

# Welcome to Chuo City, the traditional craft arts town!

Chuo City has many stores that specialize in traditional Japanese craft arts, such as *yukata* (robes), *tenugui* (towels), and *tabi* (socks). We will feature some of the finest stores, which two foreign writers visited and reported about. We encourage you to visit these stores yourself. You will experience and discover the wonder of traditional Japanese craft arts firsthand.

## Introduce Reporters



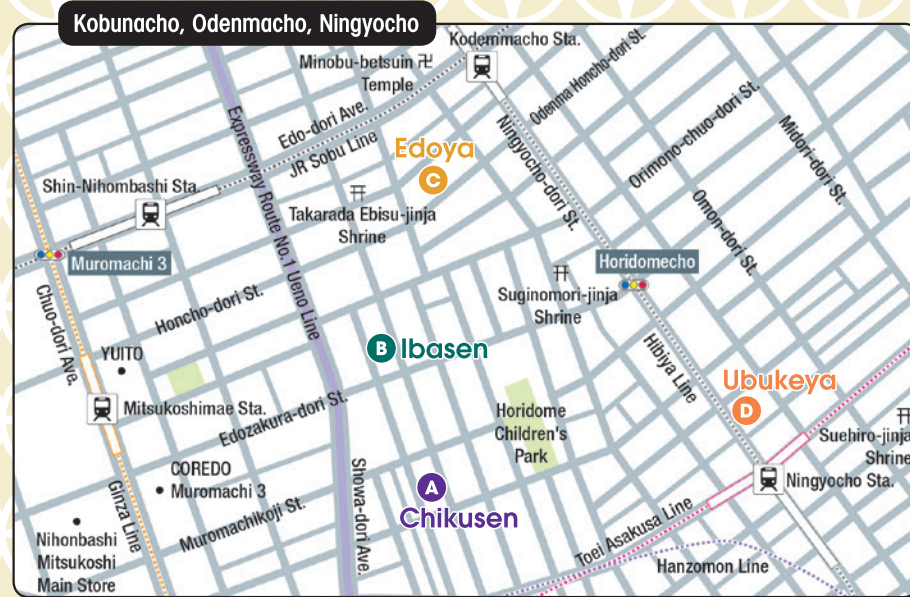
Sean

Hi, my name is Sean. I'm from Tasmania, Australia. I've been living in Japan for nearly 15 years. I'm really looking forward to visiting some great traditional Japanese craft shops to discover something extraordinary.



Kimberly

Hi, I'm Kimberly. I'm from San Francisco and I've been living in Japan for more than 10 years with my husband and two children. Though I'm currently living in Tokyo, I haven't been to Chuo City much. So I'm really excited to visit this area where there are many cool stores with so much history.



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\* The information in this brochure is as of March 2020. Some of it may have changed since then.

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# Yukata

Chikusen ● 竺仙

While the business started with humble robes to be worn just at home, its proximity to the main entertainment industry in Japan made the garments a popular choice amongst famous kabuki actors and *sumo* wrestlers. Eventually *yukata* became a part of street fashion, with their unique designs on display for everyone to see. Working together with the most culturally influential artists in Tokyo, their trendsetting designs became popular amongst the masses due to their use of intricate techniques and high-quality cotton fabrics.



I love the way this obi belt looks against the yukata fabric.



around ¥110,000  
( includes tailoring fees )  
with tax

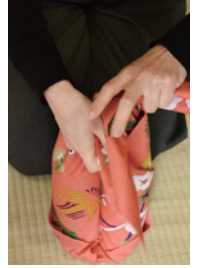
Peruse the exquisite rolls of fabric for a custom-made *yukata*, a lightweight Japanese robe suitable for men and women alike. The higher-end fabrics on offer are hand dyed on both sides of the fabric using a paper template, which requires extreme precision.

¥418 (each) with tax



If you don't have time for a tailor-made *yukata*, you can memorialize your visit to Chikusen with these patterned paper notepads. Write messages on the lined side of the paper. When the page is folded, it reveals a pop of colorful patterns.

There are many ways to use *furoshiki*, 90cm x 90cm square handkerchief-like fabrics. Wrap wine bottles, gifts, tissue boxes and more with these cloths to add a sophisticated touch to ordinary objects. To master a few techniques to use at home, be sure to ask for a wrapping demonstration when picking up your colorful *furoshiki*.



