



Welcome to Tsugi-Hagi vol.1!

A warm *konnichiwa* from Tsugi-Hagi Magazine! If you speak Japanese you may have heard of us before, but as this is our first ever English issue we'd like to take the opportunity to re-introduce ourselves to our new readers. Tsugi-Hagi is the brain-child of Yoko, Rika, Asumi and Reina, all of whom live in the quaint city of Hagi in Yamaguchi prefecture, Japan. Hagi is a truly charming place with beautiful natural scenery, and unconditionally friendly folk. Tsugi-Hagi Magazine aims to introduce these delights to readers near and far—so you can feel as connected to the local community here as we do!

In Tsugi-Hagi vol.1, we'll sail to one of Hagi's islands, meet some dynamic personalities enlivening the city, and get the inside story on life as a homestay host.

With the Olympics around the corner, a rise in the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan is anticipated. With such a variety of nationalities will come a diverse range of dietary requirements. Dietary lifestyles like vegetarianism and gluten-free have become widespread in recent years, and in this issue we'll also be digging into the reality of the food scene in Hagi, finding places that can accommodate such requirements. It ended up being a learning opportunity for us, too!

Happy travelling,

Tsugi-Hagi Editorial Team



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### Our First Island Adventure!

Some people in Hagi live on islands, and in this issue we finally got around to visiting one of them, Ōshima! With the fresh island air and effusive island folk, it was as if we'd visited somewhere far away...





Our journey begins!



Our ferry, the Hagi Ōshima. If you see this boat, you're on the right track.



“Look! Over there!”



Docking at Ōshima!



“What a flat island!”

As it turns out, all of the islands you can see from Hagi are flat, including Ōshima.

After arriving on Ōshima, we decided to be adventurous and walk the road less travelled, choosing to go down a small path. What we didn't expect was for it to be surprisingly steep! Along the way, we spotted many typical sights of the island—cats huddling together, women speeding along narrow paths on mopeds...

After climbing up the steep narrow path, we were finally rewarded with a great view. Fields stretched out before us, and beyond them, the boundless, cerulean sea. A sigh escaped our lips as a refreshing breeze hit us. When you consider how the islanders get to see this tremendous view every day, you start to get a little jealous!

Suddenly, a voice came out of nowhere.

"Hello there! You're not from around here, are you? Would you like me to show you around?"

It was one of the locals. Though a little startled, what took us aback more than anything was how affable and generous she was towards us.

"Ōshima is home to lots of tobacco and broccoli fields, you see... Did you eat lunch already? If not, I can call one of the nearby restaurants for you. What time's your ferry back? I hope you're alright for time!"

On and on the questions came, and despite being strangers, it felt like we were conversing with an old friend.

"We're having the island festival tomorrow so do stop by again!"

And with that, she was off.

What a heart-warming encounter.

A mere 25 minutes from Hagi by ferry...

A special island, just next door...

We guarantee you'll want to visit Ōshima again!



# ŌSHIMA RUNDOWN

For those who want to have lunch on the island, we recommend Restaurant Furusato (0838-28-1210) for their popular daily set meals, or Restaurant Satsukian (0838-28-0538) for their delicious okonomiyaki. Be sure to call in advance as they have irregular holidays.

## 2 Plateau-top Fields

Ōshima's upland plains are home to broccoli and tobacco fields as far as the eye can see—as if you were a king or queen overlooking your kingdom!

## 3 Iroha Hill

From here you can see Ōshima's fishing port. The boats look like cute miniatures from far away!

## 4 Ōshima Hachimangu Shrine

Long ascending stone stairs make for a striking scene. A lone cat stands waiting at the top. Could it be the guardian of the shrine?



## 1 Ōshima Port

Here you can get a 'treasure map' of the island which introduces you to some must-see spots (Japanese only).



### Introducing our model: Kiyoko Okuda

From Hagi's next-door neighbour Mine City, Kiyoko joined a Hagi-based regional development and promotion enterprise in 2018. She might be a familiar face to some of our more local readers as she's the girl on the poster of shabu shabu restaurant Irikichi, which specialises in Hagi Mutsumi pork.





fashion

Fashion is the medium through which people express themselves. We at Tsugi-Hagi believe that fashion's 'cool' factor doesn't come from the clothes, but from the person wearing them. Their personality and lifestyle are reflected in what they wear, and that's what makes for truly interesting fashion. In this issue, we will zero in on two of the trendiest Hagi natives we know.

