

日本の魅力  
発見プロジェクト  
〔新潟県燕三条地域、新潟市〕

# NIIGATA — 新潟

BEYOND ORDINARY ITINERARIES

The Tsubame-Sanjo Area,  
Niigata City in Niigata Prefecture

Beyond Ordinary Itineraries

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The Tsubame-Sanjo Area,  
Niigata City in Niigata Prefecture

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雪化粧を落とした  
素顔の新潟の  
魅力を探る

多くの人にとって、新潟県のイメージは雪国であろう。川端康成の小説『雪国』の舞台も新潟。新潟への旅の目的として真っ先に頭に浮かぶのも、スキーやスノーボード。事実、スキー場サイト「SNOWNET」によると、新潟にあるスキー場は48軒で、長野県、北海道に次いで全国3位だ（2017年現在）。また、全国で最も白鳥が飛来する県としても知られており、10月上旬から渡ってくる白鳥は、11月下旬頃のピーク時に5千羽を超え、4月、シベリアに帰っていく。しかし今回は『新潟=雪国』というイメージとは異なる、新潟県の奥深い素顔を探るべく上越新幹線に乗り込んだ。

If you say you are going to Niigata, nine out of ten Japanese would say, “Oh! You are going to ski!” In fact, there are 48 ski resorts in the Niigata prefecture, which is third highest number of ski resorts in one prefecture following Nagano and Hokkaido (from the data of 2017, “SNOWNET”). Niigata is also well known as the place where the highest numbers of swans come to spend the winter in Japan. From the beginning of October swans are seen and the number of swans reaches over 5,000 at the end of November. They stay until April and then fly back toward Siberia. This time we head for Niigata via the Joetsu-Shinkansen to look for interesting attractions beyond ordinary itineraries associated with Winter or snow.

Beyond Ordinary Itineraries  
Niigata Prefecture

日本の魅力 発見プロジェクト  
新潟県

## Chapter 1

### “Tsubame-Sanjo area”

The Place for Artisans  
Who Breathe Life into Their Craft

text by *Rei Saionji*  
photographs by *Hide Urabe*





## 九十九神 (つくもがみ) の故郷 燕三条地域

古来、日本には、九十九神という考え方が存在する。『九十九神』とは長い年月使い続けた物には神が宿り、粗末に扱えば祟り、大切に扱えば恩を返すというもので、八百万の神の国、日本ならではの考え方だ。長い間、世代を超えて使い続けることができるようにと作られた物には、作り手の丹精や魂が込められている。その魂が使い手の「大事にする」という心と出会った時に神になるという九十九神の考え方は、国際的にも有名になった「もったいない」という言葉の基盤の一つであるかもしれない。

新潟県の燕三条地域では 2013 年から毎年秋に、そんな日本のものづくりの現場を見聞できる『燕三条 工場の祭典』という催しが行われている。4 日間の期間中、地域の工場が開放され、ものづくりの現場の見学や体験ができるというもの。2017 年は 10 月 5 日～10 月 8 日に開催される予定だが、一足先に、期間外でも見学できる工場を訪問するため燕三条駅で下車した。

From ancient times there exist a general idea of Tsukumo-gami (trans. ninety-nine gods), which means a god dwells in objects that have been used for a long time. This god manifests in terrible way if the object it dwells in is treated roughly, but it also shows gratitude and grants favours to the objects owner if treated with respect and care. This concept is one of the features of traditional philosophy in Japan. When there were no machines, all objects were hand crafted with a lot of thought and effort put into their creation. Objects such as tools were made by craftsmen with the utmost care to ensure

## The Place for Artisans Who Breathe Life into Their Craft

that it could be used for a long time, through generations. Thus, people loved and took good care of things just like how they loved and took good care of people. The philosophy of Tsukumo-gami may have developed as a way to teach people how to behave towards each other and objects. The objects created with tender care of an artisan were regarded as precious as if it were a baby born from loving parents. Now, much weight is laid on efficiency and mass production, which means that, regrettably, craftsmanship is put aside. That said, there is still a great respect for artisans in Japan, and Japanese people still cherish their possessions and take good care of things. The concept “Mottainai” (trans. a term conveying a sense of regret concerning waste), which became world famous when a Kenyan environmentalist introduced it at a session of the United Nations.

We would like to introduce the area called Tsubame-Sanjo, where traditional craftsmanship is still alive. Since 2013, a four-day event called “Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival” is held during Autumn in the Tsubame-Sanjo area in the Niigata prefecture. Factories are open to the public during this event so visitors can visit to see artisans at work and experience some processes involved in the production of local goods. In 2017 it will be held from the 5th to 8th October. We visited, in advance to this festival, some of the factories that are open to the public all year round.

We got on Joetsu-Shinkansen at Tokyo Station and got off at Tsubame-Sanjo station. Tsubame-Sanjo is just a name of the station, and does not correlate with the name of any nearby place. Sanjo is the name of the municipality where the station is located, while Tsubame is the name of neighboring municipality. In the early 17th century farmers of the area suffered as the river often overflowed. To solve this problem, the local governor invited skilled craftsmen who specialized in nails to teach the farmers their craft.

この駅名、燕三条という名前のあるわけではない。駅は三条市にあり、隣の燕市と名前を合体させた駅名である。現三条市と燕市は、江戸時代の初期、五十嵐川の氾濫に苦しむ農民を救済するため、江戸から釘鍛冶職人を招いて和釘の製造方法の指導を受けたことから、農家の副業として和釘を製造するようになる。その後、鍛冶技



術を取り入れることによって、釘だけでなく鎌、鋸、庖丁を作る専門の鍛冶職人が生まれ、『鍛冶の町』として知られるようになったという経緯があり、駅名を一つとするこの2市は今でも、協力して地域産業を守っている。

燕三条駅の改札口を出ると『燕三条駅観光物産センター 燕三条Wing』がある。ここでは、燕市と三条市で作られている製品やお土産品が美しくディスプレイされており、店の天井からは、燕三条地域を代表する職人の写真が印刷されたタペストリーが下がっている。これから始まる『ものづくり探訪の旅』の序章のようで、心をワクワクとさせる。この観光物産センターには、燕三条地域の観光案内をしてくれるコンシェルジュが常勤しており、見学できる工場についての情報も丁寧に教えてくれるのでとても心強い。

燕三条地域では、それぞれの工場で、職人が魂を込めてものづくりに励む姿を見ることができた。出来上がった製品には、創業から現在に至るまで、その工場に関わった全ての人々の哲学と情熱が反映されている。職人が丹精込めて作り出した製品の中に、職人の魂が宿ることで命が吹き込まれ、これから出会う使い手の愛情を得るべく待機しているように感じられた。ものづくりの現場を見学することによって、物の価値や、物を大切にすることの重要性を改めて学べた。

燕三条地域には、今回訪問した工場以外にも年間を通じて見学が可能な工場が17軒ある。秋の『燕三条 工場の祭典』の開催中のみに限らず、燕三条地域を訪れてはいかがだろうか。

Since then farmers made nails as a side-business and as a result they were able to have a financial back-up plan when the overflowed river damaged their cropland. Once the forging technique was developed, blacksmiths who created sickles, saws, and kitchen knives appeared. Thus this area became famous as “the town of forging”. Even though the area is divided into two municipalities, they gather to cooperate with each other to protect the local industry. So, the name of the station is symbolic for this corporation.

In the station premises, we found a neatly displayed shop named “Tsubame-Sanjo Wing” where many kinds of regional products and souvenirs are sold. Faces of craftsmen from Tsubame-Sanjo woven into hanging tapestries appeared to be almost inviting us on a trip

to discover the craftsmanship in the area. The tourist information is also available at the information desk.

In this trip, we were able to see craftsmen at work putting their heart and soul into objects. The spirit, philosophy, and passion of all the people who were involved in the factories from the time of their establishment till now are reflected in finished products. The products are animated with the soul of the craftsman and they seem to be waiting for someone who use them and love them. Through this, we understood the real meaning of “value”, and the importance of tender care towards objects. In the area of Tsubame-Sanjo there are seventeen factories which are open for the public all year round. “Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival” is a good occasion to visit factories, however even if you can't make it at this time we highly recommend you to visit factories in this area to have a once in a lifetime opportunity to witness traditional Japanese craftsmanship.









