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REVITALIZING THE REGIONS:  
MUSEUMS AS HUBS

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THEME FOR **DECEMBER:**

**REVITALIZING THE REGIONS: MUSEUMS AS HUBS**

Japan is home to a large number of museums, and these are located in regions throughout the country. Beginning this year (2020), the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan has designated qualifying museums as regional hubs for the promotion of cultural tourism. In this month's issue, we introduce several such museums as well as the regions and cultures which they promote.

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**ON THE COVER**

Ohara Museum of Art (Kurashiki City, Okayama Prefecture)

Photo: Courtesy of Ohara Museum of Art

**EDITORS' NOTE**

Japanese names in this publication are written in Japanese order: family name first, personal name last.

## JAPAN-AUSTRALIA SUMMIT MEETING



Japan-Australia Summit Meeting

ON Tuesday, November 17, Prime Minister SUGA Yoshihide and the Hon. Scott Morrison MP, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, held summit meetings in Japan. The leaders first had a one-on-one meeting, followed by a main meeting. After that, the leaders signed the Joint Statement of their intent to further strengthen their cooperative relationship in fields including security and defence cooperation and the economy. Later, Prime Minister Suga hosted a working dinner. The summary of the meetings is as follows.

At first, the leaders met one-on-one, with interpreters, where, in a friendly atmosphere, they discussed their background, personal views and their approach to politics.

At the main meeting, the leaders discussed strengthening bilateral relations and cooperation on international issues.

The leaders affirmed that Japan and Australia, as “Special Strategic Partners” which share the basic values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law and strategic interests, will together work toward realizing a “Free and Open

Indo-Pacific.”

The leaders announced agreement in principle on the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (Japan-Australia RAA), which is being negotiated to take security and defence cooperation between Japan and Australia to a new level. The leaders concurred to accelerate the remaining tasks necessary for an early signing of the Japan-Australia RAA.

In addition, the leaders instructed their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence, with a view to elevating security and defence cooperation between Japan and Australia, to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in this area, through the Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (“2+2”) and other mechanisms.

The leaders also concurred to strengthen cooperation on economic security in areas such as telecommunications and critical minerals.

The leaders concurred to continue to work together on reforms at the World Trade Organization, including reforms to the Appellate Body, electronic-commerce rule-making, and the issues of “developing countries.” They also welcomed the signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and,

through close coordination between Japan and Australia, decided to play a leading role in realizing its early entry into force. The leaders also confirmed that they will continue to cooperate toward the steady implementation and expansion of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The two leaders concurred to promote cooperation in the economic field, including on hydrogen-related efforts.

At the working dinner after the formal meeting, the leaders exchanged views on the regional situation.

The leaders welcomed the United States’ continued commitment to the Indo-Pacific region and stressed the importance of close cooperation with the United States to contribute to the peace and stability of the region.

On North Korea, the leaders concurred to work together on the full implementation of UN Security Council resolutions, including measures against ship-to-ship transfers. Prime Minister Morrison gave his continued full support for Japan’s efforts on the abductions issue.

In addition, the leaders exchanged views on the South China Sea, East China Sea, Southeast Asia and other topics.

Photographs and text courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Cabinet Public Relations Office of the Government of Japan



# REVITALIZING THE REGIONS: MUSEUMS AS HUBS

Japan is home to a large number of museums, and these are located in regions throughout the country. Beginning this year (2020), the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan has designated qualifying museums as regional hubs for the promotion of cultural tourism. In this month's issue, we introduce several such museums as well as the regions and cultures which they promote.

Photos: Courtesy of Yokote City; Courtesy of Nara National Museum; Courtesy of The Tokugawa Art Museum; Courtesy of The Foundation for Ainu Culture; Courtesy of Nakamura Keith Haring Collection / Keith Haring Artwork ©Keith Haring Foundation

# Cultural Assets Showcased as “Stories”

Aoyagi Masanori



**M**ANY regions in Japan today are promoting cultural tourism with art and history museums as their bases. We spoke about Japan’s cultural tourism with Aoyagi Masanori, who worked as the Commissioner for Cultural Affairs at the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Japanese government from 2013 to 2016 and is currently the Chairman of the Board of Directors for Tama Art University, director of both the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art and the

Ishikawa Prefectural Museum of Art, and Director General of the Archaeological Institute of Kashihara, Nara Prefecture.

**In a variety of regions in Japan, cultural tourism is currently being promoted centered on cultural facilities that include art and history museums, shrines, temples, and more. What is the background to these initiatives?**

There are many unique forms of regional culture throughout the country of Japan. They are quite diverse, from traditional crafts, architecture and other tangible cultural properties to folk performing arts, festivals, and other intangible cultural properties. Even when we look globally, there aren’t many countries that have this level of rich regional cultures. The purpose of the promotion of cultural tourism today is to showcase these cultural assets as tourism resources both within Japan and abroad, leading to regional revitalization.

To promote cultural tourism, stories are important. Rather than simply showcasing valuable cultural assets, the history and charm of the region where these assets exist must also be clearly showcased as stories. The cultural assets themselves then radiate a lively charm, leading many people to gain an interest in cultural assets. You could say that what institutionalized this concept was the certification of Japan Heritage<sup>1</sup> by the Agency for Cultural Affairs and the enactment of the Cultural Tourism Promotion Act, which was enacted as a national law in May of this year

Photo: Courtesy of Tama Art University

(2020). This Act aims to revitalize areas by actively promoting cultural tourism and deepen an understanding of culture through the viewing of various cultural resources. It also aims to produce economic effects.

### **The background stories that cultural assets have accumulated are key points in cultural tourism, aren't they?**

Definitely. In the past, French wine was defeated by wine from another country in an international wine contest. I had a Japanese friend who was a vice president of a company that makes wine at an old chateau in France, but his reaction to this was unexpected. I thought he would feel a sense of loss, but he said, "It's not a problem. In this day and age, if you want to create quality grapes, you can do it anywhere in the world. But for us, we can showcase the stories from history that the chateau has been through, something that rising new wine makers don't have." Indeed, his chateau was once owned by a historically famous aristocratic family so I'm sure the chateau has a variety of stories. We can say that people drink their wine while also thinking about the stories of this wine-producing chateau.

In the same way, there are heaps of excellent cultural assets in various parts of Japan that can be introduced to the world along with interesting stories. However, Japanese people haven't really told these stories as much.

### **What role do museums specifically play in cultural tourism?**

Most regional museums are located where local culture has been systematically organized. They surely take on an introductory or encyclopedia-like role to learn about the regional culture for those who visit an area. I also think that they act as a central facility to collect various local cultural

assets and as a place to showcase culture itself.

For example, there is an art museum in Hokkaido where viewing the works by a local artist can be incorporated into a tour of the beautiful surrounding scenery and includes lunch using local ingredients. The tour has become popular for groups because participants can appreciate the distinctive stories of the place.

The Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art, where I serve as director, is famous for its Millet paintings, but in addition to these paintings, we also exhibit works by local artists and works that feature Yamanashi. It is also important to arrange works not only by world-famous artists, but also by young or local artists. I think that putting various works from leading artists together with those of young or local artists causes a variety of changes to occur and then new creative works are born.

You can also say that the accumulation of tangible and intangible culture in digital archives will be a major role for various museums including art museums in the future. Cultural assets suffered serious damage from the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. Even if a natural disaster occurs and various records and cultural assets are lost, they can still be accurately recorded and handed down if they've been digitally archived. If various museums including art museums save the photos and paintings of their corresponding regions, it is helpful for local governments and residents to learn about local changes of the past and future. Surely this role will become more and more important, together with their role as a base for cultural tourism. 

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Interview by SAWAJI OSAMU

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<sup>i</sup> Japanese tangible and intangible cultural properties/assets, i.e. regional histories, traditions and customs, are passed down for generations through narratives. These stories, telling of the legacy of our culture and histories, have been designated as "Japan Heritage" by the Agency of Cultural Affairs. <https://japan-heritage.bunka.go.jp/en/index.html>

The National Ainu Museum and Park (Upopoy) (Image is for illustration purposes)  
Photo: Courtesy of The Foundation for Ainu Culture

# UPOPOY

## A Symbolic Space for Ethnic Harmony

**In July 2020, the National Ainu Museum and Park, nicknamed Upopoy, opened in the town of Shiraoi, Hokkaido as a center from which to “revitalize and expand the Ainu culture.”**

UMEZAWA AKIRA

**T**HE Ainu are an indigenous people from the northern region of the Japanese archipelago, predominantly Hokkaido, and have developed a distinctive, rich culture that includes the unique Ainu language, a spirituality that holds that spirits dwell in every part of the natural world, traditional dances that are performed at a variety of events, uniquely patterned embroidery and carved wooden art.

According to the National Ainu Museum website, the history of the Ainu (“Ainu” means humans in the Ainu language) stretches back 30,000 years, to when humans first came to Hokkaido. The Ainu were hunter-gatherer-fishers, but in around the seventh century they began to grow cereals. The Ainu actively traded with people overseas and created a unique culture.

