

To: All media representatives

February 23, 2016
Toba Hotel International Co., Ltd.

**In honor of the Ise-Shima Summit
Toba Hotel International Shiojitei:
New Programming for Experiencing the Rich Culture of Mie Prefecture
Begins on March 1st**

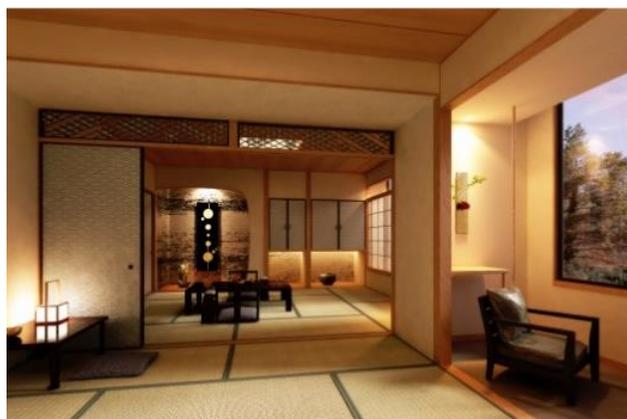
Toba Hotel International Japanese style inn %Shiojitei+ (Toba City, Mie Prefecture) will offer new and unique programs in honor of the 2016 Ise-Shima Summit. The new programs will commence on March 1 and provide hotel guests from Japan and overseas the opportunity to experience the distinctive traditions and culture of Mie Prefecture.



Artisan of Ise stencil handcrafting (image)



Ise cotton kimono material (image)



Concept room (image)

<Program>

1. Demonstration of traditional Ise stencils* by artisans
Demonstrations will be held once a month in the Shiojitei lobby (free for hotel guests).
2. Hands-on creation of bookmarks using Ise stencils (unique to Mie Prefecture)
This activity is available everyday in the Shiojitei lobby (free for hotel guests).
3. Rental of cotton kimonos dyed with Ise stencil designs (charge for rental)
4. "The Katagami" concept room for direct experience of the culture of Mie Prefecture (room charge)

1. Hands-on demonstration of traditional Ise stencils by artisans

Demonstrations will be held in the hotel. Guests will be able to see first hand the delicate and minutely detailed technique of Ise stencil artisans.



2. Hands-on creations of bookmarks using Ise stencils

Guests will be able to carve their own designs in Japanese paper dyed with persimmon tannin. A variety of designs will be provided. Guests will be able to make a souvenir of their trip with their own personalized bookmark.

3. Rental of cotton kimonos dyed with Ise stencil designs (charge for rental)

Cotton kimonos dyed with Ise stencil patterns will be available for rental by guests for wearing inside Shiojitei.



The rental charge is ¥1,944 per person (women only). Hotel guests staying in "The Katagami" concept room and premium suites may rent Ise stencil dyed cotton kimonos free of charge.

Cotton kimonos (image)

4. "The Katagami" concept room for direct experience of the culture of Mie Prefecture (room charge)

<Interior design>

The traditional Japanese room interior employs elements such as fusuma (sliding paper doors) and ranma (carved wooden panels above the sliding doors that divide the rooms) decorated with traditional Ise stencil designs. Kumiko ranma (ranma made of wood pieces assembled into intricate grid designs) are an element of traditional Japanese culture that is thought to have arisen in connection with respect for and careful use of natural materials in short supply, because of the small-diameter trees such as Japanese cedar and cypress that grow in large numbers in Japan. Kumiko ranma in an intricate hemp-leaf design formed by wood pieces assembled without nails can be seen in the concept room.

<Guest room furnishings>

1. Banko teapots in an original design for Shiojitei (designed in collaboration with Suigetsu Toen**, a Mie brand certified business operator).
2. Banko tea bowls in an original design for Shiojitei used to serve powdered green tea to guests.
3. Ise cotton kimono or Ise stencil dyed cotton kimono.
4. Three types of hinoki (cypress) fragrances inspired by the Ise Grand Shrine.



