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楽
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Mindful
Journey

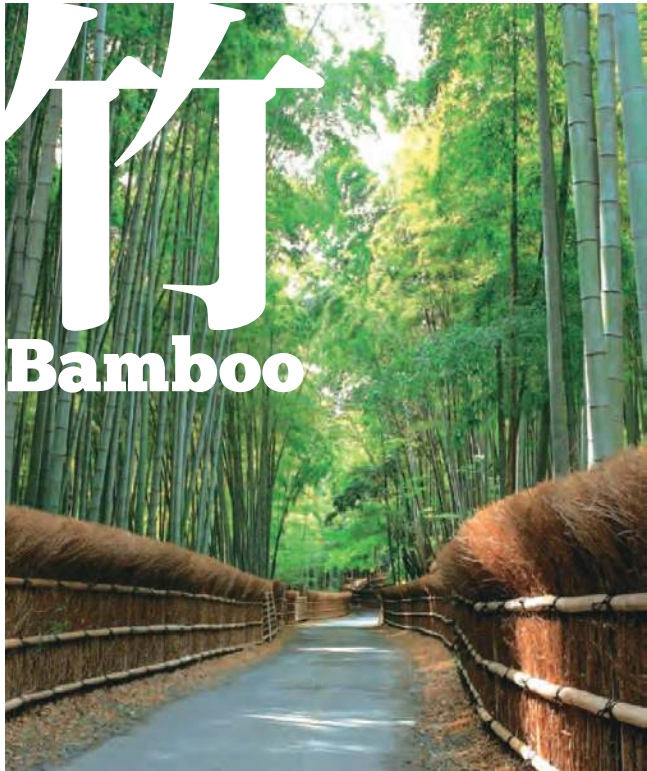


海
Sea

Encounter the Hidden Gems of
Kyoto Prefecture



森
forest



竹
Bamboo

Kyoto is bigger than you think. Beyond the iconic ancient capital on the tourist maps, there's a whole other world of wonderful hidden attractions. Enjoy Kyoto is here to help plan your travels with some amazing destinations far off the beaten path. Leave the bustle of the city, and let your spirit go where the magnificent nature, food and culture take it.



茶
Tea



Kyoto Prefecture 101

Five Regions, Endless Discoveries

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If you surveyed tourists about their reasons for visiting Kyoto, most answers would probably be something to do with experiencing traditional Japanese culture. But what about a slight change in travel perspective? Just as France has Provence and Italy has Sicily, Kyoto has its own sparkling blue seas and green-covered mountains. It's home to a diverse tapestry of deep-rooted beliefs, crafts, and industries that color the local way of life.

The prefecture can be divided into five areas. The northern part offers spectacular views of the magnificent Sea of Japan, while the central part, covered in mountains

and forests, retains the idyllic rural character of yesteryear. In the southern part, there's a pocket of thick shady bamboo groves to the west, and the bottom tip of the prefecture where leafy tea fields stretch as far as the eye can see. Then there's the city of Kyoto, the 1,200-year-old cosmopolitan urban center where your journey starts. With each area you visit, you'll encounter a new and different face of Kyoto.

The key to Kyoto's hidden gems is mindfulness. Slow down and let your spirit go where the unspoiled nature and local interactions take it. Stay at a farmhouse and join in the harvest, stroll through an old

The sea of clouds seen from Mt. Oe (Fukuchiyama City)



town where the clickety-clack of weavers at work resonates through the streets, or take a breath of fresh, tea-scented air. Engage your senses and you'll be rewarded with richer, more memorable experiences.

This issue of Enjoy Kyoto, made possible with the generous support of the Kyoto Prefectural Government and Kyoto Tourism Federation, marks the publication's revival (at least for this special edition) after a long, pandemic-induced hiatus. While you've been excited to come to Kyoto, we're excited to finally be back with you again. May your visit be a mindful one. We hope the following pages assist you on your journey.





Kyoto by the Sea

FORGING AHEAD

The Art of Sword Making in Tango

The Tango region is located on the Tango Peninsula about 100 km northwest of Kyoto. A mountainous, seaside area, it has a climate, history and culture very different to those of the “big smoke” of Kyoto, and a more relaxed, rural feel. It also boasts a thriving traditional craft scene—there’s a 1300-year-old silk textile industry and an 800-year-old papermaking tradition still going strong here—that is attracting young artisans from urban areas to set up shop here. Among them are three transplants from Tokyo who moved here to establish the Japanese sword making workshop Nippon Genshōsha.

The Japanese sword is characterized by the beautifully curved and exceptionally sharp single-edged blade (Japanese swords are said to be the sharpest in the world) made with techniques that are centuries old. The curved blade is thought to have evolved from the straight swords of the Asian continent about 900 years ago when samurai began to emerge. The shape made it easier to access to the sword while on horseback.

Interestingly, Japanese swords are considered not only weapons but also works of art. People have historically revered them for their sharpness and mystical sheen, believing that swords housed gods or spiritual powers. The warrior class also cherished their swords as “the soul of the samurai,” treating them as protectors. These traditions and tales add to the endless fascination with swords.



The sparks that fly during forging are from impurities burning off. The steel is folded and hammered up to 15 times, resulting in 32,768 (2 to the 15th power) layers.



The Three Musketeers

Nippon Genshōsha was established in 2019 in Kyōtango City by Tomoki Kuromoto, Kōsuke Yamazoe, and Tomoyuki Miyagi. All three were inspired by the samurai movies of their childhood to become swordsmiths and met as apprentices in Tokyo under one of Japan's top swordsmiths. Despite being at different stages of their training, the three became firm friends.

The workshop in Kyotango was formerly the home of Yamazoe's grandparents. Kuromoto and Miyagi had no prior connection to the region, but on discovering the area's ancient ironmaking history and a



nearby tomb from which swords were unearthed, they sensed the hand of destiny.

Tamahagane

Tamahagane, the raw material for Japanese swords, is an extremely pure type of steel made from Japan's unique iron sand.

The decision to establish a workshop together was motivated by the belief that one person could not singlehandedly pass on the art of swordsmithing to the next generation. Three swordsmiths are better than one, so to speak, when it comes to taking on new challenges. Currently, they are each tackling sword making in their own unique way while opening the workshop to the public and exploring the possibilities of swords as objects of art—they currently offer stunning pieces consisting of a sword suspended in a sleek resin panel. One senses the ambition in this next generation of sword makers.



Tomoki
Kuromoto



Kōsuke
Yamazoe



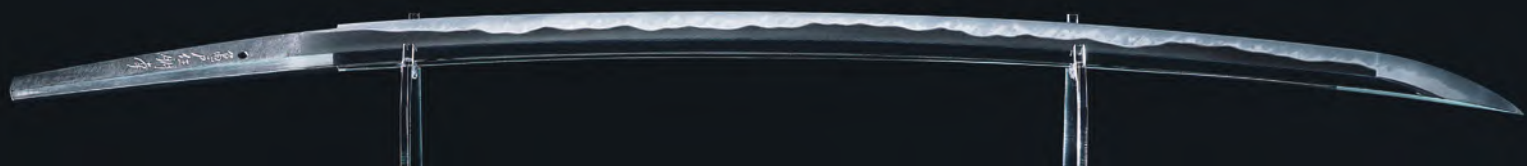
Tomoyuki
Miyagi

Nippon Genshōsha

gensho.jpn.com

Address: 京丹後市丹後町三宅314

For workshop tours, apply at:
www.veltra.com/en/asia/japan/kyoto/a/172363
For crafting experiences, contact Kyoto by the Sea DMO
(visit@uminokyo.jp)



Sword

A Japanese sword crafted by Tomoki Kuromoto. The distinctive blade pattern was a signature technique of his master. To better appreciate a sword, take note of ❶ the overall appearance, ❷ the edge pattern (*hamon*), and ❸ the visible surface pattern of the steel (*jigane*). Detailed explanations are also provided during the workshop tours.

