

# Proud producer of Gunnai textile

● Gunnai textile, the improved descendant of legendary Kai silk.

## FABRIC



Yamanashi Prefecture's eastern Gunnai region\* has been involved in textile production for over 1000 years. It was a hard sell for a mountainous region to attract merchants, but they found an answer in the production of light and luxurious textiles, like Kai silk: an excellent textile as beautiful as any ukiyo-e woodblock print, which would become widely known amongst fashionable individuals. Its translucent, layered depth, the 3D sensation of its alternating weave, and shifting appearance add to its allure. Kai silk was used as the inner lining of clothing, which necessitated the silk be both thin and strong. This makes applying colored patterns difficult, so its craftsmen became highly skilled. To date, this region continues to innovate upon tradition, to become a source of textiles known throughout the world.

\*Encompassing the municipalities of Fujiyoshida, Nishikatsura, Tsuru, Otsuki, and Uenohara

### Characteristics of Gunnai textile

#### [Pre-dyeing]

By dyeing the yarn before weaving, brilliant and luxurious patterns can be produced. Using different colors on warp and weft threads, stripes and Jacquard patterns can be produced with depth.

#### [High density]

An extraordinary thread count made Kai silk supple, even in thin layers. The same thin threads, used in abundance, make Gunnai textile feel and look luxurious.

#### [Fine denier]

Silk, rayon, and polyester are all raised as examples of low denier threads. Fine threads are harder to work with, but produce complex and beautiful textiles.

#### [Multiple applications]

The difficult properties of this silk-- pre-dyeing, fine denier, and its high density-- have given rise to specialists who create silk products like neckties, dresses, and umbrella cloth.

## TOPICS #1

The elegant sheen of  
pre-dyed textiles



Pre-dyed and luxurious cushions

As was the case with Kai silk, thin and light Gunnai silk textiles are flush with intricate designs. One reason for their quality is pre-dyeing. Textiles are dyed as sewn products, as bolts of cloth, or pre-dyed as individual threads. Individual threads are easily damaged, so it's a difficult process to dye them. But by using different colors on warp and woof threads, deep colors can be achieved. Complex compositions can be made if differing materials of differing color are used. This can give stitched drawings depth, and beautiful expressions of color. No wonder the masterfully woven Gunnai textile and its colorful beauty has attracted attention from around the world.

## TOPICS #2

Fujiyama Textile Project,  
hotbed for Gunnai production



A business-student collaboration project, the "GOSHUIN Note"

The Fujiyama Textile Project was established in 2009 as an industry-academic collaboration project between Gunnai textile producers and textile design students in Tokyo. To find new opportunities and reinvigorate the textile industry, passionate young craftsmen and talented student designers teamed up to create actual products, the results of which have had clear effects on Gunnai textile production. Many students that took part graduated and moved to Yamanashi to join production or branding businesses. The Fujiyama Textile Project continues to bring new life to Gunnai textile production and aim for new heights.

## TOPICS #3

What moves the hands  
that weave beauty



Technology helps "Komorebi" umbrellas express natural lighting

Textile research and development with modern technology have contributed to the growth of Yamanashi textiles. Through research, images of natural scenery were analyzed, and textiles were enhanced with natural gradation and new kinds of textures, creating textiles more beautiful than ever before. But for all the cutting-edge technology used these days, you can still find textiles produced painstakingly on shuttles. Gunnai area weavers treasure both tradition and technology in their diligent work. Every day, they proudly seek the heights of beauty in their creations.

## TOPICS #4

Outstanding elegance produced by  
technology and tradition



Yamanashi Jōmon Silk Scarf, made with patented techniques

The Yamanashi Prefecture Design Archive serves to digitize and share the traditional methods, patterns, and colors of Yamanashi. The swirling patterns of prehistoric "Jōmon" period pottery excavated in Fuefuki were used to make "Yamanashi Jōmon Silk Scarves." In cooperation with the University of Yamanashi, new and patented technology was used to digitize the patterns of pottery from abundant, local archaeological finds. The patterns were reproduced in silk with the natural gradation made possible with Jacquard looms. The raised Jōmon patterns in these lustrous textiles are pleasant to feel, a fine example of how Gunnai silk textiles are made to please.