In 1889, the Governor of Tokyo prefecture issued the Tokyo City Improvement Ordinance, setting in motion the construction of an elevated railway line between two terminals, Shimbashi and Ueno. The Tokyo prefectural government also established a plan for the installation of a central station in the middle of Tokyo around the same time. The survey and early scheme of the station were initially entrusted to Hermann Rumboldt and Franz Balzler, German engineers who were also involved in the design of the elevated city railway stretching between Shimbashi and Ueno. In 1903, the Japanese architect Kingo Tatsuno, who was known for designing the headquarters of Bank of Japan and had established himself as a pioneer of Japanese modern architecture, was commissioned to design the Central Station. He followed the layout plan envisioned by Balzler, while elaborating the design with his own distinctive features. After several design changes and suspension of the project during the war with Russia, the construction of the Central Station finally began on March 25, 1908. It opened for business about six years later on December 20 after the official announcement that the formal name would be Tokyo Station—an easily recognizable designation for the station at the heart of Japan’s growing capital.

Tokyo Station miraculously survived the Great Kanto Earthquake and had remained a majestic landmark of the imperial city for 31 years until it was burnt down in air raids during the World War II in May 1945.

**Tokyo Station Timeline**

- 1872: Shimbashi-Yokohama Line opens
- 1889: Announcement of the City Improvement Ordinance to build the Central Station
- 1903: Franz Balzler submits scheme for the Central Station
- 1903: Kingo Tatsuno appointed as the architect for the Central Station
- 1910: Kingo Tatsuno submits final plan
- 1914: Tokyo Station opens
- 1915: Tokyo Station Hotel opens
- 1923: The Great Kanto Earthquake (almost no damage to Tokyo Station)
- 1945: Roof of Tokyo Station damaged during World War II
- 1947: Tokyo Station reconstructed as a two-story building
- 1951: Tokyo Station Hotel further renovates
- 1964: Tokaido Shinkansen Line opens
- 1972: Seibu Line opens
- 1986: The Illumination of Tokyo Station Marunouchi Building starts
- 1988: Tokyo Station Gallery opens
- 1995: Chuo Line elevated platform opens
- 2000: Establishment of exceptional floor area ratio districts
- 2001: The Research Committee for Regeneration and Improvement of the Tokyo Station Area established
- 2002: Committee for the preservation and restoration of the Tokyo Station Marunouchi Station Building established
- 2003: Tokyo Station designated as an Important Cultural Property of Japan
- 2012: Preservation and restoration of Tokyo Station completed

**Kingo Tatsuno (1854-1919)**

Kingo Tatsuno was a first-generation student of the Technical College of the Imperial University (the predecessor of Tokyo University). On his return to Tokyo, he succeeded Josiah Conder to teach for 18 years at the Technical College and founded the Architectural Institute of Japan in 1886. He started his private practice in 1892.

His work features a combination of red brick and granite stone stripes with dome structures that cap a building. His most notable work includes the headquarters for the Bank of Japan (1896), which is characterized by columns of granite stones. He was a pioneer of Japanese modern architecture and undertook over 200 built works throughout the course of his career.

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1. Top above: Steel framework of the station at completion (1911). 2. Top right: On the day of opening (1914).
3. Middle left: Dome interior. Middle center: VIP waiting room. Middle right: Vaulted ceiling of dome.