideas for chefs of all countries. In Japan, seasonal foods are cherished and chefs generally pursue perfection. These are the things here that provide inspiration to foreign chefs."



(Left) The Highest-Grade Extra Virgin Olive Oil  
This oil is made from the fruit of the olive tree, after the pits are removed. The deep flavor is like juice, and they call it "oro liquido," meaning "liquid gold." For quality, there is an international standard rating.  
(Right) Chorizo  
The rich, top-shelf cuisine just melts in your mouth with the taste of mature meat

We Tried Spanish Ingredients

## What Motivates the Ambassador's Chef

We asked him to tell us about an event that impressed him. He told us, "The National Day of Spain" on October 2nd. "On this day, the Embassy gardens are opened and we celebrate the day together with hundreds of guests, with a wide variety of Spanish dishes on offer. The central part of the event is Spanish cuisine, so it is also understood to be "Chef's Day." Many of my friends help me, for example as a "Cortador de Jamon," a person who can cut ham at a professional level. Also, some of my friends help me make paella or pasta. In 2022, this event was held for the first time in three years. It was a lot of work to prepare so many dishes, but we were very happy to be able to gather again. There was also a lot of pressure on me to make sure all the guests were satisfied. Fortunately, they were very happy." It was quite impressive for us to see how much joy his job brings him. He told us some more stories, including about when he worked together with the chef of a three-Michelin-starred restaurant and when he prepared dishes for Olympic gold medalists. Only an Ambassador's Chef can experience such things.



Finally, we asked him to say something to the "The Azabu" readers. "As the Ambassador's Chef, I don't often have chances to meet local people, but our Embassy hopes for local exchanges. The Embassy provides exhibitions for free, so please access our website and stop by our Embassy."

In the calm of the drawing room, with its solid furnishings, time seems to flow more slowly. We were mesmerized by the stories that demonstrate his love for cooking. Recently, we have heard that extra virgin olive oil and dry-cured ham made in Spain is available in Japan. Although they are a bit expensive, they are very high quality and are satisfying even in small quantities. You should try them!



1 Pinchos: All hand-made! 2 Appetizer using dry-cured ham beautifully arranged like flower petals 3 Tarta de Santiago (St. Jacob's cake) representing Spain: Sweets are also among his specialties! 4 Paella: Paella for 50 people can be made at once using a large pan

● The Embassy of Spain in Japan 1-3-29 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo  
<https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Embajadas/tokio/ja/Paginas/index.aspx>

(Researched and written by HIGUCHI Masanori and HORIUCHI Akiko)



# Walking the Periphery of the Azabu Area ④

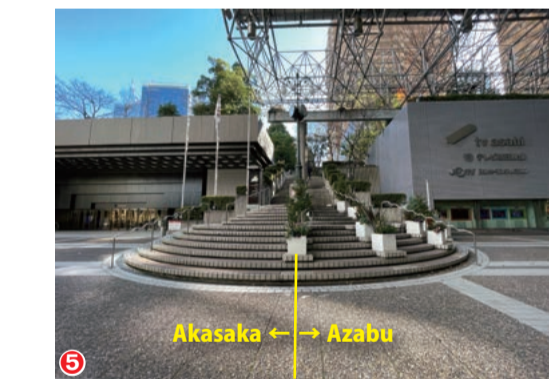
This is the fourth installment of our project to explore the perimeter of the Azabu area on foot. With this project, we follow the border and learn the history of how it became this way. For the first half of our story this time, we walked through many blocks of our town that have changed drastically due to large-scale cross-boundary redevelopment. For the second half, we walked along a street where the border has remained almost unchanged since the Edo Period. (About 2.4 km)



## Tracing the History of Large-Scale Redevelopment From Azabudai in the Reiwa Period to ARK Hills in the Showa Period

The dotted border line seen on the map below runs to the left around the perimeter of the Nishikubo-hachimanjinja Shrine that was the goal of last session. From Daiyoji Temple, it goes up and left along the former valley line. However, at present (※) redevelopment work is being done in the Azabudai area on the left side of the border. So, this time we started walking from the entrance of Roppongi First Plaza, which is 5 minutes on foot from Tokyo Metro Roppongi-itchome Station. From the point of departure, the border has a distinctive pointed shape. Five blocks along the border have been totally redeveloped or are being redeveloped now.

