

Welcome to Kobe Kitano Museum!

The origin of the historic building of the Kobe Kitano Museum dates back well over a century, and it was once used as the US Consulate.

This 'Ijinkan,' or a foreign residence was constructed in 1898 and used as a US consulate since soon after World War II until 1978. The Kobe Kitano Museum opened in 1996, the year after the tragic Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake.

We have long been holding the permanent exhibition of original painting of a children's book author, Moe Nagata, but this time renewed it to 'Painters of Montmartre – Kobe Kitano and Paris Montmartre's Friendship Exhibition' since April 2011.

The museum is a place representing the culture and history of the exotic Kobe Kitano district and showcasing its charm.

Data of the buildings

- Completed in 1898
- Structure: Main building + annex; wooden; hip roof and pantile roof; single-storied; weatherboard (the south wall improved to gunite shooting and flat-stone paneling)
- Remarks: Kitano-Yamamoto district's traditional building #6

(The designated name is 'Former US Consulate.')

- Facilities:

Main building: Exhibition hall, museum shop, and café

Annex: Museum café



Montmartre, the famous place attracting painters and tourists from around the globe, is situated high up on a hill looking down the whole city of Paris. As most of you know well, the place has been loved and lived by many celebrated artists, and still many artists gather around.

The Montmartre District signed a friendship agreement with the Kobe Kitano District, and Montmartre's artists' works are presented here in Kobe.

Montmartre, a district in Paris, always loved by artists

The Montmartre District sits in the 18th ward of Paris and features stone-paved slopes and long stairs, a picturesque scenery. From the Basilique du Sacré-Cœur atop the hill, you can see the entire landscape of the city, and the district always bustles with joyous tourists year-round.

In the early 19th century, Montmartre was just countryside spotted with windmills. Starting the middle of the century, it began to gain some vigor, turning to an entertainment district with bars and dancehalls. Many cabarets represented by Moulin Rouge brilliantly colored the city with music, songs, and dances. Attracted by the reasonable cost of living in this district, painters, poets, craftsmen, and foreign visitors settled down there at the end of 19th century to early 20th century. Montmartre was frequently drawn by many brilliant painters who lived in Paris and chosen as a location for many films. It is also one of the representative tourist attraction of the city of art, Paris.

Kitano Ijinkan (foreign residence) of Kobe and

Kobe's Kitano-Yamamoto District developed as an international port town during the Meiji Era, and many foreigners lived loving the environment of the residential area. People who lived in this area established the foundation of the current Kobe and led Kobe to the position of the world's fashion and gourmet leader and the place of unique culture.

Nowadays, Kitano is one of the largest tourist spot representing Kobe while many people live there. We are searching ways and doing activities to carry on the great cultural aspect streamlined with its historic value to the future generations. This is an essential attitude to develop the area yet further.

Ten years after the great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, Kitano and Montmartre signed a friendship agreement. Two districts share many specific characteristics in common such as their locations up on a hill and residential areas perfectly harmonized with tourist spots fascinating many tourists. Both districts will deepen the cultural exchange by knowing each other's history and attractive features, mutually stimulating and promoting the districts' development.

Interaction with Montmartre Tourism Association

Kobe Kitano Museum frequently communicates with the Montmartre Tourism Association and dispatches its personnel to visit the district to strengthen the friendship. The museum's exhibits and layout are decided by taking advice from the association into consideration. We hope you can feel the atmosphere of Montmartre, where world renowned artists have been turned out and also is a tourist spot of Paris.

An art work that symbolizes the friendship agreement sent by the Montmartre Tourism Association

Information about Kobe introduced in Montmartre Tourism Association's brochure

Galerie Roussard

Galerie Roussard is one of the most historic galleries that still exist in Montmartre. Julien Roussard is a current manager of the gallery, and all the Lautrec's artworks currently exhibited in the Kobe Kitano Museum by his courtesy.

Painters of the place du Tertre

At the Place du Tertre in Montmartre, some 200 to 300 painters are drawing and painting every day. Montmartre Tourist Association is supporting these painters, and the Kobe Kitano Museum decided to act in concert with this action by exhibiting and selling some of the Place du Tertre's artworks that were selected by the association.

Painters at the Place du Tertre

The Museum of Festivity

At the bottom of Montmartre is Musée de la Vie Romantique. At its open café, tourists and local people enjoy casual conversations. Getting a clue from this idea, the Kobe Kitano Museum expanded and improved the facility of open café and indoor café. These spaces are used to hold a variety of parties as well.

We are also making our efforts to make spaces upstairs festive and unique to Kobe under the concept of 'a space for communication and creation of new culture.'

How about reserving this Ijinkan for private use?

The museum of festivity nestled in Kobe's great history and culture

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