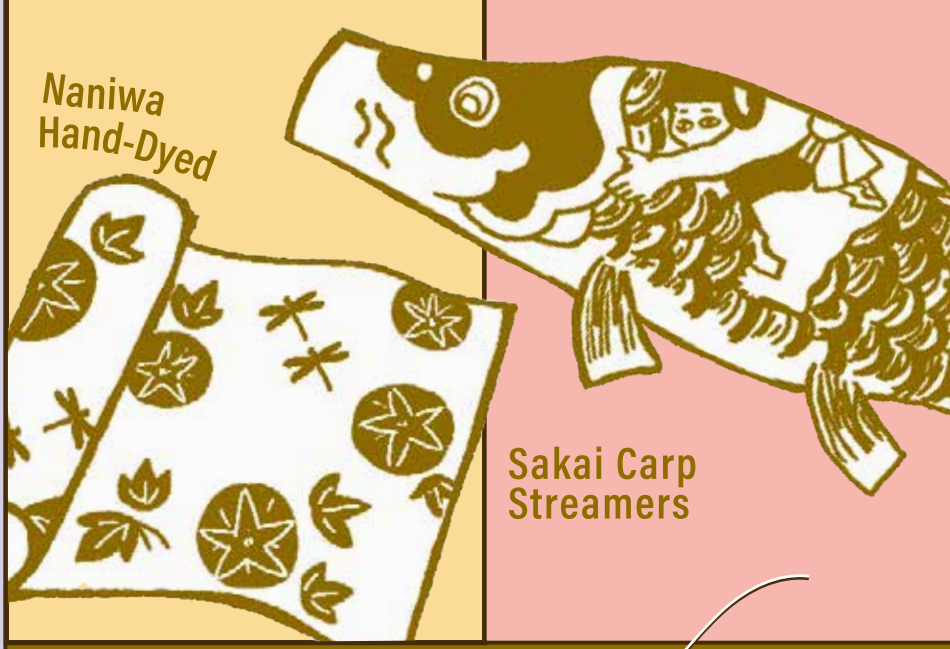


Sakai Handwoven Carpets



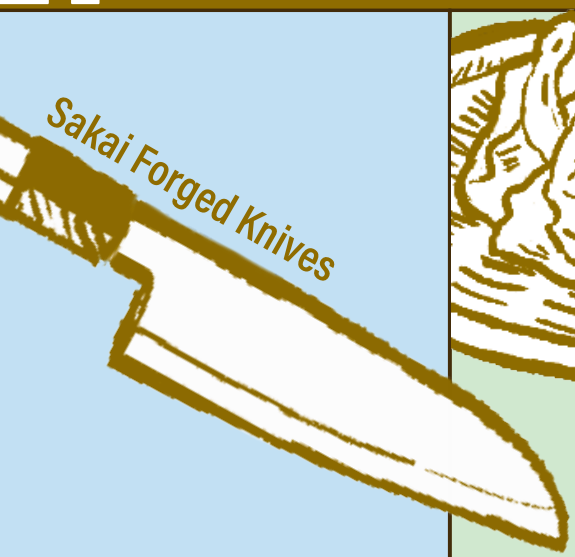
Naniwa Hand-Dyed

Sakai Carp Streamers

"Everything starts from Sakai"

SAKAI

Complete Guide to Traditional Industries



Sakai Forged Knives



Hand-Shaven Kelp



Sakai Incense

Sakai's Traditional Industries Everything starts from Sakai

Chronological Table

Sakai, a city that gathers various cultures of the world

Since ancient times, Sakai has been home to thriving trade and commercial industries and is where people, goods, and information have gathered from various parts of the world. As indicated by the saying "Everything starts from Sakai" the city has been a cradle of various aspects of traditional Japanese culture and industries. Throughout its history, artisans in Sakai have passed down time-honored techniques to the present day.

Let me introduce traditional industries in Sakai.



A walking encyclopedia of Sakai

"I know everything about Sakai."

