

KUNISWAGGY

LET'S EXPLORE KUNISAKI PENINSULA!





WELCOME

Our magazine looks to highlight Kunisaki in a more natural and interactive way. Rather than presenting things through factual articles and carefully selected photographs, we hope that our magazine will be able to show Kunisaki from a personal perspective, highlighting the enjoyment of our trips there, and encouraging other people to become involved.

Given that Kunisaki is a place known for its sense of community and its natural beauty, by placing a greater emphasis on the photography of the area, we hope to highlight how alive Kunisaki actually is. In many ways, the aspects of Kunisaki that make it so special, and so enjoyable to visit are almost unexplainable. Because of this, we can look to use photographs to better show the true nature. As a picture tells a thousand words, photos from various people in diverse locations tell a more complete story of the area than our articles could.

Anyway, we hope you enjoy this one.

THE SWAGGY TEAM.

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ROKUGO MANZAN - THE FORGOTTEN RELIGION



How would you like to experience a Japanese religion in way that not many modern Japanese are aware of? the Kunisaki peninsula is unique in several ways. However in the midst of the many scenic site it offers to travelers, it is also the center of a one-of-a-kind system of beliefs.

Many know about Shinto and Buddhism being the two prevalent religions of Japan. Many don't know about these two being identified as two separate religions from roughly 200 years ago. Japan has always had a certain way of incorporating foreign influences into its culture by merging them with its own unique ways. Be it art, literature, architecture, Despite not originally developed in Japan, they all have a unique Japanese twist to it. Religion is no exception. When Buddhism reached the Japanese islands, it went through several changes, ultimately being entwined with the natives' original faith, creating a unique syncretic religion, you cannot find anywhere else in the world.

For the longest time, this mixture of Shintoism and Buddhism was one of the governing forces of everyday life in Japan. Then the Meiji emperor separated the two religions as to cleanse the original native Japanese belief system of any foreign influences. In fact, it was during this time that the term „Shinto” was created, since until then, there was no need to make a distinction between the two. This separation came at a price however. With Shinto and Buddhism now being clearly defined, the hybrid religion has largely been forgotten. Except in Kunisaki.

The modern day Kunisaki peninsula is home to the Rokugo manzan, which means "six districts full of mountains". While combining aspects of both Buddhism and Shintoism, this particular sect also incorporates parts of local mountain worship. The sect itself was founded by a priest called Ninmon. Unfortunately we don't know much about him, his name is shrouded in the mystery of local legends. But his work still remains to this day: the system of

