

ALL MAP



Scan for a map of all events and places found in this issue!

# A DIVERSITY OF SHIGA CERAMICS

While Shigaraki ware is undoubtedly Shiga's most famous producer of ceramics, it is by no means alone in the craft. With a long and vibrant history of local art, culture, and religion, Shiga has been home to many artists and craftspeople through the ages. Here are a few more of Shiga's notable ceramic styles that we hope you'll enjoy!



## ZEZE WARE – WABI SABI MADE FOR TEA

Zeze ware pottery originated in the Zeze Domain of Edo Japan in the 17th century. In those times, it consisted mainly of tea vessels, produced for the *daimyo* lord to give out to as gifts. It typically featured a thinly walled surface with black iron glaze, thought to embody the spirit of "kirei sabi" or sophisticated beauty and refined simplicity, extending from the wabi sabi aesthetic concept. After the practice nearly died out, Zeze ware was revived in 1919 and is still produced today, primarily for tea vessels. The Zeze Ware Museum also features a tea ceremony room where you can enjoy matcha tea with the local ware.

### Zezeyaki Museum

TEL 077-623-1118  
ADDRESS 1-22-28 Nakasho, Otsu, Shiga  
WEB <http://zezeyaki.jp/zezemuseum/>  
OPEN 10am to 4pm  
CLOSED Mondays & Tuesdays (except ntl. holidays), Dec 28 - Jan 7  
ADMISSION ¥900 / ¥500 (children under high school) \*includes matcha serving



## KOTO WARE - A CASTLE TOWN'S LEGENDARY KILN

Koto ware was introduced by merchants of the town around Hikone Castle in 1829. It prospered under ownership of the Ii Family, the ruling clan of the Hikone Domain. However, after Ii Naosuke, the local lord, was assassinated in 1860, business was soon forced to scale down and within two years the ownership was discontinued. During the ownership period, skilled potters were invited from all over the country to craft pieces with various advanced techniques such as *sometsuke*, or blue and white pottery, and *iro-e*, or colored artwork. This ware represented the peak of quality, yet due to the short time it was able to flourish, very few pieces remained. Hence, it is now referred to as "legendary" ware.

### Hikone Castle Museum

TEL 0749-22-6100  
ADDRESS 1-1 Konkicho, Hikone, Shiga  
WEB <http://hikone-castle-museum.jp/en/>  
OPEN 8:30am to 5pm (admission until 4:30pm)  
CLOSED Dec 9, Dec 25-31, Jan 27-31, Mar 4 (may close irregularly)  
ADMISSION ¥500 (adult), ¥250 (elementary & JHS students)



## SHIMODA WARE - POPULAR WARE FOR EVERYDAY USE

Shimoda ware began developing around 1750 when community members discovered thick clay suitable for pottery around the nearby mountains. Shimoda ware is known for its vivid bright indigo made with *gosu* glaze, a cobalt-rich pigment. They produced a variety of everyday ware such as tea cups and bowls for generations until 1989, when the lack of a successor forced its discontinuation. However, the craft was revived 5 years later thanks to support from the local community, and now the studio not only produces pottery, but also provides Shimoda ware workshops.

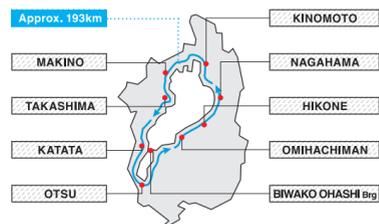
### Omi Shimoda-yaki Tobo

TEL 0748-77-7457  
ADDRESS 2-11-9 Higashitera, Konan, Shiga  
WEB <https://shimodayaki.com/>  
OPEN 10am to 5pm  
CLOSED Mondays, Tuesdays & irregular holidays  
ADMISSION Free (ceramic painting workshop from ¥850 by reservation)

## BIWAICHI -Cycling in the Ceramic Arts Village of Shigaraki-



Enjoy cycling in and around the town of Shigaraki, now featured in Scarlet, a morning drama series on NHK TV. Spot some of the local pottery studios. Enjoy the autumn breeze while riding at your own pace, discovering your new favorite pottery pieces, and getting a taste of local cuisine at nearby restaurants. If you cycle a bit further, you can visit the palace ruins of Shigaraki-no-miya, which served as the nation's capital about 1300 years ago. Bicycle rental for short distance is available at Shigaraki Station. For experienced riders, there's a great ride from Otsu City on a longer course with a series of inclines and winding roads.



