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SEKI
CITY OF SWORDS

刀都関

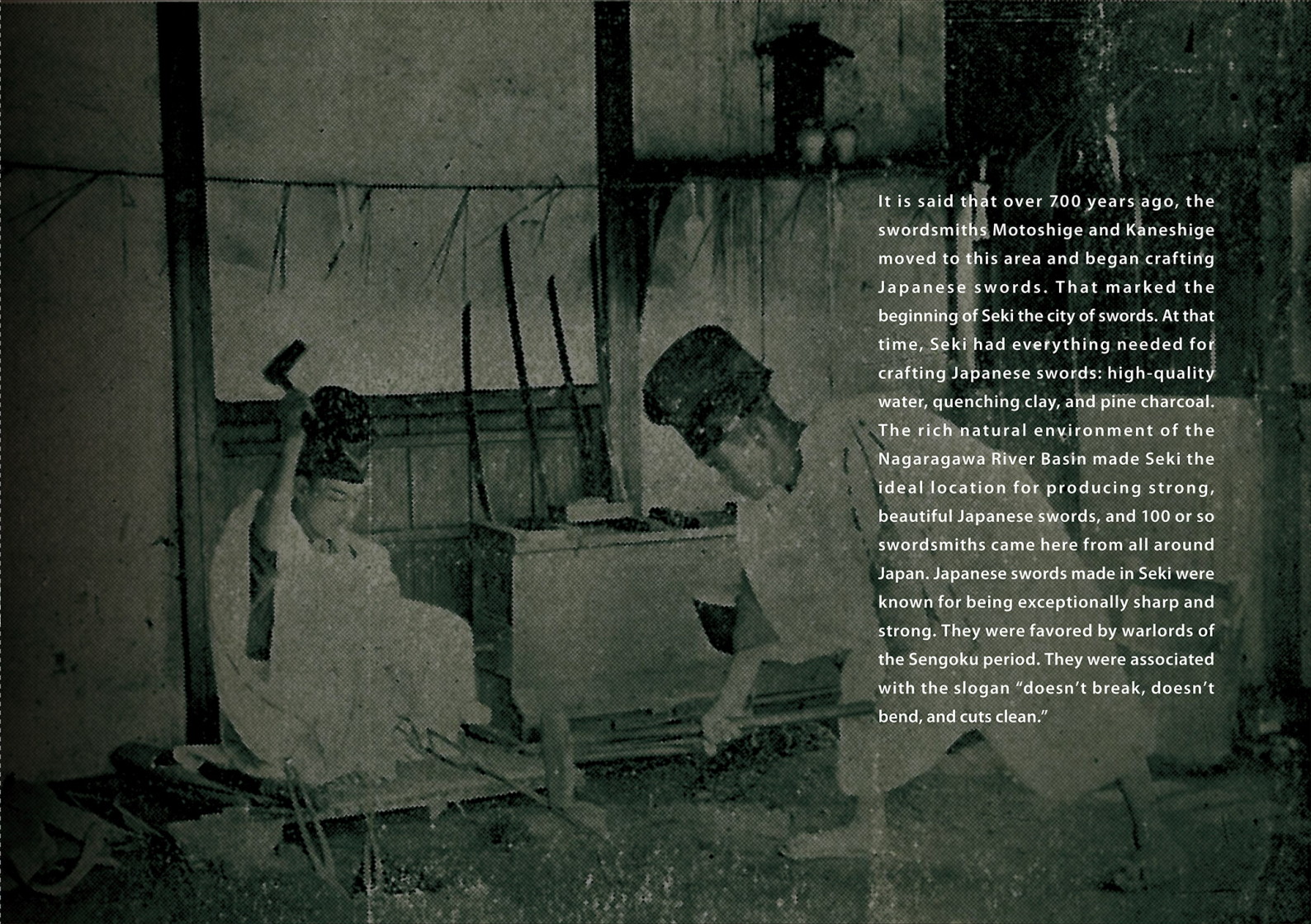




700 Years of Swordmaking Tradition

Kasuga Shrine

In 1288, a swordsmith who had moved from Yamato Province enshrined a spirit from another Kasuga shrine here, making it the guardian deity for swordsmithing in Seki.