## 玉川堂 (ぎょくせんどう)

世界有数の金属加工産地である燕市のルーツは、江戸時代初期、和釘作りが始まったことに端を発すると言う。その中で、玉川堂は、19世紀初頭、江戸時代後期に鋤起銅器の製法を受け継ぎ、日常銅器の製造を始めた初代から約200年もの間、燕市で銅器を作り続けている老舗。初代は「やかん屋覚兵衛」と呼ばれていた。

日本が開国した後、ウィーン万国博覧会、世界コロンビア博覧会、日英博覧会などの海外の博覧会に出品し、国際的にもその美しさと技術は高い評価を受けている。

有形文化財に登録されている明治時代末期に建てられた重厚な造りの日本家屋。門をくぐり、敷地内に足を一歩踏み入れるだけで、タイムスリップしたような感覚を覚える。

鋤起銅器(ついきどうき)とは、一枚の銅板を鉄の金鋤で何度も叩くことによって立体の銅器を作っていく製法で、今回は口打出の急須を作る工程を見学した。通常の急須は、注ぎ口だけを後から作り、穴を開けた本体に錫で留めて作るところを、その口までも一枚の銅板から作る特殊な工法だ。しかも、図面はなく、設計図は職人の頭

## Gyokusen-do, Hand-Hammered Copper Ware



の中にだけ存在し、感覚のみで形成していくという。素人考えでは、銅板は叩くと薄くなり、その分広がるのかと思いきや、事実はその逆で、叩くことにより縮めていくという、まさにマジックのような作業を、固唾を呑んで見学した。

作業の際に生じる金属音が室内に響かないように、また、自然光をより多く採り入れることができるように窓が大きく作られている。数人の職人の、その金鋤を叩くリズムや叩き方が一人一人違うことに気付く。口打出は全ての工程を一人の職人が担当するため、製品が出来上がった後、それを作った職人が分かるらしい。まさに、神が製品に宿る瞬間を目撃したような感覚を覚えた。

鉄の金鋤は三条の鍛冶屋に作ってもらう特注品。カーンカーンと、一叩きする度に職人の魂が込められていく。

金鋤で叩いた跡が、そのまま製品の模様となる。言い換えれば、製品の肌は金鋤によって作りだされる。出来上がった製品には、金鋤を作った職人と、叩いた職人の両方の魂が籠っているのだ。

—  
玉川堂

<http://www.gyokusendo.com>

新潟県燕市中央通2丁目2番21号

TEL:0256-62-2015

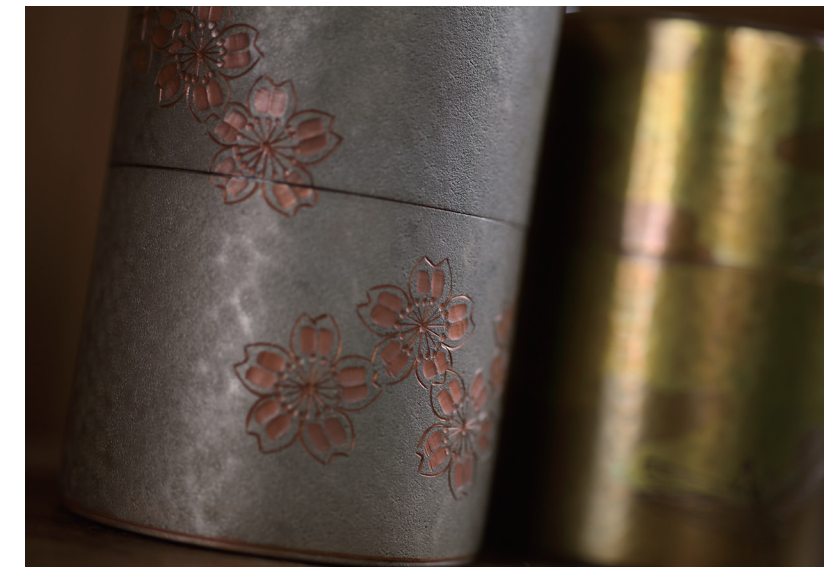
営業時間: 8:30 ~ 17:30

定休日: 日曜・祝日

上越新幹線「燕三条駅」から車で5分、弥彦線「燕駅」から徒歩3分。

Tsubame-shi is known for its metal works internationally. Among many factories of metal working Gyokusen-do is the leading hand-hammered copperware making factory. Its 200 years of history started when the founder learned the technique of making





hand-hammered copperware in the beginning of the 19th century. He made daily copperwares like kettles.

After Japan opened its gate to the world at the end of 19th century, it began to promote its high quality products to increase exports. Gyokusen-do was always included in this endeavour and even exhibited their products in Vienna World's Fair in 1873, World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, Japan-British Exhibition in 1910 and so on. In every exhibition Gyokusen-do was highly regarded for the beauty of its products and sophisticated techniques.

## The Place for Artisans Who Breathe Life into Their Craft

The factory is in a building built in the beginning of 20th century, which is now a registered Tangible Cultural Property. One step inside the gate will

make you feel as if you were transported through time. Hand-hammered copperwares are called Tsuiki-doki in Japanese. We were fortunate enough to witness the production process for teapot making. A skilled craftsman hammered a copper plate many times to make a three-dimensional shape. Normally a spout is made separately and is attached later with melted tin. But we saw a very special technique where the craftsman produced a whole teapot, even a spout. Surprisingly, he created a teapot without looking at a design drawing. He just hammered and hammered following the design



plan that he had in his brain. The technique of hand-hammering is just like a magic. You may imagine that the copper gets thinner and wider when it is hammered. However, in reality the copper plate just diminishes in size when hammered.

The room where craftsmen work has a high ceiling for acoustic reasons so as to prevent the clanking sound from reverberating. The windows are large enough to let natural light in. We noted that each craftsman has his own rhythm and the way of hammering. As one craftsman makes one product all by himself, it is distinguishable to the trained eye who created the product. While watching a craftsman hammer a copper plate, we felt as if we had witnessed the moment when an aura or spark of life enters into an object.

The iron hammer is custom-made by a blacksmith in Sanjo-shi. One clank after another, a craftsman put his heart and soul into a product. Marks made by an iron hammer become the pattern of the products. In other words, the skin of the products is made by a hammer. The soul and the spirit of the two craftsmen- the one who made the hammer and the one who uses the hammer to make the object- dwell in the final products.

—  
Gyokusen-do

<http://www.gyokusendo.com/>

2-2-21 Chuo-dori, Tsubame-shi, Niigata-ken

TEL: 0256-62-2015

Open: 8:30-17:30

Closed on Sundays and bank holidays

Access: 5 minutes by car from Tsubame-Sanjo station of Joetsu-Shinkansen, or 3 minutes on foot from Tsubame station of Yahiko-line.



## 山崎金属工業

第一次世界大戦が終了した 1918 年、初代が鋳起銅器の技術を習得した後、独立。手作業でスプーンを作る工房を開いてから現在に至るまで、日本のカトラリー（ナイフ、フォーク、スプーンなどの食卓用道具の総称）の製造を牽引してきた工場である。自ら設立したアメリカの現地法人があり、ノーベル賞 90 周年記念晩餐会用のカトラリーを作るなど、海外での評価も非常に高い。『燕三条 工場の祭典』の期間以外は見学できないが、今回は特別に工場とショールームを見学させてもらった。

日本におけるカトラリーの歴史は、日本が開国した後、西洋の文化が一般庶民にまで広がっていった歴史と重なる。山崎金属工業が設立された当初の顧客は主に、神戸や横浜に居留していた外国人であった。1960 年代、日本では洋食をナイフとフォークで食べる習慣はまだ一般的ではなかった高度経済成長の真っ只中に、世界約 65 カ国を巡り、飛込み営業で自ら世界へ販路を開拓。日本の丁寧なもの



代表取締役の山崎悦次さん  
Mr. Etsuji Yamazaki, the president

# Yamazaki Kinzoku Kogyo, Cutlery

づくりの文化を世界に広めていき、洋食器の本場であるヨーロッパやアメリカで高い評価を得るようになった。どの家庭にも、ナイフやフォークが置いてあるようになった現在、日本製カトラリーの90%を生産している燕市の中で、山崎金属工業は中心的な存在となっている。

カトラリーの品質とは、デザインの美しさ、手触り、口触りと舌触りである。実にカトラリーとは、食卓において三役をこなさなければならぬ運命を背負わされた珍しい道具である。食事が運ばれる前からテーブルの上にセットされているカトラリーは、これから運ばれて来る美味しい食事を想像させる主人公の一人として、食事が運ばれた際には、作られた料理をより洗練され、文明的であると見せる脇役として。そして、料理を食べるべく口の中に運ぶ際には、その存在をできる限り消して主役をサポートする黒子となる。いくら美しいスプーン / フォークであっても、口の中に入れた時に存在を主張するのでは、質の高いスプーン / フォークとは言えないのである。ここでは、安価品は 10 工程ほどで作られるところを約 35 工程、デザインによっては 50 以上の工程をかけて作っている。

カトラリーは日本の伝統的な道具ではないが、ここで作られているのは、日本の職人が手間と知恵を余すところなくかけた Made in Japan の素晴らしい製品だ。日本の家庭やホテルなどの飲食店はもちろん、多くの国で使われている。

—  
山崎金属工業

<http://www.yamazakitableware.co.jp>

新潟県燕市大曲 2570 番地

工場見学は、『燕三条 工場の祭典』の期間のみ可能。

Yamazaki Kinzoku Kogyo (Yamazaki Metalworking Factory) has been a leading factory of cutlery in Japan. Its history dates back to 1918, the year when World War I ended, when the founder set up a small factory of handmade spoons after he learned the technique of making hand-hammered copper ware. Their products have been highly valued also in the overseas market. They supplied cutlery for the gala dinner which celebrated the 90th anniversary of Nobel Prize. Their factory is open for public only during the four days of

“Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival”, but as an exception to this rule we were allowed to see the factory and the showroom.

