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imabari style  
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Cycling Shimanami 2014  
(Shimanami Kaido International Cycling Event)

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IMABARI

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Shikoku・Imabari

IMABARI STYLE

Take *free*



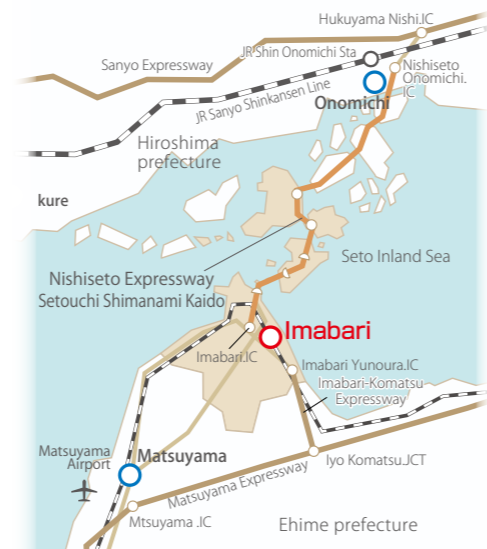


Tsunagaru

## IMABARI STYLE

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Imabari Map

We created 'Imabari Style' with the hope to promote an imaginable Imabari Lifestyle just as it is, not from a tourism or sightseeing point of view.  
We wish that our daily lives in Imabari will touch your heart.



People — Those who helped



In 2014, the worldwide-known Takeshi Okada arrived at the local football club team in Imabari. The news astonished the world. Although there are many owners of club teams who pursue their dreams of promoting a local city through sports and nurturing world-class athletes, the target that Owner Okada has set is not exclusive to contributing to the local area. He pursues more than that. His target is to break the barriers of the local area and reach beyond it to the wider sports community, business and education areas. What kind of future will Okada create in Imabari?



FC Imabari Owner Takeshi Okada

## Imabari has possibilities

Since his first visit to Imabari in 1998 until becoming owner of the local football team, Okada has visited here once or twice a year over the last 16 years. Imabari has the sea, islands, mountains and streams. This fascinating natural beauty and the abundance of outdoor fields impressed him. He was also charmed by the potential of Imabari, including the ship building and towel industries, and envisioned what he could do in Imabari.

### To stimulate the city through sports

Despite this potential, he had witnessed the reality in which the department store in the center of the city had closed and the local shopping area was declining. It is said that local cities move into decline due to low birthrate and longevity as well as a fall in population. Okada says, “We need to overcome the struggle for life at least, however, we don’t need to compete with each other

more than that.” It’s not necessary to win all the time, but he wonders how to create a harmonized society in Imabari.

“I hope FC Imabari will become a strong, appealing team, however, if Imabari city, as a foundation of our team, lacks energy, FC Imabari can’t be viable. For this reason, I want to make Imabari more energetic. A system of bringing in people, products and money is necessary. I’ve considered a business model and team management to realize it.”

“I want to build a pyramid of young teams including local junior sports clubs, junior high and high school teams. If FC Imabari, at the top of this pyramid, plays well and becomes stronger, more children and coaches will come from all over the country to join the developing teams. Probably not only from Japan, but Asia too.”

His dream to build a multi-purpose stadium would connect to



Okada’s vision of making a vibrant city through the power of various sports, not only soccer. In the stadium, top athletes would be able to train and get health check-ups, as well as manage their physical data. It is a concept to create a base for athletes.

Okada says he wants to make Imabari a city of health and sports. “If it’s realized, local senior citizens might have a chance to accommodate young athletes and cook for them. They could learn recipes suitable for athletes or start English lessons. On the other hand, young people could help senior citizens with internet shopping on a tablet. That interconnection across generations or stimulation through sports could become realistic.” It sounds like a dream, but it’s easy to believe in these dreams coming true while listening to Okada’s story.



People can’t act without a vision or dream. Bigger dreams can change people’s minds. Once a big stone starts rolling, it gains force and won’t stop. “I’ve just started to move ‘my big dream stone’ and so right now, it’s barely moving,” he says.



### Legacy for children in the future

The original point of Okada’s activities is, “What kind of society can we leave for our children?” There is a Native American saying, “The earth is a place borrowed from future descendants.” The idea is that the earth is not inherited from our ancestors, but borrowed from future generations. Continuing this idea, Okada says we have to return this borrowed earth without destroying or contaminating it.

The population of Imabari is in fact decreasing. At this time, Okada chose Imabari as a place to try a new challenge. The fact that such a great person sees the possibility of Imabari makes local people proud and confident. The ‘big dream stone’ has just begun to move, but surely there will be a beam of hope soon.



### TAKESHI OKADA

Born in Osaka in 1956  
 Joined the soccer club in Waseda University. After graduation, started working at Furukawa Electric Group. Selected as a member of the national soccer team. After retirement, became the manager of the national team in 1997, leading the team to the World Cup Football Finals. From 2007 again became the manager of the national team and led the team to the best 16 in the 2010 World Cup Finals in South Africa. In November 2014, became the owner of FC Imabari of Shikoku League. Brought passion into ‘the reform of the development system of Japanese soccer, as well as regional revitalization’.



# People charmed by Imabari

In the present day, the richness of living in the countryside is seen in a new light. People who, of their own accord, deliberately choose to live in Imabari rather than in a big city, have increased.