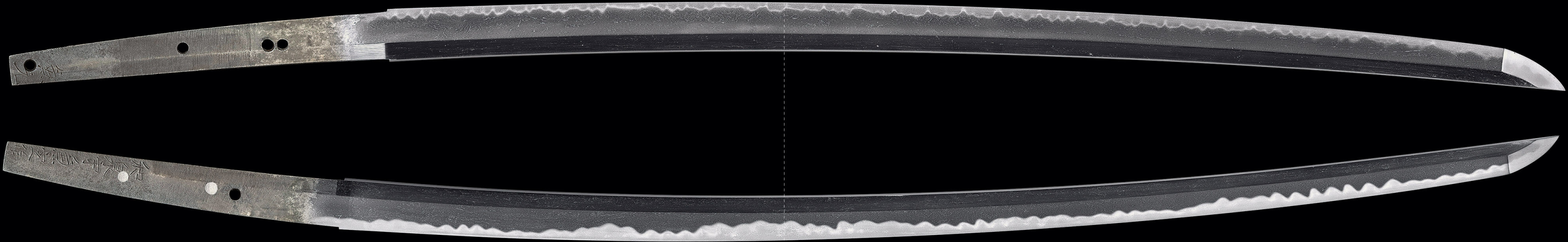


It is said that over 700 years ago, the swordsmiths Motoshige and Kaneshige moved to this area and began crafting Japanese swords. That marked the beginning of Seki the city of swords. At that time, Seki had everything needed for crafting Japanese swords: high-quality water, quenching clay, and pine charcoal. The rich natural environment of the Nagaragawa River Basin made Seki the ideal location for producing strong, beautiful Japanese swords, and 100 or so swordsmiths came here from all around Japan. Japanese swords made in Seki were known for being exceptionally sharp and strong. They were favored by warlords of the Sengoku period. They were associated with the slogan “doesn’t break, doesn’t bend, and cuts clean.”

The Swords of Seki, Prized by Samurai Warlords

孫六兼元 Magoroku Kanemoto

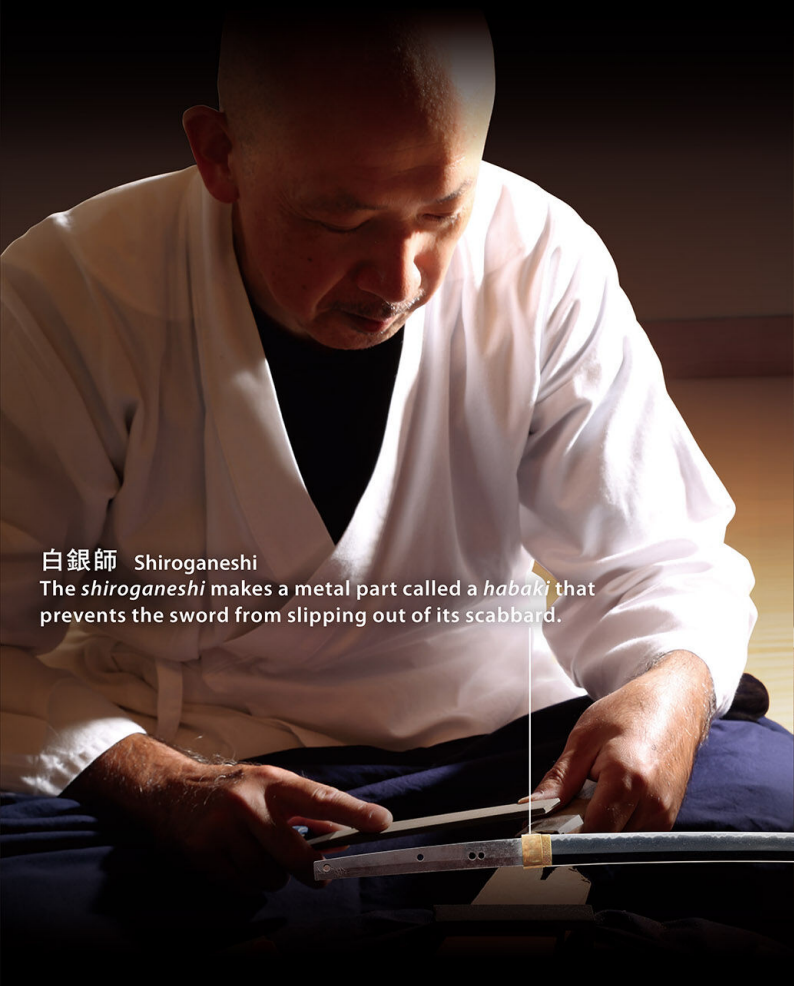
Swords by Magoroku are distinctive for their sharp edges and Sanbonsugi temper pattern along the blade's edge, which resembles a repeating pattern of three cedar trees.



和泉守兼定 Izuminokami Kanesada

Kanesada's blades were practical and featured a gentle, wavy temper pattern.

The Artisans Behind Japanese Swords



白銀師 Shiroganeshi
The *shiroganeshi* makes a metal part called a *habaki* that prevents the sword from slipping out of its scabbard.



