

A magazine about Shimane Prefecture, Japan

The Shimanean

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A Way to Enjoy Matsue

Wear a kimono and take a stroll

Japanese Beauty, Breadth of Mind

-The Charm of Japanese Clothing-

The Tea Culture of Matsue

Kimono and Sweets:

Experiencing Matsue's Traditional Tastes

The Round Dango are Art

松江の楽しみ方
～着物を着て歩く～

和の美心のゆとり ～私が見た和服の魅力～

松江の茶文化

着物と和菓子作り・松江での体験

丸い団子は芸術品

Japanese Beauty, Breadth of Mind - The Charm of Japanese Clothing -

Du Chunhong

When I think of Japan, Mt. Fuji, cherry blossoms, Japanese clothes, kabuki and anime are usually the images that pop into my head. Japanese clothing exists as a distinctive and characteristic symbol that can represent Japanese culture. As a result, it is not just Japanese people, but also people from other countries who like Japan that are drawn to and continue to admire it. I am one of those fans.

It was the first time I wore Japanese clothing. One of the professionals working there recommended a purple kimono, and when I wore it I was surprised by how beautiful it was. It was a beauty that would be recognized even outside Japan, a masterpiece. As soon as I put on the kimono we went outside to walk around. I could feel the old history in the way the area was constructed. The calm atmosphere, the fantastic designs, and colors combined to make a pretty scene and I was moved by it. We experienced a Japanese tea ceremony, and even though I am not Japanese, I felt that the four most important elements of the Japanese tea ceremony (harmony, respect, purity and tranquility), and wabi, a quiet refinement, resonated perfectly with me.

When women walk while wearing Japanese clothing, the way they walk naturally becomes more ladylike, allowing them to walk in a supple and beautiful manner. Furthermore, it makes their movements and behavior more elegant. What was even more mysterious was that the feeling of wearing a kimono was different compared to wearing regular western clothes to the point that it reached deep into my mind. All of a sudden I was able to feel as if I was transformed into the main character in an ancient Japanese drama, and I was able to feel a woman's happiness,

delicateness, and even joy. By wearing kimono, I believe that woman can feel confident in their beauty and intellect.

Before the Tokugawa Shogunate, wafuku (Japanese clothing), was called gofuku. Japan was influenced by a place called Gokoku that existed during China's three kingdoms period. As a result, the clothing style took hold, continued for generation after generation while characteristic components were incorporated. Different tastes



● Japanese

和の美 心のゆとり ～私が見た和服の魅力～

日本と言えば、富士山、桜、和服、歌舞伎、アニメというようなイメージがすぐ頭に浮かびます。和服は日本の文化を代表できるシンボルのような、独特で特別な存在だから、日本人だけではなくて、日本が好きな外国人までも心を引かれ、愛されつつあります。私もそのファンの一人になります。

初めての和服を着たのはつい最近でした。プロの方から紫の色を勧められ、

杜 春紅

試着したら、びっくりするほどその美しさを実感しました。日本の外でも認知度が高い、芸術の傑作です。早速、和服姿で、松江の町を歩いてみました。その町づくりに古い歴史が感じられます。落ち着いた雰囲気、色とデザインも素敵で、きれいで、感動しました。外国人である私でも、茶道の「和敬清寂」、「わび」という言葉がその気持ちにぴったりだと思いました。

女性は和服を着ると、自然に歩き方が淑女になり、しなやかで美しく歩くことができます。それに合わせて、立ち居振る舞いを優雅にします。非常に不思議なことは、心までも普段洋服を着る時と違って、いつの間にか、自分がまるで古代のドラマの主人公に変身したかのように見え、女性としての喜び、繊細さ、幸せもいっぱい味わうことができました。和服のおかげで、女性はもっときれいに、知的に、自信を持つことができると信じています。

和服は徳川幕府時代以前には、呉服と呼ばれていました。中国の三国時代の「呉国」の服装から影響を受け、日本に伝来しました。その後、定着し、代々に受け継がれ、さらに独特の要素を入れ、四季折々の趣に映し出される情景を装いに用いる「和服のモチーフ」で、現在まで発展してきました。それらを生活に反映



that varied from season to season would become a motif for the clothes themselves and develop into what they are today. As the clothing was applied to the everyday lives, of the people back then, it allowed for the creation of a proud world of Japanese culture with a rich spirit; borne through many years and continues to be inherited and developed even now. The Chinese character, Wa (和) has many meanings such as calm, quiet, non-opposing, harmony, and getting along. Japanese culture or Wa no bunka values the pursuit of harmony with nature, a balanced human society, and breadth of mind.

