

For more information on Toyama's traditional craftsmanship



**Toyama Prefectural Traditional Industry Support Division**

Production Associations

for Nationally Designated Traditional Crafts within Toyama Prefecture



**Takaoka copperware traditional craft cooperative promotion**

2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101 Otayamachi,  
Takaoka City 933-0029 ☎ 0766-24-8565



**Shogawa Wood Works Turnery Union**

116 Shogawamachi-Shimeno, Tonami City 932-0315  
(inside the Shogawamachi Shokokai Building)  
☎ 0763-82-1155



**Inami Wood Carving Cooperative**

Inside Inami Wood Carving Composite Hall,  
733 Kitagawa, Nanto City 932-0226  
☎ 0763-82-5179



**Toyama Washi Paper Cooperative**

668-4 Yatsuomachi-Kagamimachi, Toyama City 939-2341  
☎ 076-455-1184



**Takaoka Lacquerware traditional craft cooperative**

2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101 Otayamachi,  
Takaoka City 933-0029 ☎ 0766-22-2097



**Etchu Fukuoka Sedge Hat Promotion Association**

1034 Fukuokamachi-Fukuoka, Takaoka City 939-0111  
☎ 0766-64-2702

For more information on purchasing Toyama's traditional crafts



**To Toyama**

1F CiC Building, 1-2-3 Shintomicho, Toyama City, Toyama 930-0002  
☎ 076-444-7137 FAX: 076-444-7133



**Nihonbashi Toyama**

1F Nihonbashi Daiei Building, 1-2-6  
Nihonbashi-Muromachi, Chuo City, Tokyo 103-0022  
☎ 03-6262-2723



**Takaoka Regional Local Industry Center**

2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101 Otayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0029  
☎ 0766-25-8283

For more information on tourism in and access to Toyama



**Toyama Prefecture Official Tourism Website "Toyama Navi"**

Public Interest Incorporated Association Toyama Tourism Organization  
2F Prefectural Office South Annex, 1-7 Shin-Sogawa, Toyama City, Toyama 930-8501  
☎ 076-441-7722 FAX: 076-431-4193

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Toyama Prefectural Commerce, Industry & Labor Department,**

3F Prefectural Office East Annex, 1-7 Shin-Sogawa, Toyama City, Toyama 930-8501  
☎ 076-444-3247 FAX: 076-444-4402



**Toyama Traditional Crafts'**  
**11 Points of Pride**  
All Creation Begins with Love





## Loving Our Homeland, Innovating Creation Every Day

Stoke the flames. Carefully select the materials. Make the tools. Clear your thoughts. Then work wholeheartedly in creation. Toyama's traditional crafts are the crystallization of this exact spirit, kept alive for hundreds of years, passing on the techniques and hearts of each craftsman. These diligent workers build on the ideas of their predecessors, who worked with patience despite the harsh snows of winter, viewing the spectacular sight of the Tateyama mountain range from the first light of morning to the setting of the sun. This photo shows craftsmen casting metal in a foundry of Takaoka, a place which has a history of metal casting stretching back over 400 years. This is a glimpse of the origin of Toyama's crafts.

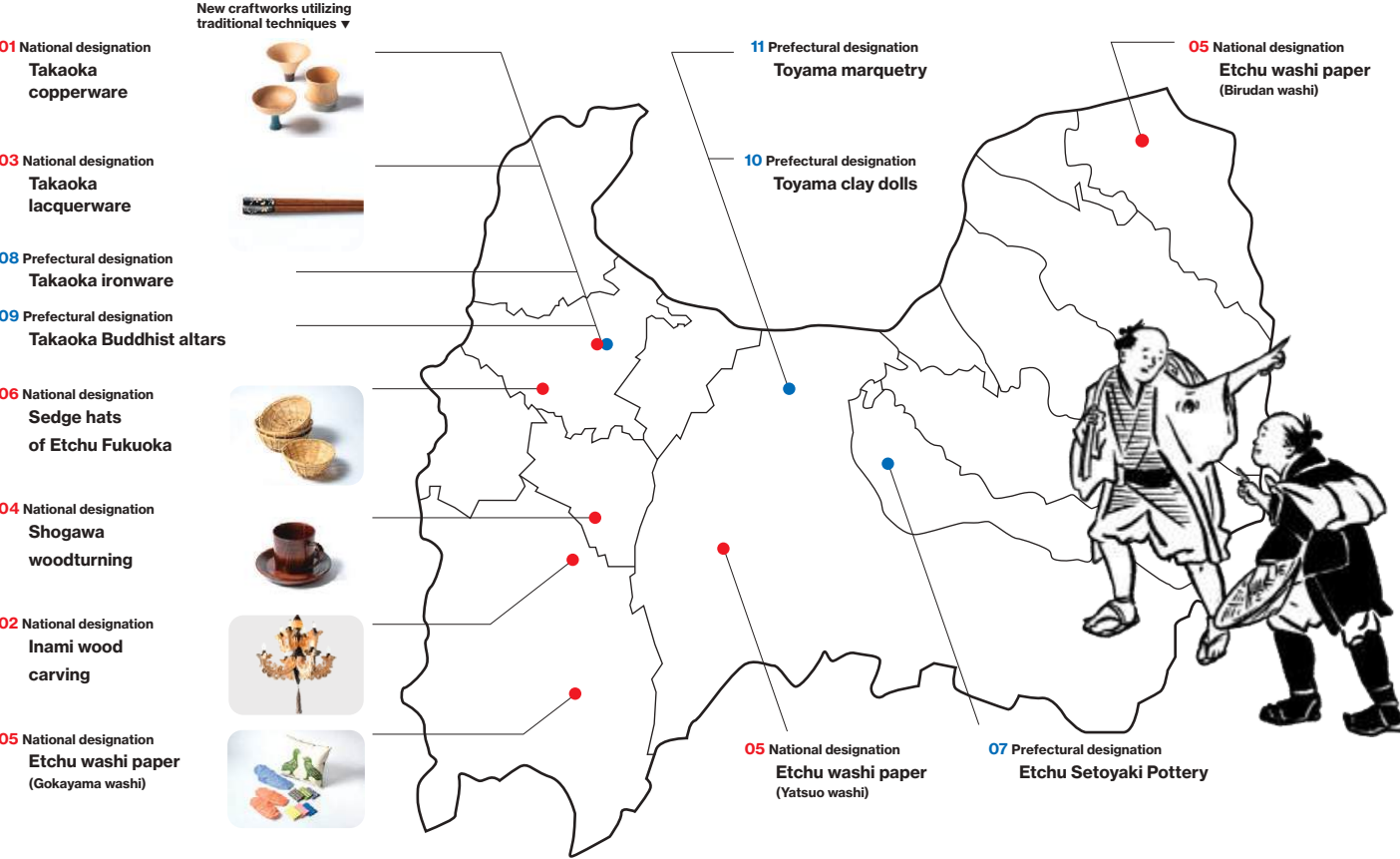
The nature, the history, and the culture of Toyama are all put to use, to create craftworks with true devotion. Every single step of the process is impossible without having great affection for the land, the people, and for everything in the artisan's life beyond mere work. Toyama's crafts take this inspiring spirit towards the future, driving constant innovation as they do so.



