



Special Minpaku 365 Day License: Complete Municipal Guide

Japan's Special Zone Minpaku (特区民泊 / Tokku Minpaku) system allows year-round operation of short-term rentals without the standard 180-day restriction that applies to regular minpaku under Japan's Private Lodging Business Act. This special license permits **365-day operation** and is available only in designated National Strategic Special Zones.

Current Municipalities Offering 365-Day Special Zone Minpaku

As of September 2025, the following municipalities offer the Special Zone Minpaku exception license allowing year-round operation:

Tokyo

- **Ota Ward** - Japan's first special zone minpaku area, introduced in 2016^[1] ^[2]

Chiba Prefecture

- **Chiba City**^[3] ^[4]
- **Narita City** (part of Tokyo Area National Strategic Special Zone)^[5]

Niigata Prefecture

- **Niigata City**^[4] ^[3]

Fukuoka Prefecture

- **Kitakyushu City**^[6] ^[3] ^[4]

Osaka Prefecture

- **Osaka Prefecture** (prefectural level)^[3]
- **Osaka City** (municipal level)^[7] ^[3]
- **Yao City**^[8]

Note on Recent Changes:

- **Neyagawa City** withdrew from the Special Zone Minpaku program in August 2025 due to resident complaints about noise, garbage violations, and property damage^[9]

- **Osaka Prefecture** announced intentions to completely end the Tokku Minpaku program, with new applications currently frozen^[10]

Key Requirements for Special Zone Minpaku

Properties operating under the 365-day license must meet specific requirements that differ from standard minpaku:

Minimum Stay Requirements

- **2-3 nights minimum stay** (varies by municipality)^{[11] [12] [7]}
- Most areas require 2 nights and 3 days minimum^[3]

Property Standards

- **Minimum 25m² floor area** per accommodation unit^{[12] [7]}
- Foreign language information and emergency services^[12]
- Guest registration and list maintenance^[12]
- Neighborhood consultation and complaint response systems^[12]

Operational Differences

- **No 180-day operating limit** (unlike standard minpaku)^{[13] [11]}
- **Year-round operation permitted**^{[13] [7]}
- **No front desk requirement**^[13]
- Simplified licensing compared to full hotel licenses^[13]

Geographic Distribution and Market Concentration

The special zone minpaku system shows significant geographic concentration:

- **95% of all Special Zone Tokku Minpaku in Japan** are concentrated in Osaka^[10]
- **44.7% of Osaka's operators** are Chinese-owned or affiliated^[10]
- Osaka has seen **over 200 new applications per month** for five consecutive months as of September 2025^[10]

Administrative Framework

Special Zone Minpaku operates under the **National Strategic Special Zones Act** rather than the standard Private Lodging Business Act. This system was designed to:^{[3] [12]}

- Address accommodation shortages in high-tourism areas^[14]
- Provide alternatives to traditional hotel licensing^[1]
- Support international tourism growth^[15]

Licensing Process

Unlike standard minpaku which requires simple notification, Special Zone Minpaku requires:

- **Certification application** (not just notification)^[12]
- Municipal-level approval process^[12]
- Compliance with building and fire safety standards^[12]
- Neighborhood consultation requirements^[12]

Future Outlook

The Special Zone Minpaku system faces growing challenges:

- **Osaka's program freeze** signals potential policy reversal^[10]
- **Resident complaints** about noise and property management^{[9] [10]}
- **Market saturation** in some areas like Osaka^[10]
- **Regulatory tightening** as tourism rebounds post-pandemic^[16]

For investors and operators considering Special Zone Minpaku, it's essential to verify current availability in target municipalities, as the program continues evolving with some areas withdrawing from participation while others maintain operations under increasingly strict oversight.

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