

シラキ工芸



chouchin from Yame, Japan
www.chouchin.com

Shiraki Kougei

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Shiraki Kougei is a company manufacturing many of the *Bon chouchin* (Bon festival lanterns displayed beside a Buddhist altar) in Yame City known for green tea production and traditional crafts industry. Our artisans are mostly young females who are tackling with creating new types of lanterns with delicacy and warmth only generated by hand suitable for our modern life styles.

日本茶と伝統工芸の郷八女で、日本のお盆提灯の多くを手がけてきたシラキ工芸。若い女性の職人たちが中心となって、職人の手仕事にしか出せない繊細さや温もりを大切に、今の暮らしに合った新しい提灯づくりに取り組んでいます。



Yame chouchin lanterns

Yame *chouchin* used to be called Fukushima *chouchin* as they started to be made in Fukushima town in Yame city, Fukuoka prefecture. All the materials necessary to produce *chouchin* lanterns such as *mokuro* (wooden wax) for candles, *washi* (traditional Japanese paper) for *hibukuro* (a lamp shade), bamboo for bone, and wood and lacquer for *gawa* (the top and the bottom parts of the shade) are available in Yame district. Therefore, *chouchin* production became one of the main industries in Yame district in Meiji and Taisho eras (1869-1926) and Yame came to be widely known as *Bon chouchin* producing area throughout Japan. Nowadays, the artisans in Shiraki Kougei spend one year to make many of *Bon chouchin* lanterns for just a few days of *Bon**¹ festival observed all over Japan every year.

A *chouchin* lantern is made by coiling *takehigo*, flexible thin bamboo sticks to form the bone and pasting *washi* (Japanese paper) onto it which transmits light, and putting a candle inside to produce light. *Chouchin* had been used in every Japanese household until electricity widely spread. *Chouchin* with pictures are especially called *Bon chouchin**² and commonly used as essential items for the festival even in present days when *chouchin* lanterns have been replaced with electric lights. People hang them at the door or decorate them beside an Buddhism altar in the house during *Bon* festival as landmarks to lead ancestors' spirits to come back home.

*1 [*Bon*] There has been an ancestor worship since the ancient times before the introduction of Buddhism into Japan. Souls are immortal and ancestors are thought to come back to their respective family during the *Bon* festival. It is an important occasion for an annual family reunion for those who live away from their families.

*2 [*Bon chouchin*] In the old days torches or bonfires were lit to illuminate the paths to welcome souls of ancestors and to see them off. *Bon chouchin* lanterns became popular after a Buddhism altar came to be placed inside the house.

