This paper studies whether the post towns (shukuba) along Japan's Five Highways under the Tokugawa shogunate (1603–1868) shaped the long-run geography of organized crime. Established in the early seventeenth century as relay stations serving both official traffic and ordinary travelers, these waystations drew a transient, cash-rich crowd that sustained gambling and itinerant street vending. Such settings offered fertile ground for the bakuto (gamblers) and tekiya (fair and street peddlers), the forerunners of the modern yakuza. Linking a roster of yakuza groups to historical post-town locations, we find that municipalities containing a former post town are significantly more likely to have a yakuza presence just after World War II and that this pattern persists even to the present day. The effect is larger where Tokugawa-era authority was more fragmented, suggesting weak local law enforcement as a key mechanism. Moreover, post-town municipalities are more likely to contain a red-light district designated by the Meiji government, suggesting that official licensing of prostitution anchored the vice economy — and organized crime with it — in these municipalities.