From the seventeenth century, however, Ainu society gradually became absorbed by the Japanese economy and society. Until the nineteenth

century, the Ainu lived in Hokkaido, the islands around Hokkaido and the northern parts of the Tohoku region. Today, many Ainu people still live in Hokkaido, while some Ainu live in other parts of Japan, particularly in the Kanto region, and overseas.

Promoting and raising public awareness of Ainu culture are facing several challenges. The existence of the Ainu language and traditional crafts is in crisis as the number of people able to pass on these traditions declines, while levels of understanding regarding Ainu history and culture remain low.

To overcome these challenges, the government’s Council for Ainu Policy Promotion stated in July 2009 that the establishment of “a symbolic space for ethnic harmony” would be key to a policy based on the recognition of the Ainu as an indigenous people. Upopoy, which means “singing together in a large group” in the Ainu language, has been established as a base for the revitalization and expansion of Ainu culture, an invaluable culture that is at risk of extinction, and as a “symbol of the building of a forward-looking, vibrant society with a rich, diverse culture in which indigenous people are treated with respect and dignity without discrimination.”

In July 2020, Upopoy opened in Shiraoi in southwest Hokkaido, facing the Pacific Ocean. By limited express train, Shiraoi is about 40 minutes from New

Chitose Airport, and it is about 1 hour from Sapporo. The foundations of Shiraoi were laid by the Ainu, and the town has many facilities to pass down Ainu traditions and culture amid beautiful natural surroundings.

The National Ainu Museum in Upopoy has a collection of about 10,000 items, about 800 of which are permanently exhibited exploring six themes. In the Our Language area, the Ainu language, stories, place names and current initiatives to promote its use are explained. Visitors can hear narration in the Ainu language, and there are games enabling visitors to study the pronunciation and grammar of the Ainu language. Videos explaining place names and conversational Ainu are also displayed. In the Our Universe area, spirituality, a central aspect of Ainu culture, is described. The Ainu belief that *ramat* (spirit) exists all around us is explained using graphics.

In the open-air center, the National Ainu Park, visitors are able to experience Ainu culture through dance, cooking and traditional crafts. For example, the Cultural Exchange Hall (uekari cise) features traditional Ainu mouth harp, or *mukkuri*, performances and traditional Ainu dances that are inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. At the Workshop (yayhanokkar cise), visitors are able to make and taste Ainu cuisine and play traditional Ainu instruments such as the *mukkuri*.

“Visitors love the carved wooden handicrafts, embroidery and the experience of preparing food. We would like to provide opportunities to as many people as possible to experience Ainu culture, while taking measures to protect them from COVID-19,” says a staff member. 📌

**NOTE:** With the permission of Upopoy, this article draws on English-language materials published by the museum.

- 1 The National Ainu Museum
  - 2 About 800 items, including hunting tools and art, are exhibited at the National Ainu Museum
  - 3 Demonstration of an Ainu traditional performing art at the Cultural Exchange Hall
  - 4 Traditional Ainu houses (*cise*) recreated in the National Ainu Park
- Photos: Courtesy of The Foundation for Ainu Culture (1, 3); Stake to which a bear cub would be tied / Courtesy of The Foundation for Ainu Culture (2); Courtesy of Kotan (Traditional Ainu Village) / The Foundation for Ainu Culture (4)





# A Town Blessed with Nature and Tradition—and a Manga Museum

**The city of Yokote in Akita Prefecture is well known for its traditional *kamakura* (snow house) event and its signature style of stir-fried noodles. Recently, a pioneering manga-themed museum has also been attracting attention.**

Manga artwork on display at the museum  
Photo: Courtesy of Yokote City

## SASAKI TAKASHI

LOCATED in a basin surrounded by mountains, the city of Yokote in Akita Prefecture is blessed with abundant nature and a traditional culture unique to one of the “especially heavy snowfall regions” of Japan. In particular, the Kamakura Festival is a well-known event with a history spanning more than 450 years. *Kamakura* are small houses made of snow. In the traditional event of the same name a water god was believed to be enshrined in the *kamakura*, where children had fun baking and eating *mochi* rice cakes and drinking *amazake*, a sweet beverage made from rice. The event evolved to become the Yokote Snow Festival, which is held in mid-February, when more than a hundred large and small *kamakura* snow houses are built in the city, drawing many tourists every year. Visitors can enter the snow houses and enjoy traditional foods such as the aforementioned *mochi* and *amazake*. For those who cannot visit at the time of the festival, the Yokote Fureai Center Kamakura Hall displays a *kamakura* snow house year-round in a room permanently kept at about -10°C.

The town of Masuda within Yokote City was for centuries a thriving commercial center where rice, leaf tobacco, raw silk and many other commodities

were traded. A number of old homes and store-houses built between the mid-nineteenth and mid-twentieth century still stand here and have been designated by the national government as an Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings.

In Masuda, the Yokote Masuda Manga Museum opened in 1995. The museum typically attracts over 100,000 visitors from Japan and abroad every year. Recognized as a base for the promotion of cultural tourism by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Japanese Government, the museum is at the core of efforts to promote local cultural tourism.

The museum opened with the underlying objective of celebrating the achievements of



*Kamakura* snow houses during the Yokote Snow Festival  
Photo: Courtesy of Yokote City



- 1 Yokote Masuda Manga Museum
- 2 A large touch-panel screen allows visitors to view scanned original drawings
- 3 *Tsurikichi Sampei*
- 4 Activities at Tsurikichi Sampei no Sato

Photos: Courtesy of Yokote City (1, 2, 4); Courtesy of Yaguchi Takao/Yokote City Manga Utilization Project (3)

Yaguchi Takao, a popular manga artist who was born in Yokote. Yaguchi created numerous works, most notably *Tsurikichi Sampei*, before his death in November 2020. *Tsurikichi Sampei* is the story of a boy named Sampei traveling Japan and the world to fish. It was serialized in a comic magazine for boys for nearly ten years from 1973 until 1983, and played a role in popularizing angling nationwide.

“Initially, the plan was to build a memorial museum to exhibit the works of Masuda native Yaguchi Takao, but he suggested that it should be designed to widely disseminate the wonderful Japanese manga culture to the world. Based on this suggestion, we adjusted the plan to create this manga museum,” says Shibata Toshinori of the Yokote City Planning Department’s Culture Promotion Division.

Visitors are welcome to read as many of the museum’s roughly 25,000 manga volumes as they like. The museum also keeps an enormous number of original drawings, so-called *genga*, in storage. After two years of renovation, the museum reopened in May 2019 and currently possesses more than 400,000 pieces of *genga* by 181 manga artists, including Yaguchi and many others from Japan and other Asian countries. Three to four *genga* representing each of seventy-four manga artists from the museum’s collection are exhibited at all times and are rotated on a regular basis on the wall of a gentle slope extending from the first floor to the second floor of the museum and in the exhibition room on the second floor.

“In the past, the original artwork for manga was used to print the book or magazine, and once the printing was finished, it was no longer needed. But

look at the drawings up close. Everyone would be impressed by the real, compelling strokes, just like in other forms of art. We ensure that these great drawings are preserved for posterity, and not scattered and lost like ukiyo-e prints and the woodblocks that were used to make them. This is the important role we play,” Shibata explains.

The museum is also committed to digitally archiving the *genga*. Visitors can view the digital archive freely using the large touch panels inside the building. They can also see the ongoing preservation work conducted in a glass-walled storage room.

Beyond the manga he is famous for, Yaguchi drew beautiful pictures of the nature and landscapes of Yokote. Seeing these pictures up close is one of the opportunities fans look forward to. A ten-minute drive from the museum takes the visitor to Tsurikichi Sampei no Sato (Tsurikichi Sampei’s hometown), a recreation facility themed on the work of Yaguchi. Here fishing, walking, barbecuing in summer and winter activities such as skiing can be enjoyed, surrounded by the beauty of nature that has remained unchanged through the ages.

The city of Yokote has a flourishing agricultural sector, growing rice, apples, grapes, cherries, watermelon and many other fruits. Yokote is also well-known for its Yokote Yakisoba, a dish of stir-fried noodles, pork and cabbage, topped with a fried egg sunny-side up, and served with *fukujinzuke* pickled vegetables. Yokote Yakisoba is a beloved local cuisine that is known nationwide. As Yaguchi Takao would no doubt agree, a trip to Yokote would not be complete without tasting this unique local food. 🍜



# Art Appreciation in Mountainous Yamanashi

**Yamanashi Prefecture with its magnificent mountain landscapes and bountiful nature provides the perfect backdrop to a handful of celebrated art museums.**

**YANAGISAWA MIHO**

**Y**AMANASHI Prefecture is surrounded by mountains on all sides. Mount Fuji, a World Heritage site, lies in the south; the Southern Japanese Alps to the west, the Yatsugatake Mountain Range to the north, and the Okuchichibu Mountains to the east. Thanks to the pure natural water originating in these mountains, the prefecture has long been a place for sake brewing and fruit growing. In addition, it is also known as the birth place of Japanese wine, and currently there are approximately eighty wineries operating within the prefecture. This environment offers visitors many places to enjoy delicious local foods while appreciating the beauty of nature during any season.

