



chapter 6

日本の歳時記

Annual Customs and Rituals



正月飾り

縁起が悪いとされる29日の「苦(9)飾り」、31日の「一夜飾り」は避けて、12月30日までに飾ります。年神様(その年の福をつかさどる神)の滞在する「松の内」の期間(1月1日～7日)飾っておき、飾りは7日に外します。

New Year's Decorations

New Year's decorations should be completed by December 30. Avoid decorating on the 29th because the number "9" is phonetically similar to the word "suffer" and is considered unlucky. The 31st should also be avoided as a one-day decoration is considered unlucky. Keep decorations in place during the period from January 1 to 7, which is when the *toshigami*, the year god, is said to visit homes, and remove them on the 7th.

年始まわり

親戚や仲人宅、とくにお世話になっている上司・恩師宅などに何うのが一般的。家族だけで祝う1日を避け、2日～7日までに。昼食時の11時30分～13時を避けた、10時～17時の間に出向きます。年の暮れのうちに先方の都合を聞いておきましょう。年始まわりは玄関先ですませるのが基本。引き止められても、失礼にならないように断ります。

Nenshi-mawari

(First Visit to Relatives and Authority Figures)

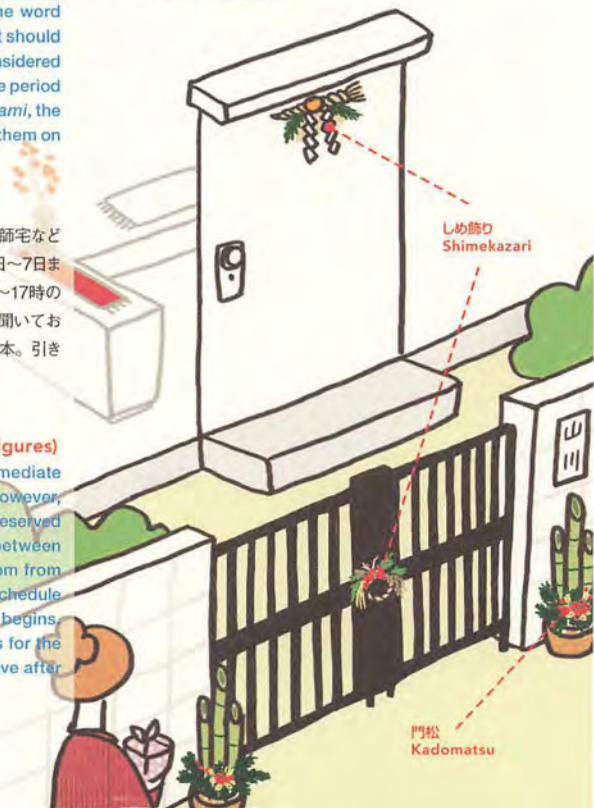
It is common to pay a visit to relatives or immediate superiors during the New Year holidays. However, avoid visiting on January 1, because the day is reserved for family celebrations. The ideal time is between 10:00 am to 11:30 am and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm from the 2nd to 7th day of the New Year. Ask their schedule in advance, preferably before the new year begins. The aim of the visit is to extend your wishes for the New Year. Do not stay long and, ideally, leave after exchanging greetings at the entrance.

日本人にとっての正月

正月は、日本人にとって最も大切な行事のひとつで、もともとは、その年の豊穡を司る年神様をお迎えし祝う行事です。正月はまた、1年のはじまりの月であることから、気持ちを新たにし、その年の目標を掲げる月でもあり(会社や学校では、4月が新スタートの月になります)、故郷をはなれた人が帰郷し、家族と睦まじくする時期でもあります。多くの子どもたちにとっては、「お年玉」をもらえる嬉しいイベントと考えられています。

Shōgatsu (The New Year)

The New Year is one of the most important annual festivals in Japan. It was originally a celebration to welcome the *toshigami* (the year god) and to show appreciation for the year's harvest. People make a fresh start and set new goals for the new year. (The school year, however, starts in April.) Schools and businesses close for about a week; families and relatives travel far and wide in order to spend some quiet time together. As for children, it's the delightful holiday on which they receive *otoshidama*, the New Year's monetary gift.



