

Machiya Life

Scenes of a family and Nara Machiya

in Nara



奈良町家
NARA MACHIYA

Traditional townhouse, old-fashioned?
No, it's full of ideas for a happy life.
Find some clues for a rich life from the family's
daily life living in a Nara Machiya.



STORY 1
Doorway

Sweeping and splashing water
at the doorway is to start a
refreshing day.
Settle the dust, or cool-down
the front street.



merry voices
in the morning!

STORY 2
Tori-niwa
or Passageway

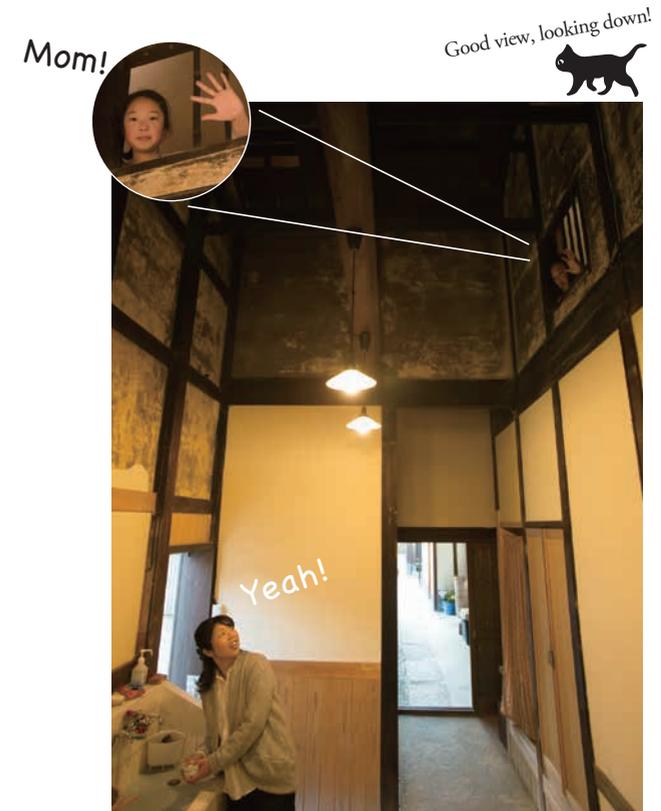
Friends in the neighborhood come to pick you up in the morning.
"Good morning!" "Bye, Dad!"
Mom goes to work with her children.

Place where neighborhood and family make connection

Passageway connected with the front street at the ground level is where the neighborhood and family keep relationship.
Neighbors or friends stop by for chatting, kids spend some time playing around.

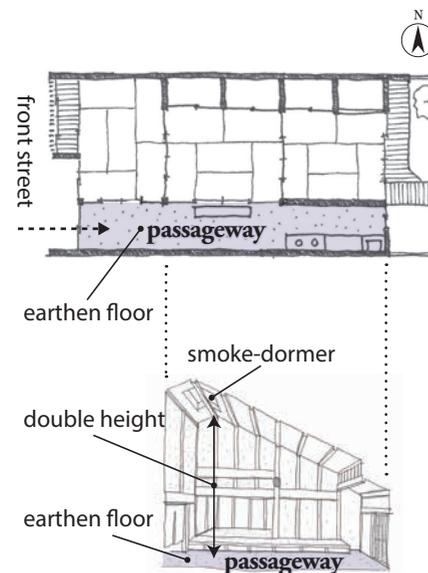
Family's comment

Thanks to the passageway, kids go to school without being late or leaving things behind, because friends come to pick them up.



Double height is fun and functional.

Passageway is double height up to the roof structure. High side windows or smoke-dormer make smoke get away from the kitchen.



Keywords of Nara Machiya

Passageway

A space that connects the street and backyard inside the main house. Used as entrance at the front and kitchen in the back. Suitable to outdoor & gardening work for its earthen floor. Also works as an alley when there is a house repair in the rear building, bringing large stuff through the house without taking shoes off. An unique space being both indoor and outdoor.



STORY 3

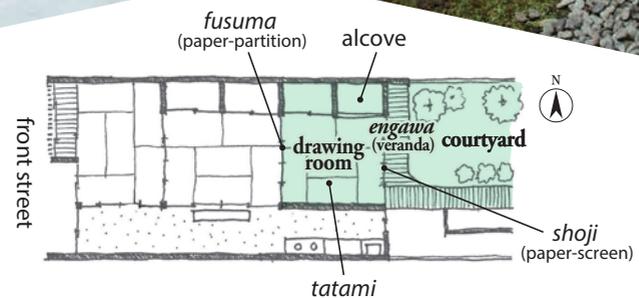
Drawing room —
Veranda —
Courtyard

Voices of children romping around in the courtyard.
Dad checking mails at engawa enjoying some fresh air.
Snapping sound of Mom cutting flowers for the alcove decoration.
Maybe somebody's coming over today.