研師 Togishi
The *togishi* uses more than ten types of whetstones to polish the blade to beautiful perfection.



柄巻師 Tsukamakishi
The *tsukamakishi* wraps the hilt of the sword with cords or leather as reinforcement and decoration.



鞘師 Sayashi
The *sayashi* makes scabbards to hold the sword and protect its blade.

Skills Passed Down Through Generations

刀匠 Toshō

The *toshō* (swordsmith) is a craftsman who makes Japanese swords from steel. This person heats the steel until it glows red and then shapes it into a Japanese blade by hammering it with large and small hammers.



From Japanese Swords to Modern Knives

As time went by, the smithing techniques developed at Seki were preserved and reapplied to the production of bladed objects essential for everyday life, such as kitchen knives, scissors, pocket knives, and razors. With its blending of tradition with modern techniques, the craftsmanship of Seki continues to evolve to this day.



Japanese sword forging demonstration Kitchen knife shop SANSYU Seki Hamono Museum

See a spectacular blade forging demonstration complete with flying sparks, symbolizing Japanese sword craftsmanship. Experience the refined techniques of Fujiwara Kanefusa, whose family craft has passed down since the Muromachi period. This popular activity offers the rare chance to use a large smithing hammer under a master swordsmith.



Don't Just Watch. Experience It.
Hands-On Swordsmithing Experiences in Seki, City of Swords



Photo by: Benjamin Beechey



Appreciation of real swords | Nosyudo

This specialty shop is dedicated to the crafting of custom-made *iaido* practice swords as well as authentic sharp blades. The opportunity to hold and appreciate authentic blades and tour workshops where craftsmanship can be viewed up close should not be missed.



Short-sword making | KANEMASA The KATANA Smith

Crafted to ward off evil and protect homes, visitors at this workshop can try making one-of-a-kind short swords. Each blade is infused with the spirit of craftsmanship, using high-quality *tamahagane* and traditional techniques.





Damascus steel knife making | G.SAKAI

Enjoy the process of creating cool kitchen knives from Damascus steel. They're incredibly sharp and something you can be proud of owning. A wide variety of knife styles are available, and they can even be personalized.



Factory tours | FUKUDA HAMONO KOGYO Co.,Ltd.

See, touch, and handle the world's only cemented carbide kitchen knife, KISEKI!. Witness the manufacturing process of this much-talked-about knife, which has a multi-month waiting list in Japan. Here, you can try sharpening and using it, and even make a pocket knife from the same materials.



* All experiences are paid
* Advance reservation required

Take Home a Piece of Seki Craftsmanship



Gifu Seki Cutlery Hall

This shop sells over 2,000 different bladed products from Seki at great prices. Knife sharpening lessons, taught by professionals, are also very popular.



Nosyudo

This specialty shop for Japanese swords brings in lots of Japanese sword enthusiasts. You can custom order a Japanese sword with the weight, length, and design of your choosing.



Kitchen knife shop SANSYU Seki Hamono Museum

This long-established knife shop brings in tourists from across Japan and worldwide. It features the only museum in Seki where visitors can see, purchase, and attend workshops related to knives.



World Knife Showroom YAMAHIDE

Established 85 years ago, this is one of Japan's largest knife showrooms, exhibiting over 1,000 outdoor knives from Japan and abroad.



Explore Seki, City of Swords



Seki Traditional Swordsmith Museum

A museum dedicated to Seki's 700-year tradition of Japanese swordmaking, brought to life through videos, historical materials, and exhibits.



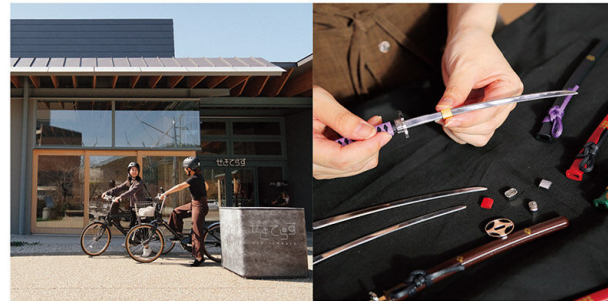
Knife Museum

This exhibition features 1,500 knives specially chosen from 30 countries around the world. The world's largest knife is on display here, 5 meters long and 600 kg in weight.



Feather Museum

This interactive museum is focused on "cutting" as a theme. It is operated by Feather Safety Razor, a company that manufactures razor blades.



Sekiterrace

This tourist information center includes a café and gift shop as well as walk-up workshops related to Japanese swords.



Downtown Seki Map

