

**Katsushika Shibamata is
the Home of the Japanese Heart**

When Director Yoji Yamada and his staff were looking for a suitable shooting location for his new project, they made the journey to every possible candidate site in and around Tokyo for a place that best matches the image. Just as they were about to give up, they found Katsushika Shibamata, a town with an abundance of nature where a kind and warm way of life could still be found among its residents. Ever since, all of the movies in the *Otoko wa tsurai yo* series have been filmed here.

On February 13, 2018, the same Katsushika Shibamata was selected as the first National Important Cultural Landscape in Tokyo. The Cultural Landscape in Katsushika, Shibamata was formed through the lifestyles of the local people, their history and customs. Katsushika Shibamata, a place where a traditional air and atmosphere are still preserved, has been praised as one of Japan's most picturesque locations.

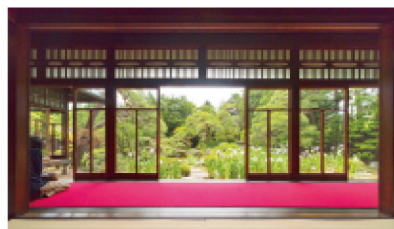
**Katsushika Shibamata is a Town
Where Abundant Nature and
Warm Hearts Interconnect**

Situated on the banks of the Edogawa River in northeastern Tokyo, water, greenery, and streets brimming with traditional downtown atmosphere blend together in Katsushika Shibamata. The heart of Katsushika Shibamata is the Shibamata Taishakuten temple and its accompanying temple road, the Taishakuten Sando. Officially named the Kyoei-zan Daikyoji, the temple is said to grant worshippers protection from misfortune, long life, and business prosperity.

The Yamamoto-tei, a modern Japanese building constructed and added on to from the late Taisho period (1912-1926) to the early Showa period (1926-1989), stands down the road from the temple. This beautiful estate blends shoin-zukuri style Japanese rooms with a modern, Western style room. The Yamamoto-tei's lush, archetypical shoin-zukuri style Japanese garden delights the eyes of visitors.

Ascend the embankment of the Edogawa River behind these two facilities and you'll be greeted by a refreshing breeze blowing off the surface of the water. The area is maintained as Shibamata Park by Katsushika City. Past the children shouting with glee as they play baseball on the dry riverbed, you'll find the Yagiri no Watashi, a manually poled ferry boat service which has been in operation for hundreds of years. The ferry is also known as the setting of the tragic parting of two lovers never to meet again in Sachio Ito's famous novel, *Nogiku no haka* (*The Wild Daisy*). Follow the river upstream while taking in the view of hilly Matsudo City and Ichikawa City sprawling in the distance on the opposite bank and you'll come to Mizumoto Park, which boasts the most beautiful riverside scenery in the Tokyo metropolitan area.

Also be sure not to miss the "Shibamata Seven Gods of Good Fortune," one of Katsushika Shibamata's best kept secrets. This seven temple mini pilgrimage can easily be walked in just under an hour.

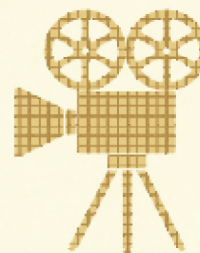


Yamamoto-tei



The Taishakuten Sando leading to the Shibamata Taishakuten temple

**Katsushika Shibamata
Tora-san Museum
&
Yamada Yoji
Museum**



TORA cafe



Otoko wa tsurai yo

The *Otoko wa tsurai yo* ("It's Tough Being a Man") movies series originally started as a television drama. Director Yoji Yamada, fascinated by actor Kiyoshi Atsumi's vivid recollections of the street vendors he looked up to as a boy, expanded on the image the actor painted, creating a story brimming with the atmosphere of Japan's traditional downtown neighborhoods interwoven with the characters of traveling vagabond Tora; Sakura, a younger sister who is more like a responsible older brother to Tora; his uncle and aunt operating a dango dumpling shop along a temple road; and their colorful neighbors.

When the series ended with Tora dying after being bitten by a poisonous snake, the television station was flooded with angry protests. Moved by this response, Yamada planned a movie version released the following year in August 1969 titled *Otoko wa tsurai yo*. Ultimately, in all, 49 films including a special compilation movie were created up to 1997, and even today this popular series remains a national favorite.