# Traditional Crafts of Toyama

Toyama is a prefecture facing the Sea of Japan famed for its workman-ship.It contains excellent natural and marine resources, such as the Tateyama Mountain Range, with an elevation of 3,000 meters, and Toyama Bay, which is a member of the Most Beautiful Bays of the World Club. At the same time, in winter the land becomes isolated by severe snowfall, giving rise to the enterprising spirit and diligent devotion to work of the local people. In the domain of traditional crafts, the techniques have reached a superior level of proficiency through refinements achieved by the persistent efforts of the people over many long years, and have been passed down through the ages. Now artisans of Toyama intend to bring new life to their craft, looking to expand their reach to the entire world.

	▶ National designation	▶ Prefectural designation
Purpose	Generally designed for use in everyday life.	
Manufacturing process	The majority of the manufacturing process should involve manual work.	
Techniques	Must be made by traditional techniques (generally with a history of over 100 years).	
Materials	Must be made with traditionally used materials (generally with a history of over 100 years).	
Scale	Must be made in one particular region (either 10 or more firms or 30 or more artisans) as a local industry.	Must be made in one particular region by a certain number of people (generally 5 or more), with the expectation that traditional techniques utilizing local characteristics will continue to be handed down.



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Discover the secrets

# Takaoka Copperware

The only place to go for casting work

**Designated organization** Takaoka copperware traditional craft cooperative promotion  
2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101 Otayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0029  
Tel.: +81(0)766-24-8565 <http://www.doukikumiai.com>

**Primary materials** Alloy of copper, zinc, lead, and tin

Takaoka is a city designated as Japan Heritage



## The Superb Heartland of Japanese Copperware

Takaoka copperware, from Takaoka City in Toyama, has the top share in Japan for copper-alloy castings. A broad range of items are created here, including bronze statues, temple bells, Buddhist altar items, artworks, and interior items. In Takaoka, these works are created by highly skilled artisans specialized in their respective processes, including building original molds, casting, engraving, coloration, and so forth.

Takaoka copperware dates back to 1611, when Maeda Toshinaga, the second head of the Kaga Domain, which had a castle in Takaoka, invited seven metal casters from nearby areas to open a foundry in Kanayamachi. At first, they produced everyday goods in ironware such as pots, kettles, plows, and hoes. Later manufacturing of copperware

such as Buddhist altar items became prominent, and from the Meiji period, Takaoka copper merchants invited artisans in engraving or marquetry from the former Kaga Domain and elsewhere to further heighten the their skill level. Created with such masterful techniques, their works have enjoyed an excellent reputation outside Japan, such as at the Vienna World's Fair.

In addition to the alloys of copper and zinc, lead, and tin that have been used up to now, the local foundries are also working on new styles using 100% tin or aluminum. They also make excellent use of techniques to color metal by corroding it, while opening up a new world for Takaoka copperware in areas like tableware.



Combining woodwork with copperware

◀The world's first cast pot still made using techniques adapted from temple bells



### CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

A popular sake drinking set using the weight of the metal

### TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

Producing incense burners using superior techniques in casting and engraving



Visit & try

Nousaku is a maker of casting wares that was founded in 1916. Its bendable vessels made of 100% tin have been a major hit. Nousaku's head office contains a shop and cafe. Visitors can try casting themselves or take a tour the foundry (reservations required).

**Nousaku**  
Address : 8-1 Office Park, Takaoka City 939-1119  
Tel.: +81(0)766-63-0001



Visit & try

Kanayamachi is the home of Takaoka casting. In addition to the Takaoka Casting Museum, there are other stores displaying and selling casting wares or other places where visitors can try out making their own accessories in cast metal.

**Kanayamachi (Takaoka Casting Museum)**  
Address : 1-5 Kanayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0841  
Tel.: +81(0)766-28-6088



### Production of Takaoka copperware



#### Polishing

Buffing and other techniques are used on cast metal to create various effects, from rough to mirror-smooth finishes.



#### Engraving

Several dozen types of cold chisels are used to etch patterns into the metal's surface, including hairlines, fretwork, or inlaying other metals.



#### Coloration

Chemicals, vinegar, rice bran, plants, scrap metal and other items are used to corrode and color the metal.



# Inami Wood Carving

A wood carver's uniqueness is essential to success

Designated organization

Inami Wood Carving Cooperative  
Inside Inami Wood Carving Composite Hall,  
733 Kitagawa, Nanto City 932-0226  
Tel.: +81(0)763-82-5179 <https://inamichoukoku.jp>

Primary materials

Lumber from the camphor tree, Japanese zelkova, paulownia, etc.