In a Blazing Fire

Opening the door of the forge, we were struck by the dimly lit interior and roaring pine charcoal fire. On the day we visited we observed *tanren*, a critical process in the roughly 15 steps of sword making. *Tanren* or forge folding involves heating a special type of steel called tamahagane, which is repeatedly pounded with large hammers and folded to remove impurities from the steel and maximize its strength and toughness.

The person managing the flame, called a *yokoza*, acts as the leader (on this day it was Kuromoto). He extracts the red-hot *tamahagane*, heated to 1300 degrees, out of the flame and taps it lightly with a small hammer, after which the other two standing across from him take turns to swing their hammer and pound the *tamahagane*, sending sparks flying with a resounding clang each time.

The *yokoza* is constantly checking the color and sound of the *tamahagane* and intervenes as neces-



sary using the small hammer to indicate where and with what degree of force the next blow should land. This is fascinating to watch as the sound and rhythm of the hammers varies each time.

The sword-making process continues over several days. There's a process that involves wrapping the harder steel we saw today around softer steel, which contributes to the sharpness and durability of the blade. This is followed by *hizukuri*, shaping the sword with a single hammer, and *yaki-ire*, a process that further enhances sharpness by heating the blade to 800 degrees before quenching it in cold water.

Miyagi explains, "I want to create a strong and beautiful sword that uplifts the spirit of the person who holds it." He especially considers *hizukuri* an important moment of "quiet reflection between the sword and oneself."



Edge of Perfection

We had the opportunity to hold a sword ourselves on our visit. It was profoundly heavy to hold, and we could feel ourselves tense. The brilliant, gleaming sword was entirely captivating, a perfect form with not a single unnecessary element and the exquisite wave-like edge pattern characteristic of the Japanese sword. Our initial fear of holding it was replaced by an intense sense of emotion. The swordsmith's single-minded honing of their skills and mind and their relentless pursuit of beauty and functionality all made sense.

Nippon Genshōsha offers several ways in which you can experience the wonders of sword making—something everyone should do at least once in their lifetime! Choose from shorter experiences such as a forge tour, sword appreciation and knife making or full-day and two-day options. Understand Japanese swords and you'll have a greater understanding of Japan itself.



Kyoto by the Sea

PARANOMAD

The new “weave” in the ancient art of textiles

There’s a lot of buzz around “craft tourism” and the ability it gives you to dig deep into the culture of the place you’re visiting. As we saw on pages 4-5, the Tango area on the Sea of Japan has some centuries-old handicraft industries that are inextricably linked to its environment and history. It’s the largest producer of silk fabrics in the country, boasting a 60% share of the kimono fabric industry, and home to the studios of world-renowned artists, so the whole area is something of “textile village.” Workshops are increasingly opening their doors to visitors, making Tango a great destination for the craft or fashion lover.

Miho Harada, owner of textile brand Paranomad, is one of the emerging artists in the area. Also a creator of interior textiles and fashion items, Harada opened a factory-cum-showroom in Yosano-chō at the base of the Tango Peninsula in 2023. She named it Mado, meaning “window” in English. “I wanted it to be a portal through which visitors from both Japan and overseas could connect with the weaving culture and the way of life of the Tango I love so much,” explains Harada, who offers workshop tours, weaving experiences and a place to interact with local artisans, as well as being an enthusiastic promoter of the region.

The allure of Tango weaving culture

“Textiles are like sculpture,” says Harada, who says that her journey on this path in life began with a desire to make one-of-a-kind curtains that could transform a space all on their own. Harada’s background is in sculpture, which she studied at a post-graduate level before becoming an interior coordinator and then an assistant to a happening modern sculptor. She spent some time wandering about abroad and finally moved to Tango in 2015, where her now matured experiences and thoughts lead her to pursue textile art that could have a place in everyday life. She started by visiting weaving factories while working a “day job,” and honed her skills at a training school for weavers. Harada recalls the emotion of her first visit to a workshop. “I had thought that art and the textile industry were separate things, but I soon realized that that’s not the case. I was profoundly moved by the incredible level of skill cultivated by generations of craftspeople over hundreds of years, the artisans’ passion and pride, and the beauty and originality of the textiles created from that. The atmosphere in the factory with the



Miho Harada

Owner of textile factory Paranomad, Harada is a textile creator who also writes about the weaving, culture and lifestyle of the Tango area. In this picture, she holds a recent work dubbed “nomadic textile.” The picture at the bottom of the opposite page shows the “Chirimen Silk Road” near Harada’s workshop built in the golden age of silk textile production in the area. Harada recommends visiting the charming merchants’ houses and textile mills.



Paranomad's Workshop and Creations



well-used looms all standing in row gave me goosebumps. That was the moment when I made up my mind that I wasn't only going to make my own work, but that also I wanted to promote the skills and thoughts of the artisans."

Adding a touch of playfulness to everyday textiles

Harada's workshop is in the storeroom of a renovated weaving factory. The studio contains an old-fashioned wooden loom and a towering modern Rapier loom machine that she takes advantage of the respective characteristics of in her creations. Harada chooses to work mainly with cotton and linen because it can be easily used in everyday life. One is struck by the original use of color and texture in her works and the interesting artistic expressions she achieves through the combination of weaving and the various effects she applies by hand afterward.

On one of the pieces we saw, Harada had created a collage using scrap thread ends from the weaving process, which she then felted with a needle punch to create a

fluffy a three-dimensional look. Another, which she had just completed, was a warm beige blanket stole named "nomadic textile" designed to look like a piece of fabric you'd find "somewhere, sometime." The thickish fabric has a soft, plump texture that feels amazing to the touch that is the result of using a loosely twisted organic cotton yarn for the weft. She then printed a design on the fabric using an Indian woodblock technique, which further brings out the pattern of the weave. The ever-creative Harada is also apparently in the process of designing textiles for metaverse spaces, and we hear that the older weavers in the district love her original creations.

You can look forward to some unique weaving experiences incorporating mindfulness that Harada plans to offer in the workshop. We suggest pairing your visit with some relaxing local sightseeing, checking out some of the other workshops in the area, or feasting on the fresh local seafood. The texture and warmth of weaving is something that can only be appreciated in person, and understanding the land and breathing the air that has nurtured this exquisite art will make it all the more meaningful.

Chirimen Silk Road, Yosano-chō

1. Curtain with a beautiful watermark-like motif
- 2,7. A colorful hand-woven stole with a pop of fluorescent pink
3. A scene from the joint craft exhibition "Dialogue"
4. Bag with an intricate lace-like pattern
5. A collage made on fabric using upcycled thread scraps from the weaving process
6. Cushions with stripes created with various types of textiles
8. A light stole woven from linen and cotton
9. The workshop gift corner selling local crafts and foods

(Photos 1, 3, 4-6, 8 courtesy of Paranomad)

PARANOMAD

paranomad.net

Instagram @PARANOMAD

Address: 与謝郡与謝野町加悦185-1 MADO

For tours and experiences, inquire via the contact form on the studio website.





Kyoto by the Sea

Emerald Escapes

Discover Kyoto's Coastal Paradise

Known affectionately as "Kyoto by the Sea," the northern part of Kyoto Prefecture is defined by the stunning coastline scenery that is one of its most alluring attractions. With dramatic cliffs and calm inlets, breathtaking views await. Visitors to Kyōtango City in the northern part of the Tango Peninsula, which juts out into the Sea of Japan, will find beaches with sparkling white sands and clear emerald-green waters just like a tropical resort, all within a couple of hours of downtown Kyoto.

This area is part of the UNESCO San'in Kaigan Geopark, preserving a dynamic geological heritage that dates back 2,500 years to when the Japanese archipelago split from the Eurasian continent. Fifteen unique beaches unfold along its varied coastline.

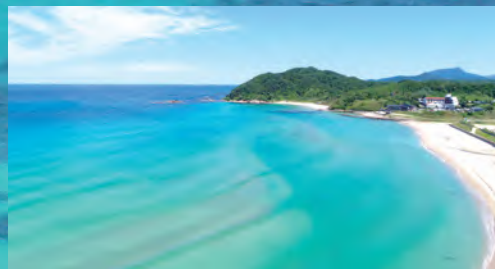
Take a long bike ride or drive and feel the kiss of the sea breeze, or go for a swim in the ocean. Perhaps you'd like to try surfing with a local guide or a mini adventure through some of the coastal inlets on a SUP (stand-up paddleboard). There are also 40 hot springs sources (the greatest number in any one location in the prefecture) here as a result of ancient volcanic activity, so put some spa-hopping on your itinerary as well. Now let's explore six of the area's most scenic beaches.