■…History of Sakai

Kofun period (ca. mid-3rd—6th century)

The burial mound of Emperor Nintoku (a world heritage site) constructed.

Azuchi-Momoyama period (1573—1603)

Francisco de Xavier visits Sakai. Firearm production becomes widespread.

Oda Nobunaga visits Sakai.

Edo period (1603—1868)

A marine route developed, linking Hokkaido and Sakai.

The cotton bleaching industry develops in the area along the Ishizu River.

Sakai Prefecture established.

Meiji period (1868—1912)

Sakai's carpets become known to the world after being displayed at the first domestic industrial exhibition.

Taisho period (1912—1926)

Sakai Prefecture merged into Osaka Prefecture.

Sakai City established.

Showa period (1926—1989)

Most of the city area destroyed by air raids in World War II.

The cotton goods industry develops in Sakai.

The kelp processing industry thrives.

Carp streamers are exported to Hawaii.

Sakai incense has the greatest market share in Japan.

Present day

Sakai Forged Knives

Beginning



Sakai Incense

Beginning



Production of tobacco knives begins.

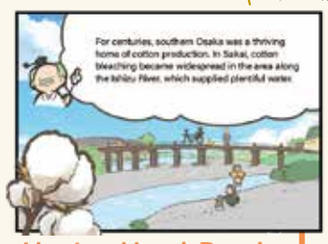
Hand-Shaven Kelp

Beginning



Naniwa Hand-Dyed Summer kimono and cotton towels

Beginning



Sakai Handwoven Carpets

Beginning



Sakai Carp Streamers

Beginning



INDEX

P 2 — Sakai Forged Knives
a history of 600 years
Knives cherished by chefs worldwide

P 4 — Naniwa Hand-Dyed Summer kimono and cotton towels
Featuring traditional cotton bleaching and dyeing techniques developed in Sakai

P 6 — Sakai Incense
"Fragrant works of art" characterized by the blending of carefully selected natural ingredients

P 8 — Hand-Shaven Kelp
Fusion of kelp from Hokkaido and sharp knives of Sakai

P 10 — Sakai Handwoven Carpets
Popular items for exports, featuring delicate patterns

P 12 — Sakai Carp Streamers
Swinging in the sky with Kintaro (a folklore boy hero) riding on the carp's back

Sakai Forged Knives

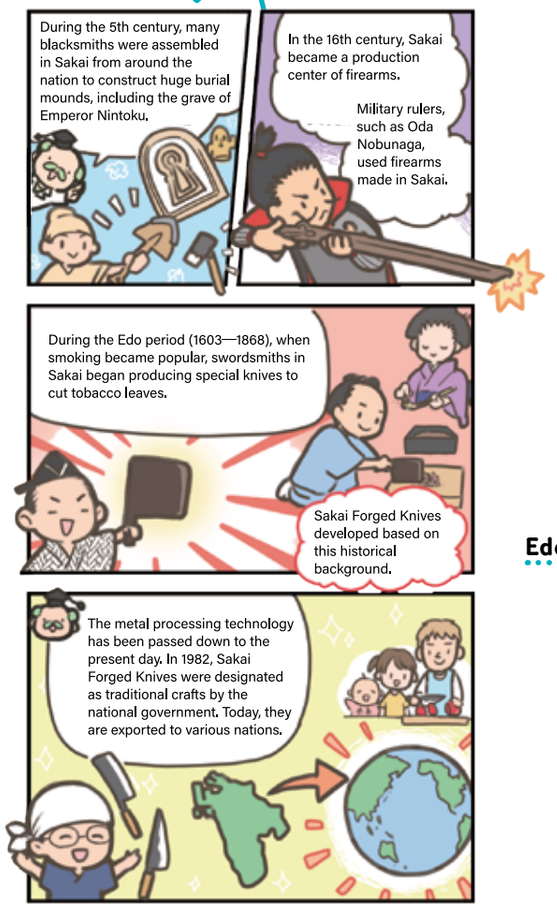


Description

Sakai Forged Knives have a history of about 600 years. They are made by the division of labor, comprising the following three steps: forging, sharpening, and attaching a handle/finishing. Skilled artisans in Sakai create knives of unparalleled sharpness, cherished by chefs not only in Japan but all over the world.

