



Manhole Best 100

1. Prologue

Japan has developed peculiar cultures of the closed environment surrounded by the sea. Japanese woodblock print, Ukiyo-e, is a representative example of them. It has a special beauty that Western culture never do. From the 18 century, Japan had already pursued its own unique way in art culture, on the other hand, Western countries had gone for realistic art. After hundred years, Ukiyo-e made a big influence on impressionist painters, including Gogh, Monet.

The flow of this stream has existed in Japan. Japanese people found round canvases in the streets. The first design manhole that has a picture of native things appeared in 90's. The attempt have spreaded around the country. The municipalities in Japan take part in this program and thousands of original manhole exists in Japan.

This book is written for foreigners to introduce the excellent Japanese culture. It has pictures with a caption of the top 100 beautiful manholes. They are selected on author's own authority.

History



Ise City : 伊勢市 (Mie Prefecture)

Ise City has the Grand Shrine of Ise which worship sun god "Amateras" in Japan. In Edo period between 17 to 19 centuries, visiting the Ise Shrine was caught on around the country in public.

Many people went to the Ise Shrine for their pray.



Takamatsu City : 高松市 (Kagawa Prefecture)

Yositsune Minamoto made an assault on a military unit of Taira at Yashima Island in 1185. A boat with Taira's princess and Japanese fan came down to the sea in the sunset and the boss, Yoshitsune, ordered his follower, Yoichi, to arrow through the fan. Yoichi could not decline, and finally shot an arrow. It heard that both of the military units moved when it hit the fan.



Shizuoka City : 静岡市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

After Ieyasu Tokugawa started with Edo Shogunate, he took over his business to his son and went into retirement at Shizuoka, where his career began. The manhole was made to celebrate 400th anniversary of Ieyasu's return. A red armor of samurai and Mt. Fuji were painted.



Ueda City : 上田市 (Nagano Prefecture)

Yukimura Sanada, the hero in the age of provincial wars in Japan, was from Nagano Prefecture. Sanada's family had a original family emblem of six coins, which was painted in the fragment of their family.



Chiryu City : 知立市 (Aichi Prefecture)

The Story of Ise, featuring an aristocracy in the ninth century, have been enjoyed by Japanese people. He came down to Chiryu in his transfer, and composed a famous Japanese poem. Initial letters of poem expressed the Japanese name of Iris.



Omiachiman City Anzucco Town: 近江八幡市安土町 (Shiga Prefecture)

Nobunaga Oda, a great person in history, built the most excellent castle in Anzucco. He is said to use old coins as a symbol of his military flag. He focused on money economy.



Nishio City Kira Town : 西尾市吉良町 (Aichi prefecture)

Yoshihisa Kira is a liege lord in Edo period. He is an enemy role in the Japanese Kabuki story "Treasury of Loyal Retainers" in Edo period, but in his hometown "Kira Town", was believed to be a ruler of virtue for his development of new field and water control. The levee he built has been still present today. His family crests of 5-3 Paulownia is carved on the manhole, which is now used for Japanese government crest.



Nagasaki City Dejima Town: 長崎市出島 (Nagasaki Prefecture)

Japan closed itself off from the outside world from 17 to 19 century.

Nagasaki City Dejima Town was only place to be allowed to trade with Netherlands. Now that the place is designate as a national historical site.



Iga (Ueno) City : 伊賀・上野市 (Mie Prefecture)

Ueno City exsisted once in the Iga, western area of Mie Prefecture. Today, It is included in Iga City. Iga Ueno City is famous for Ninja village, including Iga Ueno Castle and Ninja Mansionare major attractions in the city.

Fish



Yamatokoriyama City : 大和郡山市 (Nara Prefecture)

The aquafarming of goldfish is famous in the city of Yamatokoriyama. It started as a side business of samurai in Edo period. There are many ponds for goldfish in the city. The championship of goldfish scooping in Japan was held there every year.



