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Illustration by Jacqueline Reese-Mikula



ADVENTURE IN THE NINJA KYOTO LABYRINTH

On Monday, my friend Jacqueline and I discovered the Ninja Kyoto Labyrinth Restaurant. We'd been walking back after spending the afternoon at the Nishiki Market when suddenly a ninja appeared in front of us. After laughing at the surprise, we decided the place looked interesting, and went inside.

First, we had to go through the Labyrinth, a series of dark twisting tunnels that led into the restaurant. Although it was a little unsettling, we managed to make it through alive, and to the restaurant itself. There we were greeted by a waitress dressed as a ninja who led us to our table, which was in its own cave-like alcove. Continuing the ninja theme, she brought us appetizers, little crackers shaped like ninja throwing stars, before our dinner.

After we'd finished eating, there was a knock at the door, and another person dressed like a ninja came in, this time to do some "ninja magic tricks". Finally, our waitress came back with dessert. The restaurant offered many adorable themed desserts, such as matcha shaved ice shaped and pretzels made to look like a bonsai garden, and a cheesecake in the shape of a tiny frog.

Altogether, the food was delicious, and the entire experience was both interesting and completely entertaining. I would definitely recommend this restaurant to all who visit Kyoto.

Getting there is also very easy, and only about a 12 minute walk from the Shijo station. Take the Karasuma subway line to Shijo station, and from there go straight and take a right at the first corner. After that there will be many small intersections, and at the ninth one, cross the street and turn left at the next corner. After going straight for a bit longer, it will be clearly visible on the right side of the street.

I highly recommend everyone go!

Mackenzie Tyler

Yatsuhashi

A seemingly endless amount of famous products, places, and festivities can be found in Kyoto, Japan. However, if you are to think of the tastes that embody Kyoto, *yatsuhashi* definitely tops the list.

This traditional Japanese treat was first made in 1689, during the middle of the Edo Era, and gets its name from its shape. After doing some research, two theories about *yatsuhashi's* name origin can be found. The first is that it looks like the traditional Japanese instrument, the koto, and that *yatsuhashi* was named after the famous koto player Kengyo Yatsuhashi. The second theory is that the treat looks like a bridge, the Japanese word for which is *hashi*, and thus received the name *yatsuhashi*. However, when I visited a *yatsuhashi* store in Kyoto, a store clerk informed me that the true name origin of the treat is related to its similarity in appearance to the *koto*.

Yatsuhashi comes in multiple forms and can be split into two main categories. The first is normal *yatsuhashi*, which is baked, and the second is referred to as *nama yatsuhashi* and is unbaked. Both types, although quite different, are made from the same basic ingredients: rice flour, sugar, and sesame. However, the baked *yatsuhashi* is often made with cinnamon and strongly resembles a cinnamon cookie.

In some ways, *nama yatsuhashi* is similar to the traditional Japanese treat *mochi*, however the former is smaller and less dense. *Nama yatsuhashi* is often filled with jelly or *anko* (red beans) and comes in many different flavors. As in its baked form, cinnamon *nama yatsuhashi* is quite common. However, *nama yatsuhashi* can also be found in a multitude of other flavors, from traditional Japanese flavors, such as matcha green tea or black sesame seed, to fruit flavors such as peach or *yuzu* (a Japanese citrus fruit).

Because *yatsuhashi* is a popular souvenir treat of Kyoto, stores that sell it can be found all over the area. However, despite the wide spread of stores that sell it, there are also a number of famous stores in the area that specialize in the production and sale of *yatsuhashi*. One such store is called "Izutsu Yatsuhashi Honpoi" and was established in the famous Gion District of Kyoto in the year 1805. "Izutsu Yatsuhashi Honpoi" is definitely worth a visit. The store has a huge variety of both baked and *nama yatsuhashi* and includes treats exclusive to that store and nowhere else. Additionally, customers can taste multiple different flavors of *yatsuhashi* and, if they desire, can learn more about this popular treat from the store clerks.

The next time you are in a souvenir shop in Kyoto, take a look around for some *yatsuhashi*. Upon doing so, you will probably find it front and center among the other numerous famous products that Kyoto has to offer.