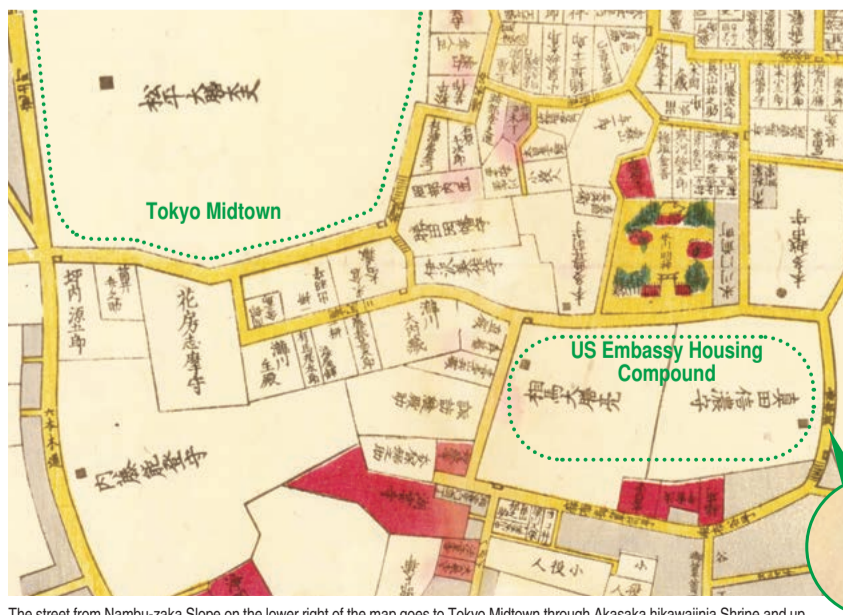
- ① The Roppongi First Building Town Block, completed in 1993. The path along this city block in our town, from the housing complex to an office building, roughly corresponds to the border. This place became Imperial Land in the Meiji Period, serving as the residence of Seikanin-no-Miya. She was previously called Princess Kazu-no-Miya, and married the 14th Shogun TOKUGAWA Iemochi; her name was changed after she became a nun. This was also the residence of Prince Higashikuni-no-Miya. After the War, this land was turned over to the state and civil servant dormitories were constructed there.
- ② The ARK Hills Sengokuyama Mori Tower Town Block, completed in 2012. This city block is about 2 ha, and stretches from Roppongi in Azabu to Toranomon in the Shiba area. The border seems to go through the center of a particular group of high-rise buildings and low-rise buildings. The entrance is on the first floor and the exit is on the second basement floor, so you can feel the difference in elevation as you pass through. The "Kogera no Niwa" (Pygmy Woodpecker Garden), can be found along the border. A lot of the old stones from the original border can be seen here.
- ③ The Shiroyama Garden Town Block, completed in 1991. The border here appears to be the path between the Embassy of Sweden and a housing complex, continuing through a square and past an office building. There are playgrounds and a square with a sandbox and slide for toddlers. The voices of neighboring nursery school children can occasionally be heard.
- ④ The city block where the Hotel Okura Annex used to be is now under construction. The name



From the center of the stairs, on the right is the Azabu area and on the left is the Akasaka area.



Road Guide Board (installed by Minato City in 2019)



The street from Nambu-zaka Slope on the lower right of the map goes to Tokyo Midtown through Akasaka hikawajinja Shrine and up the Hinoki-zaka Slope. This has been so since the Edo Period. Addition to the "Imaidani Roppongi Akasaka Map" (Image provided by the International Research Center for Japanese Studies)



The border with its distinctive pointed shape at the starting point



②

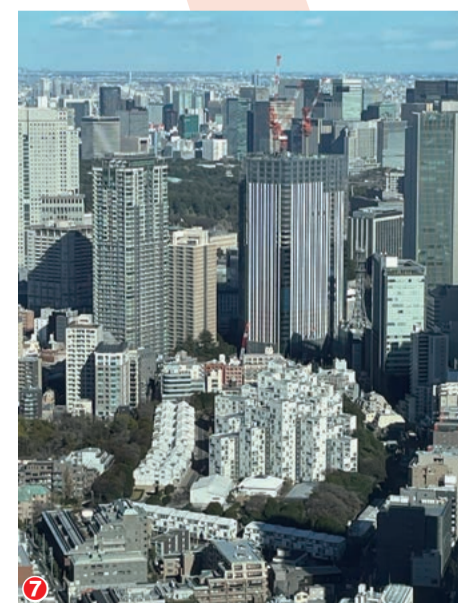
of this area was Reinan-Zaka-Cho, and was in the Akasaka area before being incorporated into the Roppongi Azabu area when the addressing system changed in 1966. A high-rise building is going to be constructed here. The open sky we can see over the empty lot will disappear.

⑤ The ARK Hills Town Block, completed in 1986. ARK stands for "Akasaka Roppongi Knot." As the name suggests, it is a huge redeveloped area of 5.6 ha, stretching from Akasaka to Roppongi. The border is the path through the center of this city block up to Roppongi, and is accessible by an escalator in the building.

