

RIEKO OHASHI

One of Rieko Ohashi's favorite things about living in Hayama—a small beachside town just south of Tokyo—is its proximity to nature. “I live by the water in the peaceful and picturesque countryside, and there are some beautiful mountains nearby,” says Rieko, a designer at Fog Linen. “I was tired of living in Tokyo and moved to Hayama for a quieter lifestyle: It’s a great place to design and create because you can really think deeply about your ideas.” Rieko lives by herself in a traditional Japanese dwelling that was constructed about 80 years ago. Living alone gives her ample time and space to work at her own pace, often leaving various pieces of fabric spread out across several tables. Although she makes frequent trips to Tokyo for work, she’s diligent about setting time aside for herself and finding moments of peace throughout the day. She also takes note of her days off and firmly sticks to them. “I like going for evening walks along the beach and make a point to relax at night with a long bath, a home-cooked meal and a glass of sake,” she says. When decorating her home, she paid careful attention to creating a balanced color spectrum throughout the house, as well as using materials that complemented each other. “It’s important for me to maintain a sense of balance in terms of color, quantity and layout, whether in my designs or in my home,” she says. “I often make unexpected discoveries when I physically line up certain pieces alongside each other rather than letting

them remain as abstract concepts in my head.” Although her house is minimally furnished, some of her favorite items include her futon, bathtub and various pieces of Danish furniture. “I didn’t expect them to work in a traditional Japanese house, but they’ve blended in rather nicely and add a lot to the overall mood,” she says. “A home is the perfect reflection of its inhabitant: You don’t have to look too hard to see a person’s essence manifest itself in the interior.” Rieko enjoys entertaining and frequently prepares fresh meals for her guests. Many of the ingredients she uses in her dishes come from her garden, where she grows a variety of produce including yuzu, kumquats, plums and *sansho* (Japanese peppers). “Different flowers bloom with the changing of the seasons, and I love coming home to the scent of the garden,” Rieko says. “I like drinking my morning coffee and looking out the window to see what flowers have blossomed overnight—it really warms my heart.” For Rieko, living in Hayama presents a welcome change from life in a bustling metropolis. “Home is a place where I can reset and recharge,” she says. “No matter how late I have to work in Tokyo, I come back to my house in Hayama and immediately feel at ease.”

In the following article on page 224, we explore some of the enduring concepts in Japan’s history of domestic rituals.





Left: The hallway that leads to the entrance passes through Rieko's workspace, which is where she keeps her sewing machine, fabrics, worktables and mannequins.

Above Right: Although Rieko works with an assortment of fabrics, her favorite material to work with is chambray. She's also a fan of herringbone and the Lithuanian hemp fabric that she uses to create many of Fog Linen's collections.