## BIWAICHI BEST SHOT!!



BIWAICHI CYCLING NAVI



BIWAICHI RENTAL CYCLE



BIWAKO VISITORS BUREAU

[biwaichi-cycling.com/en/](http://biwaichi-cycling.com/en/) [en.biwako-visitors.jp](http://en.biwako-visitors.jp)



FREE volume 5

# COOL SHIGA

CULTURAL INFORMATION GUIDE

THE ORIGIN OF TEA IN JAPAN

EARTHENWARE EXCELLENCE

A DIVERSITY OF SHIGA CERAMICS

EVENT SCHEDULE

Careful selection of the best quality leaves for Asamiya Tea



## SHIGARAKI AGRICULTURE AND ART FROM ANCIENT SOIL

What area would you guess may be the original home of Japanese tea? Kyoto, perhaps? Would you believe that the first tea seeds were actually planted in Shiga?

In 805, tea seeds were brought over from China by a Buddhist monk who would soon after plant them near the Enryaku-ji Monastery, located atop Mount Hiei in Otsu, Shiga. The teas of Shiga prefecture, now known as Omi Tea, encompass a few long-established tea regions such as Asamiya, Tsuchiyama, and Mandokoro. In particular, Asamiya tea, named for the farming area of Shigaraki town, is

renowned as a top quality tea with a fine aroma, included among Japan's five greatest teas.

The same town of Shigaraki is even more famous for its pottery, where the various vessels and utensils for tea are produced. Blessed with quality soil, the area developed a thriving industry of earthenware known as Shigaraki ware. One of the defining features of Shigaraki ware is the scarlet color which comes from the local soil. Between the local communities and kilns, and the tea fields scattered around the mountain landscape, we find a remarkable glimpse of past lifestyles and traditions that are increasingly rare.

continued inside →

## ABOUT SHIGA

Shiga Prefecture is located just northeast of Kyoto, at the center of Japan's main island. We're home to Japan's largest lake, *Biwako*, or Lake Biwa, and a community of unique culture and traditions that developed over time in harmony with the nature that sustains our local cuisine, industry and lifestyle. Scenic lake views and abundant nature have been a continual source of inspiration for artists. As a junction between East and West Japan, Shiga is also a land of many historic sites such as temples and castle ruins, as well as many enchanting traditional towns.

## Easy Access from Kyoto!



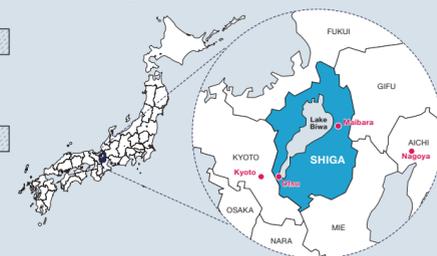
### BY SHINKANSEN

- Kyoto Sta. to Maibara Sta. in about 20 min.
- Nagoya Sta. to Maibara Sta. in about 27 min.



### BY JR TRAIN

- Kyoto Sta. to Otsu Sta. in about 9 min.



# THE ORIGIN OF TEA IN JAPAN

## Arrival and Growth of Tea Culture

### Asamiya - Fertile Land for Centuries of Quality

The story of tea in Japan begins about 1,200 years ago. The country was sending many individuals including Buddhist monks to China at the time to learn from China's highly advanced academics and culture. One such individual, who would eventually be recognized as the historic founder of Buddhism's Tendai Sect, Saicho, brought tea seeds back from China and soon planted them somewhere around Mt. Hiei, which is now part of Otsu City, Shiga. This planting became recognized as the moment that tea was first introduced to Japan.

In those early times, tea was a luxury available only to the upper class who enjoyed it more for medicinal use. As time passed, tea farming spread out and

became further rooted in other parts of Shiga. Asamiya Tea from Shigaraki Town is perhaps the most distinguished among them for its superb quality and aroma owing to the area's ideal growing environment in mountain farms where the temperature drops down at night and the fresh clear water makes its way through the granite rock.