The history of cutlery in Japan started after the country opened its door to the world and its domestic lifestyle slowly gravitated towards Westernization. Before that, chopsticks were the only tools used at the dinner table. Thus the first clients of Yamazaki were Westerners who were living in foreign settlements such as Kobe and Yokohama. In the 1960s when the custom of using knives and forks were still not common among ordinary Japanese people, Yamazaki visited 65 countries in the world to develop sales channels. As he spread the philosophy of precise product making all over the world, his cutlery became highly valued in Europe and the US, the homelands of cutlery. Now almost every household in Japan has

knives and forks. In Tsubame-shi, where about 90% of Japanese cutlery is made, Yamazaki Kinzoku Kogyo plays a leading role.

## The Place for Artisans Who Breathe Life into Their Craft

The beauty of the design, the texture felt in your hands, and the texture felt on your lips and tongue...these are the key elements that differentiate good cutlery from ordinary ones according to Mr. Yamazaki. In fact, cutlery has three roles: Cutlery set on the table should be beautiful and inviting as the main character; When dishes are displayed on the table, cutlery should enhance their appearance to ensure the place setting looks civilized and gorgeous; And when are actually in use, they must not dominate their users sense of taste. Even a very beautiful fork cannot be qualified as a fork of high quality if a user's lips identify the metallic feel or taste. Low-priced cutlery is made through about ten processes, while in this factory there are about 35 or more than 50 depending on the designs. Although cutlery is not a traditional Japanese tool, the cutlery of Yamazaki is truly a “Made in Japan” product, crafted with extra care and great expertise.

—  
Yamazaki Kinzoku Kogyo

<http://www.yamazakitableware.co.jp/>

2570 Oomagari, Tsubame-shi, Niigata prefecture

Factory is only open to the public during the Factory Festival





## 庖丁工房タダフサ

1948年、戦後間もなく創業の庖丁工房タダフサ。創業当初は、鎌、小刀、庖丁を手がけ、その後、漁業用刃物・家庭用刃物・本職用刃物・蕎麦切り庖丁などの多岐に亘った刃物を鍛造し販売するようになった。まずは、モダンなデザインの建物に驚き、次に中へ一歩足を踏み入れると、様々な庖丁がディスプレイされ、アトリエのようなショールームに感動を感じる。なかなかお目にかかることのない形状の刃物類を見ていると、驚きのエクスクラメーションマークが頭の中を駆け巡る。様々な刃物の形をじっと見つめていると、一言で『切る』と言っても、切る物の大きさ、形、硬さ、厚みなどによって、力の入れ具合や、また動作そのものが異なるものだと気付く。使い手の立場で、可能な限り使いやすくと考案し工夫した結果であり、熟練の職人たちによって生みだされた、ものづくりの真髓を実感させる逸品ばかりだ。今は製造されていない刃物の数々も、ギャラリーには展示されている。

家庭での食生活も多様化し、今では珍しくなくなったパン切り庖丁。パン切り庖丁と言えば、刃全体がワニの歯のようになっている物が主流だが、庖丁工房タダフサのそれは、先端だけがワニの歯状になっている。これで切れるのか？ 試し切りを試してみる。切り始めをワニの歯がとらえ、柔らかい食パンをつぶすことなく、滑るように、今

## Tadafusa, Knives

まで感じたことのないような切れ味で思い通りの厚さに切れてしまう。切れ味がこれほど良いと、顔がほころんでしまう。良い切れ味は使い手の喜びなのだ。

工場では、まさに、『鉄は熱いうちに打て』を実践するが如く、真っ赤に溶けた鉄を叩いて刃物を作っていく。職人は、機械に取りつけられた大型のハンマーを足で操作し、刃物を叩いていく。鉄を溶かす火の熱さを感じ、一心に刃物を叩く職人は、使い手の笑顔のために魂を込めているのだ。なぜなら、刃物を使う者の喜びが、その切れ味であると知っているから。

—  
庖丁工房タダフサ 直営店 / 工場

<http://www.tadafusa.com>

新潟県三条市東本成寺 27-16

TEL:0256-32-2184

業務時間：8時～17時 / 工場見学が可能な時間：10時～11時半、13時半～16時

In famous Kappabashi, Tokyo, which is known as “a kitchenware town” where there are hundreds of shops selling various kinds of kitchenware, many tourists who buy Japanese knives are seen. Culinary experts regard the superior quality of Japanese knives internationally. Tadafusa started its history as a knife-maker in 1948, soon after the World War II ended. At the beginning, they made mainly sickles, short swords and kitchen knives but their product range soon broadened and they began to make various kinds of knives corresponding to the purpose of use as knives for fishermen, kitchen knives for household, kitchen knives for professional cooks, kitchen knives for *soba* makers. *Soba* are Japanese noodles made with buck wheat and they are like Italian *tagliatelle* made by cutting the dough with a knife. *Soba* making requires a heavy, straight and long knife. Tadafusa has produced and sold all kinds of knives



imaginable suited to the purposes of their users.

In a showroom with a modern design that reminds us an atelier where artists work, various kinds of knives are displayed like art works. Some of them have “strange” shapes. It is an amusing game to imagine the purpose for which they were made. All the characteristics are meaningful, which are solutions developed by the skillful craftsmen of Tadafusa for the problems and challenges of their clients. Cutting is an action to divide or to make something smaller or thinner. It may also be used for breaking. Looking at every piece of a knife, however, you can be astonished to realize that the actions



## The Place for Artisans Who Breathe Life into Their Craft

of human body and the intentions are different depending on what one is trying to cut. To be precise, the degree of pressure and motion involved in cutting change depending on the size,

the shape, the hardness, and thickness. Also, the skill-level of user, professional or novice, would be another key factor. These knives are artworks created by craftsmen who put themselves in users' shoes, which is the spirit of Japanese craftsmanship!

As eating habits in Japan are now Westernized, bread knives are not so rare in many households. Normally their edges are all wavy and serrated, but the bread knife of Tadafusa is different. Just for a few centimeters the tip is serrated and other part is flat just like normal knives. This bread knife was made for Japan's bread culture. Even though hard-crust bread is popular in Japan now, the bread mainly preferred is *shoku-pan* (trans. bread for meal), a soft and white square shaped loaf. In supermarkets shoku-pan is usually sold already sliced. Those who appreciate high quality bread prefer to buy a loaf in bakeries and cut them by themselves. As shoku-pan's crust is soft and the inner part is even softer, if sliced with a blunt knife the bread will be pressed or with a serrated one its surface will become rough. This is where Tadafusa's bread knife comes in. Its serrated tip holds the soft crust and its sharp edge goes through the bread so smoothly. You should try using it at Tadafusa's showroom. You will know how pleasing the sharpness of a well made knife is! This knife is also recommended for cutting soft things with skin such as tomatoes.

“Strike while the iron is hot.” This is a famous idiomatic phrase which is also used in Japan. Here in Tadafusa's factory, you can see craftsmen striking red-hot iron. They operate a hammering machine by foot and carefully watch the state of the iron. It is as if the spirit of craftsmen who know that sharpness will bring happiness to users is pumped into the knife with every pound of a hammer.