國本中心

Yuji Kunimoto

Occupation: Artist

Profile: Born and raised in Hagi, Kunimoto has received many awards for his art over the years. He won the prestigious Tadanori Yokoo Award in the 2nd Miyamoto Saburo Dessin Grand-Prix, and an honourable mention at the 3rd Graphic Design in Japan, Japan's biggest annual graphic art showcase. He and his wife, Ai, an illustrator, work together as an artistic unit under the name 'Meoto Zenzai'.



On weekend evenings, Kunimoto transforms into the barman of 8½. The bar, which he conceptualised and opened himself, is a space filled with flair and subtlety. Kunimoto is always surrounded by his closest companions, art and the night, and his beloved liquor is never far from his side. “I think of it as my mind palace,” he chuckles and explains. Looking at Kunimoto in his element behind the bar, I think, *now here is someone who has their own distinct style.*

The café-bar is located inside a 200 year-old refurbished Japanese-style house. Also inside is the Hagi Gabou Art Shop, opened by Kaneo Mizunuma, an oil painter and Kunimoto’s grandfather, after he retired from teaching. Kunimoto’s great-great-grandfather was Dōtei Yoshida, a ceramic painter. Yoshida specialised in Obata ware pottery, a thriving porcelain ware during the feudal era. The works of these two ancestors are on display around Hagi, and it is their blood that runs through Kunimoto’s veins.

“When I was a kid, people would say that I was adorable, and my parents often dressed me in red clothes.” But this irked him and so when he grew up, he took the opportunity to move out to Tokyo. There, he made a drastic change, growing a beard and upending his fashion, only wearing clothes by avant-garde designers. In his late 20s, whilst working as a movie billboard designer, Kunimoto joined a prominent fashion school to study fashion illustration. There, he became acquainted with fledgling pattern makers, whom he persuaded to create clothing based on his original ideas. Later, in his early 30s, he worked as a freelance designer. Finally, at age 45, he moved back to Hagi.

Coming back to Hagi, Kunimoto took over Hagi Gabou, but the street on which it stood was not as lively as it had once been. Seeing an opportunity, he gave the creative desire burning inside of him a shape, and that shape was 8½. One fateful day, a woman visiting from Chiba happened to pop in. This woman, Ai, would later become his wife. “I remember he recommended Tsurue\* to me,” she recalls. Kunimoto’s suggestion really must’ve made an impression on her as nine years later, on 21st August, their daughter Saika was born. Separate the date into numbers and you get 8, 2, and 1—the numbers that form 8½. What a touching story behind the name!

\*pictured on the cover



## Bits & Bobs



He even features in famous manga artist Riyoko Ikeda’s comics!



Kunimoto at 30 with afro



Vest made by Kunimoto’s fledgling pattern maker friend

fashion



中原万里

Mari Nakahara

Occupation: Café-gallery owner

Profile: From Ooi, Hagi, Nakahara is the owner of Kurumayado Tenjuppei, a lively café-gallery located in the Hagi Castle Town. As a child, she was a fan of dollmaker Jusaburō Tsujimura, and kabuki actor, Bandō Tamasaburō V—impressive!

What kind of person can we describe as truly having ‘style’? We think it’s someone who manages to make even the mundane interesting.

*Even Mari's silhouette is fashionable*, I think as I look on at her sporting a long white t-shirt designed by luxury designer YACCOMARICARD. Talking with Mari, we gained a lot of insight into the tension and transition she experienced throughout her life and how it all lead her to become the confident person she is today. She begins by telling us about when she met her husband, rickshaw driver, Shōgo.

Mari met Shōgo at a community development event at age 30. “He’s good at reading people and isn’t easily influenced by others.” Drawn to him for his lifestyle and outlook, they married within half a year. To support her hard-working rickshaw-pulling husband, Mari took to running a shop inside the Kubota Family Residence, a historical point of interest. After the Residence was successfully designated an Important Cultural Property, the couple decided to move to their current location, newborn in tow. While raising the baby, Mari took to wearing comfortable cotton attire made by Shimane prefecture-based company, Gungendo, and since then always opts for natural materials.

At her new location, Mari opened her gallery, and decided to start hosting solo exhibitions of clothes and crockery designers there. There was joy in being able to introduce people to the creators she admired, but behind the scenes she was under pressure to produce results. If that wasn’t enough, she had also opened a café, COTOCOTO, but the staff were ever-changing.



She says in the end she managed to overcome this by only thinking one year ahead at a time. It was tough, but going through all these experiences made her strong.

