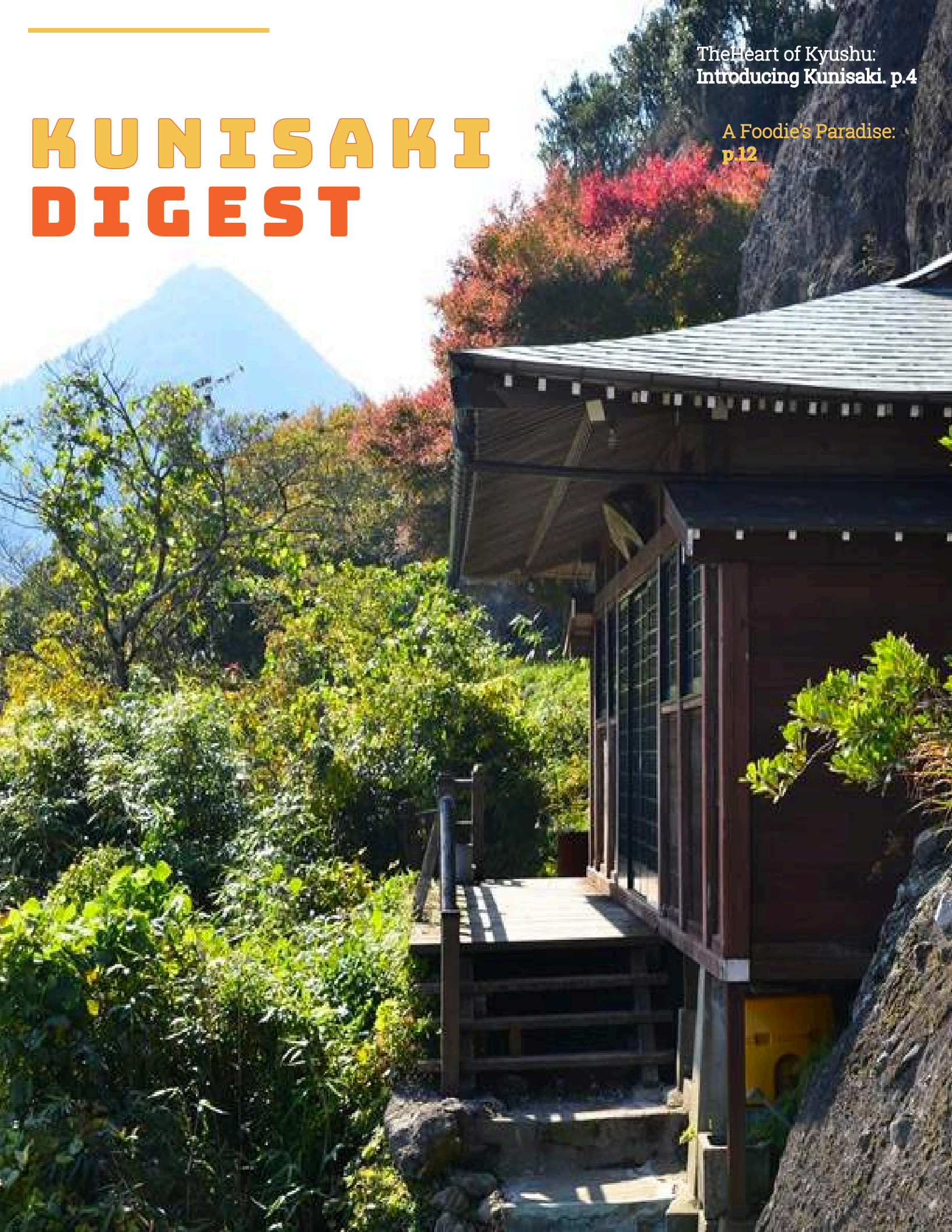

The Heart of Kyushu:
Introducing Kunisaki. p.4

A Foodie's Paradise:
p.12

KUNISAKI DIGEST





CONTENTS

- 3 A Note from the Contributors
- 4 Kunisaki: The Heart of Kyushu
- 5 Looking Forward
- 6 Your One Stop Guide to Festivals
- 8 Kunisaki: A History
- 12 A Foodie's Paradise
- 15 Kunisaki, Au Naturel
- 18 Entertainment
- 19 Souvenirs

The Kunisaki Digest

Editor-in-chief
Caroline Sundberg-Downey

Photography
Langston Hill
Lija Kocergina

Design
Caroline Sundberg-Downey

Contributors
Simon Letch
Yunseong Seol
Langston Hill
Lija Kocergina
Caroline Sundberg-Downey

国東



**Caroline
Sundberg**

**Lija
Kocergina**

**Yunseong
Seol**

**Simon
Letch**

**Langston
Hill**

Upon first researching kunisaki, came our first doubts. Would there be anything worthwhile, or anything thing on this little spoken of peninsula?

Shrouded in greenery, mystery, and initial inpenetrability, we were delighted to see that the peninsula surprised us at every turn.

Where we expected there to be nothing there was a rich cultural history, stunning scenery, various important religious sites, amazing food, and above all kind people. It is this that makes Kunisaki Kyushu's hidden gem.

Having now completed numerous trips to the peninsula, each with a certain goal in mind, we've selected some of our favourite few things about the peninsula to share with the wider world in this edition of the Kunisaki Digest.

Full of the friendliest and most genuine people you may ever meet, and full of the sort of adventures only found in fiction, it's an area that deserves to be talked about more, and we who-

leheartedly see an increase in popularity for the future.

Believe us when we say that the things contained within this magazine do not even scratch the surface of what there is to discover in the the Kunisaki Peninsula. Let this be your source of inspiration to go and find out the rest for yourself.