The flavor and aroma are also shaped by the local preference for organic fertilizers and methods, which result in a product with volumes too low for mass production, yet is recognized and sought as a top premium tea. Asamiya has recently drawn international attention allowing tea lovers worldwide to enjoy this local specialty.



### Achieving Quality Through Organic Methods



Passing through the center of Shigaraki and heading deeper into the mists of the nearby mountains, we soon spotted the perfectly shaped rows of green from the local tea farms. Our destination was Katagi Kokaen, where we interviewed Mr. Takatomo Katagi, one of the Asamiya growers whose family has been taking on the challenge of completely organic tea production for the past 40 years.

Takatomo Katagi, 7th generation head of Katagi Kokaen. "Unlike vegetables, tea leaves will never undergo washing before packaging. While our customers enjoyed and praised our product, we ourselves were still not satisfied, so we made the move to stop using all chemical fertilizer and pesticides," said Mr. Katagi. For the first 2 or 3 years, production suffered heavily from pests and disease. He continued, "I think the trees got stronger and built up a natural immunity to disease without fertilizers, and better microbes started populating the soil. Organic tea has a deeper flavor and aroma, embodying the truest taste of the tea."

*"the first brew offers a deep aroma, while a second brewing will bring out the distinct bitter hints of green tea"*

Green tea is just one of the world's many tea varieties, which include black tea, oolong tea, and many more. But it may not be so widely known that all these tea varieties come from the same plant. The processes after harvesting are what differentiate each of them, and in the case of green tea, the leaves are steamed while still fresh to stop the fermentation process, so the leaves retain their green

color. Mr. Katagi pointed out that green tea is particularly rich in potent antioxidants called catechins, and is known to prevent cancer, help allergies, etc. Research has also shown fewer influenza cases in communities where green tea is regularly consumed.

Green tea itself contains many varieties, which are also distinguished by process differences. Sencha is perhaps the most familiar and popular type of green tea. While matcha consists of leaves finely ground into powder, sencha is made with tea leaves infused in a tea pot and poured in cups, much like black tea. For the first cup, a low temperature water, about 60 - 70°C is used to steep leaves for 1.5 minutes. Subsequent cups should be brewed in slightly hotter water. Mr. Katagi explained, "the first brew offers a deep aroma, while a second brewing will bring out the distinct bitter hints of green tea." Green tea also differs from other teas in that it's normally consumed without adding any sweeteners or flavors, to enjoy the natural fresh flavor and aroma. The catechins in the tea are also antibacterial, helping to naturally refresh your mouth and rinse oils. This is why green tea is enjoyed during or after meals at home, and is commonly served at sushi restaurants.

#### Katagi Kokaen (かたぎ古香園)

TEL 0748-84-0135 ADDRESS 1090 Miyajiri Shigarakicho, Koka, Shiga  
EMAIL info@katagikoukaen.com OPEN 9:00am to 4:00pm  
WEB http://www.katagikoukaen.com CLOSED Irregular



Katagi's green tea with package design featuring traditional style artwork depicting their farm.



Quality green tea meets high standards for both flavor and aroma.

# EARTHENWARE EXCELLENCE

## A CERAMIC JOURNEY OF EARTH AND FIRE

### Shigaraki Ware - Pottery to Pair with Premium Tea

The fertile grounds which nurture the quality tea of Shigaraki are also at the heart of the town's other industry, pottery known as Shigaraki ware. This local craft began around 700 years ago when people made kilns by digging burn pits in the ground for large items such as pots and jars. Later with the introduction of chambered climbing kilns that could fire many more pieces at a time, smaller items such as daily wares were produced, and in larger quantities to meet the demands of a market expanding with their growing reputation. With a long history of trade, developed skill and versatile craft, Shigaraki is now recognized as one of the "Six Ancient Kilns of Japan."

