

Takumi Takahashi : Artisan of Futon

To sleep comfortably in a cotton futon



The owner of Futon-kobo Takahashi, Takumi Takahashi (Born: 1983) says "I'd like people to feel how comfortable a cotton futon is to sleep in." He is one of the few artisans who can make and repair futon. Making futon carefully one by one for people to sleep comfortably is his principle.

Takumi is the third head of the shop which was established by his grandfather in 1953 and deals in futons and real estate. After his graduation from high school, he got employed at other jobs like a factory once, however, he started helping his family business around 2012. He knew that artisans of making futons were decreasing all over the country and resolved "If there is no one to do it, I will."

Partly because he liked making things, he learned work quickly. Trained in other shop and taught by teachers of a specialized school, he got a national certification of the 1st-grade skilled bedding maker. He grew as to win first prize in the comforter category at the 30th National Skills Grand Prix in 2019. His talent was recognized so that he took over the shop from his father.



Making a futon while lowering his center of gravity by bending their knees to expand cotton equally is rather hard work. Takumi is daily absorbed in his work alone in his detached working room. The work requires patience and steady efforts, but "It suits me because I don't need to keep pace with the others" he says.



Work quickly to make the corners come out.



Now he became the one who is relied upon by other elder futon makers and is willing to carry the Futon field. Moreover, he has also invented new products such as a cotton futon that can be used instead of a mattress on a bed, a cotton pillow which has excellent use of feeling, etc. By the works that go further than that of a futon maker, he wants to continue appealing cotton futons.

Hiroshi Emori Artisan of bamboo work

Invented "Migaki-dake (polished bamboo)" which has the beautiful texture of bamboo



Draw with a wood-burning pen on bamboo which is peeled green skins with a hatchet and polished to the thickness of 5mm and engrave designs by perforating with a jigsaw. People can enjoy it as a "bamboo lamp" by putting on a light inside. Hiroshi Emori (Born: 1948) calls his bamboo art "Sukashi-bori (openwork)." Not only the beauty of its drawing but also the beautiful bamboo as the material attracts people spontaneously.

The straight longitudinal fiber, the whiteness of skins and the sharp gloss after polishing are outstanding. "It is quite difficult to show the actual goodness of bamboo itself beautifully and lightly" Hiroshi says. He created his processing method of bamboo used for his works and named it "Migaki-dake."

Bamboo is weak against mold, worms and cracks and it is said that dealing with these 3 points are the problems on bamboo work. Hiroshi solved those problems by skipping a process that is taken a matter of course and adding his unique process, moreover, increased the efficiency of work. "By using my method, Migaki-dake can be mass-produced. If we can make a business with Migaki-dake, neglected bamboo forest will decrease and may be able to develop a new art field." he dreams.

Hiroshi retired early from the position of the elementary school principal at the age of 57. As groping something to live for, he found a bamboo work and was especially attracted to the good atmosphere of bamboo lamps so that he started making it by himself. He joined "Harebare Take club" which has a base of activity named "Chikutou." He has got materials from bamboo forest in Akiruno and enjoyed making while believing his sensibility and inventing.



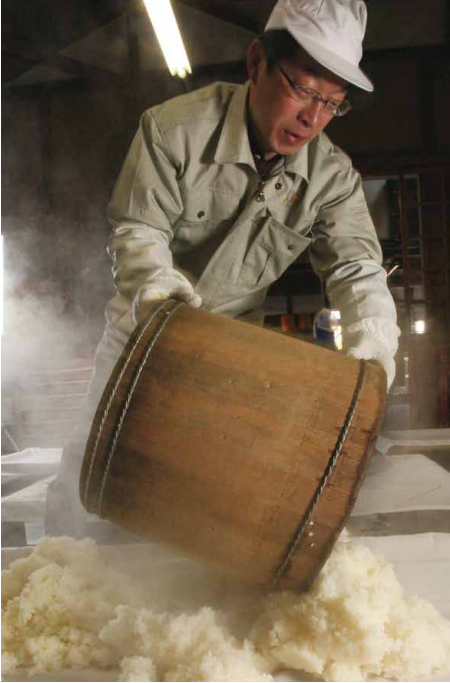
The work begins with peeling off the green skins.



Hiroshi says "Chikutou, where gave me a new thing to live for, is a kind of my origin and it is also the hometown of bamboo lamps" and "I hope to expand 'Migaki-dake Art' from here."