Have fun exploring!

- The Kunisaki
Digest Team

INTRODUCING

KUNISAKI 国東市

THE HEART OF KYUSHU

If you ever feel too overwhelmed with the life-draining, nine-to-five everyday routine and want to take a week off to relax and destress somewhere peaceful, then travelling to Kunisaki is a perfect option for you. This place celebrates the simple pleasures of life and the serenity of untouched nature, allowing you to submerge into the calming, soothing atmosphere of inaka, the Japanese countryside.

Secluded, still, and stable, Kunisaki Peninsula is located in the Eastern part of Kyushu and encompasses a number of small towns, such as Kitsuki or Bundotakada, and villages, huddled around Mount Futago. Its tightly-knit community is friendly and hospitable, and is as eager to share their truly unique culture, as to learn about other cultures. Despite being separated from the rest of Kyushu by a mountain range and by the sea from the rest of Japan, Kunisaki somehow remains surprisingly open, accepting, understanding. People of Kunisaki value cooperation, solidarity, and mutual support and show very thorough care both to the guests they greet, to each other, and to their land. They strain for harmony and peace within their small community in order to make life comfortable for everybody.

When you first come Kunisaki, you might think there is nothing to see or to do, but do not let your-

self be misguided by this hasty impression. There is so much more to this place than an eye can perceive, if you are patient enough.

The uniqueness of Kunisaki's culture roots in a harmonious coexistence of authentic Japanese mountain worshipping, Shinto traditions, and adopted Buddhist ideology, which gave birth to the Rokugomanzan cult almost 1300 years ago. This religious cult is still present in Kunisaki, and its main temple Futago-ji lies at the foot of the Mount Futago and is guarded by two magnificent statues, the Nio Guardians. Futago-ji is the embodiment of Kunisaki people's commitment to their values and culture.

In the past, the monks had to undergo severe training in the mountains to test the strength of their spirit and to challenge their endurance with fasting, meditation, and other practices. Nowadays this tradition has been forgotten, however, the mountains paths are well-preserved and available to anybody, who wishes to venture on a hike.

The beauty of Kunisaki is in its modesty and imperfection. The old, dusty tōrō lanterns, the stone steps overgrown with moss, the ponds, dark and unruffled, flowering with bright pink water lilies, represent the rough, humble aesthetics of wabi-sabi and creates a feeling of spiritual calmness and acceptance of

the transient nature of all things. This might seem unexciting or even saddening to somebody. We are deeply engulfed in the whirlwind of our busy, urban lives and rarely stop and observe. We forgot how to switch off our anxious minds and simply enjoy the company of ourselves. So, perhaps, Kunisaki can teach us how to embrace our solitude and appreciate the moment.

Kunisaki also provides a very distinct air of nostalgia. The rural sceneries of quiet villages, the muddy rice fields, glimmering in the sun, and the black nets of electrical wires, hanging above the neat traditional Japanese houses can evoke a strange sense of longing for something safe and very dear. Even if you have not been there before, you might find yourself recalling the warmest and brightest days of your past.

Some might think that Kunisaki is boring and unattractive, since there are no busy, bursting streets, no vibrant colours, no crowded cafes with cheerful music in the background. Kunisaki is different from the most of the popular travel destinations. It is place where your mind can rest and unwind, return to its natural, calm, and balanced state. So, if you are feeling a need to recharge yourself spiritually and physically, visit Kunisaki.

Accessibility

- The easiest way to travel to Kunisaki Peninsula from other parts of Kyushu is by car, however, there is a sightseeing bus tour running from Oita and Beppu. For more information contact Oita Kotsu Shinkawa Bus Center (097-534-7455).
- Regular buses to Kunisaki City are also running from Oita Airport.
- Trains to Kitsuki are running from Beppu.

LOOKING FORWARD



Much of Japan faces a severe population migration, and Kunisaki is no exception. Young people are flooding in their masses toward the cities, in search of jobs and new opportunities. This leaves the most rural areas in the hands of the elderly and the traditionalists. Whilst depopulation comes with a reef of disadvantages, it does mean that the far flung reaches of Japan can show you the Japan of the past.

Yet, there's no doubt that this decrease is unsustainable, and before long, long-lived-in residences will become abandoned, leaving an epidemic of modern ghost towns strewn across the nation.

Kunisaki will not just sit by and let this happen however, and are determined to show visitors the charms of their history and ways of life. Already this is making waves, and Kunisaki produce is sought over around the world. People who move there, tend to happily stay for years, even lifetimes, and those who visit come away with a sense of honest contentment.

As Kyushu becomes more and more popular as a tourists destination, as does Kunisaki. An antenna shop, showcasing Kunisaki's most popular produce operates in Fukuoka, the main landing port of Kyushu, and brings in visitors keen to explore more.

As interest in nature, and the natural world increases, so do the merits of a trip to Kunisaki. It'll be on everyone's radar.

Why not get your visit in now? Because let's face it, who doesn't love to be the first to discover somewhere new.

Matsuri: Two Festivals of the Kunisaki Peninsula



The Kebesu festival is performed on the 14th of October every year. But the festival used to be held on the 14th of September. So they call this festival 九月祭 which means festival of September.

The story of this performance is based on the traditional fairy tale of this village. In the performance, performers who are chosen randomly among people living in Kishiki wear the different masks that signify people's roles during the performance.

They are divided into two groups between Kebesu and Touba which are evil and fighters respectively. Fire placed in the middle of performers is used, and is a symbol of goal they need to achieve. It is because the fire is considered the only weapon to beat other opponent.

In the peak of this performance, Touba beat the Kebesu, getting the fire and allowing people watching this performance to share warm fire which is thought to give a lifetime without illness to people around the fire beating the Kebesu. Moreover the place holding the festival has preserved natural environment.