Japanese people continue to love and take pride in their traditional culture, passing it down through generations. I really admire their efforts in developing it further and doing their utmost in conveying its appeal to the world. Thinking about that suddenly reminded me of the preservation and passing down of China's traditional culture. China has

Shimane



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five thousand years of history, and within that history lies a countless number of wonderful cultures that were created and spread throughout the world, especially Asia. However, as a result of wars and other causes, a majority of China's cultures were destroyed, unpreserved, and have become lost.

After learning the old traditions and customs of Japan that have been conveyed up until now, I think that it is truly important to remember the preciousness of those traditions and to make use of them. From my experiences as a coordinator for international relations, I believe many Chinese people will be able to feel the richness of the spirit of Japanese culture. At the same time, I believe that when the time arrives that Chinese people are able to think about the importance of culture in their lives and develop a breadth of mind, surely the day that China can rethink and rebuild its culture will follow.



和の美心のゆとり

Japanese

させながら、豊かな心で築き上げた世界に誇る「和の文化」は、長い年月の中で育まれ、今なお、受け継がれ続けています。「和」という漢字には、「なごむ、おだやか、争わない、あわせる、仲良く助けあう」などの意味があり、「和の文化」は自然と調和する、人間社会のバランス、心のゆと리를求める価値観です。

日本人がこのような伝統文化を愛しつつ、誇りを持って、文化の伝承、発展に力を入れ、世界に向けて一生懸命にアピールする姿に何度も強く感心させられました。それに対して、中国の伝統文化の保存と伝承についても、つい考えるようになりました。中国には五千年の歴史があり、その中で、数えきれないほど素晴らしい文化が創出され、世界各国、特にアジアに普及されました。でも、戦争やさまざまな原因で、大部分は保存できずに、滅ぼされたことになった状態です。今現在に残った古い文化を日本のやり方、ノウハウを学び、日本のように大切にしながら、生かしていくことは重要な課題ではないかと思います。一方、国際交流員になることをきっかけに、心の豊かさを感じる中国人も少なくないです。人々にいつか心にゆとりができる時こそ、きっと中国文化をあらためて考える、立て直す日が訪れるでしょう。





The Tea Culture of Matsue

Park Hye-Jung

Wearing Japanese traditional clothing called kimono, we experienced a day of traditional Japanese culture in Matsue. This was the second time I wore a kimono. The first time that I wore a kimono, I was living in Japan with a host family and had the opportunity to try on the kimono of an aristocrat that was on display at a kimono museum. Wearing a regular kimono this time was a first for me. If the hanbok, a Korean traditional dress, expresses beauty through the combination of its curved and straight lines, I think you could also say the kimono's straight lines express a different kind of beauty.

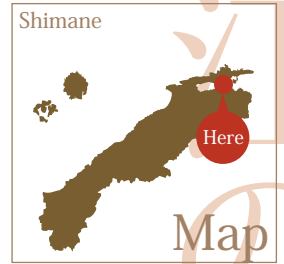
During my experience of wearing kimono for a second time, the most difficult part was when we had to sit seiza-style while experiencing the Japanese tea ceremony. This is because in Korea sitting in that style was a form of being scolded.

Other than that, one does not experience it often, thus not providing an opportunity to get used to it. This time I would like to share my personal experience of Matsue's tea culture through the Japanese Tea ceremony, also known as sado.

I was able to experience the Japanese tea ceremony at a store called Senchasou, a shop with a long standing and history within Matsue. In sado, there is maccha tea and sencha tea, but generally maccha is the representative tea. We were taught the etiquette of sado such as the steps to make maccha, the proper way to drink tea, and manners for hospitality. Japan's three biggest schools of sado are the Hyo-Senke, Ura-Senke, and the Mushakoji-Senke. We learned the Ura-Senke school of sado etiquette.