—  
Tadafusa, atelier of kitchen knives

<http://www.tadafusa.com/>

27-16 Higashi-honjoji, Sanjo-shi, Niigata prefecture

Tel: 0256-32-2184

Open: from 8:00 to 17:00 / Factory tour: from 10:00 to 11:30, from 13:30 to 16:00





## マルナオ

元々、初代は仏壇彫刻師であり、寺社を装飾する彫刻を施す会社として1939年に創業した。現在では、黒檀や紫檀など、家具や仏壇に使われる最高級の硬木を使用して作る箸を中心に、スプーンやエスプレッソカップ、ステーションナリーを製造している。シンプルモダンな外観で、お洒落なブティックを思わせる店内には、細く華奢な造りの箸が美しくディスプレイされている。

工場は、ショールームのガラス越しに見ることができる。一人一人の職人が、細い木をさらに細く削っている。木を荒削りにした後、形を整え、先端を極細にしていく繊細な作業のため、一人の職人が1日に作ることができる箸は40膳。極細に仕上げつつも、面と面で滑らずに物をつまむため箸先を八角形にする。手元と箸先を八角形にし、真ん中を十六角形に削るという特殊な形は、使いやすさを追



求した結果生み出された。

マルナオの特徴である細くて軽い箸は、その存在を感じさせず、持った瞬間に違和感なく手にしっくりと馴染む。細く仕上げられた先端は、どんなに小さなものでも難なくつまむことができる。小さい頃から、マルナオの箸を使えば、箸さばきの楽しさが身体に染み付き、食べることそのものを楽しく感じられるに違いない。

—

マルナオ

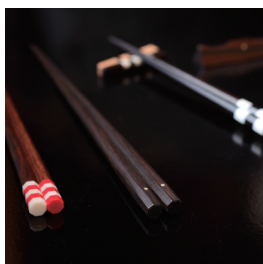
<http://www.marunao.com>

新潟県三条市矢田 1662-1

TEL: 0256-45-7001

店舗の営業時間：10時～19時

工場見学が可能な時間：9時～17時半



## Marunao, chopsticks

Chopsticks are also good souvenirs of Japan among foreigners. Now Japanese cuisine is popular in overseas many people are getting accustomed to eating with chopsticks. Japanese people are known to be clever with their fingers, which is probably because they use chopsticks. Chopsticks, however, run the gamut from disposable ones to ones of high quality. Here in Marunao, you will know the best of chopsticks and witness the process for their production. The founder of Marunao was a craftsman who started his career creating wood-carvings for Buddhist wooden cabinets. At the time of the foundation of the company in 1939, they offered wood-carvings to temples and shrines. Lately, they make mainly chopsticks using ebony and rosewood. These wood types are hard and traditionally used for furniture, including Buddhist wood cabinets. Marunao also makes and sells wooden spoons, wooden espresso cups and stationery with the unused sections of wood remaining from chopstick production. In their modern style shop, which is cool and simple like a luxurious boutique, fine and delicate chopsticks of the highest quality are displayed. In the factory you can see how craftsmen work through a glass window. Chopsticks are made, one by one, by scraping a piece of wood. The thinness and the shape of the chopsticks are key to a successful design. The tip and the base are made into an octagon, while the center part is made into a hexadecagon. This is the ultimate shape of chopsticks, which has been developed through a desire to optimise their functionality. The chopsticks with flat shape and eight sides make it easy to pick up even small and unstable pieces of food. The chopsticks of Marunao are also light. When you hold them they fit comfortably in your hand. If you eat traditional Japanese dishes like sashimi using these chopsticks, you will know the real meaning of Japanese cuisine, which places importance on the delicacy of picking up small portions of food.

—  
Marunao  
<http://www.marunao.com>  
1662-1 Yada, Sanjo-shi, Niigata prefecture  
TEL: 0256-45-7001  
Opening hours of shop: from 10:00 to 19:00  
Factory tour: from 9:00 to 17:30

Beyond Ordinary Itineraries  
Niigata Prefecture

日本の魅力 発見プロジェクト  
新潟県

新潟市  
醸す町

## Chapter 2

### “Niigata-shi”

The Town of Richly Fermented Culture

text by *Rei Saionji*  
photographs by *Hide Urabe*





醸す力で  
ヒト・コト・モノが  
つながる

The Power of Fermentation  
Can Also Connect People, Events and Products

『醸す (かもす)』とは、麴に水を加えて酒や味噌、醤油を作ること  
を意味するが、他に、ある事態を作り出してゆくという意味もある。  
新潟では、一つの会社や一つの店が独自の活動を行う他に、複数の  
会社や店や地域が垣根を超えて力を合わせることで、さらに魅  
力的な活動を作り出している。それぞれの持ち味に、協力という名  
の麴を加えることにより、さらにその魅力が倍增されるという『醸  
す力』を新潟市で見つけた。

燕三条地域の工場見学で日中を過ごした後、新潟のナイトライフを  
楽しもうと日本海側の新潟市へと移動した。燕三条から新潟までは  
新幹線で約 12 分、車で約 30 分。古くから信濃川、阿賀野川の水運  
により、周辺の様々な物資が集まり、江戸時代からは北前船が立ち  
寄る日本海側有数の港湾都市として繁栄してきた。日本海の魚、米、  
野菜や果物、酒など、地域の豊富な食の魅力を楽しむことができる  
エリアだ。また江戸時代、北前船の港町として賑わいをみせた古町  
は、訪れる人をもてなす芸妓文化や料亭文化が発展し、京都の祇園、  
東京の新橋と並ぶ花街と言われた。

Like other historical cities in Japan, the circumstances surrounding  
Niigata-shi have drastically changed. Currently, Niigata-shi is focus-  
ing on their gastronomic culture as it is the leading sake producing  
area in Japan. To make sake from rice, as well as to make wine from  
grape juice and to make bread rise, the process of fermentation is  
essential. Japanese cuisine would not be so delicious if our ancestors  
had not learned the process of fermentation. Soy sauce, miso (trans.



soybean paste), natto (trans. fermented soybeans) are also made with  
that process. In technical terms, fermentation involves converting  
materials by making good use of their various microorganisms. To  
make delicious food or drink by fermentation, it is important to  
consider and take advantage of the functions and merits of each  
microorganism. It is said that we are only aware of only five to ten  
percent of all the microorganisms that exist in the world. Thus the  
power of microorganisms and their power through fermentation  
have enormous potential. The same goes for Niigata-shi. There are  
residents who produce, cultivate, run shops and restaurants, work or  
who love the products and their hometown. They all have certain  
functions and merits. If they work in harmony influencing each  
other just like microorganisms work for fermentation, the town  
becomes more and more attractive. In this regard, the metaphor of  
fermentation encapsulates the power of Niigata-shi. After spending  
the daytime at marvelous factories in the Tsubame-Sanjo area, we  
moved northward to Niigata-shi, the coastal zone along the Sea of

The Power of Fermentation  
Can Also Connect People,  
Events and Products

Japan, to seek gastronomic de-  
lights. To go to Niigata-shi from  
the Tsubame-Sanjo area it takes  
about half an hour by car. If you  
take Joetsu-Shinkansen, it takes

only 12 minutes. Niigata-shi is known as a city of gastronomy with  
fish caught in the Sea of Japan, rice, vegetables, fruits and sake. From  
the 17th century to the end of the 19th century, when the method  
of transportation was mainly by ship, Niigata-shi was prosperous  
as a port city thanks to the Kitamae-bune (trans. northern-bound  
ships) that visited. Kitamae-bune are merchant ships founded by  
a great merchant in the Hokuriku area. They carried various kinds  
of products that the merchants bought and sold at several ports.  
Simply put, it was like a mobile market. It went from the north part  
of Japan such as Hokkaido and Tohoku, along the coast of the Sea  
of Japan passing the Seto Inland Sea and the coast of the Pacific to  
Osaka. People have always tended to gather where there is good  
business. The port city of Niigata was not the exception and was  
very prosperous. In particular, in Frumachi town there were many  
restaurants where Geiko who were trained in traditional dancing,  
music and singing entertained customers, just like Gion in Kyoto.

新潟市を  
楽しむための  
様々なイベント



この地域の飲食店を巡って“はしご酒”をする「古町花街ぶらり酒」というイベントが過去8回にわたって実施されている。4枚綴りのチケットが付いたマップを購入し参加店の「ぶらり酒メニュー（料理1品、飲み物1杯）」を楽しめるというイベントで、期間内に最大4店のはしご酒が可能になる。2016年の参加店は80軒。数居が高そうな店も、この機会を利用して気軽に覗いてみるのが嬉しい。

さすが米所、酒所の新潟は蔵元の数が日本一の県で、全国的に有名な日本酒もあれば、県外ではあまりお目にかかることのない銘柄もたくさんある。お薦めは地酒で、地元の野菜や魚介類を使った料理にとっても合う。

2016年から期間限定で「レストランバス」を運行している。このバスの1階は、オーブンや電子レンジ、冷蔵庫などの調理器具を揃えたキッチン。2階にはテーブルが設置され、乗客は見学した農家の食材を活かした料理や新潟の酒を味わいながら窓越しに見る風景を楽しむ。2017年も新潟を楽しむレストランバスが運行される予定だ。

The event called “Furumachi Hanamachi Burari-zake” (trans. Bar-hopping in Furumachi, an old Geisha district) has been held annually over the past eight years. For this event, a map with four tickets attached is sold. One ticket is for one drink and one dish. In 2016, 80 restaurants and bars were on the list of participants. Restaurants in Japan are well known for the plastic food models placed outside



which make it clear what kind of food is offered. Elegant and high quality restaurants, however, do not have this. Here, too, most of the doors of restaurants are closed and sometimes look so elegant and unfriendly. This ticket allows them to show their warm and welcoming side by providing you with the opportunity to make a trial visit.