Inami is a town designated as Japan Heritage



## Wielding Incomparable Skill with the Chisel

Inami, part of Nanto City, is famed for being the temple town of Inamibetsuin Zuisenji Temple, and also for its wood carving. Walking around the town, you can see artisans tapping away with their chisel at various workshops. There are still around 200 wood carvers in this town, competing together to create works full of individuality. Their presence gives the town a rare sense out of the ordinary.

Inami wood carving can be traced back to the reconstruction of Zuisenji Temple after its destruction in a fire in the mid-Edo period. The officially appointed wood carver Maekawa Sanshiro, sent out from Honganji Temple in Kyoto, taught the local temple carpenters his skills in carving. Inami wood carving requires the use of 200 to 300 different types of chisels, each with their specific

purpose. Its characteristic style is to use thick pieces of wood to create a dynamic three-dimensional effect.

Their work ranges widely, including carved wooden transom panels called *ranma* for temples and shrines nationwide, those for homes, wooden lion's head masks, carvings for portable shrines and various other types of festival floats, Buddhist statues, *tenjin* dolls, *hina* dolls, artworks, wooden screens, carvings for signs, and repairs or restoration of cultural properties. Orders for wood carving of all types come from the length and breadth of Japan. In order to foster young talent, Inami Town established the Inami Woodcarving School in 2023. Currently, over 30 students have gathered from across the country to learn traditional skills. Among these are students who, while training under a master, try to venture into the world with their individual pieces following the end of their training.



Developed by young artisans

CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Highly unique works are being developed, such as this wood carved chandelier



TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

The *ranma* transom panels seem to be almost escaping from the frame.

point

The world of Inami wood carving is full of individuality

In the Meiji era, the local carvers began to apply the skills they had learned for *ranma* of temples to that of houses as well. Each *ranma* panel is created to be unique, matching the customer's requests or the building it is to be fitted in. A carved wooden chandelier made by several young carvers working together is one example. It is shaped as a single work by carvers who have learned the same techniques working in anticipation of each other's moves.



Visit

Zuisenji Temple was founded in 1390. After it was destroyed by fire, a carver from Kyoto was dispatched to help in the reconstruction, marking the beginning of the history of Inami wood carving. Marvelous displays of skill can be seen throughout the temple.

Shinshu Otani-ha  
(Higashi Honganji)  
Inamibetsuin Zuisenji

Address : 3050 Inami,  
Nanto City 932-0211  
Tel.: +81(0)763-82-0004



Visit & try

At the Inami Kiborinosato Soyukan, you can see a wood carving workshop, or experience wood carving on Sundays only (reservation required).

Roadside Rest Area Inami  
Inami Kiborinosato Soyukan

Address : 730 Kitagawa,  
Nanto City 932-0226  
Tel.: +81(0)763-82-5757

Inami Wood Carving  
Composite Hall

Address : 733 Kitagawa,  
Nanto City 932-0226  
Tel.: +81(0)763-82-5158



## Production of *ranma*



The draft sketch is traced onto the wood, then a fretsaw is used to open holes for the fretwork, followed by preliminary roughing, rough carving, fine carving, and the finishing work, without use of a file.

# Takaoka Lacquerware

The beauty of *aogai-nuri* lacquerware is simply enchanting

Designated organization

Takaoka Lacquerware traditional craft cooperative  
2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101 Otayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0029  
Tel.: +81(0)766-22-2097 <https://takaokashikki.jp>

Primary materials

Wood, lacquer, green turban shell, abalone, silver-lipped oyster shell, etc.

Takaoka is a city designated as Japan Heritage



## The Beauty of Lacquer Reaches Beyond Time Itself

The story of Takaoka lacquerware begins when joinery craftsmen came to live in the town of Takaoka, newly opened in 1609 by Maeda Toshinaga, second head of the Kaga Domain (Maeda clan). These joinery craftsmen built cabinets and chests, applying a red lacquer to them. The popularity of this style attracted more craftsmen to Takaoka. At the end of the Edo period, an artisan called Ishii Yusuke learned Chinese lacquerware and created his own *Yusuke-nuri* lacquerware characterized by a combination of Tang-style flowers and birds or landscapes painted with rust-colored lacquer and other techniques such as metal-leaf decoration, stone decoration, and *aogai-nuri*. Many tea shelves or display shelves were created in the Meiji

period. The Toyama Kogei School (now the Takaoka Kogei High School) was also established. *Chokoku-nuri* lacquered trays decorated with sea bream wood carving by Kurosaku Murakami, a teacher of wood carving, became popular. The techniques of *aogai-nuri* (mother-of-pearl inlay) were incorporated into many lacquerware works. These three traditional techniques can be seen in the Takaoka festival floats, called "mobile art galleries."

Modernization came to production and sales methods with the arrival of the Showa period. Post-war, the process was divided into wooden basis production, carving, and decoration, and the mass production of commemorative gifts and other such items began. Nowadays lacquerware works are suited to contemporary times, such as accessories, smartphone cases, mother-of-pearl inlay glasses, or chopsticks.

Applying traditional techniques to everyday items



CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

*Aogai-nuri* (mother-of-pearl inlay) lacquered chopsticks.



TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

An *aogai-nuri* lacquered candle stand from the Taisho period.

point

The beauty of Takaoka lacquerware seen in *aogai-nuri* lacquerware

The three primary traditional techniques of Takaoka lacquerware are *chokoku-nuri*, *Yusuke-nuri*, and *aogai-nuri*. *Chokoku-nuri* (carved lacquerware) is a technique handed down from the mid-Edo period. *Yusuke-nuri* is a style comprising several techniques that was developed in the Meiji period. *Aogai-nuri* was developed under the influence of Somada Kiyosuke, whom Maeda Masatoshi, head of the Toyama Domain in the early Edo period, invited from Kyoto. The brilliance and elegance of blue and pink colors reflecting from the shells are a wonder to see.