If the new map is compared with the old one, we can see that the border has hardly changed since the Edo Period, even after massive redevelopment, quietly telling tales of history. As a reminder, we walked along Gaian Nishi-dori Avenue in the first session (The Azabu No. 58). This part of the border follows the old Kogai-gawa River, which is now entirely underground.

## From the US Embassy Housing Compound to Tokyo Midtown Some Places and Streets Remain Unchanged

When we cross Roppongi-dori Avenue to the Roppongi 2-Chome area, we can see the border be-

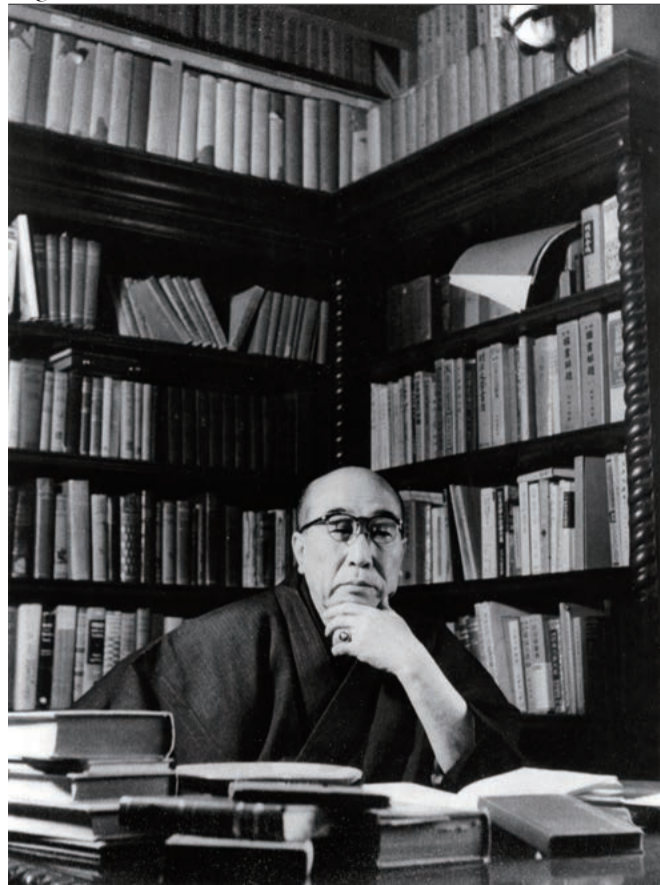


The view from the Roppongi Hills Observation Deck: The group of white buildings in the center is the US Embassy Housing Compound.

tween Azabu and Akasaka, following the northern perimeter of the US Embassy Housing Compound. The Embassy Housing Compound can be seen on the left from Nambu-zaka Slope ⑥, famous for the Chushin-Gura story, the "47 Ronin." This area is large, 4.5 ha, and there was a daimyo's mansion here in the Edo Period. Before the War, the mansion of the leader of the Mitsui Group, MITSUI Hachiroemon, was built here ⑦. (The building burnt down in the War, but was later rebuilt at Nishi-azabu 3-Chome. The building was eventually moved to the Edo-Tokyo Open-Air Architectural Museum and is now open to the public.)

Go down the gentle slope between the Akasaka hikawajinja Shrine and the US Embassy Housing Compound for about 300 m, to reach the west end of the Housing Compound. Then there is a steep slope to ascend, followed by another called the Hinoki-zaka Slope, to arrive at Hinoki-Cho Park ⑧. The area of this park and Tokyo Midtown is 10.2 ha. The huge old daimyo's mansion site became the property of the military, and after the War, the Defense Agency was located there until 2000. The address of this land is designated as being in Akasaka. This means that the boundary of the Hinoki-Cho Park-Nogizaka Station block corresponds to the border between the Akasaka and the Azabu areas.

※ This report is based on information that is correct as of December 2022.



# EDOGAWA Rampo Around Ichinohashi and Tansumachi

EDOGAWA Rampo (1894 to 1965) (real name HIRAI Taro) was born in Nabari in Mie Prefecture in 1894. He was a famous novelist and the pioneer of detective novels in Japan. “Kaijin-Nijumensou” (The Fiend with Twenty Faces) is one of his most famous works. This novel is from a series about a private detective called AKECHI Kogoro and KOBAYASHI, the leader of a group known as the Detective Boys. These characters play out their colorful stories in Minato City. We would like to tell you about Azabu, where Rampo spent time before he wrote these works, together with their historical background.

