

京都花街

KYOTO KAGAI

祇園甲部、宮川町、先斗町、上七軒、祇園東
 一にしえの文化と伝統が息づく京の五花街で
 ひらりと羽を広げる蝶のように、優美な姿で私
 たちを楽しませてくれる「舞妓」。春は桜、秋は紅葉
 など四季の草花や、鶴などの吉祥文様が描かれ
 た「裾引き」と呼ばれる着物、西陣織の帯、色鮮
 やかな蛇の目傘などの装いは、独特の情感漂う京
 の風物詩だ。始業式、節分、八朔など四季折々の
 年中行事の中で、美しくも日々鍛錬を重ねてい
 くその姿に、見る者はいつしか心を奪われていく。

Gion Kobu, Miyagawacho, Pontocho, Kamishi-
 chiken and Gion Higashi - Five Kagai of Kyoto
 where classical culture and tradition is still
 alive. And this is where "maiko," entertain
 people like mesmerizingly beautiful butterfly
 with their gorgeous attire. Their kimono
 called "susohiki" always reflects Kyoto's
 seasons, such as cherry blossoms for spring
 and colored leaves for autumn or beautifully
 decorated with auspicious designs such as
 cranes. The elaborate sash woven in Nishijin
 and vivid red traditional Japanese umbrella
 are all classical symbols of Kyoto. A year
 in Kagai passes with consecutive seasonal
 events and ceremonies, starting from the
 Shigyoshiki (first ceremony of the year in
 January), followed by Setsubun (seasonal
 division in February), and Hassaku (mid-
 summer greetings in August) and so on. How-
 ever, a maiko's life is not always one of
 just elegance and entertainment. Rather,
 their meticulous beauty is anchored by
 daily hard training and the results of these
 hidden secrets is what captures people's
 hearts.

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