## Paysan, a small bakery open only twice a week Mitsuaki & Yuko Motome

At first they only had a small dream to live in the countryside. When they started to look for a place to live, they couldn't find an ideal location. As they were about to give up, they caught sight of a small house on an island in the Seto Inland Sea on the internet. They went to see the house and found the ideal situation there: a small house built on the top of a hill and beyond the hill behind the house, a panoramic view of the sea. "We want to live here!"

Right after their move, Mitsuaki worked at an office and felt pressed for time. He didn't have enough time to relax with his children. He wondered why he'd come to live in the countryside. Finally he decided to open a bakery in their house using a bread-making technique learned from a friend. He built a stone kiln, a studio and a shop with the help of his friends on the island. Comments such as "The bread made by Kyu-chan (Mitsuaki's nickname) is so tasty!" encouraged him. He persisted in mixing the bread dough by hand and baking it in the stone

kiln because he didn't have enough money to buy a bread mixer and oven. Yet interestingly, this resulted in better-tasting bread! Bread in Paysan uses homemade natural yeast made from organic raisins. Ingredients are as safe and healthy as possible. The outside of the bread is crispy, while inside it is the perfect softness. Their reputation was spread by word of mouth and Paysan has become a very popular bakery with queues of people forming out the front.

The bakery opens two days a week. The other five days, Mitsuaki is quite busy collecting firewood, preparing for bread making, and renovating the studio. It might be a little different from his dream of 'a laid-back life in the countryside of a farmer'. However, there are always many friends with them. At first, locals were surprised and worried, 'Can you open a bakery in such a place?' 'Will you make a living?' Now they have become big fans of the bread in Paysan.

Because of Paysan on this island, there will always be smiling people around here.

Paysan means farmer in French. This bakery, that uses natural yeast, opened in 2006 by a couple who had moved from Kobe.



Is this the right road? With anxiety, you climb a narrow path up a steep hill. In a small village on the hill, you find the atelier of Nakata. He measures feet and makes custom-fit, one-of-a-kind shoes.



## Shoe Manufacturer AKATSUKI a shoe atelier on a hill Katsuro Nakata

Katsuro Nakata majored in product design in university. After graduation, he started to work at a shoe manufacturer in Kobe, in charge of planning female shoes for 18 years. Hoping to work independently, he left the company and went to shoe manufacturing school in Osaka. He learned the basics from a craftsperson who was still active in his 80s. Although he considered starting his own business in Kansai, his home area, or Tokyo, he decided to move to a local city. He thought it would be better to stand out in his favorite place. He'd spent his youth in Imabari. His family moved to Osaka in his junior high school days, but he had many chances to come back to Imabari where his relatives lived. The island along the Shimanami Kaido expressway was like home to him.

He moved to Yoshiumi town, Oshima in 2015. He renovated an old house into a shoe atelier. In between his busy shoe manufacturing, he also makes hand-made desks and shelves, with the sense and outcome of a professional. Hand-made shoes change their features as time passes along with the person who wears them. The more the customer wears the shoes, the more the shoes mold to the foot. They gain a more natural appearance. Like his shoes, Nakata's atelier will settle in and change, along with his customers on the island.



In a great location with a panoramic view of two bridges, the Omishima Bridge and the Hakata-Oshima Bridge, there is a coffee bean roasting shop.



## Omishima Coffee Roastery Tomoyasu and Fumiyo Eto

Both Tomoyasu and Fumiyo Eto are originally from Kyushu. After leaving their business careers in Tokyo, they thought what to do next in their lives. They dreamed of "wanting to roast coffee beans." Since the operating budget was high in the city, they shifted their focus to the countryside. At that time, they found Omishima in a magazine article. When Tomoyasu visited Omishima for the first time, he fell completely in love with the beauty of its nature and the amazing flavor of citrus. So they moved. Heading in a new direction, Tomoyasu became a coffee roaster, while Fumiyo supported community revitalization.

In April 2015, they opened their long-cherished coffee bean roasting shop in Kamiura town, Omishima. The shop includes a café space, where they hope visitors can have a relaxing time looking at the beautiful scenery. They had difficulties getting to this point, for example finding a good location for the shop, however, they didn't give up living on Omishima. "We didn't want leave our friends in Omishima," Fumiyo says.

"A wish comes true" means that if you don't give up, and pursue what you want to do, you will find the result naturally.

On weekdays, locals drop by to drink coffee. On the weekend, there are many customers who come from afar. Tomoyasu makes each cup of coffee in a careful manner using his own roasted beans, dripping through a cotton flannel filter. Here, one can fully enjoy the time and place between people and nature.





## Tomoura Site, Café & vegetable shop

Andy and Yuko Watanabe

Over the mountain pass, a lovely little cottage appears, with a red roof and green walls in the middle of a wide garden. "Tomoura Site" was opened by Yuko Watanabe and her Canadian husband in 2014 with the help of their local friends.

Andy liked Japan very much while visiting Japan during a trip to Asia and decided to live in Tokyo, where he met a competent businesswoman, Yuko. They got married and since they wanted to bring up their child in the country, when a baby girl was born, they moved to Imabari, Yuko's hometown.