## i Around Ichinohashi in Azabu-ku: The Summer of 1912

The “Harimaze Nenpu” issued in 1989 by Kodansha is a compilation of Rampo’s autobiographical materials. When we looked at the Chronology’s ‘Tokyo Shi ni okeru Jyukyo Tenten no Zu’ map of where Rampo lived in Tokyo City, we were surprised by how many times he moved. It was said that the Edogawa Rampo Residence in Ikebukuro was his final residence (\*1), and he had moved 46 times in the Tokyo City alone, he lived in 26 locations. In the “Harimaze Nenpu” it was written that ‘he lived rent-free at Mr. SUGO Tatsujiro’s residence close to Ichinohashi in Azabu-ku’ ‘for about a month’ in August 1912. This was when he came to Tokyo for the first time, making the area around Ichinohashi, Azabu-ku (Ichinohashi) his first experience of the city. Rampo had graduated from Aichi Prefectural 5th Junior High School in March the year he came to Tokyo.

He did not further his education at that time due to family circumstances, and instead went to Korea with his father. However, within six months he returned to Tokyo to take the mid-semester first preparatory course entrance examination for Waseda University First Senior High School. He stayed for over a month in the place close to Ichinohashi, until he entered the Senior High School in September.

## ii ‘Commuting’ from Ichinohashi to Waseda

The “Minato-ku Modern History Map of Azabu and Roppongi Addenda ” issued by Minato City Local History Museum in 2010 notes significant changes from the Meiji Period to the Showa Period. It says that ‘Ichinohashi’ was ‘a bridge across Amishirocho to Mita Koyamacho,’ but the address for ‘Ichinohashi’ (‘close to Mr. SUGO Tatsujiro’s residence where Rampo lived’) can’t be found.

We had a look at the railways and streetcars at that time to find out what his route from Ichinohashi to Waseda would have been. We found out that there were over 2 million citizens in Tokyo then, and the number of passengers on streetcars averaged ‘510,000 per day’—one in four residents (source: The Tokyo Metropolitan Bureau of Transportation).



Drawing room in the Western style building in the Edogawa Rampo Residence

The changes in railway operations from 1911 in Tokyo are described in “A 60-year History of The Tokyo Metropolitan Bureau of Transportation” issued by the Tokyo Metropolitan Bureau of Transportation in 1972. According to this book, there was not yet a streetcar stop called Waseda, which would have been used by students ‘commuting’ to Waseda University, at the beginning of the Taisho Period. At that time, stops close to Waseda University were Yakimochizaka and Wakamatsucho on the streetcar line coming from Iidabashi. The line between Iidabashi and Yakimochizaka opened at the end of 1912, and the line between Yakimochizaka and Wakamatsucho opened in June 1913. When Rampo was commuting to Waseda University from Ichinohashi, the streetcar line from Iidabashi toward Shinjuku did not exist. At the time, he would likely have used the Edogawabashi stop as the closest, located on the north side of the University. This stop existed from 1907, and students always walked from here, although it took a long time.

The owner of the route to Ichinohashi was The Tokyo Railway Co., Ltd., which was bought by Tokyo City in 1911 and its name changed to Tokyo Shiden. As you might have guessed, Azabu was a highly convenient place to be in Tokyo at the time, as the railroad here was being developed faster than in other areas. When going to Waseda University, Rampo would have boarded the streetcar at the Ichinohashi stop, and got off at the Shibazonobashi stop. Then, he would have changed to another streetcar line going north to Iidabashi. From Iidabashi, he would have got off the streetcar at the Edogawabashi stop, after the Ohmagari stop.



Stairs to the 2nd floor in the earthen storehouse in the Edogawa Rampo Residence

It is possible that he could have boarded a streetcar to the Shibuya stop and gone on to Japan National Railways Shibuya Station (which is now part of JR East Japan Railway Company), then on to Takadanobaba Station, the closest JR station to Waseda University. However, it does not seem likely that he would have used this route because of the 11 locations Rampo moved to during his time as a university student. They were all around Waseda University and he was accustomed to streetcars.

During this time, the system of streetcars and railroads expanded quickly. In 1918, the big Waseda Garage and the railroad from the Edogawabashi stop to a last stop called Shimototsuka, close to Waseda, were completed. This was 6 years after Rampo started using streetcars to ‘commuting’ to Waseda University.