Miwako Schlageter



MATCHA AND KYOTO

Matcha is a signature product of Kyoto, and when you are there you will see it often. Matcha is a special kind of green tea. It is often used in its powdered form for cooking. You will often also see things like matcha-flavored coffee, cake, and ice cream as well as various other foods, because of the popularity of the matcha flavor. The flavor is a little bitter, so when put in snacks their sweet flavor is diminished.

I buy matcha-flavored items often because I like those kinds of flavored foods and drinks. For example, I often drink tea at restaurants where you can brew your own matcha in hot water. Although the first time I tried it, I put in too much matcha and it was not very good, but if you make it properly it is really delicious.

Matcha is also used in tea ceremonies. In the olden days, a monk named Eisai brought tea from China and wrote a book called *Kissayojoki*, spreading information about tea. The use of tea in Buddhist practices, made it popular throughout Japan. Furthermore, because Uji City, located in Kyoto Prefecture, is famous for its matcha, Kyoto City itself has also become known for its matcha.

Many Americans have seen matcha, so it is not unknown to them. However, it is still relatively rare in the States, so when they visit Kyoto they often want to try it. It makes a good souvenir for family or friends. The price varies greatly on the quality, so you can decide what kind of matcha to buy according to your budget. Trying out matcha-flavored foods and beverages is also fun.

Katie Carpenter

NISHIJIN ORI

Nishijin Ori is a dyed fabric originating from Kyoto and is used not only for kimonos but also for several other products. For example, it is used for the kimono obi and even for neckties.

Kyoto's traditional handicraft, Nishijin Ori has a very interesting and long history. During the Onin no Ran war, which occurred between the years 1467-1477 in Kyoto, there were two main military forces—the Western Army and Eastern Army. The location where the Western Army based their main force became known as Nishijin. Similarly, the location where the Eastern Army based their main force became known as Higashijin. Once the war came to an end, all of the workers who had previously evacuated the area during the war returned to Higashijin and Nishijin respectively. The workers from Nishijin started to compete with the workers from Higashijin using textile manufacturing. Eventually, those from Nishijin won and earned the business operation rights. As such, Nishijin Ori became Kyoto's representative traditional handicraft item.

Most of the Nishijin Ori manufacturing process was performed by hand until the end of World War II. After the war, the manufacturing process was mechanized and now there are three main forms of production. The first is manufacturing at a Nishijin Ori factory. The second is subcontracted weaving. Subcontracted weaving is when a textile shop hires a subcontractor company to make their goods for them. The third method is to use both of the first two production forms together in order to produce goods.

Lastly, there are currently 30,000 people working in the Nishijin Ori industry. These 30,000 people utilize approximately 4,783 machines in order to manufacture their goods.

After I researched the long history of Nishijin Ori, I was really amazed by the fact that the area that we spent a week studying in was a former battlefield, and the name of that battlefield eventually was adopted by a type of textile. According to my Doshisha University language buddy, "The fact that the name Nishijin still exists is very interesting, and the fact that this name that we normally use every day has been used and remained for over 600 years is very surprising".

Chris Ramos

THE ADVENTURE IN FESTA

Since the Yukata Matsuri (a Yukata is similar to a kimono), there has been a story floating around CLS students and Himeji Dokkyo University students. Up until today, the story's details have been embellished or removed from what truly occurred. But the fact that one of CLS students had a big adventure remains the same. Here is the story from the perspective of three of the students at the scene of the incident:

Together

During the midst of the Yukata Festival, the story starts with a group of friends aimlessly looking for a place to eat. After deciding on eating at the Burger King inside the underground mall complex called Grand Festa, they unfortunately found out that it was closed. Having left the mall tired from the festivities and hungry, one of the members soon discovered that he accidentally left his expensive camera inside the mall. Leaving most of his belongings with the group, including his phone, he entered the mall, but he and his party and he quickly realized there was a swarm of police with riot shields and megaphones entering into the mall and blocking the entrance.

