

Kimono Tour October 2026

Textile Encounters

Day 2 & 3

Kogin Sashiko One of Japan's three major sashiko styles, Kogin Sashiko is known for its geometric patterns, stitched by counting the odd-numbered vertical threads. It developed in the Tsugaru region as a way to reinforce clothing, and is now admired as a refined textile art.



Day 3: Tsugaru Indigo Dyeing In Hirosaki, once home to over 100 dye workshops in the 17th century, indigo dyeing flourished alongside sericulture and weaving. The deep indigo-dyed hemp fabrics became the canvas for kogin embroidery, creating a beautiful blend of two local traditions.



Day 4: Akita Hachijo A traditional silk textile with over 230 years of history. It features plaid or striped patterns in three base colors: brown dyed from beach rose roots, yellow and



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reddish tones from wild plants, and black. The rich colors and delicate texture appeal to textile connoisseurs.



Day 6: Apple Dyeing In Masuda, a town surrounded by apple orchards, textiles are naturally dyed using the boiled leaves and branches of local apple trees. The resulting soft, gentle tones reflect the essence of the apple region.



Day 8: Shina Weaving An ancient craft using fibers from trees such as Japanese



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linden and large-leaved lime. Designated a Traditional Craft of Japan in 2005, it takes about a year from harvesting the bark to weaving. The result is a durable, water-resistant cloth with a rustic beauty.



Day 9: Safflower Dyeing Safflower dyeing from Yamagata is one of Japan's rarest and most luxurious dyeing traditions. Despite harvesting the flowers carefully by hand, less than 1% of the pigment extracted is red. This makes it highly prized, creating vibrant reds used in elite textiles.



Day 10: Yonezawa Weaving A general term for fine silk fabrics produced in Yonezawa, Yamagata. Known for its soft texture and the use of natural plant dyes like safflower, it



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includes techniques like “chijimi” (crêpe weaving). The region is Japan’s northernmost textile hub and home to a new generation of weavers.



Textile Instructors

Dr. Sheila Cliffe (Kimono)

Originally from the UK, Dr. Cliffe has lived in Japan since 1985. She is a former university professor with a Ph.D. in kimono studies, and shares her knowledge around the world through writing, talks, and exhibitions.



Ms. Yoko Sato (Kogin Sashiko)



Director of the Yoko Sato Kogin Embroidery Museum, Ms. Yoko Sato is one of Japan's leading experts in kogin sashiko. Her museum is considered a sacred destination for kogin enthusiasts, offering a rare opportunity to experience the history and spirit of kogin embroidery firsthand.

Reiko Domon Master (Yuza Sashiko)

A leading figure in Yuza sashiko, the representative of the LLP Yuza Sashiko Guild has gained recognition both in Japan and internationally, with works selected for exhibitions and quilt shows in the U.S. and the U.K.