Senchado, or "the way of Sencha," is a variant of the traditional sado tea ceremony, but unlike the formal ceremonial style of sado, senchado culture developed around a more casual natural enjoyment of green tea, becoming popular and spreading throughout Japan in the 18th century. As a tea producing region, Shigaraki naturally embraced tea drinking culture, and moreover produced all the accompanying ware and utensils. Traditional Shigaraki ware is defined by a raw, earthy texture and warm "scarlet" glaze. However, for green tea vessels, a white glaze is preferred to highlight the fresh green sencha color, as well as a much thinner ceramic for a smooth feel on the mouth. Pottery for sencha inhabits a variety of shapes and sizes for different purposes. For example, a shaped pouring cup is used to cool water down to brewing temperature, and smaller tea cups are used for enjoying multiple brewings.



Tea cups and vessels made by Satoki Onishi, accentuating the golden hue of Asamiya Tea.

### Tanuki - Getting to know Shigaraki's Beloved Mascot



Some of the many uniquely designed tanuki statues.

As you wander through the pottery district of Shigaraki, it's hard to miss the friendly faces of the countless ceramic *tanuki*, or raccoon dogs, waiting to welcome you. The tanuki have long been a popular subject of Japanese folklore and literature, and are believed to be supernatural characters of mischief and humor who may disguise themselves as humans or be seen beating their oversized bellies.

Now a symbol synonymous with Shigaraki, the tanuki first began their mascot role in 1951 when Emperor Showa visited the town, and ceramic tanuki statues were produced to line the streets, welcoming his visit. As the event was featured nationally in newspapers, the tanuki became widely recognized.

The "ta" of tanuki can also mean "others" and "nuki" can mean "beat (an opponent)," which have made it a popular figure used as a charm for fortune or business success. You'll likely find them at the entrances of shops, restaurants and households throughout Japan, and often depicted with belongings that also have meaning. The *tokkuri* sake bottle is for gathering virtue (toku is a homonym for virtue), an umbrella hat protects from disasters, and so on. Visit Shigaraki to find the perfect tanuki that's just right for you!

### Exploring the Pottery and Culture of Shigaraki

The pottery district represents over 70 potters, and includes their kilns and studio spaces. Exploring on foot, you're sure to find interesting shops and galleries, and with luck you may even get to strike up a chat with an artist or two. A variety of pottery workshops are also available, such as wheel throwing and ceramic painting for a more memorable way to experience the town.

#### Shigaraki Tourist Association

WEB <http://www.e-shigaraki.org>



One local potter's facilities in the Shigaraki pottery district (left) and an old decommissioned climbing kiln (right) which used the natural slope to distribute heat to upper chambers.

# EVENT SCHEDULE

ALL MAP



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## CURRENT AND UPCOMING SHIGA EVENTS IN OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, & DECEMBER, 2019

### FALL SPECIAL EXHIBITION "ANIMAL MUSEUM IS NOW OPEN!"



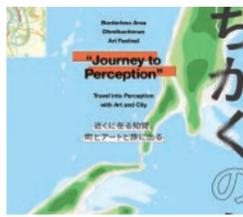
Komainu Dog of Yusuki Shrine, Nagahama

Animals have always captured the human imagination. This exhibition provides a curated presentation of animals in Japanese art, such as animal *haniwa* burial figures, *komainu* Shinto guardian dogs, as well as animals depicted in religious and contemporary arts.

**DATE** October 12 (Sat) to November 24 (Sun), 2019  
**TIME** 9am to 5pm (doors until 4:30pm). Closed Mon (unless holiday, then Tue).  
**PLACE** Shiga Prefectural Azuchi Castle Archaeological Museum (6678 Shimotoira Azuchicho, Omihachiman City)  
**ADMISSION** Adults ¥900 (¥690), Students: College & HS ¥640 (¥470), Elementary & JHS ¥420 (¥310), Seniors 65+ residing in Shiga ¥460 (¥350)  
 \*Prices in parentheses for groups of 20+.  
**TEL** 0748-46-2424  
**WEB** <http://www.azuchi-museum.or.jp/>

ENGLISH BROCHURE Wi-Fi

### BORDERLESS AREA OMIHACHIMAN ART FESTIVAL "JOURNEY TO PERCEPTION"



Art festival that gives an immersive art experience as you wander through the historic Omihachiman town. The 6 total locations offer different themes and expressions such as "Overflowing Sound," or "Seeing with Our Hand."

