

noh



A 600-year old form of theatrical drama. Strangely, many Noh plays feature ghosts as the main characters. The Noh program is taught by Tatsushige Udaka (Shite, Kongo School) and includes lessons on basic movements and demonstrations by the instructor. Participants have opportunities to see exquisite fans, costumes and masks which are actually used on stage.



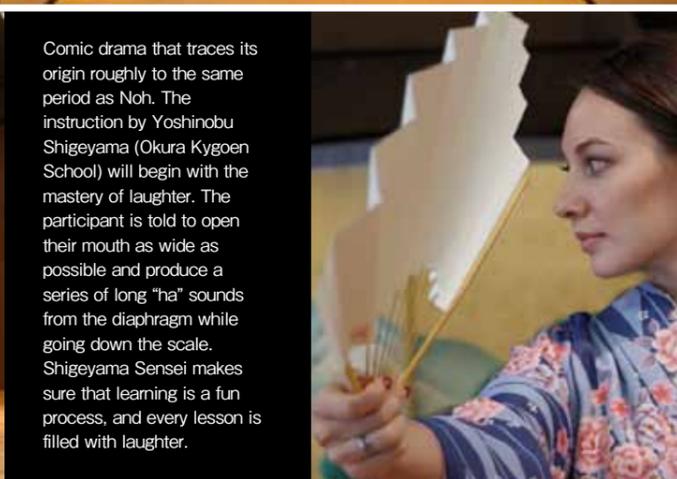
Ochaya-asobi



The arrival of Fukuhiro and Fukunae brightened up the dimly lit room. I was transfixed by the fascinating dance performed by the two ladies in front of the golden screen. Their dance repertoire consists of about 40 works. It was a dream-like 2.5 hours packed with entertainment and games



kyogen



Comic drama that traces its origin roughly to the same period as Noh. The instruction by Yoshinobu Shigeyama (Okura Kyogen School) will begin with the mastery of laughter. The participant is told to open their mouth as wide as possible and produce a series of long "ha" sounds from the diaphragm while going down the scale. Shigeyama Sensei makes sure that learning is a fun process, and every lesson is filled with laughter.

JQR highly recommends staying at a machiya

Machiya stays bring guests closer to the real charm of Kyoto.

Of course, that all depends on how much or how little you want to explore

Your creative horizons will expand enormously even when you are away from home, if a more flexible and carefree use of lodging is acceptable. Why not rent an entire machiya house to ensure privacy and pursue special activities? A wide variety of diversions may be arranged, including ochaya-asobi (dance, games and cultural conversation with geiko and maiko), traditional arts workshops and small private events with special guest artists right in your machiya. If you want a cozy dining experience in your home away from home, there are many caterers that can fulfill your gastronomic dreams. All you need is the willingness to try out new things to get the most out of your Kyoto experience.

Photography: Satoru Naito Text/JQR Editorial Staff

Kyoto is an old capital city where traditional customs still constitute an integral part of the daily lives of its residents.

To enhance your trip and add new dimensions to your Kyoto experience, we suggest you include some cultural activities in your itinerary, along with the usual tours of places of scenic beauty and historic interest.

We suggest Machiya Stays, which is a system that allows you to experience Kyoto like a native. You rent an entire machiya house in the inner city, and this house will be your home away from home. The people next door will instantaneously become your "life-long

neighbors." Each machiya house is stocked with everything you need to live like a native, and some have tatami rooms that may be connected together (by removing fusuma partitions) and converted into a spacious tatami banquet area. These houses are very functional. Since no meals are served by the machiya owner, you are free to go restaurant hopping in the city. If you are too lazy to go out, you can bring in some liquor and send out for some ryotei haute cuisine. In a nutshell, you decide what you get out of your stay, and the opportunity to experience it will present itself. What options will be available if you rent

machiya under this system?

According to Ms. Hongo of Iori Co., the operator of Machiya Stays, instruction in a full range of traditional arts, from the tea ceremony and flower arrangement to Noh drama, kyogen and ancient martial arts may be given right in your "home." First-class professionals active in their respective disciplines will visit your machiya to personally give lectures. For ancient martial arts, which require a spacious hall to exercise and a large number of participants, the Noh stage located at the rear of the Sujiya-cho machiya may be used. Aside from traditional arts activities, ochaya

asobi (entertainment by geiko (geisha) and maiko (apprentice geisha) as well as games and intimate conversations with them in a private party usually thrown in a teahouse) may be arranged and staged right in your own machiya. Ochaya asobi may sound too exclusive for first-timers, but the geiko and maiko in their iconic thick white make-up with bright red lips and huge Shimada chignon hairdos will perform music and dance to the tune of Gion Kouta and teach you traditional party games like Konpira-Fune-Fune and Tora Tora. Their elegant manners and soft-spoken Kyoto dialect is guaranteed to mesmerize you.