**Aogai-nuri lacquerware shining with all the colors of the spectrum**

The mother-of-pearl layer of shells such as abalone, green turban, silver-lipped oyster, and black-lipped oyster caught in the warmer waters of Kyushu and Okinawa are finely shaved to 0.1 millimeters. In addition to using the natural colors of the shells, another technique characteristic to Takaoka lacquerware is *fusezaishiki*, where paint and gold or silver gilt is applied to the rear of the sliced shell.



## Production of *aogai-nuri* lacquerware

**The mysterious beauty of *aogai-nuri* lacquerware**

*Aogai-nuri* is a technique of placing finely sliced shells such as abalone, green turban, or pearl oyster in sections cut to match the picture on a lacquered surface. The pattern is delicately crafted to carefully take into account the tiny differences in coloration or the pearl-like shine of the shells. Takaoka's *aogai-nuri* lacquerware is said to make up 90% of the mother-of-pearl inlay lacquerware in Japan.



Visit

Takaoka festival floats, registered as a national important intangible folk cultural property and as UNESCO intangible cultural heritage items, are on display throughout the year. The Takaoka festival float newly made for the Heisei period is decorated with *aogai-nuri* lacquer work.

Takaoka Mikurumayama Museum

Address : 47-1 Moriyamamachi, Takaoka City 933-0928  
Tel.: +81(0)766-30-2497





# Shogawa Woodturning

These warm wood grains are so pleasing to the eye

Designated organization

Shogawa Wood Works Turnery Union  
116 Shogawamachi-Shimeno, Tonami City  
932-0315 (inside the Shogawamachi Shokokai Building)  
Tel.: +81(0)763-82-1155 [www.shokoren-toyama.or.jp/~shogawa-wood/](http://www.shokoren-toyama.or.jp/~shogawa-wood/)

Primary materials

Natural timber like Japanese zelkova and Japanese horse chestnut, lacquer



## A Shine and Texture that Improves with Every Use

Shogawa town in Tonami City grew prosperous as a major collection point for logs floated down the Shogawa River by the Kaga Domain from Hida and Gokayama in the Edo period. In the late Edo period, a woodworker called Echigoya Kiyotsugu moved from Uozu to Shogawa, to start producing turned woodwork made on a lathe from raw wood. In the Meiji period, this area also produced the base wood for Takaoka lacquerware and Wajima-nuri lacquerware.

Traditional Shogawa woodturning still continues even now. Logs are cut lengthwise into slabs that are then turned on a lathe. This method reveals wood grain rich in variations, making each piece unique. The materials used are Japanese timber with beautiful

grains like Japanese horse chestnut or Japanese zelkova, as well as *jindai* zelkova, ebony, pine, and so on. Woodworkers spot and purchase choice pieces of timber while still in log form, to be sawn into slabs and left for a year to dry naturally outside. The result is high quality timber free of warping. Some products are finished with *fuki-urushi* wipe lacquering, to use the natural grain of the wood, or left unvarnished for the wonderful texture. Goods handmade by artisans using natural wood and lacquer exude warmth and have a comfortable feel. Each one has its own uniqueness, while their gloss and the texture of the wood grain improve the more it is used.



### CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Coffee cups and breadboards that soak up excess moisture



### TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

Japanese horse chestnut and Japanese zelkova have beautiful grains

### point

Handmade work and the warmth of wood go perfectly with contemporary lifestyles.

Shogawa woodturning has a long history of popularity as gifts for traditional events in the Tonami region, such as memorial services for the founder of a sect, Buddhist memorial services, or festivals. Typical forms are trays, teacup saucers, or cake trays. Nowadays, coffee cups, tumblers, and breadboards are also made in response to changes in people's lifestyles. Dishes and cups made from natural wood pleasantly transmit warmth to the hands, with a good reputation for ease of eating with.

# Etchu Washi Paper

Washi paper is tough stuff

Designated organization

Toyama Washi Paper Cooperative  
668-4 Yatsuomachi-Kagamimachi,  
Toyama City 939-2341 (Inside Keijusha)  
Tel.: +81(0)76-455-1184 <https://www.etchu-washi.jp/>

Primary materials

Paper mulberry, sunset hibiscus, pigments, etc.



## The World of Washi Paper Is Forever New

Amidst the wonderful natural scenery of Toyama, with its plentiful supply of clean water, *washi* paper has long been made to suit people's lifestyles, deeply intertwined with the history of each region. The three types produced in Toyama and designated as national traditional crafts are Yatsuo *washi*, Gokayama *washi*, and Birudan *washi*. Together they are called Etchu washi.

In the mountainous area of Yatsuo, a tough *washi* paper was made for various uses, such as wrapping paper for medicine distributed nationwide from Toyama through door-to-door medicine vendors. Collaboration with the living national treasure Keisuke Serizawa led to the creation of brightly dyed washi paper, which is used for a variety of popular washi paper items.

In the Gokayama region, which contains villages registered as World Heritage Sites for their traditional Japanese architecture, *washi* paper was produced for the Kaga Domain in the Edo period. In Gokayama, which is located high above sea level, the morning and daytime temperatures differ considerably, allowing paper mulberry to grow at a gentle pace. This gives the fibers more density and makes the branches thinner and longer. These characteristics add toughness to the *washi* paper. *Washi* paper, made only with natural materials, is said to last for a thousand years. It is often used as paper to repair cultural properties.

Birudan is located in Asahi, where there were many paper mills at the start of the Showa period. Efforts are now being made to revive the culture of *washi* paper, such as with the founding of the Birudan Washi Cultural Association.

Characteristics of washi paper  
ease of use in today's lifestyles



### CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Cushions, slippers, and business card cases made of colorful washi paper



### TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

A reproduction of a bundle of 2,000 sheets of umbrella paper made in winter by a farmer

### point

Making traditional *washi* paper into something people want to use now.

