

During and After the Meiji Period (1868-1912)

Development of Historical Kamakura into a Center of Culture

With the establishment of the Meiji government in 1868, Japan began very rapidly to absorb Western culture. Dr. von Bälz, who was invited from Germany to teach at the Tokyo Medical College, recommended Kamakura as an ideal place for sea bathing therapy, and thanks to the efforts of Sensai Nagayo, the director of the Medical Affairs Bureau at the time, Japan's first sanatorium, called Kaihinin, was established in 1887. In the same year, the Tokaido Line railway opened, followed by the Yokosuka Line in 1889. The improved accessibility of Kamakura gave rise to a rapid increase in the number of people moving to Kamakura to enjoy its history and its recreational opportunities. After the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake, which caused catastrophic damage to Tokyo, many cultural celebrities moved to Kamakura from Tokyo. They were later to be known as the Kamakura Writers. They contributed greatly to deepening the cultural life of the city. The farsightedness of Kamakura residents in protecting the culture and the natural environment of their city, spearheaded by the Oyatsu Movement, a grass-roots movement that started during the post-war boom years, is still alive and well and is one of the distinguishing features of the city.

1869

Kamakuragu Shrine

Kamakura Torchlight Noh Performance is a Fall Tradition.

Kamakuragu Shrine was established by Imperial Order of the Meiji Emperor. The enshrined deity is Prince Morinaga who died violently during the Nanbokucho Period (1336-1392). Every year since 1959 the Kamakura Torchlight Noh Performance has been staged on fall evenings in the shrine precinct. The torchlit performance is a seasonal tradition in Kamakura. Many writers have been inspired by the Noh performances, including Masaaki Tachihara, the author of *Fuyu no Katami ni* and *Kamakura Madam*. He wrote a novel titled *Takigi Noh* (Torchlit Noh).



Leading Noh performers, such as the head of the Konparu school, perform Noh and Kyogen during the festival.

Digging Deep into Kamakura

Kamakura Writers Contributed to the Revival of Culture through a Rental Bookstore and School.

Thanks to the opening of the Yokosuka Line railway in 1889, the ancient city of Kamakura became a popular resort visited by many of the literati. After the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake and throughout the Showa Period (1926-1989), some men of letters moved from Tokyo to Kamakura. They later came to be called the Kamakura Writers. More than 100 of them made important contributions to the development of literature, art and culture in Kamakura.

In 1945, during the last days of the war, writers such as Masao Kume, Yasunari Kawabata and Jun Takami donated their libraries to create the Kamakura Bunko, a rental bookstore aimed at relieving some of the privations of the war. The store was very popular with customers who dashed there in the intervals between air-raid sirens. When the war ended, the writers established a publishing company, also called Kamakura Bunko, and a school temporarily housed in Komyoji Temple. The school was called Kamakura Daigakko; later the name was changed to Kamakura Academia. The lecturers included writers and scholars. Although it only lasted four years, many young people studied at the school which aimed to cultivate students free of restrictions. During this desolate period in Japan, the Kamakura Writers created works using Kamakura as a motif and made Kamakura a city of literature. Their free and open spirit calls to mind the independence and pride of the *samurai* of ancient Kamakura. The spirit of the Kamakura Writers lives on in today's new generation of literati.



Signage written by writer Ton Satomi appears in front of the Kamakura Bunko store.

Property of the Kamakura Museum of Literature.



"Thriving Business at Kamakura Bunko Rental Bookstore," by comic artist Kon Shimizu, depicts the store atmosphere at the time.

Property of the Kamakura Museum of Literature.

1908

Hase Children's Hall (Former Moroto Residence)

Small Western-Style House
from the Meiji Period in a Residential Area

This building was first built as a villa for Namizo Fukushima, a stock broker. Later, the businessman Seiroku Moroto became the owner of the house, which was then acquired in 1980 by Kamakura City. Fine design can be found in both the interior and exterior of this attractive house, as for example in the beautiful Greek-style balcony. The building is not open to the public, but visitors can view the exterior.



The pillars of the front balcony, the entrance and the window and door frames are gorgeously decorated.

1916

Koga Residence

33

Palatial Mansion Home to Celebrities and Politicians

The Koga Residence, the Kamakura Museum of Literature and the Former Residence of Kachonomiya are the three most important western-style buildings in Kamakura.

It took approximately 15 years to build the Koga Residence which was used as a villa by Seiji Sho, managing director of the Mitsubishi Joint-Stock Company.

