

- Annual event where factories in the Tsubame-Sanjo area of Niigata open their doors to the public.
- Visit selected factories with a local tour guide

## Announcing the 2nd Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival October 2nd (Thu) – 5th (Sun), 2014



The Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival is an annual event where factories in the Tsubame-Sanjo area open their doors to the public. The inaugural festival was held in October 2013 and was met with a great response, having attracted approximately 11,000 visitors to the area. This year, it is our pleasure to announce that the 2nd Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival will be held for four days from October 2nd through 5th, 2014, with a total of 59 participating factories.

Situated on the Shinano River in central Niigata, Tsubame-Sanjo is one of the world's most renowned areas for the production of metal tools, with a tremendous number of companies and factories manufacturing products that range from farming tools and carpentry tools to knives and other tools for the kitchen.

While visitors are not usually allowed to enter the factories during operating hours, the festival will offer an opportunity to get a close up view of the artisans at work. Visitors will also be able to make products by participating in various workshops.

This year's festival will also include tours and a series of receptions. For further details, please refer to Page 2.

The Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival is an annual event where visitors can enjoy tours of one of Japan's renowned manufacturing areas and have the chance to meet local artisans. The event is open to the public and so if you are interested in product making and would like to take a closer look at the factories or speak with the artisans, please join us this October for the four-day festival.

### Event Information

Dates: October 2nd (Thu) – 5th (Sun), 2014.

Hours: 9am - 4pm. Please note that all factories will be closed between 12pm-1pm.

Locations: Sanjo-Tsubame, Niigata Prefecture

Participating Factories: 59

Visitors: Approximately: 11,000 (in 2013)

Access: On the weekend of the 4th and 5th, a limited number of Festival Buses will run from Tsubame-Sanjo Station (JR East).

Website: <http://kouba-fes.jp>

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/koubafes>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/koubafes>

Organization / Management : Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival Committee

Cosponsor : TsubameSanjo Regional Industries Promotion Center, Sanjo-city, Tsubame-city

Event Direction : method

Art Direction / Design : SPREAD

Editing (Booklet) : BACH

### For press inquiries

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## ABOUT TSUBAME-SANJO

Tsubame-Sanjo area (Sanjo-city and Tsubame-city) is located along the Shinano River in central Niigata, with an area of 540km. and a population of 180,000. The area is regarded as having the largest number of company owners in the country, with tremendous numbers of small companies and factories, often family-run, manufacturing a variety of products. Tsubame-Sanjo's industry was born out of a group of local artisans producing a small batch of Japanese nails in the Edo period. Since that time, artisans in the Sanjo area have continued to produce nails, as well as knives, farming and architectural tools, and - since the Meiji era - a variety of edged tools. Forged from red-hot steel, Sanjo-made tools are known to last for decades and occasionally find their way back to the original artisans for repairs. As new technology has emerged, production has expanded to incorporate a broader range of industrial tools.

In Tsubame, the introduction of metal casting technology saw factories commence the production of kitchen tools and homewares. Teapots and flower vases - made from hand-hammered bronze plates - are known for their long-lasting gloss, while the famed skills of local artisans led to the development of high quality western cutlery. As metal processing techniques have continued to develop, larger items such as kettles and pots have started to be produced.

Today, many techniques have been modernized, with factories in both cities using casting and pressing machines to make car parts or office equipment. Despite this, there are still many artisans who continue their tradition crafts; for example creating cutlery by mixing soft iron and hard steel. Such artisans are not merely following tradition; through the knowledge they have acquired through scientific research, they have renewed their techniques over time, constantly updating their products to meet the needs of the present day.

Tsubame-Sanjo has become one of the most concentrated industrial areas in the world and is a place where highly skilled artisans continue to produce a range of metal goods. We welcome you to come and meet the local artisans who look forward to demonstrating their unrivalled skills.

## Official Tours

Throughout the four-day event, a series of Official Bus Tours will take place, with local tour guides taking visitors on one of eight different routes – each featuring three local factories. In addition to activities at each of the factories, visitors will be able to experience the beautiful local scenery while hearing insights from the local tour guides.

Dates: October 2nd (Thur) – 5th (Sun), 2014.

Hours: Morning Tour, 9am - 12pm / Afternoon Tour, 1pm - 4pm

Tickets: 3,800 yen (tax included) for each tour.

Capacity: 15 people per tour. No bookings, with tours filled on a first come, first served basis.

Boarding Location: Messepia, Tsubame-Sanjo Regional Industries Promotion Center (1-17 Sugoro, Sanjo, Niigata)

Contact: JTB Kanto, Sanjo Branch. Telephone number: 0256-35-7222

\*For further information, please refer to the Official Website of the Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival.

## Official Reception

At this year's "Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival," six of the factories will stay open during the night for reception parties. Visitors can communicate with the artisans, who have done their day's job. At some of the receptions, special events will be held for the visitors to enjoy the unique environments of the factories. Please make sure to visit those factories at night while you are in Tsubame-Sanjo for the Factory Festival.