First, we ate Japanese confectionaries while warming the tea bowl with hot water. Maccha has a bit of a bitter taste, so you are supposed to eat the Japanese confectionaries beforehand to balance the bitterness, but I think the tastes combine well. I made the tea to the best of my ability and gave it to my customer. I felt that the practice of having the recipient express their gratitude and respect to the Temae (person who made the tea) made it quite apparent how Japanese culture places great importance on ceremony and courtesy.

Historically, only people of a high social status were able to enjoy maccha, and it is said that the time common people also became able to enjoy it was not too long ago. In current times there are not many chances to come in contact with maccha in other regions, but in Matsue,



● Japanese

松江の茶文化

日本の伝統衣装である着物を着て、松江で一日中日本の伝統文化を体験しました。

着物を着てみたのは今回で二回目です。初めての体験は、以前ホームステイで日本に来た時、着物博物館に行って、展示されている貴族の着物を着てみたことでした。だから、普段着を着るのは今回が初めてでした。韓国の伝統衣装である韓服(ハンbok)が曲線と直線の美を表しているとしたら、着物は直線の美を表していることが違うところだと言えます。

着物を着て体験したことの中で、一番大変だったのは、正座をしてお茶を点てる茶道の体験でした。正座というのは韓国では叱られる時以外はなかなか経験しないことなので、慣れないことだからです。今回、個人的に体験した茶道を基にして、松江の茶文化について情報を共有したいと思います。

茶道の体験は松江の有名な老舗である千茶荘というお店で行われました。日本の茶道でお茶というと、抹茶と煎茶がありますが、一般的に抹茶が代表的で、抹茶を点てる礼法、飲む礼法、もてなしの礼法などを教わりました。日本の3大流派は表千家・裏千家・武者小路千家ですが、今回は裏千家の作法を簡単に教え

朴慧貞

ていただきました。

まず、お湯で茶碗を温める間に、和菓子をいただきます。抹茶は少し苦い味があるので、お茶を飲む前に甘い味の和菓子を食べておくのですが、良い組み合わせだと思います。

最善を尽くしてお茶を点て、お客さんに出し、お茶を出してもらったお客さんは点前(てまえ)の人に敬意を表す茶道の礼法は、儀式や儀礼を大事にする日本の文化がよく表れていると感じました。

抹茶は昔、身分の高い人だけ楽しむお茶であって、庶民まで楽しむことになった期間はあまり長くないそうです。現在も抹茶といえば、他の地域では接する機会の少ないお茶ですが、松江では抹茶は一般の人たちにも広く楽しまれているそうです。このように松江の茶文化が広がった背景は出雲松江藩7代藩主である松平治郷(まつだいらはるさと)の存在があるといっても過言ではありません。不昧公(ふまいこう)とも呼ばれた松平治郷は普段から抹茶を楽しんでいて、後に、不昧流という流派と形式にこだわらない独自の茶道を築きました。現在も不昧公が使っていた茶室の明々庵(めいめいあん)が松江城の近くに残っています。

This is the tea culture that started from the Fumai-school up until now, spanning about 200 years of history. If you decide to visit Matsue, I believe you'll find that sado is not that difficult, and that you can enjoy a relaxing experience.



It seems that everyone throughout the city enjoys drinking it. It would not be an exaggeration to say that Harusato Matsudaira, the 7th of generations of feudal lords of the Izumo-Matsue domain, existed within this period of time with the spread of Matsue's tea culture. Also known as Fumaiko, Harusato Matsudaira regularly enjoyed maccha, and would later create his own school of sado called the Fumai-school. The teahouse called Meimei-an, which is located near Matsue castle, was used by Fumaiko and continues to use the Fumai style.

Matsue, the city where the Fumai-school of Japanese tea ceremony was born, holds an annual event called the "Matsue Castle Grand Tea Ceremony." It is one of Japan's 3 Grand Tea Ceremonies along with Kyoto's "Nijou Castle Citizens' Grand Tea Ceremony" and Kanazawa's "Kenrokuen Grand Tea Ceremony," and this a large cultural event is held in autumn. Last year, the event was held on October 4th and 5th and I bought the ticket for the event, hoping to experience the various schools' styles of tea ceremony. However I went without checking what time the event would end, limiting the stalls I could visit to two.