A disaster recovery conference was held here immediately after the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake. In 1937 the house was acquired by Sadachika Koga, head of Nippon Tochi-Tatemono Co., Ltd. Later, Osachi Hamaguchi and Fumimaro Konoe, both former Prime Ministers, used the house as a villa.

Currently the house functions as a restaurant.



The residence was designed by Kotaro Sakurai, the architect who designed the former Mitsubishi Bank head office building.

Digging Deep into Kamakura Sea Bathing Started at Japan's First Sanatorium

Dr. Erwin von Bälz, a German medical doctor, and Sensai Nagayo, director of the Medical Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of the Interior, considered Kamakura to be an ideal destination for summer and winter sojourns and for recreation. They were proponents of sea bathing for medical purposes.

The establishment of Japan's first sanatorium, named Kaihinin, in Yuigahama in 1887 made Kamakura into a popular seaside health spa. Patients at the sanatorium bathed in the sea at scheduled times.

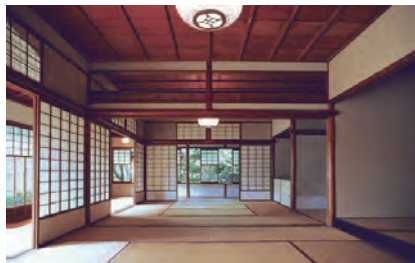
The Mitsuhashi Ryokan Inn in Hase ran an advertisement for sea bathing in the *Tokyo Yokoyama Mainichi Newspaper* in 1885, and in 1888 Kaihinin became the Kaihin Hotel for sea-bathers and overseas visitors. Sea bathing became a popular recreational activity in Japan. Kaihinin, just after it was transformed into the Kaihin Hotel.

1918

Shinreikyo Kamakura Renseijo Reigenkaku (Former Residence of Jotaro Yamamoto)

A Rare Surviving Example of a Villa Built Before the Great Kanto Earthquake

This structure was built as a villa for Jotaro Yamamoto, a businessman and politician who served as the president of the South Manchuria Railway. Using carefully selected materials from Kyoto and showcasing the mastery of Kyoto carpenters, it was built in an exceptional Kyoto sukiya tea house style, which embraces the aesthetic of refined simplicity. Located on a hill 40 meters above sea level, the garden offers a sweeping view of the Yuigahama beach. It is a valuable example of a villa built before the Great Kanto Earthquake and provides a glimpse into life at such villas. It was acquired by the Shinreikyo religious group in 1982 and named “Kamakura Renseijo Reigenkaku.”



A large reception hall built in the sukiya style using “Kyoma” (the Kyoto standard size for tatami mats). The main building and other structures were registered as Tangible Cultural Properties in 2016.

1926

Ishikawa Residence (Former Residence of Satomi Ton)

Writer Ton Satomi's Dream House

The writer Ton Satomi was involved in designing the house. The western-style building is built in the style of Frank Lloyd Wright, while the annex, which is connected to the western-style building by a covered corridor, is in the Japanese style with a thatched roof. The annex was used for tea ceremonies. The house changed hands several times after Satomi moved out in 1936, and at one point the house was owned by Mr. Ishikawa and is now owned by a private company.



The house has an impressive porch. The western-style and Japanese-style buildings make an attractive contrast.



Kaihinin, just after it was transformed into the Kaihin Hotel.

1927

Mikawayama Honten

Long-Established Liquor Store & Restaurant Maintains Pre-War Appearance

This liquor store was founded in 1900. The current building was built by the founder, Fukuzo Takeuchi, after the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake destroyed the original building. This stately building on Wakamiya Oji Avenue makes a statement. It is built in the traditional *dashigetatai* style in which the eaves at the front of building are greatly extended. Local sake and beer are sold in the store. A traditional storehouse at the back of the premises and a tramline for moving merchandise which is next to the store are still in regular use.



Stately building with intricately layered roofs and very long *sashikamoi* lintels.

Digging Deep into Kamakura

Ryunosuke Akutagawa Spent Unforgettable Days in Kamakura as a Youth

After graduating from Tokyo Imperial University, Ryunosuke Akutagawa (1892-1927) started teaching English at the Naval Engineering College in Yokosuka, dreaming of becoming a writer. From 1916 to 1917 he boarded in Yuigahama near the Kaihin Hotel. In 1918 he and his new wife rented a house near Motohachiman and lived there for about a year. His time in Kamakura was fulfilling. He cultivated deep friendships with literati living in Kamakura such as the haiku poet Kyoshi Takahama, and published a number of works including *Hell Screen*, *The Spider's Thread* and *The Martyr*. Many of the letters he wrote about his life in Kamakura are extant. After becoming a popular writer, Akutagawa returned to his home in Tabata, Tokyo. However, his health gradually worsened. In his final years before committing suicide he said that leaving Kamakura was his biggest mistake.