There is also a place where you can borrow a bicycle, as riding a bicycle and seeing the nature of Kishiki area is a must. Also they sell organic vegetables grown around the Kishiki area.

It would be a good chance to experience traditional festival and nature of Japan throughout the day if you visit when this festival is held.

Access

Held at Iwakura Hachiman Shrine in Kunimimachi, Kunisaki City, Oita Pref

Once in the peninsula, buses run infrequently to local attractions.

A TRADITION OF RICE

AN EXPERIENCE OF TRADITION PLANTING METHODS

Over time, the ways to grow rice, the staple dish of Asian countries, has developed. As time goes by, since mechanic tools took over modern manufacture, the traditional way to grow rice by planting the crop by hands has almost disappeared. In other words, the way to plant rice by hand has become only something we experience occasionally, as well as a thing to be compared to show what a developed world we are living in.

From my point of view, The rice planting in Kunisaki was not only a really nice chance to experience traditional rice planting of Japan, but also to see the differences between the old ways in Japan and in Korea. Moreover, we were able to experience traditional clothes worn by farmers in Japan during the first harvest of the year. The clothes were quite similar to the way of wearing clothes and the outlook of Kimono which are famous as Japanese traditional clothes. Also we found out some of Japanese took many pictures of us doing traditional planting. I assume that they consider that it is really beautiful that westerners for whom rice isn't the main dish are experiencing rice planting in Japanese way.

The festival itself was full of tradition, including a play where a cow chased a person. The rice was also blessed before being planted, showing just how important rice is to the ancient Japanese people.

This festival was especially nice because it takes place in an area that is untouched by modernity, so you can really get a sense of how things used to be done. I really recommend this festival.

HONOURABLE MENTION: KITSUKI CASTLE FESTIVAL

Kunisaki is referred to as little Kyoto which is famous for an old, traditional atmosphere. It is home to the biggest festival in Oita prefecture. The festival focuses on tradition performances throughout dancing, parades of samurai and princes-

ses and performances of Taishu which is famous a Japanese dramatic art. Though this festival wearing a Kimono and strolling through a traditional Japanese town would be nice experience of Japan. Also most traditional houses in Kitsuki city were built during the Edo period which was influenced by Buddhism. Many of these houses open during the festival, meaning you get a first-hand look at the Japanese lifestyle of old. Finally, every third Saturday the town holds an event called "Kimono Kanshasai in Sho Kyoto Kitsuki" (Kimono Thanksgiving Festival) in which a professional photographer will take your photo, available to take home **for free!** You'll feel transported back to the Edo Period in Kitsuki City.





FEATURE

Kunisaki: A HISTORY

Kunisaki is an area with a rich natural history. From beautiful natural areas, to places of religious significance, there is something interesting about this area at the top of Oita prefecture hidden around every corner.

Home to its own variation of Buddhism Rokugo Manzan, the scenery of Kunsaki has been obviously shaped by this. It contains elements of Buddhism, Shintoism and even mountain worship, and as such elements of all can be seen in the shrines and festivals of Kunsaki. One such key shrine is that of Futagoji Temple, the pinnacle of Rokugo Manzan, and Usa Shrine the head shrine of all Hachiman shrines (those worshipping the god of archery and war) and has been shaped, and in turn shaped, the mountain worship practices of Kunisaki. If you visit and happen to see a large amount of stone statues, then know that you've found yourself in the centre of a key manifestation of Rokugo Manzan ritual.

Literally meaning "Six Towns Full Mountain" Rokugo Manzan pays homage to the locations of settlements within the valleys of Kunisaki, each holding true to its own local culture. If one was to wish to get a concentrated dose of different Japanese cultures working in harmony with one another (a true Japanese ideal at work!) then a trip to Kunisaki is mandatory. Nio Guardians mark the entrance to Futagoji, and the rest is an uphill climb through natural rock formations, and beautiful shrine buildings, that embody mountain worship at its finest.

**BECOME A SAMURAI IN
THE MAKING IN:
KITSUKI**

Home to its own variation of Buddhism, Rokugo Manzan, the scenery of Kunsaki has been obviously shaped by this. It contains elements of Buddhism, Shintoism and even mountain worship, and as such elements of all can be seen in the shrines and festivals of Kunsaki. One such key shrine is that of Futagoji Temple, the pinnacle of Rokugo Manzan, and Usa Shrine the head shrine of all Hachiman shrines (those worshipping the god of archery and war) and has been shaped, and in turn shaped, the mountain worship practices of Kunisaki. If you visit and happen to see a large amount of stone statues, then know that you've found yourself in the centre of a key manifestation of Rokugo Manzan ritual.

Literally meaning "Six Towns Full Mountain" Rokugo Manzan pays homage to the locations of settlements within the valleys of Kunisaki, each holding true to its own local culture. If one was to wish to get a concentrated dose of different Japanese cultures working in harmony with one another (a true Japanese ideal at work!) then a trip to Kunisaki is mandatory. Nio Guardians mark the entrance to Futagoji, and the rest is an uphill climb through natural rock formations, and beautiful shrine buildings, that embody mountain worship at its finest.

If stone statues and mountain aren't your thing, and well-preserved samurai districts are, then make your way over to Kitsuki, located in the south of the peninsula. Numerous samurai homes are open to the public, and the streets retain that historical eastern feel many tourists are searching for. Entrance is cheap, and at certain times free if you wear a kimono (even more incentive to throw yourself into the culture!), and there's more than one to be seen. At times, you can even take part in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, once favoured by the samurai, and a practice still steeped in ritual and ceremony. It's most certainly not a chance to be missed.