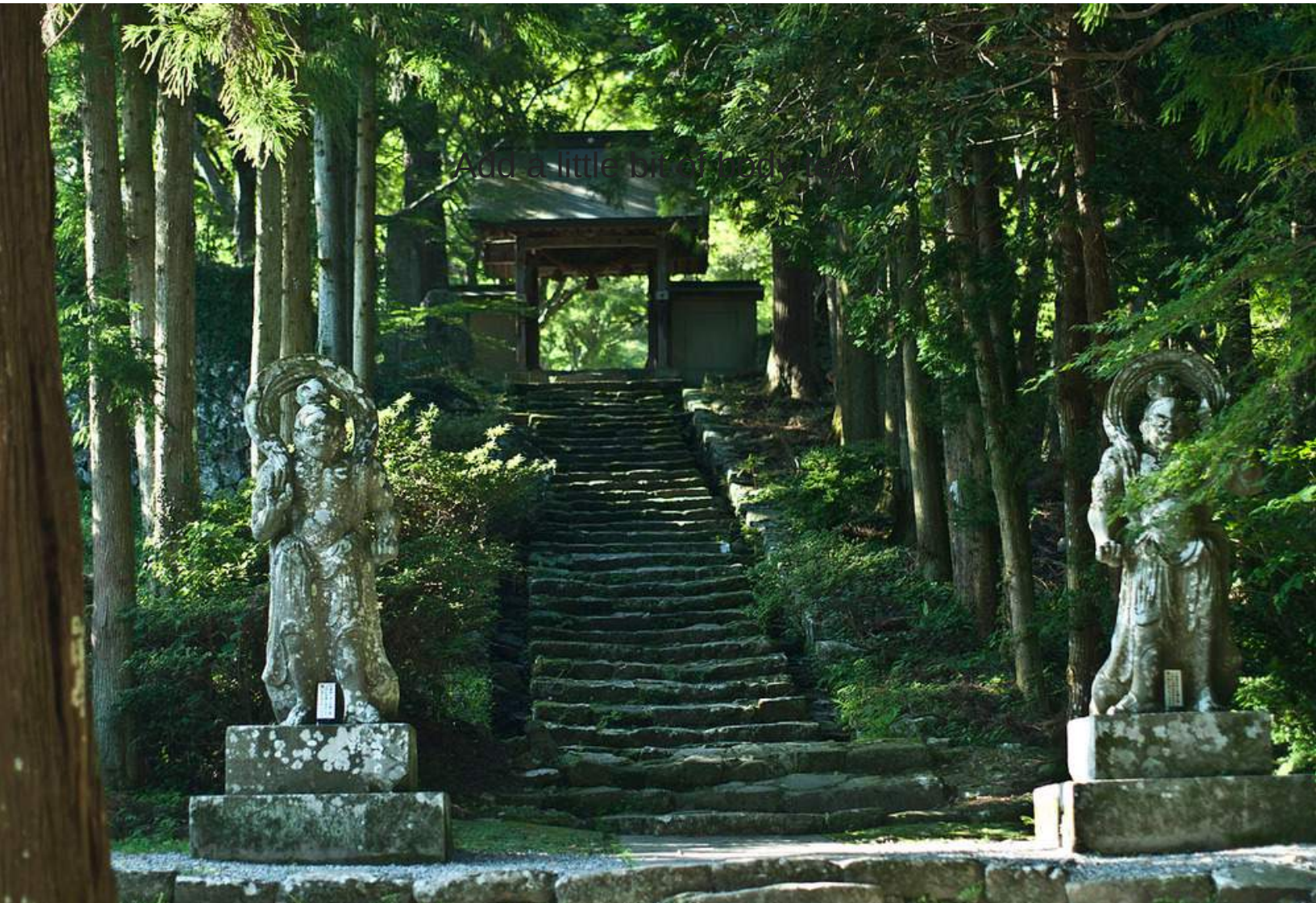


temples still exists on the Kunisaki peninsula, though a number of buildings are unfortunately no longer standing. Together they made up a complex, each serving as a stop for travelers who came to Kunisaki to visit these temples as part of a pilgrimage.

The center of the complex is located at the peak Mount Futago, a buddhist temple named after the mountain itself. Founded in 718, it has many temple buildings inside, and the entrance is guarded by two fearsome Nioh sculptures. Another building of importance is the shrine of Hachiman. Hachiman-guu is quite a unique building. It actually has an equivalent in Kyoto, and the deity residing in its halls is the same one residing in the former Japanese capital. The shrine is located in the town of Kunisaki, making it easy to access.

There are many more temples and shrines worth visiting, but introducing them one by one would be far beyond the scope of this article. There is a sightseeing bus accompanied by a tourist guide geared towards visitors, that makes a stop at every shrine and temple of note. If you want to experience the ancient culture still remaining at the Kunisaki peninsula, this guided tour is definitely for you.

BY FRUZZINA VÁRADI



TO CONNECT WITH NATURE

FROM EARTH, TO HISTORIC TREASURES, WE LEARN MORE ABOUT JAPANESE CULTURE



Kunisaki, surrounded by wonderful nature, is a privileged place not only by its location but also by its environment. A place of silence, beauty and peace, Kunisaki is a unique area offering an infinity of possibilities for adventure.

As a town that works both together with nature, this is of fundamental importance. But the area is currently facing rapid decline mainly due to depopulation and aging. Nature has harsh yet silently reclaimed its rights over abandoned sites in the area.

