

Mino Tesuki-Washi: Handmade Washi

Most of the washi paper that you can see and buy in Mino is branded as Mino Tesuki-washi. Like Hon-minoshi, Mino Tesuki-washi must meet strict requirements to carry the Mino name. The basic processes for both Hon-minoshi and Mino Tesuki-washi are the same. However, while Hon-minoshi uses only the inner bark fibers of the *kozo* (paper mulberry) plant grown in Daigo, Ibaraki Prefecture, Mino Tesuki-washi can also be made with *mitsumata* (*Edgeworthia chrysantha*) and *gampi* (several shrubs of the genus *Wikstroemia*).

Drying by machine

Another key difference is that Mino Tesuki-washi can be dried by machine, while Hon-minoshi is always dried in the sun. This makes it easier for washi makers to produce paper year-round. Visitors to the Mino Washi Paper Museum in Mino can try their hand at making several types of handmade washi.

Types of Mino Tesuki-washi

There are three common types of Mino Tesuki-washi: water-patterned *rakusuishi*, non-bleached *kigami*, and coarse *unryushi*. Water sprinkled on sheets of washi before drying creates patterned paper called *rakusuishi*. To make *kigami*, the inner bark fibers are not bleached by the sun and water, resulting in a warmer color. When the bark fibers are less refined, they create attractive patterns, producing washi known as *unryushi*. These papers are commonly used to make lanterns and fans, and some writing paper.