

Ginza Six Could Be the World's Coolest Mall

With 40-foot tall vertical gardens and installations by such artists as Yayoi Kusama, Ginza Six promises to be a destination even shopping pessimists will love



Red and white pumpkins by Yayoi Kusama hover in the atrium.

Photo: Courtesy of Ginza Six

Tokyo's Ginza district has long been home to an array of beautifully designed shops, from Renzo Piano's glass-clad Hermès building to Jun Mitsui's undulating DeBeers tower. The latest addition to the retail scene, Ginza Six, boasts 241 stores across over 500,000 square feet, making it the largest shopping destination in the area. But even more impressive than its size, is the shopping center's design. The building was designed by architect Yoshio Taniguchi of Taniguchi and Associates, who is best known for his 2004 redesign of New York's Museum of Modern Art, and features a façade inspired by *noren*, or traditional Japanese sunshades.

Inside, designer Gwenaél Nicolas of the firm Curiosity also blended the country's architectural traditions with contemporary techniques. Lattice screens draw the eye up from floor to floor in the spectacular center atrium to a sculptural ceiling with an asanoha motif. Nicolas took inspiration from the alleyways of Ginza and Kyoto to devise zigzagging paths through the floors of stores and bring a sense of discovery back to shopping. The designer also created lighting influenced by shoji screens or andon oil lampstands.

Ginza Six is also home to a rooftop garden, a food hall, and the Kanze Noh Theater, which will showcase the traditional Japanese masked musical dramas. In collaboration with the Mori Art Museum, the building will display permanent and temporary public art installations. The first in the series of featured artists is Yayoi Kusama, who created 14 polka-dotted pumpkins to float within the center atrium. In addition to works by Shinji Ohmaki, Misa Funai, and Yuumi Domoto, shoppers can also check out the nearly 40-foot tall living walls, including a vertical garden by Patrick Blanc and a digital waterfall by teamLab.



Architect Yoshio Taniguchi is behind the noren-inspired façade.



The atrium is crowned by a sculptural illuminated ceiling.

Photo: Courtesy of Curiosity



Living Canyon, a vertical garden, by Patrick Blanc was planted with native greenery.

Photo: Courtesy of Ginza Six



TeamLab developed *Universe of Water Particles* on the *Living Wall*, a digital installation that changes according to the sun.

Photo: Kozo Takayama