Good distance among the family members
Comfortable relationship with nature

Interior is divided vaguely with *shoji* or *fusuma*.
Able to feel the family being together,
even if each member is spending their
own time in different space.
Live a life feeling the nature,
as well as the family around you, in Nara Machiya.

A voice of the family
Handle both work and
raising kids!
That's my policy of living
in Nara Machiya.



Dad
Difficult to concentrate on work,
but that's OK, too.



Keywords of Nara Machiya

- tatami** Floor material that symbolizes Japanese room. The top is made of soft rush.
- shoji** Sliding screen made with Japanese paper on wooden lattice. Various designs are possible by different ways of fixing frame. Softens the direct sun lights through Japanese paper.
- fusuma** Partition made with two layers of paper or cloth on wooden frame. Variety of patterns and designs for the top sheets and door handles.
- drawing room** Japanese room for guests. By removing *fusuma* & *shoji*, widens as a connected room for a large number of guests.
- tokono-ma** (alcove) Space to decorate scroll, ornament and flowers in a drawing room. Change decorations according to seasons or annual events.
- engawa** (veranda) Wooden deck space between drawing room and courtyard. Becomes half-indoor space connected with interior rooms by opening up the *shoji*.
- courtyard** Garden located between the main house and detached room. Very important space to bring light & wind into the long and narrow interior space, also to sense the seasons changing.

STORY 4

Flexible ways of use

Japanese houses are able to meet different ways of life styles.



Maximizing the space for a big party night!

Flexible use of drawing room

Rooms divided by *fusuma* or *shoji* are adjustable in changing the sizes, opening or closing the partitions, according to the scenes.

Gathering in a sunny spot, helping Mom.



Breakfast with the whole family.



Changing into a room for inviting a guest.



Bed making is a fun time.



Flexible use of passageway

Passageway with earthen floor is an indoor space but useful for outdoor activities. Fun place for chatting with neighbors, or becomes Dad's working space or playroom for kids.



Chatting with a neighbor.



Dad's hobby space.



Playroom on a rainy day.

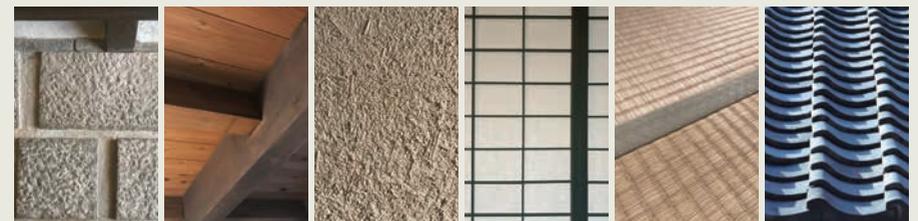
Place to take off your shoes.

Kutsu-nugi-ishi

A stone called *Kutsu-nugi-ishi* is placed at the *engawa* (veranda) or entrance deck to help the different level floors, since the floor is raised to avoid moisture in Nara Machiya. Taking off your shoes on this stone, helps you come into the room without dirty feet.

Materials of Nara Machiya

Architectural materials of Machiya has rustic charm with years. Stone, wood, mud, paper, *tatami*, roof-tile, you can feel the warmth from them. Replaceable when they are damaged and that is the advantage of them.



Today, many people still enjoy living in Nara Machiya.

voices from Nara Machiya

Here are some real voices talking about how comfortable living in Nara Machiya is.

Daily scenes

Machiya is relaxing.



Kitchen in *tori-niwa* is convenient to bring vegetables with dirt! We cook together, my folks helping me, and it's a lot of fun.



You'll find *chasitu* in many Machiya in Naramachi. We enjoy having tea casually.



Stretching out on *tatami* floor after meals or on days off. So relaxing!



Refreshing, because the winds go through.



We have vegetable gardens in the back. It's great to harvest the vegetable you took care of.



Cozy room is perfect to shut myself in. I use *tsushi* (the attic floor) as a study.



Night watch with the neighbors. We feel connections with the region, helping the local festival together.



Kura, or a storage house is all the way in the back, and we store many kinds of things, like old tools.



Burning charcoal is warm to look at as well. One of a seasonal items.



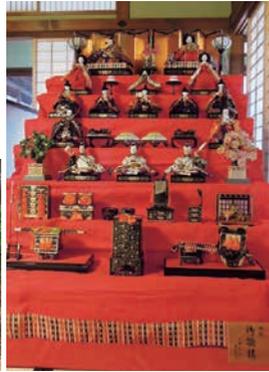
It's beautiful, contrast of light and shade. You can see different appearance depending on the weather.