Looking for a good place to live all over the islands, Andy was impressed by the beauty of the southern coast of the "Tomoura" area on Oshima Island. There, on the top of a small hill overlooking the sea, they built a Canadian house twenty years ago. At that time, the house looked exotic and became famous with many people on bus tours coming to look at it.

Andy translates current economic news articles at home. His work seems to be hard because he has to submit articles on time every morning. However, he finds it more valuable to live with his family on the beautiful island than living in a big city.

Meanwhile, Yuko was born and raised in central Imabari and had never lived on an island. Since they moved to Oshima, she has concentrated on home-making and bringing up their daughter.

After she was old enough, Yuko joined a group to revitalize the local economy.

She rented an empty house and renovated it into a café with the help of Andy and a local carpenter. "I only bought lighting fixtures and paint, all the other materials were from demolished houses." They even laid the boards for the floor by themselves. It took a year and a half to finish the Tomoura Café. It is furnished with foreign antiques and furniture. They serve lunch and sweets, as well as sell local organic vegetables, fruit, and honey. They have been here for 20 years and have successfully made up a "place" where people can get together.



It features a beautiful sea view, which is Andy's favorite.



Their daughter, Momo, has moved onto university in Canada. When she comes back home, she helps her parents at the café on the hill.



The nice cozy interior of the Café.

## Traditional lifestyle in an 80-year-old house

bamboo basket craftsman, Seiji and Yuki Uchihara

The Uchihara family lives in a quiet mountain village, Nibukawa, Tamagawa town, Imabari. Seiji makes baskets from bamboo, while Yuki cooks in an earthenware pot. Their children like insects, playing and running around the mountain every day. Here is the life we have almost forgotten.

They originated from Tokushima where Seiji was working for an electronics manufacturer. He worked overtime every day and was often away on business trips. Gradually he started to want to live a natural life dealing with nature, when he came across an article in a magazine. It was a special edition on bamboo basket craftsmen. It changed his life. He resigned from the company and the family moved to Oita Prefecture in order to learn how to make baskets with bamboo. After a five-year training, someone told them about Nibukawa and they moved there. They renovated an 80-year-old house, even remaking the kitchen into the traditional style with an earthen floor.

Their kitchen looks beautiful, equipped with bamboo kitchen tools and baskets Seiji has made. His bamboo works are admired and he receives a lot of orders from all over the country. After Yuki gave birth, she recognized the importance of healthy food and began to make soy sauce and miso paste herself. Additives are not necessary to make food tasty. Nowadays people



These bamboo household goods, created by Seiji, are elaborately woven and easy to use. Their reputation attracts orders from all over Japan.

are too busy always surrounded by information, seeking convenience in a fast-paced life. There is no end to the chase. People sometimes stop and wonder if it is ok. "It is important to think what you want to feed your children, then you can find the right answer," Yuki explained with a smile. The city and country have respectable good points. You have to decide yourself which is more important to you. They laugh and say, "If you don't like to communicate with people, we don't

recommend the country life." They have participated in local events as much as possible. Their friendly attitude has impressed the locals. Neighbors often bring vegetables, fruit and, once, even a rabbit, right to their door. The rabbit is now an important member of the family.



Seiji is making traditional bamboo baskets, while Yuki is cooking traditional healthy food. Working and eating are the basics of life.



The Uchihara family is living a natural life in Nibukawa, using the tools Seiji has made, cultivating the backyard and growing vegetables. The mountain is the playground for their children.

# Choosing to return to live in Imabari



## Mori-no-Tomodachi Noen Co.”

Yoshihiro Mori

On a mountainside in Tamagawa, amidst the murmuring sound of a serene stream, children’s cheerful voices are echoing. Yoshihiro Mori is explaining how to pick blueberries to a group of school children. He is 26 years old and has worked as a member of staff of Mori-no-Tomodachi Noen for a year and a half.

Yoshihiro graduated from a local high school and went to university in Tokyo majoring in business system engineering. He had the intention to come back home one day to take over his father’s business, but he thought, “It will be a long time before I come back.” However, his father suddenly got ill. After witnessing his mother busily taking care of his father and running the farm, he made up his mind, “I will go back home to take over the farm right after graduation.”

His professor was surprised at his decision. “From IT to agriculture??” He told the professor smiling, “I was thinking of



A nature experience class with children from all over Japan

going back sooner or later.” It turned out to be sooner than his original plan, but he was not forced to do so by anyone but himself. He was very decisive.

Time seems to go by slowly in this peaceful village. The sky is blue and the mountains are green. Birds and insects are singing. All these things are different from Tokyo. You may think that he is relaxed and having a slow life, but he isn’t. “I am really busy doing this and that all the time. This is not the so-called slow life at all,” he said and smiled. Working on the farm is physically tough, sweating all over from morning until evening. On the weekends, the farm organizes experience-events such as harvesting, baking pizza, or fishing and playing in the river. These events are always fully booked. In contrast to his hard schedule, his facial expression is bright and he looks to be enjoying his work. “I sometimes remember my life in Tokyo and realize it was really hard. I wonder how I was able to bear it.” His feeling may be common to those who have returned from a big city to their hometown.

He is pursuing his own way of running the farm, on top of what his parents and grandparents did. “Now is the age of the internet. Even if you live in a remote area like here, you can get anything from all over the world online. However, this place only exists here. I want many people to visit here so that I can help them to feel and experience nature.” Yoshihiro’s challenge will continue.