When I went inside one of Matsue's supermarkets, I was surprised at the size of the Tea section. A variety of teas and even tea tools for sado were displayed for sale. Even though in other regions you would find these kinds of things like tea whisks only in specialized tea stores or department stores, the fact that you could easily buy one at a supermarket in Matsue makes it easy to understand just how deep rooted the tea culture is in Matsue.



Japanese

不昧流という茶道の流派まで生まれた松江では年に一度「松江城大茶会」が開かれます。これは京都の「二条城市民大茶会」と金沢の「兼六園大茶会」に並ぶ日本3大茶会の一つで、秋に行われる松江の大きな文化行事です。去年は10月4日、5日に行われたのですが、私は終わる時間をチェックせずに行ったせいで、買っておいたチケットをたった二か所の茶会に参加することにしか使えませんでした。

また松江のスーパーマーケットに行ってみると、お茶のコーナーの広さに驚きます。

様々な種類のお茶や茶道に使う道具まで陳列されています。他の地域ではお茶の専門店やデパートなどでしか買えない茶筌を松江ではスーパーマーケットで気軽に購入できることから、茶文化が松江にどれだけ深く根付いているのかが分かります。

このように、不昧流から始まって、今日まで約200年の歴史を持っている松江の茶文化。松江にいらちゃったら、茶道がそんなに難しくなく、身近で気軽に楽しめる体験になると思います。



Kimono and Sweets: Experiencing Matsue's Traditional Tastes

Sonday Olaseun

I had never worn a kimono before, but on a cold January morning, I was able to put one on for the first time. I went to Keiyama-go-fuku, located in Matsue city's Kyomise Shopping District with 4 of my fellow coordinators for international relations to experience traditional Japanese culture while wearing traditional Japanese clothing.

It was during this time that I was able to experience one of the things Matsue is known for: the craft of making Wagashi.

The first thing me and my colleagues did was head to Keiyama-go-fuku to put on our kimono. The main part of the kimono felt like a sort of bathrobe. The obi, or belt of the kimono was wrapped tightly around my hips, and I could feel it straightening my back. The outermost layer is a light jacket type of clothing called the haori (羽織). Instead of buttons, it is held in place by a thick, functional yet decorative rope which is simply called a himo. At first, I was a bit embarrassed to walk outside because even though you would see the occasional Japanese person wearing a kimono, these days it is way more common to see people wearing western clothes. However, I soon got used to having it on. The multiple layers of the kimono helped keep my upper body warm, though my legs and feet which were in old-style

straw sandals, were vulnerable to the cold. Though my feet were cold, walking around the shopping district with the kimono was a valuable experience, as the feeling of wearing a kimono was a different kind of formal than even the suits that I was used to wearing. I felt that I walked with my back straight and a strong posture, with the space between the layers and the sleeves accentuating my presence.

One of the events we were to participate in was a workshop for making wagashi, a traditional Japanese confectionary that is closely associated with the Japanese tea ceremony as it is usually served with tea. Wagashi usually take the shape of things found in nature such as flowers, small animals, or even scenes found in nature. The most common ingredients for making wagashi are azuki beans (kindey beans) and sugar. The beans are mashed into a paste and sweetened with sugar. The consistency of the paste and how much of the original shape of the beans remain determines the name and type of the bean paste. White beans called tebo beans are also used because of the ability to dye the color of the bean paste. Dying the color allows the creation to look more like the objects they are modeled after.