The History

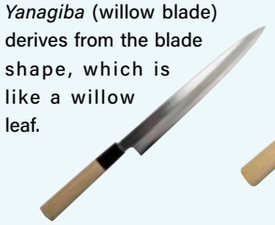
The three frames below show



Classification

Yanagiba

Used for slicing raw fish. *Yanagiba* (willow blade) derives from the blade shape, which is like a willow leaf.



Deba

A thick and durable knife used for cutting fish.



Usuba

Used for cutting and peeling vegetables. The *Kama* type is used in the Kansai region, while the Edo type is used in the Kanto region.

Edo type



Kama type

Santoku

Multi-purpose knife for home use.



Gyuto

A Japanese-style handle is attached to a typical Western-style blade.



How to Produce

START

Forging

1 Base making



Place a shaped billet of hard steel on heated, relatively soft steel and hammer the two types of steel to combine.

2 Pointing and forming a tang



After shaping the edge of the metal bar, cut it to the desired size and form a tang (a part of the blade held in the handle).

3 Cooling in straw ashes



After expanding the bar to the desired size by hammering, put it into straw ashes to cool it gradually.

4 Rough hammering and grinder buffing



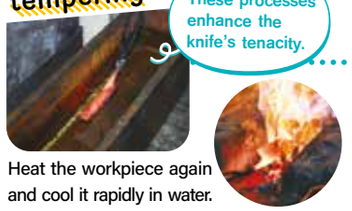
Hammer the bar to fix distorted portions and buff the surface with a rotating grinder.

5 Trimming



Trim the bar to the knife size and fix distorted portions on the surface.

6 Quenching and tempering



Heat the workpiece again and cool it rapidly in water. Then, heat the cooled workpiece at a lower temperature and cool it by natural cooling.

8 Final sharpening, removing deformation, and buffing

Use a grindstone finer than the one used in Step 7.

Sharpen the back side to make it even.

Sharpening

7 Rough sharpening, removing deformation, and flat sharpening





[Rough sharpening]
Make the blade thinner.
[Removing deformation]
Fix deformed portions.
[Flat sharpening]
Sharpen the flat surface.

9 Buffing with a wood sharpener and rubbing



Buff the knife with a spinning wood sharpener to create luster. Rub the blade to make the ridge distinctive.

10 Creating a hazy tarnish and sharpening the edge



Create a hazy tarnish to distinguish the blade pattern and sharpen the edge.

Attaching a handle and finishing

11 Attaching a handle



Insert the heated tang in a handle and fix the tang by tapping the base of the handle with a wooden mallet.

12 Marking and final adjustment



Engrave the brand name and adjust the angle once again.