Mitsunaga Nozaki Artisan of Sake Brewing

A Rare Tokyo "Kuramoto Toji" (Head Brewmaster)



Tokura Village, a quiet mountain village on the outskirts of Itsukaichi, near the mountain road to Hinohara Village, is the birthplace of "Kisho," a locally brewed sake produced by Mitsunaga Nozaki. Mitsunaga Nozaki (born in 1962) is the fifth generation head of the Nozaki Brewery, founded in 1884. In addition to his role as a kuramoto (sake brewery owner/operator), as toji, or head brewmaster, he is also responsible for the brewing of sake, and is responsible for creating his own ideal sake. About 8 years ago, he decided that he needed to know the actual brewing process, so he worked day and night in the brewery, gaining knowledge of the brewing process and becoming a toji. Preparation begins throughout the year, from October through winter. As the toji, Mr. Nozaki, oversees several brewery workers. The sake's name, "Kisho," was given around the middle of the Meiji period by Kisaburo Nozaki, the founder of the brewery, taking the first character of his name. The company has won numerous awards at the National New Sake Competition and the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau's Sake Competition. The brewing water used for Kisho is from the underground water that springs from Mt. Tokura Shiroyama, directly in front of the brewery. This water has long been used by the people of Tokura for their daily lives. The water is slightly soft and contains very little iron and manganese, which deteriorate the quality of sake, making it very suitable for sake brewing.

Mr. Nozaki boasts, "This water is the star of Kisho." Even as larger commercial operations adopt increasing mechanization, toji brewers still take time and effort to brew sake in the traditional way,

boiling water in a wagama kettle and steaming rice in a koshiki. It is one of only a few kuramoto breweries in Tokyo that preserve the tradition of sake brewing. "Kisho" is a locally brewed sake widely consumed in Akikawa Valley, a recreational area for Tokyoites. The brewery uses spring water from Mt. Shiroyama and the owner himself is directly involved



Rice steamed in a koshiki strainer is cooled by exposing it to the outside air.



Hachiroemon Nakamura

Artisan of Sake Brewing

Sake brewing inheriting more than 200 years of history



The Akigawa River, which crosses Akiruno City, is the largest tributary of the Tama River system and is known as a clear stream where ayu sweetfish and other mountain stream fishing are popular. In the basin of the Akigawa River is the Nakamura Shuzo sake brewery, which has been carrying on the tradition of sake brewing since its establishment in 1804, marking a history of more than 200 years. Hachiroemon Nakamura (born in 1976), is the 18th generation owner, and the 10th generation since they began sake brewing. Their “shikomikura” is a brewery that utilizes the features of both an earthen storehouse built in the Edo period and a modern air-conditioned storehouse that keeps the temperature below 8 degrees Celsius year-round. The cool and clear water, naturally refined by the Chichibu Paleozoic strata, is pumped up from 170 meters below the ground, and carefully selected shuzo-kotekimai (rice suitable for sake brewing) is polished to a high degree of whiteness. The brewery still retains traditional handmade brewing techniques such as use of “wakama” kettles, “koshiki” strainers and “futakoji” starter, but has also adopted modern brewing techniques such as fully automatic koji making machines resulting in high quality production standards.



The brand name “Chiyozuru” (meaning “crane” in Japanese) was named after a crane that once flew along the banks of the Akigawa River. It has a strong flavor that is “tanreigata” (the taste and mouthfeel of the sake is clean and smooth), yet retains a powerful hit of the umami of the rice. Chiyozuru has won numerous awards at the National New Sake Competition and the Tokyo Regional Taxation Bureau's Sake Competition.



Sake Brewing Museum



On the premises, there is a “Sake Brewing Museum” in an earthen storehouse. It was originally built in 1884 as a brewery tool warehouse, and was restored over a period of two years. Traditional sake brewing tools and materials that have been used for more than 200 years are on display for public tours, and there is also a sales and tasting corner. (Open from 12:00pm to

**Tetsuo Shimizu
Syogotei**

初後亭

Syogotei: 233 Sannai Tel: 042-596-0541
Weekdays 11:00AM~3:00PM
Saturdays,Sundays,and holidays 11:00AM~4:00PM
Close: Wednesday & Thursday

Hikizuridashi-udon

The local taste of boiled udon with the flavor of dried bonito, soy sauce and residual boiled water. Enjoy the flavor of local wheat-flour while it is hot. Add some "mashi" such as grated yam, natto and grated Japanese radish as you like and enjoy it.