I was thrilled to learn that Matsue is known for its wagashi and tea culture



Japanese

着物と和菓子作り：松江での体験

着物を着たことがありませんでしたが、一月のある寒い朝に初めて経験できました。国際交流員の同僚と一緒に五人で着物を着たまま、日本の松江の伝統文化を体験しに松江の京店商店街を歩きました。これがきっかけで、松江の、よく知られている和菓子作りを体験出来ました。

国際交流員たちは最初に着物を試着するために景山呉服店を訪問しました。初めてで何だかバスローブを着ているような気持ちもありました。腰は帯できちんと結ばれ、一番上に着る羽織は軽ジャケットみたいな感じでした。羽織はボタンではなく、太くてスタイリッシュなひもで結び付けます。ほとんどの日本人は洋服を着て生活しますので、最初は外で着物を着たままで歩くのが恥ずかしかったのですが、すぐに慣れてきました。着物を重ねて着る上半身は暖かかったのですが、草履をはいた足が寒さにあらわにされてしまいました。それでもいつも通りに来た洋服のスーツではない日本式のフォーマルな服を着たという実感がわいて、寒くても京店商店街を歩くのは貴重な経験でした。着物を着るだけで背筋がピンとし、姿勢をもっと強く、正しくなり、重ね着のボリュームで僕の存在が際立った感じがしました。

オラシュン・ソンデ

松江は茶道と和菓子の文化で有名です。町歩きだけでもいくつかのお茶や和菓子の店が目に入ると思います。松江を代表する和菓子の一つは松平不昧(1751年～1818年)の大好きな「若草」です。別の和菓子と違って一年中に味わえる和菓子です。鮮やかな緑色の和菓子は甘くて柔らかいです。見ると確かに若い草に見えると思います。日本の伝統的なお菓子で、僕たちはその伝統を体験することになりました。和菓子は季節によってデザインが変わりますので、和菓子作りの教室で何を作るのか楽しみでした。茶道を体験し、昼食後にカラコロ工房に向かい、3階まで移動しました。カラコロ工房では和菓子作りのほか、ステンドグラス、メタルバンド、勾玉も教室で作れます！

青戸邦男さん(あおと・くにお)という元気で面白いおじいさんが教室を担当しました。50年も情熱を持ち続ける職人として和菓子を作っています。和菓子作りの伝統を守るために人生をさげています。青戸さんは子供の頃、お菓子が大好きだったので職人として和菓子を作りたいと思ったと語りました。一年間で約4000人に和菓子作りを教えています。和菓子は冷蔵庫に入れるとあまり長持ちしないですが、冷凍庫に入れると一年くらい保存できます。青戸さんの冷凍庫は

The Shimanean



and I would have the opportunity to make wagashi of my own. Walking around Matsue, I had encountered many shops that offered wagashi. The wagashi that are presented in stores and offered along with tea change according with the season. Wagashi based on a flower that blooms in the spring will, naturally, become available in the spring. However, one of the wagashi that can be enjoyed all year around is the wakakusa, the most representative wagashi of Matsue. Wakakusa means young or fresh grass, which would explain its vibrant light-green color and grainy appearance. It was one of the favorites of Lord Matsudaira Fumai (1751-1818), a famous historical figure in Matsue and a member of the ruling clan of Matsue. It was one of the Lord Fumai's favorite wagashi. The recipe had been lost but it was recovered in the Meiji era (1868-1912).

After experiencing the Japanese tea ceremony and having lunch, we headed to the nearby Karakoro Art Studio, a large 3 floored building full of shops, café's and rooms where workshops are held. Outside of creating wagashi, the Karakoro Art Studio has many workshops for making different things such as stained glass, fitting metal accessories (for couples), and even ancient Japanese jewelry called magatama.

The wagashi workshop was led by a quirky old man named Mr. Kunio Aoto, a wagashi craftsman whose passion for sweets led to making wagashi for 50 years. He has dedicated his life to upholding the traditions of making wagashi. "I started making wagashi because I enjoyed eating candy as a child. So, I decided to make candy as a craftsman." In one year, Mr. Aoto has taught about 4000 participants in his workshop. His favorite wagashi is wakakusa, but he also enjoys the wagashi that change according to the season. He happily showed me the wagashi that was stored in a small freezer. It was almost completely filled, each molded and shaped into various flowers and plants. When I asked him if it was still possible to eat them, he excitedly took one out the freezer and proceeded to bang it onto a nearby counter. He explained that since it was frozen it would have to be defrosted, but you could eat it.

In the workshop washed our hands, and took our seats at the tables.



