



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



City of Design  
**KOBE** 

- Member of the UNESCO
- Creative Cities Network
- since 2008

# 10 Things to know about

# **KOBE** UNESCO City of Design

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## **Overview of Kobe**

Kobe is located on the central south coast of Japan. It is the 6<sup>th</sup> largest city with a population of 1.5 million, an area of 550 square kilometres and a gross city product of approximately six trillion yen. The unique landscape of the city ringed by mountains and the ocean has long been a lure for many residents and visitors. Kobe is also one of Japan's leading centres of fashion and apparel industries.

Kobe, a gateway port to Japan when the nation opened itself to the world in 1868, is open-minded and unique due to its active incorporation of foreign cultures into its own culture. The citizens of Kobe participate in the creative life of their city, which was clearly seen after the 1995 earthquake when the citizens played a significant role in rebuilding their city.

## **Community Designs**

### **Former Foreign Settlement of Kobe**

In well-ordered blocks into which modern western city designs were introduced, cityscapes aligning the historical architectures of museums, boutiques and offices that retain vestiges of the port opening period have been handed down in cooperation with community organizations.

### **Ruralscape**

Although a large city, Kobe has panoramic rural landscapes in the suburbs with approximately 770 thatched houses remaining there. Kobe has made joint efforts with its local residents to protect its lush green natural environment and the favorable ruralscapes woven through the combination of people's activities and nature.

## **Daily life Designs**

### **Kobe Fashion Week**

Kobe has organized in each urban area fashion design-related events intensively before and after "Kobe Collection," Japan's greatest fashion show that attracts 10,000 attendees in total.

### **KOBE DESIGN FESTA**

To enable citizens to understand that design is close to their lives and to enjoy these designs, Kobe has intensively organized a wide spectrum of design-related events. The KOBE DESIGN FESTA has also played a part as a hub for disseminating designers' daily activities in Kobe.

## **Manufacturing Designs**

### **Design Renaissance Kobe PROJECT**

This project is intended to conduct training in the form of seminars for manufacturing by famous designers in Kobe's life culture-related industries, aiming at the creation and dissemination of new Kobe designs.

### **Forum of Design-Oriented Company Representatives in KOBE**

This forum is intended to open designers, owners and citizens' eyes to the importance of management with design by welcoming as guest speakers prominent designers and representatives of companies and organizations that have adopted the principle and philosophy of design-focused management.

## **Major Design Institutions and Museum**

### **Kobe Design University**

This university houses a wide array of departments such as "Graphics," "Fashion," "Products," and "Architecture." In spring 2008, a creative center with a huge atelier space and state-of-the-art equipment was completed.

### **Kobe Fashion Museum**

Opened in 1997, this official museum operates under the theme of Japan's first fashion designs. The museum is equipped with a library of 28,000 fashion-related books, an exhibition room designed to introduce clothing from various perspectives, a circular hall that from outside creates the image of a UFO, and a designer-participatory museum shop.

### **Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art**

This museum, established in the Kobe New Eastern City Center "HAT Kobe" in 2002, houses more than 7,000 art pieces. The facility was designed by Tadao Ando, one of Japan's finest architects.