Byōbuiwa Rock, Kyōtango City



① Yūhigaura

Known for beautiful sunsets. Visit during the magic hour to experience the breathtaking sight of the shimmering gold shoreline and the glowing orange and blue hues of the sea and sky. There's a 5-meter-high wooden beach swing called Yurari, making it a popular spot for an impressive Instagram snap. Nearby Kyōtango 135°EAST offers surfing and SUP experiences. You'll also find Yūhigaura Onsen here and plenty of beachside accommodation options.



② Hacchō-hama

A beautiful arched white sandy beach with shallow, emerald-green waters. Hacchō-hama is also popular as a surf spot due to the powerful waves that hit this area. There's a grassy park in front of the beach, so it's ideal for families with children.



③ Kotohiki-hama

A scenic spot with 1.8 km of white sand and green pines, known as one of Japan's best "singing sands" beaches. Walking on the sand produces a charming squeaking sound due to the friction of the quartz in the sand. It was made the world's first non-smoking beach because clean sand is necessary for the sand to "sing." Look for the small open-air hot spring on the beach.



④ Tateiwa and Nochiga-hama

For those who enjoy both dynamic landscapes and beaches, Nochiga-hama is the place to go. You'll find this area of outstanding natural beauty near a 20m-high, single giant volcanic rock called Tateiwa. The nearby hot spring Hashiudo-sō is popular for its outdoor baths with views of Tateiwa. The neighboring **Sunagata Beach (MAP ⑤)** boasts crystal-clear marine blue seas on a sunny day and gentle shallow waters perfect for playing on the shore.



⑥ Kyūso Beach

A small beach, but incredibly clear water. Visitors can also tour secret caves with a local guide on an SUP. The wide, open views as you paddle across the water are like nothing else! Afterwards, relax at the nearby hot spring Ukawa Onsen.

To book a SUP tour, contact Kyoto by the Sea DMO (visit@uminokyoto.jp)





Woodland Kyoto

Hozugawa River Boat Ride

What you didn't know
about Kyoto's most scenic river cruise

The timeless flow of a river that connects the forest and the city

Just west of Kyoto City, the Hozugawa River flows eastward through 16 km of rocky rapids cutting through magnificent mountain scenery. For 1,200 years, skilled boatmen have braved these waters, originally on lumber rafts floated from northern forests and later on narrow wooden boats carrying items such as rice, barley, and coal. These practical journeys of goods were the origins of the region's downstream boat transportation.

In the late 19th century, when

samurai sheathed their swords and Japan embraced modernity, transportation circumstances changed drastically. Trains became the lead players in material transportation and demand for boat services rapidly disappeared. Still, the impressive seasonal scenery of the beautiful Hozugawa Gorge created fresh demand for sightseeing boat trips. They started in 1895 and continue today.

Of course, in the olden days, there was no easy way to return the boats to the start of the river course after they arrived downstream. The captain would remain on board while men on the riverbanks used ropes to pull the boat back upstream against the current. This difficult undertaking took 5 hours, meaning that there were few rides each day, and because the

boat ride was about as expensive as a hotel suite, most customers were wealthy foreigners.

Some of these high society guests proved a surprising source for

boosting the boat ride's popularity; a number of members of the British royal family enjoyed the ride, one going so far as to say, "Number one is Mount Fuji, number two is the Hozugawa River Boat Ride." The ride is also mentioned in Edward the Prince of Wales's records of his visit in 1922. It would seem this exciting river activity left quite an impression on the royal visitors on their trips to Japan.





The roles and ranks of the three crewmen

The Hozugawa River cruise boats are crewed by three people who each have specific roles. The person who stands at the bow holding a long pole that is pushed against rocks to protect the boat from a collision is called a *sao-sashi*, a pole thruster. The rower that sits toward the front of the boat is called a *kai-hiki*, (an oar puller). Sitting at the very rear of the boat, steering it, is the captain, or *kaji-mochi*, (the rudder holder).

The role of the rower, sitting in the middle, is the easiest, and crew members who go on to become captains must first master this job. After gaining experience in this role, they are eventually allowed to become a *sao-sashi*. The *sao-sashi* is responsible for fine changes of course and propulsion, and with careful timing must thrust the pole into large rocks and dangerous hollows in the riverbed. For that reason, to become a fully qualified *sao-sashi*, the person has to memorize all the points where they must thrust the pole from the start of the journey to the end. It takes about another two years after that to become a captain. Without the approval of his

superiors, a *kaji-mochi* will not even be allowed to practice. That is because the rudder determines more than 90% of the boat's movements, making this position a very important one that holds the passengers' lives in its hands. The points where the rudder needs to be turned are all predetermined. Boat captains memorize all of them and apply years of experience to finely adjust the angle of the rudder in response to the volume of water and weather conditions on each particular day.



Buoyed by the public after tragedy strikes

Despite this strict training, an accident occurred in March 2023 when a boat collided with rocks after the most difficult rudder manoeuvre of the ride was unsuccessful. When the captain fell into the river, another crew member went to the back of the boat to try to regain control, but the furiously flowing water made it impossible. The boat was rocked from side to side and eventually overturned. The boatmen and all the passengers were thrown into the river. All the passengers were rescued, but two of the crew died in the process.

Hiroshi Kawarabayashi has been a boatman for almost 30 years and was in a nearby boat when the accident happened. At first, he had no idea what was happening, as this was the first time such an incident had occurred. "In that moment, I saw a person who

was saved by a crewman that did not survive," he remembers. "Later, even that person said they hoped the Hozugawa River Boat Ride would not end because of the accident. Rather, a lot of people have been telling us that they are glad to see that the rides are up and running again. Crew like myself are always prepared that we could die, but, as we have been advised by the water safety society, firmly protecting ourselves also protects the lives of our customers. That has been newly impressed upon me."

Further safety precautions have been implemented since the accident. Ropes have been installed inside the boat to prevent the crew from falling overboard, and life jackets with an even greater degree of safety have also been introduced. Due to this, children less than 80 cm in height and people

whose bodies exceed the stipulation are no longer able to join the boat ride. Since the accident, the depth of the water level at which the boat rides are called off has been reduced, and safety explanations in English are now carried out before departure.



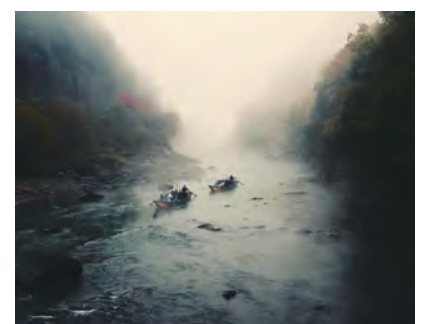
Hiroshi Kawarabayashi,
Hozugawa River boatman



A boatman's favorite scenery

Cherry blossoms in springtime, the fresh greenery of the gorge in summer, reddened leaves in fall and snow in winter—the Hozugawa River Boat Ride lets customers simultaneously enjoy both an exciting activity and the beauty of the season. Now that this

world-famous sightseeing boat has become a popular item on foreign tourists' itinerary, the number of crew members who can share greetings and simple conversation in English is increasing. For guests wondering when is the best season to visit, one veteran boatman unexpectedly recommends cruising in the fog. The land around Kameoka, where the boat departs, is famous for morning fog from fall through winter. The boat sets off in thick mist, but the view suddenly clears as the fog lifts. This mystical moment offers a new way in which to enjoy the magic of the Hozugawa River cruise. The local boatmen invite you to come enjoy the ride no matter the season, for they know this beautiful river never disappoints.