Shimonoseki City : 下関市 (Yamaguchi Prefecture)

Shimonoseki City located in the most western area of the main island. Swellfish in Shimonoseki has good taste with poison in its organs. Eating of puffer had been banned for a long time, but puffer dishes became specialities in Shimonoseki when the first prime minister, Hirobumi Ito, said "It's unbelievable that people must not eat swellfish." That was why puffer dishes came to life again.



Chikuma City : 千曲市(Nagano Prefecture)

Chikuma river, also known as Shinano river, is the longest river in Japan.

In the old days, salmons run up to Matsumoto or Ueda City in Nagano Prefecture, but salmon fishing ended by the construction of dums in 1940s'. In 2010, a salmon was found in Ueda City as a result of recent releaseing with artificially hatched salmons.



Saga City : 佐賀市 (Saga Prefecture)

Saga Prefecture located on the Ariake Sea, western Japan. Ariake Sea has big tidal variation, and its mudflat is very large. A kind of gobioid, Mutsugoro, live there, and grilled dish become a delicacy in the region.



Yaizu City : 焼津市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

Yaizu City is famous for distant-water fisheries and seafood processing in Japan. The catch of bonito in Yaizu port rank first in Japan. There are a lot of Sushi restaurants in the city.



Ojiya City : 小千谷市 (Nigata Prefecture)

In the early 19 century,colorful carp, Nishikigoi, came into the world by mutation. Since then, studies and improvements of carp had been conducted.

Nishikigoi in Ojiya City recieved high evaluations from home and abroad.



Himi City : 氷見市 (Toyama Prefecture)

Various fish were caught in Toyama bay, northern Japan. Especially sardine in Himi City is famous all over the country. It has seven spots in the side of its body, called seven star sardine.



Yoshikawa city : 吉川市 (Saitama Prefecture)

There were a lot of small streams in Yoshikawa city, where we used to see many catfishes. The area had been urbanized since 1970s, and the number of them became small. But we can enjoy catfish dishes at the Japanese-style restaurants in the city.



Miyako City : 宮古市 (Iwate Prefecture)

Miyako City is a fishing village on the sea, but one of the disaster areas hit by earthquake and Tsunami in 2011. Miyako hosts a Miyako salmon festival every year on January 3rd. Anyone can catch a salmon by the hand in the pool.

Ship



Imari City : 伊万里市(Saga Prefecture)

Old Imari City once flourished as an export port of chinaware. Chinaware of old Saga Prefecture are called as "Koimari", very popular name in Japan. They were presented to Shogun and Imperial Court as tributes. Many of them are designated as national important cultural properties.



Shimoda City : 下田市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

The national closed-door policy which lasted 200 years in Edo period was ended by an arrival of black ships of Commodore Perry. He called on the opening of the country, since then, Japan proceeded into the turbulent era to form their own nation.



Kuwana City : 桑名市 (Mie Prefecture)

Old Tokaido route connecting Edo, old Tokyo, and Kyoto. The route includes a route by sea, so people once pontoon between Owari Atsuta and Kuwana. It was a traffic chokepoint where many accidents at sea happened.



Toyohashi City : 豊橋市 (Aichi Prefecture)

TOYOTA Motor is a giant automobile company originated in Aichi Prefecture in Japan. Toyohashi City is close to Toyota City, geographically.

Many cars are shipped from Toyohashi Port every day.



Sakai City : 堺市 (Osaka Prefecture)

Sakai City has a great historic town. There are many ancient tombs in the city, including the biggest tomb of emperor's ancestor. But the height of the city's history is Muromachi era, about 400 years ago. Trading with China or Europe brought in a large amount of money. Sakai city was called as "Oriental Venice" in those days.



Tsuchiura City : 土浦市 (Ibaraki Prefecture)

There is the second largest lake, "Kasumigaura", in Ibaraki Prefecture, eastern Japan. Many sail boats had been used for fishing until 1960s. But they came back to life in 1970s as sightseeing boats.