## iii Tansumachi, Azabu-ku: in 1934

Just after the beginning of the Showa Period, Rampo visited Azabu again. ‘He stayed for an extended period in a place called the Cho Hotel in Azabu-ku’ in January, it says in the 2006 edition of “The Main Events of 1934” chapter of “40 Years of Detective Stories (First Volume),” Volume 28 of “The Complete Works of Edogawa Rampo” issued by Kobunsha. There was a reason he came back to Azabu after an absence of 22 years. This was because he had an issue with how the city had changed around his rented house in Kurumacho, Shiba-ku. This episode is described in detail in “Rampo and Modern Tokyo: Strategies and Methods for Popular Novels” by Mr. FUJII Hidetada, published by Chikuma Shobo in 2021. Mr. FUJII describes Kurumacho as a beautiful scenic spot in the early modern period, but says the town had changed as it grew, with ‘factories, warehouses, ironworks and manufacturers, etc.’ Traffic and all the noise associated with it had increased exponentially from the beginning of the Meiji Period.

‘Street buses’ and ‘one-yen taxis’ filled ‘Major Arterial Road No. 1,’ so Rampo moved back to quiet Azabu to escape the hustle and bustle of Kurumacho.

## iv 67 Tansumachi

The old Cho Hotel was located around 67 Tansumachi in the Showa Period—this is still a quiet area just a little way off Roppongi street. From present-day Roppongi Crossing on Roppongi street, head around 500 m toward Tameike and you’ll find Roppongi Nadarezaka Crossing. With the steep Nadarezaka on your right, look to the left and you’ll see a street with a gentle slope; this is the area in question.

There is a List of Foreign Diplomatic Mission Locations in Japan in the “Tokyo City Commerce and Industry Directory (5th Edition)” issued by Japan Magazine in 1933, edited by the Commerce and Industry Division, Tokyo City Government. This contains the addresses of embassies and legations at the beginning of the Showa Period. At 67 Tansumachi, the same block as the Cho Hotel, was ‘the Czechoslovakian embassy’, and at 62 Tansumachi on the south side of the hotel block was ‘the Finnish embassy’. This city block must have had an exotic atmosphere, with the legations of small countries in Eastern and Northern Europe.

One of Rampo’s works is called “Ryu Hotel no Kai-Shinshi” (The Suspicious Gentleman in the Ryu Hotel). This is included in “Ryokui no Oni” (Demon in Green) in “The Complete Works of Edogawa Rampo Vol. 11” published by Kobunsha in 2004. In the story, he describes the area around the hotel and writes, ‘There is a spot like a very small foreigners’ quarter surrounding the legation building of a certain small country in Europe on the high ground in Azabu.’ It is certainly likely that the real Cho Hotel was used as the model. We had a look at the map of “Azabu Northeast Section corrected in November 1930” (Figure 1) issued by the Nippon Terrain Company in 1947. On the north side of the block, the Cho Hotel, the Legation of Czechoslovakia and the Legation of Finland are very close together on the east side of the Imaicho streetcar stop. It looks like a ‘very small foreigners quarter,’ just as Rampo described.

This place in Azabu, where Rampo lived and spent his time, was an attractive locality a bit different from other places. Rampo clearly thought so and ‘stayed there for a long time’ as his home and neighborhood.

\*1 The Edogawa Rampo Memorial Center for Popular Culture Studies (The Edogawa Rampo Residence): The Edogawa Rampo Residence located at Rikkyo University was established in 2006 as the Rikkyo University Edogawa Rampo Memorial Center for Popular Culture Studies. This Center is a research institute that conducts serious academic study on popular culture, and their publications related to EDOGAWA Rampo are highly regarded. The storehouse that includes his book storeroom was designated as a tangible cultural property by Toshima City in 2003 and is open to the public. rampo@rikkyo.ac.jp

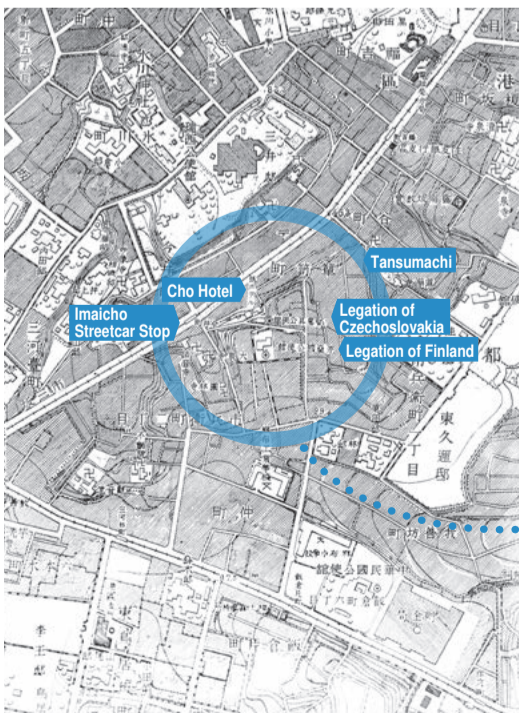
References:

