

Nishijin Textile Center

[KITANO-NISHIJIN]

The Nishijin neighborhood is the birthplace of a type of traditional textile known as Nishijin-ori (Nishijin weave). These silk textiles were used to make high-end kimono, obi sashes, and related accessories, which were worn by the aristocracy, members of the imperial court, and wealthy merchants mainly on ceremonial and other special occasions.

The centuries-long history of Nishijin-ori can be explored in detail at the Nishijin Textile Center, a cultural facility that engages visitors with the industrial heritage of the Nishijin area and describes how its textiles helped define Kyoto culture from the Heian period (794–1185) onward.

The center serves as a venue for demonstrations by Nishijin-ori artisans, including the weaving of silk textiles on traditional looms, and sells a variety of handmade silk souvenirs as well as modern Western-style knitted crafts. The center also includes an exhibition room where visitors can learn about the process of silk production, from the cultivation of silkworms to the labor-intensive and intricate way in which threads are dyed.