From here on, the story divides into two parts: the Party and the Adventurer

Party's Perspective

Having been separated from their friend by the police, they tried to explain that their friend was inside the mall. After a bit of confusion and commotion, some of the policemen understood their situation and had some people look for him. The party learned that the police were taking precautions in closing the mall and preventing the entrance of drunken people due to the festival. They thought he was lost in the mall. Worried, upset, tired, and hungry, they sent someone to contact the CLS advisors, and the party waited at a nearby police station for their friend.

Adventurer's Perspective

Together with other Japanese shoppers, he attempted to leave from the entranceway to no avail. After picking up his camera, he wanted to find a way back to his friends and so decided to leave the mall. He later encountered several more police barricades telling him to leave the area and so he decided to head back to the hotel and wait for his friends there. The moment he returned to the hotel was the moment a worried classmate called out to him and explained how a search party was looking for him. Returning to the police box, he was met with both hugs of relief and faces of disdain.

Reunited

The night ended with dinner at the second McDonalds they found that night. It was there that the adventurer and the party's stories were exchanged. In a span of about 30 minutes, police were called in for a small search party, worries were exchanged and a big commotion occurred. Although the evening was filled with frustration, worries, and empty stomachs, after sitting down and eating together, they all took a moment to see how funny the story really was and how this could be a moment to remember.

Report by Frank Le

Firsthand Accounts: Laura Berg, John Buglione, Elizabeth Murillo



Pictured from the Left: Laura Berg, France Le, and John Buglione

Senryū CONTEST

Recently the CLS students held a *senryū* poetry contest during our stay in Kyoto, in which ten poems were chosen as the finalists. The *Kawaraban* committee then distributed surveys to Japanese students from Doshisha University who chose their three favorite poems from the list of ten. We also requested that the students include their impressions of the poems they chose. Afterward, results were tallied and a first, second, and third place were decided. We also had the privilege of receiving feedback from none other than CLS Institute Director Dr. Mari Noda, who is currently in the United States. To compare results, please see the adjacent article where you will find Noda Sensei's impressions!

However, perhaps you are wondering what a *senryū* is in the first place. To put it simply, a *senryū* is a poem similar in structure to that of the 5-7-5 syllable-count haiku, except *senryū* are often whimsical or portray human emotions whilst having a more flexible structure than haiku.

Without further ado, here are the results!

First Place:

Kyoto dialect
How they speak it, truly
I dunno.

Student's impression: "I thought their use of Kyoto dialect was nice."

Second Place:

"It doesn't hurt."
The sensei spoke.
Was a lie.

(The "warning stick" during Zen meditation)

Student's impression: "It really does hurt, doesn't it?"

Third Place:

Again, "see you again."
The passing of time.
So soon.

Student's impression: "This is how I feel today [the last day in Kyoto for CLS students] -- sad."

Kyle Koslosky

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT HEALTH COMMITTEE



JAKE BUGLIONE



CHRIS RAMOS



NAOMI HAYES



MIWAKO SCHLAGETER



DEAN LEINGER



MACKENZIE TYLER



HELEN ROLFE



NATSUMI SUZUKI

THE TALE OF KUROTORI HANEI

PART THREE

“Just a little further, my lord!” said the White Heron.

Kurotori Hanei asked, “What an awful stench! What sort of bird could live in a swamp like this?”

Hearing this, the White Heron suddenly stopped, landing in the branches of the sole tree in the swamp. “Bird? No, no. Lord Meadow isn’t a bird!”

“He’s not a bird? Then what is he?” Kurotori asked, his voice filled with worry. “Surely this White Heron is an ally of Kozue! I’ve fallen into a trap!” he thought.

“Why, Lord Meadow is a frog of course!”

“What do you mean he’s a frog!?” Kurotori shouted angrily. “White Heron!”

“Yes?” the White Heron answered calmly.

Kurotori’s feathers ruffled. “I trusted you! And you betrayed me!” His anger was uncontrollable. He was about to peck the White Heron, but suddenly a deep voice fell from the branches above:

“My goodness! Violence?” And a frog as big as the voice followed, also falling from the branches above, with a thump. He wore a crown chock-full of rubies.

“I am Meadow. Who are these fools who enter my Marsh Kingdom?”

TO BE CONTINUED...