Hozugawa River Boat Ride

Please confirm the ticket and timetable information on the Hozugawa River Boat Ride official website
www.hozugawakudari.jp

Tickets: adults 6,000 yen, elementary school students and younger 4,500 yen

Access: An 8-min walk from Kameoka station on the JR Sagano line





Woodland Kyoto

NATURAL WHETSTONE AND HONE MUSEUM

**Natural Whetstone:
The Unsung Hero of Japanese Culture**

A glimpse into prehistoric times in ancient Kyoto

In recent years, Japanese knives have become popular worldwide. How then did Japan develop such a refined craft of bladesmithing? One factor may be that it's one of the few places on earth where natural whetstones and hones ("whetstones" from here on in this article), or grindstones for sharpening tools, are found.

Experts believe that the abundance and wide variety of exceptionally fine whetstones are what led to the creation of swords, kitchen knives, high-quality plane blades, and carving knives. These tools in turn enabled the construction of beautiful, delicate wooden architecture and the art of Japanese cuisine which highlights the natural flavors of seasonal ingredients, thus contributing to

the refinement and sophistication of the country's culture as a whole. In other words, whetstones have played a little-recognized yet crucial role in shaping Japanese culture, or so says Aki Tanaka, Director of the Natural Whetstone and Hone Museum in Kameoka, Kyoto. Tanaka is such an enthusiast of whetstones, she made Kameoka her home to pursue her passion.

According to Tanaka, it is worth noting that Kameoka is a special region where a steady supply of natural whetstones are mined. The stones are also of unusually high-quality as a consequence of the way in which

the Japanese archipelago was formed. More than 250 million years ago in the Triassic period, volcanic ash and clay were deposited on the seafloor far away from the Pangaea supercontinent at a mind-numbing one millimeter every 1,000 years. These sediments were carried on an oceanic plate, migrating at a speed of a few centimeters per year. As they approached Japan, which was still connected to the Asian continent at the time, the

finely grained mud that had deposited on the seafloor over the years was scraped off at the plate boundary and piled up into a mountain-like formation, eventually becoming whetstone. The location where the formation surfaced happens to be in present-day Kameoka and the rest of the Tamba Highlands.



Natural Whetstone and Hone Museum

www.tennentoishikan.com/en/
(Click on "Experience" for workshop reservations)

Address: 亀岡市宮前町神前長野15 森のステーションかめおか1階

Open: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Closed: Monday to Wednesday and New Year holidays

Admission: Free (Workshops are fee-based)

Access: A 7-minute bus ride on the Keihan Kyoto Kotsū Bus from JR Chiyokawa Station to the "Kameoka-shi Koryū Kaikan" bus stop





The whetstones that refined Japanese culture

Natural whetstones are categorized into three types—coarse, medium, and fine—based on the grain size which determines the stone's abrasive ability. While coarse and medium-grit whetstones with rougher surfaces can be found in various places, the raw material for fine whetstones is mainly produced in the Tamba Highlands. Let's look into some examples of how rare, high-quality natural whetstones have influenced Japanese culture.

The Partner of Wooden Architecture

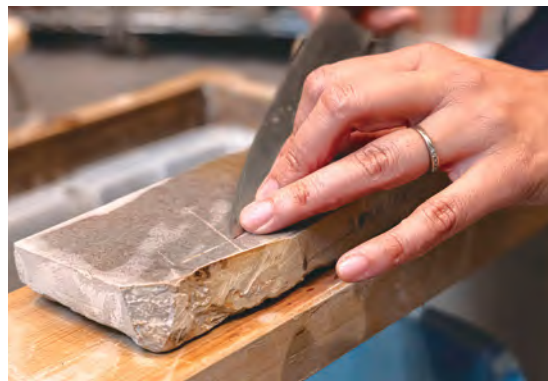
Japan is home to numerous examples of elaborate wooden architecture such as Horyū-ji temple, the world's oldest wooden building. In order to create such sophisticated structures, one needs appropriately advanced carpentry tools. Due to the beautiful, smooth luster that plane blades sharpened with natural whetstones produce on wood surfaces, natural whetstones were indispensable in building shrines, temples, and traditional *sukiya-zukuri* houses. Even today, specialist carpenters involved in repairing and rebuilding traditional shrines and temples work with tools sharpened with natural whetstones. Furthermore, since it is difficult to find whetstones that are compatible for each blade, carpenters



would always go on a search for their tool's "partner" whenever they make a new one.

The Companion to Japanese Cuisine

Renowned chefs of Japanese cuisine also use natural whetstones to sharpen the knives that play a key role in creating delicate flavors and textures. For instance, there are specific knives for meat, vegetables, and fish, and among fish knives, there are different types for cutting and trimming fish, slicing sashimi, and for handling blowfish, eel, and pike conger respectively. With Japan stretching such a great distance from north to south and having four distinct seasons, it is blessed with a diverse array of natural sources of food. Some believe that this variety of kitchen knives was developed to carve out every last piece of nature's bounty without letting any go to waste.



The Comrade of the Japanese Sword

In recent years, synthetic whetstones have also become popular, but natural fine-grit whetstones are still imperative for finishing Japanese swords. The desired glisten and distinctive wave pattern that a natural whetstone gives the blade cannot be achieved with an artificial alternative. Swords not only served as deadly weapons, but also symbolized the samurai spirit and were a sacred object used in rituals and ceremonies, so it was of utmost importance that they display a sense of divine beauty and radiance. The significant role Kameoka's natural whetstones played in this sense is just one more way in which these unsung heroes have underpinned Japanese culture.



Explore the beauty yourself

The Natural Whetstone and Hone Museum in Kameoka is home to a wide collection of natural whetstones and provides a hands-on learning experience. It features an installation which replicates a natural whetstone mining site, displays of various carpentry tools, kitchen knives, swords and more, as well as whetstones from around the world. You might just find one from your own country! Incredibly, entry to this fascinating museum is free.

The museum also offers whetstone-related workshops for a fee. You can try your hand at knife sharpening with over 200 different whetstones or make

your own. A museum tour is also available for an in-depth learning experience on whetstones and the practice of using blades. You will be surprised to find how smooth a razor-sharp knife can cut through ingredients!

In the museum shop, visitors can purchase natural whetstones from Kameoka and around Japan, which make a highly practical souvenir for a cookery-loving friend or a perfect treat for yourself after sharpening your skills in the workshop.



If your appetite has been "whet" for something to eat, head to the second-floor restaurant for a medicinal meal prepared with freshly harvested local vegetables by the neighborhood mothers. The gentle, nourishing dishes are a welcome change for the stomach if you have been indulging day after day in ramen or yakiniku. The warm hospitality of the ladies has earned them the nickname of "angels" among diners.



Kyoto Tea Country

A Sip of Mastery

Uji's Exquisite Roasted Matcha Revolution



If you're going to a café in Kyoto, you really must order matcha, the globally popular superfood. That's because Kyoto is home to Japan's leading high-grade matcha production area, the Yamashiro district in the southern part of the prefecture. For an authentic matcha adventure, make your way down to where the tea is always fragrant and flavorsome.

One of the things that makes a visit to the Yamashiro region so enjoyable is that there are always new twists on traditional green tea happening, like the current local favorite, roasted matcha. Lighter and eminently drinkable like coffee, it's more than just a matcha drink but a true innovation. What's more, it comes from a workshop that has been making beautiful *kumihimo* braids (more about them later) for 76 years, and so offers visitors the chance for a unique matcha experience and to learn about Kyoto craftsmanship at the same time.



Matcha Roastery

matcharoastery.com

Address 宇治市宇治妙楽146
Open 10:00 am – 5:30 pm (last orders at 5pm)

Showen Kumihimo

www.showen.co.jp

Address 宇治市宇治妙楽146-2
Open 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Access: A 5-min walk from Uji station on the JR Nara line, a 9-min walk from Uji station on the Keihan Uji line

In search of everyday matcha

So, what’s special about roasted matcha? Served at Matcha Roastery café, the drink, called “Roast Matcha,” feels like a hybrid between matcha and coffee. It’s revolutionary because owner Hitoshi Kaji has succeeded in adding a roasted feel to what is normally a fresh, bright-greenish and astringent drink. Kaji is also the CEO of Showen Kumihimo. He renovated the house where he was born and raised, a traditional Japanese-style building in Uji, renowned as the home of matcha, and opened the café there in spring 2023 near the workshop.



