

LEGOLAND Japan

Text by lluisgib

Images by lluisgib and Delia Balsells



As an AFOL, it is always an interesting experience to visit a LEGOLAND park. In the past I have visited LEGOLAND Billund (HispaBrick Magazine® 007) and the one in Günzburg (HispaBrick Magazine® 010). In 2017, LEGOLAND in Nagoya was opened, and since I spent my summer vacation in the country of the rising sun, I had to take the opportunity to visit the new amusement park (even it were during a typhoon...)

No doubt one of the main attractions for every AFOL is the miniland (a LEGOLAND scale reproduction of the most characteristic monuments and cities of the country where the LEGOLAND is located). With the experience of the LEGOLAND Discovery Center in Tokyo (HispaBrick Magazine® 020) and the one in Osaka (HispaBrick Magazine® 024) my expectations were quite high.

I have to admit that the miniland didn't let me down. Perhaps it was due to the fact that I recognized most of the elements shown, or because of my well-known passion for Japanese culture. Whatever it was, it's a great miniland – smaller than the ones in Denmark or Germany, but with a higher level of detail, maybe because the park is newer and the builders have more references to take into consideration.

You follow a route through the miniland where, among others, the most well-known places in Tokyo can be seen (Shibuya Cross, Ginza, Tokyo Tower, Sky Tree, Tokyo Station, Asakusa Temple), places in Kyoto (Kinkaku-ji Temple, Fushimi-Inari Temple, Kiyomizu-dera Temple), places in Osaka (Dotonbori, Osaka Castle, Umeda Building), places in Hiroshima (Miyajima Temple), places in Sapporo or the city that hosts the LEGOLAND, Nagoya, with its castle, or the Baseball stadium (this one in minifig scale).

Between rain showers, the sun appeared and we could take some better pictures which we have included in this article. As in any miniland, the pictures do not really do justice to what can be seen in person. However, you can still get an idea of what this miniland is like in terms of architecture and showing a way of life that is totally different from what we are used to in the West.

The rest of the park is quite similar to other LEGOLAND parks. It is true that, unlike the oldest ones, there are some large-sized minifigures and vehicles made with molds instead of bricks. They represent current sets, like a motorcycle or the limousine from the Palace Cinema modular building. Maybe I'm not purist enough about this aspect, but I loved them and I almost bought an extra plane ticket to adopt one ;). There are also sculptures made with bricks: fountains, animals, and other decorations.

There are some common rides that are similar to those in other parks, such as the 4D Cinema – where you can see a movie made with the characters from the LEGO® Movie – the Fire Station, or the LEGO® Factory, where the manufacturing process of the brick is shown, and afterwards you can take home a brick molded there, with an exclusive decoration.

Other rides, the roller coaster for example, were surprising, as it was a mixture of two rides from other parks. At the beginning, you go through a cave where there are a lot of models decorated in the Castle theme. Later, after the cave, the wagons start going faster and you get into the roller coaster, which is outside. Sadly, since it was a roller coaster we couldn't use the camera. There's also an area dedicated to Ancient Egypt, another to Arctic exploration, with an aquarium containing penguins... and even a DUPLO area for kids!

If you are in the Nagoya area, don't miss out on the opportunity to visit this LEGOLAND park. You will get to know Japan better thanks to the miniland, and you will enjoy interesting rides and amazing decorations.

PS: In case of typhoon, near the LEGOLAND park there's the interesting Railroad Museum 'Nagoya Maglev Museum' where we took refuge when the weather worsened ;D.

I want to thank Itsuka Oguri for allowing us access to LEGOLAND to produce this article.

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