If we were to talk about Kunisaki we should absolutely mention how Kunisaki managed to convert usual Japanese culture into its local form which is not even the most amazing about it. Locals were able to merge nature and religion into such a form that itself be the proof of what shinto is trying to aim for, peace.

While maintaining their style and main beliefs in cultural heritage they were able to deepen the harmonious atmosphere of the temples and monuments. Being one with the nature or ruling over it may be the two sides of a coin however, Kunisaki shows us that such ways thinking are not present in the area.

Whilst Maintaining what was once part of the religious aspect of the area one can see the rustic temples and shrines which represent the human presence Kunisaki that have widened the observable relations with mother nature.

The blend of temples hidden amongst the green woods are not just a coincidence but a proof of how locals relate to their area. Kunisaki found an answer modern cities are yet to embrace, respect. It is as if the temples and other buildings were not built inside their surroundings but grew up with them and were always a part of each other.

The depopulation crisis that the area is experiencing now is not unexpected but the drawback of the mindset Kunisaki follows, but as times change, Kunisaki still wishes to show the world what unique relations they have with the area. Kunisaki is awaiting tourists to explore it.

People coming to Kunisaki have many opportunities to enjoy the Kunisaki landscape to their hearts content. One of the area's most exciting sights is Mount Futago which is home to many temples but would also make great terrain for hiking. If this terrain seems to be too difficult, the coast line would also make the perfect place for a track for everyone who wishes to exercise and take in a natural beauty of Kunisaki. These paths are definitely worth being explored.



In Kunisaki nature welcomes you with alive and flourishing forestland, where the songs of the cicadas will enchant you, where the scents of iodine and pine will surround you, where the dancing of butterflies will astonish you as you revitalize yourself in this superb world of natural mystery. These breathtaking activities are a brilliant way to connect to Nature, its rhythms and cycles so that one can be in harmony with it.

BY LAETITIA DUBOSC

NO RICE NO LIFE

Kunisaki is well known for its unique agricultural methods especially in regards to the cultivation of rice.

A little known fact about Kunisaki is that it is that the area has been awarded the title of a being a world agriculture heritage site by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in 2013 with the aim of carrying traditional farming techniques on to the next generation. What's difference between a world heritage site and world agriculture heritage site you might ask? The purpose of a UNESCO world heritage site is to register and protect heritages and historic buildings. A World agriculture heritage is declared to protect traditional and sustainable agriculture systems. There are 36 world agriculture heritage sites in the world with 8 of them being in Japan.

Kunisaki was registered as a world agriculture heritage site in 2013 due to its unique agricultural methods which relies on the use of manmade reservoirs. During the 19th century, many of Kunisaki's farms suffered from widespread drought therefore the farmers came up with the ingenious idea to create reservoirs that collect rain water during rainy season that this can be distributed amongst crops during the dryer periods of the year.

Almost every Japanese person eats rice on a daily basis therefore some people say "No rice, No life". From this we can see the significance of rice in Japanese culture. Kunisaki's main crop is the rice plant and specializes in two particular types of rice known as Sasaniki and Hinohikari. These types of rice are very difficult to buy because they are so popular. The reason for the popularity of this rice comes from the fact that it is entirely organic and does not use any chemical based fertilizers which is therefore higher quality rice can be produced.

Another agricultural product that Kunisaki is well known for is Shiitake mushrooms.

Shiitake mushrooms are made from sawtooth oak. The Sawtooth trees supply nutrition to the Shiitake mushrooms and allow them grow. Since the Kunisaki region contains limited arable land, this method of growing food has contributed to the livelihood of the area. Because of this Kunisaki makes sure to protect the forestry of the region.

The third famous crop of Kunisaki is Shichitai which can be used for making tatami. Shichitai is made exclusively in Kunisaki and nowhere else in the world. The crop planted in May and harvested in August. In Kunisaki one can experience trying the fresh and high quality produce grown in the area therefore visiting Kunisaki comes as a highly recommended.