Today, Mari has more than five 'looks'. “Objects and clothes express the real me. I've come to understand myself and understand what suits me. I really want to nurture that independent side of me. I don’t need full marks—I'm happy if I only score 70/100. I think for women, wearing even just one item that we like can give us so much motivation!” she says, breaking into a grin.

As fellow women who have our own worries and pressures in life, hearing about Mari’s experiences and insight left a powerful impression on us here at Tsugi-Hagi. What a role model!

## Bits & Bobs



T-shirt featuring art by printmaker Rafael Navas.



Glasses bracelet with a subtle matte finish—a favourite accessory of Mari's during summer.



Top designed by Harumi Sakurai



# Moreish Memories: The Hagi Food Scene

Hagi is a diverse place, bordered by the coast on one side, and mountains on the others. Thanks to this varied geology, Hagi locals enjoy a rich variety of seafood and crops. However, it is important to be aware that not many places are able to cater to vegetarians, vegans, or those with gluten intolerance. Unfortunately, it is quite common for these kinds of dietary lifestyles to be unfamiliar in Japan.

Nevertheless, there are some hidden gems of restaurants around town that can be more flexible in accommodating your dietary needs!

## Useful Japanese Phrases

Use the phrases below to help you communicate with restaurant staff and host families (pointing is A-okay!)

VG

### Vegan

"I'm vegan. I don't eat animal products like meat, fish, eggs, dairy, or honey. Do you have any dishes without these?"

私は、ヴィーガンです。肉や魚、卵、牛乳、蜂蜜などの動物性の食材は食べません。そのような料理を注文することはできますか？

Watashi wa vīgan desu. Niku ya sakana, tamago, gyūnyū, hachimitsu nado no dōbutsu-sei no shokuzai wa tabemasen. Sono yō na ryōri o chūmon suru koto ga dekimasu ka?

V

### Vegetarian

"I'm a vegetarian. I can eat eggs and dairy products, but otherwise I do not eat animal products like meat and fish. Do you have any dishes without these?"

私は、ベジタリアンです。卵や牛乳は食べることができますが、肉や魚などの動物性のものは食べません。そのような料理を注文することはできますか？

Watashi wa bejitarian desu. Tamago ya gyūnyū wa taberu koto ga dekimasu ga, niku ya sakana nado no dōbutsu-sei no mono wa tabemasen. Sono yō na ryōri o chūmon suru koto ga dekimasu ka?

GF

### Gluten Intolerance

"I cannot eat food that contains wheat flour or wheat. Do you have any dishes without these?"

私は、小麦粉や小麦を使った食べ物を食べません。そのような料理を注文することはできますか？

Watashi wa komugiko ya komugi o tsukatta tabemono o tabemasen. Sono yō na ryōri o chūmon suru koto ga dekimasu ka?

# La Ceiba ラ・セイバ

A natural foods restaurant located in the Tamachi Shopping Arcade, La Ceiba makes meals using locally-grown organic ingredients that are kind to the body.

A great option on the menu for vegetarians is the 'Multi-Veggie Lunch'. Whilst there is no exclusive menu for those with more specific dietary restrictions, owner-chef Asai is willing to do the best he can to cater to you!

The restaurant features a shop corner selling natural goods, cosmetics, detergents and seasoning. It also becomes a cosy gig venue on occasion! Asai hopes La Ceiba can be a hub for sustainable lifestyle awareness and promotion.



Multi-Veggie Lunch



Rota Asai is a man of many faces—not just the owner-chef of La Ceiba, but also a football coach AND city council member!



Seasoning, condiments and canned goods on sale. Organic cosmetics and detergents are also available.



Opening Times\*: Lunch 12:00–14:00, Dinner 18:30–21:00

Holidays: Mon, Tue, Sun

Address: 92 Higashitamachi, Hagi, Yamaguchi 758-0047

Parking: Onarimichi Tamachi Parking Lot

Phone: 0838-21-4331

Facebook: <https://bit.ly/2og5Frz>

Blog: <http://laceiba.cocolog-nifty.com/>

\*Please check their Facebook or blog for opening days (Japanese only)

# Hotoritei ホトリテイ

A café located in the Hagi Castle Town area featuring a beautiful Japanese garden you can admire while you eat! A tourist-friendly café, Hotoritei can make vegetarian meals off-menu. The café has a homely atmosphere and is shoes-off like a Japanese house. There is both table and floor seating, comfortable for all ages.



"Our coffee bean supplier, COFFEE VALLEY, takes extreme care in selecting delicious coffee beans for us. Please stop by and have a cup!"

