

# Japanese Wedding

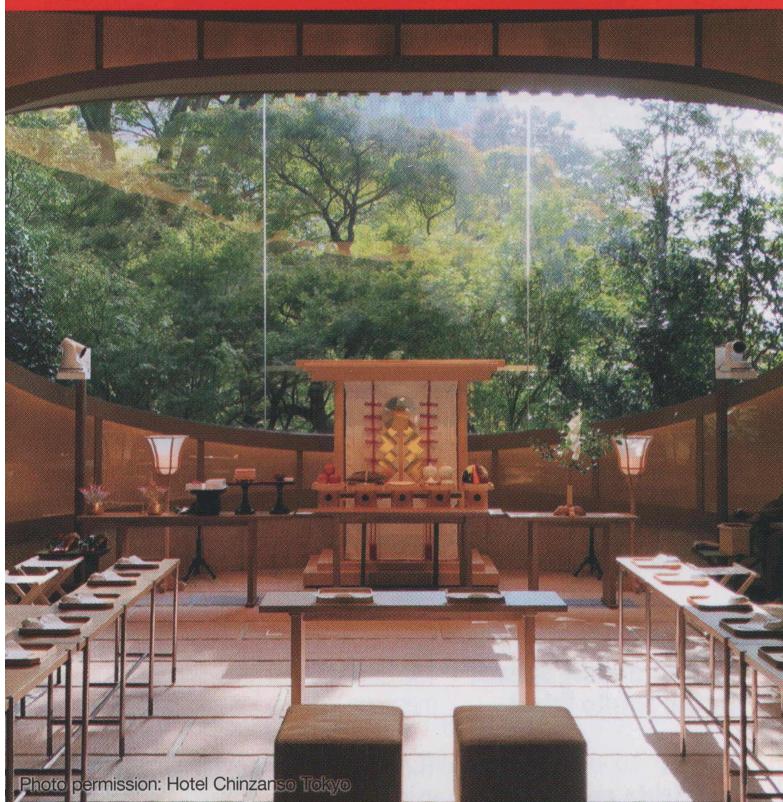


Photo permission: Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo

In Japan,  
it is believed that  
the Deities bring  
people together.



② 祝詞奏上

NORITO  
SOUYOU

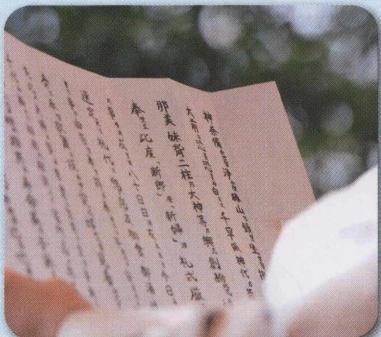
PRAYER  
READING



**Norito** is a prayer written in classic Japanese and is offered to the Deities by the Shinto priest.

In the wedding ceremony, this is for showing respect to the Deities, reporting a marriage to Them and wishing for the everlasting happiness of a new family that the bride and groom will create.

The time when the Shinto priest reads out the prayer with all his heart is an important moment in which the bride, groom and all participants are connected to the Deities. The couple and attendees join their hearts together holding a bow.



③ 椿山の舞

TSUBAKI  
YAMA  
NO MAI

DEDICATION OF  
THE SACRED  
DANCE



**Tsubakiyama-no-Mai** is one of the holy dances performed by Shinto acolytes, or **Miko**. Please enjoy its sacred beauty and the background music performed with Japanese traditional instruments.

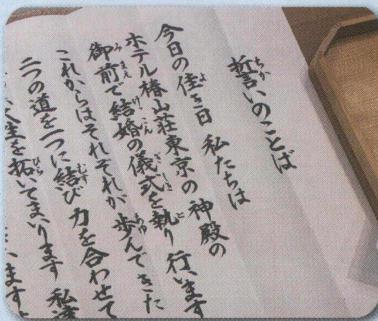


誓詞奏上  
SEISHI SOUJO

READING OF  
VOWS



The bride and groom take marriage vows in front of the altar. They promise to love each other and stay together as long as they live, render thanks to their ancestors and pray for their prosperity and the Deities' protection.



On this special day, we will hold a wedding ceremony in front of You in this shrine of Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo.

From now on, we will tie our lives together and walk hand in hand in our life journey.