**A STEP BACK IN TIME:
YAYOI NO MURA**

Suppose the age of samurai isn't far enough back for you, then worry no more. Kunisaki is home to a gorgeous restored and preserved Iron Age village, known as Yayoi no Mura. Dated from around 300BC, the Yayoi people were the precursor to modern Japan, and much of the Japanese's historical development took place during this time. Weaponry, developing agriculture, philosophical advancement. You name it, the Yayoi people did it. Though first uncovered in a district of Tokyo, first signs of development appear on Kyushu, and still the remnants of Yayoi culture have long fascinated both the archaeologist and history enthusiast alike. And you need look no further than the Yayoi no Mura to see some examples



“Kunisaki is a place full of unique culture, untouched nature, and mystical abundance.”

“No trip to Kyushu is complete without a trip here, and it’ll be one you cherish for a lifetime.”

of their pottery, agricultural tools and much more. A quick visit to the adjacent museum can show you many things, including providing the chance to light a fire in the way of the Yayoi people.

A HISTORY OF TALENT: LOCAL CRAFTS

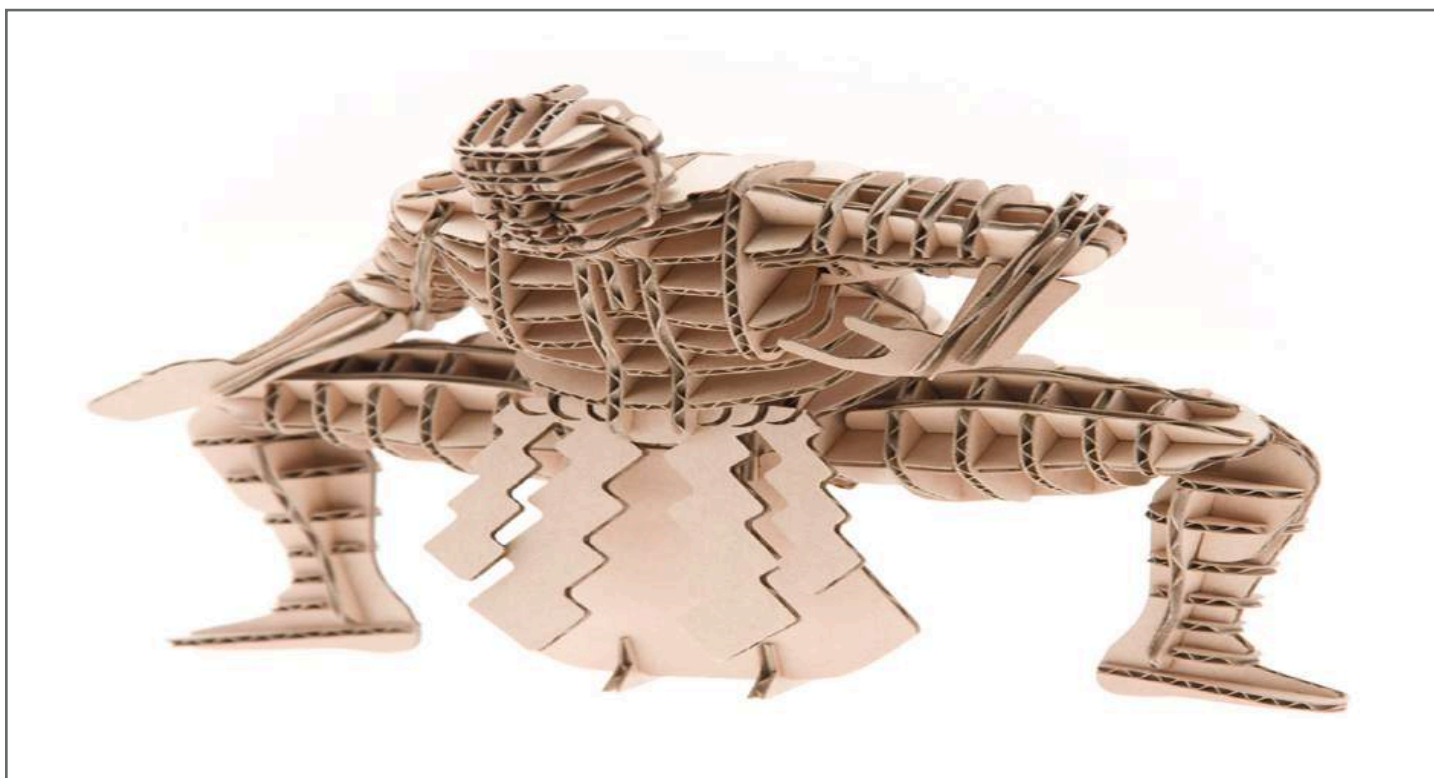
Had enough of history? Well, don't worry because Kunisaki has so much more in terms of culture than its rich cultural history.

Home to no more than 28 ravines, each with its own culture, it is no wonder that traditional, and oft sought-after crafts began to develop. Each and every one well worth the visit for the history buff, and casual visitor alike.

For those of you who enjoy a good tippie, then Nishi no Seki is a must go. A locally based traditional sake brewery, with techniques passed down through the ages, Nishi no Seki prides

itself on synthesising the tastes of its sake, to produce the flavour of “real sake”. Perfect for a taste of “real Japan”, and a thoughtful gift for friends and family alike. Should interior design be more what you’re looking for, then Kunisaki has you covered at every base. From Kunisaki Rokugousha to d-torso, the traditional and the new can be found here. Kunisaki Rokugousha masterfully crafts wooden furniture, cutlery and much more, from the finest wood from across Japan, each showcasing a different form of beauty. Yet, if you require something more modern then d-torso is just the thing for you. Made from cardboard, various structures can be created, each with a distinctive look unique to d-torso products. Homeware displays to toys, to craft-it-yourself items can be found here, and it’s bound to make a fun gift, or provide hours of entertainment for yourself.