Akutagawa's study at the house in Omachi (current Zaimokuza), Kamakura, where he lived with his new wife.

1928

Former Kawakita Annex (originally the Watsuji Residence)

Annex of Film Promoter who was a Bridge between Japan and Overseas

This annex used to be owned by Nagamasa Kawakita, president of Towa Shoji (now the Toho-Towa Company), and his wife, Kashiko. Starting before the war and continuing after the war, Kawakita distributed numerous European films in Japan, such as *À nous la liberté*, *Les enfants du Paradis* and *The Third Man*. After the war, he introduced Japanese films to overseas audiences at international film festivals.

This Japanese-style annex with its pantile roofs is located in front of a mountain and surrounded by black wooden board fences. The house was originally built in the Edo Period in Oyama, Kanagawa, and was owned by the philosopher Tetsuro Watsuji in Tokyo before being moved to Kamakura in 1961. Mr. and Mrs. Kawakita were very cosmopolitan and used this villa as a guest house for film directors and movie stars from overseas. The main building located on the east side of the premises is now the Kamakura City Kawakita Film Museum.



The annex, which has a covered courtyard with an earthen floor (called a *dōma*), a living room and a study, is open to the public in the spring and fall.



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1929

Former Residence of Kachonomiya

Walk around a Classical Western-Style House and a French Garden from the Early Years of the Showa Period (1926-1989).

This western-style house, located to the east of Mt. Kinubari, was built as a residence for Marquis Hironobu Kacho. The house changed hands several times before being acquired by Kamakura City in 1996. The classical half-timbered building, typical of wooden architecture in Europe, is characterized by the tasteful look created by filling the spaces between exposed posts and beams with brick, gravel or clay. There is a beautiful French garden with a pond and trees geometrically arranged. Visitors can stroll through the gardens. In 1971 Mr. Matsuzaki, the owner of the Former Residence of Kachonomiya at that time, moved the gate and tea-ceremony house, called Muian, from his residence in Kamiosaki, Tokyo, and rebuilt them behind the main house. Muian and the Former Residence of Kachonomiya are open to the public for a few days in the spring and fall.



The western-style house and geometric garden are a reminder of a more flamboyant lifestyle.



1929

Senkosanso Villa

Japanese Garden with Beautiful Cherry Blossoms and Autumn Leaves

This villa was named Senko, or “fan lake,” because Sagami Bay as seen from the villa looking through the cedar trees of the gardens looks like a lake in the shape of a Japanese fan. The villa was moved from Hida Takayama and renovated by Kinya Nagao, the founder of Wakamoto Co., Ltd., a pharmaceutical company. The highlight is the Japanese garden which is open to the public several days a year.



The main house is a two-story wooden building with a basement. There was a drawing room on the second floor.



Digging Deep into Kamakura

Bungakukai Nurtured the Kamakura Writers

Undeterred by the war, social unrest, suppression of free speech and the death by torture of the proletarian writer, Takiji Kobayashi, writers such as Hideo Kobayashi, Fusao Hayashi, Yasunari Kawabata and Kyuya Fukada launched the *Bungakukai* (Literary World) magazine in 1933. This magazine was free from any political bias and was devoted to the cultivation of literature, art and culture. The magazine promoted the freedom and purity of literature by showcasing developing trends in the literary world. The writers involved included Yasunari Kawabata and Riichi Yokomitsu, neo-impressionists known for literary modernism, Hideo Kobayashi, who was inspired by modern French literature, and Kensaku Shimaki, who moved away from proletarian literature. In the editor's postscript, Kawabata wrote, "We are seeing signs of the revival of literature."



The first issue of the *Bungakukai* magazine. The magazine was initially published by Bunkakoronsha and later by Bungeishunjusha.