¥4,180  
with tax

Chikusen / 竺仙 MAP A

Address 〒103-0024 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Nihonbashi-Kobunacho 2-3

☎ 03-5202-0991

Open Mon.-Fri. 9:00-17:00 / Sat. 9:00-17:00 from April to July /

Sat. from August to March, Sun., holidays are closed

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





# Sensu, Uchiwa

Ibasen ● 伊場仙

While it evokes images of a bygone Japan, the *sensu* folding fan is still carried by many Japanese during hotter months. Along with the non-folding *uchiwa* fan, the *sensu* can serve both an ornamental and practical use. Standing in almost the same location for 430 years, Ibasen supplies handmade fans ranging from simple, everyday models to collector's items. Each has been crafted by skilled artisans who keep alive techniques used since the beginning. Ibasen maintains a connection with its history as a producer of *Ukiyo-e* woodblock prints through its many products featuring the traditional Japanese art form.



¥5,940  
with tax

High-quality bamboo is the key component of this *sensu* for men, providing a lightweight yet sturdy frame. The shiny surface indicates higher-grade wood taken from the outside of the tree trunk. The quality of a *sensu* can also be judged by the length of the "ribs" onto which the paper is attached. Longer ribs make the fan firmer and more durable.



Those longer ribs make the *sensu* lasts longer.



Travelers from overseas make up roughly 30 percent of Ibasen's customers, according to president Nobuo Yoshida, with many becoming repeat visitors to the store in historic Nihonbashi.



¥495  
(each) with tax

These postcard-sized *uchiwa* decorated with *Ukiyo-e* designs are very Japanese-looking greeting cards. You can actually mail them using the enclosed envelopes. These affordable cards are also an ideal size to take home as gifts for friends.



¥3,300  
with tax

This *sensu* features The Great Wave off Kanagawa, from the 36 Views of Mt. Fuji series by Hokusai Katsushika (1760-1849). Ornamental *sensu* come with a bamboo display stand, making them easy to display. The store's wide range of *Ukiyo-e sensu* has contributed to its popularity with customers from overseas.



Next to its Nihonbashi store, Ibasen hosts a small gallery of *Ukiyo-e* prints, including rare works by masters of the art form. The display is changed around once a month and is open to public viewing.

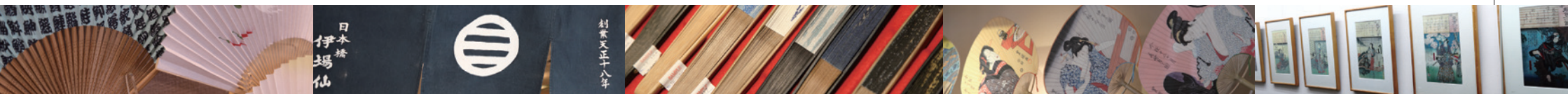
Ibasen / 伊場仙 MAP B

Address 〒103-0024 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Nihonbashi-Kobunacho 4-1

☎ 03-3664-9261

Open Mon.-Fri. 10:00-18:00 / Sat. 10:00-17:00 from April to August / Sat. from September to March, Sun., holidays are closed

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





# Brush

Edoya ● 江戸屋

As the name suggests, brush merchant Edoya dates back to the Edo period, or 1718 to be precise. Stocking some 3,000 brush products, the store welcomes sightseers to its heritage-listed premises.

Among its specialties are brushes used by traditional Japanese paper and lacquerware artisans. The store also trades extensively in hairbrushes, as well as brushes to care for clothing and footwear.



¥5,500  
with tax

With bristles of varied lengths, Edoya's hairbrushes are designed to avoid becoming snagged or tangled. The pattern of bristles, made from pig hair, is determined by the user's hair type.



Customers are encouraged to get a hands-on feel for Edoya's products, many of which are made using traditional methods. Aside from toothbrushes, every item in the shop is available to try.



¥19,800  
with tax

This clothing brush uses long, high-quality pig hair bristles. A skilled craftworker carefully makes the brush by hand. It can be used on a variety of fabrics, such as finely woven wools and delicate cashmeres.



While Edoya sources its brushes from trusted suppliers around Japan, each item must undergo inspection inside the store before it goes on sale.



¥550  
with tax

Made using horse hair, the teapot brush can clean the hard-to-reach inside of a spout with one end (on the left), and the bottom of the pot with the other. A store specialty, its bristles remove buildup without leaving scratches.