HINOURA HAMONO Thursday, Oct 2, 18:00-20:00

For the special evening, floodlights will light up the quiet machines that have done the day's job. During the reception, special film, showing the scenes of the factory during the day, will be screened. Among the machines, you can chat with the artisans about their history and passions. (Snack and one drink included)

GYOKUSENDO Co.,Ltd Friday, Oct 3, 18:00-19:00

GYOKUSENDO, a registered tangible cultural property, will host a special concert for Hiromi Motomiya, the flutist who was chosen as the opening at this year's Nihonkai Yuuhi Concert. After the concert, the visitors can join the tour of the factory at night. (Includes one drink)

TADAFUSA Co.,Ltd Friday, Oct 3, 18:00-20:00

During the day, it would be impossible to talk to the artisans in the factory filled with the forging sound. The reception is going to be the special occasion for the visitors to have some drinks with the artisans. (Snack and one drink included)

TAKEDA KANAGATA SEISAKUSHO Co.,Ltd Saturday, Oct 4, 17:00-

The idol group RYUTist is well known in and outside of Niigata Prefecture. They will give an evening live performance at the factory. After the performance, the reception will be held at the venue. (Snack and one drink included. 500 yen for a drink)

Snow peak Inc. Saturday, Oct 4, 18:00-

The reception party will held at their immense camping cite annexed to the headquarters of Snow peak; the visitors will be treated with quintessential camping food cooked with Dutch ovens.

SUWADA BLACKSMITH WORKS,Inc. Sunday, Oct 5, 17:30-

As the finale for the Factory Festival, the closing party will be held at SUWADA BLACKSMITH WORKS. Opening its factory shop and gallery space, SUWADA artisans will welcome you with food and drinks. And a professional bartender will make special drink according to your request. The food, drinks and cocktails are all free, of course.

\*For further information, please refer to the Official Website of the Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival.

## Additional Material

### Factory Workshops/Tours

In 2013, workshops and tours were held at several participating factories and were enjoyed by visitors of all ages.



### Media Coverage

The inaugural Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival was featured in newspapers, magazines, web media, radio and television, and attracted tremendous attention from all over the country.

### Winner of the Special Committee Award at the 18th Hometown Event Awards.

In receiving the Special Committee Award at the Hometown Event Awards Ceremony in March 2014, the festival was acknowledged as a distinguished event for regional Japan.

#### **About the Hometown Event Awards**

Founded by the Japan Center for Regional Development, the annual awards aim to support unique events held in regional areas of Japan. By acknowledging quality events and introducing them to a wider audience, the awards support the country's regional revitalization. The Special Committee Award – which the Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival was presented – has previously been awarded to distinguished events such as

-Kobe Luminarie, Niigata Water and Land Art Festival 2009, and The Setouchi Triennale 2010.

### 2014 Milano Salone

Earlier this year, the Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival was invited to exhibit at SHARING DESIGN, an event held at La Fabbrica del Vapore, a city-owned venue housed in a former steam engine factory in Milano, Italy. City officials and local artisans were in attendance to present numerous high quality products made in Tsubame-Sanjo's factories to the international audience, offering further insight into Japan's most active area for the production of metal tools.

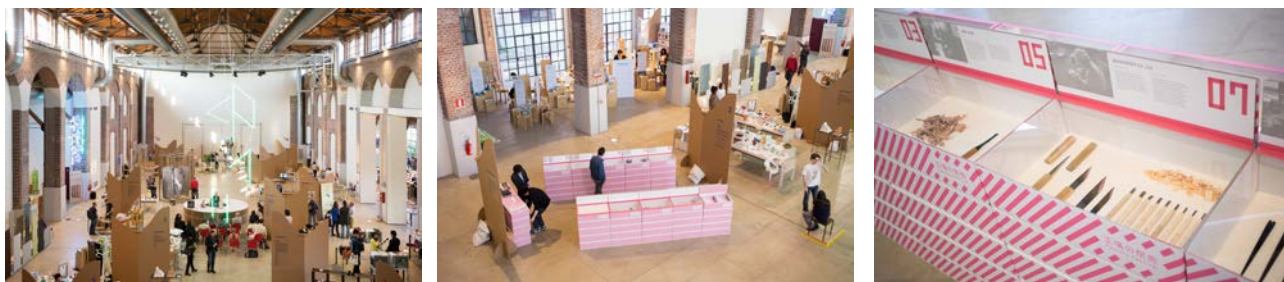


Photo : Takumi Ota

## Additional Material

### Art Direction

For many years, the factories in Tsubame-Sanjo Area had used black (metal) and red (fire) to represent their manufacturing. In 2013, while preparing for the first Tsubame-Sanjo Factory Festival, the company leading the festival's art direction, SPREAD, was drawn to the silver colour of the materials and factory interiors. The pink of the fire also caught their attention, resulting in the decision to replace red and black with silver and pink. Graphics printed on cardboard and stickers were distributed to the factories for the artisans to decorate the entrance and interior, with additional markers and information boards placed in the street to welcome visitors.

