

Hanafuda Cards

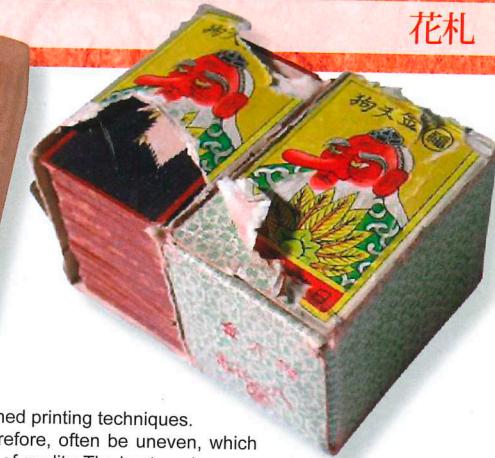
花札



Currently, hanafuda packs are produced with a large sheet explaining and showing the best combinations and how points are awarded.

Number 1 Hanafuda Maker...

Nintendo and Fujisarō Yamauchi received countless awards and medals from several Imperial governments for the quality of their craftsmanship. These awards are still displayed on Nintendo hanafuda packs to this day.



Tengu

Hanafuda were initially made by hand, using old-fashioned printing techniques. The colour and the overall quality of cards would, therefore, often be uneven, which required employees to sort cards according to their level of quality. The best cards were used in sets of the Daitōryō series, whereas lower quality cards were used in sets of Tengu and Kitengu series. These were not as beautiful as their higher priced equivalents.



Hanafuda boxes represent excellent evidence of the company's evolution. Of the three illustrations above (from left to right) a model sold under the first "legal" name of the company Yamauchi Nintendo, then Nintendo Koppai, and finally the current Nintendo Co. Ltd. The Marufuku brand (the circle around the ideogram) is still present.

□ And today?

It is still possible to buy new hanafuda packs in Japan today, but Nintendo's range is limited to three standardised series: Daitōryō, featuring Napoléon's portrait, Tengu (illustrated with the red faced old man with a long nose), and Miyako no Hana (meaning "flowers of the capital").

These are available in all department stores, specialty shops and even in some neighbourhood shops. Although illustrated in the same way as in the old days, cards and boxes are now made of plastic.

The only thing that varies from one series to another is the quality of the boxes and cards.

The most luxurious and expensive ones are the Daitōryō (¥2,000), the Tengu being a good compromise in value for money (¥1,500) whereas the Miyako no Hana is the cheapest (¥1,000).