やめちょうちん

八女提灯

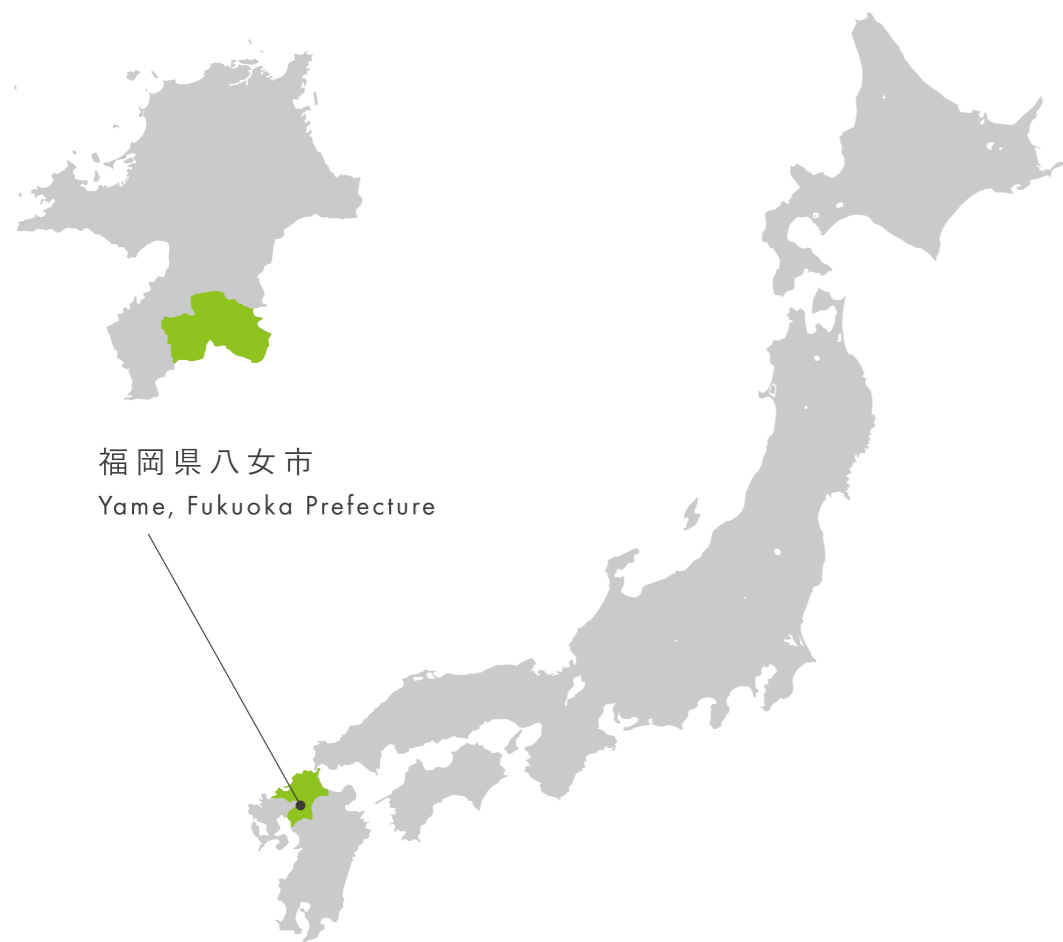
八女提灯は、福岡県八女市福島町で作られるようになった事から福島提灯と呼ばれ、ろうそく蠟燭となる木蠟、もくろう火袋となる和紙、骨となる竹、がわ加輪となる木材と漆といった提灯に必要な材料が八女地方で揃う事から、明治・大正にかけて八女地域全域の産業の一つとなり、盆提灯として世の中に広く知られるようになりました。

現在、お盆*¹の数日間の為に、シラキ工芸の職人たちは1年かけて日本全国の盆提灯の多くを作り続けています。

提灯は、よくしなる竹ヒゴを螺旋状に巻いた土台に、光が透ける程薄い和紙を貼り、中に火を入れて照明としたもので、今のように電気が普及するまで、日本のどの家庭でも使われていました。中でも、絵が描かれている提灯は、提灯が電灯にとって替わられた現代でも、家の玄関に吊るしたり、仏壇の傍に置かれ、霊が家路を迷わぬようにする標として、夏のお盆シーズンに欠かせない仏具の一つに定着し、盆提灯*²と呼ばれます。

※1 [お盆] 日本には仏教が入ってくる以前から、魂は不滅で、お盆に家族の元に帰ってくるという祖霊信仰があった。遠くに住む家族や親戚が集まり語り合う、大切な機会でもある。

※2 [盆提灯] 元々は、霊の家路を照らす迎え火、送り火として松明や篝火が炊かれていた。一般家庭に仏壇を置く時代になってから、室内に置ける提灯が普及した。



福岡県八女市
Yame, Fukuoka Prefecture

Pass a baton of Yame tradition

Yame district is located in the south western part of Fukuoka prefecture at the foot of mountains. People have been living in this district since ancient times as excavated traces of human habitation in Jomon (12,000BC-2,400BC) and Yayoi (500BC-300BC) periods show. It has good natural conditions such as abundant water, forests, mild weather, flat landscape and beautiful sceneries. It is one of the largest clusters of traditional crafts industry in Kyushu as well as a famous agricultural region of rice and tea. Elderly farmers in the mountainous areas used to make *chouchin* as their side job. Their skills have been passed on to the young artisans working in Shiraki Kougei.

八女地方は、福岡の南西部に位置する、山間の麓にあります。縄文～弥生時代の史跡が発見される程、人の営みの歴史は古く、昔から、豊かな水と森があり、過ごし易い気候、平滑な地形、といった風光明媚な自然条件に恵まれ、米や茶で有名な農業地帯であるだけでなく、九州最大の伝統工芸の集積地です。

この地域は、山に囲まれていた為、山間部のお年寄り達が農業の傍、内職として提灯作りを支えてきました。その先輩達から技術を学び、受け継いだのがシラキ工芸の若い職人達です。

繋ぐ。伝統のバトンを



八女時間。

八女には、都会よりゆっくり時を刻む、八女時間が流れています。ゆっくり構え、焦らない、考えすぎない。八女の人達は、あるがままで良い、という意味で「よかよか」と言って事を治めます。自然に争わない柔軟な生き方が、八女には昔から息づいています。

Yame time

The locals in Yame enjoy slower pace of rural life than that of urban areas. They call it Yame time. They relax and do not rush nor worry too much. They begin doing things, saying "Yoka, yoka", which means to accept everything naturally. Their flexible life style of living with nature and not against it has existed for a long time.