- 5th International Standardizing Association (I.S.A.) Conference (1935): Page 196, No. 215, Volume 38, Journal of The Society of Mechanical Engineers, written by IHARA Sadatoshi
- “Daitokyo Kubunzu 35-ku no uchi Shiba Azabu-ku Shosai-zu” (Shiba-Azabu-ku Detailed Map Among the Great Tokyo Area Classification Maps of 35-Ku) written by IGARASHI Kiyokatsu, issued by Kyogakukan in 1936
- “Tokyo Shiden and Tokyo Toden” (Tokyo City Streetcars and Tokyo Streetcars) edited by Kosakusha, issued by Diamond-sha in 1976
- “Changes in Shinjuku-ku on the Map: Tozuka and Ochiai Section” edited by Shinjuku City Board of Education, issued by Tokyo Shinjuku City Board of Education in 1985
- “Edogawa Rampo Comprehensive Dictionary” edited by OCHIAI Takayuki, SAKAMOTO Hiroshi, FUJII Hidetada and WATANABE Kenji, issued by Bensei Publishing in 2021

Photos provided by The Edogawa Rampo Memorial Center for Popular Culture Studies, Rikkyo University

# 麻布の軌跡

Historical Footsteps of Azabu

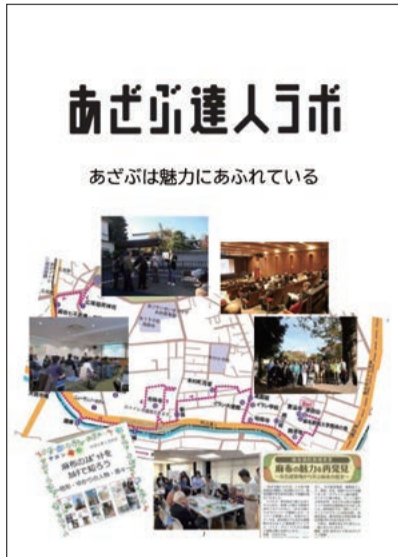


(図1)



# あざぶ達人ラボ

**Azabu Experts LABO**  
Why don't you join us as a new member!!



**We are actively recruiting new members who want to work with us to find the charms of Azabu we still don't know about!**

The regional operations team "Azabu Experts LABO" (originally called the "Azabu Experts Club") began their mission to explore and spread the word about the charms of Azabu in FY2008. They are divided into three sections, and each carries out activities to promote the attractions of Azabu from their respective points of view.

The "Planning Section" was established to exchange ideas, to make more people aware of their activities and to inspire younger people to join them.



Their brochure can be obtained in the Collaboration Project Section of Azabu Regional City Office.

**Inquiries: Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office Tel: 03-5114-8812**

## The three sections of Azabu Experts LABO

### Research Section

This section analyzes Azabu's architecture, topography, history, and culture, etc. from their unique point of view.

### Cooperation Section with Local People

Members go to the regional operations "Local Saloon Chokotto Tachiyori Café," etc. and hold mini-events. This section created the "Azabu Cards" game, so people can learn the charms and history of Azabu while playing cards.

### Town Walking Section

This section has prepared a Walking Map so people can go around the town to find the charms of Azabu, either on their own or on a guided tour.

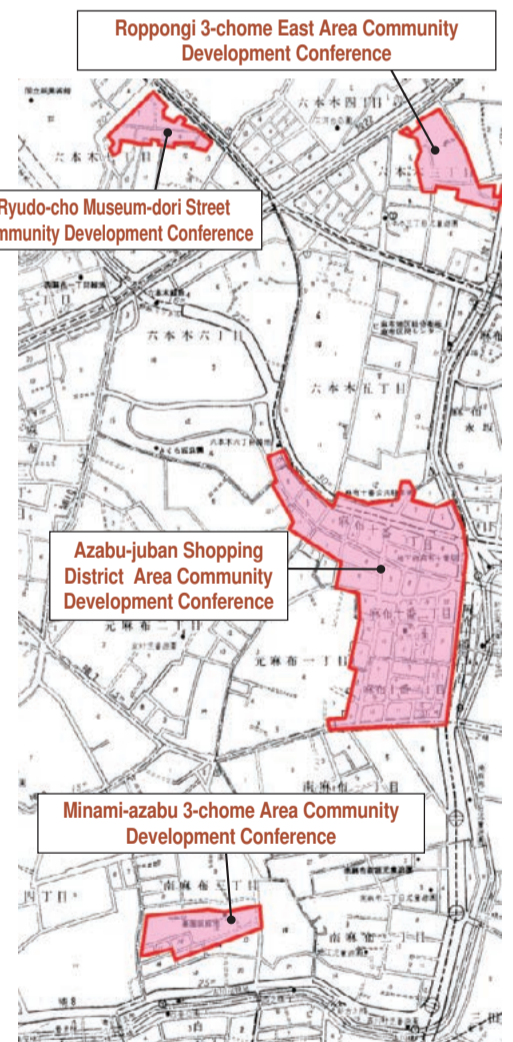
For leading the meeting and all documents, Japanese language is used.