Yamanashi Prefecture is also home to a handful of celebrated art museums. One of these facilities is the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art in Kofu City. Reflecting the character of the nature-rich prefecture, the museum, which opened in 1978, is famous for its collection of works from the Barbizon School of painters who painted the beautiful natural scenery of the French countryside, including in particular a collection of the works of Jean-François Millet. The museum was fortunate enough to acquire Millet's *The Sower* as the first piece in its collection when it

began searching for paintings of the Barbizon School for its main collection during preparations for the opening of the museum. The museum has continued to acquire Millet's landscapes and portraits ever since, and its collection of more than seventy works including several masterpieces is now considered one of the finest Millet collections in the world.

"Millet mainly depicted farmers, but as you can see from the *The Sower*, one of his masterpieces, he did not paint facial features clearly. It is said that Millet depicted a something, instead of an individual, in this case that something being the universal behavior of cultivating the soil. For this reason, I think people are fascinated by Millet's work, and view it here without any awkwardness, even though they are looking at it in Yamanashi, a foreign place, and not where or when the works were painted," remarks Kouno Kiminori, a section chief of Yamanashi Prefecture's Tourism and Culture Department.

In addition to Millet's works, the museum displays works from artists who are connected to Yamanashi or works created with a focus on Yamanashi as a main theme. For example, the *Thirty-six Fujis* by Hagiwara Hideo (1913-2007), a woodblock print artist who was born in the city of Kofu, express the natural



1



2



3

As Keith Haring artwork ©The Keith Haring Foundation. Courtesy of Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art

beauty of Yamanashi, inspired by Katsushika Hokusai's *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji*.

Added to this are three cultural facilities in the city of Hokuto which give visitors the opportunity to enjoy art alongside the beautiful natural landscape. One of these museums is the Hirayama Ikuo Silk Road Museum. In search of the sources of Japanese culture, Hirayama Ikuo (1930-2009), a painter of *Nihonga* (traditional Japanese painting) and recipient of the Order of Cultural Merit, frequently visited the Silk Road, which is known as the path that carried Buddhism to Japan. The museum displays a number of art works that he collected as well as Silk Road-related paintings of his own creation. The collection of approximately 10,000 Silk Road-related cultural items is highly praised in academic circles.

Another facility is the Nakamura Keith Haring Collection, the world's only museum that principally collects and exhibits the works of Keith Haring, an artist who played an essential role in 1980s American postmodern art. Haring provided support for children and worked on a range of projects, including HIV/AIDS-related campaigns globally, through his art until he passed away at the young age of 31. As a continuation of his legacy, the museum engages in many different social causes, including initiatives to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and related information, the international drawing contest for children's well-being, and efforts to highlight injustices and inequalities that various minorities face. Through international exhibitions, pop-up shops, nightlife events, and its social media presence, the museum has become a must place to visit for overseas travelers. Many outlets across social media also introduce the museum as one of the places that young people want to visit at least once.

Last but not least is the Kiyoharu Art Colony. This approximately 18,000 m<sup>2</sup> (195,000 square feet)

- 1 Jean-François Millet's *The Sower* on display at the Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art
  - 2 View over Fujimori Terunobu's *Tearoom Tetsu* at the Kiyoharu Art Colony
  - 3 Exhibits from the Nakamura Keith Haring Collection
- Photos: Courtesy of Yamanashi Prefectural Museum of Art (1); Courtesy of Kiyoharu Art Colony (2); Courtesy of Nakamura Keith Haring Collection / Keith Haring Artwork ©Keith Haring Foundation (3)

facility includes art museums, a library, a ceramics studio and an unusual tearoom. The blooming cherry blossoms in spring are a sight to behold. Here, visitors will appreciate a number of impressive buildings, including the Rouault Chapel designed by Taniguchi Yoshio, who was involved in the expansion of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, as a homage to the religious French painter Georges Rouault. Also on the grounds of the colony are the Museum of the Light designed by Ando Tadao, who has been involved in the design of many museums both in Japan and abroad; a tearoom built four meters above the ground on top of a tree trunk by Fujimori Terunobu, an architectural historian and architect; and some of the Eiffel Tower's stairs, relocated from France when the country celebrated the tower's 100th anniversary in 1989.

Taking maximum advantage of the time they can spare from art appreciation, visitors can also enjoy the wonders of Yamanashi by eating local foods such as *hoto*, a hot stew featuring thick, flat noodles, squash, carrots and other vegetables, and sometimes *nigai* (boiled abalone), or by visiting wineries in the prefecture to taste the different wines produced from the native Koshu variety of grape.

"There are many ways for people to enjoy touring Yamanashi," says Kouno. "For example, they might visit orchards, wineries, springs gushing from the mountains, and breweries making sake from that spring water, in addition to enjoying the museums and local foods. Visitors will fully enjoy touring Yamanashi, taking advantage of all the things that can only be experienced here in this prefecture."

## Keeping the Splendor of Daimyo Culture Alive

There is an expression, “Nagoya owes its prosperity to the castle.” This proud boast dates back to the Edo period (1603-1867), when Nagoya Castle was constructed at the behest of Tokugawa Ieyasu. Another source of pride for Nagoya is the Tokugawa Art Museum, which houses many works of art bequeathed by the castle’s owners, the Owari Tokugawa family.

SATO KUMIKO

**A**FTER establishing the Tokugawa shogunate in 1603, Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616) appointed his three sons as daimyo of the feudal domains Owari, Kishu and Mito. These three branches of the Tokugawa clan came to be known as the Tokugawa Gosanke, or “Three Houses of the Tokugawa.” The senior-most house is the Owari House (corresponding to present-day Aichi Prefecture), its prestige still communicated by the residence of the Owari House of Tokugawa, Nagoya Castle.

Constructed in 1612 at the behest of Ieyasu, Nagoya Castle is partially extant, including the stone walls and gardens. The castle’s main tower keep was restored in 1959 and has come to symbolize Nagoya City in Aichi Prefecture. Approximately three kilometers east of the castle, on the site of the Owari Tokugawa family villa, is the Tokugawa Art Museum.

The Tokugawa Art Museum was opened in 1935 by the nineteenth-generation head of the family, Yoshi-chika, who established a foundation and donated artifacts with the aim of passing on to posterity the daimyo culture and traditions handed down from generation to generation. The museum houses over



1



2



3



4

- 1 Suits of armor and swords are among the precious exhibits
- 2 Part of National Treasure the Hatsune (First Warbler) Trouseau
- 3 Detail of National Treasure “The Tale of Genji Illustrated Scrolls”
- 4 Nagoya Castle’s main tower keep

Photos: Courtesy of The Tokugawa Art Museum (1-3); Courtesy of Nagoya Castle Hommaru Palace (4)



10,000 objects, including 9 designated National Treasures, 59 Important Cultural Properties, and 46 Important Art Objects, encompassing a vast amount of possessions bequeathed by Ieyasu and the cherished belongings of successive heads of the family.

According to Ichihashi Yasuyoshi, the museum's vice-director, "A particular characteristic of the museum's collection is that many of the objects have been treasured as Owari Tokugawa family heirlooms in Nagoya Castle so they are well preserved and have well documented historical records. It's the most comprehensive collection of daimyo culture in any art museum in Japan."

Among the extravagantly crafted swords, armor, tea utensils, and other artifacts, the Hatsune (First Warbler) Trousseau, designated a National Treasure, is especially gorgeous. This is the bridal trousseau of Chiyohime, daughter of the third Tokugawa Shogun Iemitsu, brought on the occasion of her marriage to the second daimyo of the Owari clan, Mitsutomo. The trousseau comprises over 70 items, such as *tebako* boxes and cosmetic tools, all exquisite and representing the finest examples of the *makie* lacquerware technique dating back some 400 years. Also included in the museum's collection is the National Treasure "The Tale of Genji Illustrated Scrolls," a masterpiece painted in the first half of the twelfth century depicting *The Tale of Genji*, one of the world's first pieces of long-form realistic fiction.

As well as exhibiting these precious treasures, with items from the collection being frequently

rotated, the Tokugawa Art Museum regularly hosts events that allow visitors to try on replica swords and armor, as well as experience traditional entertainments such as "Monko" (distinguishing different types of incense) and "Kaiawase" (matching pairs of clam shells decorated with painted scenes inside).

"One of the highlights of the exhibition room is a partial reconstruction of the interior of the Ninomaru Palace in Nagoya Castle, where the head of the Owari Tokugawa family resided, based on historical documentary evidence. You can deepen your understanding of daimyo culture even more by combining a visit to the museum with Honmaru Palace in Nagoya Castle, which was used as accommodation for the shogun and was faithfully restored based on the original plans in 2018," says Ichihashi.