Have the best trip of your life. Visit Kunisaki.

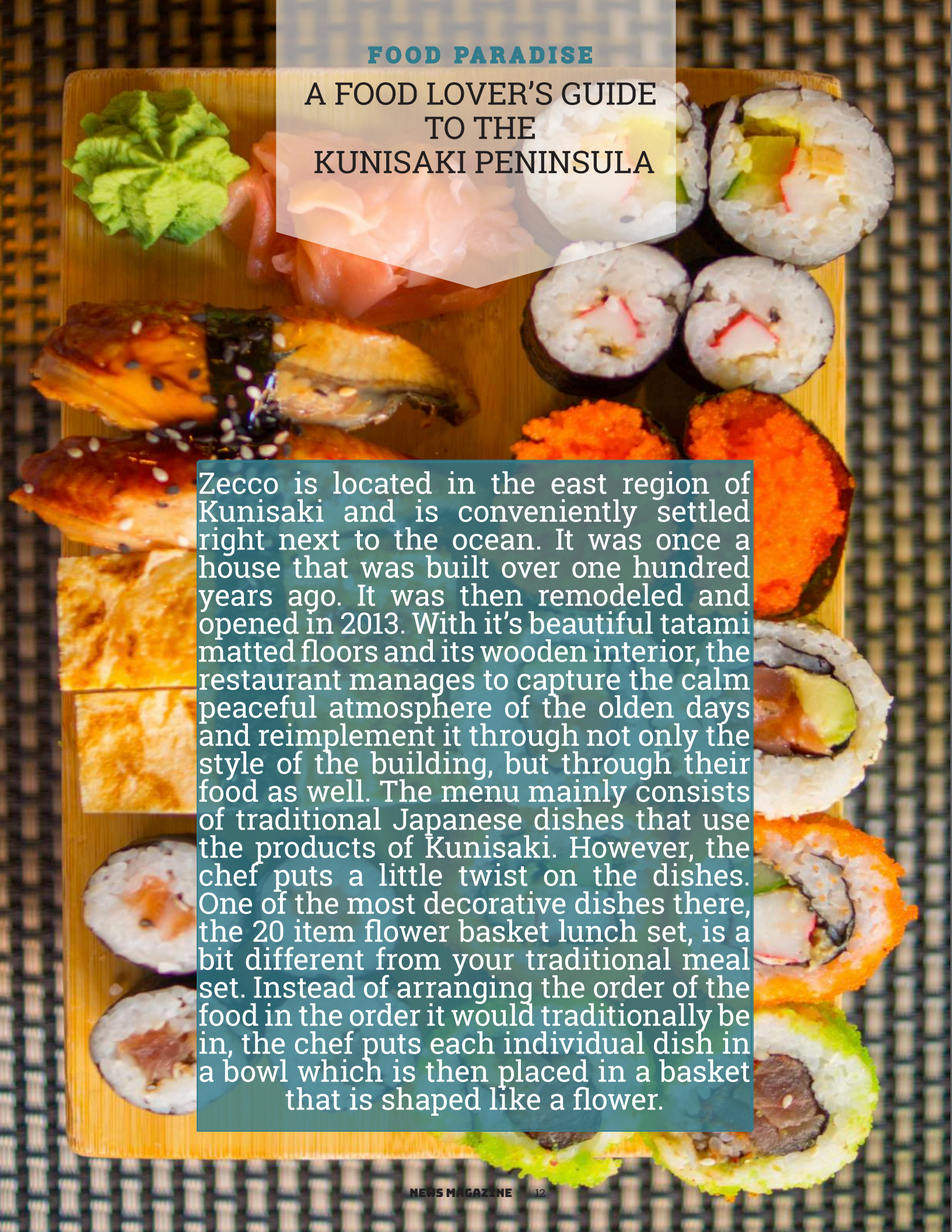


.....
A Yayoi
Reconstruction



FOOD PARADISE

A FOOD LOVER'S GUIDE TO THE KUNISAKI PENINSULA

A wooden platter filled with a variety of Japanese dishes. At the top left is a small green garnish. Below it is a piece of sashimi, likely salmon. To the right are several pieces of nigiri sushi, including one with salmon and another with tuna. In the center are two pieces of tempura, one with a dark sauce and sesame seeds. To the right of the tempura are two pieces of sushi with orange roe. At the bottom are two more pieces of nigiri sushi, one with salmon and one with tuna. The platter is set against a dark, textured background.