## Kobo Oriza Company

Ms. Eriko Takeda,  
Brand Manager of business planning section

Imabari city is famous for its production of towels. However, at Kobo Oriza, they are not weaving towels but other kinds of cloth. Eriko Takeda is leading the company as Brand Manager.



She was born and raised in Imabari and went to university in the Kansai district. After graduating, she got a job at a company in Osaka. There she worked in sales. Looking back now, she remembers it was a hard time. After being transferred to Tokyo, she continued to work for the company for a while and then made up her mind to resign. It was the turning point in her life. Although she could have stayed in Tokyo and looked for another job, she decided to go back home to Imabari.

One year before she went back home, her father had set up his own company, Kobo Oriza. Her father, Masatoshi collected old abandoned weaving machines from the Showa era, fixing and improving them. Using his handmade machines, he



started to weave scarves and shawls. However, although they had things to sell, there was no one to sell them well. Eriko was the right person at the right time. She started by making catalogues and designing a homepage to help her father. She was not so serious in the beginning, thinking of herself as just a helper. However, once she stood in an exhibition booth at a product trade show, she found the business interesting, realizing that good things can sell. Now she is serious, using the abilities she acquired from working in the city.

People started to pay attention to the cloth, which feels soft, light, and warm, woven with restored one-hundred-year-old machines. They were not only trying to sell ‘things’ but their creative ideas and sense. It is not so easy to grab people’s hearts but they had the passion and technique to make their own way to succeed. The studio founded by her father Masatoshi 10 years ago, now has 13 staff and some trainees. Eriko dreams of Kobo Oriza’s woven fabric becoming a traditional technical art.

There are many people who were tired of living in a big city and returned home. Eriko was one of those people when she came back to Imabari. However, she found a way that only she could do and has done her best on her own two feet. In her 20s, she just worked hard, but now she has a family. It is not easy to bring up her children while working. Yet she says smiling, “I just take it easy. Things are going well.” She sounds proud and confident about what she has done and is doing.



Mr. Kashiwa Sato

Towel production in Imabari has been successfully revived and Imabari Towel is now well-known to the world. Kashiwa Sato, Creative Designer, is the director of the branding project. At first, he was not willing to take the offer. However, once he used towels made in Imabari, he was so impressed with the quality that he decided to accept the offer. Imabari towels have always been of high quality.

“There are wonderful things about these towels but people didn’t know. I just helped the makers advertise their towels. Even if the marketing is great, but the products themselves are not good, they won’t sell. Imabari towel makers have always made great towels. That’s why Imabari Towel was able to become a fine brand and be successful,” Sato says.

Before, people in Imabari had nothing but fresh fish to be proud of. Now, they have Imabari Towel.

Compared with 2007 when Sato started to direct the project, Imabari city has become unbelievably famous, not only for Imabari Towel, but also for its relaxing mascot character ‘Bary-san’; local delicacy ‘Imabari Yakibuta Tamago Meshi’ (a bowl of rice topped with a fried egg and roast pork); ‘FC Imabari’ directed by Takeshi Okada, and cycling mecca ‘Shimanami Kaido’. Imabari city has been energized. People’s spirits have been lifted up and have gained confidence.

Mr. Sato tells, “Imabari Towel is one of the greatest products in Japan which can make a difference in the Japanese economy in the world. Imabari Towel is a hope in Japan’s future.”

### Mr. Kashiwa Sato

Creative director / Art director

Born in Tokyo in 1965. Majored in graphic design, graduated from Tama Bijutsu University. Worked for Hakuhodo Inc. and founded “SAMURAI Co.,” a creative studio, in 2000.

One of the greatest creators in Japan he’s written many books including best-seller Sato Kashiwa no Chou-seiri-jutsu (Nikkei Business Jinbun-bunko), Kiki-jouzu Hanashi-jouzu (Shuei-sha), Satou Kashiwa no Uchiawase (Diamond-sha).

His awards include Mainichi Design Prize, Tokyo ADC Grand prix, Tokyo ADC Gold-prize, Asahi Advertising Award Grand prix, The 4th Yusaku Kamekura Design Award, Design for Asia Award Grand prix, among others.

Special invited professor at Keio Gijuku University, Guest Professor at Tama Bijutsu University, Trustee at Hattori Gakuen Corporation, Director of Gareki wo Ikasu Mori no Choujou Project, Director at Tokyo Art Directors’ Club, Director at NPO Design Association.

He has been directing the branding project of Imabari Towel since 2007.



Imabari towel Minami Aoyama Shop

# Imabari Towel White Towel

Imabari Towel is simply white without any decoration but is based on the philosophy “Feel the essential qualities.” When the branding project of Imabari Towel started, the color white was chosen for the main product based on this philosophy. Although you may think that all white towels are the same, actually they are not. White towels vary according to the way of weaving, dyeing, or other processes. Each item has its own characteristics.



imabari towel  
Japan



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13 Yasashii Towel  
Yokota Towel Co., Ltd.