– Mamoru Kurogo, Manager



Vegetarian lunch  
(specially-requested)

Opening Times: 11:00–16:00 (irregular holidays)

Address: 62 Minamikatakawamachi, Hagi,  
Yamaguchi 758-0076

Parking: On site

Phone: 0838-22-1755

Instagram: @hotoritei.cafe

# Hagi Samurai 萩侍

The Sanada\*: Popular with foreign tourists, the Sanada is a tomato and cheese-topped okonomiyaki made with spicy chilli pepper-infused noodles, accompanied by kimchi and edamame side dishes.

\*Each okonomiyaki is named after a famous samurai



True to the name, your chef at this restaurant isn't any old chef, but a samurai! Restaurant manager and part-time samurai Yoshiaki Nakamoto is flexible and very willing to adapt okonomiyaki recipes to meet a diverse range of dietary requirements. He won't blink an eye if you ask for okonomiyaki sans pork, eggs or even sauce! Some customers may need to be mindful of the ingredients in the sauce, noodles, or dashi used to make the pancake mix, but otherwise look forward to a fun-filled experience trying one of the most quintessential Japanese dishes!



Nakamoto is originally from Hiroshima, so the menu features many Hiroshima-original drinks!

Opening Times: 18:00–01:00 (Sundays 18:00–00:00)

Holidays: Mon

Address: 76 Yoshidacho, Hagi, Yamaguchi 758-0027

Parking: Use nearby parking lots

Phone: 0838-26-1401

Instagram: @hagi\_samurai



# WOOD MOON ウッドムーン

Run by CEO Noriko Tsukimori, WOOD MOON is a baked goods manufacturer whose products are made without eggs and dairy, instead using plant-derived products that are kind to the body.

All of WOOD MOON's cookies and cakes are vegan, and they can adapt the recipe to accommodate food allergies. Tsukimori comments that the number of her vegan customers has been rising recently, as awareness of gluten intolerance has increased. However, Tsukimori herself in fact is not a vegan, being a big lover of bread and eating meat on occasion. Rather than completely giving up meat and dairy, she considers it important to strike a balance, having an ongoing conversation with her body to get the necessary level of nutrition.

WOOD MOON first moved west 6 years ago, from its original base in



Noriko Tsukimori: Having a food allergy herself, Tsukimori decided to study macrobiotics. For many years she was a chef at an organic restaurant, and after that opened WOOD MOON.

One assortment this year included a natsumikan orange Swiss roll amongst other treats. All delicacies are of course handmade.



Want to try WOOD MOON's delicious creations? Head on down to café COTOCOTO in the Hagi Castle Town area. Don't live in Hagi? Fear not! You can also find them at Nicolina Ecute inside the Tokyo Station building.

Tokyo to Ōnan, Shimane—Tsukimori's hometown. Living amongst farmlands, she had more chances to come into contact with vegetables in their natural habitat. This meant that rather than relying solely on recipes, she was able to grow her own vegetables and experiment with various cooking techniques to unlock the hidden potential of her ingredients. You can taste the result of Tsukimori's efforts yourself through her popular 'Monthly Hometown Selection', a box of select treats that differs each month. Orders can be made online through WOOD MOON's website.

Address: 108 Tsubaki, Hagi, Yamaguchi 758-0061

Parking: On site

Phone: 090-8347-6196

Email: woodmoon8@icloud.com

Website: <https://woodmoon.jp/> (Japanese only)

Orders can be picked up at the shop. Call or email in advance to arrange.



## Tsugi-Hagi Farm: Open for Business!

Just under a 20-minute drive from central Hagi lies the quaint district of Ooi. It's been 3 years since our very own Tsugi-Hagi editor, Yoko Ishida, moved here with her family. Holidays where travellers can experience the daily lifestyle of another culture have become a popular type of trip in recent years. Calling her old house and the field surrounding it Tsugi-Hagi Farm, Ishida decided to start a homestay business. Today she tells us about the enjoyment and challenges of life as a homestay host.



*Snack time—homemade yoghurt with homegrown loquat! Ishida's husband explains the growing and fermentation processes.*

*Later, the New Zealander couple tell the Ishidas about the Japanese exchange students they've hosted. Apparently the Japanese language and pronunciation is quite similar to that of Māori!*

## A Gentle Fondness

"You live in such a great location—picturesque mountains, quiet. Tokyo is nice...but I definitely prefer places like this!"

A couple who had come from New Zealand\* complimented me so numerous times throughout their stay in my home. At some point, I realised, I must've stopped noticing the beautiful scenery that I once marvelled at. But when seen through the eyes of a guest, I was reminded of how lucky I was, and it was like seeing it for the first time all over again.