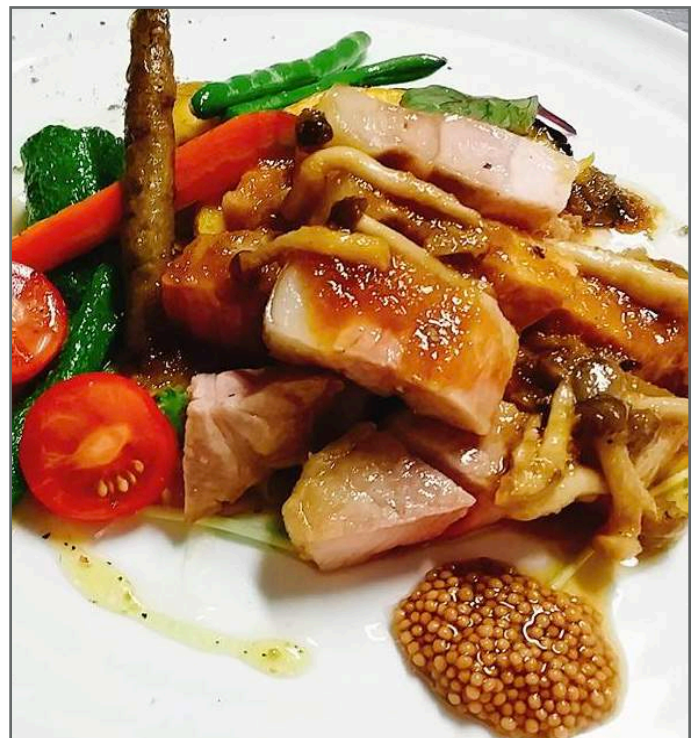
Zecco is located in the east region of Kunisaki and is conveniently settled right next to the ocean. It was once a house that was built over one hundred years ago. It was then remodeled and opened in 2013. With its beautiful tatami matted floors and its wooden interior, the restaurant manages to capture the calm peaceful atmosphere of the olden days and reimplement it through not only the style of the building, but through their food as well. The menu mainly consists of traditional Japanese dishes that use the products of Kunisaki. However, the chef puts a little twist on the dishes. One of the most decorative dishes there, the 20 item flower basket lunch set, is a bit different from your traditional meal set. Instead of arranging the order of the food in the order it would traditionally be in, the chef puts each individual dish in a bowl which is then placed in a basket that is shaped like a flower.



In the north-eastern region of Kunisaki, there is a small cafe with a great view of the ocean. This also used to be an old house and was then later on renovated into a cafe. The cafe itself is small and quaint, giving the customers a relaxing place to enjoy a cup of coffee. The shop is currently owned by one man who makes every single item on the menu. They have a pretty broad menu and all of the drinks are made from scratch. The cafe also provides food and desserts at a very reasonable price. When I visited, I had the cafe oreo latte. It was so delicious I almost bought another one. The other items consist of variations on a classic coffee and Japanese sweets that use products from Kunisaki. One of the things I liked about the cafe is the layout. They have a very small area in the cafe where you can read (and even borrow) some books the owner has provided. He said that he wants to see what kind of things his customers are interested in so he lets the customers barrow the books with no return date. I think it's a very interesting way to get to

know the customers. He creates a very home friendly atmosphere and "talks" to his customers by the books he lends and the food he makes.

Kunisaki has a huge advantage when it comes to agriculture. They are blessed with a beautiful vast landscape. They have taken advantage of that land and turned many of the valleys in-between the mountains into rice fields. In addition to this, Kunisaki also works hard on producing fresh vegetables, fruit and tea. Kunisaki is has a treasured culture of using local farm products in their cuisine. Like Zecco, this has inspired restaurants and stores to create their own individual dishes out of the products grown in Kunisaki. Cuisines such as Dango-jiru, Mitori Okowa and Imokiri have been conceived by the locals, making them some the standard local cuisine of Kunisaki. Dango-jiru is a soup based cuisine. The dango is made from wheat flour that is produced in Kunisaki. It





also contains local grown vegetables. It is available throughout the entire area of Kunisaki. Mitori Okawa is a dish that uses rice and fresh beans. In the Usa area, Mitori beans are used instead of Azuki beans because they are easier to harvest. This dish is also available throughout the entire region. Imokiri is yet another soup based cuisine served in the Himeshima Village. It contains noodles, fresh fish and a little bit of vegetables. The soup is made from shiitake mushrooms. For hundreds of years, Kunisaki has maintained their traditional agriculture and farming methods which still permeate through the peninsula today. About 18.2% of households participate in the traditional ways of farming and rice growing. However, as the climate rises and the population decreases, the number is slowly declining. In order to preserve the tradition of farming and rice planting, The Kunisaki Peninsula Area was recognized as an Agricultural World Heritage Site. There is a certain area in the Kunisaki cal-

led "Tashibunosho". The inhabitants long ago have utilized the landscape and turned most of it into rice fields. The landscape has stayed the same ever since the 15th century and is still used to produce rice today. Because of how broad the landscape is, they are able to produce rice in large quantities. Kunisaki has created a number of delicious dishes out of the locally grown products. They have a wide variety of many different meals that represent the culture of Kunisaki. Kunisaki is a spectacular place that has a unique long running culture, complimented with its original cuisine. The overall beauty of Kunisaki really is something that I think should be treasured throughout the years.

Kunisaki is an incredibly unique place, abundant in nature and history that runs back to the beginning of the Edo Period. Because Kunisaki is rich in nature, they have become very skilled in ways of agriculture, producing many local foods. Kunisaki use these products as

their ingredients for the food, making for a very delicious meal.

The freshly grown ingredients of Kunisaki are very delicious and satisfying. If you are a foodie and are interesting in getting your hands on some cheap delectable lunch or dinner, I suggest you make your way down to Zecco. I can guarantee you will have a great time.

Be sure to add Zecco to your list!

FIND ZECCO:

555-1 Tsurugawa, Kunisaki Town, Kunisaki City, Oita Prefecture, 873-0503, Japan

Japan, 〒873-0503 大分県国東市国東町鶴川555-1

Kunisaki, Au Naturel

HIKING

Mountain worship is done best whilst climbing one of Kunisaki's many trails.

BEACHES

From sunrise to sunset, a walk along these beaches is a sight to behold.