Minokamo City : 美濃加茂市 (Gifu Prefecture)

The canyon along with Kiso River in Minokamo City is also known as Japan Rhein, because of its similarity to the Rhein in Germany. The local firm once provide the 13-kilometer rafting tour in the steep stream until 2012. The traditional sightseeing spot was lost, already.



Toyama City : 富山市 (Toyama Prefecture)

In the past, a bridge made of boats spanned Zinzu River in Toyama Prefecture. It is believed that sixty-four boats linked by two steel chains were used. Two stone light objects were set both side of the river.

The manohole in Toyama Prefecture are listed by following page! (in Japanese)

http://www.pref.toyama.jp/cms_sec/1506/kj00000378-010-01.html

Castle



Osaka City : 大阪市 (Osaka Prefecture)

Hideyoshi Toyotomi had started building of Osaka castle in 1583.

At First, the castle had golden tile-roofs and black cement plaster walls. It was very gorgeous. In 1615, battling with Ieyasu Tokugawa, the castle bursted into flames. Ieyasu completed a new Osaka castle with white body as competition with Hideyoshi. However, the white castle also burned in 1665, then, Osaka city built the Osaka Castle, emulating the example of Hideyoshi castle.



Inuyama City : 犬山市 (Aichi Prefecture)

Inuyama Castle is one of the twelve no-rebuilding castle tower, designated a national treasure. It is very small compared to other three national treasure castle, Himeji Castle {World Cultural Heritage}, Matsumoto Castle, and Hikone Castle. The tower looks down Kiso River where the cormorant fishing in summer.



Shirakawa City : 白河市 (Fukushima Prefecture)

The city of Shirakawa, playing a gateway of northeastern Japan, has Shirakawa Komine Castle. The three stories tower of the castle was restored recently. The beauty of the castle was regarded as top three Grand Castle in northeastern Japan, along with Morioka Castle, Wakamatsu Castle. The earthquake hit in northeastern Japan in 2011, damaged the stonewall and set up a no-go zone around as of 2013.



Nakatsu City : 中津市 (Oita Prefecture)

There is The Nakatsu Castle in the outlet of the Nakatsu River.

The moat of the castle are drawing sea water and called one of the top three Grand Castle on the water, along with Imabari Castle, Takamatsu Castle.

In 1964, The simulated castle tower was built for sightseeing.



Ena City Iwamura Town : 恵那市岩村町 (Gifu Prefecture)

Iwamura Castle located in the mountain at a height of 717m above sea level.

The existing six-stage stonewall is must-see attraction. In 1572, the owner of the castle died of illness, his wife become a new lord. But the castle were captured by enemy, she decided to get married with the rival to help her corps with no-blood.



Nagoya City : 名古屋市 (Aichi Prefecture)

Aichi Prefecture has a lot of castles. The area was the center of the age of provincial wars. The Nagoya castle is very gorgeous. it has two golden killer whale statues on its roof. They are pride of residents in Nagoya City.



Okazaki City : 岡崎市 (Aichi Prefecture)

Okazaki City is the hometown of Ieyasu Tokugawa who established the Edo Shogunate. Now that the city is known for the production area of soy bean paste. Therefore, there are a lot of speciality dishes using bean paste in Aichi Prefecture.

Bridge



Yokohama City : 横浜市 (Kanagawa Prefecture)

Yokohama Bay Bridge was built in 1989. The overall length of the bridge is approximately 860 meters. Now that it is a symbolic landmark in Yokohama bay. The express way linked Kawasaki to Yokohama is on the bridge.



Prefecture-run Awajishima Park : 淡路島公園 (Hyogo Prefecture)

Awajishima is the largest island in Japan, except main four island.

You can look down Seto Inland Sea from the observation deck in the park.

Akashi Strait Big Bridge was built in 1998, which is the longest bridge, 3911 meters, in the world. The tower of the bridge in Kobe side has the elevator.



Soka City : 草加市 (Saitama Prefecture)

The speciality of the Soka City is a rice cracker, very famous in Japan.

