

# Community of Smiles



Naked as a jaybird, I gazed out over the expanse of Tokyo's Minato Ward. It was an oddly thrilling way to start the day: up to my ears in piping hot water, looking down upon the Lego-like jumble of the world's biggest city from 42 stories above the ground.

"I could stay here all day," I thought, before reluctantly emerging from the marble tub to shave and dress. Then, over a coffee and croissant at the Green Hills Spa Lounge down the hall, I looked up from my newspaper to check my watch. I still had time to cycle to the office. Within minutes, I was racing toward the Marunouchi business district, just a few blocks away.

As the residential side of a unique, mixed-use development, Atago Green Hills Forest Tower offers unparalleled convenience for people who work in the city center. Located between Onarimon and Kamiyacho stations, on the Mita and Hibiya lines, respectively, it's close enough to the CBD to cycle or jog to work.

But, perhaps more importantly, Atago Forest Tower, which boasts 253 unfurnished apartments and 99 serviced, furnished units for shorter-term residents, offers a deeply personal experience. From its first-rate spa, pool and gym facilities to its wide range of staff-organized events, the residence's attention to detail makes it one of the city's best-kept secrets.

"A lot of our new guests think this is just another hotel," front desk manager Tsuyoshi Matsunaga told me. "What makes it different is the way the staff continually add value."

In many ways, the staff function as an instant social network—connecting new arrivals with other residents, handling restaurant reservations or offering tips and local insights. But it is Atago Forest Tower's packed events calendar and the staff's determination to create a sense of community that make living here special.

Traditional tea ceremonies and visits to Seisho Temple, which is tastefully integrated into the Atago Forest Tower development, top the list of popular activities. But other intriguing get-togethers, such as rooftop star-viewing sessions, Santa visits at Christmas and cherry blossom parties, are also organized.

In addition to long-term residents, Atago Forest Tower caters to shorter-stay business travelers and expatriates seeking flexible rental conditions in a central location.

My needs during my brief stay put me closer to those of a business traveler, and I found the service at the residence exceptional in its unobtrusiveness. The highly perceptive, multilingual staff strike the perfect balance between



attentiveness and reserve.

This versatility is arguably Atago Forest Tower's key strength. In fact, while pondering how well a glass of Chardonnay would complement in-house chef Akihiro Kikuchi's excellent chicken dish, my server suddenly appeared with a bottle of the said varietal. And in the mornings, when I would trudge bleary-eyed from my apartment to the spa for a pre-work soak, the staff would politely afford me some space, seemingly aware of how antisocial I can be at 6:30 a.m.

This intuitive service impressed me from the moment the desk staff briefed me on the facilities at check-in, before leaving me to enjoy my complimentary welcome basket of sweet goodies while watching a storm roll in across Tokyo Bay from my balcony.

I soon fell into an enjoyable rhythm during my stay, underscoring the ease with which new arrivals can quickly slip into their lives in Tokyo.

I would kick off the day with a swim or soak in the hot tub, followed by a healthy breakfast before work. Depending on the time I returned in the evenings, I would either grab a quick bite at the restaurant or head out for a run around the nearby Imperial Palace. Evenings were rounded off with a contemplative stroll through the quiet grounds of

the temple next door or a last-minute rejuvenating massage before the spa closed.

"Stop by any time for a chat," one of the nurses at the residence's on-site medical clinic cheerfully called out to me one evening. "I'm always here."

Time and again, I was made aware of Atago Forest Tower's trademark blend of intuitive, tailor-made service and genuine hospitality. This is what will bring me back to this truly unique property—a gem in Mori Living's impressive Tokyo portfolio. □

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