The goal was to create a matcha that can be drunk several times a day casually, from a mug. Raised by parents who ran the *kumihimo* workshop, he left Japan for the US where he studied, worked, and ran an IT venture busi-

ness for 35 years in total. “You might wonder why one would enter the tea business from a completely different industry,” says Kaji, “but as someone born and raised in Uji, I wanted to be the bridge across which the tea we’re so proud of here is sent out as another new venture to the world.”

According to Kaji, matcha as a casual beverage has yet to catch on as much as it is used as an ingredient in confectionery and lattes. One reason is that its use is primarily in tea ceremonies. But more than that, since matcha is simply ground tea leaves mixed with water, one is essentially ingesting leaves directly. While it has excellent health benefits, the concentrated flavor and high caffeine content make it difficult to consume in large quantities.

Kaji looked for hints in the coffee culture he’d experienced in the United States. In the late 80s, dark French roasts captivated consumers and



swept the market. Third-wave coffee ignited interest in the terroir of coffee from various production regions. He realized that the roasting might hold the key to reducing bitterness and caffeine and creating a new taste and smoother drink.

Of course, he paid careful attention that roasting should not spoil the fundamental flavor. After two years of trial and error, three types of roasted matcha were ready to be shared with consumers. The light roast, green in color, has a refreshing flavor with a faint roasted aroma as an accent. The darker roasts, meanwhile, combine a deep roasted flavor with the umami of matcha. They’re all less strong and lower in caffeine than traditional matcha so make the perfect refreshment for quenching your thirst on your travels.



The three types of roasted matcha powder. Matcha Roastery uses only the the first harvested *tencha* tea leaves, from long-established Uji tea merchant Horii Shichimeien, which are roasted and ground with a stone mill in-house to finish.



The Timeless Beauty of Braided Cord

After enjoying your time in the café, stroll next door to Showen Kumihimo. *Kumihimo* are traditional Japanese decorative cords made by interlacing variously dyed silk threads. Their beauty lies in the unique luster of the silk and the exquisite woven patterns. Historically they have been used for tying up Buddhist scriptures and decorating samurai armor and swords. Kaji explains, “We take pride in

the high quality and wide range of our products that are possible because we do everything from dyeing the threads to manufacturing and finishing in-house.” In the shop, you’ll find a variety of products, from traditional kimono *obijime* sash-belt to smartphone straps, keyholders, shoelaces, and business card holders, all featuring colorful and modern designs for everyday use.

With an advance booking, you can

also experience making *kumihimo*. You move the threads, which are tied to wooden weights, in sequence to work them into a cord, which the staff will make into your own original phone strap, charm or bracelet to take home. The gentle sound of wooden beads clacking together in the tranquil room makes the whole experience pleasingly meditative.



Reservations are required for hands-on experience via the website at least one week in advance. The cost is 2500 yen per person, with the experience lasting from 30 minutes to 1 hour. Sessions are at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm.





Kyoto Tea Country

Kizugawa

A Treasure Trove of Ancient Buddha Statues

Next, we head to Kizugawa City on the southern-most edge of Kyoto Prefecture. This pretty corner of Kyoto is home to the picturesque scenery of the Kizu River flowing through rolling, green mountains. It borders Nara Prefecture which, as the location of the capital in ancient times, has a history even longer than that of Kyoto. The Kizugawa area itself was home to the capital Kuni-kyō for 3 years from 740 and so was, albeit briefly, the center of the country at one point. After the capital moved to present-day Kyoto, Kizugawa continued to play an important role as a water and road transportation corridor between the old and new capitals. The area has a rich legacy of beautiful Buddhist statues, architectural assets and a variety of other government-designated cultural treasures, making it a magnificent destination to experience both nature and history.



1. Principal Buddha statue and Four Guardian Kings, Gansen-ji
2, 3. Charming carvings on the stone Buddha path
4. Main Hall, Jōruri-ji



Kizugawa city and the site of the former Kuni-kyō palace as seen from Kaijūsen-ji temple

Kaijūsen-ji and the Site of an Ancient Palace

Many of Kizugawa’s historic temples are in the hilly Kamo area in the eastern part of the city. The closest station is JR Kamo station, which is about 1 hour from Kyoto City or 15 minutes from Nara station. Japan Rail Pass holders can take advantage of free travel there with the pass.

We recommend starting at the 735-year-old Kaijūsen-ji temple. Nestled midway up the mountain overlooking Mikanohara, the site of the former capital, the temple has a vermillion five-storied pagoda that makes for a striking sight against the mountainscape behind. The main deity of the temple is an eleven-faced Kannon Bosatsu believed to save sentient beings, and the statue of it dates from around the 10th century. The public can view it each spring and autumn as part of a special exhibition of the temple’s “hidden statues” (the name given to statues not usually publicly displayed), including the colorful “Four Guardian Kings.” Kaijūsen-ji is a one-hour walk from Kamo Station. The road is steep so consider taking a taxi up and saving your legs for a leisurely downhill walk back. There’s a grassy clearing where the Kuni-kyō palace was located that is



worth a stop at on the way down.

If you’re interested in hidden statues, insiders hail the exquisite one at Genkō-ji temple about 3kms southeast of Kaijūsen-ji. Little is known of the origins of the temple—only a rustic-looking hall remains today—but the main deity is a rare seated eleven-faced Kannon (Goddess of Mercy) estimated to have been made in the 13th century which is on display to the public for just a few days each year during a special opening. The statue is thought to be the work of a famous group of Buddhist sculptors, suggesting the temple was once one of some significance in the faith.



5. On the stone Buddha path
6. Five-storied Pagoda, Kaijūsen-ji
7. Nine Amida Nyorai statues, Jōruri-ji

Hiking to Paradise

The Kamo area is a great place for enjoying beautiful Buddhist statues while hiking through the leafy mountain trails. Centuries ago, monks eschewing the secularization of Buddhism and noise of the city fled the capital Nara on the other side of the mountains for this secluded sanctuary where they could practice their faith in peace. Their huts eventually developed into temples, and today two such historic temples remain still quietly marking the passage of time.

First is Gansen-ji temple, which can be reached in about 15 minutes by bus from JR Kamo station. It was founded in 729 and is famous for the gorgeous flowers that bloom in the grounds on the mountainside slope each season. If you’re visiting in early summer, you’ll enjoy the spectacular sight of 5,000 hydrangeas in full bloom. In the main hall there’s a 3-meter-tall Amida Nyorai Buddha statue carved from a single piece of wood which you can see close up.

From Gansen-ji, there’s a relatively easy mountain path—it should take about 50 minutes to hike—with some delightful 700-year-old carvings of Buddhas in the walls and on stones along the way. Be ready

to be charmed by the affable smiling Buddha, Amida triad, sleeping Buddha and their pals.

Your goal is Jōruri-ji temple. Founded in 1047, it’s set in peaceful, green grounds centered around a large lake. On the east side where the sun rises is a three-storied pagoda dedicated to Yakushi Nyorai, the Buddha of “this world” who heals illness and eradicates disasters (the statue of which is only shown to the public on the 8th of each month, and only if the weather is fine).

Meanwhile, in the main hall across the lake on the west side where the sun sets, the next life is represented by Amida Nyorai, the Buddha who presides over the Pure Land where Buddhists believe they go after dying. The hall also contains an impressive set of nine gold Amida Nyorai statues sitting in a row that are designated national treasures.

The gentle breeze through the garden and the chirping of the birds make this place feel as if it really is some kind of heavenly land. One suspects there could be no better reward from this mini “pilgrimage” through the Kizugawa mountains than to sit here soaking in this peaceful paradise.





Kyoto Otokuni Bamboo Grove

The Sustainable Beauty of Bamboo

Charming Souvenirs from the Forest

The bamboo groves of Kyoto rank together with Mount Fuji and cherry blossoms as scenery that represents Japan. The fresh, green leaves swaying in the breeze and the sudden pleasant silence create an experience that make you feel “This is Kyoto.” It also makes beautiful, Kyoto-grown bamboo the perfect thing to take home as souvenirs. To the southwest of Kyoto City, in Nagaokakyō, is Takano Chikkō, a studio that grows bamboo and makes it into modern handicrafts. The gentle warmth, flexible strength and speedy growth of bamboo have boosted its reputation as a superlative material. It can also add a touch of everyday elegance to your home.



