

SAMURAI DAYORI

A PIECE OF ADVICE FROM OHASHI SENSEI

Your stance and footwork should be done as if you are on a thin ice surface. Prepare for slippery, muddy (after you break the ice) or not smooth ground. Fighting places are not always on clean carpet or wooden floor. This is not only for *Mukushin-ryu*. On any kind of style (*ryu*) they say the same thing.

----- This advice reminded me of an episode I read in a book before. At one *kendou dojo*, they polished the wooden floor like a mirror and let the students walk fast or run with *Tabi*. I am not sure it was true or not but it makes sense to me.

Q.WHY JAPANESE CAN HAVE TWO NAMES LIKE OHASHI SENSEI?

A. Second name is an artist name like pen name. Sometimes masters of arts, including actors, give their name to their successor. For example *Kabuki* actors pass their names on from generation to generation as actors when they retire. Or, the masters give their pupils permissions to use one *Kanji* letter from their name as artists' names. Of course, you can pick any name you like too.

RECOMMENDED MOVIE

THE SAMURAI TRILOGY (set of 3)

1. MUSASHI MIYAMOTO
2. DUEL AT ICHIJOJI TEMPLE
3. DUEL AT GANRYU ISLAND

Starring--*Mifune Toshirou*

Best foreign film of Academy Award of 1955

This is the movie based on *MIYAMOTO MUSASHI* by *Yoshikawa Eiji* which is Vol.3 *Samurai Dayori's* recommended book. If you don't like to read a long book, please watch this.

Mifune Toshirou was the most popular and famous *Samurai* movie actor. You can find many of his movies with English subtitle.

ABOUT JAPANESE SWORDS

Guntou (*gun-* military, *tou*-sword) were basically made for one-handed use. For that reason *Tsuka* are shorter than regular Japanese swords.

Toyama-ryu was originally founded for *Guntou*.

WHAT SHOUGUN WAS

Most people have an image of Shougun as a ruler like *Tokugawa* Shougun.

Originally it was a general of military that was dispatched by the Imperial Court to conquer or to suppress people who were against the central government. The Shougun was a temporary position. The Imperial Court appointed somebody to a Shougun post each time they decided to send military. Shougun was handed the swords from Emperor before he left for the war with military. This sword was not for use on the battlefields. This was a swearing-in ceremony. When the Shougun came back to the capital, he returned the sword to Emperor and he was removed from his position.

There were some names (titles) of Shougun. It depended on where they went or whom they were fighting against. If the military was sent to the west side of capital (Kyoto), the title was *Chin-zei-Shougun*. *Chin* means suppression and *zei* means west.

Most well known was *Sei-i-tai-shougun*. *Sei* means conquer, *i* means barbarian and *tai* means great or grand. North East side of Japan was still not completely under the control of central government and people around the capital didn't know much about the people who lived far east and north. So, they called them barbarians of East or North. The first *Sei-i-tai-shougun* was *Ootomo-no-Otomaro*. He was sent to northern Japan in 794.

When *Minamoto-no-Yoritomo* established the first *Samurai* Government, he was *Sei-i-tai-shougun*. This title became the name of the top of *Samurai* Government after him.

The shougun's position was given from the Emperor even after the Imperial court lost power. They couldn't give that name to their successors without the Emperor's appointment.

JAPANESE CUISINE : SUSHI

The name of 'Sushi' is derived from the way to keep fish. If you keep salted fish in cooked rice for between two months to three years, they will keep and become tastier by gaining an amino acid. Sushi's original mean is 'sour'. Because the fish become sour from the process of fermentation of rice. This type of Sushi is called 'Nare-zushi'. (*nare-* mature, *zushi-sushi's su* turns to *zu*).

In early *Edo-era* (1603-868) 'Nare-zushi' or 'Nama-nare' were common. 'Nama-nare' was Sushi which was given shorter time for fermentation than 'Nare-zushi'. (*nama-* raw).

Around 1750, the way of mixing vinegar into rice was started. The vinegar-flavored rice was put into a wooden box and the fish on in, and then it is pressed by wooden plate. This is called 'Oshi-zushi'. (*oshi-*press). Also rolled Sushi was appeared around the same time, but it was only fish and seaweed without rice.

The type of Sushi that is the most common now began around 1820. Sushi that is fish on the top of rice is called 'Nigiri-zushi'. (*nigiri-*grasp), it is also called 'Edo-mae-zushi'. It means Sushi with fresh seafood from the bay in front of *Edo*. At first it was sold at food stands. It was very reasonable priced. It became popular with the common people soon and spread in *Edo* quickly. *Nigiri-zushi* was introduced to *Kyoto* and *Osaka* area but it wasn't welcomed as much as in *Edo*. *Oshi-zushi* was still the most popular.

The price of one piece of *Nigiri-zushi* was about \$0.80-\$1.60 and Sushi roll with egg (use egg instead of seaweed) was about \$3.20.

Nare-zushi and *Oshi-zushi* are still common around *Kyoto* and *Osaka* area. There is another popular sushi called 'Chirashi-zushi'. (*chirashi-*spread or sprinkle). Rice is not grasped or rolled. Cooked vegetables and/or seafood are topped or mixed with vinegar-flavored rice. This one has some different names depend on the area or what kind of seafood you add.

Sushi rice is called 'Shari', topping is 'Neta' and Pickled ginger which is always served with Sushi is called 'Gari'.

When eating sushi, the *wasabi* (Japanese horseradish), should not be mixed with the soy sauce. Some of Sushi already has sauce and some of them should be sweet. Soy sauce should be used moderately. Just a touch is the best way to enjoy.

INTERESTING FACTS

Tokugawa Yoshimune (8th Tokugawa Shougun) was one of the best rulers. He cared about the common people's life alot. There is a TV series about him. Most parts are fiction but it is very popular in Japan. (I had been watching every week, too). He was also an open minded and very curious person. He loved to read about a variety thing of other countries. He imported many things to satisfy his curiosity.

One of the best episode (I think), about a couple of elephants he imported. During *Edo-era* (*Tokugawa era*) *Nagasaki* was the only port opened to foreign countries and only a few countries were allowed to have trading business. *Nagasaki* is a city of west of *Kyushu*, that means very west end of Japan.

Those elephants arrived in *Nagasaki*. While they traveled to *Edo*, they stopped at *Kyou* (it is *Kyoto* now), because the Emperor wanted to see them, too. But, nobody is allowed to go inside the palace and meet the Emperor directly without a certain level of official rank, this is true still now. The court of Palace gave those two elephants a very high rank to meet Emperor.

EVERYDAY JAPANESE

Ittekimasu---I am going or I am leaving now.
Say this word when you go out. We don't say good-bye when you are just going out. Good-bye is for you when don't come back or meet that person for a while.

Itterasshai--Go or leave now.
Say this word when you see a person. This word includes 'be careful and be safe.'

There are many such words in Japanese. We don't say 100% of what we mean. You feel what are not told.

In this newsletter:

Japanese names are written by Japanese way. Family name comes first, then given name.

Japanese words are written close to Japanese pronunciations and writing, ie. Noutou instead of Noto or Shougun instead of Shogun.

Have a questions or request? Contact me at:
Rie Campbell
Email--RIE@Mukushin.com