

# 寄木細工 Yosegi-zaiku Wood Mosaic Works

*Yosegi-zaiku* is a kind of wood mosaic works which express geometrical patterns by combining and assembling natural wood materials of various colors and grains. While this kind of wood craft is widely found elsewhere in the world, in Japan *yosegi-zaiku* has especially been produced in Hakone area, Kanagawa Prefecture, and has come to be a well-known traditional handicraft.



Japanese plane (*kanna*)



Shaving the surface



A variety of *yosegi-zaiku*

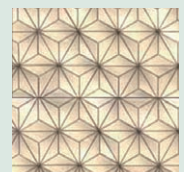
To make a *yosegi-zaiku* wooden pieces of different colors and grains are assembled and glued together to form patterned units, and they are combined to make beautiful larger patterns. Sometimes the patterned wooden pieces could be carved into bowls, trays, and so on, but they are usually shaven using Japanese plane (*kanna*) into thin sheets of approximately 0.2 mm thick and pasted on the surfaces of ordinary wooden boxes, etc.



*kikko*



*nami*



*asanoha*

The geometrical patterns used in *yosegi-zaiku* are often those representing nature, such as *kikko* ("tortoise shell", hexagonal patterns), *nami* ("waves"), and *asanoha* ("hemp leaves", triangle patterns). On the other hand, a method called *mokuzougan* (joined wooden block construction) is also popular in recent years, where wooden pieces are assembled to form pictures and shaven to a sheet, then pasted on sheets of Japanese paper (*washi*).

## Nikko



A famous sculpture, "a sleeping cat"



Yomeimon gate



"See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil"

Located in the northern mountain range of Kanto plain, Nikko is blessed with beauty of nature, water and forest areas; you can enjoy beautiful scenery of four seasons around Lake *Chuzenji*, and the *Oku-nikko-shitsugen* area inscribed as a registered wetland under the Ramsar Convention, including Lake *Yuno-ko*, River *Yugawa*, *Senjogahara*, and *Odasirogahara*. Additionally, the building complex consisting of a total of 103 buildings (nine of which are registered as Japan's national treasures and 94 the important cultural properties) belonging to *Toshogu* shrine, *Rinnou-ji* temple, and *Futarasan* shrine on Mt. *Nantaisan* and the historic monuments around the area are UNESCO's world cultural heritage. Nikko is a spiritual area, where great beauty of nature and historic temples and shrines coexist in accord, where people can feel their spirits cleansed, and where spiritual culture still exists which Japanese people have cherished since ancient times.