The city has symbolic bridge, Hyakudai Bridge, made of the wood.

The name of the bridge originates in the old story of the Basho Matsuo "Okunohosomichi". The

word of Hyakudai means forever in Japanese.



Nagoya City : 名古屋市 (Aichi Prefecture)

Commemorating 100th anniversary from starting aqueduct supply, Nagoya City set the special manhole in the part of the city. The Nayabashi Arched Bridge over the Horikawa River is in the main street of the city. It was made of steel-frame, built in 1886. The bridge is designated as an important architectural structure for the city's landscape.



Isahaya City : 諫早市 (Nagasaki Prefecture)

The eyeglasses-like stone bridge is one of historic sites of Nagasaki Prefecture. It was built during edo period in 1839. About 2300 stones were used in the bridge. It was designated as an important cultural properties of Japan in 1958.

Imaginary Creature



Nakatsugawa City Naegi Town : 中津川市苗木町 (Gifu Prefecture)

Naegi feudal domain and castle once existed in the site of the present Nakatsugawa City in Muromati period, 15th century. The castle ruin has a giant stonewall using a natural rock surface. The folk tale of the castle said the color of the castle's wall turned into red in a night. It is believed that the doragon did it.



Fukui City : 福井市 (Fukui Prefecture)

Fukui City was destroyed in air raid in 1945, earthquake and washout of Kuzuryu River in 1948. But the city completed restoring from the three-time disasters. People in the town declares the phoenix town.



Ushiku City : 牛久市 (Ibaragi Prefecture)

The folk tale of the Ushiku pond said a monster "Kappa" lived in the pond. The monster have carapace in his back and dish on his head. One day, many people were drawn by the monster. People in the village got angry and captured him and binded on the tree. But one boy felt sorry, and released him. Since then, the monster mend his ways. The Kappa festival is held every year in the city.



Ikaho Town : 伊香保町 (Gunma Prefecture)

Ikaho Town is one of the representative hot springs of Japan. Since early times in Japan, demons are believed to live in the hot springs. People believed that a geyser shoot from the hot springs looked like an anger of devil.

Plant Life



Mito City : 水戸市 (Ibaraki Prefecture)

There is one of the top three Japanese garden, Kairakuen, in Mito City, which was build by Nariaki Tokugawa. More than three thousand Jpanese apricot trees, and one hundred kind of the trees were planted in the 13-hectare park. Japanese Plum Festival in Mito is held every year in March.



Matsuyama City : 松山市 (Ehime Prefecture)

The endemic camellia, Yabutsubaki, in Japan is symbolic flower in Matsuyama City. Patterns like water well, called Iyo Kasuri, are carved in the edge of the manhole. The familiar patterns were often seen in cotton kimono for summer.



Kumamoto City : 熊本市 (Kumamoto Prefecture)

The cultivation of plants caught on in Kumamoto Prefecture in Edo period. The hundreds of endemic camellia, Higo Tsubaki, has been grown even now. It has a lot of stamens compared with normal camellia.



Tachikawa City : 立川市 (Tokyo Metropolitan)

Millions of cosmos bloom here and there in the state-run Syowa Memorial Park in Tachikawa City. Many photographers and families visit the park in September. The flower is designated as a symbolic flower in Tachikawa City.



Kuwana City Tado Town : 桑名市多度町 (Mie Prefecture)

There is a Tado Grand Shrine in the Tado Town, which is famous for shrine ritual using horse riding. The representative landscape, iris, Japanese apricot, mountains, and Ibigawa River in Tado town was painted.



Nakakami Gun Kadena Town : 中頭郡嘉手納町 (Okinawa Prefecture)

Sokan Noguni was born in Okinawa Prefecture in 16th century. When he visit China, he larned Spanish potato and returned to Okinawa with potato plantlet.
The bronze statue of him was built in the restaurant plaza in the town.



Mishima City : 三島市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

The symbolic flower of the Mishima City is cherry blossoms. The City has the biggest shrine "Mishima Shrine" which built in the Heian period, about 1200 years ago. Many cherry trees are planted in the shrine, a lot of people visit to see them.