Bamboo's Long Journey from Forest to Workshop

The Japanese people's relationship with bamboo is a deep one. Since before the common era, bamboo native to Asia has been used in various forms in daily life here, including baskets, farm tools, and building materials. It has also been widely used for tea utensils, playing a key role in maintaining Japan's traditional culture. Takano Chikkō carries on this tradition today. The founder, who was an artisan of tea utensils, established it in 1968 in the Otokuni area, which for a thousand years has been known as a source of quality bamboo.

"In order to make the finest products, we start with the raw material, which is bamboo." This is the philosophy of Takano Chikkō, which manages a bamboo grove within Nagaokakyō and surrounding regions, and is committed to carrying out all production processes itself, from nurturing and harvesting the bamboo to the crafting of products. Due to the temperature difference that is characteristic of mountain basins, the Otokuni region grows thick, quality bamboo. The plant grows with such vigour that it can climb as high as 20 meters just three months after sprouting even without fertilizer or pesticides, but its quality suffers if the grove is allowed to become unkempt. The job of maintaining the groves is done by tradespeople called *kiriko*, who carefully harvest the bamboo in a way that takes into account the effect it will have on the environment in 10 or 20 years in the future and the look of the forest.

The bamboo that is best suited to Takano Chikkō's handicrafts is stalks in their fourth or fifth year of growth. It is felled in the fall, when its moisture content is lower, and it is a considerable, time-consuming task. "Bamboo is all connected by underground stems, so I have to be extremely careful to not cut the parent plant," says Higashimae, a *kiriko* and artisan of bamboo handicrafts. She harvests about 1,000 plants each year, but the high moisture content of freshly felled bamboo means it can't be used right away. It is only after it has been dried and polished that it becomes the beautiful, sturdy material that will last well into the future. 



The picture shown on p.18 is bamboo crafts from Takano Chikkō. These cups, saucers and chopsticks utilize bamboo joints, and the sake cups use its roots. The vase is made from natural bamboo that resembles a tortoise shell. Some items are colored with lacquer or with gold or silver leaf.



Takano Chikkō also reuses aged materials from old temples and tea houses to make artworks and tea ceremony utensils. It's an impressive initiative that is not only sustainable, but also carries on the memory of the buildings.

Bamboo as long as 20 m and as heavy as 30 kg is felled by *kiriko*. Because the stalks are harvested from the top of the hillside first, care must be taken to ensure the bamboo doesn't fall on lower stems.



An important step in that process is *abura-nuki*, which removes any remaining oil and moisture in bamboo that has been dried for at least two months. It produces a beautiful luster and also prevents damage from mold and insects. Higashimae rolls the long poles as she heats them over a flame and wipes the oil and moisture that appears on the surface with a cotton cloth while carefully polishing them. After this, the bamboo is sundried, then set aside for another two to five years before reaching the hands of bamboo artisans.

The Joy of Craftsmanship in Our Daily Lives

Takano Chikkō is a professional group of artisans who have various skills. Along with people who craft bamboo, there are *sashimono* carpenters who make boxes and furniture without using nails, and lacquer artists who impart color and further luster to bamboo. This means the group offers not just artistic works, but also attractive daily utensils that express elegant craftsmanship. An example of this is their chopsticks, which have a finely finished shape that makes it easy to pick up even a single grain of rice. The secret of the delicate shape is that each chopstick is heated over a flame to remove the natural bend of the bamboo.

The company also runs a shop and gallery called Chikubuen that is located on the grounds of the historic Nagaoka Tenmangū shrine. From tea ceremony utensils to tableware and accessories, all their products are available in this one building, which also offers a pleasing view of a bamboo forest through its window. All of the products feature sophisticated designs and many of them utilize the natural form of the bamboo itself. Adding to their appeal is the fact that bamboo products fit the hand even more comfortably the more they are used, which also further increases their luster. Try it yourself by discovering a piece that you would like to use for many years to come.

Shop & Gallery Chikubuen
(Takano Chikkō)
www.takano-bamboo.jp

Address: 長岡京市天神2-15-15
Open: 10 am – 5 pm on Monday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday and national holidays
Access: A 10-min walk from Nagaoka-tenjin station on the Hankyū Kyoto line

*A bamboo craft workshop is held at Chikubuen. Apply to participate via Tradi Inc. (<https://tradi-jp.com/jump/31.html>)



Kyoto Otokuni Bamboo Grove

A Sanctuary of Flowers and Water Yōkoku-ji Temple

After you've been to Chikubu-en featured on pages 18-19, we recommend spending a while longer in the area exploring another of Nagaokakyō City's gems, Yōkoku-ji temple. Dating back to 806, it was founded by Enchin, the same monk who established the famous Kiyomizu-dera. According to legend, Enchin was led away from Kiyomizu-dera by a dream, and finding a living Kannon (the Goddess of Mercy) on a rock, built the temple here to enshrine it.

Yōkoku-ji shares several similarities with Kiyomizu-dera. Both temples have a mountain location that affords spectacular views, with Kiyomizu-dera situated on the eastern edge of the Kyoto Basin and Yōkoku-ji on the western edge. Yōkoku-ji's location has earned it the name of "the Kiyomizu of the West." The beauty of the vista from the temple grounds is a source of pride for both temples.

A second commonality is that both have the Eleven-Headed Thousand Armed Kannon Bodhisattva as their principal deity. Kannon, known as the Buddha of Compassion, is often associated with water worship and is frequently enshrined in places where there's a spring of pure, clean water. Just as Kiyomizu-dera has the famous Otowa Waterfall, Yōkoku-ji has a spring called Okōzui that has been flowing for over a thousand years. This water, historically revered for its eye-healing properties, has a smooth, clear taste. One gets the sense that a sip might be an instant tonic or relieve eyes tired from staring at phones and computer screens.

Built on a mountain slope, Yōkoku-ji temple consists of a series of buildings connected by a covered walkway. The 300-year-old garden, viewed here from above, is a spectacular sight, especially during the autumn.



Reflecting Seasonal Beauty in Flowers

Yōkoku-ji has recently become a sensation for its beautiful *hana-chōzu*, or flowers floating in stone basins. “*Chōzu*” refers to a place for or the act of purifying one’s hands and mouth before worshipping at a temple or shrine. Yōkoku-ji’s head priest named the floating floral arrangements “*hana-chōzu*” after the practice of using the dew from flowers or plants (“*hana*” meaning flower) instead to purify oneself outdoors.

Though the practice of floating seasonal flowers in water basins has been around for some time, Yōkoku-ji started doing it regularly seven years ago, and its unique and beautiful arrangements have created a social media buzz. Now, temples and shrines nationwide are following suit (a search for #hanachozu on Instagram will reveal its popularity!).

Currently, there are five flower water basins within the temple grounds, featuring seasonal flowers such as cherry blossoms in spring, hydrangeas in early summer, sunflowers in midsummer, and chrysanthemums in autumn, each one a treat for the eyes of visitors. There are also vibrant arrangements for seasonal events like New Year’s and Valentine’s Day that are something of a work of art. “We hope that by viewing the flower water basins and enjoying the changing seasons, visitors will find peace of mind,” says the head priest.

Yōkoku-ji is about a 40-minute walk from the nearest bus stop (Oku-kaiinji). A convenient shuttle bus service runs directly from Hankyū-Nishiyama Tennōzan Station and JR Nagaokakyō Station on the 17th of each month when the temple holds a monthly fair. The normally private and scenic Upper Study as well as the temple’s principal Kannon statue are also open to the public on this day, so it’s ideal for leisurely immersing oneself in the rich natural surroundings of the temple grounds. When visiting Kyoto, don’t forget to put it in your diary for the 17th.



There are five water basins in the temple grounds. The floating seasonal flowers and leaves create a unique landscape.