13 Completed.



Naniwa Hand-Dyed

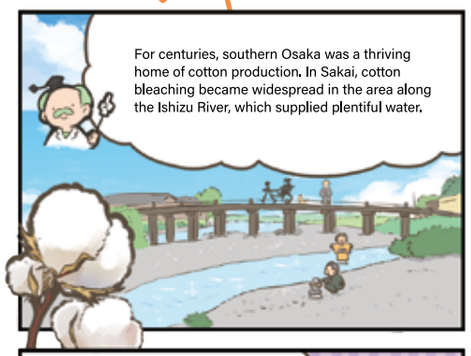


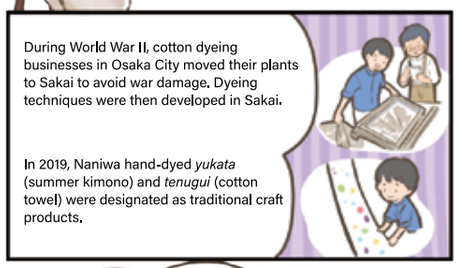
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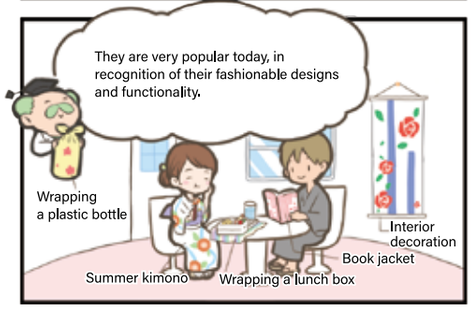
Cotton bleaching techniques developed in Sakai since it is located close to Kawachi and Izumi, both regions being home to cotton production. As compared to cotton bleached by the Western method, cotton bleached by the Japanese method *wazarashi* features high water absorbability and soft texture. The bleached textile is then dyed manually and made into *tenugui* (cotton towel) and other items.

The History

The three frames below show







How to Use a Cotton Towel

A cotton towel can be used in various ways in your daily life. Find your own style and enjoy using it.



Wrap

Example : Wrap a lunch box, tissue box, book, plastic bottle, etc.



Wipe

Example : Wipe your fingers, dishes, glasses, etc.



Wear

Example : Wear it like a bandana or a snood. Use it in place of a bandage.



You can also use it in place of a table cloth or a tapestry.

How to Produce

START

Cotton bleaching



Select a sheet of cloth suitable for processing.

1 Bleaching

Boiling in a tank



Put the cloth in a basket and boil it in a large tank to remove any impurities. The bleached cloth becomes pure white.



Steam released at the moment you open the tank



A crane is used to move the tank. It looks like a huge claw crane.

Dehydrating



Dewater the bleached cloth.

Drying



The cloth used to be sun-dried.

Dry the cloth by passing it through drying rollers heated at about 110°C.

Close-up



2 Completed.



To the dyeing process

hand-dyeing

1 Applying glue





You can dye dozens of sheets at once.

Place a carved paper pattern on a bleached cotton fabric and apply glue on the parts not to be colored. Pile each sheet of the cloth, carefully aligning designs.

2 Embarking



To apply several colors at once, place glue thickly along the contours of the design. This process is called *dotebiki* or embarking.

3 Pouring dyes



Pour dye on the glued textile using a special kettle called a *dohin*. At the same time, place a vacuum pump underneath the cloth to penetrate the dye evenly. Repeat this process on the backside.

Dyeing the cloth from both sides is good for creating subtle touches.

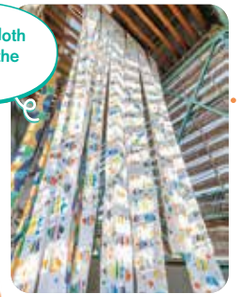
4 Washing



Wash the dyed cloth to remove the glue.



The dyed textile



The dyed cloth blowing in the wind

Sun-dry the cloth.

5 Completed.



Sakai Incense

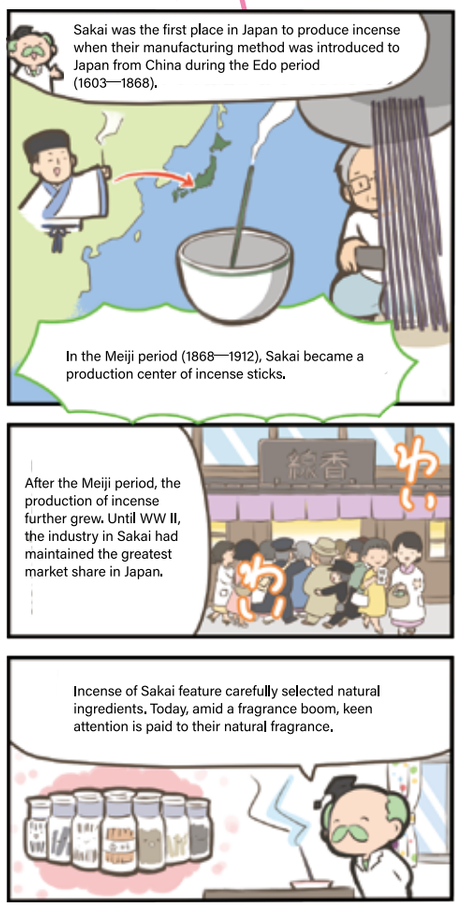


Description

Sakai Incense, known as “fragrant works of art,” are characterized by the blending of carefully selected natural ingredients. Since Sakai was once a leading port city of overseas trade, incense producers in Sakai had easy access to the ingredients of incense from overseas countries.

