

兵庫県の産地 (HYOGO)



BANSHU-SOROBAN

(ABACUS)

Ono-shi and environs, Hyogo Prefecture

Soroban (abacus) was introduced from China to Nagasaki (then to Otsu) at the end of 16th century. It was then introduced to Hyogo by a person who fled to Otsu upon the aggression of the Warlord Hashiba Hideyoshi against Miki Castle. While in Otsu, he acquired the skill of abacus and returned to produce this device. The production reached its height to 360,000 units in 1960, but decreased thereafter under the influence of electric/electronic calculators. Hard and durable natural materials are used for abacus manufacturing. i.e. birch or boxwood for the beads, and, ebony for the frame. The abacuses assembled applying the sophisticated traditional technique ('Uroko-hoso' and the like) boast of usability and quick reaction to flicks. They also retain the value as objects of art.

TANBA-TACHIKUI-YAKI

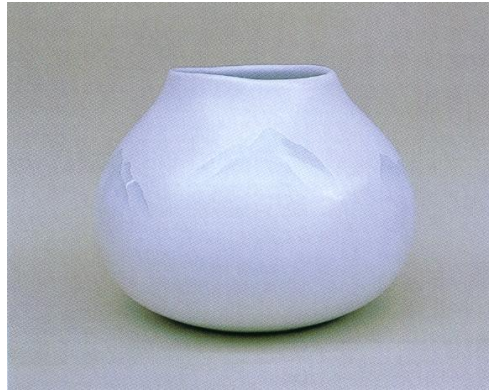
(CERAMICS)

Konda-cho and environs, Hyogo Prefecture

Tachikui pottery, one of the 6 oldest potteries in Japan, is said to date back to the end of the Heian Period. Around the end of the 16th century Nobori Gama (Inclined Kiln) came into use substituting the conventional Ana Gama (Hole Kiln). Nobori Gama, together with the Ke-rokuro (potter's wheel of counter-clock-wise turn unique to Tachikui region), which was introduced at the same time, has been handed down to present generation as traditional techniques. They used to produce mainly pots and urns until they learned Kobori Enshu's thought in the Edo Period and took tea utensils into their repertoire. From then on a number of fine pieces of the kind have been created. Tanba Tachikui-yaki has been manufacturing the vessels for everyday-life using ash glaze or iron glaze. A pot made in Nobori Gama features the unique color or patterns called 'Hai-kaburi', a deformation caused by the mixture of the ash of pine fuel and the melted glaze.



兵庫県の産地 (HYOGO)



IZUSHI-YAKI

(CERAMICS)

Izushi-cho, Hyogo Prefecture

Legend has it that a Shinto God (Ameno hiboko-no-mikoto) reached Tajima accompanied by the potters, and, had them kiln the food vessel 2000 years ago.

Historically, Izushi-yaki dates back to the mid-Edo Period, when large amount of rude ore for ceramics was found in the region. Subsidized by the domain lord, people invited the potter from Arita, Saga and manufactured porcelain. Izushi region is proud of producing the one and only kind of stark white porcelain. In addition, high level of carving technique adds to the beauty of porcelain. There is a clean and neat atmosphere about the Izushi-yaki with the smooth surface reminiscent of silk. And yet it is elegant and sublime.

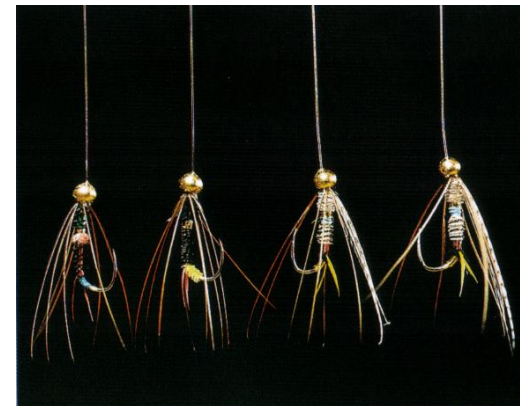
BANSHU-KEBARI

(FISH HOOK)

Nishiwaki-shi and environs, Hyogo Prefecture

The techniques of Banshu Kebari (artificial fly) were introduced from Kyoto at the end of the Edo Period and have been developed as peasants' sideline work. After it received various awards at the fishery exposition etc. in the mid-Meiji Era, its high quality became known to anglers. Today, the region has become a production center to manufacture the best part of the domestic demands of artificial fly.

Artificial fly is not a mere copy of actual aquatic insect, but a fantastic work of art which features the stylized image of the insect to reflect Japanese aesthetic feeling. Hundred percent hand work techniques proud of over hundred years' tradition. To a hook of less than 1 cm long several kinds of feather are attached coiling silken thread. And then, leaf gold, lacquer etc. are applied by fingertip manipulation in compliance with the targeted fish, season, weather, time of fishing, water depth, water color, water quality etc. At the sight of submerged artificial fly being manipulated, you may feel as if an aquatic insect were swimming there.



兵庫県の産地 (HYOGO)



TOYOOKA-KIRYU-ZAIKU

(WICKERWORK)

Toyooka-shi and environs, Hyogo Prefecture

Willow has 2000 years history. 'Willow Box Made in Tajima' is listed among the old treasures housed in Shosoin Storehouse (built in 752), Nara. The wickerwork, started with weaving Koriyanagi (willow) growing in the barren on Maruyama River into basket, has taken a shape of an industry by the time Toyooka became a castle town. In the Edo Period the domain lord of Toyooka patronized and promoted the wickerwork to establish the monopoly system, which made the Toyooka wickerwork widely known.

The product is woven one by one utilizing the taste of natural tree and the features of the material, such as, strong and flexible texture, softness and suppleness.

Various techniques are involved in basket weaving, i.e. 6 kinds of straw rope knitting, 33 kinds of side weaving and 18 kinds of edge knitting techniques. The product line is wide ranging from willow trunks to Taisho baskets, or, from Shopping baskets to fancy bags.

BANSHU-MIKI-UCHIHAMONO

(SMITHERY)

Miki-shi Hyogo Prefecture

Banshu Miki Uchihamono originated after the fall of Miki Castle in the late 16th century. For the reconstruction of Shrines, temples and houses carpenters gathered from various regions, which resulted in the development of Miki's carpenter tool industry. The Japanese wrought technique was handed down to Meiji and many kinds of wrought edge-tools were developed applying the new techniques. Chisels, planes and knives are made by heating carbon steel in the fire pit and wrought by hammer. Forming process is done by heating and wrought while applying mud. Saw and pallet offer the chance for craftsmen to show their skills of straightening the deformation. Among the craftsmen, 20% of them are directly engaged in the manufacture of traditional crafts.

