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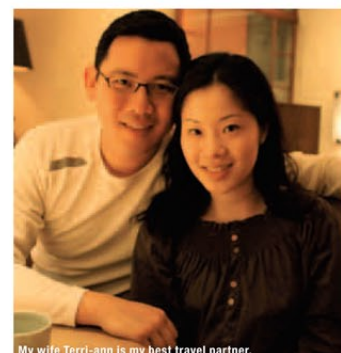
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APRIL 2010

A WEEKEND AWAY

# FERGUS FUNG'S TOKYO

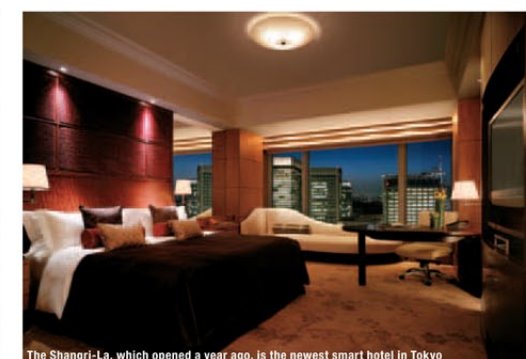
Foodie Fergus Fung, co-founder of the Wom Guide ([www.womguide.com](http://www.womguide.com)), lived in Tokyo for three years when he was a banker. He visits Japan several times a year, discovering new and exciting things to do and places to eat. When in Tokyo, he favours the areas of Azabu-Juban and Nishi-Azabu, finding them more interesting, calming and less crowded than Shinjuku.



My wife Terri-ann is my best travel partner.



Stay at the Peninsula Tokyo for its Ginza location and spacious rooms



The Shangri-La, which opened a year ago, is the newest smart hotel in Tokyo



The chef at Matsui Sushi prepares tuna sashimi



Chef at the tiny Aronia de Takazawa restaurant



Sumo wrestlers are practising at the sumo stables

#### HOW DO YOU GET THERE?

Cathay Pacific or Japan Airlines. There is a red-eye flight operated by JAL and ANA (All Nippon Airways), which departs at 1.30am and gets you there by 6am. It saves you a lot of time as you can start your day early, but it is also extremely tiring because you don't get much chance to sleep!

#### WHO DO YOU GO WITH?

My wife and I usually go together to visit old friends and our favourite haunts (we used to live there).

#### WHERE DO YOU STAY?

If I'm not staying with friends, I check into the Peninsula (1-8-1 Yurakucho, Chiyodaku, tel: +81 3 6270 2888, website: [www.peninsula.com](http://www.peninsula.com)) as it's perfectly situated for walking around the Ginza area and the rooms are very spacious. We have yet to stay at the newest hotel in Tokyo, the Shangri-La (Marunouchi Trust Tower Main, 1-8-3 Marunouchi, Chiyodaku, tel: +81 3 6739 7888, website: [www.shangri-la.com](http://www.shangri-la.com)), which is also in Ginza. Perhaps next time...

#### WHERE DO YOU GO FOR BREAKFAST?

If I take the red-eye flight, I like to head straight to Tsukiji Fish Market. Sushi for breakfast is a real treat! There are many sushi restaurants in the area, but I like Daiwa if the queue is not too long (Tsukiji Fish Market, Building 6, 3rd alley). I also adore fresh Japanese fruits, especially the summer peaches and melons.

#### WHERE DO YOU GO FOR LUNCH?

Matsukan was my neighbourhood sushi place when I lived in Tokyo; I keep going back as I like it's warm and very casual atmosphere (\*\* tel: +81 3 3456 3268).

Nearby is Savoy Pizza, which serves one of the best pizzas in town (website: [www.savoy.vc](http://www.savoy.vc)). Next door is Nagasaka Sarasina, a famous soba place that has been around for 200 years (they have many branches; this is the main one, tel: +81 3 3585 2241).