Wagashi is traditionally made by hand. No machines are used in the process, and this is another method of preserving the traditions of making wagashi. There are multiple tools used in making wagashi. There is a pencil like tool, a grater called a toushi, a pair of chop sticks, and a handkerchief. Making wagashi reminded me of when I was a child because molding and rolling the bean paste between my hands is similar to playing with play dough. The difference is that at the end you can actually eat it!

Each participant had a set of tools, two prepared azuki bean clumps and an already made wagashi called wakakusa. We were to make 2 wagashi based on the bud of a peony and daffodils. Traditionally, wagashi are made to look like objects of nature. I tried my best to mimic the actions of Mr. Aoto, but as would be expected, I made multiple mistakes. It looks simple, but using your hands to make wagashi requires a mastery of subtle movements and applying pressure to give it shape. Additionally, the sleeves of my kimono kept getting in the way. I asked Mr. Aoto about how many years it takes to master making wagashi. He said, "when making wagashi you don't say it takes 3 or 5 years to master it. Rather than the number of years you do it, effort is what is important."

In the end I was able to mold the play dough-like bean paste into something that resembled the bud of a peony and a daffodil in the grass. Though I was not able to make the most beautiful of wagashi, I was still able to enjoy its signature sweet, but not too sweet taste. It is a rare opportunity to make wagashi, and to be able to do so in Matsue, the castle town known for wagashi and the tea ceremony, was an experience I will not soon forget.



Japanese

和菓子でいっぱいになっていました。その和菓子が何個あるのかまだ数えきれないうちに青戸さんは冷凍庫から和菓子を一箱出してテーブルでたいてみました。パンパンとどっかい音がして、びっくりしました。もちろん溶かしてから食べたほうがおいしいですね。

教室で手を洗い、和菓子を作る準備をしました。全てを手と簡単な道具で作ります。和菓子作りをして、子供のころのおもちゃであるプレイ・ドゥー (play dough) を思い出しました。手で和菓子の素材を握ってみると、プレイ・ドゥーの感覚と似ていますが、最終に和菓子の方は食べられます! 作る和菓子のデザインの一つは水仙でしたが、やっぱり僕は未経験者でうまく作れませんでした。花のような形にできましたが青砥さんの上手な握り方のきれいな水仙と違ってました。着物の袖が長く、腕を動かしたら袖もバタバタとして邪魔になりました。確かに普通の着物は和菓子作りにふさわしくないとしました。変な水仙和菓子になりましたが、自分なりの和菓子が作れたのではかと思いました。青戸さんはどのぐらいの年数作るかより努力し続けることの方が大切だとアドバイスをくれました。

きれいでなくても、プレイ・ドゥーのような小豆などの素材を使って、自然にある花のような形に仕上がって、おいしく食べられましたので大成功だと思いました。和菓子作りは自分にとって珍しく、それを茶道を和菓子で有名な松江で体験でき、忘れられない経験でした。



The Round Dango are Art

Borkhodoeva Natalia

One midwinter day, I was able to experience a deeper connection with Japanese culture in Matsue City, Shimane Prefecture. Together with four other colleagues from America, Korea, and China, we were able to experience part of Japanese culture by wearing lovely kimono at Keiyama-go-fuku. I have worn a kimono before, but wearing a kimono while doing things such as eating and walking around the area made it feel fresh and new. The way the women walk while wearing kimono can be described as walking from the knees downward; you must keep your legs together and inward, or it will be difficult to walk. Though I became tired from walking in a way I was not used to, I was able to wear a pretty kimono, and I believe I was also able to understand a bit more about how Japanese women of the past must have felt. It was a very valuable experience.

After putting on the kimono, we learned how to make and drink traditional maccha tea and then headed straight for a restaurant called Tsukigase. Tsukigase was established 20 years ago as a store selling dango, a treat that is one of the representative traditional confectionaries of Japan. The restaurant also offers Japanese ramen, so I ordered the Matsue Ago-dashi ramen (530 yen) along with dango. The ramen had a light taste.

Dango is made by adding and kneading both cold and hot water with flour made from pulled rice, and then steaming it to create mochi. The mochi is cut, rolled into small spheres, and 3 spheres are placed on a skewer.

