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Japan Screen Topics

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KURASHIKI--WHERE TIME STANDS STILL

154 feet 4 min. 17 sec.

1. (ROOFS) A century ago, cascades of tiled roofs dominated the low skylines of Japanese cities.

However, today, modern buildings are displacing the traditional architecture.

But in the city of Kurashiki near the Inland Sea, time seems to stand still. A stroll through Kurashiki's streets is a visit to pre-modern Japan.

2. (ALLEY) Few cities are better loved by the Japanese people. Located 470 miles southwest of Tokyo, Kurashiki can be reached easily from Tokyo by superexpress trains of the Shinkansen.

Kurashiki rose to great prosperity as a grain trading center starting in the 17th century. It's river provided easy access to the sea from the merchants' great warehouses.

(OLD STORE) Old style business buildings like this one still line the river today, their appearance unaltered in more than a century.

Today, Kurashiki has become a museum city... a center for tourism and traditional arts and crafts.

(KURASHIKI-KAN) The city's first Western building, built in the 19th century, now houses Kurashiki's tourist center.

3. (ART GALLERY) Near the river stands a more modern structure, the Ohara Museum of Art, founded in 1930. Although modern

Kurashiki is a city of only 400,000 population, the museum has become one of the most famous in Japan.

Besides modern works, the Ohara museum has a large display of ancient art from Egypt, Iran and Turkey.

(PICTURES) It's collection includes original paintings by El Greco, Toulouse-Lautrec, Cezanne and Renoir.

4. (~~TOY MUSEUM~~) Another of Kurashiki's famous museums is the Kyodo Gangu Kan, or toy museum.

Traditional Japanese toys from all parts of Japan have been gathered here, restored and placed on display.

They range from masks through dolls, puppets and kites.

5. (~~IVY SQUARE~~) In the late 19th century, Kurashiki boasted one of Japan's first Western-style textile mills. It was built around a square courtyard.

Today the textile mill is a hotel. The courtyard... known as "Ivy Square" is a popular gathering place for college students and other young tourists.

6. (~~WEAVING~~) One traditional industry for which Kurashiki is famous is the weaving of hanagoza... decorative mats used for floor coverings.

It is a natural development because the raw material... rushes... abound in the Kurashiki area.

Kurashiki's hanagoza are famous for their bold, colorful patterns.

7. (SETONAIKAI) Kurashiki lies near the heart of one of Japan's great beauty spots, the Setonaikai, or Inland Sea.

A popular Japanese poem sums up Japanese people's feeling for the city in these words:

"Oh Kurashiki---

Your walls of black and white

Bring memories of childhood

And old Japan."

PAPA IN THE KITCHEN

75 feet 2 min. 05 sec.

1. (MEN WRITING) Adult men... but it seems they're in school. Just look at them taking notes! A sales conference? A seminar of learned professors?

(WOMAN INSTRUCTOR) Ah! Behold their teacher!

Japan today has a boom in cooking schools for men. Since many Japanese men work half a day on Saturday, the classes... like this one in Tokyo... often are held on Saturday afternoon.

2. (FOOD) The pupils here include government officials, doctors and corporation executives.

Today they're learning a French dish... shrimp cooked in wine sauce Normandy style.

Confucius once said that a gentleman should eat the food his wife brings him without complaint, and never inquire about what goes on in the kitchen. Until recently, most Japanese men followed this rule to the letter.

But life styles change. These men aren't anxious to replace their wives in the kitchen; rather, in this age of greater leisure-time, culinary skills have been added to the male's list of hobbies.

(TASTES) This student applies the taste test, and seems to like the results so far.

(TEACHER) And of course the teacher is there to guard against culinary disasters.

3. (SERVING MEAL) Soon the delicious odor of cooking shrimp fills the room. It's time to put the results to the test.

Toasting each other with wine, the students dig into their shrimp Normandy.

(LAUGHING) It's hard to tell if he finds the results good-- or just funny.

In the end, most are satisfied with the kitchen miracle they have wrought.

Besides the schools, Japan nowadays is getting a growing stream of magazine articles and even books on cooking for men. It has taken a long time, but Japan's papas finally have come to the kitchen.

JAPAN'S COLORFUL KITES

96 feet 2 min. 40 sec.

1. (KITE) The social sport of kiteflying was introduced to Japan from China about one thousand years ago. Today, kites are more popular than ever... a source of pleasure for millions of Japanese children and adults.
2. (KITE DISPLAYS) In old days, each region of Japan developed its own distinctive varieties of colorful kites. Today... the history of Japanese kites and the techniques used to fly them is preserved in a kite museum recently established in Tokyo.
(TINY KITES) The display includes these miniature kites which actually fly.
3. (MAN IN WHITE) Let's meet one of Japan's best known amateur kite craftsmen, Mr. Koichi Mashita, who runs a restaurant in Tokyo specializing in sushi... rice cakes topped with raw fish.
(KITE ON WALL) But his real love is building traditional kites.
4. (WORKSHOP) He pursues his hobby in a home workshop. Long ago, kitemaking was a handicraft art. Kites were prized as much for beauty as for air worthiness.
Mr. Mashita takes great pains to reproduce some of the best loved kite pictures of old times.

(BAMBOO) His kites are made from a special paper called washi which is reinforced with silk strands. He splits the bamboo for the frame himself, and even weaves the cords of his kites in the traditional way.

5. (FLYING KITES) On their days off, Mr. Mashita and his friends like to fly their kites in open areas around Tokyo.

Kite flying is a winter and spring activity, when the winds are at their best. Kites also are associated with special holidays like New Year's and Children's Day when the skies over parks and schools are likely to be filled with them. The enchantment they provide for Japanese of all ages seems only to get stronger as the years go by.

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