14 Imabari Umare no  
Shiroi Towel  
Yoshii Towel Co., Ltd.

15 Fuwafuwa Gokutama  
Towel  
Watanabe Pile Textile Co., Ltd.

10 Premium White Hotel  
Maruei towel Co., Ltd.

11 Kumogokochi Towel  
Maruyama Towel Co., Ltd.

12 Moco Moco Towel  
Mori Shoji Co., Ltd.

7 Imabari Eco Towel  
Hisaou Co., Ltd.

8 FUJITAKA GOLD  
Fujitaka Co., Ltd.

9 Sugoi Towel  
Masaoka Towel Co., Ltd.

4 Largo  
Tanaka Industries Inc.

5 Maison de San Hawking  
Sunta-no Waffle  
Tanokubo Towel Industry Co., Ltd.

6 UTSUROI  
HartWELL Co., Ltd.

1 Tenku  
Imai Towel Co., Ltd.

2 Pure Organic  
Kontex Co., Ltd.

3 Mou Cube  
Johnan Orimono Co., Ltd.



A Hot Spring  
always warm and ready

Nibukawa Onsen Bath surrounded by rocks of Kadoya Besso

## Home of good quality towels

We use towels casually every day. Did you know that producing towels requires a lot of labor and processes such as spinning, dyeing, bleaching, starching, and weaving, followed by removing the starch, printing or embroidering, sewing, and finishing? Because of these many processes, there are no less than 200 factories related to manufacturing towels in Imabari. The size of the factories varies from firms under private management to big companies with many staff. All the workers have confidence and pride in producing good towels and work hard every day to polish their skills.

Imabari city features a mild climate and clean soft water. Under these blessed conditions, the towel business has developed over 120 years.

Imabari towel makers have excellent techniques and expertise to produce great towels, culminated from such a long history.

At one point, production dropped to a quarter of peak production because of the threat of cheap foreign towels. Many towel makers went out of business and the recovery of the towel industry seemed extremely difficult.

However, business has recovered miraculously. Before, many thought, “Just making good towels is not good enough to sell.” Now, it is believed that “towels can sell because of their high quality.” The person who made this happen is Kashiwa Sato, creative director of Imabari Towel branding project. Thanks to him, towel makers could regain their pride and confidence. The key concept of the project is ‘white towel’. White towels have become synonymous with Imabari Towel.



About 20 minutes’ drive from the city, Nibukawa Onsen is a rustic but pleasing hot-spring resort evoking a sense of nostalgia. No amusement areas. No stores. There is the babble of a stream, lush greenery, and the sound of birds. Plus, five hot-spring inns and spa facilities. It is a small intermountain village but it boasts great hot spring quality.



The springs’ strong alkaline content, which includes radon, feels soft and smooth. Some inns welcome guests as early as 6 in the morning, making a full-day trip to the area possible. A lot of neighborhood regulars enjoy a morning bath.

Nibukawa Onsen is famous as a beautifying hot spring, containing properties that make the skin beautiful. Its peculiar slippery-feeling water makes the skin smooth, which certainly seems to make people beautiful. This hot spring is popular among women but it’s a resort for old men as well. Obviously, the skin of old men is soft and smooth.

After the bath, you can enjoy walking around Nibukawa Valley, a part of Okudogo-Tamagawa Prefectural Natural Park. The stream flowing from the mountains, including Mount Narabara, satisfies people with the blessings and beauty of nature.







Ship launching ceremony at a shipbuilding yard in Imabari



Noshima, home of Murakami Suigun Navy

# A shipbuilding story

Imabari is the largest maritime city in Japan. There is a concentration of maritime industries here. Maritime industry is the general term for shipping, shipbuilding and shipboard industry. There are fourteen shipbuilders in Imabari and they have built the best position in Japan in terms of quantity and gross tonnage of vessels. In addition, the group of ‘Imabari Owners’, as local ocean-going vessel owners are called, make up the top four biggest ship-owning groups, along with Northern Europe, Hong Kong and Piraeus (Greece).

Behind this status is the history of Murakami Suigun (ancient navy), which played a role in maritime advancement. In Imabari, we have a proud culture which we have taken over from our ancestors who nurtured a spirit to progress and build.

A Suigun race is held at Miyakubo Port in Oshima every summer.

In 2015, Ryo Wada, who received Japan Booksellers’ Award for his novel ‘Murakami Kaizoku no Musume’, participated in the race. It is meaningful that he rowed a Kohaya, a small warship which also appears in the novel. Large Sekibune, Atakebune and small Kohaya were warships in the Suigun navy. The Kohaya performed a central role in Murakami Suigun. When you watch the Suigun race as the local experts row the Kohaya, it clips along as if it has an engine. The novel depicts a scene with more than one thousand Kohaya rallied in Osaka Bay. It is an overwhelming spectacle to imagine. Owing to the brilliant shipbuilding technology at that time, in addition to the maritime and military strength of Murakami Suigun, this large fleet was made possible. This continuing technology has made Imabari the world’s dominant maritime city.