BY TAIKI SUZUKI



OSCAR KOTT

WHY SHOULD MORE PEOPLE COME TO KUNISAKI?

I have visited many famous places in Japan such as the Fushimi Inari Jinja and Meiji Jingu. Whilst these places are very beautiful, I feel that they are somewhat marred by the sheer number of visitors therefore it is difficult to truly appreciate the wonders of such places. However, Kunisaki is so quiet and peaceful yet there is so much beautiful scenery that I feel some people are missing out on.

WHAT IS YOUR FONDEST MEMORY OF KUNISAKI?

I really enjoyed walking around the farmland that surrounds the Yayoi village. The atmosphere was very calming and I feel that one sees things that are not present in more built up areas of Japan. The true beauty of Kunisaki comes from the harmony between man and nature.

TELL US ABOUT AN INTERESTING PERSON YOU'VE MET?

At the rice planting festival, I met a very kind strawberry farmer. He couldn't speak English but he was very enthusiastic about more foreign visitors coming to sightsee in the Kunisaki Peninsula. He also showed me a collection of photos he had taken of his farm. The strawberries looked delicious and I could clearly see that he felt so much pride in his work.





JAMES GILBERT

NAME 3 REASONS WHY SOMEONE SHOULD VISIT KUNISAKI

People should visit Kunisaki because of the impressive landscapes, the history, both in terms of the farming and the religious. In addition to this, the festivals show the unique hospitality and welcoming nature of the kunisaki people

TELL US ABOUT AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE YOU'VE DONE

During one of our festivals in Kunisaki, we got to experience traditional rice planting methods. This was particularly memorable as we were able to wear traditional Japanese clothing. Whereas the traditional Japanese clothing is normally a kimono or yukata, in Kunisaki we got to wear farmers clothing. The ability to wear this while working to plant a communal rice paddy showed a reflection of the history of kunisaki

IF KUNISAKI HAD AN UNIVERSITY WITH AN EXCHANGE PROGRAM, WOULD YOU CONSIDER JOINING IT ?

If I was able to spend a semester studying in kunisaki, I would like to study there. It would provide a glance into a different style of Japan, and living in rural areas is always enjoyable. Being able to explore the peninsula would be enjoyable, given the nature that is visible in the area





FRUŽSINA VÁRADI

WHY SHOULD MORE PEOPLE COME TO KUNISAKI?

I think Kunisaki has a very unique cultural heritage, not just on a worldwide scale, but on a Japanese one as well. I find its unique religious practice very interesting, and I have a hard time wrapping my head around the fact that the peninsula is not a popular destination for tourists.

WHAT IS YOUR FONDTEST MEMORY OF KUNISAKI?

It has to be that of the Night Market. I really enjoyed working at the oyaki-stand, and my boss was a very nice man. I also loved interacting with the customers, who, after getting through their initial shock at seeing foreigners behind the counter, treated me and my non-Japanese partner no differently than they would any other regular Japanese person.

TELL US ABOUT AN INTERESTING PERSON YOU'VE MET?

At the rice planting festival, I've got to wear traditional clothing. There were a lot of Japanese tourists visiting, and whenever I happened to be in their vicinity I was always asked to pose for a photo or two. They were all very nice, and while I didn't get to talk at length with any of them, I still think back on them quite fondly.



TAIKI SUZUKI

WHY SHOULD MORE PEOPLE COME TO KUNISAKI?

People should visit Kunisaki because Kunisaki has a lot of beautiful landscape. For example, sea and nature, shrine and so on. There are many interesting spots. I visit Yayoi no mura and beach. I feel very interesting. People are very kind for us. So, I like Kunisaki. People should visit Kunisaki.

WHAT HAVE THOSE FIELD TRIPS TAUGHT YOU?

I think Kunisaki has a lot of beautiful nature, so I protect them. Oita city doesn't have a lot of nature and decrease nature places. When I watch nature in Kunisaki, I was impressed them. After that I want to protect nature and tell everyone about experience.