しめ飾り
Shimekazari

門松
Kadomatsu



床の間飾り

鏡もちと、屠蘇器、生花の3点を置き、かけ軸を飾ります。生花は、松のほか、千両や万両(商売繁盛)、南天(難を転ずる)などの赤い実が用いられます。

Tokonoma kazari (Decoration of Japanese Alcove)

The alcove, where *toshigami* (year god) settles, is decorated with *kagami-mochi* (round rice cakes), *toso-ki* (a set of New Year's special sake cups), *ikebana* (fresh flowers) and *kakejiku* (hanging scroll). In addition to pine, which represents good fortune, red berries like Chloranthaceae and Myrsinaceae are used in *ikebana* because they symbolize prosperous business. Berberidaceae, which are associated with avoiding bad luck, are also used.

お節料理

本来は年神様へのお供え料理。その一部を家族一同で分け合って食べ、新年を祝ったのがはじまり。数の子(子孫繁栄)、栗金団(金団=財宝を表す)、ごぼう(長く根を張って生きる)など、それぞれの食材に縁起や願いが込められています。

Osechi-ryōri (Special Dishes for New Year's)

Traditionally, *Osechi-ryōri* were offerings made to the year god. It is packed in a three-tier lacquer box and eaten on the first three days of the New Year. Although there are some regional differences, the basic components and ingredients are the same. They are all auspicious and represent prosperity, fertility, good health and good fortune. Examples include *kazunoko* (herring roe) for prosperity, *kuri kinton* (mashed sweet potatoes with chestnut) for wealth, and *gobō* (burdock) for long life.

門松

正月に年神様が訪れ、一年の幸福を宿す所とされています。外から見て左に雄松(葉が硬いもの)、右に雌松(葉が柔らかく枝が多いもの)と、左右一対で飾ります。

Kadomatsu (Decorative Pine Branches)

A set of *Kadomatsu* is placed at the front door of many households and businesses, for it is believed this is where the year god stays during the New Year season and thus is where good luck can be received. *Kadomatsu* is decorated as a pair, with the male *kadomatsu*, which consists of hard leaves, on the right, and the female *kadomatsu*, which consists of soft leaves, on the left.

しめ飾り(しめ縄)

正月のしめ縄は一年の不浄を祓い清める目的があります。玄関のほか、台所(火の神の入り口)、蛇口やトイレ(水の神の入り口)、商売道具・車などいろいろなところで使用され、神聖な場所を意味します。

Shimekazari (Sacred Shinto Rope)

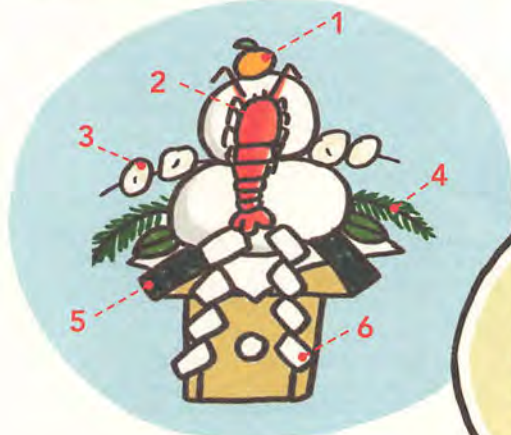
Shimekazari is a twisted straw rope with good luck charms like fern leaves and bitter oranges attached to it. It is hung to indicate sacred places and serves to purify evil spirits. In addition to the entrance, it may be placed in various places including the kitchen, bathroom, work place and inside or on cars.

鏡もち

年神様へお供えしたもちを食べると、新しい生命力が授けられると言われられています。

Kagami-mochi (Round Mirror-shaped Rice Cakes)

Kagami-mochi is a set of two round mirror-shaped rice cakes, one large and the other small, stacked on a stand, with a daidai (bitter orange) on top. They are displayed in the alcove as offerings to the toshigami (year god). Tradition says that people will have a happy and healthy year by eating them on January 11.



おみくじ Omikuji

引いた後のおみくじを、境内の木の枝などに結ぶ習慣は、神様との「縁を結ぶ」といわれるところから。Omikuji are written oracles sold at shrines and temples. The oracles are written on long strips of paper, and are usually tied to a branch of a tree after being read.



1. 橙が代々栄えるように **Daidai (Bitter Orange)**
Besides meaning "bitter orange," daidai also means "generation after generation." It is displayed for its auspicious name, and is not eaten.
2. 伊勢海老: 腰が曲がるほど長生きできるように **Ise-ebi (Japanese Lobster)**
Ise-ebi symbolizes a wish to live until one's back becomes bent like a lobster's.
3. 干し柿: 柿は「嘉来」と書いて「喜びが来る」とする **Hoshi-gaki (Dried Persimmons)**
Phonetically, hoshi-gaki could also be interpreted as meaning "joy is coming."
4. ゆずり葉: 子孫繁栄 **Yuzuri-ha (Daphniphyllum)**
Yuzuri-ha symbolizes a wish to be blessed with children.
5. 昆布: よろこぶに由来 **Kombu (Seaweed)**
Kombu is phonetically similar to the word "yorokobu," which means to rejoice.
6. 裏白: 長命を願う **Urajiro (White Underside)**
Urajiro symbolizes a wish for a long life.