Edoya / 江戸屋 [MAP](#)

Address 〒103-0011 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Nihonbashi-Odenmachi 2-16

☎ 03-3664-5671

Open Mon.-Fri. 9:00-17:00 / Sat., Sun. and holidays are closed.

<https://www.nihonbashi-edoya.co.jp/>





# Knife, Scissors, Tweezers

Ubukeya ● うぶげや

For eight generations, Ubukeya has provided high-quality cutting tools to tailors, professional kitchens and everyday customers. Stocking 300 different items, all made in Japan, its clients include the world-renowned Sukiyabashi Jiro sushi restaurant.

This Japanese-style kitchen knife, suitable for a variety of foods, has a longer handle than most western-style knives. It makes the knife comfortable to maneuver while cutting precisely.

¥28,600  
with tax



Founded in Osaka in 1783, the historic store moved to the capital in the Edo period, when many former sword makers began entering the knife trade.



Each of the four Japanese characters on the nameplate above the doorway of the historic shop was contributed by a different artisan. It is written right to left, as was once customary in Japan.

These food scissors are one of the store's signature products. Often carried by *geisha* in the Taisho era, the rounded ends help them cut food without scratching the surface of a bowl or plate.

¥9,900  
with tax



These tweezers are able to grip and hold threads barely visible to the naked eye. Along with razors and scissors, tweezers are among the store's specialty items. These tweezers are also good for needlework.

¥12,100  
with tax

They feel so precise.



Ubukeya / うぶげや **MAP**

**Address** 〒103-0013 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Nihonbashi-Ningyocho 3-9-2

**☎** 03-3661-4851

**Open** Mon.-Fri. 9:00-18:00 / Sat. 9:00-17:00 / Sun. and holidays are closed

<https://www.ubukeya.com/>

\* Cash payments only.





# Tenugui Towel

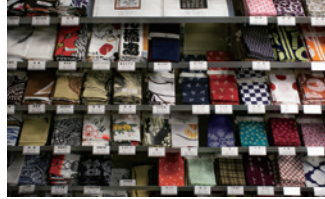
Hamacho Takatora ● 濱甲 高虎

Light to pack and versatile in use, *tenugui* - traditional Japanese towels - make for a wonderful souvenir from Japan. With their unique artwork and a touch of humor, Hamacho Takatora's products are easily identified by locals. Every element, from the fabric to the colors to the design, has meaning, reflecting both the traditional Edo values of this neighborhood shop and evolving trends. The parkside boutique also offers tote bags, pouches and *hanten* robes using the same charming designs and materials.



¥1,980  
with tax

With an entire wall of the shop lined with choices, no doubt you'll find a design (or two or three!) that speaks to you. This cool cat motif is a perfect example of the shop's quirky humor and design sense. A *tenugui* like this can be displayed at home or used on-the-go as a convenient hand towel. For the eco-conscious, these colorful fabrics can also be used instead of plastic bags to wrap and carry *bento* lunch boxes and other portable containers like drink bottles, etc.



Cotton tote bags of various sizes are a great way to show off your favorite prints when out and about. Many famous Japanese techniques, such as *mameshibori*, are showcased here.

¥6,600  
with tax



If time is not an issue, pick up a one-of-a-kind pouch customized with your name. The personalization is drawn in-house and completely free-handed - a nod to their commitment to tradition.



¥3,960  
with tax



¥41,800  
with tax

*Hanten* robes emblazoned with a business' name are typically worn during neighborhood festivals. Made of silk or cotton, these easy-to-wear jackets can also be hung indoors as a unique piece of home decor.

Hamacho Takatora / 濱甲 高虎 MAP E

Address 〒103-0007 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Nihonbashi-Hamacho 2-45-6

☎ 03-3666-5562

Open Mon.-Fri. 9:00-18:00 / Sat. 9:00-17:00 /

Sun. and holidays are closed /

Closed during the end of the year and the New Year holidays.

<http://www2.gol.com/users/ip0611031455/>





# Wood Frame

Kyoushindo Inazaki ● 経新堂 稲崎

Take home a piece of traditional Japanese craftsmanship at Kyoushindo Inazaki, a workshop specializing in wall scrolls and frames. These bespoke frames are carefully designed from wood and Japanese fabrics to enhance your photos and art. In addition to framing, the Inazaki family have been restoring and preserving historic art for over 5 generations. They are true masters of their craft!