Nagano City : 長野市 (Nagano Prefecture)

Nagano Prefecture is famous for apple-growing area in Japan. Nagano original beeds, including Shinano Gold, Shinano Sweet, Alpine Otome gain in fame at the international competitive show.



Chiba City : 千葉市 (Chiba Prefecture)

Lotus and Little Terns were painted on the manhole. In 1951, Dr. Ohga investigated the ancient ruins in the Chiba City, and found some lotus seeds. He planted them and produced beautiful pink lotus flower on the following year. The flower was called as Oga Lotus.



Kikukawa City : 菊川市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

Shizuoka Prefecture is one of the major producers of green tea leaf. The drainage of Makinohara plateau plain in the Kikukawa City is good, suited for growing tea leaves. The manhole say
"Associate green tea with Kikukawa City."

Traditional Art Work



Iwakura City : 岩倉市 (Aichi Prefecture)

Japanese people have a custom of raising colorful carp banner to wish children's growth on 5th May. There are some carp banner shops which last for more than 400 years in the city. In the season in cherry blossoms, washing carp banner in Gojyogawa River is seasonal tradition.



Matsumoto City : 松本市 (Nagano Prefecture)

The manufacture of Matsumoto handful ball started in the middle of Edo period as side business of samurai family. Samurai's wife and kids made them to help out with household expenses. By the nature of the ball, Matsumoto handful ball was used for playing, but now is mainly used for present for ornament purpose.



Marugame City : 丸亀市 (Kagawa Prefecture)

Everyone knows Marugame City is famous for Udon wheat noodle. But few people know about 90 percent of paper fans in Japan is made in the city. The volume of the production is about 83 million per year.



Toba City : 鳥羽市 (Mie Prefecture)

Have you heard about the King of pearl, Kokichi Mikimoto? He is a first man who succeeded in farming of pearl shellfish. In Toba City, this place's specialties are seafoods, including oysters, analons, and shrimps.



Kuwana City : 桑名市 (Mie Prefecture)

Can you make an Origami crane? About two hundred years ago, a book of 1000-Origami-cranes was published. Forty-nine making methods for 2 up to 97 cranes from a piece of paper were presented in the book. In 1976, Kuwana Origami was designated as intangible cultural properties of Kuwana City. Kuwana Origami is explained as below.

<http://kuwananosenbazuru.com/gallery/index.html>

Literature



Fuji City : 富士市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

The tale of the Bamboo-Cutter is known as the oldest story in Japan literature. At one time, there was a fairy princess "Kaguyahime" inside the bamboo stem which a man cut. He raised her and the princess became a beautiful woman in three months. One day, the envoys came down from the moon to take her. Leaving for the moon, she presented a letter and elixir of immortality to an emperor in Japan. But indulging in his pain of saying goodbye, he ordered his subordinates that the items would be burned in the top of the highest mountain close to the moon in Japan. Since then, the mountain was called as "Fujisan {Mt. Fuji}". The word of "Fuji" means no death or immortal in Japanese.



Okayama City : 岡山市 (Okayama Prefecture)

Momotaro is the most famous fairy tale story in Japan. The legend of the story remains in Okayama City. Momotaro was born from a big peach. He made a companion of animals, dog, monkey, and pheasant by using rice dumplings. They completed extermination of devils.



Yugashima City : 湯ヶ島市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

Yasunari Kawabata won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1968. His best known work is "Izu no Odoriko", means a female dancer in Izu City. Yugashima is in Izu Peninsula. A young man suffering from loneliness started his journey to free from his public life. In his way to Izu, he bumped into a group of traveling entertainer. He took a romantic interest in a young girl in the group.



Tatebayashi City : 館林市 (Gunma Prefecture)

There is an old temple "Morinji" in the Tatebayashi City, which is associated with a fairy tale "Bunbuku Chagama". Chagama is a kettle for tea.