*Washi* paper was made in the winter agricultural off-season in the mountainous areas of Yatsuo, Gokayama, and Birudan. The peak season for *washi* paper making is in the middle of winter, when the water is icy cold. This is because in warmer temperatures, glue called "neri" made from sunset hibiscus loses its viscosity. In contemporary Yatsuo and Gokayama, stylishly designed items are being developed with strong *washi* paper pattern dyed with vivid colors.



Visit & buy

This center displays and sells traditional Japanese handicrafts (Takaoka copperware, Takaoka lacquerware, Inami woodcarving, Shogawa woodturning, Etchu washi paper, Etchu Fukuoka's sedge-woven bamboo hats). It also introduces the process and history of craft production. Additionally, "the largest tray in Japan," created with Shogawa woodturning techniques, can be found on display.

Takaoka Regional Local Industry Center

Address : 2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101  
Otayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0029  
Tel. : +81(0)766-25-8283



Visit & buy

Here you can buy Shogawa woodturning pieces made with traditional techniques, along with soft serves made with yuzu, a citrus fruit that is a special product of Shogawa, and other souvenir goods.

Shogawa Wood Plaza,  
Shogawa Aqua Memorial Park

Address : 1550 Shogawamachi-Kanaya,  
Tonami City 932-0305  
Tel. : +81(0)763-82-6841



### Production of Shogawa woodturning



#### 1 Slab stacking and timber cutting

Japanese horse chestnut and Japanese zelkova timber are left to dry naturally for over a year after being sawn into slabs. Once dry, the slabs are rounded off into circles of various sizes.



#### 2 Drying and turning

The wood is roughly turned on the lathe, then dried in a kiln drying room. The artisan then turns the inside and outside of the work.



#### 3 Fuki-urushi lacquering

Raw lacquer is applied several times to the plain wood surface. The way the lacquer is applied to make the grain clearly stand out is a particular feature.



Visit & try

A large range of Yatsuo washi items including pattern-dyed goods are available. At the adjoining workshop you can see the papermaking process or try it out yourself.

Keijusha

Address : 668-4 Yatsuomachi-Kagamimachi,  
Toyama City 939-2341  
Tel. : +81(0)76-455-1184



Visit & try

At the Washi Taiken-Kan, you can try out making washi paper, and as the largest store for these products in Toyama, you can also buy a range of washi paper products only available here, such as large-size sheets or items for daily use.

Road Station Taira  
Gokayama Washi-no-Sato

Address : 215 Higashinakae,  
Nanto City 939-1905  
Tel. : +81(0)763-66-2223



### Characteristics of washi paper by producing region



#### Yatsuo washi

Strong washi paper individually hand-dyed with pigment using a pattern-dyeing method is sold as calendars, stationery and others.



#### Gokayama washi

The skin of paper mulberry grown in the mountains is bleached in the snow to turn white with the moisture of the snow and the sunlight. This paper is used for shoji sliding door screens.



#### Birudan washi

Asahi in Toyama is blessed with clean water and the wonders of nature. Postcards and other goods are made using this paper, which has excellent preservation quality.



# Sedge Hats of Etchu Fukuoka

They're not woven,  
they're sewn with thread!

Designated  
organization

Etchu Fukuoka Sedge Hat Promotion Association  
1034 Fukuokamachi-Fukuoka, Takaoka City 939-0111  
Tel.: +81(0)766-64-2702 <https://sugegasa.jp>

Primary  
materials

Sedge, bamboo, thread



## Japan's Foremost Sedge Hat-Producing Region

Sedge hats were once made in various regions of Japan as a daily necessity indispensable for protecting people from the rain and sun during farm work. Sedge is water repellent, sheds water and snow, and is also thought to repel insects. Today, over 90% of Japan's sedge hats are made in Takaoka City's Fukuoka town. With over 400 years of history producing sedge hats, it was designated an important intangible folk cultural property. Sedge hats are thought to have been brought to the area from Ise Province or by a Zen monk from Kyoto. Encouraged by the Kaga Domain, full-scale production began during the mid-Edo period and reached a peak of 2.1 million sedge hats produced in one year. Today, about 30,000 hats are produced yearly by a group of about 70 artisans.

Fukuoka is located in a place that was originally marshy where high quality sedge used to be harvested. Today, sedge is cultivated by hand in dedicated fields. Sedge hat production is an integrated process, from growing the sedge, to creating the hat's frame, to sewing sedge into the hat with a needle and yellow thread, and finally, to selling hats to customers. Orders come from all over Japan for sedge hats in a variety of styles that will be used in festivals, folk song performances, and historical plays. These include conical hats, flower hats, courier hats, flat hats, and traditional women's hats. In order to preserve traditional sedge hat-making, successor training and new product development are also underway.



Emphasizing the beauty  
of the bamboo frame



### TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

Conical, flat, courier hats—a variety of traditional shapes are produced

### point

Using the benefits of sedge hats to create something that is always useful

As orders come in to Fukuoka town from all across Japan, artisans make traditional sedge hats in many different styles by hand. They use the techniques learned through sedge hat production to actively create new products for everyday life that make use of sedge's characteristics. In addition to baskets that highlight the beauty of their bamboo frames, name card holders, pot stands, accessories, and hats are also made.

### CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Baskets and coaster that make full use of the water and bug repellent properties of sedge.



Visit & buy

This facility utilizes a sedge-woven hat wholesale store that was relocated in 1931. It displays instruments and costumes used in "gagaku," Takaoka City's Designated Intangible Cultural Property. The inner gallery displays and sells a variety of sedge-woven hats, and the adjacent Machizukuri Fukuoka Workshop Ippukudokoro also has a large assortment of accessories made from sedge.

The Takaoka City Fukuoka Historical Materials Annex "The Gagaku Hall"

Address : 1208 Fukuokamachi-Fukuoka, Takaoka City 939-0111  
Tel. : +81(0)766-64-0390



Visit

The methods and history of sedge hat production are explained in detail through displays of the actual tools used, as well as through picture galleries and other exhibits.