The city plan of present-day Nagoya is still based on the layout centered on Nagoya Castle during the Edo period (1603-1867). The subdivisions of Shirakabe, Chikaramachi and Shumokucho were once lined with samurai residences and they retain aspects of Edo times such as their names and streetscapes. Kenchu-ji Temple, the family temple of the Owari Tokugawa, and Atsuta Jingu (Atsuta Shrine), where generations of famous warlords worshipped, also tell the history of Nagoya. Visitors to Nagoya Castle are greeted by the Nagoya Omotenashi Bushotai (Nagoya Hospitality Warriors) dressed in samurai costumes, a fun and friendly initiative of Nagoya City. Nagoya is still brimming with the charm of traditions bequeathed by warlords. **7**

# NARA

## *A Treasury of Ancient Japanese Culture*

**Nara is a special place where visitors can experience the ancient history and culture of Japan, surrounded by World Heritage sites and museums showcasing works of art and historical resources, great numbers of which are National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties.**

### YANAGISAWA MIHO

**N**ARA Prefecture is situated at the center of the Kii Peninsula in Honshu, the largest of Japan's four main islands, and bordering Kyoto to the north. There are more World Heritage sites in Nara than in any other prefecture. These are "The Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara"; "Buddhist Monuments in the Horyu-ji Area"; and "Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range," the last of which spans the prefectures of Nara, Mie (to the east) and Wakayama (to the west). Nara is home to many more cultural assets besides these sites, and many of these have been designated National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties. Six museums of art and history have been certified by the Agency for Cultural Affairs of the Japanese Government. These are centers for the promotion of cultural tourism, and their official certification makes them more widely known to visitors eager to immerse themselves in the rich cultural legacies of Nara.

When Buddhism arrived in Japan from the Asian continent in the sixth century, the flowering of

Japanese culture was centered in Nara.

Horyu-ji Temple was founded at this time by Prince Shotoku (574-622), a devout student and patron of Buddhism. The temple has international significance as the oldest extant wooden building anywhere in the world.

"Asuka-Fujiwara: Archaeological sites of Japan's Ancient Capitals and Related Properties," as the site is listed on UNESCO's World Heritage Tentative List, is comprised of a cluster of twenty properties, principally the archaeological remains of palaces, gardens, temples and burial mounds built during the Asuka period (592-710). Among them, the Takamatsuzuka Tomb in Asuka Village is a highlight, famous for its colorful wall paintings, which have been designated as a National Treasure.

The Asuka period came to an end and the Nara Period (710-794) began when the capital of Heijo-kyo was established in the present-day city of Nara. It



**World Heritage sites in Nara Prefecture**

was a time when Buddhist culture flourished. All of the eight properties included in UNESCO's "Historic Monuments of Ancient Nara" are within the city of Nara, which is just 30 minutes from neighboring Kyoto by express train on the Kintetsu Line.

Within walking distance of Kintetsu-Nara Station is Nara Park, famous for its large population of sacred deer. Also situated in this area are Todai-ji Temple and its Great Buddha Hall; Kasuga Taisha Shrine and its sacred precincts of the Mt. Kasuga Primeval Forest; Kofuku-ji Temple; and the Nara National Museum, one of the aforementioned institutions certified as a base for cultural tourism.

Kawashima Keiichi of the Nara National Museum's General Affairs Division says, "Originally a part of the Kofuku-ji Temple grounds, Nara Park lies adjacent to the Kasuga Taisha Shrine. According to legend, the shrine originated when the deity Takemikazuchi no Mikoto rode into Nara on a deer from the Kashima Shrine in Ibaraki Prefecture. That is why to this day the deer in Nara Park are thought of as sacred animals or emissaries of the gods, and they have been carefully protected for centuries."

Explaining the appeal of the area, Kawashima continues, "I believe visitors are attracted by the natural assets that enable them to feel the atmosphere of the ancient capital during the Asuka-Nara period."

The Nara Buddhist Sculpture Hall at the Nara National Museum exhibits a collection of close to 100 Buddhist sculptures at all times. These masterworks were largely produced from the Asuka period to the Kamakura period (1185-1333).

Nonaka Hiromi of the Nara Prefectural Government's Cultural Resource Utilization Division says, "Buddhist sculptures can be identified by their iconography and style, and on the basis of this analysis, they can be dated. This allows us to follow the transitions of history. Visitors are able to see quite a few

ancient Buddhist sculptures that were made even before the Heian period (794-1185), which are not usually exhibited elsewhere in Japan. I feel that the Buddhist sculptures in Nara have a distinct appeal in terms of their artistic style and form."

The World Heritage site "Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range" is made up of three sacred sites and their connecting pilgrimage routes in Nara, Wakayama and Mie Prefectures. The sites in Nara that are a part of this World Heritage site include Mt. Yoshino and Kimpusen-ji Temple, the core temple of a branch of the Shugendo religion. Mt. Yoshino is a place of training for the Japanese mountain religion of Shugendo, which evolved as a fusion of sacred mountain worship and Buddhism. Mt. Yoshino is also famous for its cherry blossoms.

In addition to protecting and highlighting its historical sites, Nara Prefecture is also promoting the products and many charms of its agricultural sector. In 2016, the NARA Agriculture and Food International College (NAFIC) was established in Sakurai City in central Nara Prefecture, aiming to train professional cooks and workers with a wide variety of specialties to take full advantage of the exquisite produce cultivated in Nara Prefecture. Adjacent to the college is L'auberge de Plaisance Sakurai, a hotel with a French restaurant that provides students with on-the-job training for preparing and serving dishes featuring locally-sourced vegetables and meat.

Nara National Museum's Kawashima says, "We are committed to continuing to publicize the beauty and allure of culture in Nara Prefecture and leveraging stronger partnerships with various organizations, including local municipal government offices, museums of history and art, and private sector entities."

Visitors to Nara could never experience its wealth of enriching and enchanting attractions in a single day. 

Sacred deer in Nara Park  
Photo: jeminne / PIXTA





# Kurashiki and the Art of the Bikan Historical Quarter

Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter  
Photo: Courtesy of Okayama Prefectural Tourism Federation

**Kurashiki in Okayama Prefecture flourished as a town of trade in the Edo period (1603-1867) and as a textile town in the Meiji period (1868-1912). Today, the city's historical quarter is known for its beautiful townscape and as a place to appreciate fine art.**

## KATO KYOKO

**K**URASHIKI (present-day Kurashiki City, Okayama Prefecture), which fell under the direct rule of the Tokugawa Shogunate in the seventeenth century, developed as a town of merchants and a trade center. Many boats traveled along the Kurashiki River, which runs through the town and was lined with *machiya* (townhouses) and storehouses. A beautiful townscape of impressive elegance was created here, with the white plaster walls of the townhouses reflecting off the surface of the river water. Kurashiki City decided to preserve the central area by ordinance as the Bikan Historical Quarter (*"bikan"* means beautiful view) in 1969, and it was designated a National Important Preservation District for Groups of Traditional Buildings in 1979.

Today, a great number of tourists visit the



A riverboat glides through the Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter  
Photo: Courtesy of Okayama Prefectural Tourism Federation

Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter, with its shops selling Kurashiki denim and other local brands, cafés created from renovated traditional townhouses, willow trees and bridges, temples and shrines, and a collection of red brick buildings, remnants of the former Kurashiki Spinning Works, founded by Ohara Koshiro (1833-1910). Many people enjoy the townscape from the riverboats on the Kurashiki River, which flows through the Bikan Historical Quarter.

The Ohara Museum of Art is a symbol of the Bikan Historical Quarter. It was built in 1930 by Ohara Magosaburo (1880-1943), the third son of Ohara



Paul Gauguin's *Delightful Land (Te Nave Nave Fenua)* (1892)  
Photo: Courtesy of Ohara Museum of Art

Koshiro and a businessperson who further developed the textile industry of Kurashiki. The exterior, which resembles a Greek temple, stands in harmony with the traditional townscape. The museum

houses a wide range of about 3,000 pieces of art, including western art from impressionism to modern art, ancient Egyptian art and modern and contemporary Japanese art. While the museum exhibits Paul Gauguin's *Delightful Land (Te Nave Nave Fenua)*—representative of the artist's time in Tahiti—and other famous Western paintings in its collection, it also exhibits ancient Eastern art and works by artists who played a key role in Japan's *mingei* (folk crafts) movement, which uncovered the beauty in crafts and functional utensils rooted in everyday life. These works are exhibited at the Craft Art Gallery & Asian Art Gallery, which occupy a renovated granary on the museum grounds. Within the Bikan Historical Quarter, the museum is especially popular among overseas tourists, and the museum is now recognized and supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs as a base for the promotion of cultural tourism.

Chief Curator Yanagisawa Hideyuki explains the background to the museum's collection.

"Ohara Magosaburo was involved in a variety of public-interest projects, including support for hospitals, laboratories and orphanages. For this reason, our collection is not just for a few art lovers but was collected from the start under the assumption that it would be displayed to the public so that many people could appreciate the art. The initial collection, which is at the core of our collection, was purchased and collected across Western Europe by Kojima Torajiro (1881-1929), a Western-style painter who studied in Europe with help from Ohara."