The History

The three frames below show



Classification

Incense sticks are classified based on their length, which is determined by the time necessary for reciting a Buddhist sutra.

Long sticks

Burning duration：2—3 hours
Among incense sticks used at temples, long sticks are used for Buddhist memorial services and other events that last long hours.



Medium-length sticks

Burning duration：about 45 minutes
Mostly used at temples.



Short sticks

Burning duration：about 25 minutes
Mostly offered at family Buddhist altars and in front of tombs.



There are many more types! Among popular products of today are incense designed to enjoy their fragrance.



How to Produce

START

Raw materials



The fragrance of incense sticks originates from powdered aromatic wood. Dozens of different aromatic ingredients are blended.

1 Kneading



Add hot water to the powder little by little and mix them well.

2 Forming a long oval ball



After kneading the powder, form a long oval ball. From each ball, about 17,280 sticks will be made.

3 Cutting on a tray



Insert the ball into an extruding machine, which feeds out thin sticks on the attached tray, the angle of which should be adjusted adequately. Cut both ends of the sticks to align their length.

4 Laying sticks



Transfer the sticks from the tray to a drying board. It is very difficult to transfer soft sticks.

5 Cutting



Cut the sticks to the desired length with a rotating blade and leave them to dry.

6 Pushing sticks on the board



Push the semi-dried sticks closer to each other and fill the space generated by drying so as to prevent them from bending.

7 Drying



Dry the sticks for about one day.

To compare



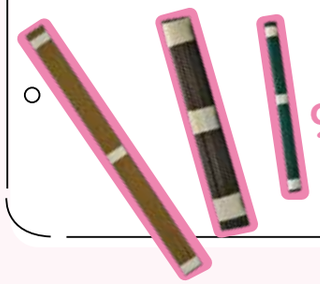
Leave the sticks for 2—3 weeks to eliminate unevenness of the fragrance.

8 Bundling



Pack the specified number of sticks of the same length into a bundle.

9 Completed.



Hand-Shaven Kelp

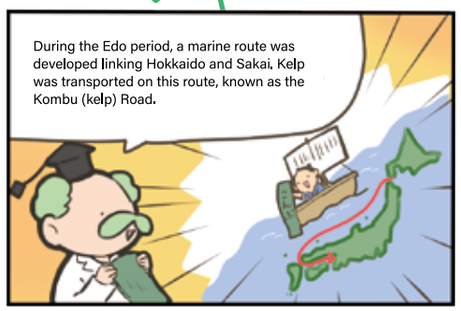


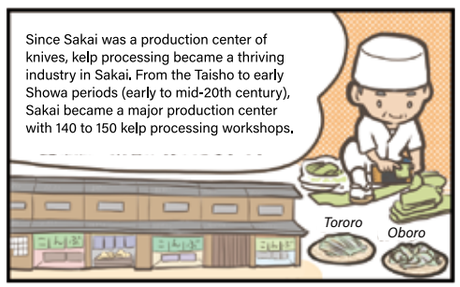
Description

As indicated by its name, every sheet of hand-shaven kelp is manually produced by skilled artisans. Since the Edo period (1603—1868), kelp processors in Sakai were able to use specific types of knives to shave kelp, provided by the thriving knife industry in the city. Kelp products made in Sakai are used in various special delicacies of Osaka, such as noodles with fine-shaven kelp and salted mackerel *sushi*.

