



# Osaka

On the main island of Honshu, Japan, in the center of the Kansai region, lies Osaka Prefecture and the third largest city in Japan, Osaka. Throughout the city's 1500-year-old history Osaka has always been a place of great cultural, as well as political and economic significance. Japan's first capital city was established in Osaka Prefecture, and the city of Osaka would later become known as the "Nation's Kitchen". Osaka is the second largest prefecture in Japan boasting a population of 8.8 million people and attracts almost as many tourists every year.

Thanks to the Naniwa-zu port in the Osaka Bay, 5<sup>th</sup> century Osaka became the cultural hub of Japan. Foreign influences reached Japan through Osaka and quickly spread to all corners of the country. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the capital of Japan was established in Kyoto, a mere 14-minute bullet train ride from Osaka city. Despite the capital's eventual move to Tokyo, the Kansai region has continued to thrive unhindered for nearly a millennium.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Toyotomi Hideyoshi set out to finish the quest of unifying the country. He chose Osaka City as his center of operations, and in 1583 he built the magnificent Osaka Castle. The castle was destroyed and rebuilt several times before its final restoration in 1931. The castle can still be enjoyed today sitting atop a large hill in the heart of the city. This iconic symbol of Japan is one of the most visited tourist attractions in the area.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the region became known as the "Nation's Kitchen" as most raw materials and commodities were manufactured in Osaka and subsequently distributed throughout the country. The region experienced major setbacks in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, during the Meiji Restoration and WWII, but Osaka regained its strength and grew into what is now one of the largest industrial centers, in the world. The Floating Garden Observatory on top of the Umeda Sky Building is a must-see modern marvel. Osaka is also home to one of the largest aquariums in the world, as well as the first Universal Studios theme park opened outside of the U.S.

Despite having transformed into a modern metropolis, Osaka never forgot its past, and that is why it's such a popular place among tourists. Shitennoji, the oldest Buddhist temple in Japan, Hozen-ji Temple, Namba Yasaka Shrine and the previously mentioned Osaka Castle are only a few examples of historic architectural wonders in the area. After sightseeing, tourists can visit one of the city's many shopping districts for a bit of retail therapy, take a picture with the iconic Glico Man, or walk along Dotonbori Street and find out why Osaka is referred to as the "Food Capital of Japan". Osaka is where to find traditional Japanese culture, great food, modern entertainment and the friendliest people in Japan.

## Vocab Match

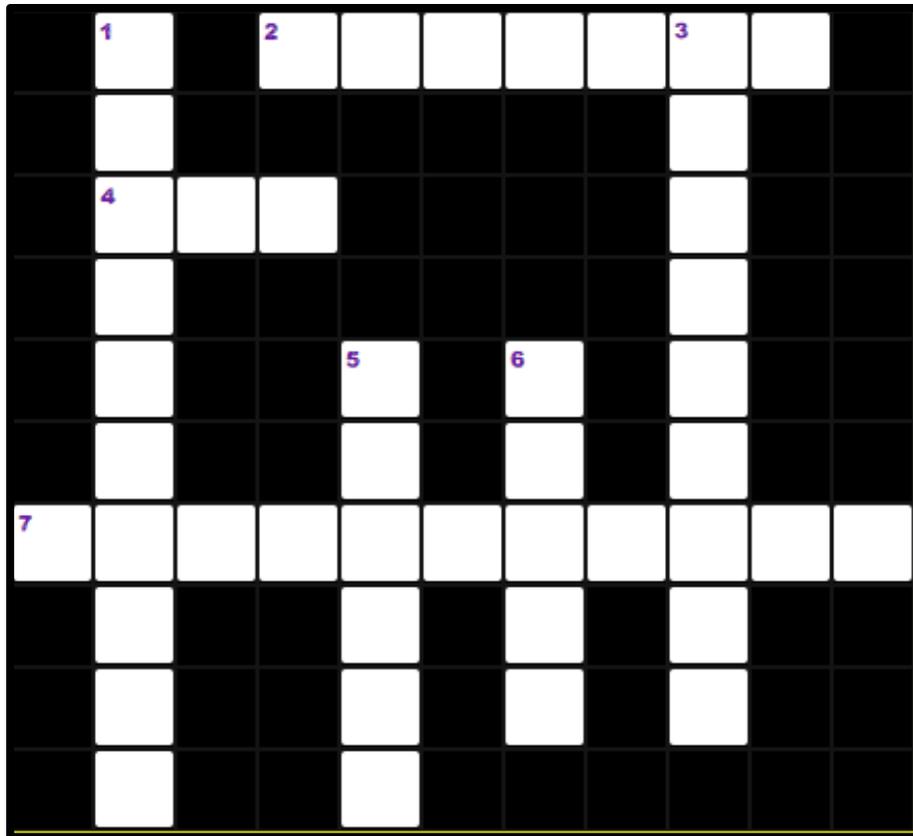
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Word	Answer	Definition
1. boast	1. ____	a. adjective- undisturbed, unbothered
2. hub	2. ____	b. noun- an action of returning something to its former condition
3. unhindered	3. ____	c. noun- that which slows the progress of something
4. quest	4. ____	d. verb- to have a praiseworthy feature
5. restoration	5. ____	e. noun- shopping to cheer yourself up
6. commodity	6. ____	f. noun- a journey in pursuit of some goal
7. setback	7. ____	g. noun- a high place used for observing natural phenomena
8. observatory	8. ____	h. noun- a useful or valuable thing
9. retail therapy	9. ____	i. adjective- very well known
10. iconic	10. ____	j. noun- the center of activity