Niigata is a leading producer of rice and sake. The sake lists are huge from nationally famous ones to the ones rarely seen outside Niigata. Try the local sake first. It goes well with dishes cooked with the local ingredients and local recipes.

A special sightseeing bus tour called the “Restaurant Bus” started in 2016 here in Niigata. The unique aspect of this tour is the double-decker bus itself. These days, double-decker bus is not so rare. However, a double-decker bus whose lower deck is converted into a fully equipped kitchen is rather unique. The top deck is converted into a restaurant which offers French and Italian dishes cooked with local ingredients fresh out of the kitchen underneath. Good restaurants are expected to have extravagant interiors, decorated with things such as gorgeous chandeliers or paintings. On the bus, the beautiful scenery of countryside in Niigata embellishes the dining experience. The tour includes the visits to the places where ingredients used by the restaurant are produced, such as sake breweries and farmhouses. Some activities are also included. In 2017 the Restaurant Bus offers several courses from April to June. For the detailed information about each tour, the schedule and the reservation, take a look at <http://willerexpress.com/en/restaurantbus>





## 発酵の町 「沼垂（ぬったり）」地区

## A Town of Richly Fermented Culture

新潟駅から徒歩20分ほどのところにある沼垂地区は、新潟の港町で米の積み出し港として栄えていた。昭和30年代後半、堀を埋め立てて作られた通りに、近隣の農家や魚屋が出店する市場が作られ、当時の店舗数は100を超えるほどに賑わいをみせていた。年号が平成へと変わり、大型小売店の郊外への進出により全国的に商店街の運命に影が差すようになった2000年代、ここ沼垂の市場も1日中シャッターが閉まっている店舗が多くなった。

しかし、2010年頃からその様相が少しずつ変わり始め、寂れてしまっていた昭和の市場が、新しい文化という麴と出会うことで『醸し』が始まった。

昭和に建てられたトタン作りの店舗を改装し、新しく店舗を営む若者が現れ始め、「沼垂市場通り」は、2015年に、昭和レトロな雰囲気が残る、おしゃれで新しい『沼垂テラス』という商店街に生まれ変わった。カフェ、雑貨店、花屋、ジュエリーショップや工房、アトリエを始め、八百屋や肉屋もあり、散策がとても楽しい。

沼垂地区は古くから、発酵の町として、この地域の食文化を支えてきた地域でもある。海風により、冬は寒く夏は暑いという気候が発酵には適している。町を流れる栗の木川（現在は国道）の両岸に酒蔵、味噌蔵、醤油蔵が立ち並び、原料や製品の運搬に川が利用された。最盛期の沼垂地区には、40～50の発酵食品関連の会社があり、現在は6軒。沼垂テラスから徒歩10分ほどの所にある、沼垂を代表する酒蔵「今代司酒造」と味噌蔵「峰村醸造」を訪れた。

The Nuttari area is located about 20 minutes on foot from Niigata Station and was once a busy district as a port city receiving regular rice shipments. In 1960s the streets, developed on reclaimed moats, were lined with over a hundred shops owned by neighboring farmers



and fishermen. It was like a local market. In 2000s the circumstances here have also changed. While the number of supermarkets has increased, the number of small businesses in this area has decreased resulting in empty, shuttered streets. However some changes have been seen since 2010, as new cultures appear along the old desolated high street. Young artists have renovated the inner part of the old shops and started their own businesses. In 2015, this high street was converted into the street called “Nuttari Terrace”, where there are cafés, knick-knack shops, flower shops, jewelry shops, studios and ateliers of artists, as well as vegetable and butcher shops. It has become a district which is a lot of fun to explore. The Nuttari area has also been known for supporting the food culture of Niigata by producing food and drinks made through fermentation. The climate, cold with the sea breeze in Winter and hot in Summer, is suitable for fermentation. Sake breweries, miso factories, and soy sauce factories once lined up along the Kurinoki River, which has since been remodeled into a national road, and the products and ingredients were transported by waterway. Once there were 40 to 50 factories and food shops reliant on the fermentation process. Now only six remain, including a sake brewery and a miso factory, which we visited, about ten minutes walk from Nutari Terrace.



## 今代司酒造

(いまよつかさしゅぞう)

明治時代に建てられた建物が今もそのまま残る今代司酒造では、いつでも酒蔵見学をすることができ、アメリカ人のスタッフもいるため、多くの外国人観光客の見学でも賑わっている。

創業は1767年。昆布や鯨などを北海道の松前から日本海を通って大阪へ運ぶ北前船が新潟に頻繁に寄港したため、当時は江戸よりも人口が多かったと言われているこの地で、明治初期まで酒の卸業や旅館業、飲食業を行っていたという今代司酒造が本格的に酒造りを始めたのは明治中頃。今代司酒造の建物は明治の頃を思わせるような木造建築。のれんをくぐり、蔵に一步足を踏み入れると、時代を感じさせる看板や道具類が目に入り、酒を仕込むための麴の匂いが鼻をくすぐる。

映画の撮影でも使われるという立派な建物は完成されていないという。「完成と同時に崩壊が始まる」という日本の木造建築の俗信に則っていて、歪んでいる部分もそのままにされている。この歴史ある蔵では、蔵人から今代司の酒造りを学びながら見学できる。「お客様のための蔵見学なのですが、実は蔵人にとって“何のために酒造りをしているのか”という根幹部分を再認識する良い機会となっています」と今代司酒造、代表取締役社長の田中氏は語る。今代司酒造は、老舗としての「守るべき伝統を守る」という務めの他に、常に新しいことに挑戦し続けることによって新風を吹き込む務めも果たしている。JR東日本の農業法人が生産した酒米を使い、新潟県内限定販売の日本酒「新潟しゅぽっぽ」を他の蔵と協同で造ったり、新潟市の農家や飲食店とコラボし、米作りから酒の仕込み、提供方







今代司酒造株式会社 代表取締役社長  
田中洋介さん

Mr. Yosuke Tanaka, president of  
Imayotsukasa-shuzo

## Imayotsukasa Shuzo, a sake brewery

法までを考慮に入れた酒「おむすび」を造るなど、酒造りの枠を超えて、地酒によって地域全体を結びつけることにより、新潟の魅力さをさらに『醸し』ている。

酒が貴重品だった頃、少しでも酒を多く売りたい酒蔵は水で薄めて出荷し、酒屋が消費者に販売する時にさらに水で薄めていた時代があったという。そのように薄められた酒を「金魚が泳げるほど」薄いという意味で、『金魚酒』と呼ばれていた。そんな時代でも、今代司酒造では決して酒を薄めることなく販売していたという自負から作られた錦鯉をデザインしたボトルの酒『錦鯉』。日本のグッドデザイン賞を始め、フランス、アメリカ、ドイツ、イタリア、イギリス、ベルギー、香港で高い評価を受けた。