The statue of the Kannon Bodhisattva is exhibited only on the 17th and 18th of each month. Dating from the 11th to 12th century, it is attributed with the ability to heal eye disease.

(picture courtesy of Nagaokakyō City Board of Education)



Yōkoku-ji Temple (Yanagidani Kannon)

Address: 長岡京市浄土谷堂の谷2

Open: 9 am – 5 pm (last entry at 4:30 pm)

Admission: 500 yen (700 yen during special events), free for high school students or younger



The Upper Study is open to the public only in the mornings of the 17th of each month. Used as a space for receiving dignitaries, it is opulently constructed with hinoki cypress from the nearby Nishiyama region.



Kyoto City

Chiso

A Journey of Attire

460 Years of Style and Sensibility

Centuries of Artistry

Kimono house Chiso is one of the “grand dames” of Kyō-yūzen kimono and related items. It first opened its doors in 1555 in the location in which it still stands today, some 460 years later, in the Karasuma Sanjō area.

The company started out as a maker and seller of Buddhist priests’ robes, later branching out into other Buddhist-related textile products which it supplied to the imperial household and priests with imperial and aristocratic connections.

After the imperial court relocated to Tokyo in the late 19th century, the company shifted its focus to Yūzen, (an intricate hand-dyeing technique used to create picturesque designs on fabric) and Yūzen-dyed kimono. It was to become an innovative, pioneering force in the field, creating Yūzen-dyed velvet for interior décor and commissioning

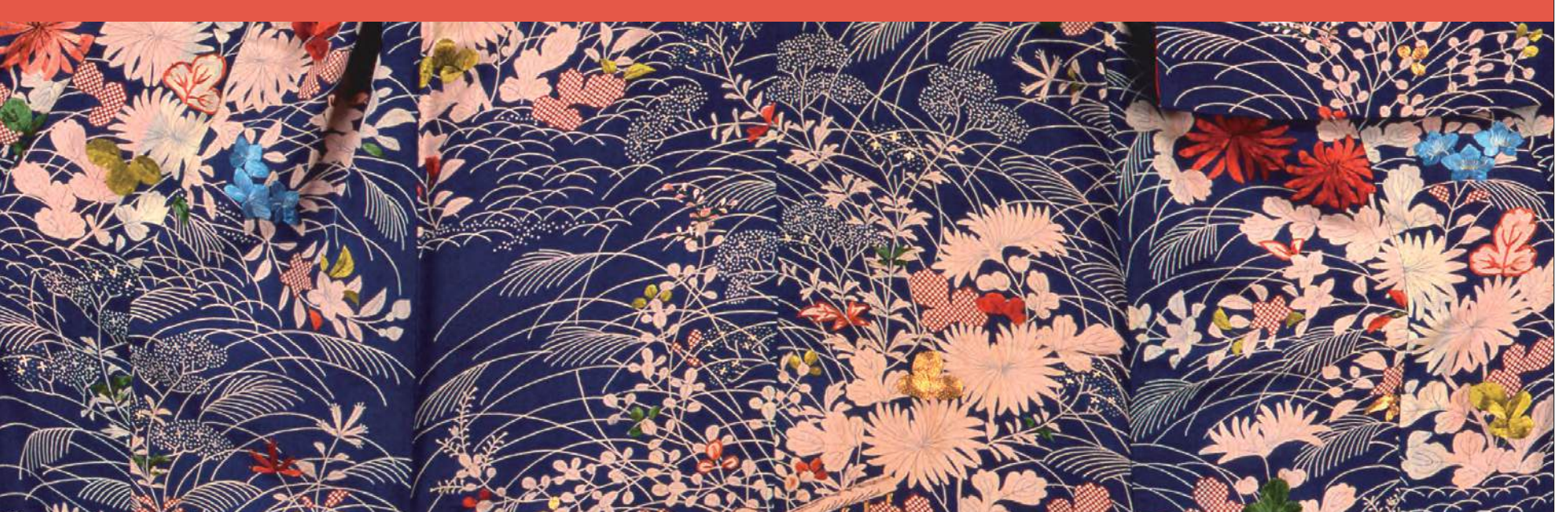
up-and-coming painters of Japan-style paintings to help create revolutionary new designs.

After World War II, Chiso evolved into a manufacturer and wholesaler of luxury kimonos that showcased the impeccable craftsmanship of the artisans. Having maintained its ties with the imperial family, the company supplied upholsteries for the Kyoto Imperial Palace and Yūzen-dyed fabric for the wedding of the then crown prince in 1959.



The flagship store for a new era

The year 2020 marked another step forward for the ever-evolving Chiso when it opened a flagship retail store in the Karasuma Sanjō location, orienting the focus of the business towards serving customers face to face. The store offers a range of services including kimonos made to order in fabric dyed to the customer’s choice of color, putting family crests and names on garments and accessories, resizing, repairs and cleaning—all with careful consultation with customers. It’s a level of care only possible with a highly skilled team of artisans and centuries of expertise. This strong foundation and unwavering commitment to innovation is precisely what has made Chiso such an admired presence for four and a half centuries.



Clothe yourself in art

But the store isn't just about traditional style; it has a whole range of items tailored to modern sensibilities and for newcomers to the world of kimono. Particularly popular are silk scarves and bags that work nicely with contemporary western outfits. There are also luxury accessories such as *obi-dome* (obi belt decorations) delicately crafted with inlaid coral and pearl shells, and a stunning collection of kimono with floral and bird motifs. Adding mens styles this spring, the brand continues to offer new and inspiring possibilities.



The Gallery at the Intersection of Tradition and Imagination

Upstairs from the retail space is a two-room gallery that is free to the public. Gallery 1 is used to exhibit items from the company's rare collection of exquisite *kosode* (short-sleeved garments that were the precursor to the modern kimono) and traditional Japanese paintings, while Gallery 2 features modern artwork. The exhibitions change quarterly with the seasons. From April, Gallery 1 will be hosting an exploration of *kosode* from the Edo period (early 17th century – late 19th century).

Chiso has also established the Institute for Chiso Arts and Culture to conduct research on these collections and numerous other valuable historical materials. The institute collaborates with universities and museums in research and archiving of historical records, as well as conducting workshops for schools. It's reassuring to know that the centuries-long legacy of kimono and dyeing culture is being passed on to future generations.



CHISO

Flagship store

Address | 京都市中京区三条通烏丸西入御倉町80番地

Open | 10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Closed | Tuesdays and Wednesdays (excl. year-end and New Year holidays)

Access | A 3-minute walk from Karasuma-Oike station on the Kyoto City Subway, or a 7-minute walk from Karasuma station on the Hankyū Kyoto line

www.chiso.co.jp/en/





Kyoto City

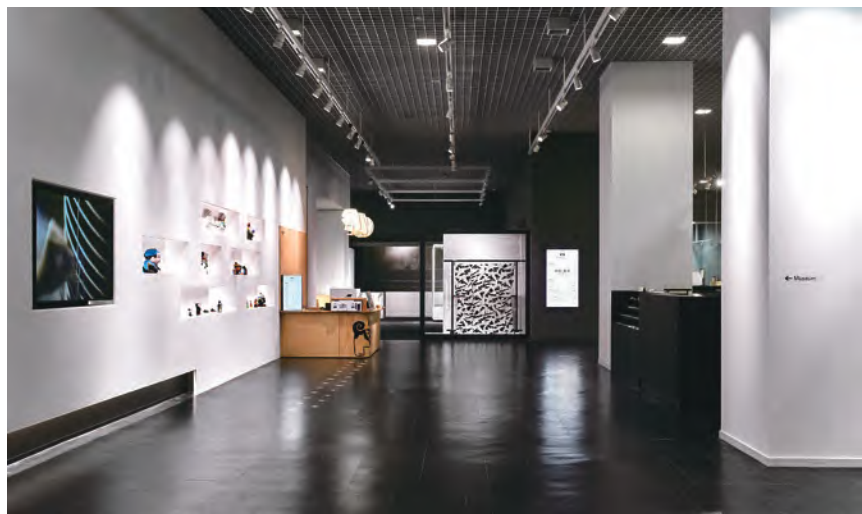


[Kyoto Museum of Crafts and Design]

A Gateway to
Kyoto's Traditional Crafts

Showcasing 74 Types of Local Crafts

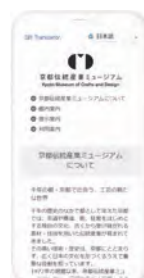
Many visitors flock to the charming Okazaki Park district to see the sprawling Heian Shrine and gardens, but the nearby Kyoto Museum of Crafts and Design is also a huge draw. This facility displays 74 types of Kyoto's traditional crafts – including textiles, woodworking, ceramics and more — through fascinating exhibits and live demonstrations. Here, visitors can appreciate the extent of Kyoto's craft heritage and learn how these beautiful items have been made for centuries. The world of *shokunin* artisans is usually inaccessible to outsiders, but at this museum, everyone is invited to gain a comprehensive understanding of what makes Kyoto's traditional craft culture so special.