Seasonal letters from Nara Machiya

Spring

Beautiful flowers in the spring breeze, with mild spring sunlight.



Rich harvest in season! Don't forget *Ume*, or Japanese Plum preserves.

Summer



Autumn

Enjoy the moonlit night, or make dried persimmon. Colorful autumn leaves in the courtyard.



Warmth of brasier. New year's decoration makes you feel purified.

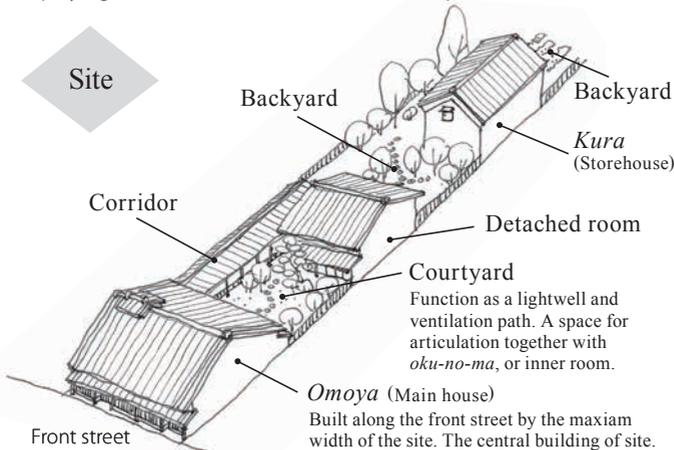
Winter



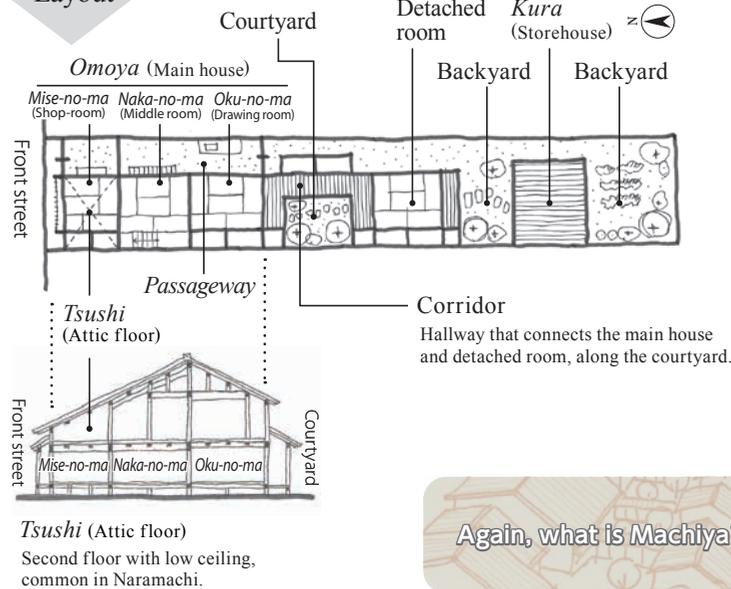
Basic Information of Nara Machiya

The feature of Nara Machiya is narrow frontage and long site. There are many ideas in design; a courtyard to bring light and wind inside, and passageway to connect the front and back side of the house, and more. Many Machiya were running business displaying merchandise in *Mise-no-ma*, or Shop-room.

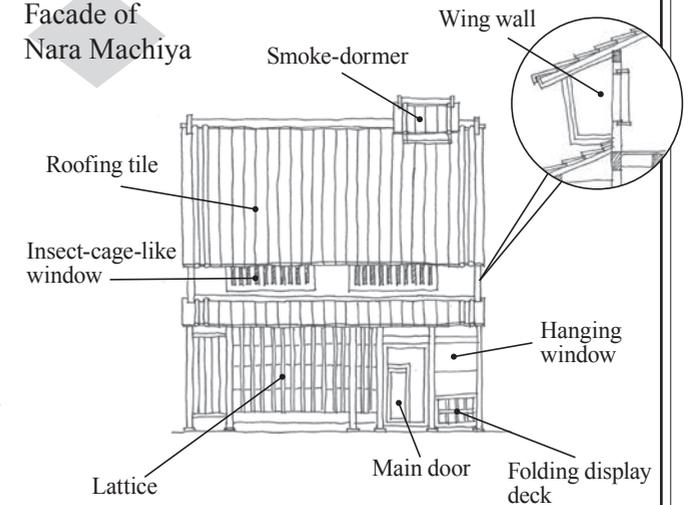
Site



Layout



Facade of Nara Machiya



Again, what is Machiya?

It is an excellent residential style of merchant's townhouse to live practically in a limited site.

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Issue

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