マメ知識

鏡もちはいつ食べるの?

1月11日に、鏡もちをかなづちなどで叩き「鏡開き」をして、今年1年の一家円満を願いながら、神様に供えた鏡もちをお下がりとして頂きます。

Kagami-biraki (Opening of Kagami-mochi)
Kagami-biraki is the event on which kagami-mochi, which was displayed in the alcove as offerings, is eaten to wish for the family's peace. Kagami-mochi is broken into small pieces with a hammer and cooked in soup and eaten on January 11.

初詣

一般的に大晦日の除夜の鐘が鳴り終わってから、7日までに参詣することを言います。前年のお守りや破魔矢はお焚き上げ(供養の意味で燃やす)をしてもらったり、おみくじをひいて新年の心構えを占ったりもします。

Hatsumōde (The First Shrine or Temple Visit of the New Year)

Hatsumōde is the first visit paid in the new year to a shrine or temple to make wishes for the new year. Hatsumōde usually refers to visits taking place in the first week (no later than the 7th). Visitors buy a new lucky charm and return the old one to be burnt.

破魔矢
Hama-ya

●参拝の仕方 Rituals When Visiting a Shrine or a Temple



Visiting a Shrine

1. Bow once as you pass under the *torii* gate.
2. Using the dipper, wash your hands and rinse your mouth to purify yourself before worshipping. When using the dipper, pour some water into your hand first, and rinse your mouth with the water in your hand.
3. Drop a small offering (*osaisen*) in the offering box, and ring the bell. Before praying, bow twice, clap your hands twice and put your hands together. Bow again before leaving.



Visiting a Temple

1. Wave the incense over your head to ward off evil spirits.
2. Give a small offering in the offering box and bow once. Put your hands together and pray. Bow again before leaving. Do not clap your hands at a temple.



絵馬

神社や寺院に祈願するときや、祈願した願いが叶ってそのお礼をするときに奉納する、絵が描かれた木の板。馬などの絵が描かれていて、余白や裏面に祈願の内容や自分の名前などを書いて、境内の絵馬掛けに奉納します。

Ema

Ema are small wooden plaques on which people write their wishes or expressions of gratitude for wishes that were fulfilled. Many *ema* have pictures of horses on one side; supplicants write their wishes on the other side along with their names. *Ema* are dedicated to a particular shrine or temple, and are left hanging there within the precincts.

2月 (如月)

February (Kisaragi)

草木の芽が張り出す月(草木張り月)。
暦の上ではもう春。

February is spring in the lunar calendar.

節分(2月3日頃)

暦の上で春の始まりとされる“立春(2月4日頃)”の前日。豆まきなどをするこゝで、季節の変わり目に起こりがちな災害や病気などの邪気を追い払い、無病息災を願います。

Setsubun (Around February 3)

Setsubun is the day before the start of spring according to the lunar calendar. Rituals are held on this day to drive away evil spirits that could bring disasters and illness and to wish for good health.



Toshi-otoko

Toshi-otoko are referred to males born in the corresponding animal year of the Chinese zodiac.

鬼は外!

豆まき

「鬼は外」と唱えながら玄関から外へ、次に「福は内」と唱えながら家の中に向けて豆をまきます。まき終わったら、福が出ていかないよう窓を閉め、「1年間、健康(まめ)でいられるように」と、年の数(または年の数+1)だけ豆を食べます。

Mame-maki (Bean Scattering)

Mame-maki is the setsubun ritual that is generally performed by the “toshi-otoko” or the head of the household. First, he stands at the front door and throws roasted soybeans outside, chanting “Oni wa soto!” (“Devils out!”) Then, he proceeds to throw beans into the room, chanting “Fuku wa uchi!” (“Luck in!”) After the bean throwing is finished, the windows are closed so the luck won’t escape. Finally, everyone in the family eats the same number of beans as their age (though some regions add one more). The sound of mame (beans) symbolizes good health.

節分の豆には炒った大豆(「福豆」)を使います。福豆は、日中は升に入れ、神棚に供えます。

Roasted soybeans called *fukumame* are used for the mame-maki. Fukumame are placed in a wooden box called *masu* and offered to the household altar during the day.