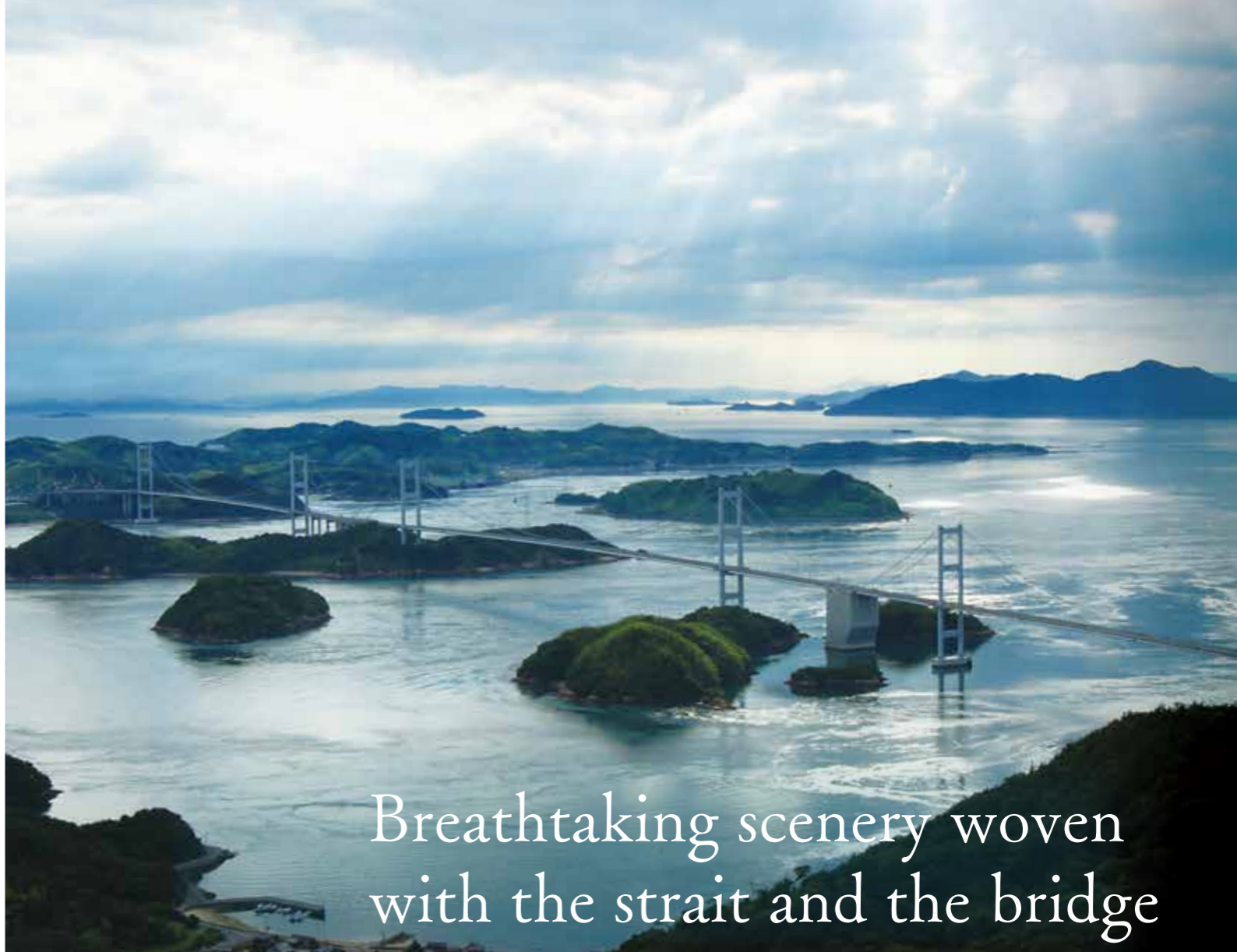


Ryo Wada

Born in Osaka in 1969, grew up in Hiroshima. In 2007, debuted his first novel ‘Nobo no Shiro (The Floating Castle)’, selling over 2 million copies with a film version released in 2012. His second novel ‘Murakami Kaizoku no Musume’ won him the 35th Yoshikawa Eiji Prize and Japan Booksellers’ Award in 2014.



Ryo Wada, participating in the Suigun race



# Breathtaking scenery woven with the strait and the bridge

Kurushima-Kaikyo Bridge, seen from Mt. Kiro in Oshima

Kurushima-Kaikyo Bridge is the first three-successive-suspension bridge in the world. It’s the four-kilometer bridge over the first strait of Shimanami Kaido. Some scattered islands, the strait and the bridge create a gorgeous and amazing view.

Kurushima Strait is one of Japan’s three main rapid currents along with Naruto Strait and Kanmon Strait. It has always been the most difficult place for vessels to navigate. We can see vessels of varying sizes go under the bridge from an observation deck or the bridge itself. More than 1,200 vessels a day pass through here.

Shimanami Kaido has not only an expressway but also has paths for pedestrians and cyclists. It is crowded with people who enjoy walking and cycling all year long. It has come to be called a mecca for cyclists. Every time you cross the bridge, you find something new, whatever the weather or season. Feel the salty breeze on your face while riding a bike.



Cyclists crossing Shimanami Kaido



Imabari Yakibuta-Tamago Meshi



Senzanki

## Senzanki

Senzanki is fried chicken eaten in Imabari. The main recipe: chicken marinated in a mixture of soy sauce, sake (rice wine), grated ginger and garlic. Dip the chicken into egg, then potato starch. Deep-fry until golden brown. Crispy and rich-tasting senzanki is popular with people of all ages. There are several speculations about the origin of this unique name. One story explains that senzanki was made from pheasant in the area during the Edo period. Mr. Sen, who lived at the foot of local Mt. Chikami, created the recipe. It came from the Chinese dish, Ruan zha ji (fried chicken with bone).