Fukuoka History and Folklore Museum of Takaoka City

Address : 15 Azegayauchi, Fukuokamachi-Shimomukuta, Takaoka City 939-0143  
Tel. : +81(0)766-64-5602



### Production of sedge hats

Making sedge hats begins with planting sedge in autumn. Artisans create bamboo frames, and then sedge is sewn onto the frames with yellow, cotton thread.



# Etchu Setoyaki Pottery

Doesn't it have a wonderful, elegant color?

Designated  
organization

Kanakurekai  
See the website for contact details.  
<https://kanakurekai.com>

Primary  
materials

Local red-brown, yellow, blue, and white clay, as well as wood and straw ash



## Understanding Our Home's Soil, Aiming for New Heights

Etchu Setoyaki Pottery dates back almost 430 years to around 1590. It began at the base of Mount Tateyama in Tateyama Town's Uwazue when Maeda Toshinaga of the Kaga Domain invited a potter from Owari region to come make Seto ware for him. Uwazue was where Sue pottery had been made since the Heian period, and a variety of high-quality clays suited for pottery were produced there. Potters under the patronage of the Kaga Domain had a monopoly on the valuable white clay, and they used it to make tea utensils, including tea containers and pitchers. In later years, when Seto Village was built, it began producing a variety of wares for daily use and continued to develop throughout the

Edo period. After the Meiji Restoration, as the country was flooded with porcelain goods, many potteries were converted to produce roof tiles instead, and therefore only a few remained. However, through the efforts of people striving to revive Etchu Setoyaki Pottery, it was reborn in the Showa era.

Currently, there are 7 active ceramic artists. Kanakurekai was founded in order to promote the local pottery widely. "Kanakure" is a local word for "potsherds." They are working to promote new crafts rooted in the nature of Tateyama and the culture of Toyama.



### CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

New color tones added to the base using traditional white clay and glazes



### TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

High-quality clays are produced in the area around Tateyama Town.

### point

Rich natural features and culture are the basis of high-quality pottery.

Etchu Setoyaki Pottery is made in Tateyama Town, a town blessed with an environment full of a wide variety of excellent, locally-produced clays and straw for making glazes. The valuable fine-grained and iron-poor white clay produced there since long ago enables intricate work. The late Steve Jobs loved the pottery products created here by the fusion of traditional techniques and new concepts.

### Production of Etchu Setoyaki Pottery



#### 1 Processing clay

First, clay is dug up. Then, it is dissolved in water, and coarse sand and other impurities in the clay are removed through a process called "elutriation."



#### 2 Clay kneading

The clay is then kneaded by hand until it reaches a uniform hardness and air bubbles have been removed. It takes many years to master this technique.



#### 3 Shaping, drying, and glaze-making

The clay is shaped by hand or on a wheel, and then bisque fired after it dries. Various kinds of glazes are made.



#### 4 Glazing and firing

Glaze is applied to the work before the second firing. A climbing kiln is heated and its temperature is regulated over the course of several days.



Visit & try

Etchu Setoyaki Pottery of five potters and offers pottery workshops. In addition to offering hand throwing and pottery decoration courses where you can experience the joy of pottery, a climbing kiln can be rented.

Etchu Pottery Village "Tounoukan"

Address : 31 Setoshin, Tateyamamachi, Nakanikawa County, Toyama 930-3247  
Tel. : +81(0)76-462-3929





# Takaoka Ironware

The rustic simplicity of the ironware surface is incredible.

Designated organization

Takaoka copperware traditional craft cooperative promotion

2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101 Otayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0029  
Tel.: +81(0)766-24-8565

Primary materials

Iron

Takaoka is a city designated as Japan Heritage



## Takaoka Casting that Began with Iron

Takaoka's metal casting history of over 400 years began with Takaoka ironware. In 1611, Maeda Toshinaga, the second head of the Kaga Domain who developed Takaoka, invited casters from surrounding villages and created a foundry in Kanayamachi. Under the Kaga Domain's generous patronage, they began making household items out of iron, such as pans, pots, and kettles, and farming implements out of cast iron, such as spades and hoes.

Before long, Takaoka's casters expanded their production to include the salt-making pans that were once made in Noto. A vigorous trade with Hokkaido was supported by northbound ships stopping at Takaoka's Fushiki Port, and from the Meiji period through the Taisho period, Kanayamachi produced herring pots in great numbers that

were shipped to Hokkaido where the huge quantities of herring caught there were used to make fertilizer.

After the war, as Takaoka copperware was developed, artistic ironware also became popular. Even now, a wide variety of items with a high degree of artistry that take advantage of iron's unique qualities are made, including tea kettles and iron kettles, iron Chinese zodiac figurines, commemorative gifts, and other ornaments, wind chimes, paperweights, and even kitchenware. The traditional casting method in which molds are buried in the ground is still in use today. To pass the qualities of Takaoka ironware, with its long history spanning from the Edo period to the present day, on to future generations, product development is being promoted with the full use of iron's unique characteristics.



Plates and other kitchenware are also available



point

Enjoying the casting surface of traditional and modern ironware

The authentic simplicity on the surface of traditional tea kettles is one of their best features. The quality, rust-resistant iron from Edo period tea kettles made back when charcoal was used as fuel, are recycled as a source of iron. While honoring traditional craftsmanship, the development of new, never-before-seen products, such as iron plates, is also being promoted.

CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

The weightiness and texture of cast iron are selling points.

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

A traditional tea kettle made using rust-resistant iron recycled from older kettles.



Visit

The Takaoka Casting Museum is located in Kanayamachi, the home of Takaoka metal casting. Along with a detailed history of Takaoka casting, the museum houses various casting tools, outstanding products, and historic items such as herring pots.

