

JRTR

Japan Railway & Transport Review

Feature

Restoration of Tokyo Station

■ Preservation and Restoration of Tokyo Station Marunouchi Building

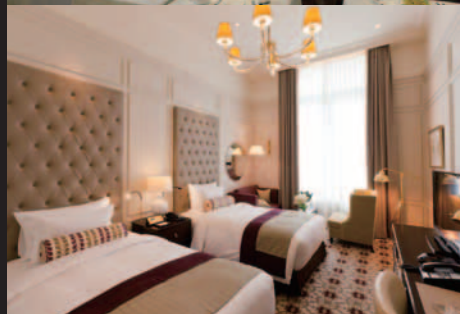
Export and Import of Railway Technologies

■ Introduction of Overseas Technologies to JR East Track Maintenance

■ Japan's Railway Technologies Serving on Overseas Railways

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A collection of photographs and drawings of the renovated Tokyo Station Marunouchi Building exterior, interior, and facilities, courtesy of JR East.

Tokyo Station

Construction to restore the Marunouchi Building of Tokyo Station was completed on 1 October 2012, revealing once again its stately and elegant form when first built close to 100 years ago. The majestic 335-meter long red-brick exterior seen from the Imperial Palace side and the splendid decorations in the 30-meter high north and south domes have impressed and inspired many people. I would like to thank the management at JR East who decided to proceed with this restoration. Tokyo Station has a long shape because it was designed to run parallel to the tracks, unlike so-called stub stations where trains enter and exit to and from the same direction. Initially called a central station, Tokyo Station was constructed for trains to pass through, hence, its long form. In the West, nations with advanced railway infrastructure have urban railway stations scattered radially and connected to each other by trams and underground. But in the Tokyo of 1884, the plans called for the 5.5 km between the southern terminal at Shimbashi and the northern terminal at Ueno to be connected by one line. This proved a difficult undertaking due to the need to elevate the entire line through the growing city, extending construction a full 30 years. A large piece of land was also secured for the Tokyo Station yard, forming the basis upon which Tokyo Station would function as a major terminal for today's shinkansen lines running north and south. Without the shinkansen lines to Tokyo Station, the current restoration probably would not have been achieved so easily, given today's increasing demand for intensive land use. We must not forget that what we have today is the result of our predecessors insightful planning 130 years ago.

(This editorial references a thesis by Hiroshi Okada in a collection of papers by the Kotsu-Kyoryoku-Kai Foundation)

K. Aoki

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