1936

Kamakura Museum of Literature (Former Maeda Kamakura Villa)

Learn More about the Kamakura Writers

The museum is located on a hill from which there is a panoramic view of Sagami Bay. It was originally built as a villa for Toshinari Maeda, the 16th head of the Maeda family, formerly lords of the prestigious Kaga Domain on the Sea of Japan. After the Second World War, several people, including a Danish envoy and Eisaku Sato, a former Prime Minister, used this building as a villa. Yukio Mishima used this villa as one of the settings for his novel, "Spring Snow" (the first volume of *The Sea of Fertility*). Later Kamakura City acquired the villa and in 1985 it became the Kamakura Museum of Literature. The first director of the museum was novelist Tatsuo Nagai. This magnificent building is half-timbered in the Spanish style with beautiful art deco interiors. In front of the building, there is a large garden with a beautiful rose garden featuring rare roses named for their association with Kamakura, such as "Kamakura" and "Yabusame." The museum houses and exhibits original hand-written manuscripts, letters and other items belonging to writers who lived in Kamakura. The museum also stages special exhibitions.



The best times to see the roses are from the middle of May to the end of June and again from the middle of October to the end of November.



Eisaku Sato

(1901-1975)

Eisaku Sato, who served as the 61st, 62nd, and 63rd Prime Minister of Japan, used this building as his villa from 1964.

He often rehearsed speeches on administrative policy on the third-floor balcony (currently not open to the public) in the middle of the night before regular sessions of the Diet. Sato had close ties with the Kamakura Writers. Writers such as Hideo Kobayashi, Tatsuo Nagai and Yasunari Kawabata dined with him at the villa.

In the
footsteps of
the Literati



Yukio Mishima

(1925-1970)

At Yasunari Kawabata's urging, Yukio Mishima published *The Cigarette* and made his debut as a writer. From that time on, the two writers maintained a close friendship and Mishima often visited Kawabata's home in Hase. As a member of "Hachinokikai," a group of writers, and the *Koe* literary magazine, Mishima established relationships with other Kamakura Writers such as Mitsuo Nakamura. In order to gather information for his novel, *Spring Snow*, Mishima visited the Former Maeda Kamakura Villa.

In the
footsteps of
the Literati

1936 Yuasa Souvenir Shop

Nostalgic Billboard Architecture that Copy of a Building in Yokohama

The Yuasa Souvenir Shop was founded in 1897 to manufacture and sell products decorated with sea shells. The building with its impressive arch windows was built in 1936. It is typical of "billboard architecture" in which western-style decorations are applied to the front of a wooden building. Shinzaburo Yuasa, the founder, remembering the 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake, wanted to build a building robust enough to withstand earthquakes so he took carpenters to Yokohama to copy a trading company building there.



Now five businesses including a café and a kimono studio occupy the building.

Digging Deep into Kamakura

"Kamakura Carnival"—An Exciting Summer Event Started by the Kamakura Writers

Inspired by the Nice Carnival in southern France, writers such as Masao Kume and Jiro Osaragi decided to hold the 1st Kamakura Carnival in July 1934. Except for eight years during the war, this major event was held until 1962. For the festival, a giant "deity" of the year was created and carried from Wakamiya Oji Avenue to the Yuigahama beach by a parade of people in fancy dress. Humorous "deities" such as a dragon king, Kintaro (a folk hero), Audrey Hepburn and Rikidosan (a professional wrestler) were displayed for the carnival. The number of visitors increased year by year and Kamakura became well known across Japan as "Ginza by the Sea." After the war, the carnival was revived in 1947, and was expanded to include the Miss Carnival competition, a *yukata* competition and dance. The population of Kamakura in those days was 80,000 but 200,000 people gathered in the city during the carnival. The photographs show a group of comic artists, including Ryuichi Yokoyama, enjoying the costume parade and Yasunari Kawabata judging the Miss Carnival competition. Written records and literary works show that this event which the Kamakura Writers themselves enjoyed brightened up the city of Kamakura.



A huge parade on Wakamiyaoji Street. People came to Kamakura from all over the country to see the carnival.

1938 Bonbori Festival

A Magical Kamakura Tradition

The Bonbori Festival is held every summer at Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine, starting one day before the first day of fall according to the lunar calendar and lasting until August 9th. This summer festival includes several events: the "Nagoshisai" festival held one day before the first day of fall, the "Risshusai" festival held on the first day of fall and the "Sanetomosai" festival which is held on August 9th, the birthdate of Minamoto no Sanetomo. Nearly 400 lanterns decorated by celebrities associated with Kamakura line both sides of the approach to the shrine and the Yabusame horseback archery course. They are lit at night creating a magical atmosphere in the shrine precinct. The festival was first started by Kamakura Pen Club members in 1938 to promote the culture of Kamakura to visitors to Kamakura's beach. Tatsuo Nagai is one writer who described the festival atmosphere in his novels.



A line of lights continues from the raised path to the main shrine.
The precinct becomes crowded in the evening.