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今代司酒造株式会社

www.imayotsukasa.com

新潟県新潟市中央区鏡が岡 1-1 TEL:025-245-3231

The very astonishing old building of Imayotsukasa Shuzo (trans. Imayotsukasa Brewery) made our hearts beat. Before this brewery specialized in sake brewing in the end of the 19th century, the family was one of the leading merchants in the area that managed the sake dealer, inns and restaurants since 1767, when the town of Niigata was prosperous due to Kitamae-bune. The wooden old building is said to be built in the Meiji Era (1868-1912). One step inside the building, passing through *noren* (trans. a vertical fabric hanging in front of the entrance), you may feel as if you had travelled into the past. You will see an old signboard and old tools. You will detect the scent of wood and sake brewing. This perfectly preserved old building is also used as a set for film. However, Mr. Tanaka said that the building is actually not completed. Following the Japanese traditional philosophy, “the completion is the beginning of the collapse,” the family is leaving the incomplete areas as they are. Among many traditional shops, that try to protect traditions of old, Imayotsukasa Shuzo is always taking on the challenge of new projects. For example, they made sake collaborating with the agricultural corporation of JR East (railroad company) and other breweries using only the rice harvested in Niigata prefecture called “Niigata Shuppoppo” (cf: Shuppoppo is an onomatopoeia word for the sound that a locomotive train makes). They also make sake named Omusubi (trans. rice ball) collaborating with local farmers and

restaurants. (cf: A rice ball is usually called in two ways in Japanese: ‘onigiri’ or ‘omusubi’, which are completely interchangeable. ‘Onigiri’, grammatically speaking, consists of two elements: ‘o’ which is an exalted prefix which shows respect and ‘nigiri’ which means ‘grasping’. On the other hand, ‘omusubi’ consists of the same ‘o’ and ‘musubi’ which means ‘connecting’. Now you know why Imayotsukasa Shuzo chose the name ‘Omusubi’ for their sake!) And this is just the tip of the iceberg! Imayotsukasa Shuzo not only produces sake through the fermentation process, but it also plays the role of a microorganism for the “fermentation” of the area, to make it a better place. When sake was more valuable, some breweries wanted to maximize their profit, and so they diluted sake with water. As even sake dealers diluted their products, it got to the point where sake became so watery that goldfish could stay alive in it! As a result, bogus sake was called “gold fish sake”. Imayotsukasa Shuzo made a series of sake in a bottle that looks like a beautiful *nishiki-go* (trans. brocaded carp) to convey the message that they have never made gold fish sake but more valuable “carp sake.” This bottle won Good Design Award in Japan and also won prizes in France, USA, Germany, Italy, UK, Belgium and Hong Kong. You must see Imayotsukasa Shuzo’s showroom which showcases all of their sake products. You can also taste their sake. The brewery is open to the public for the brewery tour. An English tour, provided by an American staff member is available, but reservation beforehand is required.

—

[http://www.imayotsukasa.com/index\\_eng.htm](http://www.imayotsukasa.com/index_eng.htm)

1-1 Kagamigaoka, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi, Niigata prefecture

TEL: 025-245-3231

Open from 9:00 to 17:00



1 |

「今代司は『金魚酒』ならず。威風堂々たる『錦鯉』。『新潟しゅぽぽ』の包み紙裏面には地域情報を載せるという工夫も。

Various bottles of sake of Imayotsukasa Shuzo including the “carp sake” (left)



## 峰村醸造

明治38年創業の味噌蔵。最盛期の沼垂地区には、40軒以上の醸造蔵が軒を並べていたものの、現在は10軒以下と少なくなった。この厳しい状況の中、峰村醸造は、今代司酒造とともに沼垂地区を醸造の町として蘇らせようと力を尽くしている。この地は、日本海から吹く北風にさらされる冬は寒く、夏は高温多湿になる。この気候によって微生物の働きが活発になり、発酵食品を仕込むには最適なのだ。味噌は30度を超える日が1ヶ月以上ないとできず、創業当時は、温度が上がるように神に祈り、仕込んだ味噌を置いておいたと志村さんは言う。それほど暑い日が続くと、当初抱いていた新潟＝雪国のイメージが崩れる。

峰村醸造を経営する峰村商店、代表取締役の志村氏は、「味噌は、大豆と塩さえあれば出来る」と言う。「手前味噌」という言葉が存在しているように、昔は、味噌をつくる家庭も多かった。煮て柔らかくした大豆を潰し、米麴と混ぜて寝かせる。しかし、原料の大豆の種類、米などの大豆の他に用いる副原料、麴などの微生物、そして仕込み方によって味は変わってくる。峰村醸造の味噌づくりに欠かせないのは、歴史ある峰村醸造の建物の天井についた常在菌。つく

2 |

株式会社峰村商店 代表取締役社長  
志村毅さん

Mr. Takeshi Shimura, president of  
Minemura Jozo

り手の伝統を守り、後の世代に伝えてきた先祖の教えとともに、この常在菌も存在し続けて来たのである。

峰村醸造では、丁寧な説明をしてもらいながら味噌づくりの工程を見学できるが、全ての工程を見せてくれる味噌蔵は珍しい。味噌づくり見学とともに、味噌づくり体験もできる。味噌づくりの見学の前に食べてはいけない物は納豆だ。納豆菌はとても強い菌で、少しでも大豆に混ざると、味噌にならずに納豆になってしまう。このため、子供連れの家族を含め、誰でも味噌づくりの見学と体験をすることができるが、納豆を食べた人と納豆職人は例外である。

醸造の技術は発酵によって旨味を引き出すこと。峰村醸造では、味噌や味噌漬だけではなく、長年培われた醗酵・醸造の技術と経験を応用し、出汁、酢等の発酵・醸造から生まれる調味料も取り扱っている。江戸後期から明治初期に建てられた土蔵の内部をリノベーションして作られた直売店で、ゆっくりと試食しながらのショッピングも楽しい。

株式会社峰村商店

<http://www.minemurashouten.com>

新潟県新潟市中央区明石 2-3-44 TEL:025-247-9321

A traditional basic Japanese style meal consists of rice, miso soup and pickles, which is like the Western staples foods: potatoes (or bread), meat and salad. Miso soup is made simply by dissolving miso in boiling water, with *dashi* broth added, mainly made with *kombu* (trans. dried kelp) or *katsuo-bushi* (trans. bonito fish flakes). *Tofu* (trans. bean curd) cut in small cubes, and various kinds of vegetables, clams or seaweed are popular





ingredients. With all these flavors in mind, what then is miso? In short, it is fermented soybean paste. Miso was something indispensable for home cooking, and it used to be eaten every day in one way for another at home. Miso can be used as sauce and as a base for pickling and marinating, for example. As the production process is simple, it was once made at home. Soak soybeans in water, and then boil and mash them. Add water and salt, and stir the paste continuously. Crumble *koji* (trans. steamed rice that has *koji* mold cultivated on) and mix well until the texture becomes smooth. Put the paste into a container and wait for 6 to 12 months, while it ferments. If you have seen miso sold in a shop, you may have noticed that there are various types of miso in different colors, from whitish ones to blackish ones, whose taste is also different. Whitish ones tend to be mild and sweet, on the other hand, blackish ones tend to be salty and strong. This difference comes from various factors: the type of *koji* mold, the amount of salt added and the length of fermentation. Miso differs by who makes it and the area in which it is developed.

Minemura Jozo, the miso maker, was founded in 1905. As the climate of this area is cold in Winter with an onshore breeze and hot and humid in Summer, the conditions are advantageous for fermentation. As a result, there used to be more than 40 factories in which alcoholic beverages and food were made through the fermentation process in the Nuttari area during its golden era. Sadly, the number of these factories decreased according to the change of times and people's lifestyle. Minemura Jozo, together with Imayotsukasa Shuzo, is trying to rehabilitate this area as "Town of Fermentation".

Mr. Shimura, the president, gave us a tour to show us the processes of miso making. This factory is also open to the public. Visitors can also try miso making and can bring the miso that they make back home as souvenir. Any visitors can go on this tour of miso making process, save for those who have eaten *natto* or who work at *natto* factories. *Natto* is a food made through the fermentation process with microorganisms called *Natto-kin* (trans. grass bacillus), which are very strong bacterium. If the miso as a paste comes in contact with this microorganism, even just a small amount, it will be converted to *natto*!

"What we do is to educe *umami* (trans. savory taste) through fermentation process," says Mr. Shimura. Minemura Jozo produces not only miso and miso regarded food such as pickles and foods marinated in miso, but

併設するショップでは麴を使った様々な商品を扱っている。

The interior of the historical building was renovated into a shop.

also various products made with *koji* that have been inoculated with fermentation process. They are available in their shop, which is in a historical building built at the end of the 19th century.

—  
Minemura Shoten

[http://www.imayotsukasa.com/index\\_eng.htm](http://www.imayotsukasa.com/index_eng.htm)

2-3-44, Akashi, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi, Niigata prefecture TEL: 025-247-9321







Gyokusen-do, a hand-hammered copper ware factory



Tadafusa, a knives factory

Ramen (Koshu Hanten)

The Tsubame-Sanjo area, Niigata city  
in Niigata prefecture  
— *Niigata in your pockets*

# One Day Trip

*to Tsubamesanjo by Joetsu Shinkansen*

## INVITATION to TSUBAME-SANJO

Tsubame-Sanjo is a historic and world-famous place for its metal products in the Niigata prefecture. Several factories are always open for visitors, in which you can see how excellent products are made by artisans. The manufacturing process, the spirit of artisans towards their creations, as well as the beauty of the finished products will captivate you.