One day a man find a trapped Japanese raccoon. He feel sorry for the animal and released it. At that night, the raccoon came his home in gratitude. Then, It changed itself into kettle and asked him to sell as a kettle for money. He sold a Buddhist priest next day. Immediately, the priest boiled the kettle. But the raccoon couldn't stand heat, and revealed a half of its original figure. Then, it ran away from the temple to his house. Secondly, it offered a circuse to put itself on show. The idea succeeded and the man became a billionaire.

Temples and Shrines



Ikoma Gun Ikaruga Town : 生駒郡斑鳩町 (Nara Prefecture)

One of the world's cultural heritage of Nara located in Ikaruga Town. It's a Horyuji Temple. But the tower on the manhole is three-story one, so it may be a tower of Hokkiji Temple. It's the oldest tower which was built in 706.



Nakatado Gun Kotohira Town : 仲多度郡琴平町 (Kagawa Prefecture)

The central grand Konpira shrine of Konpira shrines across Japan located in Kotohira Town.

Konpira, the god of the sea, is giving many people faith.

The central grand Konpira has a very long stone stairway, a total of 1368 steps up to the top shinto shrine. There are a lot of souvenirs stores the both side of the steps.



Ise City Futami Town : 伊勢市二見町 (Mie Prefecture)

Futami town is scenic spot in Mie Prefecture. Two rocks stuck out from sea level are called as "Meotoiwa", which means married couple. They have a lot of faith from the local people. Many people visit there on New Year's Day and greet the rising sun.

Landscape



Kitasaku Gun Karuizawa Town ; 北佐久郡軽井沢町 (Nagano Prefecture)

Karuizawa town is famous for post station looking up Mt. Asama since early times. Now there are many hotels and resort villas in the town.

We can find white birch trees all over the place.



Tomi City : 東御市 (Nagano Prefecture)

The post station of the northland way, "Umino town" located in Tomi City. Many tourists visit the quaint old streetscape, which is now preserved as a historic site. The street is used for a main way to transport gold of Sado island.



Fujieda city : 藤枝市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

Fujieda city located in the west outskirts of Mt. Fuji. We can see it on very clear days. The city's symbolic bird, Japanese bush warbler, and flower, Japanese wisteria are painted.



Oamishirasato City : 大網白里市 (Chiba Prefecture)

Oamishirasato City is located directly on the Pacific Ocean, having a part of the 66-kilometer-length beach. We can see the rising sun on the sea level.



Fuji City : 富士市 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

Fuji City located in the south outskirts of Mt. Fuji. The name of the city is named after Mt. Fuji. In 2013, Mt Fuji is designated as World Heritage Site. Mt. Fuji is representative mountain of Japan, and known as a symbolic mountain of Japan all over the world.

Bird



Himeji City : 姫路市 (Hyogo Prefecture)

There is the world heritage site, Himeji Castle, in the city of Himeji. It is called as the castle of egrets , because of the whiteness of the castle's wall. The city's bird and flower, egret and egret flower, are painted in the manhole of fire hydrant.



Kusiuro City : 釧路市 (Hokkaido)

Many Japanese red-crowned cranes comes to Kusiuro bog in winter every year.
They are designated as protected species in Japan.



Jyoetsu City : 上越市 (Nigata Prefecture)

Many swans come from Siberia to Nigata Prefecture to make it through the winter. Asahiike Pond in the Jyoetsu City is famous swan's visit spot.
The maximum number of coming swans is about 100 between October and March.



Gifu city : 岐阜市 (Gifu Prefecture)

"Ukai" is the Japanese ancient fishing method catching Japanese trouts by using tamed cormorants. It is performed in the Nagaragawa River in the Gifu City from May 11 to October 15 every year. The first Ukai was done 1300 years ago.



Choshi City : 銚子市 (Chiba Prefecture)

Choshi City locate in the east of Honshu island. There is no island but sea ,the Pacific Ocean, in the east of the town. The city is one of the most famous fishery harbour. Many seagull are seen in the town. The catch of sardine is one of the highest in Japan.