Takaoka Casting Museum

Address: 1-5 Kanayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0841  
Tel.: +81(0)766-28-6088



## Production of ironware

### 1 Creating the original and casting molds

The original mold is made based on a completed image and used to create a casting mold from a sand base mold. Then, a sprue is attached to the mold to allow the molten iron to flow in.

### 2 Casting

Iron is melted in a furnace heated to about 1,500°C and then poured into the mold.

### 3 Finishing and coloring

Once the cast is finished, the sprue and any burrs or sand on the surface are shaved off, and the item is polished with machines and whetstones.



before → after



# Takaoka Buddhist Altars

Gold leaf and metal fittings provide an extravagant finish!

Designated organization

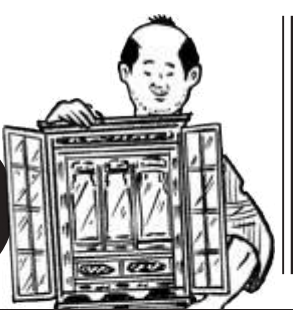
Takaoka Buddhist Altar Artisan Association

9-2 Kyomachi, Takaoka City, 933-0917  
Tel.: +81(0)766-25-0050

Primary materials

Aomori cypress, ginkgo, lacquer, gold leaf, brass, sheet copper, etc.

Takaoka is a city designated as Japan Heritage



## The Majesty of the Pure Land in the Brilliance of Pure Gold

Takaoka Buddhist altars can be considered large-scale works of art made by combining the sophisticated techniques of Takaoka's traditional metalworking, lacquerware, and woodworking. Buddhist altars are small-scale replicas of the inner altars for objects of worship in Buddhist temples, and have been in popular use since the Edo period. In the Hokuriku region of Japan including Toyama Prefecture (sometimes called the Kingdom of Shin Buddhism), a popular Buddhist altar is a golden type that emulates the Amitabha halls of Higashi and Nishi Honganji Temples (two of Kyoto's Pure Land temples). Buddhist altars and their implements vary by sect, but in Takaoka, the Buddhist altar of the Nishi Honganji Temple style is widely used, and their heavy use of

gold leaf and the ornamentation on their metal fittings, roof, and carvings express the grandeur of the Pure Land. In Toyama Prefecture, Buddhist altars designed for households spread after the Meiji Restoration, and so did the use of extravagant decorations. It is not unusual for families even today to have large Buddhist altars in the altar room of their homes.

In Takaoka, craftspeople and artists from about seven different specialties take part in the making of Buddhist altars: wooden basis, carving, gilding, metalwork, and maki-e lacquering. Hard, bug-resistant woods, such as Aomori cypress or ginkgo, are used. At each step, every part is made with the utmost care using sophisticated techniques before everything is finally assembled at the end. Takaoka Buddhist altars are works of composite art made possible through the combined efforts of many outstanding craftspeople.

Creating brilliance by hand



CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Applying a lacquer foundation before pressing the gold leaf creates a durable Buddhist altar.



TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

To build a Buddhist altar measuring about 61 cm wide, between 700 and 1,000 sheets of gold leaf are used.

point

Skills shine through in the details of traditional Takaoka Buddhist altars.

Buddhist altar crafting in Takaoka was originally handled and developed by joiners working on household furniture. The Buddhist altar size was based on the width of the scroll hung inside of them and measured in "dai" using the old Japanese system of measurement. The Buddhist altar pictured here is "70 dai" wide, so its width at the front is about 61 cm. The largest size, a "200 dai" Buddhist altar, has a front width of about 110 cm. As many as 2,000 sheets of gold leaf, which is flattened manually, are used to create a large Buddhist altar.



Visit & try

The Takaoka Regional Industrial Center has displays of Takaoka Buddhist altars, and sells and displays many other Japanese traditional crafts, including Takaoka copperware, Takaoka lacquerware, Inami wood carving, Shogawa woodturning, Etchu washi paper, and sedge hats of Etchu Fukuoka. Visitors can also try their hand at casting tin sake cups and maki-e lacquering.

Takaoka Regional Local Industry Center

Address: 2F, OTAYA SERIO, 101 Otayamachi, Takaoka City 933-0029  
Tel.: +81(0)763-82-5696



Visit

Shokoji Temple is a Pure Land temple of the Honganji Sect located in the port of Fushiki. It recently underwent an extensive, 20-year restoration project. Its 12 buildings, including the remarkably large main hall, are registered as national important cultural properties.

Shokoji Temple, Mt. Unryu

Address: 17-1 Fushiki-Furukokufu, Takaoka City, 933-0112  
Tel.: +81(0)766-44-0037



## Artisanal techniques connect to the future

### Techniques from Buddhist altar crafting used in the restoration of cultural property

Many of the craftspeople who have inherited the traditional techniques of Takaoka Buddhist altar making, such as woodturners, lacquerers, and metalsmiths, also take part in the restoration of cultural property in addition to their work making and repairing household Buddhist altars. During the Heisei period, a large restoration project was undertaken for Shokoji Temple, a Pure Land temple in Fushiki, Takaoka City. The main hall is a national important cultural property and it houses an inner altar containing a statue of Amitabha. Takaoka's craftspeople handled repairs to both the temple's inner altar and the Buddhist altar of the chief priest and his family.





# Toyama Clay Dolls

They're handmade, so each facial expression is a little different

Designated organization

Toyama Clay Dolls Preservation Society  
1118-1 Anyobo, Toyama City 930-0881  
Tel.: +81(0)76-431-4464  
www.city.toyama.toyama.jp/etc/minzokumingei/tuti/tuti.html

Primary materials

Clay, paint, etc.



A new doll for the Chinese zodiac every year!

## CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Slender lucky cats are unique to Toyama, and Chinese zodiac dolls have a modern cuteness.