People in Imabari grow up eating senzanki!

## Imabari Yakibuta-Tamago Meshi

Imabari Yakibuta-Tamago Meshi is a rice bowl topped with roast pork, a sunny-side up egg and sweet soy-sauce flavored sauce on it. This popular dish gets a place in B-1 Grand Prix (a popular regional food festival) every year. It was first made as an off-menu dish for the staff of a Chinese restaurant in Imabari 40 years ago. When the cook of the restaurant added it to the menu, it became popular and now many restaurants serve Imabari Yakibuta-Tamago Meshi. It's Imabari comfort food.



Yakitori in Imabari is broiled on a griddle.



# Eating in Imabari



Milk shake served at Tamaya



Strawberry and crème served at Tosendo

## Standing in line for shaved ice

On a hot day in summer, there is a long line at the corner of a street. At the head of the queue is the confectionery store, 'Tosendo'. The most popular bowl is shaved ice drizzled with strawberry syrup. The syrup is made from pureed strawberries every spring. It is luscious and mouth-watering.

Another shop is the more traditional 'Tamaya Santonore'. Nowadays they have many flavors of shaved ice, but perennial favorites are milk shake and Uji Kintoki (green tea syrup with red beans). The shaved ice served here is silky and fluffy; not so much ice as a light snowfall.

It would be fun to compare the difference between Tosendo and Tamaya Santonore.



〔Torikawa〕

## You can't fully enjoy Imabari without trying the seafood

Local residents say that the firm seafood of Setouchi, grown in the rapid strait is the best in Japan. Cooks in Imabari prepare it simply, making the best use of the freshness of the ingredients.

Fish grown in Kurushima Kaikyo are strong. We'd like you to savor the taste of seafood in Imabari.

## Imabari Yakitori

Many Japanese people associate yakitori (grilled chicken) with a spit-roasted or char-broiled chicken. However, people in Imabari broil chicken on a griddle. The chicken is pressed with a large, heavy flat iron so the chicken can be cooked and served quickly. It is said that many people in Imabari are in a rush so this method is perfect. The most popular dish is torikawa (chicken skin). Locals order torikawa first in a yakitori pub, washing the savory, juicy chicken down with a beer... it is a blissful moment.



Ikiki-no-Gomon



Toyo Ito Museum of Architecture, Imabari



## Transforming into the most beautiful island in Japan

Omishima is an island in the Seto Inland Sea. It is blessed with a mild climate and prospers with agriculture based on mandarin oranges. From winter to spring various kinds of citrus bear fruit. Stunning views surrounded by the sea and the mountains. Life in nature. This place will make people feel happy and at peace.

This island is home to Oyamazumi Shrine, which is called the Shrine of the Grand Guardian God of Japan. The island is known as an island of gods. The shrine was worshipped by the Imperial court and warlords as the god protecting the mountain, the sea and battle. There's a massive camphor tree in the innermost sanctuary of the shrine. It's 3,000 years old and its trunk is 30 meters around. It's designated as a prefectural natural treasure of Ehime.

It is said that people in the past used to pass under this tree to offer prayers. This tree has been keeping a long-term watch over people.

Mr. Toyo Ito, a world-famous architect, established a project named "Project Omishima – Transforming into the most beautiful island in Japan".

He opened Toyo Ito Museum of Architecture, Imabari in 2011 and since then he has been involved on Omishima.

He says, "Omishima has a mild climate and the calm sea. We can have a lovely time only a few hours away from Tokyo. I feel really happy to come here." He gets energy from this island. All his friends who come here get hooked on the island. Omishima seems to have special charm.



### Toyo Ito

1941 born in Seoul, Korea  
 1965 graduated from University of Tokyo, Department of Architecture  
 1971 started "Urban Robot" studio  
 1979 studio name is changed to Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects