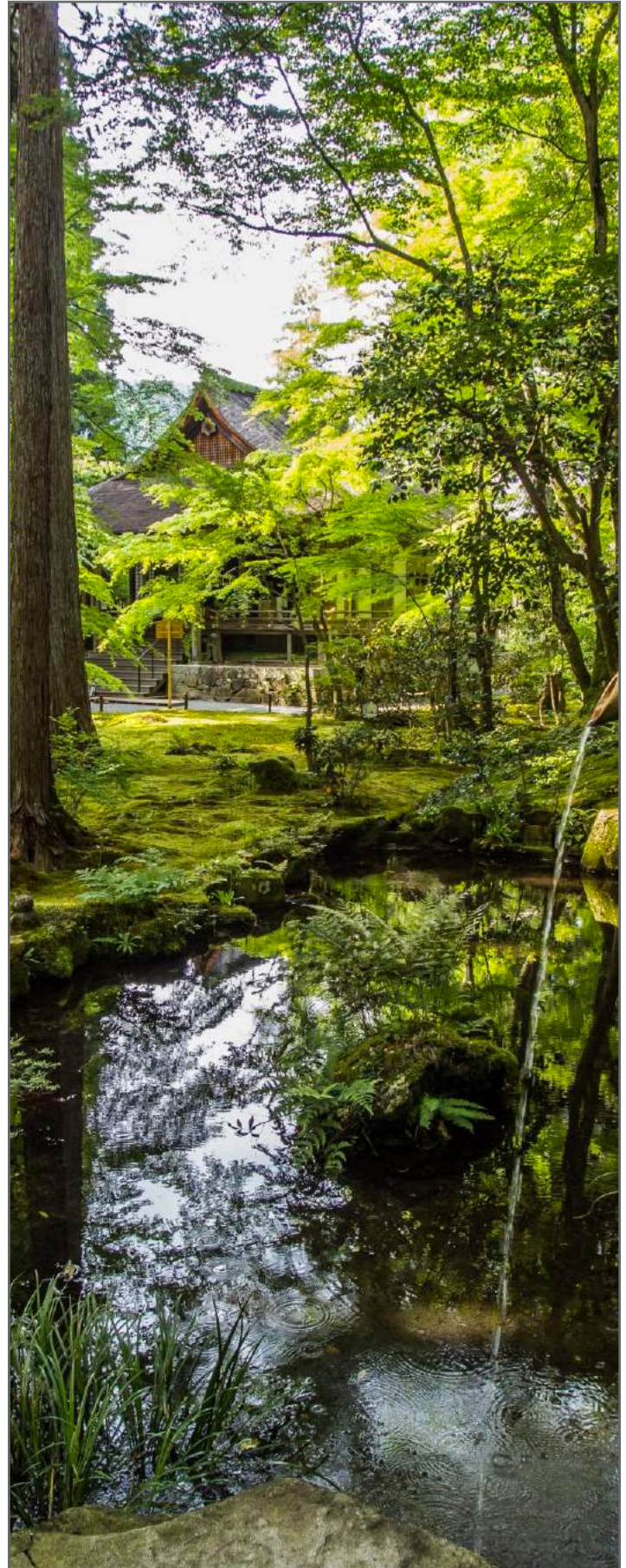


Kunisaki is a truly unique peninsula, not only for its richness in nature and religion along with other characters, but from the way in which it was formed. Kunisaki is formed through large volcano, the most well-known being Mount Futago. From a satellite view you are able to see the beautiful formation of Kunisaki with its twenty-eight ravines, creating a stunning bird's eye view. As a result of being segregated through these ravines each section in between the ravines of Kunisaki has its own unique culture and speciality, along with some shared characteristics. Be sure to visit multiple segments of Kunisaki in order to experience the array of specialities that are available.

Kunisaki is truly a place of great natural beauty. As Kunisaki was formed from volcanic activity there is a highly diverse amount of landscape to hike. The combinations of nature, richness in religion and modern world makes Kunisaki a place which contains some amazing hiking locations, with many wonderful experiences that can be had on the way. If you are the type of person who enjoys hiking up mountains and across valleys while viewing stunning scenery; or perhaps enjoy hiking through a forest being surrounded by beauty and wildlife, then Kunisaki is definitely a place that you should visit.

With Kunisaki being as rich in religious history as it is there are multiple ancient pilgrimage trails you can hike. Location such as Nakayama Senkyo are a prime example of the type of stunning locations which were used for pilgrimage for over one thousand years. As seen through the stone Buddha statues that you will undoubtedly pass if you decide to take this trail. With its amazing views and its historical religious significance this is a strongly recommended hiking location, if you get the opportunity you should hike this great trail.

In addition to Nakayama Senkyo, if you wish to have an extensive hike and a few days available for hiking then there is ability to take the "kunisaki long hiking trail" which spans for 137km. This will involve going to various places throughout Kunisaki which hold religious significance or have a beauty that is worth seeing. In order to do this trail by gaining the guides and maps you are required to pay a fee, however this is insignificant in comparison to the experiences you will have through taking this trail. You will be able to learn about the history shugendo whilst experiencing the beauty of Kunisaki through various locations.



Beaches are a far less appreciated part of Kunisaki that are very much worth while visiting. One in particular Matama Shoreline is known to be a highly relaxing spot where you can view the sun setting across the horizon. Kunisaki's shorelines are a place where you can take a peaceful walk and relax in tranquillity whilst bathing in the sun. However, if you wish to go for a swim, walk across the sand and have a peaceful day out you can also just be coming there during the day as a quiet beach get-away. As Kunisaki's beaches are not busy you will be able to have an enjoyable without having to worry about crowding and other such inconveniences. For a fun family outing the beach's within Kunisaki are an excellent choice.

Kunisaki's beauty can be seen all year long, with a different kind of natural beauty being seen with every season. During spring cherry blossom viewing is a great option, drinking in the shade with the cherry blossoms floating in the wind is always a great activity. An

additional benefit of viewing cherry blossoms within Kunisaki is that it is not overpopulated, so there is no need to worry about your cherry blossom viewing being crowded. so, if you visit Kunisaki during the spring time be sure to enjoy cherry blossom viewing.