Another time, a girl visiting from Ireland burst into laughter when I opened up the fish grill in my kitchen stove. "Wow! That's adorable!" she said. For me, a fish grill was nothing special, just a fact of everyday life. But for her, not knowing what it was for, it was something novel and intriguing.

My family and I have shown guests around our house countless times. The house is pretty much chaos the day before a guest comes, with us all rushing around trying to clean, tidy the rooms and stock up on meal ingredients. On top of juggling all these chores, there's always part of me that worries the guest won't enjoy the experience, the meals won't be to their taste, and so on. I worry so much that there have even been times I've thought of giving up hosting.

But then I finally come to face to face with the guest, and even if my English is broken, we always manage to forge a connection by the time dinner is over. After that, there's nothing but a gentle feeling of fondness.



*The guest bedroom is a typical tatami room with a big kamidana Shinto altar.*

*With one more room next door, Ishida's house can fit four guests comfortably...and five at a push!*

\*Homestay guests from abroad come periodically on a tour organised by Canada-based travel company G Adventures. From Tokyo, they visit numerous places throughout the country. One of the tour options is a 3-day homestay in Hagi. Their homestays are arranged through Hagi City Furusato Tourism.





## Think of it as visiting your relatives!

Ours is a traditional house, and as far as possible we try to live in a way that is considerate to both people and the environment. But that doesn't mean our lifestyle doesn't have its drawbacks. We don't have much storage space, so our bookshelves are under our floors. Our paper shoji doors are ripped in places, so we've covered up some of the rips with pictures of our children. Lots of people think that is great. However, I'm sure there are many who would not think so. Finally, only a single sliding door separates the guest bedroom from ours, so we can hear each other talking or snoring in our sleep. My home, like any other, has its quirks.

I may not be from Hagi originally, but I think it's exactly because I didn't grow up here that I can offer a unique and unbiased take on life here. If you fancy trying a homestay, please come and stay at my home! I want people to think of it as staying at their relatives' house. I'll keep posting updates on Tsugi-Hagi Farm here and there on social media, so keep an eye out!



*The view from  
Ishida's window:  
the path up to Ooi  
Hachimangu Shrine*



## Tsugi-Hagi now has a website!

Coming soon: more in-depth reports about the places and people we just couldn't fit into this issue, and back number issues for download (Japanese only).

<https://tsugihagi.info/>

You can find more information on Tsugi-Hagi Farm under 'Homestay' (Japanese only).

Text: Yoko Ishida, Photos: Rika Kōtsu & Reina Matsuda

## Experience HAGI

Feel, taste, discover, relax, create

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3944-1 Fukuishimo, Hagi City,  
Yamaguchi Prefecture,  
758-0212  
Japan

CHECK  
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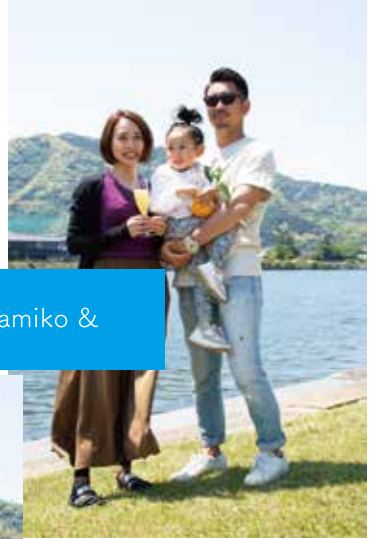
# Citrus Snapshots

## = Natsumikan and Me =

Snapshots of memories from Hagi's annual Natsumikan Orange Festival, held on the 11th May on the Hashimoto riverbed in Hiyako, Hagi.



from Shimonoseki  
Kanaoka Oda



from Hagi  
Takahide, Mamiko &  
Yūki Hara



from Hagi  
Takahide & Mina Miyazaki



from Hagi  
Kayoko Kenmotsu



from Hagi  
Yūka & Ōga Fujimura  
Sakina & Omi Kimura





from Hagi  
Yūichi Ueno



from Yamaguchi  
Kominka Yamane Guesthouse

from Hagi  
Rin Yoshimoto



from Hagi  
Masayuki Yamagata  
& Ikuo Ōtani

from Shimonoseki  
Saki & Nari Hirama



from Nagato  
Doggy Bon-chan and his family



A handy map of the spots introduced in this issue of Tsugi-Hagi!

# Tsugi-Hagi Map





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To

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