

THE MAIN FEATURES OF JAPANESE NATIONAL COSTUME

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Japan is a sovereign island nation in Eastern Asia. Located in the Pacific Ocean, it lies off the eastern coast of the Asia Mainland (east of China, Korea, Russia) and stretches from the Sea of Okhotsk in the north to the East China Sea and Taiwan in the southwest.

The culture of Japan has evolved greatly over the millennia, from the country's prehistoric Jōmon period, to its contemporary modern culture, which absorbs influences from Asia, Europe, and North America. The inhabitants of Japan experienced a long period of relative isolation from the outside world during the Tokugawa shogunate after Japanese missions to Imperial China, until the arrival of "The Black Ships" and the Meiji period.

«The «kimono» is the traditional dress of Japan, and it is worn nowadays on formal occasions. It is sometimes accused of being an impractical form of dress, but it has the advantage of giving the wearer a graceful and elegant deportment.

A long undergarment called nagajuban is worn underneath the kimono and top of the normal underclothes.

The obiage supports the obi.

The obi is a sash for a kimono.

The obijime the obi in position. The baggy sleeves are called taoto. The material is silk, dyed in various patterns.

Furisode is the formal kimono with long baggy. Married women wear the noral-sleeved tomesode.

Men's Kimono are mainly black. Montsuki or haori: a halfcoat emblazoned with the wearer's family crest. Hakama: a culotte-like garment worn over the kimono. Tabi should be worn with montsuki. The obi is made either of stiff material or of soft material.» [1]

«Women also wear the happi coat, traditional Japanese jacket with wide straight sleeves. Happi is usually made of cotton of indigo or brown colour. It also has a print of a family crest or nowadays a crest of a shop or other organization (it's an advertisement and affiliation 2-in-1). Happi coat is worn for different festivals.

Hanten is a short winter coat. It is another item of traditional Japanese clothing for men and women. It has a thick layer of wadded cotton to warm the body. The collar of hanten is usually made from black sateen.» [3]

«Shoes. Females also use geta, wooden flip-flops. They also wear okobo – another kind of flip-flops, but very tall. Okobo are geisha's shoes. They are made of willow wood and have straps of red or yellow color. Japanese women use uwabaki (flexible slippers), zori (straw flip-flops) and waraji (straw sandals), just as men do.

Kanzashi. Women often use a kind of hairpin called «kanzashi». It helps to keep the hairdo in order. The colour, pattern and material of kanzashi vary according to the event, marital status of the woman or season.

Yukata is a light kimono for summer occasions. It is an informal kind of kimono, worn in summer or after bathing. Yukata is usually made of cotton.

Full Japanese national costume consists not only of a kimono. The whole image is formed of the kimono, the nagajuban (undergarment), the obi (sash), the obiage (it supports the obi), the obijime (it holds the obi in place), the tabi (special socks), and shoes (there are several different kinds of shoes).» [2]

the traditional ethnic garments of Japan are still in use, they are mainly worn for ceremonies and special events, funerals, coming-of-age ceremonies (seijin shiki), and festivals. In more recent years, western clothing is worn often in day-to-day life. While the westernization of fashions has continued at a rapid pace, the kimono lives on in Japanese culture.

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