The *Shoji* Frame is an original design meant to mimic the traditional sliding doors found in many Japanese homes and *ryokan*. Moving the door to one side reveals a contrasting picture for a 2-in-1 effect.

¥8,800~  
with tax

After

① → A damaged sign brought in for restoration. The *washi* paper has worn away, but much of the art remains. ② → Due to *washi* paper's unique properties, it is possible to build back the canvas from behind the painted art. ③ & After → After months of washing, cleaning and drying, the piece is ready to be mounted onto fabric which will help preserve the art work further.

Before



¥9,900~  
with tax

The postcard wood frame has a thick silk cloth matting which can be customized. The proportions of this piece have been thoughtfully chosen to enhance any postcard size picture on display.



I love how these look together!



The wooden frame and cloth matting should work together harmoniously to elevate your chosen artwork. A large selection of wood finishes and silk cloth options are available to browse, making it easy to bring home a one-of-a-kind souvenir from Japan.

Kyoushindo Inazaki / 経新堂 稲崎 MAP

Address 〒103-0007 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Nihonbashi-Hamacho 2-48-7

☎ 03-3666-6494

Open Mon.-Fri. 9:00-18:00 / Sat. 9:00-17:00 /

Sun. and holidays are closed

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





# Tabi Socks

Onoya Sohonten ● 大野屋總本店

Originally made to accompany kimono, *tabi* are traditional split-toe socks worn nowadays by many Japanese as stylish indoor footwear. Onoya Sohonten started as a tailor shop in 1770 and now makes *tabi* socks for customers in the world of Kabuki and *Noh* theater, Japanese tea ceremonies, and in general. Despite its distinguished clientele, the store stocks an array of affordable items which make ideal gifts.



¥3,080  
with tax

Contemporary *tabi* are made with attractive fabrics that complement fashionable clothing. The split toes allow the foot to move more naturally.



Customers can be fitted in store for *tabi*. The fabric will shrink slightly after the initial wash, so it is best to keep this in mind when selecting the size.



¥550  
(each) with tax

These gauze handkerchiefs are embroidered with Japanese motifs such as the *maneki-neko* beckoning cat, Mount Fuji and an array of good-luck charms.



All of Onoya Sohonten's *tabi*, including those worn on stage by kabuki actors, are made at its headquarters, originally built in 1849 and rebuilt after the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake.



The *hanten* is a traditional housecoat worn during winter. This long-sleeved *hanten*, filled with manmade down, gives the sensation of being wrapped in a duvet.



¥12,100  
with tax

Onoya Sohonten / 大野屋總本店 MAP G

Address 〒104-0041 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Shintomi 2-2-1

☎ 03-3551-0896

Open Mon.- Fri. 9:00-17:00 / Sat., Sun. and holidays are closed

<https://www.onoyasohonten.jp/>





# Hanko-name seal

Takeguchi Sansyodou ● 竹口三正堂

In Japan, a *hanko* seal is essential for contracts and other formal documents. Serving as the bearer's signature, a *hanko* can also reflect one's personal style in the design of the characters and the materials used for the handle. Master *hanko* maker Takeguchi Sansyodou also creates made-to-order seals for overseas visitors seeking a uniquely personalized Japanese gift.

Challenge!

## Hanko Order

### Step 1

The first step in creating a personal *hanko* is choosing the size and material. Options include boxwood, water buffalo horn and cattle horn. Each has a distinct look and feel. You can touch and feel all of them before deciding. There's an easy English instruction with pricing that is also very helpful.



### Step 2

The next step is selecting the characters, including the typeface. Most names can easily be rendered in *hiragana*, *katakana*, *kanji* or alphabet script. With advice from Masaki Takeguchi, the owner of the store, I chose to have my first name "Sean" written in *kanji* characters for "victory" and "luck."



### Step 3

After the stamp is cut by machine, Mr. Takeguchi, who is also a certified master *hanko* craftsman, finishes the process by hand, making certain the characters are shaped to perfection.



### Done!

The final product is a unique seal that can be used to add a personal touch to letters or just for fun. The store graciously upgrades the attached *hanko* case with an ink pad just for foreign tourists.



