

A Sendai City shopping arcade during the Tanabata Festival  
Photo: Courtesy of Sendai Tanabata Festival Support Association



Chikurin-no-Komichi in Kyoto. The “Path of bamboo” is lined with *hogaki* bamboo fences  
Photo: s\_fukumura/photolibrary



# The Japanese and Bamboo



Some of the range of bamboo shoot dishes that feature in Kinsuitei’s full course menu  
Photo: Courtesy of Kinsuitei



A restaurant ceiling fitted with *Kyo-meichiku* split bamboo  
Photo: Courtesy of Yokoyama Bamboo Products & Co.

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n this month's issue of *Highlighting Japan*, we take a look at the role of bamboo in Japanese culture and everyday life. The issue opens with an interview with Shibata Shozo, a professor at Kyoto University and Chief Director of the Japan Bamboo Society, about the characteristics of Japanese bamboo and its many different uses. We visit a famous bamboo forest in Kyoto. We meet a manufacturer of traditional bamboo crafts and two bamboo artists, a *shakuhachi* (bamboo flute) player, and the owner of a restaurant that serves fine bamboo shoot cuisine. We introduce the colorful Sendai Tanabata Festival, where bamboo has long played a central role. And in the realm of science, we look at the role bamboo played in the commercialization of the first incandescent light bulb, and at how bamboo forests are being managed to provide the raw material for smooth and supple bamboo paper.