The History

The three frames below show







※おいしい…delicious

Classification

1. Oboro

Oboro, thin slips of finely shaven kelp, is often used in clear soup and noodles. The core of the kelp that remains after shaving thin slips is called *shiroita kombu* (See 3.).





2. Tororo

Tororo consists of long, thin tread-like strips of kelp. Black *tororo* is produced by shaving the surface of the seaweed, while white *tororo* is made by shaving the kelp's inner parts. *Tororo* is used to wrap rice balls and sprinkle on top of rice.

3. Shiroita

The inner part of kelp left after shaving is known as *shiroita kombu*. It is used as an essential ingredient of mackerel *sushi*, a special delicacy unique to Osaka, and for decorating New Year's round rice cakes.





4. Sukombu (vinegar kelp)

Sukombu, or short slices of kelp seasoned with vinegar, features an excellent flavor, loved by people of all generations.

How to Produce

START

The type of kelp to use



Use the highest-quality kelp, known as Shirokuchi-hama-san-makombu, harvested in southern Hokkaido. Since the kelp's cut edge is white, it is called *shirokuchi* (white edge).

Shirokuchi-hama, southern Hokkaido

1 Pickling



The vinegar has a good aroma of kelp.

Pickle the kelp twice. The pickling duration changes depending on the season and the kelp's condition.

2 Clearing



Before shaving, clear each sheet of kelp to remove sand and dirt.

3 Shaving

Tororo

Zigzagging the knife



Before shaving the kelp, add fine zigzags to the knife to produce thin thread-like strips.

Hand shaving



In a moment, a sheet of kelp turns into thin strips.

Adjusting the angle of the knife edge



Sharpen the knife and adjust the angle of the knife edge with a special tool.

Oboro

Hand shaving

This is the most important and the most difficult process for artisans.



Make each sheet so thin that it looks almost transparent!

Shave the kelp while holding it down with your foot. Since the remaining kelp is made into *shiroita*, no parts of the kelp are discarded.

4 Completed.



Sakai Handwoven Carpets

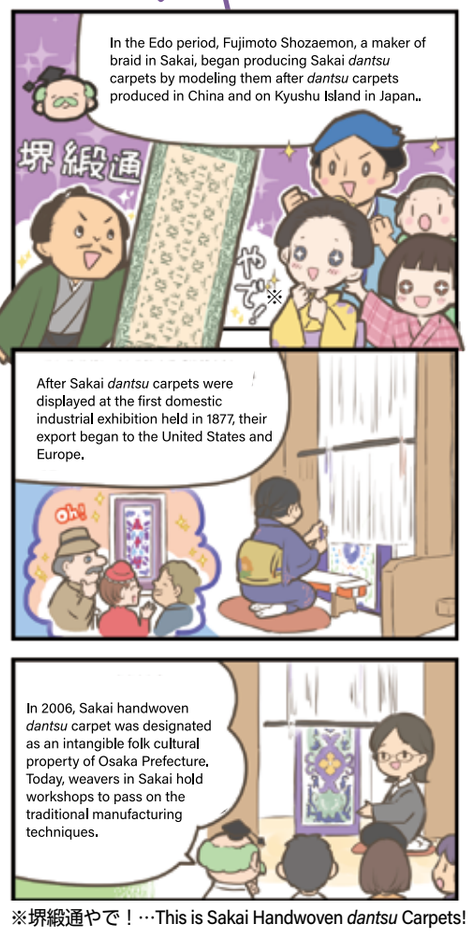


Description

The manufacturing method of handwoven carpets was introduced to Japan from China. In Sakai, the production of carpets began during the Edo period (1603—1868). In the Meiji period (1868—1912), they were exported to various countries, where they won high acclaim in recognition of their delicate patterns and fine texture, both of which cannot be made by machine.

The History

The three frames below show



※堺緞通やで！…This is Sakai Handwoven *dantsu* Carpets!