**DATE** September 21 (Sat) to November 24 (Sun), 2019  
**TIME** 11am to 5pm. Closed Mon (unless holiday, then closed on following day).  
**PLACE** Borderless Art Museum NO-MA (16 Nagaharacho Kami, Omihachiman City) and 5 other nearby spots  
**ADMISSION** Entry for all locations: Adult: ¥1000 (¥900) / College & High School Student: ¥900 (¥800), Entry for 1 location: ¥300  
 \*Children under 13 free \*Prices in parentheses for groups of 20+.  
**TEL** 0748-36-5018  
**WEB** <http://www.no-ma.jp/english.html>

ENGLISH BROCHURE

### CONCERT OF SHIGA PREFECTURE CULTURAL AWARD WINNERS



A pair of concerts to celebrate the winners of the Shiga Prefecture Cultural Award, Encouragement Award, and Next Generation Cultural Award. Featuring "Goshu Ondo Suite" by Rie Yamamoto NY Jazz Trio, and "Taiki Matsumoto's Guitar Recital."

**DATE** November 10 (Sun), 2019  
**TIME** 1pm (jazz trio) and 4pm (guitar recital)  
**PLACE** Shigagin Hall (1-38 Hamamachi, Otsu City)  
**ADMISSION** Single Concert: Adult: ¥2000, under 25: ¥1000  
 Both Concerts: Adult: ¥3000, under 25: ¥1500 \*Children under 6 not permitted  
**TEL** 077-523-7146 (Biwako Arts Foundation)  
 077-526-0011 (Shigagin Keizai Bunka Center)  
**WEB** <https://www.biwako-arts.or.jp/rd/>

NOV

### EVENT: "TAIMATSU FES 2019"



Every year from March to May, there is a series of fire festivals Omihachiman, in which about 200 *taimatsu* torches are made and lit as offerings to Shinto deities. Respecting this 1000-year-old festival, we honor the

tradition through an exhibition and workshop where we will make *taimatsu* torches together.

**DATE** November 23-24 (Sat-Sun), 2019 \*will cancel for severe weather  
**TIME** 9am to 6pm  
**PLACE** La Collina Omihachiman (615-1 Kitanoshocho, Omihachiman City)  
**ADMISSION** Festival is free. Shimenawa sacred rope workshop also held for admission of around ¥1000 (please register in person to attend).  
**TEL** 0748-47-2045 (Masse Co. Ltd.)  
**WEB** <https://www.facebook.com/masse.jp/>

NOV

### KAKI TO SEIKA TEN EXHIBITION OF IKEBANA AND SHIGARAKI VASES



Exhibition of *ikebana*, or Japanese flower arrangement, presented in vases made in Shigaraki, one of Japan's "Six Ancient Kilns." Enjoy the collaboration between the distinctive Shigaraki earthenware and a Japanese tradition that embraces the seasonal blessings of nature.

**DATE** Term 1: November 22 (Fri) to December 3 (Tue), 2019  
 Term 2: December 6 (Fri) - 17 (Tue), 2019  
**TIME** 9am to 5pm. Closed Thu (unless holiday, then closed on following day).  
**PLACE** Traditional Crafts Center of Shigaraki (1142 Nagano Shigarakicho, Koka City)  
**ADMISSION** Free  
**TEL** 0748-82-2345  
**WEB** <http://www.city.koka.lg.jp/6099.htm>

NOV-DEC

### SHIMENAWA "SACRED ROPE" WORKSHOP



*Shimenawa*, or sacred rope, is displayed at the entrance of Japanese homes to welcome in happiness and to protect from misfortune in the coming New Year. In this workshop, learn to select and handle materials, and try making *shimenawa* using traditional methods.