## Introduction of the Framework of Community Development using the Minato City Community Development Ordinance

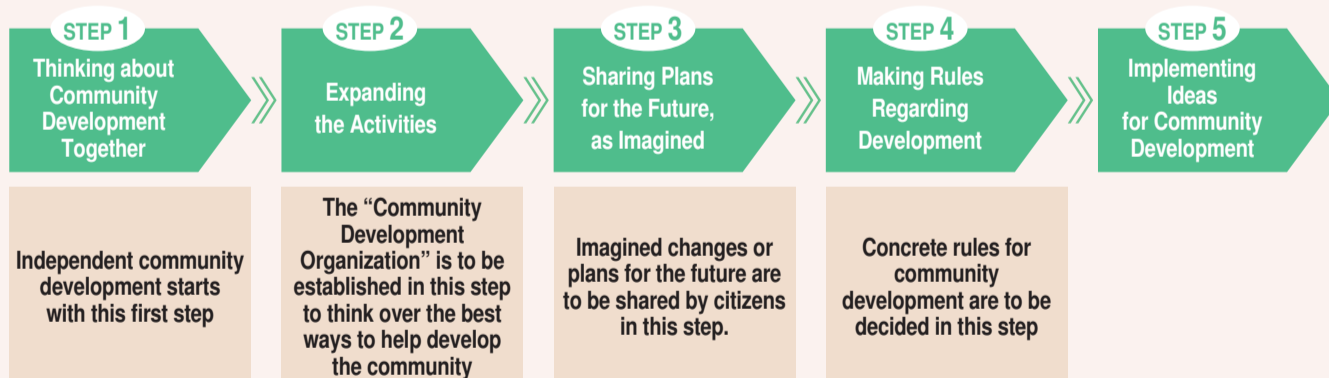
Minato City supports community development activities mainly by the people living in the community, so that local issues are solved within the community. Community development is promoted based on community initiative and agreement.

At present, there are four community development organizations registered in the Azabu area as shown in the figure on the right (as of March 30, 2023).

Three organizations have been registered as having "Regional Community Development Vision." One of them has been certified as an organization that follows the "Regional Community Development Rules"; as such, they are helping the community develop very effectively.



### Community Development System Procedure



**The certified Regional Community Development Rules are partly described here.**



- Roppongi 3-chome East Area Community Development Conference**
- Creating a disaster-resilient community
- Creating a lush green landscape we can all be proud of
- Reinforcing the bonds of the community
- Maintaining public order and morals
- Creating an environment where everybody can live with peace of mind

If ownership of a property is to be transferred or construction is to begin within the area of activity of a Community Development Conference, or if you are interested in community development activities, please contact us as follows.

A pamphlet with a detailed description of Conference activities, the registered "Community Development Organization" list, and the "Regional Community Development Vision and Rules" are available at the counter of the Community Development Subsection, Community Development Section or through the Minato City website.

**Inquiries: Community Development Subsection, Community Development Section, Azabu Regional City Office Tel: 03-5114-8815**

\* To transfer ownership of property or begin construction in the area, an application must be made to the corresponding Community Development Conference.

## Information from the Azabu Regional City Office



### Houses that have been rebuilt or renovated for earthquake resistance are exempted from Fixed Asset Tax and City Planning Tax (only when certain conditions are met) (within the 23 Wards).

The tax exemption period and amount are as follows:

**Rebuilding** Three (3) fiscal years will be fully exempted (limited to residential parts) from the newly taxed year after new construction. However, the number of units for which the tax is to be exempted will depend on the house before rebuilding took place.

**Renovation** The Fixed Asset Tax and City Planning Tax amounts after the seismic impact reduction has been applied will be fully exempted for the floor area equivalent to 120m<sup>2</sup> of the residential part per household for a certain period of time until the next fiscal year from the renovation completion date.

An application for tax exemption must be submitted.  
For more information, visit our website or contact the following:

**Inquiries: For properties located in Minato City:**  
**Minato City Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)**



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website

### Newly built Tokyo Zero-Emission Housing will be exempted from Real Estate Acquisition Tax (within the 23 Wards).

The eligibility and rate for tax exemption are as follows:

**Eligibility for Tax Exemption**

Newly built Tokyo Zero-Emission Housing that meets certain requirements, such as the installation of solar power systems, etc.