Features

1. Yarns of multiple colors

To produce a carpet, four weft yarns are twined around two warp yarns. While four weft yarns of the same color are usually used, in Sakai, weft yarns of various colors are used, which enables the creation of complex designs.



2. Hand weaving





While most textiles are woven by machinery, Sakai carpets are hand woven even today. Since this method requires a long time to weave, even skilled artisans can weave only four to five layers a day. The finished products, however, are very durable, enabling their owners to use them for life.

How to Produce

START

1 Warping

Attach a large spool to the loom.





Backside of the loom. Now ready for weaving!

Twine the yarns around the loom and set the warp yarns.



Check the pattern.

2 Weaving



Twine the colored weft yarns around the warp yarns. After this step, cut the weft yarns with scissors. Repeat this process.

Close-up



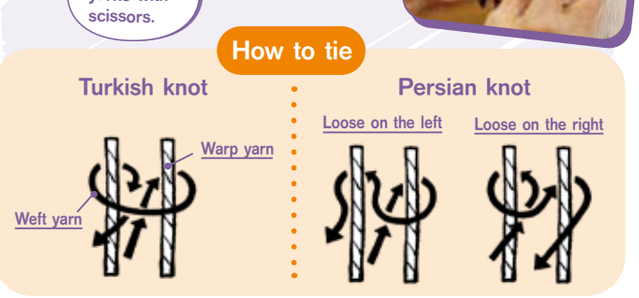
Cut the weft yarns with scissors.





Tie four colored yarns around two warp yarns ···

How to tie





After weaving one layer, insert the weft yarns among the warp yarns.

Since the reed is heavy, the beating process requires physical strength.



Beat up the newly inserted weft yarns with the reed.



Align the yarns with a comb.



Using a board, cut the weft yarns to align the thickness as indicated by the board. Repeat this process for each layer.

After finishing weaving, trim the carpet.

3 Completed.



Sakai Carp Streamers

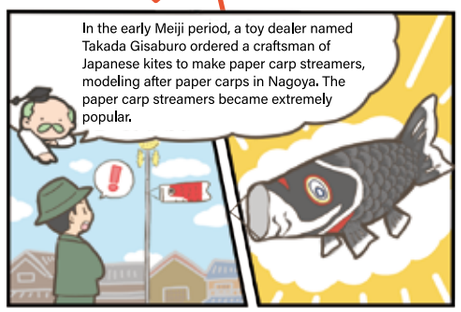


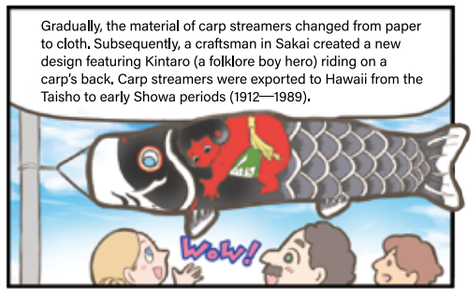
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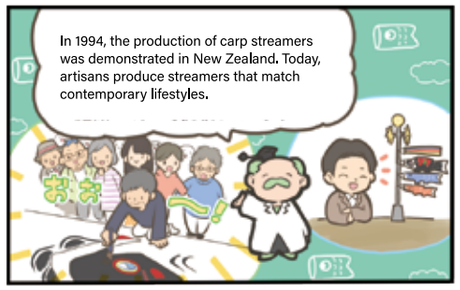
Sakai Carp Streamers are among a few hand-painted products. Modeled after paper carp streamers, they are produced by manually painting carps on white cotton cloth with tens of different types of brushes. Since the early Meiji period (1868—1912), the carp streamers have been widely used as special ornaments for Children's Day (May 5).

The History

The three frames below show







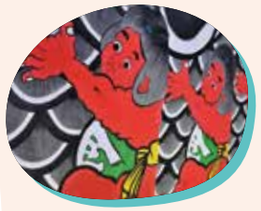
Features

1. Hand drawing



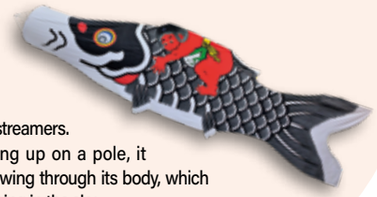
Powerful brush strokes and detailed depiction are possible only by hand drawing. Since carps are hand drawn, even products of the same design differ from one another.