TELL US ABOUT AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE YOU'VE DONE

When I visit Kunisaki, I make pizza in the first time. Cutting vegetable and fish is very interesting for me. After cooking pizza, I eat my pizza and it is very delicious. I feel happy. I help festival stuff. We make cotton candy. People are very kind for us. I enjoyed.



KUNIFESTI



In an area such as Kunisaki, with its millennia old farming plots and age-old legends and stories, it must be expected that the essences of the communities and cultures that created such things will vibrate through time. This becomes evident through the valleys of distinct culture that slice through the mountainous peninsula. This culture, comradery and communalism are made obvious when seeing the festivals put on by the people of Kunisaki, their uniqueness proven by the visitors who pour into the remote areas of the peninsula to experience what this unique place has to offer.



OTAUE, RICE PLANTING FESTIVAL

In the mountains and valleys of Bungo-Taketa, under the powerful June sun, the annual Rice planting festival starts. The entrance to the festival is flanked by shrines and already planted rice paddies, really immersing the visitor into the spirit of the day. Prior to the start of the planting, one can spend their time exploring the verdant land, renting traditional peasant clothes from locals (the hat is certainly useful given the climate of the area), or exploring the delicacies and goods being sold by the locals. Oita prefecture specialties, such as Karaage and Tori-ten were for sale alongside Curries, fried potatoes and other festival foods. Mocha based sweets were also on offer, for those who wish to sample a traditional Japanese sweet.



After everybody has finished exploring the area, mingling and eating, the main event begins. A murmur of Shinto priests approaches the paddy, strewing paper and decorations behind them as they come. Following a Shinto ritual, which allows for the potential Kunisaki tourist to immerse themselves in a new culture, or new interpretation of their existing culture. Then begins the most entertaining part of the day, as a flashback of the origins of this festival are shown to the assembled crowd of planters and photographers. Attendees of the festival get the chance to watch a funny show put on by locals of the area, as a cow and his handlers rampage through the rice field. This provides a relatively unique experience in Japan, a rural festival that acts as a mirror to the village festivals of bygone eras. This feel of belonging and collectiveness is continued as all the attendees line up and retreat away from each other, culminating in a fully planted field. For the urban dwelling visitor, who wishes to get away from the claustrophobic, towering and individualised city, this festival will provide a refreshing, revitalising and welcome introduction and experience.



KUNISAKI MOUNTAIN ART FESTIVAL

An art museum in the peaks, mona lisa in the mountains, the Kunisaki art festival combines the various types of modern art with the natural beauty only Kunisaki could provide. Rather than just being an art festival in a pretty area, or an architecturally beautiful building, the Kunisaki art festival, and its artists have used the local mountains, lakes and greenery as part of their artworks. Take the most famous piece, Anthony Gormley's "Another Time", which fixes its gaze eastward from a towering mountain ridge. This piece, and the uniqueness it gains from being a part of nature, really help to elevate this festival above the normal exhibition. Furthermore, the piece helps to reflect a famous aspect of Japanese, and Kunisaki's culture, the circular nature of life. The piece, in the shape of a giant man, is made of local iron, and has been designed to slowly be eroded away by the elements, becoming one with the earth again. What more could one ask for, beautiful scenery, and deep, regionally appropriate artwork.

THE KEBESU FIRE FESTIVAL

Perhaps one of Kunisaki's more famous festivals, the Kebesu fire festival is one that may seem strangely familiar. A traditional festival in many ways, it manages to be both recognisable, with role plays from locals and a type of fire ritual. For someone looking to get immersed into an exciting, traditionally involving festival. Occurring in an October evening, the festival revolves around a Kebesu, a torch wielding demon, trying to burn the ferns in the village. When he eventually does this, the burning fire is ran around the festival, and those whose clothes are burnt by it are said to be blessed with good health for the upcoming year. Such displays are one of the many reasons to be drawn into Kunisaki, the uniqueness and the sense of community. By being held in relatively small towns and villages, it is possible to be really welcomed as an individual, rather than being just a part of the crowd, as one might be in a more populous area.