**Tax Exemption Rate**

Max 100% of Real Estate Acquisition Tax for housing

An application for tax exemption must be submitted.

In addition, when new housing is built, tax may be mitigated based on the Earthquake Resistance Promotion Tax System, etc.

For details, visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website or contact the following:

**Inquiries: For properties located in Minato City:**  
**Minato City Metropolitan Taxation Office**  
**Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)**



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Environment Website



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website

### eLTAX is a convenient way to make electronic tax payments!

Using eLTAX, a part of the Local Tax Common Payment System, to make electronic tax payments is very convenient.

In addition to existing payment methods such as with Internet banking, etc., and direct payment systems, a tax payment method using credit cards was introduced in April 2023, which can be used to make batch payments to any local government in Japan.

For more information, visit our website on eLTAX <https://www.eltax.lta.go.jp>



Website about eLTAX

### City taxes can be paid through a smartphone payment app

Please also consider using a smartphone payment app to pay city taxes. You can use the app to scan the barcode on the payment slip, and pay city tax anywhere anytime.

For details, visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website.

[https://www.tax.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/common/tozei\\_nouzei.html#L16](https://www.tax.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/common/tozei_nouzei.html#L16)



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website

### You can complete procedures without having to visit an office

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation has a system where taxpayers can complete procedures easily by post or online, without having to visit their offices. You can use this system to send reports, applications or notifications, or make cashless tax payments, by post or electronically.

For details, visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website.  
<https://www.tax.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/raicyou.html>



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website

### You can make electronic applications for various certificates related to city taxes.

You can make electronic applications for various certificates or payment of fees using the "Tokyo Common Electronic Application/Notification Services" system on a computer, or by using the "Smartphone Application" to do it with a smartphone.

For the types of applicable certificates and frequently asked questions on detailed procedures, visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website.

For the "Tokyo Common Electronic Application/Notification Services"

<https://www.tax.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/shomei/denshi.html>

For the "Smartphone Application" System

<https://www.tax.metro.tokyo.lg.jp/shomei/smart.html>



Common Application



Smartphone Application

### Energy-Saving Promotion Tax System for Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprise Operators ~Reduction in Corporate Enterprise Tax or Individual Enterprise Tax

In Tokyo, a reduction in corporate enterprise tax or individual enterprise tax can be applied for small- and medium-sized enterprise operators to acquire energy-saving facilities.

For more information, visit the "Environment-related Tax Reduction System" page on the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website.

**Inquiries:**

**For the Energy-Saving Promotion Tax System for Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprise Operators:**

**Minato Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)**

**Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation**

**For Corporations: Tel: 03-5388-2963**

**For Individuals: Tel: 03-5388-2969**

**For the Global Warming Countermeasures Report System and Recommended Equipment to be Introduced**

**Tokyo Metropolitan Center for Climate Change Actions (Cool Net Tokyo) 03-5990-5091**



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Environment Website



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website

**Going shopping? Visit our local shopping streets.**

Please send us your comments or requests regarding

**The Azabu**



Please write your address, name, occupation (school name), telephone number, comment and/or request (in Japanese or English, no word/character limit or specific format required), and deliver it directly, or mail or fax it to the Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, 5-16-45, Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo (106-8515).

● Tel: 03-5114-8812 ● Fax: 03-3583-3782

You can also access this community information paper from the Minato City website.



## AZABU

● Locations of the Newsletter: Roppongi 1-chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabujuban and Akabanebashi subway stations, The Chi Bus, Minato Library, Azabu Library, Minami-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Nishi-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Igura Iki-Iki Plaza, Azabu Civic Center, Azabu Regional City Office, etc.

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### Editor's Note

On a day I came to look at Azabu when I had been planning to move here, a building with an outer wall shaped like a cloud caught my eye. The building was located at the southwest corner of Shin-ichinohashi Crossing. It was early morning, with light traffic. And I saw the logotype sign "ROPPONGI ROPPOINGI" with the smaller letters towards the center and the larger letters towards either end, and the six round marks for Roppongi Hills. The logotype is on the side of a viaduct wall over the Roppongi Crossing, and is indeed very impressive. It is simple, but draws the eye. I was inspired by this unique image to look deeper into this interesting area and I soon decided to live here. Since then, seven years have passed. I'm glad to have made the right choice.

(KASHO Misaho)

The original article is written in Japanese.

"Minato Call" information service answers your questions about everyday life! Feel free to ask about services provided by City Hall, facility guides, event information, and more. Available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm every day.

\* This service is also available in English.

### Minato Call

**Tel: 03-5472-3710 Fax: 03-5777-8752**

Inquiry submission form: <https://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/kouchou/kuse/kocho/iken/form-inquiry.html>