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Media Advisory

Centuries-old Japanese Woodcraft, Reinterpreted for Contemporary Living

**Live Artisan Demonstrations and Contemporary Wood Products at MAISON&OBJET
PARIS 2026**

Paris, France | 10–14 September 2026



“JAPAN WOOD × CRAFTSMANSHIP”, a special pavilion at MAISON&OBJET PARIS 2026, brings together live demonstrations by a certified master artisan and curated wood products in which centuries-old craft is reinterpreted for contemporary living.

Tenth-century bentwood vessels, preserved in volcanic ash, are the earliest physical evidence of a Japanese woodcraft still practiced today. A thousand years later, the same techniques are shaping tableware and furniture designed for modern European homes.

Visitors and media will have the opportunity to experience both the techniques that have shaped Japanese daily life for generations and the innovative wood design products they continue to inspire.

Live Demonstrations by a Master Odate Magewappa Artisan

A highlight of the pavilion will be live demonstrations by Yoshimasa Shibata, one of only 16 artisans in Japan certified as a “Traditional Craftsman” of Odate Magewappa — a nationally designated traditional craft from Odate City, Akita Prefecture, in northern Japan.

Since being established as an industry roughly four centuries ago, Odate Magewappa has been handed down from generation to generation as a highly refined artisan skill, using Akita cedar grown in the

surrounding forests.

At the pavilion, Mr. Shibata will demonstrate two of the craft's defining techniques. In *mage-kakou* (the bending process), natural Akita cedar softened in hot water above 80°C is bent in a single movement, guided solely by the artisan's fingertips. In *kaba-toji* (bark stitching), the seams are bound with wild cherry bark, as though the wood were being sewn together.

Presented at close quarters, the demonstrations offer a rare opportunity to witness firsthand the master craftsmanship that draws out the natural beauty and functionality of the material to create products designed to be cherished and maintained over decades.

From Tradition to Innovation

Traditional Japanese Crafts

The pavilion will feature a range of nationally recognized traditional crafts produced using techniques passed down through generations. Products on display will include:

- Odate Magewappa bentwood ware from Akita
- Hakone Yosegi-Zaiku marquetry
- Kokeshi wooden dolls
- Traditional Japanese lacquerware

These products embody craftsmanship — wood-carving, lacquering and steam-bending techniques — that has enriched daily life in Japan for centuries.



Contemporary Japanese Wood Design

Alongside the traditional crafts, the pavilion will present more than 40 curated items — including furniture, décor and tableware — that combine advanced Japanese woodworking with contemporary design.

Drawing on wood's natural qualities, such as its fragrance, thermal regulation, moisture absorption and antibacterial properties, these products offer fresh proposals for contemporary, sustainable European living spaces.

Japan's Circular Use of Forest Resources

Approximately 70% of Japan's land area is covered by forest, and around 40% of that forest area is planted. While planted forests account for only about 8% of the world's total forest area, Japan has one of the highest ratios globally — the direct result of a long-standing commitment to replanting seedlings after harvesting.

Wood products are remarkably eco-friendly materials: they absorb carbon dioxide as they grow, require comparatively little energy to process, and continue to store carbon throughout their lifespan as finished goods. The pavilion will introduce the European design community to Japan's approach to sustainable forestry and responsible timber use, offering insights into how environmental stewardship and craftsmanship can coexist.

Event Details

Event: MAISON&OBJET PARIS 2026

Dates: Thursday 10 – Monday 14 September 2026

Venue: Paris Nord Villepinte

Stand: Hall 6 — Stand N120 / P119

Pavilion: JAPAN WOOD × CRAFTSMANSHIP

Exhibitor page: maison-objet.com

This pavilion is presented as part of a Japanese Forestry Agency initiative to promote Japanese timber products internationally, and is operated by Gurunavi, Inc.

Media Opportunities

Media representatives are invited to:

- Interview exhibitors and project representatives
- Photograph and film exhibits and demonstrations
- Meet Yoshimasa Shibata, certified Traditional Craftsman of Odate Magewappa
- Watch live demonstrations of Magewappa bending and bark-stitching techniques
- Learn about Japanese traditional crafts and contemporary timber design
- Explore Japan's sustainable forestry and wood utilization initiatives

Media Contact

Kyodo News Digital (Press Liaison)

Tomoya Nishikawa / Shoko Kuribayashi

Email: inbound-t@kyodo-d.jp