A Banko ware production process



A Banko ware production process



A finished Banko teapot (image)

<Dinner>

The hotel's special menu offers seasonal foods that convey the food culture of Mie Prefecture. The menu includes Ise lobster, abalone, and Matsusaka beef; local specialties such as dried shark meat; and dishes that incorporate sake lees obtained from production of Hakutaka, the fine sake that is offered to Ise Grand Shrine. Diners will surely enjoy the contemporary versions of traditional Japanese cuisine served artistically in Banko-yaki ceramic ware and others.

Concept room "The Katagami" plan

Period: March 1 to September 30, 2016

Room rate: ¥32,700 (incl. tax) for 1 person per night (up to 2 guests, incl. dinner and breakfast)

Reservations

To make reservations call +81-599-25-3121 (main phone number of the hotel).

This news release is available on the "Information" page of the Web site of Toba Hotel International Shiojitei, which can be accessed at <http://www.shiojitei.jp/en/>.

* *Ise stencils: Intricate designs meticulously carved with various cutting tools on layers of Mino paper bonded together with persimmon tannin. The stencils are used to dye designs and patterns on finely patterned kimono material. The smallest patterns contain more than 900 tiny carvings on an area measuring 3 centimeters square. Ise stencils, produced mainly in Mie Prefecture, are a traditional handicraft tool with a proud history of several hundred years. The technique is designated by Japan as an important intangible cultural asset.*

** *Suigetsu Toen: Yokkaichi-based Producer of Banko-yaki*

The Banko-yaki style of ceramic ware was first produced by Nunami Rozan in the mid-Edo Period. The name Banko-yaki comes from "banko fueki," meaning eternally unchanging, that he stamped on the back of his ceramic ware in the wish that it would be passed down over generations for eternity. Suigetsu Toen inherits Rozan's founding spirit and was certified as a "Mie brand" in 2013 in recognition of its advanced techniques including an original technique for decorating ceramic ware, aesthetic sense, and insistence on high quality brought to the production of ceramic ware, as well as on-going activities to make widely known the traditional techniques inherited from the past. Suigetsu Toen engages in a wide range of activities that include presentation of ceramic ware to the Imperial Household and to the Ise Grand Shrine when it is rebuilt every 20 years and frequent solo exhibitions throughout Japan. Suigetsu Toen has a proud history of numerous awards received at ceramic ware exhibitions.

Ise stencils, a delicate traditional art with a modern aura

The spirit of Mie Prefecture is alive in the elements of "The Katagami" concept room.

Banko-yaki ware is perfect for presenting beautiful arrangements of Mie Prefecture's many culinary delights.

Here is found hospitality that discreetly conveys the abundance and depth of the culture of Mie Prefecture.

Kiyomi Chikusa

Writer and resident of Mie Prefecture

Kiyomi Chikusa

Writer born in Mie Prefecture. After serving as chief editor of Mie Prefecture's magazine Ise Shima, she began working independently as a writer. For eight years, Chikusa has written the serial article "Ise, Eternal Sacred Ground" for the magazine Gekkan Hitotoki (Monthly "Moments"). She has covered the 61st and 62nd ceremonial re-buildings of Ise Grand Shrine and serves as moderator at the public relations headquarters for the 62nd rebuilding of the shrine in charge of Internet transmission of images of the Sengyo Ritual to transfer the symbol of the divine spirit from the old building to the new building. Chikusa delivers lectures and writes articles on Ise Grand Shrine. She is the author of several books including Ise Jingu, Sacred Ground of Goddesses (Shogakukan Shinsho and a selection of the School Library Association).

Kiyomi Chikusa is the advisor for Shiojitei's new program for experiencing the culture of Mie Prefecture that was begun in March 2016.

<Profile of Toba Hotel International Co., Ltd.>

Location: 1-23-1 Toba, Toba City, Mie Prefecture

Established: October 10, 2001

General Manager: Noriyuki Amano

Guest rooms: 126

Official Web site: <http://www.tobahotel.co.jp>

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