## TIME SCHEDULE

TIME	SCHEDULE	TRANSPORTATION
07:48	Tokyo Station (東京駅)	Joetsu Shinkansen Max Toki 305 (上越新幹線 Max とき)
09:45	Tsubame-Sanjo Station (燕三条駅)	
		JR Yahiko Line (JR 弥彦線)
10:05	Yahiko Station (弥彦駅)	
		Walk (10 min.)
10:15	Yahiko Shrine (弥彦神社)	
		Walk (10 min.)
11:00	Mt. Yahiko (弥彦山) Ropeway Station	
		Ropeway
11:30	Mountaintop of Mt. Yahiko	
		Ropeway
12:30	Mt. Yahiko Ropeway Station	
		10.1km Taxi (18min. 3,400 yen)
13:00	Lunch at Ramen restaurant, Koshu Hanten (杭州飯店)	
		2.2km Taxi (6min. 700 yen)
14:00	Gyokusen-do (玉川堂)	
		12km Taxi (23 min. 4,000 yen)
15:30	Tadafusa (包丁工房タダフサ)	
		6.1km Taxi (15 min. 2,000 yen)
16:30	Marunao (マルナオ)	
		10.1km Taxi (20 min. 3,500 yen)
18:24	Tsubame-Sanjo Station (燕三条駅)	Joetsu Shinkansen Max Toki 342 (上越新幹線 Max とき)
20:12	Tokyo Station (東京駅)	

## WHAT TO SEE

### •Yahiko Shrine (弥彦神社)

A historical shrine which is said to be founded in 717 but was burnt down in 1912. Current building was built in 1916. The deity worshiped in the shrine is believed to have divine power for prosperity and success in business.

2887-2 Yahiko, Yahiko-mura, Nishi-kanbara-gun (西蒲原郡弥彦村弥彦 2887-2)  
TEL: 0256-94-2001

### •Mt. Yahiko (弥彦山)

A very beautiful holy mountain (634m). The view from the mountaintop is beyond description, especially at sunset. (Ropeway: 1,400 yen for a round trip)  
There is a restaurant at mountaintop.

### •Gyokusen-do, a hand-hammered copper ware factory (玉川堂)

A Hand-hammered copper ware factory with 200 years of history. A very interesting factory tour in which you can see all the process including the hand hammering by artisans is a "must". You can also purchase beautiful products at a showroom.

2-2-21 Chuo-dori, Tsubame-shi (燕市中央通 2-2-21)

TEL: 0256-62-2015

Factory tour: 8:30-17:30

Closed on Sundays and National Holidays

### •Tadafusa, a knives factory (包丁工房タダフサ)

Various kinds of knives are displayed like art works in a modern designed showroom. A factory tour is also available. (Reservation required.)

27-16 Higashi-honjoji, Sanjo-shi (三条市東本成寺 27-16)

TEL: 0256-32-2184

Factory tour : 10:00-11:30,13:30-16:00

Closed on Sundays and National Holidays

### •Marunao, a chopsticks factory (マルナオ)

Fine and svelte chopsticks of highest quality are displayed in the cool and simple boutique-like shop. In the factory you can see how craftsmen work through a glass window.

1662-1 Yada, Sanjo-shi (三条市 矢田 1662-1)

TEL: 0256-45-7001

Factory tour : 09:00-17:30

Closed on Sundays (Only factory tour is closed and shop is open all year round.)

## RESTAURANTS

### •Koshu Hanten (杭州飯店)

The most popular *ramen* restaurant among the locals. It offers ramen of *seabura* type, which is the specialty of this area. Pork back fat is cooked for a long time until it melts, and is then sprinkled on top of the ramen, where small pieces stay afloat, to enhance the flavor of the soup. It seems heavy but it tastes amazingly lighter than it looks. This type of ramen was invented to keep the soup hot during the delivery to factories.

49-4 Tsubame, Tsubame-shi (燕市燕 49-4)

(10 min. walk from Nishi-

Tsubame Station)

TEL: 0256-64-3770

Lunch 11:00-15:00

Dinner 17:00-20:20

### •Totoya (魚屋)

A casual Japanese restaurant which is popular among the locals. Dishes with locally caught fish and fried big oysters are recommended.

850-8 Kamisugoro, Sanjo-shi (三条市上須頃 850-8)

TEL: 0256-33-6673

Lunch 11:30-14:30

Dinner 17:30-22:30

## TIME TABLES

### • Time Table of Joetsu Shinkansen (as of March, 2017)

From Tokyo	From Ueno
07:00, 07:48	07:06, 07:54
08:24, 08:52	08:30, 08:58
09:12, 09:28, 09:52 (only weekends and holidays)	09:34, 09:58 (only weekends and holidays)
10:16, 10:40, 10:56	10:22, 10:46

### From Tsubame-Sanjo

17:01, 17:27 (only weekends and holidays), 17:35, 17:56

18:24

19:08, 19:19 and 19:29(only weekends and holidays), 19:48

20:32,19:55 (only weekends and holidays)

21:47, 21:47 (only weekends and holidays)

-Time Required: 2 hours

-Fare: (Tokyo-Niigata) 9,280 yen (Basic fare: 5,080 yen + Express fare: 3,680 yen + Seat reservation: 520 yen)

\*From Ueno, 210 yen cheaper





The Tsubame-Sanjo area, Niigata city  
in Niigata prefecture  
— *Niigata in your pockets*

# Two-Day Trip

*to Niigata by Joetsu Shinkansen*

## INVITATION to NIIGATA

Niigata-shi, from 17th century to the end of 19th century, used to be a prosperous port city thanks to Kitamae-bune (northern-bound ships), which carried various products that merchants bought and sold at the ports on the way from Hokkaido to Osaka. Now, it is known as a city of gastronomy with locally caught fish, rice, fermented food and sake. In Furumachi town there were many restaurants where Geiko who were trained in traditional dancing, music and singing entertained customers, just like Gion in Kyoto.

## TIME SCHEDULE [DAY 1]

TIME	SCHEDULE	TRANSPORTATION
07:48	Tokyo Station (東京駅)	Joetsu Shinkansen Max Toki 305
09:59	Niigata Station (新潟駅)	
		3.3km Taxi (15min. 1,000 yen)
10:30	Hotel* -Leave luggage	
		9.3km Taxi (20min. 3,000 yen)
11:00	Furusato Mura (新潟ふるさと村) -River Shinano Water Shuttle Riding (信濃川ウォーターシャトル)	
		Water Shuttle
12:00	Minato Pier (みなとぴあ) -Lunch -City History Museum (新潟市歴史博物館) -Former Bank Building (旧第四銀行住吉町支店) -Old Customs Office (旧新潟税関庁舎)	
		1.6km Walk (20 min.) Taxi (6 min. 600 yen)
16:00	Furumachi area (古町界隈) -Town strolling -Dinner in Furumachi area	
22:00	-Hotel	



## WHAT TO SEE

### •Minatopia Niigata City History Museum (みなとびあ新潟市歴史博物館)

Minatopia shows the coastal city's relationship with water and features four buildings: the three-story City History Museum, which was constructed to look like the second Niigata City Hall, built in 1911; the former Customs House; a reconstructed warehouse and a former bank building. The exhibition rooms in the museum are beautifully curated with a use of dioramas. Displays include irrigation canals, the growing of rice, area maps, early settlements, rivers, historical and current photos and today's trade with other cities. (An audio guide in English and an English brochure are available.) Outside, the well-maintained grounds include canals, which create the atmosphere of the time when many of Niigata's streets were canals.

2-10 Yanagishima-cho, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区柳島町 2-10)

TEL: 025-225-6111

Open 9:30-18:00, Closed on Mondays

Fee: 300 yen (City History Museum)

### •Furumachi area (古町界隈)

One of the historical city centers of Niigata where many traditional restaurants and shops are located. Strolling on narrow streets is enjoyable.

## WHAT TO DO

### •River Shinano Water Shuttle Riding (信濃川ウォーターシャトル)

Cruising to see the town from the river.

Fee: 1,100 yen from Furusato-mura (ふるさと村) to Minatopia (みなとびあ). (Time Table from Furusatomura: 11:00, 13:00, 15:00)

Afternoon Cruise and Sunset Cruise (25min.) from late March to late November are also recommendable. 1,000yen (Boarding place: Toki Messe) (朱鷺メッセ)

TEL: 025-227-5200

## RESTAURANTS

### •Porto Cave d'Occi (ぼるとカーブドッチ)

A French restaurant in the former bank building in the facility of Minatopia. It is managed by a local winery called Cave d'Occi established more than 20 years ago to make French style wine with locally grown Japanese grapes.