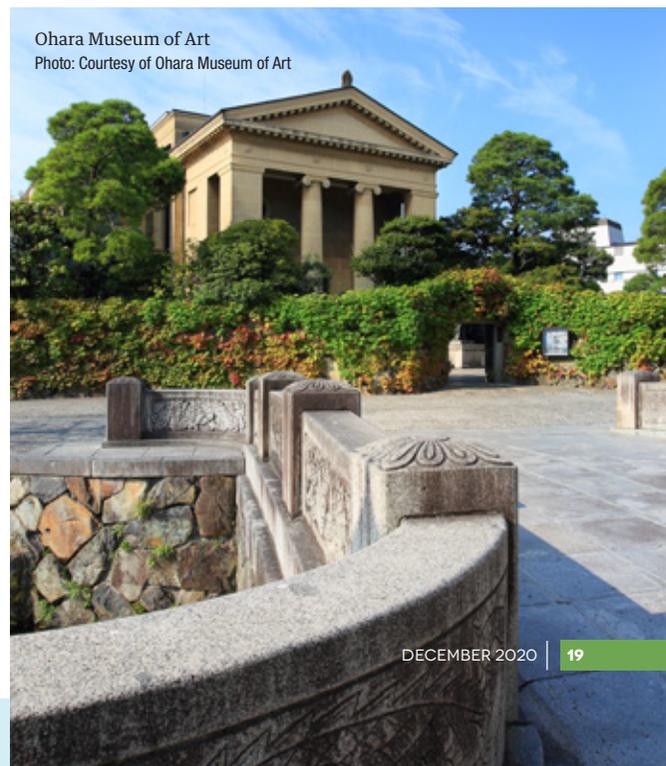
For example, Kojima purchased a painting in the famous *Water Lilies* series by Claude Monet from the artist himself in his later life. The ancient works from Egypt and western Asia were also collected by Kojima.

"In addition to collecting new modern art at the time, Kojima Torajiro also looked to the past and beyond borders, trying to capture how a variety of cultures influenced one another. While keeping an eye on art scenes from his time, the Ohara Museum of Art has followed in his footsteps by continuing the collection as a vessel to capture various cultures, ancient and modern, east and west."

Kurashiki flourished since the Edo period as a center of trade, with many people coming and going, and has a foundation for accepting different cultures and values. Curator Yanagisawa says that this is also related to the diverse collection of the Ohara Museum of Art.

"The townscape of the Kurashiki Bikan Historical Quarter does not preserve the scenery of the Edo period as it was then, but is cleverly mixed with modern buildings built since the Meiji period. The quarter does not exclude differing architectural styles, but is a scene made up of new values that have been incorporated over the years. This townscape is an important resource for Kurashiki."

The Bikan Historical Quarter is not just buildings and a townscape that remind you of the industries that flourished here over the ages; the spirit of those who took pride in and valued the town remains here, as well. 



Ohara Museum of Art  
Photo: Courtesy of Ohara Museum of Art

# Nature and Culture among the Aso Volcanoes



Mt. Nakadake viewed over Kusasenri-ga hama  
Photo: Courtesy of Aso Geopark Promotion Council

**Aso Geopark in Kumamoto Prefecture is a place to learn about and appreciate not just the abundant nature formed by volcanic activity, but also the ways of life fostered by those who have coexisted with the volcanoes over the generations.**

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## UNO MASAKI

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**A**SO Caldera is an enormous volcanic depression located roughly in the center of the island of Kyushu. The caldera as it appears today was formed by repeated extremely large eruptions between 270,000 and 9,000 years ago. Aso Caldera is oval shaped, measuring 18 kilometers from east to west and 25 kilometers from north to south, and is surrounded by an outer rim with a circumference of more than 100 kilometers. Aso Gogaku, the five peaks that comprise Mt. Aso, including Mt. Nakadake with its endless volcanic smoke, rise up from the center of the caldera, and a wide range of treasured animals and plants inhabit the surrounding grasslands and marshes that spread out from here.

Within the caldera, there are many springs, waterfalls and hot springs, and Aso has gained great

popularity as a scenic area to enjoy various outdoor activities.

The Aso area was designated as a national park by the Japanese government in 1934, and the region has also been certified as a UNESCO Global Geopark. There are thirty-three geosites or places of interest with recognized value as natural heritage in Aso Geopark, the overarching theme of which is “human life and the natural environment around the Aso Volcano.” Here you can learn not only about the topography and geology created by volcanic activity, but also about the lifestyles, history and culture of the people who have a deep connection with this land.

Aso Volcano Museum, which overlooks the Kusasenri-ga-hama crater prairie and Mt. Nakadake in the distance, has welcomed more than 8 million visitors since its founding in 1982. As a hub for the Aso Geopark, the museum has been recognized as a base for the promotion of cultural tourism by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan. The museum investigates the local animals and plants, as well as the connection between the grasslands and the people since the formation of the Aso caldera. The museum collects and exhibits its materials, and offers educational programs for



Live video stream of Mt. Nakadake's crater  
Photo: Courtesy of The Foundation of Aso Volcano Museum



Scene from the Onda Matsuri  
Photo: Courtesy of Aso Geopark Promotion Council

elementary, middle and high school students as well as hiking tours.

One of the museum's special exhibits is the live video stream from cameras installed in Mt. Nakadake's crater wall. The video, projected onto a 1/300 scale model of the Mt. Nakadake crater and accompanied by sounds from the crater, gives the viewer the sensation of looking into the volcano.

Museum director Ikebe Shin'ichiro says, "Our role is to convey the natural charm of Aso through the history of volcanic activity up until now. We guide visitors to respond to their intellectual curiosity; for example, when they ask why the mountain came to be the shape it is. Aso is a cool area of high altitude where volcanic ash has accumulated and as such is an environment unfit for cultivation. However, the soil has been improved with cow manure and green manure made from grass. In this way, we are trying to deepen the understanding of the unique culture of the people of Aso who have coexisted with the volcano for a long time."

Pasturing has been passed down in Aso, which is the location of the most expansive grasslands in Japan. It is said that the pasturing of Aso cattle and horses goes back to the Nara and Heian periods (eighth to late twelfth centuries). People pasture cattle and horses from spring until autumn, and in autumn, the grasses are reaped. This reaped grass is used not only as food for the livestock, but also as green manure to grow rice and vegetables. In early spring, controlled burning is conducted in the grasslands to prevent shrubs and trees from taking over the land and to encourage the growth of new sprouts of grass. This work has been repeated every year for countless centuries, and agriculture and livestock industries have developed as the grasslands have

been maintained.

Aso Shrine, home of the Deity of the Volcano Geosite and said to have been founded about 2,300 years ago, venerates the deity of the volcano that has been worshipped by people of the area for generations. Unique festivals are held at the shrine to coincide with the agricultural work of each season, such as the Onda Matsuri wishing for a good harvest during rice planting season and the Tanomisai giving thanks to the deities of Aso during the harvest. These festivals have been designated as Important Intangible Folk Cultural Properties of Japan.

As a hub for tourism in Kumamoto Prefecture, Aso Volcano Museum has also put effort into collecting and exhibiting materials related to Mt. Nakadake's eruptions and the 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake. The museum is also involved in awareness programs for disaster prevention.

In addition to the Kumamoto Earthquake, Kumamoto Prefecture has experienced torrential rains and other disasters in recent years. Recovery has steadily progressed. The JR Hoho Line, which connects Kumamoto Prefecture with neighboring Oita Prefecture via Aso, was fully restored in August 2020 for the first time in more than four years. In October of 2020, a bypass for the important Japan National Route 57 was also completed, and Aso suddenly became more accessible. A new bridge is expected to open in March 2021 to replace the Aso Ohashi Bridge that collapsed under a quake-triggered landslide in 2016.

Travel by car, train or bicycle in Aso will be further improved in the future, and it will surely become possible to experience the charm of Aso Geopark even more, including the dynamic environment created by volcanoes and the culture that developed along with it. 



■ Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi

# Ceremonies for Proclamation of Crown Prince

At the Imperial Palace on November 8, 2020, the *Rikkoshi-no-rei* (Ceremonies for Proclamation of Crown Prince) were held as an act of the Emperor in matter of state based on the Constitution of Japan. The *Rikkoshi-no-rei* are comprised of two ceremonies, the *Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi* (Ceremony for Proclamation of Crown Prince), which was held in the morning, and the *Choken-no-gi* (First Audience), which was held in the afternoon.

## RIKKOSHI-SENMEI-NO-GI

The *Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi* is the ceremony held for the Emperor to proclaim that Prince Akishino has become the Crown Prince and for the representatives from home and abroad to express felicitations. The ceremony was attended by about 50 invitees, including

representatives of the three powers (the Diet, the Cabinet and the Judiciary) and local municipalities, and the Dean of the diplomatic corps.

His Majesty the Emperor declared, “Today, I hereby perform the *Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi*, Ceremony for Proclamation of Crown Prince, in accordance with the Imperial Household Law, and

proclaim to those at home and abroad that Prince Akishino is Crown Prince.”

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince said, “I am filled with the deepest awe and gratitude at being proclaimed the Imperial Heir, Crown Prince, at this Ceremony for Proclamation of Crown Prince. I will discharge my duties solemnly bearing in mind my responsibilities as Crown Prince.”

Prime Minister Suga Yoshihide stated, “I wish to state respectfully that Your Majesty the Emperor, today, performed the *Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi* and proclaimed to those at home and abroad that Prince Akishino has become the Crown Prince. We wish to express congratulations from the bottom of our hearts. Their Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince and Crown Princess have supported Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress and Their Majesties the Emperor Emeritus and Empress Emerita while committing sincerely to activities of the Imperial Family



■ Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi



■ Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi



■ Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi



■ Choken-no-gi



■ Choken-no-gi

such as visits to areas struck by disasters and promotion of international goodwill. The people of Japan have a deep respect for Their Imperial Highnesses, who meet and are on an intimate footing with the people. That the Rikkoshi-no-rei is being held in this manner brings us great pleasure. We express our best wishes for the Imperial Household to flourish further.”