**Hiroshi Kondo
Kondo-jozo**

近藤醸造

Kondo-jozo Co., Ltd.:733-1 Yamada Tel: 042-595-1212
9:00AM~5:00PM, Open: every day

Kikkogo soy sauce

Completely fermented and matured domestic soybeans and wheat for a year. It is the most popular product that has rich flavor and deep taste. "Gorobe-soy sauce" named after the founder, noodle soup and yuzu-ponzu are also popular.



**Kazuho Moriya
Iketani**

池谷

Kazuho Moriya's Tedori-konjak

The konjak is made in traditional way of kneading by hand and rolling by hand. Some products are made from raw konjak-imo and others are made from mix of raw potato and potato flour. Both of them contains air a lot and absorbs seasoning well so it becomes tasty in cooking boiled-food.

Iketani & Co. Inc. : 170 Otsu Tel: 042-596-0542
10:00AM-4:30PM, Close: Monday & Tuesday



**Hiroshi Mori
Itokobo MORI**

糸工房「森」

Kurohachijo

Producing Kurohachijo obi, shawls, vest, pouch, etc. He displays and sales it in the exhibition every November. You can visit the showroom in other periods by contacting in advance.

Itokobo MORI : 1129 Ina Tel: 042-596-0250
8:00AM-6:00PM, Close: irregular



Futon

He is particular about 100% of cotton and makes futon as his customer's request for the thickness of cotton, size, patterns of cloth, etc. Repairing futon is accepted at any time. It will be reduced by 10~20% in sales several times a year.

Masaru Ishikawa
Ishikawa Menten

石川綿店

Ishikawa Menten : 894 Yamada Tel: 0120-0260-85 (toll-free)
9:00AM~6:00PM, Close: Sunday & Holiday



Visual Design

Shop design, product logos, package design, poster, pamphlet, etc. Two-dimensional or three-dimensional design and planning.

Toshihiko Takahashi
Visual Design Office

高橋敏彦視覚デザイン研究室

He performs total design consulting that has high visual effect.

Toshihiko Takahashi Visual Design Office : 1312 Otsu
Tel : 042-596-4335
11:00AM~4:00PM, Open all year round



Kan-soumen

Made in winter that is dry and stood for a half year in a warehouse, then it will be in the store. The noodles are strong in elasticity and it hardly gets soggy while boiling. There are also various dried noodles such as soba and udon.

Kishi Tadashi
Sumiya

寿美屋

Sumiya Co., Ltd. : 64 Itsukaichi Tel: 042-596-0018
9:30AM~6:00PM, Close: Wednesday(irregular)



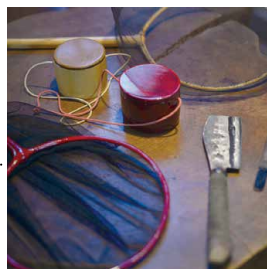
wood work

He has been working in mountains as a forester and got skills to discern a peculiarity of woods or differences of tree species. Making use of the tree characteristic and his skills of sharpening, he handcrafts landing nets and bait boxes. He doesn't sell these but teaches how to make if he was asked.

Atsushi Kozukue
Kozukue Ringyo

小机林業

Kozukue Ringyo : 490 Sannai
Tel: 090-1558-1058



Akimitsu Tomonaga

Tomonaga's little museum at Fukasawa

深沢小さな美術館

He was in charge of art and production of puppets in the NHK serial puppet show "Purinpurin monogatari". He is an artist who freely creates unique girl statues, ZiZi who is genial and pleasant, and so on. These are displayed in the Tomo's little museum at Fukasawa.



Tomonaga's little museum at Fukasawa : 492 Fukasawa
Tel : 042-595-0336 (Close: December to March)
10:00AM~5:00PM, Close: Wednesday & Thursday



Wasuke Ishikawa

Ochazoppe no Nakajima-ya

お茶ぞっぺの中島屋

Saka-manju

The primary product Saka-manju (steamed cake) is made in the traditional way; wrap the homemade bean paste, which is made from coarsely mashed beans, in the dough that is leavened with rice-koji (malted rice). It is on sale for a limited time from March to November that is suitable for fermentation. Okoju and Chitton-mochi, what has name using local direct, are also popular.



Nakajima-ya : 1261 Ninomiya Tel : 042-558-0277
8:30AM~6:00PM, Close: Thursday



Cotton Pillow

It is made by applying the technique used in futon making. The pillow that contains cotton tightly in every corner has good elasticity and gives excellent sleep. Putting in the sun regularly keeps it comfortable.