Summer time is an excellent time for visiting Kunisaki's beaches. The refreshing sea and the dazzling sunset make for a good day out where you can relax and enjoy some good summer weather. If you feel up to it you could always go for a little swim, as most of Kunisaki's beaches are less populated than most others around Japan you will be able to have an enjoyable day at the beach. During the Autumn time the leaves within Kunisaki will turn to various bright red and orange colours. Not only do these bright coloured leaves provide a beautiful scenery, but when it is combined with the amazing temples and shrines within Kunisaki you are able to gain a true appreciation for the beauty of Kunisaki.

When you come to Kunisaki please be sure to enjoy the various benefits that each in season brings and explore the tranquil beauty of Kunisaki.

.....
“The refreshing sea and the dazzling sunset make for a good day out where you can relax”



Quiz Time!

5	3			7				
6			1	9	5			
	9	8					6	
8				6				3
4			8		3			1
7				2				6
	6					2	8	
			4	1	9			5
				8			7	9

What is the name of Kunisaki's indigenous religion?

How many valleys can be found on the peninsula?

What's the hottest festival?

What's the name of the most popular restaurant?

What was the name of the people called the precursors to the modern Japanese?

Rokugo Manza
28
The Kebesu Fire Festival
Zecco
The Yayoi People

Need to know where to go?

Well look no further, the Kunisaki Oracles have you covered.

Taurus: Have you been working too hard again? Take a break, treat yourself with a juicy steak from Zecco restaurant.

Gemini: You should try hiking! A pleasant surprise awaits you on the top of Mount Futago.

Cancer: Mountains got you feeling crabby? A day at the beach may bring you the clarity you need.

Leo: The stars highlight the importance of health this month. Have the lion's share of Kunisaki produce with a set meal at world famous, Zecco.

Virgo: Astrologists recommend you renew your wardrobe. Try on a kimono at Kitsuiki Warakuan Kimono Rental to become even more stunning.

Libra: If recently you've been feeling rather unstable, you can regain your balance

through meditation in Fuki-ji temple.

Scorpio: Feeling lonely? Take the sting out of isolation with a visit to one of many stone Buddha sites around the peninsula. How can you be lonely with 8,000 friends!

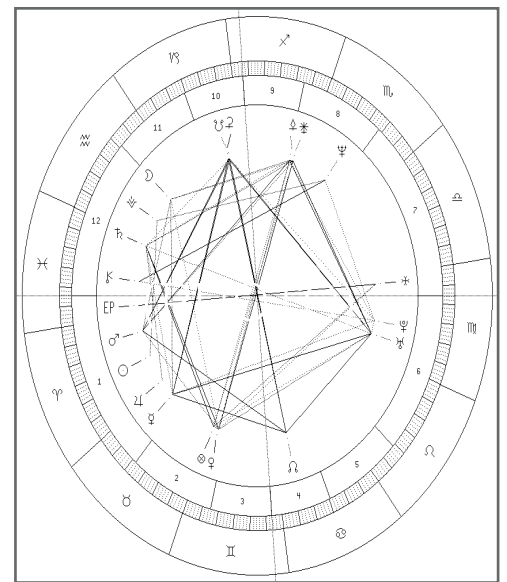
Sagittarius: Loosing site of your goals? Take aim and light a fire the traditional way in Yayoi no Mura. The return to nature will clear your mind.

Capricorn: City life got your goat? Finish the Rokugo Manzan pilgrimage and regain touch with nature!

Aquarius: Just go with the flow! Wander the shopping streets of Kunisaki town. Embrace the slow life to calm your worries!

Pisces: Fancy a swim? Astrologists suggest you should visit the beaches of Kunisaki and reconnect with your element.

Aries: Has your hot-headedness ever got you in trouble? No worries, tame your fiery temper at the Kebesu Fire Festival.



Some fresh bottled orange juice!

Perhaps not the cheapest of items, but certainly one of the best, the juice made in Kunisaki is some of the most delicious in all of Japan.

Incredibly fresh, yet not too sweet nor too tart, once you've tried this you'll be sure to want some more.

Why not share this with your friends and family back home!

Where to buy: Kunisaki local shops.

Yuzu and Honey Sauce!

Both tart and sweet, this local paste works well with so many things. We recommend it on pizza!

Where to buy: Kunisaki local shops.

Vanilla Chiffon Cake

Fluffy, soft, delightfully flavoured, this vanilla cake may seem like something you know, but will far surpass your expectations. Hard to find across Japan, make sure you pick some up whilst in Kunisaki.

Where to buy: Kunisaki bakeries, shops, and Oita Airport

Ayu Fish

Dont let the description scare you, the salted Ayu fish is a delicacy not to be missed! Made from the parts less used of a fish, and raised in the Nakagawa river, said to be the cleanest in Japan, these fish provide a salty tang that is well worth the taste! Bring some of the deliciousness home!

Where to buy: Local shops in Kunisaki, and the surrounding areas



Omiyage おみやげ

At its most basic, omiyage can be defined as a gift or souvenir that you bring back from a trip, to give to friends and family.

Yet in Japan, omiyage is so much more than that. Beautifully packaged, brightly coloured, and varying from region to region, omiyage in Japan is more of an expectation than a tradition.

People can expect to shed numerous dollars on small gifts for friends, neighbours, co-workers, neighbours, and virtually anyone who knows you've been away.

To not do so may even be seen as a social faux pas, and a sign you are not thinking of others.

Why don't you get into the Japanese spirit when in Kunisaki, and try some of the delightful local items!