Tsukigase has a restaurant on the first floor, and a dango workshop on the second floor. Sometimes you can hear sounds of the pounding of flour and rice polishing, so it is clear that the restaurant is producing very fresh dango. The quality of dango is decided by the quality of the rice it was made from. The delicious rice used by Tsukigase is grown in Shimane, specifically Nita rice which is grown in Okuizumo Town's Nita District. Rice from the Tohoku region also has very good quality, so the dango there is also said to be delicious. Places that have high quality rice have the ability to make high quality dango.

Also, a large variety is also important. Tsukigase already has 8 different staple dango varieties that they offer, and according to each respective



season, they add 2 or 3 more varieties of dango. The most popular dango are mitarashi dango (one of the staple dango), soy flour dango, and maccha (green tea) dango. During this winter season, you can taste the strawberry dango and the pink-colored hana-yori dango. Dango by itself is soft and does not have much taste, so the thick, sweet taste of azuki bean paste or sweet soy sauce goes well with it. I like to try different sweets that look different or have a different texture and taste compared to Russian confectionaries, so I would like to try many different kinds of dango. There is also sesame dango, brown rice dango, even dango with seaweed on top! I think it is amazing that Japanese people can take something as plain as mocha and give it an aesthetic beauty, essentially turning it into a work of art!

After enjoying eating delicious dango, we walked to the nearby Karakoro Workshop, made our own wagashi, and ended our day of cultural experience while wearing kimono.

● Japanese

丸い団子は芸術品

真冬のある日に、島根県の松江市で日本の文化によりよく触れる体験ができました。アメリカ、韓国、中国からの4人の同僚と一緒に景山呉服店で素敵な着物を着させていって日本の文化を体験しました。以前着物を着たことがありますが、一日中着物姿でご飯を食べたり、町を歩いたりしたことがなかったので新鮮な気持ちでした。着物を着た女性の可愛い歩き方と言えばヒザから下で歩いて、足は必ず揃って内向きにしないといけません。普段はしない歩き方で長い間歩いたので全身疲れましたが、綺麗で贅沢な着物を着れた上、昔の女性の気持ちが少しでもわかったと思いますので大変貴重な経験でした。

着物を着てから、抹茶のたて方、飲み方などを勉強して、さっそく20年前から団子屋さんの営業を始めた月ヶ瀬というお店で日本の菓子を代表する団子をごちそうになりました。その場で和風ラーメンも食べられますので、お昼ご飯に530円する松江あごだしラーメンも注文しました。あっさりした味で美味しかったです。

団子は米をひいて作った粉に水やお湯を加えてこねて、蒸してできた餅を小さく丸めた菓子であり、串に3-5個刺して出来上がりです。

月ヶ瀬の一階に売店とレストランがあって、二階にある団子を作る工場から

ボルホドーエワ・ナタリア

時々ドンドンと米搗きの音が聞こえてくるので、とても新鮮な団子がお店に出されています。お団子の美味しさの基準はまず米の質で決まります。月ヶ瀬の団子に使われているのは島根県で米が美味しいとされている奥出雲町の仁多米です。日本の東北地方でも米はとても良いので団子も美味しいそうです。米の美味しい土地で美味しい団子が作られるそうです。

また種類の豊かさも大切です。月ヶ瀬では定番のお団子が8種類もあって、季節ごとにさらに2,3種類増えます。もっとも人気のある団子は定番のみたらし、そしてきな粉、抹茶です。今の冬の季節には苺団子、ピンク色をした花より団子を味わえます。何も加えていない団子の食感はやわらかくてあまり味がしませんが、濃くて甘い味の小豆や砂糖醤油をつけて食べると良く合います。私はロシアのお菓子和違ふ見た目と食感とのある和菓子が大好きなのでたくさんの種類を食べてみたいと思います。ごま団子、玄米団子、のりものせられた団子もあり、審美家の日本人がただのもち団子も芸術品にできることは素晴らしいと思います。

美味しい団子を食べた後、歩いて近くのカラコロ工房に行き、自分の手で和菓子を作り、着物を着た文化体験の一日が終わりました。

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