火袋

ひぶくろ

明かりが灯る部分、いわば提灯の主役とも言うべき部分が「火袋」です。

シラキ工芸は、この火袋を専門としています。火袋に明かりが灯ると、絵が半影となり、半分透けて光を通し、絵が立体的に光の中に浮かんでいるような幻想的な演出効果が生まれます。

神秘的な空間を、どんな場所にもつくる事が出来る、軽量で、誰でも使える演出装置とも言えます。仏様やご先祖様には姿形がありません。その仏様やご先祖様の見えざる姿形を想像させ、供養し感謝する為に考え出された芸術の一つが盆提灯です。

優しく素朴な提灯絵は、生者の寂しさや悲しみを紛らわし、死者に静かな居場所をつくる、昔の日本人の思いやりから生まれたのではないのでしょうか。

Hibukuro

Lamp shade

Shiraki Kougei's specialty is making *Hibukuro* (a lampshade literally meaning a fire bag), which is the main part of *chouchin* where the light is produced. Once the *Hibukuro* is lit, the picture becomes partially shadowy and partially transparent, allowing the light to penetrate through the paper. The candle light inside the *Hibukuro* generates a fantastic effect of creating a three-dimensional scene of the picture on it as if it were floating in the light. *Chouchin* can be regarded as a light handy device used by anyone for producing a mysterious space in any place. Buddha and ancestors are intangible and invisible. *Bon chouchin* lanterns are a kind of art to be appreciated as works produced to make us imagine their invisible figures, respect them and thank them. Gentle and simple pictures drawn on lanterns may originate from warm and compassionate mind of the Japanese in the old days who tried to present a peaceful place for the deceased and to appease sorrow and loneliness for the bereaved.

Katagumi and Higomaki

Framework and Bone

The bone of *Hibukuro* is made of thin and long bamboo sticks stretched and coiled horizontally and thin threads stretched vertically. *Chouchin* is very light and decently collapsible thanks to the bamboo sticks coiled evenly with the delicate touch of skillful artisans. The wooden framework can be disassembled to be taken out after the covering paper is glued to the bone sticks.

Haritsuke, Tsugimegiri and Katanuki

Pasting *washi* or silk cloth, Cutting seams and Taking out frames

Hibukuro is covered with either *washi* (Japanese paper) or silk cloth pasted on the bone made of bamboo sticks. Yame *chouchin* used to be covered mainly with traditional hand-made *washi* made in Yame but silk cloth was introduced later for luxurious *chouchin* lanterns. *Washi* produced warm light while silk cloth cool light. The process of pasting extremely thin Japanese paper on the curved surface without making any wrinkles or covering it with silk cloth by applying *dosa** to add its strength cannot be mechanized.

* [*dosa*] a mixture of *nikawa*, liquid glue, and *myoban*, a material used to prevent the paint from being blurred

Etsuke

Painting

Traditional design motifs for Yame *chouchin* lanterns are mainly plants and sceneries to make people feel cooler during the humid *Bon* season in summer. These rapidly drawn motifs with a brush and the gradation backgrounds painted with a spraying method add a mysterious depth to Yame *chouchin*: they look like a picture when the lantern is not lit and look three-dimensional when it is lit.