## CHOKEN-NO-GI

Following the Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi, the Choken-no-gi (First Audience) was held. The Choken-no-gi is the ceremony in which His Majesty the Emperor and Her Majesty the Empress meet the Crown Prince for the first time after the

Ceremony for Proclamation of Crown Prince.

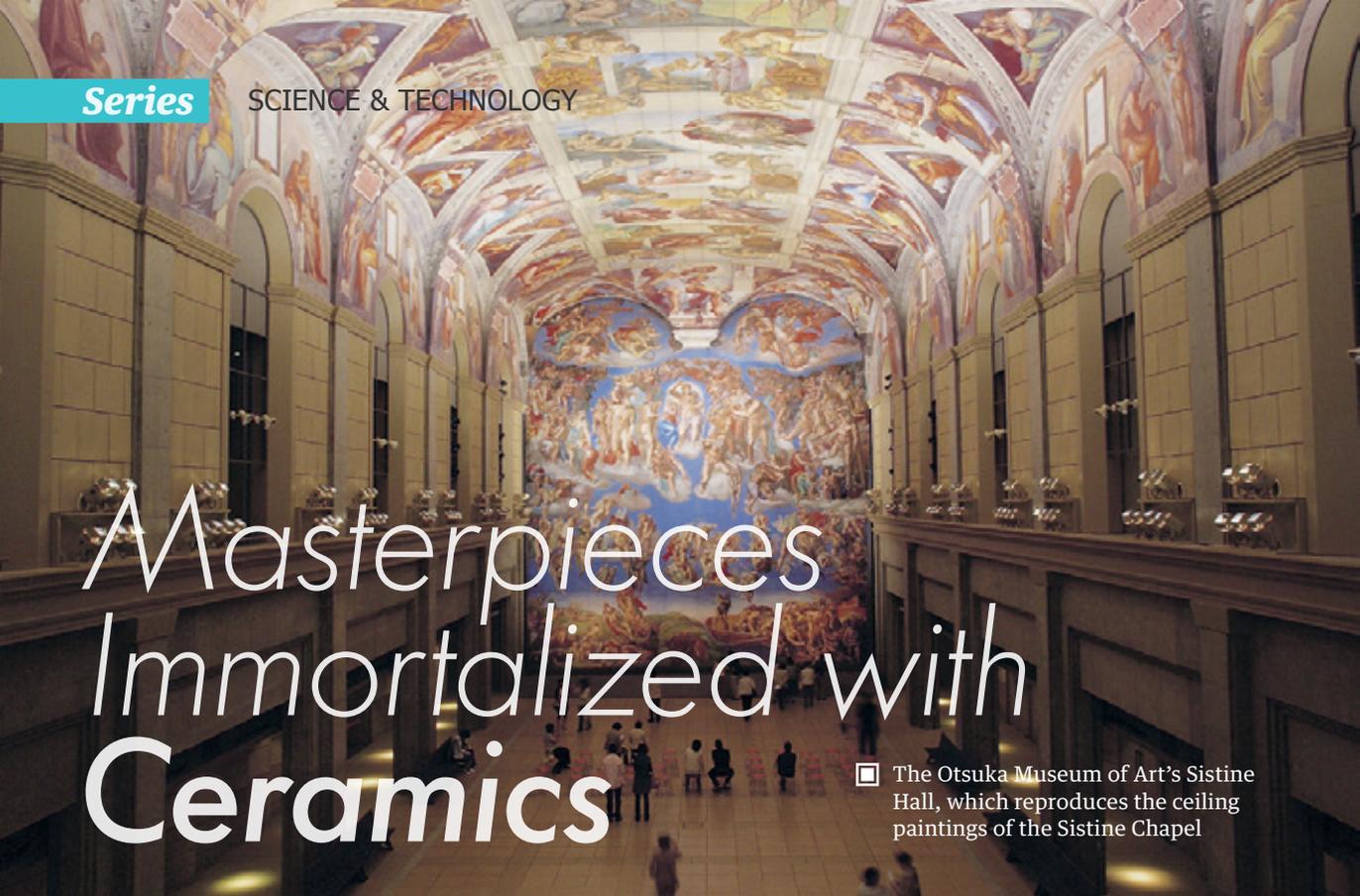
His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince thanked His Majesty the Emperor, saying, “I am filled with the deepest awe and gratitude at having been proclaimed the Imperial Heir, Crown Prince, today at the Ceremony for Proclamation of Crown Prince. I will continue to discharge my duties to the best of my ability now that I have been proclaimed the Imperial Heir, Crown Prince. I wish here to express most respectfully my humblest gratitude.”

His Majesty the Emperor said, “It gives me great joy that the Rikkoshi-Senmei-no-gi, Ceremony for Proclamation of Crown Prince was performed today. It is my hope that you will meet the expecta-

tions of the people and successfully fulfill the duties as Crown Prince, fully drawing on what you have cultivated.”

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince thanked Her Majesty the Empress, saying, “I am truly grateful to have been graciously granted by His Majesty the Emperor the great honour of being proclaimed the Imperial Heir, Crown Prince, today at the Ceremony for Proclamation of Crown Prince. I wish here to express most respectfully my humblest gratitude.”

Her Majesty the Empress said, “I am delighted that the ceremony today has been performed smoothly. I hope that you will continue to fulfill your duties in good health.” 7



# Masterpieces Immortalized with Ceramics

□ The Otsuka Museum of Art's Sistine Hall, which reproduces the ceiling paintings of the Sistine Chapel

**Master artwork from around the world has been faithfully reproduced and immortalized through the addition of the latest technology to traditional Japanese ceramic technology.**

## SUGIYAMA MAMORU

More than 1,000 replicas of masterpieces are on display at the Otsuka Museum of Art in Naruto City, Tokushima Prefecture, which opened in 1998, including the ceiling paintings of the Sistine Chapel, Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* and Picasso's *Guernica*. All of these replicas have faithfully reproduced the size, color, brushwork, and more of the originals on ceramic panels. The quality of the reproductions has been highly praised by the owners of the originals.

The company that produces these works is Otsuka Ohmi Ceramics Co., Ltd., whose manu-

facturing base is located in Shigaraki Town in Koka City, Shiga Prefecture. This is a production area for Shigaraki ware, which is known as one of many representative Japanese ceramics. This company, established in 1973 as the housing department of the Otsuka Pharmaceutical Group at that time, began with tile production as its primary business, using the white sands of Naruto as a material.

President Osugi Eitsugu says, "Just when we were trying to start tile production, demand for construction tiles was no longer expected due to the 1970s oil crises, and so an idea emerged to create added value by using techniques

for painting ceramics to reproduce masterpieces."

Production of full-scale replicas of masterpieces begins with obtaining consent from copyright holders and examining the originals on-site. While examining, company technicians record delicate flaws and rough spots in great detail and take photos from a variety of angles and in a variety of conditions. They then separate the colors from the obtained image data and create a copy sheet that has been printed multiple times, once in each color, with ceramic paint. This is then placed over a ceramic plate and fixed (fired) onto the plate by firing it for approximately eight hours at 1,000 to 1,350 degrees Celsius. The technicians then reproduce the subtle, detailed color hues, textures, brushwork and spatial effects by repeatedly covering the tiles in glaze, an impervious coat-



ing, by hand. When the glaze is fired, the color shade changes, and this firing and coloring is repeated while calculating the finish, sometimes even up to five to six times.

Normally, ceramics can only be fired once as they become deformed or break. Otsuka Ohmi Ceramics made it possible to fire ceramics multiple times through research into the material mixture and firing temperatures, and more than 20,000 colors can be reproduced through glazing.

The current maximum size for ceramic plates is 3 meters by 90 centimeters—the largest such plate in the world—and works of art that are larger than this are divided and made in sections. Only works that have been granted consent through a final inspection by supervisors and the owner of the original are publicly displayed.



■ The White Tiger from the Kitora Tumulus, reproduced on a ceramic plate. Stains and cracks from the original mural have been faithfully reproduced

Osugi says, “It is difficult to reproduce colors precisely. A variety of expressions are born for the first time not just with color numbers but also through controlling the glass-like gloss unique to glazing. We have learned a lot from the glazing techniques that have been collected here in Shigaraki.”

The greatest merit of ceramic plate masterpiece replicas is their sturdiness, as their color won’t fade, even after 2,000 years. You can view the ceramic replicas in a bright room or outdoors, even for works where the original cannot be viewed except in low-level protective lighting to protect against humidity and light. And as you can also directly touch the ceramic plates, a new way to appreciate art is born, allowing you to sense the texture of the material and the roughness of the paint.