Takumi Takahashi
Futon Kobo Takahashi

ふとん工房たかはし

Futon Kobo Takahashi : 394-4 Konakano Tel: 042-596-0345
9:00AM~6:00PM, Close: Monday



Polished Bamboo Lamp

A bamboo art with an image of Kabuki carved out by using Sukashi-bori (openwork) on the Migaki-dake (polished bamboo) with a beautiful texture. Usually used with a light inside, it can also be displayed just as an ornament. This kind of Japanese design is likely to be popular among foreigners.

Hiroshi Emori
Tokyo Takeakari
Donchiku Kobo

東京竹灯り
「吞竹工房」

Tokyo Takeakari Donchiku Kobo : 733 Otsu
Tel: 080-6556-2556
10:00AM~4:00PM, Open: Saturday & Sunday



**Mitsunaga Nozaki
Nozaki Shuzo**

野崎酒造

Kisho Honjozo is their signature sake, known for its gentle flavor and smooth mouth-feel. To avoid deterioration of the quality of sake during the distribution stage, the sake is sold only at local sake stores and some specialty sake stores such as Shiroyama Sakura Ginjoshu (named for the large cherry tree that blooms on Mt. Shiroyama).

Nozaki Shuzo : Tokura 63 Tel: 042-596-0123
10:00AM~12:00PM, 1:00PM~5:00PM
Close: Saturday & Sunday & Holiday



**Hachiroemon
Nakamura
Nakamura Shuzo**

中村酒造

"Chiyotsuru - Tokyo Shuzo Tama Junmai Genshu" is a superb junmai sake brewed with the traditional techniques of a sake brewery with a history of over 200 years. It is the owner's favorite masterpiece. "Chiyotsuru - Junmai Ginjo" has a fruity aroma and mild taste.

Nakamura Shuzo : Ushinuma 63
Tel: 042-558-0516 (Telephone service is available only on weekdays)
(Sake Brewing Museum) Noon to 4:30PM
Close: Year End/New Year's holidays



有限会社 池谷

Iketani & Co. Inc. : 170 Otsu

☎ 042-596-0542

10:00AM~4:30PM, Close: Monday & Tuesday



Mt. Ootakesan

Mt. Hinodeyama

深沢小さな美術館

Tomo's little museum at Fukasawa

492 Fukasawa

☎ 042-595-0336

10:00AM~5:00PM,

Close: Wednesday & Thursday

(Close: December to March)



Mt. Katsuboyama

高橋敏彦視覚デザイン研究室 小さなギャラリー (茶房むべ)

Toshihiko Takahashi Visual Design Office

Little gallery (Sabou MUBE)

1312 Otsu

☎ 042-596-4335

11:00AM~4:00PM,

Open all year round



Mt. Komyosan

Mt. Mazukariyama

TAKAHASHI, Toshihiko

MORIYA, Kazuho

TOMONAGA, Akimitsu

SHIMIZU, Tetsuo

JR Musashiutsukaichi St.

EMORI, Hiroshi

Mitsunaga, Nozaki

TAKAHASHI, Takumi

KISHI, Tadashi



Mt. Usukisan

Mt. Kariyoseyama

東京竹灯り「呑竹工房」

Tokyo Takekari Donchiku Kobo : 733 Otsu

☎ 080-6556-2556

10:00AM~4:00PM, Open: Saturday & Sunday



Mt. Ichimichiyama

野崎酒造

Nozaki Shuzo : Tokura 63

☎ 042-596-0123

10:00AM~12:00PM, 1:00PM~5:00PM

Close: Saturday & Sunday & Holiday



ふとん工房たかし

Futon Kobo Takahashi : 394-4 Konakano

☎ 042-596-0345

9:00AM~6:00PM, Close: Monday



株式会社 寿美屋

Sumiya Co., Ltd. :
64 Itsukaichi

☎ 042-596-0018

9:30AM~6:00PM,

Close: Wednesday

(irregular)