「^{かたぐ}型組み」 「ひご巻き」

火袋の基礎となる土台は、横に渡した細いヒゴと縦に渡した細い糸でできている。手の感覚を頼りに、均等に螺旋状に巻かれたヒゴのお陰で、提灯は非常に軽く、綺麗に折りたたむ事が出来るようになる。型は、張り付けが終わった後抜き取れるよう、分解できる構造になっている。



「張り付け」 「^ぎ継ぎ目切り」 「型抜き」

八女提灯の火袋には、和紙貼りと絹貼りがある。元は八女伝統の手すき和紙による和紙貼りが主流で、高級品として絹貼りが登場した。和紙は温かみのある光を、絹はクールな光をつくり出す。極薄の和紙や絹をシワなく立体的に貼り、絹であればドーサ^{*}を塗って仕上げる作業は、機械化する事が出来ない。

※ [ドーサ] 薄い^{にかわえき}膠液にミョウバンを混ぜたもの。日本画では、和紙に絵の具が滲むの防ぐ為に欠かせない画材。



「絵付け」

八女提灯の伝統的な絵柄は、蒸し暑いお盆に合わせた、草花、山水など、涼しげな柄が一般的。吹き付けによるグラデーションと、筆づかいだけで素早くモチーフを表現する速描^{そくびょう}が、灯を灯さない時は絵として楽しめ、灯を灯すと立体的に見える不思議な奥行きを左右する。



Quality control

Drawing pictures without a sketch on an uneven surface of the lantern made of extremely thin *washi* or silk is one of the chances for *chochin* artisans to show their skills which require a dexterous technique of delicate adjustments to make the pictures look beautiful through the light. Creating the bone of *Hibukuro* made of thin bamboo sticks and pasting *washi* or silk onto it must be done properly to draw delicate designs on it. The high quality of *Yame chouchin* is the result of careful work in each process. Shiraki Kougei makes it a rule to keep the same production pace for the proper amount of production in order to produce traditional crafts with high qualities.

ひごの凸凹が浮き出た極薄の和紙か絹の表面に、下書きなしで、光に丁度良く透けるよう加減しながら描く技は、提灯絵師たちの技の見せ所の一つと言えます。

その土台となる火袋のひご巻きと張り付けが乱れていては、繊細な絵は描けません。土台から一つ一つ、工程が丁寧に積み重なった結果が、上質な製品として結実します。

シラキ工芸では、生産ペースを一定に保つ事が、伝統工芸の品質維持にとって重要と考え、適量を守って生産しています。

品質を保つ。



人の手で作られるものには、心が宿ります。人の手で作れる量を作る事は、目のとどく範囲での生産と販売を継続させ、日本の素材と伝統技術のみで、大量生産品と一線を画する高いクオリティのものづくりを維持する事に繋がります。

Spirits dwelling in the crafts

Spirits dwell in the crafts made with human hands. Making lanterns by hand means producing them within the range of human control. This leads to producing and selling them in limited quantities in order to maintain their high-quality with traditional materials and techniques, which cannot be achieved by mass production.

魂が宿るもの。

Individuality of artisans

Respecting young people's individuality and personality is the key to raising artisans in the next generation. An idealistic process of their creating gentle, comfortable and pure light of *chouchin* is to think on their own and have a healthy mind. Shiraki Kougei company hires all artisans as fulltime employees and teach them how to make *chouchin* from its rudiments so that they can make a living only by engaging in *chouchin* production. One of our appealing points is to present an environment where they can grow to acquire true craftsmanship to be able to produce unique and original *chouchin*. Shiraki Kougei is now producing most *etsuki chouchin* (*chouchin* with pictures) in Japan. It has become the company which manufactures new products from a new perspective by collaborating with other traditional crafts industries, various creators; and expanding our business overseas. This enables our company to have become an extraordinary and unique company creating not only traditional *chouchin* but also modern ones made by young artisans.



Arie



Aya



Masunaga



Eguchi



Esaki

職人の個性。

私たちは、若者の人となりや個性を無視しては、次世代の職人は育たないと考えます。職人が、自分の頭で考え、健全な魂をもって作る。日本の灯りの、優しく、心安らぐピュアな光は、そうして生まれるのが理想です。シラキ工芸では、職人が提灯づくりだけで食べていけるよう、正社員として雇用し、提灯づくりを一から教え育てます。職人たちの成長と共に、個性的な提灯が生まれる環境。それが、シラキ工芸の一番の魅力だからです。

現在、日本の絵付き提灯の大半を、シラキ工芸が手掛けています。最近では、他の伝統工芸やクリエイターとの協業、海外進出など、新しい視点での製品づくりと発信にも取り組み、伝統的な提灯と、新しい提灯の両方を、若い職人たちが手掛ける、異色の提灯工房に成長しました。