From ¥2,160~  
with tax



Takeguchi Sansyodou / 竹口三正堂 [MAP](#) [H](#)

Address 〒104-0041 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Shintomi 2-4-4

☎ 03-3553-0855

Open Mon.-Fri. 9:00-18:00 / Sat., Sun. and holidays are closed

<http://www.ts-4185.com/>





# Noren Curtain

Tsutaya Shouten ● 津多屋商店

The store has been making *noren*, lanterns and *tenugui* for almost 90 years. Mr. Katogi is a true artisan, learning the art of *edomoji*, traditional Japanese lettering, from his grandfather. *Edomoshi* is an artform and Mr. Katogi is the master of *iki* - the smart and unpretentious qualities closely associated with *edokko*, people with Edo lineage. At first glance, you might miss playful messages hidden within the Japanese lettering. But it's this subtle yet simple cleverness that defines *edokko's iki*.



From ¥12,100~  
with tax

If you're interested in taking home a personalized lantern of your own, Mr. Katogi accepts custom orders from his shop. After deciding on the lettering and alphabet style, the master will hand paint your name on the delicate paper canvas. Upon completion, lanterns can be shipped abroad.

\* It takes two to three weeks.



The master's wife has found a way to repurpose the leftover *noren* fabrics into stylish and durable shoulder bags. Since *noren* are hung yearlong outside, the linen cloth is very strong - perfect for an everyday bag.



From ¥6,600~  
with tax

¥3,300 with tax  
\* Not always in stock.



Here you can see how the master is able to transform the same symbol or name in different ways. Each style evokes a different feeling and the goal with *edomoji* is to create something warm and appealing.



*Noren* signs are typically hung outdoors and used to entice patrons to come inside. On the surface, this sign is visually interesting. But as with all of their designs, it comes with a secondary meaning. The tan lattice pattern comes from a kind of bamboo basket with a loose weave that is considered to be a lucky charm according to a Japanese idiom.

Tsutaya Shouten / 津多屋商店 MAP ①

Address 〒104-0045 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Tsukiji 6-5-5

☎ 03-3541-3741

Open Mon.- Sat. 7:30 - 18:00 / Sun., holidays and sometimes on Wed. are closed

<http://www.noren-tsutaya.com/>





# Lacquerware

Urushigei Nakajima ● 漆芸 中島

Don't let the new riverside location fool you - Urushigei Nakajima has been specializing in fine Japanese lacquerware and chopsticks for over 300 years. Founded during the Tokugawa period when Tokyo became the capital of Japan, the business is now run by the 11th generation master, Yasuhide Nakajima. Despite many materials becoming difficult to procure today, the Nakajima family still uses the same techniques and tools as their ancestors did. This dedication to excellence has won them fans from home and around the world, including pop star Lady Gaga.

Ubiquitous in Japanese restaurants and homes, the red lacquer, *urushi*, has natural antibacterial properties which make it a logical fit for dinnerware. Spoons come in various sizes depending on what dish you want to eat.



¥1,650  
with tax

¥1,650  
with tax

¥1,430  
with tax

The beauty of *urushi* lacquer paint isn't limited to just kitchenware. The vibrant red color looks great on jewelry, as seen here on a necklace. Master Nakajima's wife uses her own expertise to make the onyx beads framing the red centerpiece. This collaboration between husband and wife is a beautiful symbol of unity. The delicate balance of materials will surely elevate any outfit.



¥7,150  
with tax

While you'll find chopsticks for sale throughout Japan, a set from Urushigei Nakajima will last you a lifetime. Every pair is made by hand and uses the finest woods from abroad. The popular 8-sided chopsticks have an ergonomic design turning the clumsiest of chopstick users into pros.

Wow, they're so easy to use!



¥11,000  
with tax



The lacquer used in all products is pure Japanese lacquer and no chemical hardeners are added, making it safe to eat from. Handmade *washi* paper, passed down from generations, is used to strain the lacquer. This produces a very pure liquid which cannot be achieved with machine-made paper. Brushes made from women's hair are used to apply the paint smoothly for an even finish.

Urushigei Nakajima / 漆芸 中島 [MAP](#)

Address 〒104-0051 Tokyo-to Chuo-ku Tsukuda 1-4-12

☎ 03-3531-6868

Open 10:00- 18:00 / irregular holidays

<https://www.urushigei-nakajima.com/>