小机林業 ©小机邸喫茶室 安居

Kozukue Ringyo : 490 Sannai

☎ 090-1558-1058

初後亭

Syogotei: 233 Sannai

☎ 042-596-0541

Weekdays 11:00AM~3:00PM

Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays 11:00AM~4:00PM

Close: Wednesday & Thursday



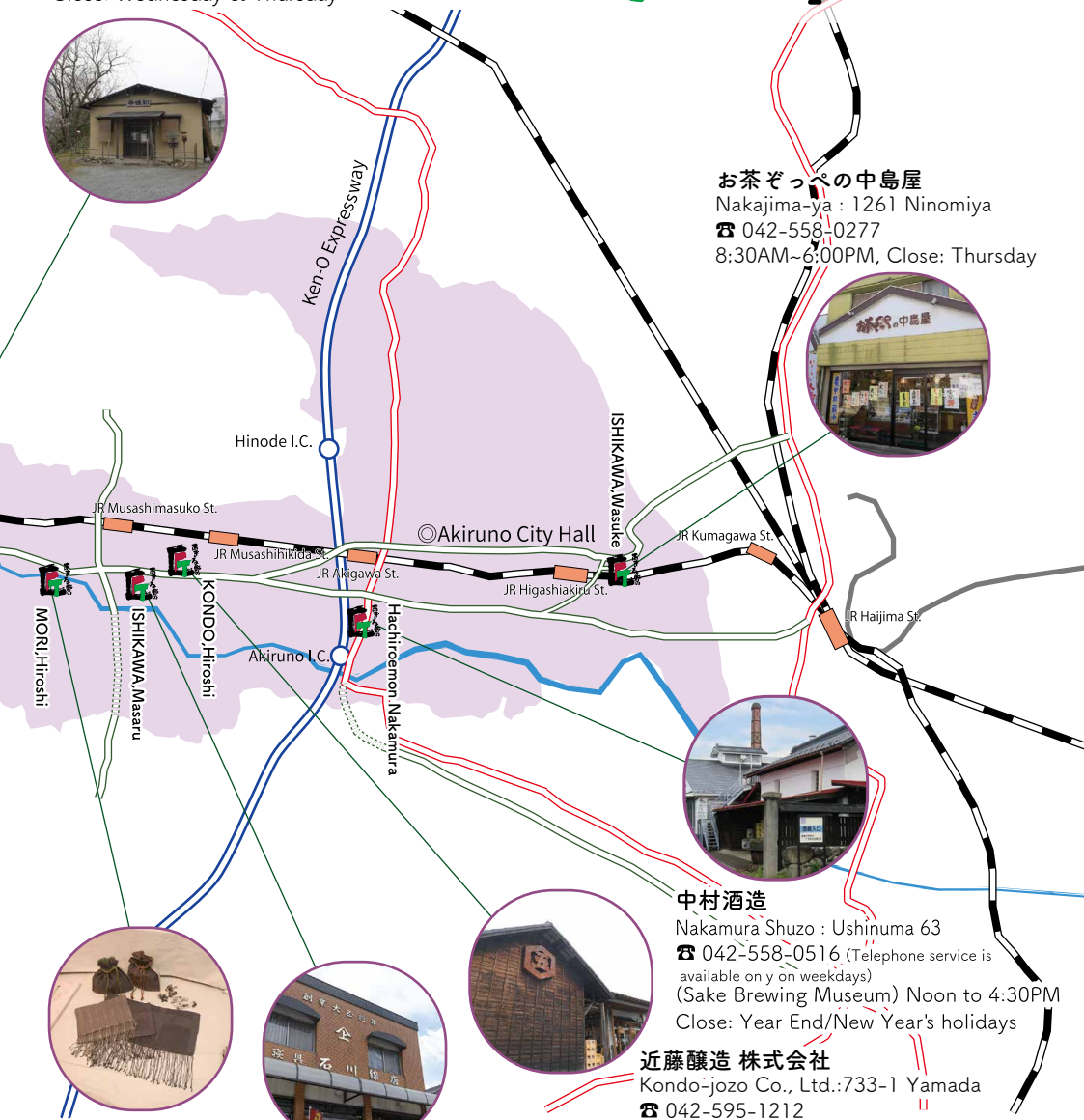
Akiruno Takumi Map

お茶ぞっぺの中島屋

Nakajima-ya : 1261 Ninomiya

☎ 042-558-0277

8:30AM~6:00PM, Close: Thursday



中村酒造

Nakamura Shuzo : Ushinuma 63

☎ 042-558-0516 (Telephone service is available only on weekdays)

(Sake Brewing Museum) Noon to 4:30PM

Close: Year End/New Year's holidays



近藤醸造 株式会社

Kondo-jozo Co., Ltd.: 733-1 Yamada

☎ 042-595-1212

9:00AM~5:00PM, Open: everyday



糸工房「森」

Itokobo MORI : 1129 Ina

☎ 042-596-0250

8:00AM~6:00PM, Close: irregular



石川綿店

Ishikawa Menten : 894 Yamada

☎ 0120-0260-85 (toll-free)

9:00AM~6:00PM, Close: Sunday & Holiday



AKIRUNO NO TAKUMI

Artisans in Akiruno

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秋川溪谷
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