2-10 Yanagishima-cho, Chuo-ku, (新潟市中央区柳島町 2-10)

Niigata-shi

TEL: 025-227-7070

Lunch: 11:30-16:00

Tea Time: 11:30-16:00

Dinner: 17:00-21:00

### •Minato Shokudo (新潟鮮魚問屋 港食堂)

A historical Japanese restaurant (founded in 1877) inside the Pier Bandai market. Rice bowl with raw fish is recommended.

2-4 Bandajima, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区万代島 2-4)

TEL: 025-248-8655

Lunch: 11:00-15:00

Dinner: 17:00-21:00

### •Kappo Kanetatsu (割烹 金辰)

A traditional Japanese restaurant where you can see traditional dance performance of Geiko while eating.

\*Reservation required.

9-1535 Nishiborimae-dori, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi

(新潟市中央区西堀前通 9 番町 1535)

TEL: 025-222-4808

Lunch: 11:30-14:00

Dinner: 17:00-22:00

### •Kiguchi (喜ぐち)

Izakaya (casual Japanese restaurant) which offers local dishes from sashimi of locally caught fish to curry flavored fried chicken.

10-1720 Furumachi-dori Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi

(新潟市中央区古町通 10 番町 1720)

TEL: 025-224-9075

Opening hours: 18:00-3:30

### •Minato-sushi (港すし 古町本店)

The oldest and the best sushi restaurant in Niigata founded in 1933.

9-1454 Furumachi-dori Kyubancho, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi

(新潟市中央区 古町通 9 番町 1454)

TEL: 025-222-3710

Lunch: 11:30-14:00

Dinner: 17:00-22:30



## TIME SCHEDULE [DAY 2]

TIME	SCHEDULE	TRANSPORTATION
09:00	Leave Hotel (Check Out)	
		1.5km Walk (15 min.) Taxi (6 min. 600 yen)
10:00	Villa of Saito Family (旧齋藤家別邸) Hakusan Shrine (白山神社)	
		3.1km Taxi (10 min. 1,000 yen)
12:30	Pier Bandai (びあ万代) Lunch and shopping in fish market	
		1.2km Walk (12 min.) Taxi (5 min. 400 yen)
14:00	Nuttari area (沼垂地区) -Strolling Nuttari Terrace Street (沼垂テラス商店街)	
		600m Walk (7 min.)
15:00	Imayotsukasa Sake Brewery (今代司酒造) or Minemura Jozo Miso Factory (峰村醸造)	
		3.8km Taxi (13 min. 1300 yen)
17:00	Hotel to take luggage	
		3.3km Taxi (15min. 1,000 yen)
17:44	Niigata Station (新潟駅)	
		Joetsu Shinkansen Max Toki 348 (上越新幹線 Max とき)
19:52	Tokyo Station (東京駅)	

## WHAT TO SEE

## •Old Villa of Saito Family (旧齋藤家別邸)

A house of a wealthy merchant constructed in the early 20th century. You will see how prospered the port city of Niigata used to be.

576 Nishiohata-cho, Chuo-ku (新潟市中央区西大畑町 576)

TEL: 025-210-8350

Opening hours: 9:30-17:00 (summer 18:00)

Closed on Mondays, Fee: 300 yen

## •Hakusan Jinja (shrine) (白山神社)

The most important shrine in Niigata, dedicated to the multi-tasking god of marriage, purification, and uniquely, teeth. (Chopsticks sold in the shrine have been said to cure toothaches!)

1-1 Ichibanboridori-cho, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区一番堀通町 1-1)

TEL: 025-228-2963

## •Pier Bandai (ピア万代)

One of the biggest markets along the coast of Japan Sea where local foods such as seafood, sake, fermented food are available. There is also a Japanese seafood restaurant which is recommended for lunch.

2 Bandai-jima, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区万代島 2)

TEL: 025-249-2560

Opening hours: 9:00-22:00

## •Nuttari Terrace Street (沼垂テラス商店街)

A renewed old high street where a hundred shops owned by neighboring farmers and fishermen used to be in 1960s. Now there are cafés, knick-knack shops, flower shops, jewelry shops, studios and ateliers of artists, as well as vegetable and butcher shops. A district that is fun to explore.

Each shop has its own opening days and hours, but many of them are closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Morning market/Winter Market is held on the 1st Sunday of every month.

Nuttari-higashi, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区沼垂東)

## •Imayo Tsukasa Sake Brewery (今代司酒造)

An old sake brewery founded in 1767 in an old wooden building built in Meiji Era (1868-1912). An English tour provided by an American staff member is available. (reservation required)

1-1 Kagamigaoka, Chuo-ku (新潟市中央区鏡が岡 1-1)

TEL: 025-244-3010

Opening hours: 9:00-17:00

## •Minemura Jozo Miso Factory (峰村醸造)

Founded in 1905. A factory tour to see all the processes including miso making by yourselves is available.

2-3-44 Akashi, Chuo-ku (新潟市中央区明石 2-3-44)

TEL: 025-250-5280

Opening hours: 11:00-18:00



## RESTAURANTS

### •Benkei (弁慶)

A Kaiten Sushi (conveyor belt sushi) restaurant inside the Pier Bandai market where you can eat sushi of locally caught fish at reasonable price.  
2-4 Bandai-jima, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区万代島 2-4)  
TEL: 025-255-6000  
Opening hours: 10:30-21:00

### •Jizakana Kobo (地魚工房)

Literally meaning local caught fish labo. A casual Japanese style seafood restaurant.  
2-1 Bandai-jima, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区万代島 2-1)  
TEL: 025-244-6181  
Opening hours: 9:30-15:30

## ACCOMMODATIONS

(Furumachi Area)

### •Italia-ken (ホテルイタリア軒)

1574 Nishibori-dori 7bancho, Chuo-ku (新潟市中央区西堀通7番町 1574)  
TEL: 025-224-5111

(Riverside Area)

### •Hotel Okura Niigata (ホテルオークラ新潟)

6-53 Kawabata-cho, Chuo-ku (新潟市中央区川端町 6-53)  
TEL: 025-224-6111

### •ANA Crowne Plaza Niitaga (ANA クラウンプラザホテル新潟)

5-11-20 Bandai, Niigata-shi (新潟市万代 5-11-20)  
TEL: 025-245-3333

### •Hotel Nikko Niigata (ホテル日航 新潟)

5-1 Bandai-jima, Chuo-ku, Niigata-shi (新潟市中央区万代島 5-1)  
TEL: 025-240-1888

(Station Area)

### •Hotel Mets Niigata (ホテルメッツ新潟)

1-96-47 Hanazono, Chuo-ku (新潟市中央区花園 1-96-47)  
TEL: 025-246-2100

## TIME TABLES

### • Time Table of Joetsu Shinkansen (as of March, 2017)

From Tokyo	From Ueno
07:00, 07:48	07:06, 07:54
08:24, 08:52	08:30, 08:58
09:12, 09:28, 09:52 (only weekends and holidays)	09:34, 09:58 (only weekends and holidays)
10:16, 10:40, 10:56	10:22, 10:46

### From Niigata

17:23, 17:44

18:12, 18:56, 18:56 (only on weekends

19:07 (only on Sundays and holidays), 19:35

20:20

21:34

-Time Required: about 2 hours

-Fare: (Tokyo-Niigata) 10,570 yen (Basic fare: 5,620 yen + Express fare: 4,430 yen + Seat reservation: 520 yen)

\*From Ueno, 210 yen cheaper

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

主催／経済産業省関東経済産業局  
協力／レ・クレドール ジャパン

### Contents & WEB

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文章／西園寺 怜（Team Mercurius）  
写真／Hide Urabe

### Book

編集／堀江由利子  
アートディレクション・デザイン／ampersands  
校正・校閲（日本語）／有限会社 西進社  
印刷・製本／株式会社八紘美術

Project Sponsor/Kanto Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry  
Cooperation/Les Clefs d'Or Japan

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Proof Revisions (Japanese)/Saishinsha, Ltd.  
Printing/Hakkou Bijyutsu Co., Ltd.

## Beyond Ordinary Itineraries

The Tsubame-Sanjo Area, Niigata City in Niigata Prefecture

# “NIIGATA”

日本の魅力 発見プロジェクト  
～新潟県 燕三条地域、新潟市～

※本プロジェクトは、経済産業省関東経済産業局が実施する「平成28年度地域とホテルコンシェルジュが連携した、新たなインバウンド富裕層獲得のための支援事業」と連携して、グランドハイアット東京コンシェルジュ 阿部佳氏のアドバイスを得て実施しています。

This project is supported by the Kanto Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry.