Ichihara City : 市原市 (Chiba Prefecture)

Ichihara City has the highest number of golf course in Japan, in addition, the shipment value of industrial products is second largest around Japan after Toyota City in Aichi Prefecture. We can hear the voice of bush warbler in the mountain area of the city, such as golf course.



Abiko City : 我孫子市 (Chiba Prefecture)

Abiko City has Teganuma Pond where many migrant birds come in the winter. The pond has an area of 149 square kilometers. Mandarin ducks on the pond were painted on the manhole.

Rarity



Yokohama City Totsuka-Ku : 横浜市戸塚区 (Kanagawa Prefecture)

The long-distance relay race "Hakone Ekiden" held on January 2 and 3 every year. The runners of Kanto area universities pass string-style baton, and connect Tokyo Nihonbashi to Hakone Ashinoko. Totsuka is one of the relay points of the relay. Totsuka was once post station of Tokaido Way. The image of the manhole looks like time-travel scene.



Nagano City : 長野市 (Nagano prefecture)

The 18th winter Olympic Game was held in 1998 in Nagano City. Japan won double-digit medals such as ski jump and speed skate. The monument manhole is set in front of the Olympic stadium.



Kusatsu City : 草津市 (Siga Prefecture)

Kusatsu City close to Kyoto is meeting point of Nakasendo Way and Tokaido Way. Both ways connect Tokyo to Kyoto in different routes in Edo period.

Nakasendo is steeper in mountains, Tokaido has sea route checkpoint.

Which way should you choose?



Yokohama City: 横浜市 (Kanagawa Prefecture)

England has a premium league of soccer. Italia has a Serie A. Japan has a Japan league. International Stadium Yokohama is a YOKOHAMA MARINOS club's home ground. The team's official mascot character is painted on the manhole.



Saitama City : さいたま市 (Saitama Prefecture)

While Saitama City is known for soccer town, because it has two famous soccer J-league club teams. This fire hydrant cover looks like a soccer ball.

Animals



Kisarazu City : 木更津市 (Chiba Prefecture)

All Japanese people know the song of Japanese raccoon in Shojyoji Temple. Shojyoji Temple locates in Kisarazu City. The old songs say that many raccoons appeared at moonlight night. Now, a lot of statues are placed in the city.



Kamaishi City : 釜石市 (Iwate Prefecture)

Tiger dance comes down as a traditional performing arts in the city of Kamaishi. The reason of the origin of the performance is unknown, but it existed in Edo period already.



Odate City : 大館市 (Akita Prefecture)

The documentary of a promising dog " Hachi " was translated in English in movie in 2009. The dog was from Odate City, his dog breed was Akita type.

The bronze statue is set up in front of Odate Station, as well as Shibuya.



Nara City : 奈良市 (Nara Prefecture)

Deer is believed to be a envoy of God in Nara City. Many deers are on the loose in Nara Park, where the world cultural heritage, Todaiji temple, exist. Bowing deers to get the rice cracker live nowhere but Nara.



Adachi Ku Takenotsuka Town : 足立区竹ノ塚町 (Tokyo Metropolitan)

There is a Entenji Temple, which is associated with Issa Kobayashi in Takenotsuka. He is a poet in Edo period. He is believed to find the frog's fighting at the pond of the temple. Frogs playing sumo wrestling are painted in the manhole.



Gero city :下呂市 (Gifu Prefecture)

Gero city is famous for hot springs. While Japanese frogs cry with voices such as "Gero Gero". This manhole is painted named after the voice of them.

The frog in the manhole has a towel to go to hot springs.



Suzuka City : 鈴鹿市 (Mie Prefecture)

Suzuka City is famous for the venue of Formula One Car Race in Japan.

But actually, most parts of Suzuka City are idyllic or rural. Many red dragonflies visit in autumn the area from neighbor mountains.



