

Art Museum & Library, Ota



November 3 is Culture Day in Japan. Autumn is the season of art and reading books. This month's travel article features a newly-built art museum and library in Ota. Opened on January 14, 2017, it takes 60 seconds from Tobu Ota Station to get to the 3-story building. If you could use just one word to describe it, it would probably be "unique". It is likely unlike any other museum or library you have ever been to before.

Architect Akihisa Hirata designed the building. His concept: Ota is a large city with population exceeding 200,000. Ota Station is located in the heart of the city and more than 100,000 people use it every day. Yet, the area surrounding the station is very quiet because people use cars to get around, including to go shopping in the suburb. This project is an attempt to have people come back to the train station and the streets surrounding the station once again.

Different exhibitions are held regularly. Paintings and other artworks are also displayed here and there in the building.

In the library, different events are held in different seasons. Books are on display according to the special theme of the event. A room dedicated to house *zenshu* (collected works of art), history & geography books, and a private collection is equipped with a large table, allowing you an ample space to do some research.

Many comfortable upholstered sofas are placed in the newspaper and magazine section. You will be amazed at the variety of the magazines here. You can spend an entire day here reading major national and local papers as well as two English newspapers.

Parents with young children can come take off their shoes and read in a room with a thick carpet.

To go up and down the floors, you use ramps, although there is an elevator, too. Children, older people, and people in wheelchairs are all welcome here. You will find small lawn gardens on both the 2nd and 3rd floors. Overlooking the streets of Ota, you can enjoy a mini picnic there. Chairs of all shapes and sizes are installed throughout the building, so you can find a space to have a snack, even lunch, as you watch passengers board and disembark trains at Ota station.

As you enter the building, there is café managed by one of the most popular café operators in the city. If you are fussy about your coffee, please try a cup of their coffee.

To the right, there are several tables with few chairs that give you a very nice view through the glass windows. All in all, this is sure to be a place you will want to come back to. I certainly hope you feel the same way.

[Art Museum & Library, Ota](#)

Hours: 10:00-20:00 (weekdays) 10:00-18:00 (Sunday & holiday)

Closed on Monday & Dec. 29 - Dec. 3

Location: 16-30 Higashihon-cho, Ota [MAP](#)

Phone: 0276-55-3036

[Nearby tourist spots \(Ota City Tourism Association\)](#)

[Gunma Children's Land](#)

[Enkiridera Mantoku-ji Temple](#)

[Yabuzuka Onsen Hot Springs](#)