Interact with Traditional Works by Hand

How these crafts are displayed is particularly notable. Following a renovation in 2020, the museum now allows visitors to touch, smell, and hear the sound that the crafts make, enabling a more immersive experience. Panels that introduce the artisans' processes and the tools they use are also on display. These tools themselves are a key part of this traditional heritage, making for an intriguing experience for the visitor.

Furthermore, for some exhibits, visitors can use their smartphones to access detailed explanations in 15 languages about the products and techniques used. This approach aims to make traditional Japanese crafts more accessible, especially for visitors from other cultures who might be unfamiliar with them.





Live Demonstrations by Artisans and Hands-on Experiences

To offer a real feel of Kyoto's traditional crafts, the museum has arranged for artisans to perform live demonstrations of their techniques daily from 10:30 am to 5:30 pm. Visitors can also participate in crafting experiences, such as painting on objects like fans and candles, without needing a reservation.



Kyoto Artisan Concierge

If you find an item you like and wish to visit the workshop where it is made, the museum offers a Kyoto Artisan Concierge service. Visitors can book a workshop tour online through the museum's website. (www.kyotoartisans.jp/en/) Whether you'd like to visit an artisan or purchase their wares, the concierge service can arrange a special visit otherwise unavailable without their assistance.



New Initiatives Towards Modern Crafts

In recent years, traditional Kyoto crafts have been attracting a growing attention from overseas, among both serious collectors and casual fans. There have been many high profile collaborations between Kyoto artisans and global luxury brands, resulting in bags and interior items that are highly sought after.

These trends represent a new era for Kyoto's Crafts. The museum has a space to showcase these items that blend traditional craftsmanship with modern lifestyles, such as bicycles decorated with lacquer, paper lantern pendant lights and a soundscape object for the home using *orin* Buddhist bell bowls.

Additionally, the museum regularly hosts exhibitions that feature works co-created by young craftspeople and artists.

A Gallery-Like Museum Shop

The on-site store sells a variety of crafts made by local artisans, including small items that make great souvenirs. Additional products are also available on the online shop, and even some artwork displayed in the museum is directly purchasable.

Supporting the artisans who create Kyoto's traditional crafts is a crucial mission of the museum. By providing a link between foreign visitors and Kyoto artisans, the museum is working towards the sustainability goal of directly supporting the local craft economy. Additionally, this helps continue the legacy of traditional craftwork that might otherwise disappear without a more global audience.

The museum invites everyone to discover the beauty of Kyoto's traditional crafts and incorporate them into their lives back home.



Kyoto Museum of Crafts and Design | kmtc.jp/en/

Address | 京都市左京区岡崎成勝寺町9番地の1 京都市勧業館みやこめっせ 地下1階 **Open** | 10:00-6:00 pm (last entry at 5:30 pm)

Admission | 500 yen, 400 yen for high school students or younger **Access** | A 10-min walk from Higashiyama station on the Kyoto City Subway Tozai line

The permanent exhibitions are free. There is a fee for the special exhibitions. Please check the website for details, including days when the museum is closed.

This is a detailed map of Kyoto, Japan, showing the city's layout, major roads, rivers, and numerous temples and shrines. The map is color-coded with green for parks and shrines, blue for rivers, and orange for major roads. A compass rose is located in the bottom left corner, and a scale bar indicates 500m. The map includes labels for various landmarks such as the Kyoto Imperial Palace, Kyoto University, and the Kyoto Museum of Crafts and Design. The map also shows the location of the Kyoto Railway Museum and the Kyoto Aquarium. The map is oriented with North at the top.



A N O T H E R K Y O T O

The destinations featured in these pages are just a selection of the unknown wonders of deep Kyoto Prefecture.
Visit the official Another Kyoto website for more ideas, and dive into untouched nature, fascinating history, and unique culture.



www.kyototourism.org/en/



making Kyoto the world's hometown ENJOY KYOTO

[エンジョイ キョウト]

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住みたくなる京都～second hometown project～をコンセプトに、海外からのゲストに京都をもっと好きになってもらうためのフリーペーパー＆WEB。



Check our website at :

www.enjoy-kyoto.net
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✉ info@enjoy-kyoto.net

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Planner: Shinya Tokumo/徳毛 伸矢

Editorial Staff

Editor-in-chief: Shinya Tokumo/徳毛 伸矢

Editor: Noriko Yamaguchi/山口 紀子

Writer: pp.4-9, 14-21 Noriko Yamaguchi/山口 紀子
pp.10-13, 22-25 Naoya Matsushima/松島 直哉

Photographer: Yūki Kimura/木村 有希
Shingo Mitsuno/三野 信吾
Naoki Matsuda/マツダ ナオキ
Takuma Ōe/大江 琢磨

Designer: Sachiko Chiken/知見 紗知子
pp.22-25 Masayoshi Katō/加藤 昌良

Translation: Yumiko Kawamoto/川元 由美子
Michaela Komine/小嶺 ミケラ
Duncan Flett/ダンカン・フレット
Kirsty Kawano/カースティ・カワノ

Editorial Supervision: Michaela Komine/小嶺 ミケラ
Terin Jackson/テレン ジャクソン
Yumiko Kawamoto/川元 由美子

Logo: Tomoko Kawao/川尾 朋子

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Advertising Staff

Creative Director: Naoya Matsushima/松島 直哉

Designer: Masayoshi Katō/加藤 昌良 (p.27)

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Contact 株式会社T-STYLE 〒602-8038 京都市上京区樫木町通油小路東入東魚屋町356-3



WARRIOR DOLLS

No matter how much things change over time, the love of parents for their children is timeless. In the Japanese tradition of the Boy's Day festival on May 5th, parents wish for the health and success of their child. These hopes are embodied in the decoration of the armor and the helmet of the ornamental dolls presented to boys during this festival. By themselves, the armor and helmet symbolize the ideals of the traditional samurai code of *bushido* - discipline and morality- which is another expression of love and aspiration for one's child.



The Ando Japanese doll shop

Ando's Doll Shop was founded in 1905 by Keizo Ando, who was the first in Kyoto to start making and promoting the spread of *yusoku-bina-*, a type of doll modeled after imperial court nobles. These dolls are to this day made in the same basic form as when the studio was founded. Keizo's son Tadao is a kitsuke-shi- a craftsman who specializes in dressing the dolls- and gives their creations a unique sense of colour and a more classic, grandiose style. Third-generation Tadahiko, as the current master of the studio, continues his family's practices and strives to elaborate on them.

Ando's Doll Shop produces samurai dolls (gogatsu ningyo) among their incredible range. Based on the established traditions of the doll artisans of Kyoto, sturdy sets of armor and magnificent helmets are created for the dolls with meticulous attention to detail by Tadahiko Ando. These striking examples of decorative art attract interest both within Japan and abroad.

桂甫作
安藤人形店

【Address】〒602-8034 京都市上京区油小路通丸太町上ル 273-2 【Phone】075-231-7466

【Access】A seven-minute walk from Marutamachi subway station 【Open】9:00am~6:00pm

【Closed】Sundays, National holidays, and the second and fourth Saturday of every month from May3 to January2
(Open every day from January3 to May2) 【Credit card】Accepted www.ando-doll.com