May You bless us as we vow to love each other forever.

⑤  
三  
獻  
の  
儀

SANKON  
NO GI

## EXCHANGE OF NUPTIAL CUPS



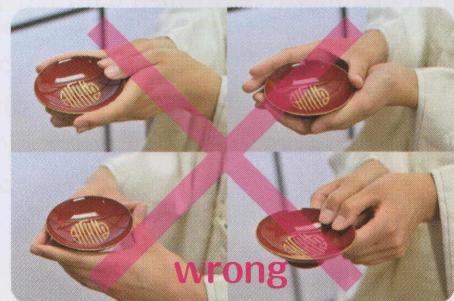
One of the things that are treated with care in Shinto wedding is sacred sake, or *Omiki*. The sake offered to the Deities acquires divine power and turns into *Omiki*.

In the ritual called *Sankon-No-Gi*(exchange of nuptial cups), the bride and groom take turns sipping *Omiki* from cups of three sizes: small, medium and large. The smallest cup represents the past=gratitude toward their parents and ancestors, the medium one the present=living together and the largest one the future=peace and prosperity of the new family. They sip *Omiki* three times from each of the cups, with the total being nine times. Three is said to be a positive number and nine,which equals three times three, the most positive in *Onmyodo* (ying-yang philosophy). To put it in another way, this ritual has been conducted since ancient times with hope to receive superlative power from the Deities.

Also in the ceremony of *Shinzokugatame-No-Gi*, not only the couple but also their families share *Omiki* to tighten bonds between them.

### 【Procedure of the Exchange of Nuptial Cups】

- ① First, the groom takes a sip from the smallest cup. It's a proper manner to receive and hold it with both hands. (Support the cup from underneath with your forefinger and middle finger and place your thumb on the lip of it.)
- ② A cup of *Omiki* corresponds to three sips of it. In Shinto wedding, first two sips are regarded as taken by only moving the cup upward and downward twice in the vertical direction.
- ③ For the smaller cup, the groom drinks first and gives it to the bride. The medium one is passed from the bride to the groom and the largest one starts with the groom again.



### Salute in the Shinto Wedding

About Twice bowing, twice clapping  
and one-time bowing

Bowing, or *Ojigi* is the act of bending your lower back in order to greet or show gratitude or respect. In the wedding ceremony, you are supposed to bow while standing. First inhale while bending your lower back, exhale while holding the bow and inhale again while straightening your lower back up. Please make a 90 ° bow when doing twice bowing, twice clapping and one-time bowing after *tamagushi* offerings.

6  
玉串奉奠

TAMAGUSHI  
HOTEN

TAMAGUSHI  
OFFERINGS



The origin of the word *sakaki*, which is used for *tamagushi*, is said to be 'evergreen tree' , 'tree on the boundary between the Deities and humans' or 'sacred tree' because it is green all year around.

*Tamagushi* is a branch of sakaki tree to which a zigzag strip of paper called *Shide* that symbolizes lightning(= Gift from the Deities that enriches the soil) is attached with a hemp string. It is believed that *tamagushi* attracts the Deities' presence and acts as a bridge between Them and humans.

*Tamagushi* offerings is a ritual in which *tamagushi* are offered to the Deities with a prayer. This is conducted after making wedding vows. Also the participants bow with the bride and groom praying for their happiness.

**[Procedure of Tamagushi offerings]**

- ① Receive *tamagushi* with both hands. Place it on your left palm and hold the root with your right hand.



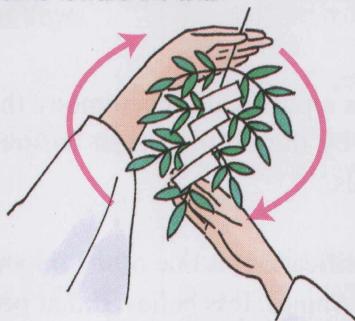
- ② Turn the root of *tamagushi* toward you with your right hand and slide your left hand under it.



- ③ Bring the *tamagushi* close to your face and pray for several seconds.



- ④ Hold the upper part of the *tamagushi* with your right hand and rotate it clockwise so that the root points toward the altar.



- ⑤ Offer *tamagushi* on the table.



- ⑥ Calm your mind. Bow twice, clap twice and then bow once in front of the altar.