Matsudo City : 松戸市 (Chiba Prefecture)

Matsudo City doesn't have a zoo, so any koala isn't there. But the city established a sister city relationship with Boxhill in Australia in 1971. Then, Matsudo city designated eucalyptus as symbolic tree of the town.



Akishima City : 昭島市 (Tokyo Metropolitan)

In 1961, an ancient whale fossil was discovered in the Akishima City. The species of whale had not been found ever, so it was named as "Akishima Whale." It was unearthed from the 1.6 million-year-old stratum. There is no precedent around the world that all of whale's skeletons were unearthed with a complete form.



Toyokawa City : 豊川市 (Aichi Prefecture)

The city of Toyokawa originates from temple town. There is one of the three major Inari Shrine (Temple) which mythologize foxes as emissaries of God in the city. Inari faith is believed to have a effect of prosperous business.

Buildings



Shirakawa Village : 白川村 (Gifu Prefecture)

A part of Shirakawa village were known for A-frame houses with thatch roof. Shirakawa village locates in the heavy snowfall area, so the roofs need steep slopes to fall snow naturally. In 1995, the area was registered as a World Heritage Site.



Aki City : 安芸市 (Kochi Prefecture)

Nora Clock Tower is in Aki City in Kochi Prefecture. It was made in Meiji period, and installed to the local landlord's house. The clock tick down slowly in the center of the countryside, where still has been same as before.



Akashi City : 明石市 (Hyougo Prefecture)

Akashi Municipal Planetarium is located at 135 degrees east longitude. The clock tower plays a role as indicator of Japan Standard Time Meridian. The current clock is third generation, which was installed in 1997. The second generation clock was stopped by the damage of earthquake in 1995.



Sapporo City : 札幌市 (Hokkaido)

Sapporo City is the largest city in Hokkaido, northern Japan. There is a tower clock in the center of the city. It became symbol of Sapporo City, and was designated as an important cultural property in Japan. But in terms of sightseeing spots, it is believed as one of the tree major disappointing spots, due to its surrounding scenery.



Izunokuni City Nirayama Town : 伊豆の国市韮山町 (Shizuoka Prefecture)

The arrival of the black ships of Commodore Perry opened the door of Japan to the World in 1853. Simultaneously, Japan faced a threat from overseas. To reinforce the country's military, Japan built the first reverberating furnace in Nirayama Town, where close to the site Perry arrived at.



Kawagoe City : 川越市 (Saitama Prefecture)

The symbolic tower and old town landscape of Kawagoe City were painted. Kawagoe City originated in castletown. The city is called "Little Edo", meaning little old Tokyo. About 6.2 million people visit sightseeing spots in the city.

2.16 After Earthquake (2)



Urayasu City : 浦安市(Chiba Prefecture)

Urayasu City is famous for the Tokyo Disney Resorts. A large part of the city originally was under the sea. In other words, it is a reclaimed area now. The earthquake in 2011, which marked intensity 5 Upper on Japanese standard, damaged Urayasu City indirectly. The ground liquefactions were caused by the earthquake all over the city. A manhole in the reclaimed area stuck out from the ground.



Takasu central park in Urayasu City : 高洲中央公園 (Chiba Prefecture)

These manholes were parts of the earthquake-proof water storage tank for residents at the time of disaster. However, the earthquake in 2011 was larger than expected, so they couldn't stay and poked through the ground. The Urayasu residents decided to keep the manholes unrepaired as a memento of the earthquake.

3.Epilogue

It is said that there are 789 cities, 746 towns, and 184 villages in Japan. A large part of the municipalities has original manholes today, so we are able to find more than 1500 different manhole in Japan. Until now, I, the author of this book, could capture more than 600 images of them. I have collected only 40 percent of them. Rome wasn't built in a day.

All manhole pictures the author collected are posted on the website.

<http://spotnote.yahoo.co.jp/maps?layer=custom&v=3&id=5cc0516de9321b514ebd8c653d31c3d4>

If you visit Japan, please look down on the street. You can find a new treasure.

Finally, thank you for your reading to the end.