Digging Deep into Kamakura

Late Spring — A Monumental Masterpiece in the Ozu Style

Since the moving of the Shochiku Studio from Kamata in Tokyo to Ofuna, near Kamakura, in 1936, Kamakura has become well-known for film making. Yasujiro Ozu, the film director, lived in Yamanouchi until his death. He shot several films set in Kamakura such as *Late Spring* in 1949, and *Early Summer* in 1951. Kitakamakura Station and Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine appeared in *Late Spring*, a film that describes the affectionate relationship between a father and his daughter in Kamakura. This movie was acclaimed in Japan and overseas and established Ozu's unique style.

Yasujiro Ozu, born in Tokyo, joined the Shochiku Cinema Kamata Film Studio in 1923. Later he moved to Kamakura where he formed friendships with writers such as Ton Satomi and Jiro Osaragi.



1962

Yoshiya Nobuko Memorial Museum

House of Nobuko Yoshiya; Famous
Female Writers in Kamakura

Among the excellent female writers who have lived in Kamakura, Nobuko Yoshiya (1896–1973) is perhaps one of the most famous. She is known for her popular novels including so-called "girls' novels," "home novels," and historical novels (e.g. *Tokugawa Women*). When she was 66, Yoshiya moved to Kamakura from noisy Tokyo in search of a better writing environment. Located in a quiet residential area, the one-story main house was designed by Isoya Yoshida, one of the greatest modern *sukiya* style architects. Yoshiya asked for the house to look like a convent in Nara. The house was donated to the city of Kamakura and is now used as a study facility for Kamakura residents. The house is open to the public in the spring and fall. Visitors can view Yoshiya's study and bedroom, as well as autograph manuscripts and other items.



Nobuko Yoshiya was a "modern girl" with short hair who loved western fashion. Her collection of short stories serialized in the *Shojo Gaho* magazine called *Hana monogatari* (Flower Tales) was popular with school girls. Her novels include "girls' novels" and historical novels written from the standpoint of women.



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Digging Deep into Kamakura

"Kamakurabori Carving,"
Traditional Craftwork Loved by
Villa Owners



"Kamakurabori" carving is believed to be based on artworks, such as Buddhist altar fittings, introduced to Japan in the 13th-century from Song Dynasty China. In Kamakurabori a wooden form is typically deeply carved with fine patterns, and the whole piece is then lacquered. Sculptors in Kamakura had carved mostly Buddha statues and Buddhist altar fittings since the Kamakura Period (1185–1333). In the Meiji Period (1868–1912) they started producing furniture to meet the needs of Kamakura villa owners. This was the beginning of Kamakurabori carving. There are two long-established Kamakurabori stores: Sunshodo, established in 1936 in Yuigahama Street as the store and residence of carver Sogaku Sato, and Hakujuitsudo, founded in around 1940 by Fusetsu Ishira in Hase. Both store buildings are unique, blending the look of a temple and a castle. Visitors can learn more about Kamakurabori at the Kamakurabori Kogeikan, the Traditional Kamakurabori Cooperative Business Association, in Yuigahama.



Kamakurabori Kogeikan

1969

Rai Tei

A Kamakurayama Landmark Restaurant

This villa was owned by Tsunemi Sugawara, a railway entrepreneur. His son, Tsusai Sugawara, is known for the subdivision and development of Kamakurayama as a high-class residential area in the early years of the Showa period (1926-1989). This massive Japanese-style house with some western features was a silkworm farmer's house located in Yokohama. The entrance was moved from Shorenji Temple and the *sammon* gate is from Koshoji Temple. Currently the building is a *soba* noodle and *kaiseki* restaurant.



The stained glass and antiques of the villa create an interesting blend of Japanese and Western elements.

Digging Deep into Kamakura

Kamakura, the Birthplace of Japan's First National Trust Movement

In 1964, during the economic miracle, there was a plan for a residential development in Oyatsu, the area behind Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine. Cultural celebrities such as Jiro Osaragi and residents of Kamakura were against this plan. They collected signatures for a petition and conducted fund-raising activities. This "Oyatsu movement" was the beginning of the National Trust movement in Japan in which municipalities acquire land to protect the natural environment. As a result of the "Oyatsu movement," the Law Concerning Special Measures for the Preservation of Historic Natural Features in Ancient Cities was enacted in Kamakura, Kyoto, and Nara in 1966. The interest of Kamakura residents in protecting Kamakura's greenery continues to this day.



The Oyatsu no Mori forest in 1964. The forest on the hill behind Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine is home to many sites of historical importance.