Receiving a request from the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in 2009, Otsuka Ohmi Ceramics worked on a replica of a mural painted on the Kitora Tumulus rock tomb in Nara Prefecture. The Kitora Tumulus is presumed to have been built sometime between the end of the seventh century and the beginning of the eighth century, and painted in rich colors on the ceiling and walls of this tomb (D 2.4 m x W 1 m x H 1.2 m) are an astronomical chart, the Azure Dragon, the White Tiger and

- 1 Technicians paint on glaze multiple times to reproduce the colors and spatial effects of the originals
- 2 Firing a ceramic plate
- 3 A technician works on the reproduction of the Kitora Tumulus mural

other divine beasts. For this project, the painted mural, along with the texture of the plaster walls, cracks, and more, was accurately reproduced with experts, based on nearly 30,000 pieces of image data. Otsuka Ohmi Ceramics’ ceramic plate replicas were awarded the Prime Minister’s Award, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry’s Monodzukuri Nippon (Japan’s Manufacturing) Grand Award, in 2018 for being a valid form of academic preservation and exhibition.

Osugi says, “We will focus our efforts on training our technicians while also advancing technical development that increases reproducibility and expressivity with ceramic plates by applying techniques such as laminating<sup>1</sup> and cutting utilizing data gained from 3D scans.”

The latest technology, traditional techniques cultivated in Shigaraki, and the precise handiwork of technicians will reproduce the valuable cultural assets of Japan and the world, and by doing so, pass them on to the future. **1**

<sup>1</sup> Laminating refers to the uniting of superposed layers of one or more materials.

# Rediscovering the Old Tokaido Highway

**Tony Everitt, a renowned travel expert in the Asia-Pacific region, has settled in Atami City, Shizuoka Prefecture, an area known for its nature and history, where he works to promote tourism.**

**SATO KUMIKO**



□ Hakone Hachiri—a section of the old Tokaido Highway  
Photo: Courtesy of Tony Everitt

**B**orn in Fiji and raised in New Zealand, Tony Everitt has been promoting tourism in Asia-Pacific for thirty years, having lived in a variety of locations also including Singapore, Shanghai and Tokyo. He moved to Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan, in 2015, feeling that it was the most fascinating of places.

Shizuoka is located in the middle of Japan's main island of Honshu, facing the Pacific Ocean for 155 kilometers from east to west. Everitt lives in Atami, a quaint seaside hot spring resort and gateway to the Izu Peninsula. Atami's hot springs have been enjoyed since the eighth century. The Izu Peninsula is also famous for cherry trees that bloom



■ Atami City is situated at the foot of mountains facing the Pacific Ocean in Shizuoka Prefecture

Photo: Courtesy of Shizuoka Prefecture Tourism Association

■ Early-blooming (February) cherry trees in Kawazu Town, Shizuoka Prefecture

Photo: Courtesy of Shizuoka Prefecture Tourism Association

as early as February—Atami Sakura—and for the annual Kawazu Sakura Festival.

Everitt tells us, “I live in a forest overlooking the Pacific. Sea breezes fan my place through Japan’s sticky summer, and our winters are mild. In 45 minutes I can be in downtown Tokyo, using the bullet train at the bottom of the hill. This is a unique twenty-first-century lifestyle.”

Everitt is currently involved in tourism development, marketing and human resource development for the tourism industry, including as Strategic Advisor to Tourism Shizuoka Japan, a destination marketing organization.

Everitt says, “Japan is a wonderful country for tourism. Things that Japanese people take for granted are novel in the eyes of international visitors. For example, Japan is a world leader in sustainable public transport, and other infrastructure is superb. A high sense of social responsibility creates a safe and orderly environment. Japanese people are natural at providing outstanding hospitality to visitors.”

Everitt says that Shizuoka also has abundant natural and cultural tourism resources.

Blessed with a mild climate year-round, Shizuoka enables outdoor activities in a stunning natural environment, including trekking and cycling. Shizuoka’s long Pacific coastline is popular for marine sports. Mount Fuji, Japan’s highest peak, is a local Cultural World Heritage Site.

A trip to Atami can be combined with a visit to neighboring Hakone. Everitt focuses on the old Tokaido Highway running through Kanagawa and Hakone into Shizuoka.

He says, “The 400-year-old Tokaido foot highway, the historical main drag between Japan’s new capital of Edo (now Tokyo) and old capitals of Kyoto and Osaka, contrasts with the state-of-the-art Tokaido bullet train that zooms along a similar route today. Most visitors to Japan ride the bullet train but aren’t aware that it is named after the old foot highway.”

From Edo to Kyoto, fifty-three post towns dotted old Tokaido for weary travelers to rest and carouse each night of their journey. Nearly half of these post towns are in Shizuoka, where remnants of life on the old highway can still be enjoyed today.

This year, Everitt founded



■ “Morning Fog at Mishima” (in present-day Shizuoka Prefecture), from the *Fifty-three Stations of the Tokaido Road* by Utagawa Hiroshige

Photo: Courtesy of Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi

HIKE Hakone Hachiri, providing hiking tours to international visitors along the old Tokaido. Hakone Hachiri is a 32-km section of the old highway from Odawara through the mountainous Hakone Pass to Mishima. Everitt speaks of his aspirations to “immerse visitors in the spirit of walking this picturesque historical route.”

COVID-19 has restricted global movement this year, but one can hardly wait for HIKE Hakone Hachiri to begin operations. Visitors can create their own memorable travel tale while thinking of a time when Japanese people of old traveled by their own feet along the Tokaido Highway. 7



# Appreciating the Changing Seasons with Beer

■ Daisen G Beers produced by Kume-Zakura Micro Brewery Corp.

A beer brewery at the foot of Mount Daisen in Tottori Prefecture seeks to produce beers that express the seasonal changes using locally produced wheat and fresh, home-grown hops, while valuing both tradition and innovation.

## KATO KYOKO

With an elevation of 1,729 meters, Mount Daisen in Tottori Prefecture is the highest mountain in the Chugoku region of western Japan. The *Izumo no kuni fudoki*, an account of the culture, climate and other features of the former Izumo province completed in 733, called it a mountain where gods reside, and to this day Mount Daisen is considered sacred. Reflecting their faith in the bodhisattva Jizo, revered as the savior of all living creatures and who is said to have appeared at the summit of Mount Daisen, many people have visited the Daisen-ji Temple since the end of the Heian period

(794-late twelfth century) to pray for the protection of their cows and horses. The bountiful nature, beautiful landscapes and large beech forests in the area have thus remained largely untouched, and due to the beech forests, the area at the foot of Mount Daisen has plentiful underground water supplies and good quality springs.

Using this underground water as an ingredient, Kume-Zakura Micro Brewery Corp., established in 1996, has been producing beer at an elevation of 300 meters in the town of Houki at the foot of Mount Daisen. It brews beers under the Daisen G Beer brand using soft water pumped from a well that is 150 meters deep.



■ The Daisen G weizen that won the World's Best Grain-only Wheat Beer award at the 2011 World Beer Awards in the U.K.



■ Beer barley "Daisen Gold" grown in collaboration with local farmers



☐ Beer is brewed using water pumped from a 150-meter-deep well



☐ Hops grown in the fields next to the brewery



☐ Inside the Kume-Zakura Micro Brewery

Daisen G Beer brews approximately thirty-five different beers over the course of the year, including its flagship weizen (a top-fermented beer brewed with a lot of malted wheat), pilsner (bottom-fermented pale lager brewed with extra hops), pale ale (top-fermented with a lot of pale malt) and stout (a dark, top-fermented full-bodied beer).

Iwata Hideki, Factory Manager of Kume-Zakura Micro Brewery Corp., explains, “There are many kinds of malted grains, hops and yeast available. These are the ingredients for making beer. Different types of beer can be produced, depending on the type of ingredients chosen.”

The company collaborates with local farmers and cultivates the ingredients it uses. For example, it grows Daisen Gold, a two-row barley originating in Daisen, as well as Yamada Nishiki and Goriki, which are rice varieties famous for their use in sake brewing, using

them as ingredients in seasonally-limited beers. The company also grows hops, the ingredient that generates beer’s bitter taste and aroma, in the fields next to the brewery. It has even been growing wheat in recent years. The company only brews its Daisen G Weihen Hop in autumn, using freshly picked hops. People enjoy its comfortable citrus flavor and refreshing, bitter taste.

The Daisen G-Beer brewery has its own restaurant.

“If we start brewing immediately after harvesting the hops in August, we can provide beer in September. We seek to express the seasonal changes in Japan by providing beers that feature the different tastes of each season.”

Daisen G-Beer has garnered high praise in international beer competitions to date. For example, the Daisen G Weizen won the World’s Best Grain-only Wheat Beer Award, the grand prize in its category, at the 2011 World Beer Awards in the United Kingdom.

“Our focus recently has been on maintaining a successful balance between tradition and innovation. Leveraging the power of tradition that we experienced during our European inspection tour and the innovation that we witnessed in our tour of the United States, we

seek to create a brewery that is able to continue to take on challenges while always valuing tradition,” says Iwata.

The entire area surrounding Mount Daisen was designated as the Daisen-Okii National Park in 1936, and Mount Daisen was certified as a Japan Heritage site in 2016. With Mount Daisen at their back, these areas face the Sea of Japan, providing not only beautiful natural scenery, but plentiful seafood and foods found in the mountains. These foods include locally caught snow crab that are best in the winter and which pair excellently with beer.