Kawaguchi



Shono



Imamura



Otsuka



Nagayama



Life with chouchin

One of the customs deeply rooted in the Japanese culture since old days is "gassho", praying by holding the palms and fingers of both hands together. There used to be a Buddhist altar in many houses and children followed their adults' gassho in front of the altar every day to show their respect and gratitude to their ancestors. The routine of this custom has nurtured Japanese people's gentleness and compassion. However, the custom of gassho has been disappearing in our daily lives due to the change of time and the decrease of household Buddhist altars as nuclear families have increased with the decline of birth rate. As a result, seeing Bon chouchin in Bon festival in summer has been less and less common. As a chouchin company we have been thinking what we can do to prevent the traditional customs of decorating chouchin from disappearing.

There are two agendas to consider: to come up with innovative ideas about Bon chouchin lanterns to cope with the decline of their needs caused by the decrease of household Buddhist altars; and to face the reality of decreasing demand of lanterns due to the

change of residential environment. We have started to develop a new line of products as answers to the above agendas: chouchin to fit the small space in the house and a simple Buddhist altar; and chouchin used as a light all year around not necessarily lit only for Bon festival in summer. To think about new types of lanterns is to shed light on the space and time with lanterns in our modern lives while in the past chouchin placed beside a Buddhist altar was too common to pay attention to. We propose a modern life with chouchin as a natural sight.

Shiraki Kougei will learn and adopt new ideas positively without being too much influenced by trends and grow slowly but firmly with Yame time. We would like to contribute ourselves from a good old town Yame to the succession of traditional craftsmanship and skills through continuing to manufacture Yame chouchin with high qualities, and selling them to customers; and through employing young workers to transmit traditional skills to them.

提灯のある暮らし。

日本に古くから深く根付いていた文化の一つが「合掌」です。自宅に仏壇が当たり前にあって、子供も大人の見よう見まねで毎日手を合わせていました。仏壇の前で合掌し、先祖を敬い、感謝を捧げる時間と所作の反復が、日本人の心を整え、思いやりを育んできました。

しかし、核家族化、少子化が進む時代の変化によって、合掌しなくなった家からは仏壇が姿を消し、仏壇がない家が増加したことで、盆提灯が夏の当たり前の光景でなくなりつつあります。

盆提灯の会社として、私たちに出来る事はないか。

課題は二つ。

一つ目は、仏壇とともにニーズの減った盆提灯のあり方を考える。二つ目は、住空間の変化による提灯ニーズの低下にどう向き合うか。

これに対して、

一、小さな住空間とシンプルな仏前にあう提灯
二、夏に限定しない灯りとして楽しめる提灯の開発に挑戦し始めました。

新しい提灯を考えることは、提灯のある現代の空間と時間を考えることです。

昔は当たり前のように仏壇があり、その傍らに提灯がありました。

私たちは、提灯が当たり前のようにある「今の暮らし」を提案しています。



新しい考えは積極的に学び取り入れるが、流されない。」という姿勢で、八女時間と共にシラキ工芸はゆっくり進化しています。

- ・質の高い八女提灯を作り続け、お客様にご提供する事。
- ・若い人を雇い入れ、伝統工芸の技術継承に努める事。

この二つの企業活動を通じて、古の里八女から日本の伝統文化に貢献しています。

Company Profile

Company name: Shiraki Kougei Limited

Founded: January, 1980

Established: October, 2004

Address: 198-1 Odama Yame City, Fukuoka, Japan 834-0041

Capital: 10,000,000 yen

Business Area: Production of *chouchin* lanterns

Employees: 8 employees (2 males and 6 females)

Company History

- Jan. 1980 Shiraki Kougei was founded, which produced *hibukuro* lampshades of *Bon chouchin* lanterns.
- Oct. 1998 Chouchin Kobo Tomo was founded, which produced *chouchin* lanterns.
- Oct. 2004 Shiraki Kougei Limited was established.
- 2011 Shiraki Kougei Limited and Chouchin Kobo Tomo were merged.
- 2015 Chouchindo project was launched.
- 2020 A new line of *chouchin* Cocolan was released.