A bit out of the way in the Kanda area famous for old books and sporting gear is one of the best tonkatsu (deep-fried pork) places in Tokyo, Katsuman (tel: +81 3 3256 5504). In the business district is a great unagi restaurant called U (Kojimachi 3-4, tel: +81 3 3261 6762). Also for eel, try Kaisuian (Akasaka 6-4-15, tel: +81 3 3505 2369). They do a beautiful fuwa fuwa anago don - grilled eel served on rice with fluffy eggs. Speaking of eggs and the Akasaka district, Hayashi (Akasaka 2-14-1, 4/F, tel: +81 3 3582 4078) has a delicious oyako don (chicken and egg rice) with very runny eggs. Rangetsu (Ginza 3-5-8, tel: +81 3 3567 1021) is more of a touristy place (they have a branch in Orlando!) but worth going for its special suki-shabu dish (shabu shabu in a sukiyaki soup base).

I'm not a big fan of desserts but patissier Inamura Shozo (tel: +81 3 3827 8584, website: <http://inamura.jp/information.html>) won a silver medal at the Charles Proust competition in Paris a while back. His mont blanc (chestnut cream) and chocolate cakes are heavenly!

#### WHERE DO YOU GO FOR DINNER?

For a unique experience, try Aronia de Takazawa (Akasaka 3-5-2, tel: +81 3 3505 5054). The husband cooks and the wife serves, the food is innovative, to say the least, and with just two tables (or a table of eight) you can get all the attention you like. Reservations are a must for this restaurant, with bookings accepted two months in advance.





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Eating suki-shabu at Rangetsu



Fresh soba at Nagasaka Sarasina



Savoy Pizza's chef at work



Kitchen at Savoy Pizza

For a once in a lifetime sushi experience, go to Matoi Sushi (Roppongi 7-8-13, tel: +81 3 3404 6051). There is no fridge and Chef Matoi uses blocks of ice to keep his fish fresh. It is very expensive but extremely good.

Lauburu (Minami-Aoyama 6-8-18, tel: +81 3 3498 1314) is a Basque restaurant that cooks everything to do with pork! They have the best pork knuckles, pork knees, pork blood sausages, pork cutlets, pork confit . . . you name it, every part of the pig cooked in every way! We keep going back and never get sick of it. Tanya Matabeii (Roppongi, tel: +81 3 3405 7890), meanwhile, serves heavenly beef tongue; need I say more?

Kinryusan (Shirogane 3-14-1, tel: +81 3 3446 8156) is a tiny yakiniku (Japanese-styled Korean barbecue) restaurant that is incredibly smoky, but its Japanese beef and other meats are very well marinated and amazingly fatty. La Bisboccia, a cosy neighbourhood Italian joint in Hiroo, never disappoints (1/F, SK Bld, 2-36-15 Ebisu, Shibuyku, tel: +81 3 3449 1470, website: www.labisboccia.com). Hiramatsu (5-15-13 Minami-Azabu, Minatoku, tel: +81 3 3444 3967, website: www.hiramatsu.co.jp) is more formal, with sister restaurants throughout Japan and Paris; their French food is excellent.

**WHERE DO YOU SHOP?**

Visit Subunso Book Store (Kanda Ogawamachi 3-3, tel: +81 3 3292 7877) for rare first editions of English books or beautiful 17th century maps. Next door, Jimbocho is a street filled with sportswear of every kind, including skiing, golfing and scuba diving. Kappabashi street is for aspiring restaurateurs and the professional home-chef. More than 300 specialist shops selling everything from knives, pots and pans and chefs' outfits to those fake plastic dishes of food you see in every restaurant shop front in Japan.

Tabio is a cool sock shop (there is a branch in Omotesando Hills and in Paris and London) that even has a free monogramming service!

**WHERE DO YOU SEE ART?**

I will visit the National Art Centre in Roppongi (website: www.nact.jp) and the Tokyo Museum of Contemporary Art (website: www.mot-art-museum.jp). I also like the newly renovated Nezu Museum (website: www.nezu-muse.or.jp), a private collection with a beautiful garden right down the road from Omotesando.

**WHAT DO YOU DO FOR THRILLS?**

An hour's train ride from Tokyo and you can go skiing. Of course the snow is nowhere near as powdery as in Hokkaido. The closest, the most convenient but also the most crowded ski resort is Gala Yuzawa (website: www.galaresort.jp). In warmer weather, white water rafting is available not too far from the city. Try it at Uncle Bear (tel: +81 278 72 8900, website: www.uboutdoor.com).

**ANY OTHER MUST-SEES?**

If you have never seen a sumo wrestler up close and personal, go to Azumazeki Beya (website: www.azumazeki.jp) and watch asa geiko (morning practice). Remember to ask politely in advance, though!