Many parts of the Daisen-Okii National Park are known for their magnificent sunsets, which bring new color to the local landscapes. What better time than sunset to experience the delicious food and drinks created in the foothills of sacred Mount Daisen? [7](#)



☐ Cultivating rice for the seasonally-limited beer “Yago”

■ The East Cocoon Warehouse

# Tomioka Silk Mill: A Model for Modernization

**Tomioka Silk Mill, a World Heritage site and National Treasure, stands as a memorial to a turning point in Japan's industrial history.**

**SATO KUMIKO**

When Japan reopened for international trade in the middle of the nineteenth century after more than 250 years of national seclusion, silkworm eggs and raw silk thread<sup>1</sup> were in high demand overseas, and these raw materials soon came to account for more than 80% of Japan's exports. The new Meiji government, established in 1868, paid attention to this trade and began efforts toward mass production of reeled silk thread. To

achieve this, government leaders imported silk-reeling expertise and machines from France, and in 1872 constructed Tomioka Silk Mill on a site covering about 53,000 m<sup>2</sup> in present-day Tomioka City, Gunma Prefecture as a government-operated model silk mill. The working mill comprised two 100-meter-long cocoon warehouses, a cocoon drying facility, a silk-reeling plant, a steam boiler plant, an iron water tank and a brick drain. Situated nearby were houses, dormitories and a clinic for the foreign experts

and employees.

The cocoon warehouses and silk-reeling plant share the same timber-framed brick structure as that used for the "Yokosuka Ironworks" in present-day Kanagawa Prefecture, which was built at the end of Edo period (1603-1867) with technical help from the French Navy. The bricks were baked by Japanese tile artisans under the guidance of French technicians, and there is a beautiful harmony in these buildings between the roof of Japanese tiles and the red brick walls. The ceiling of the huge silk-reeling plant, which is 140 meters long, is supported by triangular roof trusses, creating an open space capable of accommodating various machines and hundreds of workers. The walls of the building are

<sup>1</sup> Raw silk thread is a natural fiber made from the cocoons of silkworms. "Silk reeling" refers to the process of drawing silk thread from the cocoons, combining several of them, and making raw silk thread suitable for processing.



■ Exterior and interior of the silk-reeling plant

lined with large iron-framed windows imported from France and designed to let in lots of light and ventilation. The houses and dormitories built for the French experts and instructors are also timber-framed brick structures and likewise remain standing to this day.

In 1893, Tomioka Silk Mill was sold to the private sector. The mill was operative until 1987 when the last of a number of owners, the present-day Katakura Industries Co., Ltd., finally closed it following the decline of the domestic silk industry owing to the increased use of imported raw silk thread and synthetic fibers. Katakura Industries, which had continued to manage and maintain the site, donated the buildings to Tomioka City in 2005, and the city administration opened them up to the public in the same year.

In 2014, “Tomioka Silk Mill and Related Sites” was inscribed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List. In the same year, the mill’s two cocoon warehouses and silk-reeling plant were designated as a National Treasure of Japan.

Tomioka City has duly developed a preservation and management plan, and a thirty-year maintenance and utilization plan, for these historic sites.

The first major project was the work to preserve the West Cocoon

Warehouse that started in 2015. Conservation work was completed in 2020 and the building was opened to the public in October. The timber-frame structure and brick walls were more or less left intact, and about 60% of the roof tiles were also reused, while necessary repairs and reinforcements were made to preserve the building alongside preparations for its utilization. The plaster on the interior walls and ceiling of the first floor was also left in its original state as a way of conveying the mill’s history and value, although it has degraded over time and stains and cracks are evident.

In a unique initiative for a National Treasure, on the first floor of the West Cocoon Warehouse an exhibition room and multi-purpose hall has been installed making use of iron frames for aseismic reinforcement. The ceiling and walls of this “house within a house” are made of glass so that visitors can clearly see the walls and ceiling of the National Treasure building from inside the installed room.

Japan became the world-leading exporter of raw silk thread in the early twentieth century. Innovation in Japanese silk-reeling technology turned the world’s silk goods from something precious and expensive to something more familiar. The writings of work-

ers left on the walls of the West Cocoon Warehouse communicate the real-time atmosphere of life in the silk industry that drove Japanese modernization. Such traces are another precious face of the World Heritage site that is the Tomioka Silk Mill. 7



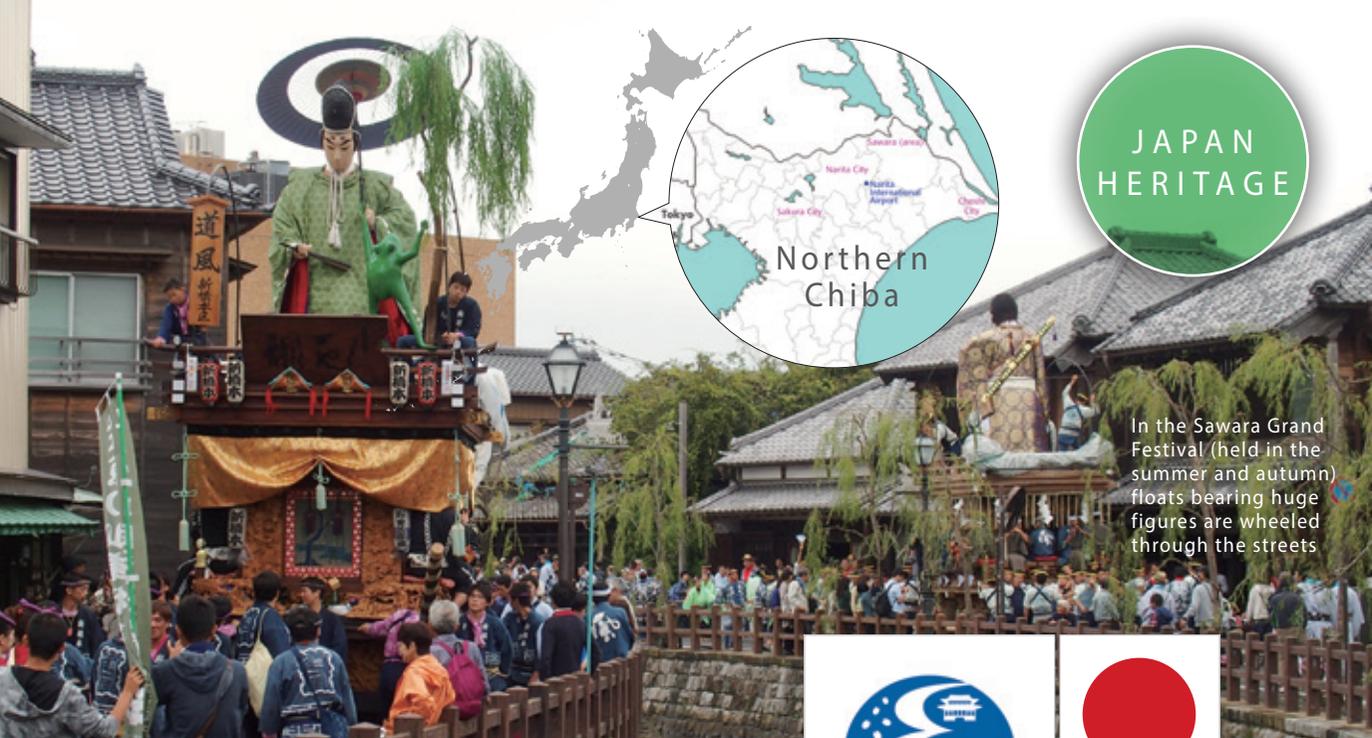
■ A close-up of the brickwork



■ The West Cocoon Warehouse

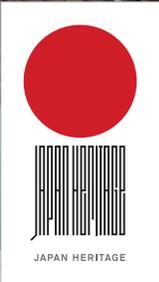


■ The glass multi-purpose hall inside the West Cocoon



In the Sawara Grand Festival (held in the summer and autumn) floats bearing huge figures are wheeled through the streets

## The Towns that Supported the Burgeoning Capital



Although some visitors may consider Chiba Prefecture, to the east of Tokyo and home to Narita International Airport, simply a point of transit to other areas of Japan, it has a rich history that is well worth exploring. From the 17th century to the end of the 19th century, the shogun's capital at Edo (present-day Tokyo) grew to be one of the most populated cities in the world, with a million residents. The heavy traffic of goods and people flowing to and from the capital brought wealth to northern Chiba, particularly to the cities of Sakura, Narita, Choshi and Sawara (now part of Katori City).

Sakura was a castle town which functioned as a strategic point to protect Edo on the east. Although the original castle no longer stands, walking down the streets lined with old samurai houses will take you back in time.

Narita developed around the Naritasan Shinshoji Temple, founded in the 10th century, which attracted many worshippers from the big city. The main street from Narita train station to Naritasan Shinshoji Temple is still lined with old shops and a few historical ryokan inns.

The Sawara area is located near the Tone River, then a major transportation artery, and was also connected to Edo and Choshi by road. Sawara merchants shipped in goods from all over Japan to sell in Edo, bringing wealth and culture to the area.

Choshi was a port town that supplied fresh fish to the megacity. Choshi's bountiful catch of sardines was processed into compost and sold nationwide, providing a huge boost to the local economy.

Each city supported Edo in its own way, giving a distinct feel to the traditional buildings and old town districts that remains to this day.

Visit the Japan Heritage Official Site at <https://www.japan.travel/japan-heritage/>

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