

Kuromon Ichiba (*ichiba* means marketplace) is an historic covered market street in the Nipponbashi area of central Osaka. It is famously nicknamed “**Osaka’s Kitchen**” because of its long role in supplying fresh ingredients to restaurants and households. Over the past decade it has also become a major tourist destination for Japanese foodies, with innumerable stalls offering many Japanese specialties from sushi to wagyu beef skewers and much much more.



Kuromon literally means “**Black Gate**” (*kuro* = black, *mon* = gate). The name comes from the black-lacquered mountain gate (*sanmon*) of Enmyōji Temple, a Jodo Buddhist temple which once stood in the area. Merchants originally gathered in front of this black gate to sell fish and produce, hence the name 'Black Gate Market'. The temple and its black gate and the market itself burned down in the Great Namba Fire of 1912. The temple was rebuilt in another part of the city - but the market was rebuilt at its original site and the name stuck. The famed market was again destroyed in the Osaka bombings of March 1945 but it was quickly rebuilt after the war. Giant fish and crustaceans were hung from the ceiling in the 1980s as good reference markers and they are both colorful and useful (e.g., "turn right at the giant lobster"). A formal commercial cooperative was formed in 1948 and a modern steel arcade roof was completed in the 1970s. Kuromon has remained a vital food hub even as it has evolved from a wholesale local market into a world-class tourist 'street food' destination. It's Osaka's most popular spot for *tabe-aruki*: 'eating while walking'. Though in recent years there have been many small dining nooks added where you can actually sit down and enjoy the delicious offerings.



The market stretches 2000 ft/580 meters under a covered arcade and houses over **150 shops** offering:

- Fresh seafood of EVERY type (some more recognizable than others)
- Fresh meats, especially high-quality wagyu beef
- Fruits, vegetables, pickles (*tsukemono*), dried goods, and sweets (*wagashi*)
- Tourist-friendly ready-to-eat seafood skewers, sushi and sashimi, *donburi* seafood and rice bowls, ramen galore, barbecued items, fresh juices, ice cream, and much more. High quality bluefin tuna sashimi and sushi including *o-toro* and *chu-toro* (the rich, prime parts of the tuna belly) as well as *uni* (sea urchin) and scallops (*hotate*) are among many specialty standouts in freshness, price and quality. Portions are generous for the price compared to any restaurant setting.

The market still attracts professional chefs early in the morning for high-quality ingredients, while later in the day it fills with locals and tourists. The atmosphere is always lively and fun.



LOCATION: 2-4-1 Nipponbashi, Chūō-ku, Osaka.

Easily accessible on foot from Nippombashi Station - take Exit 9 and one of the entrances to the market is just half a block up on your left. Namba Station is also nearby (10-min walk). And if you find yourself at a shuttle drop-off in Dotonbori you'll be very close - just a 5-minute walk.



Kuromon Market embodies Osaka's *kuida-ore* (eat-until-you-drop) culture and remains one of the city's most iconic food destinations, blending nearly 200 years of food merchant history with a big dose of modern tourist appeal. It is my #1 go-to street food market in Japan (and the world!).