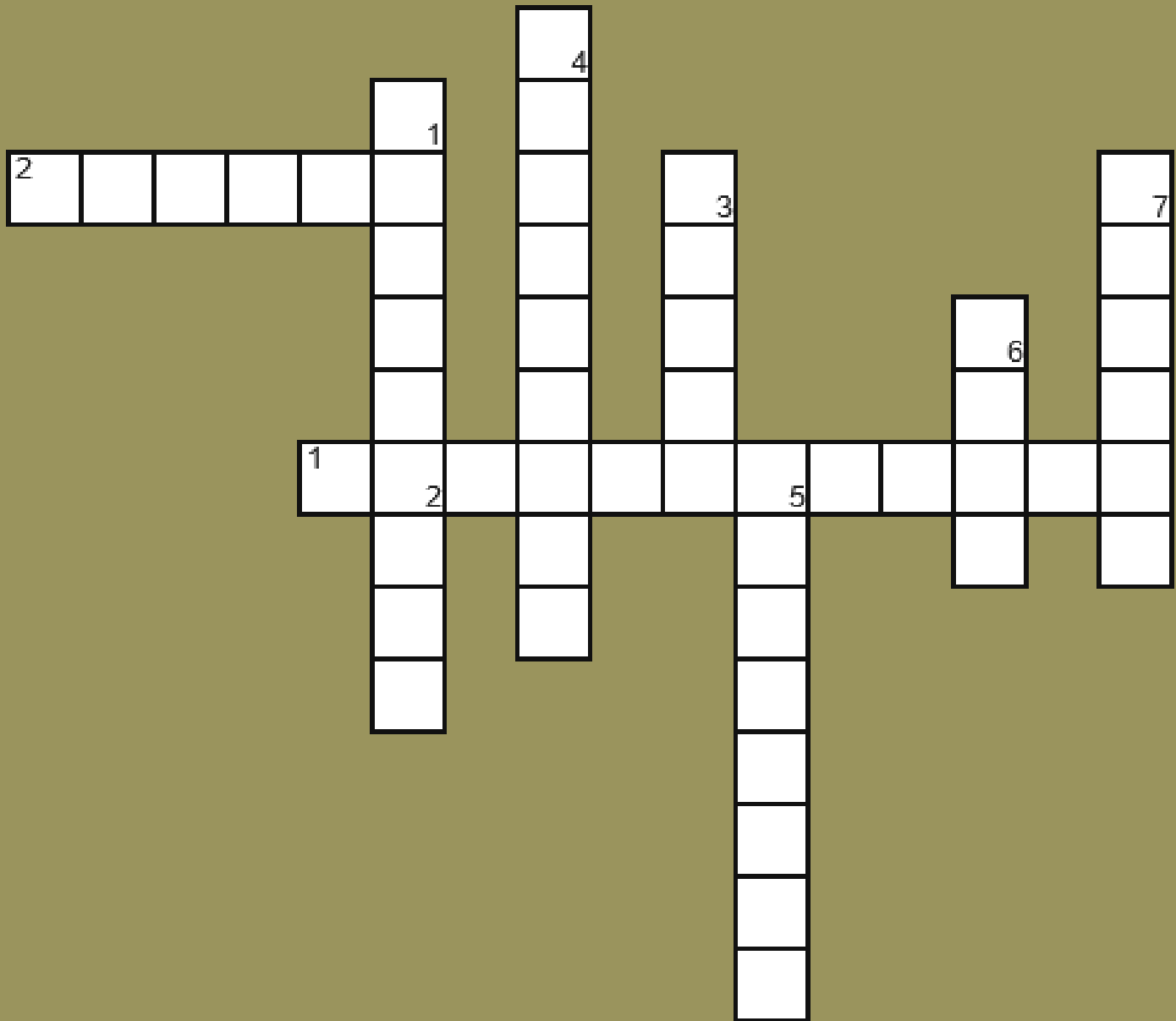
KITSUKI CASTLE FESTIVAL

The Kitsuki castle festival is a fantastic opportunity to experience a more townlike aspect of Kunisaki festivals. Imagine a historically inspired street festival in a city, and you can imagine this festival. Food stalls line the streets, while people, both foreign and local explore the area in kimono's. Appearances by Japanese celebrities and the peaceful, beautiful walk up to the castle give the visitor a wealth of things to do during their day. Explore the old homes of Samurai, climb to the highest floor of the castle and look at the coastline and mountains, or just order street food while you take in the atmosphere. Throughout this festival and Kunisaki in general, there is one obvious thing that stands out, Kunisaki is traditional Japan, but with the modern conveniences. Especially with the close proximity to the airport, experiencing a traditional, genuine Japanese festival has never been so simple.

