

Regions in Kyushu visited by Tamikichi

I trained a lot!

Kato Tamikichi left for Kyushu in February 1804 to study porcelain production. He reached Amakusa in Kyushu after a trip of about one month. After studying at the kiln of Ueda Gensaku in Takahama, Amakusa, he spent 2 years training at the kiln of Fukumoto Nizaemon in Ichinose Sarayama, Saza, where he devoted himself to learn how to make porcelain.

Saza



Ichinose Sarayama Kiln Site in Saza

(designated as a historic site by Nagasaki Prefecture)

Tamikichi spent 2 years training at this kiln.



View of Saza



Zanshin-no-sugi Cedar

Reportedly planted by Tamikichi when he left Saza.

Kyushu



Amakusa



Takahama Sarayama Kiln Site

Kiln where Tamikichi trained when he first reached Kyushu.



Tokoji Temple

Temple where Tamikichi stayed during his training in Kyushu.



In the footsteps of Kato Tamikichi



Kato Tamikichi was the second son of the potter Kato Kichizaemon. He could not take over the business of the family since the rule at that time was that only the first son could inherit the business.

When he was working together with his father Kichizaemon at developing new fields in Atsuta, Nagoya, he drew the attention of Tsugane Bunzaemon, the overseer for the Atsuta region in the Owari Domain, and eventually helped him with his research in Nankin ware. Nankin ware is an excellent example of blue and white porcelain. In September 1801, Tamikichi could finally achieve small plates and other small objects of blue and white porcelain. However, he still had difficulties making green bodies and ceramic glaze and could not produce objects similar to Hizen ware from Kyushu, which was highly valued at that time for its quality and refinement.

In the early spring of 1804, Tamikichi received the help of potter friends and other people from Seto, and asked for the assistance of Tenchu Osho, a monk born in Seto from Tokoji Temple in Amakusa, in order to begin a trip to study alone in Kyushu, which was the most advanced region regarding porcelain production. There, he learned how to refine the base material to make porcelain, how to prepare ceramic glaze and the firing process before returning to Seto in 1807.

Thanks to the production methods of Hizen porcelain brought by Tamikichi, the quantity of blue and white porcelain pieces made in Seto increased rapidly and this industry developed greatly. After this prodigious accomplishment, Tamikichi was enshrined in Kamagami Shrine as Jiso from Seto, which means "the pioneer of porcelain". Every year, the Setomono Festival, dedicated to pottery and porcelain, is held during the second weekend of September.

Life of Tamikichi

1772

Born as the second son of Kato Kichizaemon

1801

Worked with his father at developing new fields in Atsuta, and tried making blue and white porcelain

1804

Made a study travel to Kyushu

1807

Returned to Seto

1808

Use of the family name was authorized for the first generation only. He took the name of Kato Tamikichi

1824

Deceased at the age of 52

1826

Enshrined at the Kamagami Shrine



Statue of Kato Tamikichi

Statue made in 1937 by Kato Kensei, a Japanese famous sculptor.