2. Design of Kintaro



Kintaro is the trademark of Sakai Carp Streamers. Kintaro's second toe is made longer than the first toe *oya-yubi* or parent's toe in Japanese). This design reflects aspirations of parents that their sons will become greater than them.

3. Realistic design



To depict Kintaro riding on the carp's back, a Sakai Carp Streamer has a wider body and mouth than those of typical carp streamers. When the carp streamer is hung up on a pole, it swings in the sky with the air blowing through its body, which looks as if a real carp were swimming in the sky.

4. Rigorously selected colors



Pigments are collected from around the world. The red pigment used for Kintaro is particularly vivid.

How to Produce

START

1 Marking and drawing the eye



After drilling a hole in the location of the eye, draw a circle with a bamboo compass *bunmawashi* to which a brush is fixed.



Before drawing a carp, depict Kitaro riding on the carp's back.

2 Drawing the contour and creating gradations





Paint barbels and scales and blur the paint to create gradations.

3 Applying light colors



Apply light colors to scales and fins.

4 Drawing fine lines



Draw fine lines to depict Kitaro's hair and the carp's scales.



Create gradations in Kitaro's eyes to make a lively expression.

5 Attaching the eye



Finally, attach to the carp the eye made from aluminum foil.

6 Completed.



Welcome to Sakai Traditional Crafts Museum!

If you are interested in Sakai's traditional industries…



In addition to exhibitions introducing Sakai's traditional industries, the museum holds various workshops including incense making. Moreover, Sakai's traditional craftworks and specialty goods are available in shops. Visitors can also see knife-sharpening demonstrations.

1F Shops

TAKUMI SHOP
Knife / Grindstone



Sells a wide range of products for home and professional use.



TAKUMI SHOP
Traditional industrial products / SAKAI brand products

Sells traditional products, such as cotton items featuring Japanese-style bleaching and Naniwa hand dyeing, incense sticks, and kelp products.







"Pay a visit to Sakai Traditional Crafts Museum!"

2F Exhibitions

Sakai Knife Museum "CUT"

The museum displays various types of knives produced in Sakai. Particularly outstanding is the chandelier called "HIBANA" which comprises about 300 knives.

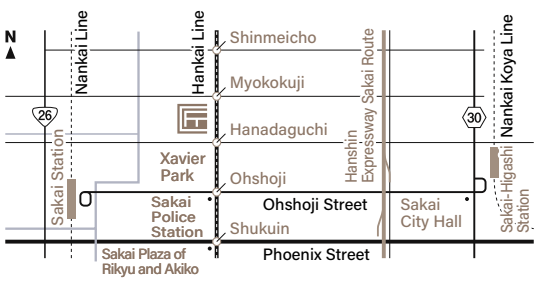




TAKUMI EXHIBITION
Traditional Industry Exhibition

The exhibition introduces the history and manufacturing processes of cotton items featuring Japanese-style bleaching and Naniwa hand dyeing, incense sticks, kelp products, handwoven carpets, carp streamers, and Japanese sweets.





Address 1-1-30 Zaimokuchō-nishi, Sakai Ward, Sakai City, Osaka 590-0941
Phone +81-72-227-1001 FAX +81-72-227-5006

Hours 10：00～17：00 Closed on the third Tuesday of each month (if it falls on a holiday, closed the following day) and December 29—January 3 * Might be closed temporarily on other days. Admission free

堺伝匠館 SAKAI DENSHOKAN SAKAI TRADITIONAL CRAFTS MUSEUM

Official website of Sakai Traditional Crafts Museum

Official Instagram of Sakai Traditional Crafts Museum

Published by Sakai Association for the Promotion of Traditional Industries