BY JAMES GILBERT



Crossword



DOWN

1. The tallest mountain in Kunisaki.
2. Kunisaki is in this Prefecture.
3. Worth flying for.
4. The Geography of Kunisaki.
5. A famous food in Kunisaki.
6. Local citrus goodness.
7. Many of these in Kunisaki

ACROSS

1. A religion started in Kunisaki.
2. I see fire.



Naoki Hayami -winner- (Japan)

KUNISAKI PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

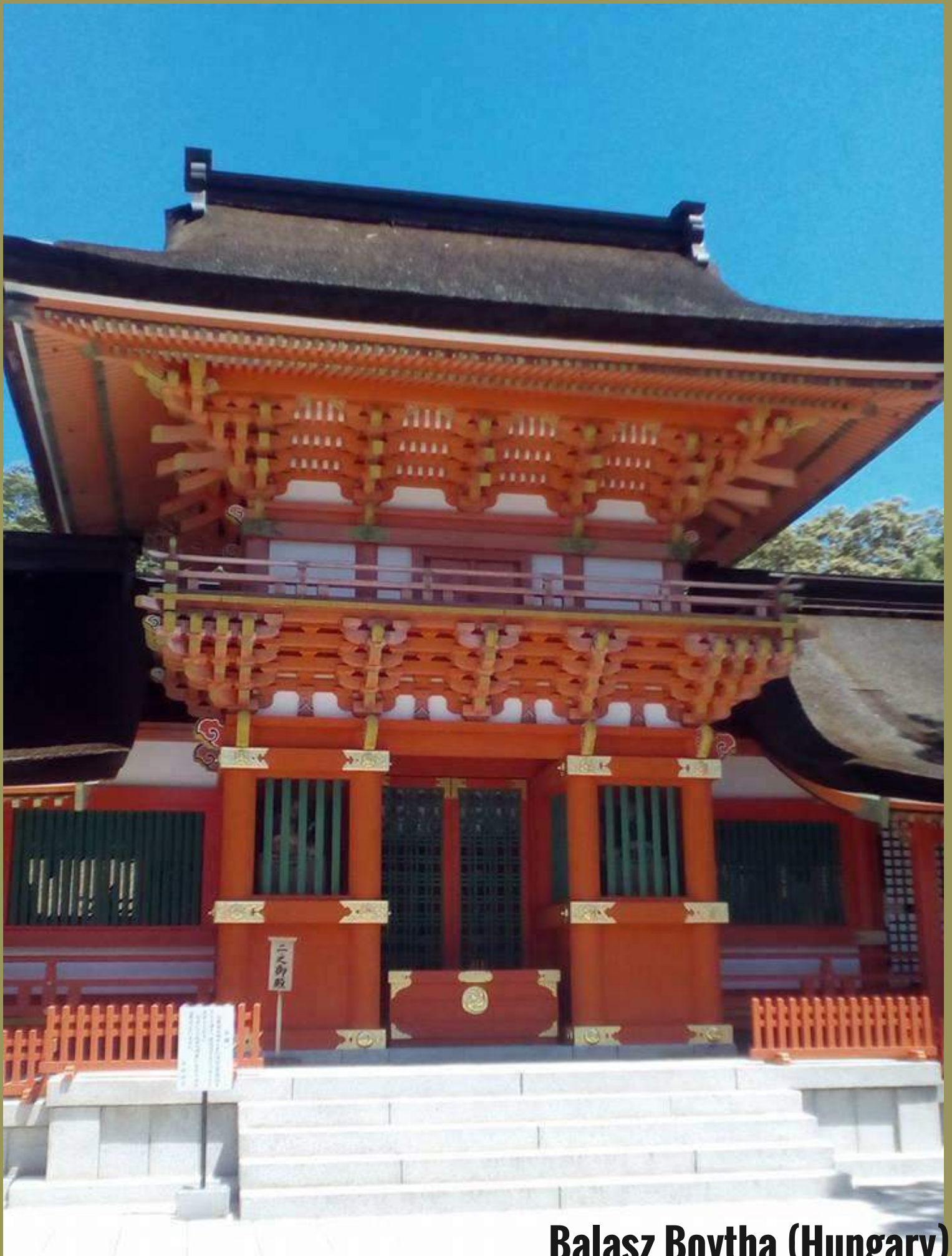
Since Kunisaki boasts such marvellous vistas and natural beauty that are ideal for budding photographers. We started a photography competition so that we could explore Kunisaki's nuances through the lens of the international students who visited the peninsula. Please admire the artistry and authenticity of the submissions we have displayed below.