**DATE** December 14 (Sat), 2019  
**TIME** AM Session: 9:30am to 11:30am. PM Session: 1:30pm to 3:30pm  
**PLACE** Okumura Residence (8 Nagaharacho Kami, Omihachiman City)  
**ADMISSION** ¥1,500. First come, first served.  
 Reservation required (see web below for reservation contact info).  
**TEL** 0748-47-2045 (Masse Co., Ltd.)  
**WEB** <https://www.facebook.com/masse.jp/>

DEC

Wi-Fi

### GENKYU-EN AUTUMN LIGHT-UP



Experience the stunning autumn colors of Genkyu-en, the adjacent garden on Hikone Castle's north side. Enjoy this once-a-year chance to view vivid colors reflected in the garden pond as you follow the foot path

through this traditional Japanese garden.

**DATE** November 16 (Sat) to December 1 (Sun), 2019  
**TIME** 6pm to 9pm (admission until 8:30pm)  
**PLACE** Genkyuen Garden (3 Konkicho, Hikone City)  
**ADMISSION** Adults: ¥700, Elementary & JHS students: ¥350  
**TEL** 0749-23-0001  
**WEB** <https://visit.hikoneshi.com/en/>  
 \*info provided by Biwako Visitors Bureau

NOV-DEC

ENGLISH BROCHURE

### ISHIYAMA-DERA TEMPLE AUTUMN LIGHT-UP "ATARA YO MOMIJI"



Over 2000 autumn trees share the spotlight with the historical National Treasure temple buildings. Enjoy the world of colorful illusion where traditional and contemporary arts meet, such as papercut art paired with color illumination.

**DATE** November 15 (Fri) to December 1 (Sun), 2019  
**TIME** 5:30pm to 9pm (admission until 8:30pm)  
**PLACE** Ishiyama-dera Temple (1-1-1 Ishiyamadera, Otsu City)  
**ADMISSION** Adults: ¥600, Elementary & JHS students: ¥300  
**TEL** 077-537-0013  
**WEB** <https://www.ishiyamadera.or.jp/en>  
 \*info provided by Biwako Visitors Bureau

NOV-DEC

ENGLISH BROCHURE Wi-Fi

### EIGEN-JI TEMPLE AUTUMN LIGHT-UP



Established 650 years ago, this Buddhist temple is well known for its beautiful momiji maple trees. The colorful trees blend beautifully into the traditional garden, and the numerous maples covering the entire area seem to envelop the mountains in a fiery red.

**DATE** November 2 (Sat) to December 1 (Sun), 2019  
**TIME** 5pm to 8:30pm  
**PLACE** Eigen-ji Temple (41 Takanosho Eigenji, Higashiomi City)  
**ADMISSION** ¥500. Children 12 and under free.  
**TEL** 0748-27-0016  
**WEB** <http://www.eigenji-t.jp/index.html>  
 \*info provided by Biwako Visitors Bureau

NOV-DEC

ENGLISH BROCHURE

## BIWAKO HALL EVENTS



**TEL** 077-523-7133  
**ADDRESS** 15-1 Uchidehama, Otsu City  
**OPEN** 10am to 7pm  
**CLOSED** Tuesdays (unless a holiday, then day after the holiday), Dec. 29 - 30, Jan. 1 - 3  
**WEB** <https://www.biwako-hall.or.jp/en/>

2019.10.19	Hidemi Suzuki plays Bach I	Ensemble Hall
2019.10.26	Hidemi Suzuki plays Bach II	Ensemble Hall
2019.11.02	Sukeyuki Iwatani Violin Concert	Ensemble Hall
2019.11.16	Kotaro Fukuma Piano Recital	Ensemble Hall
2019.12.07	Mitsutaka Shiraishi Piano & Commentary Concert "Hello, Wagner"	Ensemble Hall
2019.12.16	Nobuyuki Takami Trumpet Concert	Ensemble Hall
2019.12.21	Symphony No.9 "Choral" by L. v. Beethoven	Main Theatre
2019.12.31	BIWAKO HALL Silvester Concert 2019-2020	Main Theatre



Biwako Hall Center for the Performing Arts is one of the only spaces in Japan equipped with a four-tiered quadruple stage main theatre, as well as a performing arts theatre, and smaller ensemble hall. A wide variety of wonderful performances take place here in state-of-the-art facilities featuring exceptional acoustics to offer immersive enjoyment for audiences here in our lakefront theatre.

Scan code for English Calendar of Biwako Hall Performances:  
<https://www.biwako-hall.or.jp/en/performance/>