## Gentle Faces and the Comfort of Clay

Toyama clay dolls are made by hand, one by one. These simple, charming dolls will make you smile just by picking them up. During the period from 1848 to 1854, Maeda Toshiyasu, the tenth head of the Toyama Domain, invited a potter from the Owari Domain, an artisan of the Kaga family named Hirose Hidenobu, and had him open a kiln and make pottery in the Chitose Palace in today's Sakuragicho, Toyama City. Hidenobu's son, Yasujiro, made a figure of a bull that was considered as the god's messenger and presented it to the domain head. This is said to mark the beginning of Toyama clay dolls.

Since the end of the Edo period, Toyama clay dolls have been cherished as religious objects, good luck charms, talismans to ward off evil spirits, and children's toys. Figures of the god of scholarship, Tenjin, and

*hina* dolls for the Peach Festival are two famous examples. There were many clay doll sellers up until the early Showa period, but before long, only the Watanabe Family, who learned their craft from the Hirose Family, were keeping the traditional techniques alive. When the third generation Nobuhide Watanabe had no successor, the Toyama Clay Dolls Preservation Society was established, and the participating members studied traditional doll-making techniques. In 1997, Watanabe entrusted all of the molds and techniques that had been passed down to him to the Toyama Clay Dolls Preservation Society. The organization continues working to preserve and pass on traditional crafts to future generations.



## TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

A set of traditional *tenjin* dolls complete with attendants, guardian lion-dogs, lanterns, priests, and drums.

## point

Decorations that wish for happiness: traditional and modern clay dolls.

In Toyama Prefecture, where the god of learning, Tenjin, is enshrined and enjoys widespread popularity, there was once a custom where families would put out clay *tenjin* dolls during New Year's if a son was born. Aside from these traditional *tenjin* dolls, there are also seasonal figurines, such as *hina* dolls and carp streamers, or figurines full of local color, like medicine sellers. Lucky cats painted with modern expressions—but made using molds from long ago—and the latest animal of the Chinese zodiac produced every year are also popular.



Try painting

The Toyama Clay Doll Studio not only features hundreds of different clay dolls on display and for sale, but also holds workshops that allow visitors to decorate a clay doll that was bisque fired and painted white.

## Toyama Clay Doll Studio

Address : 1118-1 Anyobo,  
Toyama City 930-0881  
Tel. : +81(0)76-431-4464



## Production of Toyama clay dolls



### 1 Creating the mold

Molds are made for the doll's front and back. Older molds dating back to the Taisho period, and new molds based on older ones, are both used.



### 3 Bisque firing

The two halves are then removed from the molds and put together. The assembled figure is then dried for about a week before being bisque fired.



### 2 Pressing clay into the mold

A layer of clay with a thickness of about 5 mm is pressed into each mold, and even the most delicate expressions are traced into the clay.



### 4 Decoration

The bisque dolls are then painted white to make the surface smooth and then decorated.

# Toyama Marquetry

It feel so good when the wood fits together just right!

Designated organization

Toyama Marquetry Association  
3331, Sanga, Imizu City 939-0341  
Tel.: +81(0)766-55-1270

Primary materials

Various natural woods, washi paper, etc.



## A Craft Involving Use of Natural Wood to Freely Create a Picture

Toyama marquetry is an art that freely depicts natural and traditional scenes by piecing together different shades of natural wood. Examples of these techniques can be seen in objects as old as the treasures of the Shosoin Repository. Marquetry was first brought to Toyama Prefecture when, in 1907, Toyama-born Mokudo Nakajima graduated from the prefectural technical school (now Takaoka Kogei High School) and went to Hakone to become an apprentice for over two years under the foremost marquetry craftsman of the time, Senseki Shirakawa. Nakajima developed his own techniques using thicker wood, conceiving a style of marquetry that could not be mass produced

and creating high value. He produced many works depicting the Tateyama mountain range, ptarmigans, and other typical scenes from Toyama. Nakajima's pupils and their students have preserved and developed his techniques to the present day.

In order to showcase the grain and coloration of wood, Toyama marquetry does not use any artificial coloring. It utilizes some tens of varieties of woods, including Japanese bigleaf magnolia, aged magnolia, aged Japanese cedar, black persimmon, ebony, walnut, ginkgo, and Japanese horse chestnut. Recently, products for everyday use have been developed as well as various framed works. The Toyama Marquetry Association sells and displays completed works, provides technical guidance to successors, and holds workshops for the public. Efforts are being made to pass the beauty of Toyama marquetry on to future generations.



## CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS

Aluminum and wood, copper and wood—even platters inlaid with different materials can be made.



## TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

Scenes of Toyama Prefecture are framed in works both big and small.

## point

Creating with a sense of freedom founded in traditional craftsmanship.

Toyama marquetry uses woods of various colors, such as white, black, navy blue, or even red, to freely piece together patterns without the use of coloring. The foremost figure of Toyama marquetry, Ritsudo Honoki, invented his own method of affixing thin slices of veneer to washi paper or wooden boards in order to achieve even higher degrees of precision without causing distortion. He also works tirelessly to pass these techniques on to the next generation. So far, numerous works have been presented, including marquetry framed like paintings.



Visit & try

The Toyama Marquetry Association studies techniques, give instructions to younger workers, develops products, and holds workshops. At Nagamori Furniture in Imizu City, various samples of Toyama marquetry are on display, and workshops are held for visitors eager to experience marquetry.

## Nagamori Furniture

Address : 3331 Sanga, Imizu City 939-0341  
Tel. : +81(0)766-55-1270



## Production of Toyama marquetry



### 1 Cutting

The pattern is divided into sections, and then two sheets of wood of different colors or varieties are placed on top of one another and cut with a scroll saw.



### 3 Inlaying

After cutting the overlapping pieces, the base board underneath is removed, and the wood piece that was placed on it now fits together without any gaps.



### 2 After cutting

Once the two boards are cut, the necessary pieces are affixed to the base board. In the picture, the surrounding brown section is not needed.



### 4 The secret behind the perfect fit

In order for the pieces to fit together without any gaps, the cutting edge is tilted slightly to the inside of the pattern so that the width of the hole is cut smaller toward the bottom.