Sophie Skaarup Jensen (Denmark)



Langston Culpepper-Hill (United States of America)



Balasz Boytha (Hungary)



James Gilbert (UK)



Oscar Kott (UK)



Anna Novak (Hungary)

HAIKU COMPETITION

Inspired by the immense beauty and intrigue of Kunisaki we at Kuniswaggy decided to open a Haiku contest to celebrate the wonders of the area and to find out how international students felt about Kunisaki. A Haiku is a traditional Japanese style of poem usually written in three phrases of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. The idea of a haiku is usually to capture the essence of a particular scene or feeling.

For the competition, we challenged students to submit haiku about Kunisaki in any language of their choice.

We received a number of interesting haiku from international students. We were surprised by the large amount of poems relating to the stray cats of Kunisaki town. Although we enjoyed all the haiku that we received we could only choose one winner however we would like to thank all those who took part and we hope you enjoyed writing your haiku.

暑い日に
国東の旅
楽しかった
On a hot day,
I enjoyed
A trip to Kunisaki

HOANG QUYNH CHI (VIETNAM)

Chirping birds fly by
Greenery covered jinja
Small kittens eat birds

FRUSZINA VÁRADI (HUNGARY)

When I remember,
Pretty Kunisaki town,
There's only nothing

CAROLINE SUNDERBERG DOWNEY
(UNITED KINGDOM)

Nature claims the land
Ghost town reaches out
for me
Praying for the gods

BALASZ BOYTHA (HUNGARY)

Lonely streets spread out

The wind has free way to
rule

The cats are watching

BALASZ BOYTHA (HUNGARY)

Kunisaki, wow

Can I ever let you go,

You put on some show

SOFIE SKAARUP JENSEN (DENMARK)

небо купает
вершины Футаго-сан
о, Кунисаки

the peaks of Futago-san
are bathing in the sky
oh, Kunisaki

LIJA KOCERGINA (LATVIA)

HONOURABLE MENTION

Whilst this haiku is not at all related to Kunisaki in any way, shape or form, We, the editors at Kuniswaggy appreciated the effort that went into this 'interesting' Dragon Ball inspired poem. So we decided against our better judgement to feature it with our publication.

勝っ! 孫悟空!

地球を守って

かめはめ波

Go Son Goku

Protect the earth

Kamehameha

The winner is :

Hoang Quynh Chi

T H A N K

Y O U

K U N I S A K I

I S

W A I T I N G F O R

Y O U