企業概要

会社名 有限会社 シラキ工芸

創業 昭和55年1月

設立 平成16年10月

住所 〒834-0041 福岡県八女市緒玉^{おだま}198-1

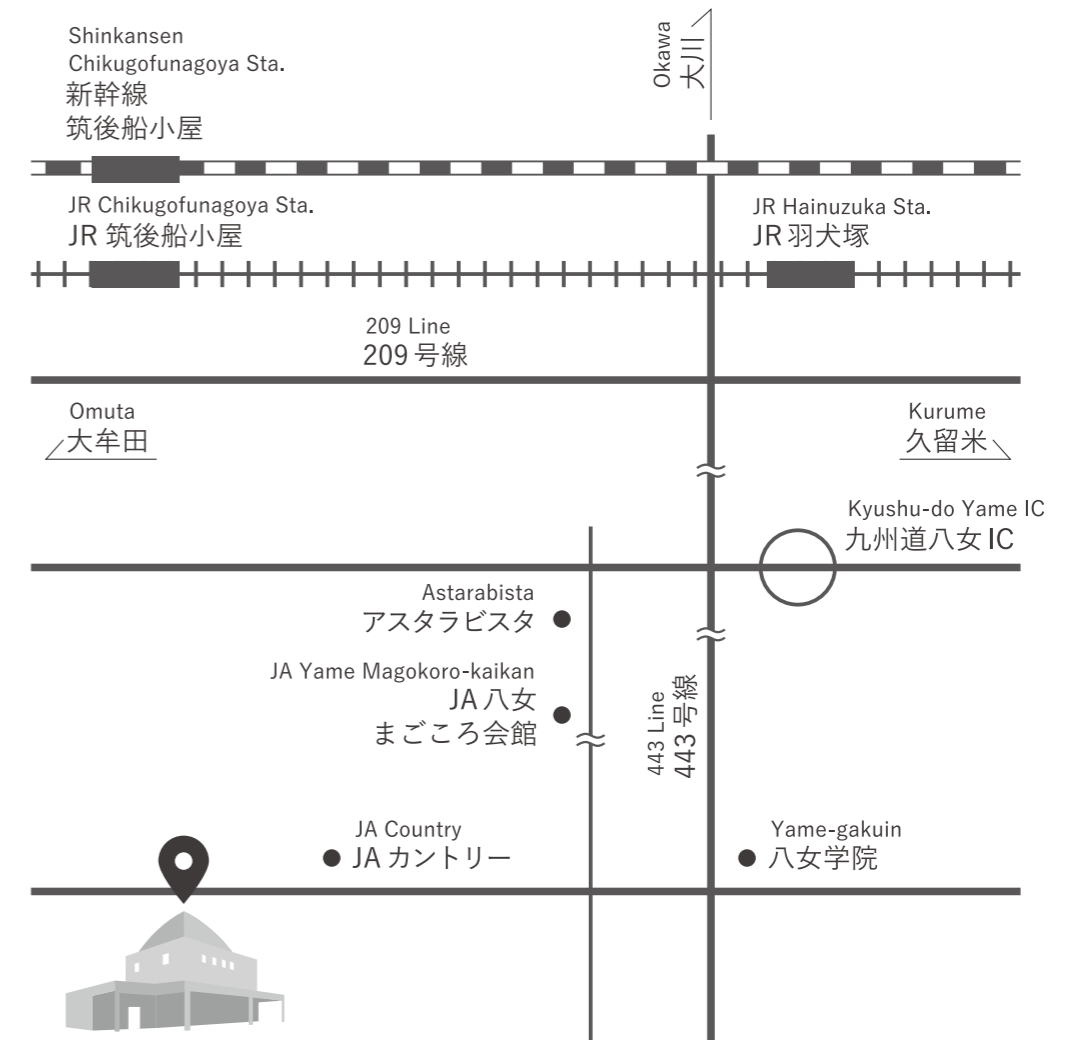
資本金 1000万円

業種 提灯製造

従業員 8名(男性2名、女性6名)

会社沿革

- 昭和55年1月 盆提灯火袋製造業 シラキ工芸創業
- 平成10年10月 提灯製造業 提灯工房^{とも}創業
- 平成16年10月 有限会社 シラキ工芸設立
- 平成23年 提灯工房^{とも}合併
- 平成27年 chouchindoプロジェクト立上げ
- 令和2年 cocolanライン発表



JR羽犬塚駅からタクシーまたは車でおよそ15分(6.5km)

It takes approximately 15 minutes (6.5 km) from JR Hainuzuka Sta. by taxi or car.