## Discussion Topics

1. Have you tried culinary (food) tourism? Would you like to? Where would you go?
2. What do you like to do when you visit a foreign city?
3. What is the most interesting place you have ever visited?
4. Have you ever visited a theme park? If not, which one would you like to visit?
5. Describe your favorite place to eat out.

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## Hint!

### ACROSS

- 2 noun- that which slows the progress of something
- 4 noun- the center of activity
- 7 noun- an action of returning something to its former condition

### DOWN

- 1 adjective- undisturbed, unbothered
- 3 noun- a useful or valuable thing
- 5 adjective- very well known
- 6 verb- to possess a praiseworthy feature

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Quiz**

**1) On which island is Osaka located?**

a. Honshu b. Kyushu c. Hokkaido d. Shikoku

**2) How old is Osaka according to the text?**

a. 2000 years b. 500 years c. a millennium d. 1500 years

**3) Osaka became a major cultural center thanks to what?**

a. an airport b. a theatre c. a school d. a port

**4) Who built Osaka Castle?**

a. Oda Nobunaga b. Toyotomi Hideyoshi c. Date Masamune d. Tokugawa Ieyasu

**5) What did Toyotomi Hideyoshi want to do?**

a. unify the country b. build a metropolis c. paint d. build an impenetrable stronghold

**6) What was the nickname of the Osaka region in the 17<sup>th</sup> century?**

a. Food Capital of Japan b. Japan's Kitchen c. Nation's Kitchen d. Osaka Kitchen

**7) What hindered the development of the Osaka region in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries?**

a. Tokugawa Shogunate and Meiji Restoration b. WWII and Meiji Restoration c. global economic crisis d. WWI and Meiji Restoration

**8) What is Shitennoji?**

a. a shopping quarter b. a shrine c. an onsen d. a temple

**9) Which famous theme park is located in Osaka?**

a. Universal Studios b. Legoland c. Disneyland d. SeaWorld

**10) What is Osaka referred to as today?**

a. Nation's Kitchen b. Noodle Kingdom c. Food Capital of Japan d. Food World

# Key

Matching	Quiz
1. d	1. a
2. j	2. d
3. a	3. d
4. f	4. b
5. b	5. a
6. h	6. c
7. c	7. b
8. g	8. d
9. e	9. a
10. i	10. c

**PROJECT:** Students present about foods from different regions. What ingredients are used? How are they prepared? Has there been any changes to the recipes over time?

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Source: <http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/osaka-population/>,

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