

Origins of Hiwasa

It is said that although in the old days the entire Kaminada area centered on Hiwasa was referred to as the 'Wasa' district, at some time it came to be called 'Hiwasa'. The Awaguni sonshi history of villages in the old Awa Province (researched by Tokushima Prefecture in 1880) includes the following anecdote on this subject: "Village elders say it was referred to in ancient times by the name 'Wasa,' and when Kukai first arrived here by sea and asked its name the natives replied 'Wasa,' but he called it 'Hiwasa' because of its propitious location with a view of the sunrise." Thus, it is said that Kobo Daishi (Kukai) gave it the name Hiwasa.



While this tradition later was said to be merely a "popular belief" among laypeople, only Kukai really knows the truth. Still, it is a fascinating tale.

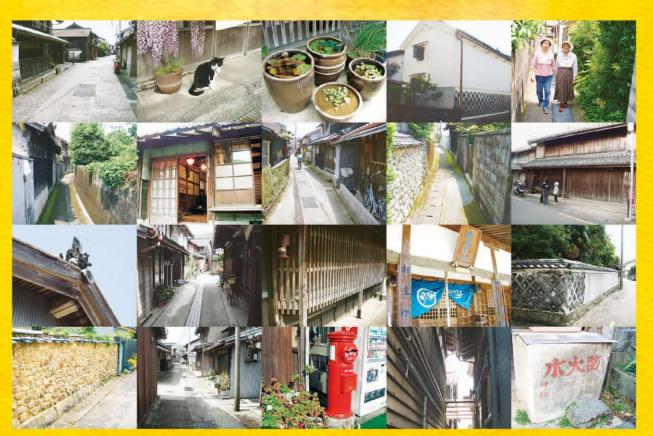
A temple town and a harbor town

The town of Hiwasa can be split into two main sections: the "temple town" consisting of Teramae and Sakuramachi, at Yakuo-ji Temple, and Hiwasaura (a general term for the vicinity of the harbor), which has developed since old times as a "harbor town" (river-mouth town). While Teramae and Sakuramachi are relatively newer areas that developed rapidly with the increase in visitors to Yakuo-ji Temple and progress in land transportation, Hiwasaura, home to shipping traders that rose to prominence beginning in the middle of the Edo Period as well as a "manor house" (later the district offices), flourished as a political, economic, and cultural center of the Kaifu district through the Meiji Period. In particular, the various cultural contributions of the shipping (trade) business, led by "Taniya", had a massive impact on the town's construction and the livelihoods of its people. This can be seen, for example, in the old townscape of Hiwasaura.

The chosa in Hachiman Jinja shrine's fall festival first were brought here from Sakai city by Taniya, and it is said that in his youth Hoin, a hero from the end of the Edo Period, worked as a "cook" on a Taniya merchant ship.



Photos from trolling in Hiwasa



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Carefully prepared Illustrated walking map to the Hiwasa district in the town of Minami



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