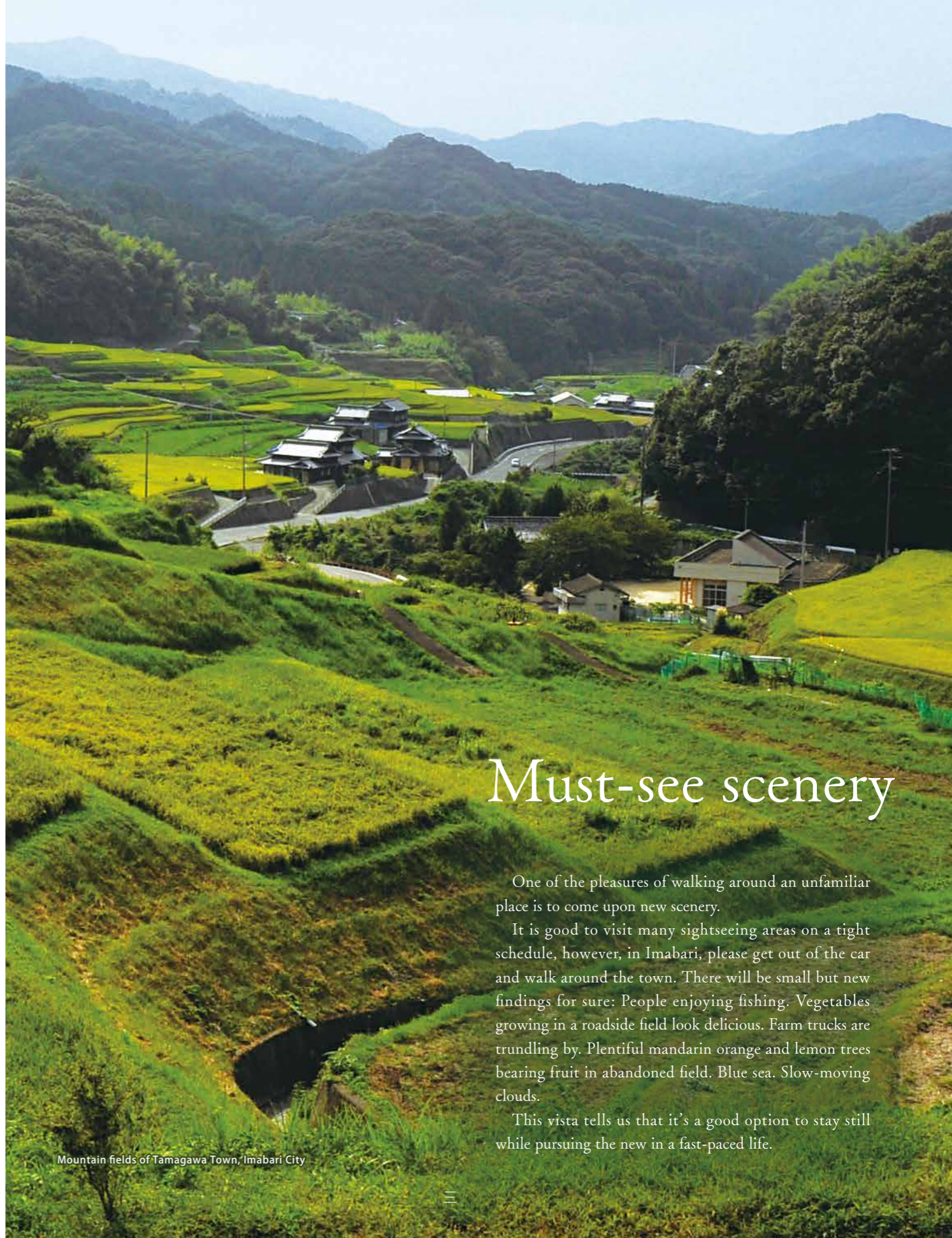
#### Awards

1986 Architectural Institute of Japan Award for Silver Hut  
 2002 Venice Biennale Golden Lion  
 2003 Architectural Institute of Japan Award (Sendai Mediatheque)  
 2006 Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Royal Gold Medal  
 2010 22nd Praemium Imperiale  
 2012 Venice Biennale Golden Lion (as a commissioner of Japan Pavilion)  
 2013 Pritzker Prize

"Many people worship at Oyamazumi Shrine. The number of cyclists are increasing every year. If we help these people to spend more time in the island and to interact with the local people, the island will become more active. There must be quite a few people in Tokyo who potentially want to live a country life. I hope to share useful information with them."

Mr. Ito doesn't necessarily want the island extensively developed. People from on and off the island mingle with each other, which makes the island friendly to tourists and newcomers.

With a little more impetus, the beauty of nature and the island will grow more. The day is not far off when not only the scenery, but also the pure hearts of people will become the most beautiful in Japan.



## Must-see scenery

One of the pleasures of walking around an unfamiliar place is to come upon new scenery.

It is good to visit many sightseeing areas on a tight schedule, however, in Imabari, please get out of the car and walk around the town. There will be small but new findings for sure: People enjoying fishing. Vegetables growing in a roadside field look delicious. Farm trucks are trundling by. Plentiful mandarin orange and lemon trees bearing fruit in abandoned field. Blue sea. Slow-moving clouds.

This vista tells us that it's a good option to stay still while pursuing the new in a fast-paced life.

Mountain fields of Tamagawa Town, Imabari City



Kaneto Shokudo keeps the style unchanged



Traditional bakery "France-ya" in Kyoei-cho



Top: the stone wall of Imabari Castle. Kanbe Stone is the biggest rock  
Center: showcase of Fujiya, a café where the locals gather  
Bottom: Issho-do sells Keiran Manju, a famous confection of Imabari



Kinsei River, which used to be the outer moat of Imabari Castle

## Welcome All the Way to Imabari

The world is rapidly changing, which makes our lives more convenient. On the other hand, we forget that we have left something important behind. However, it doesn't mean that we run counter to civilization or go back to the old days. To find a good balance between the old and the new is better.

Imabari was connected to Honshu by some big bridges in 1999. Thanks to those bridges, the transportation of people and things became much easier.

Imabari Towel, which has become a global brand; Bary-san, the local mascot character; F.C. Imabari, led by Takeshi Okada; and Yakibuta-Tamago Meshi, a popular local dish: They gather attention from all over Japan.

Perhaps you feel it's inconvenient when compared to the city. However, some people feel an attraction to life in the country and move here from the city. Some local people worry, "What would you do in a rural area like this?" Some young people say with confidence, "No place is better than this place." I visited a lot of people and listened to their stories. Through these interviews, I began to realize the simple splendor of Imabari. The old and the new exist together. A new history is being built. This is Imabari Style.