***Kimono***

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Have you ever worn kimono and walked along the streets? Both of us had put on kimonos on the second day of our wondrous journey in Japan. It was absolutely the most unforgettable and profound experience during the trip. The Japanese word "Kimono" is literally defined as “clothing”. Nonetheless, this particular word has been adopted to refer specifically to the traditional Japanese garment since contemporary Japan.

The kimono, which had been a normal form of dress for both men and women since the Heian period (794-1192), was first introduced from Han China as an undergarment. Since then, styles of clothes-making in Japan had taken a significant turn. The straight-line cutting method created what is now the style of kimono, which is more comfortable and practical to wear. Makers of the kimono cut the fabric into straight lines, sewing the pieces together without the need of the wearer’s body measurements. It also enabled people to wear them in layers during cold seasons. Attire for men and women became more distinguished and clothing for those who served in courts was also developed. Kimono are generally worn with traditional footwear and split-toe socks.

Evolutions of the kimono continued to develop in the past centuries. Nowadays, kimonos are predominantly worn by women who emphasis elegant and gorgeous outlooks. Most men wear them merely at either weddings, tea ceremonies or other special and formal occasions. Despite the gradual replacement of the kimono by Western-style clothing, this traditional culture remains vital in the Japanese society. An appropriate style and color of kimono is to be worn depending on the occasion and the person's age and marital status conventionally. For instance, Furisode with colourful patterns is a kind of kimono solely for unmarried females to wear at coming-of-age ceremonies, or wedding ceremonies and wedding receptions. Every kimono has its hidden meaning behind.

As a symbolic Japanese traditional garment, Kimono is popular and much-acclaimed worldwide. Just as we walked out of the building, the eye-catching and stunning kimonos on us started to attract pedestrians’ attention. Though we found kimono uncomfortable and inconvenient to wear because of its tight cutting at first, we soon got adapted to it and realized how engaging wearing a kimono is. Impressive moments did not last long, yet, our luscious memories are staying forever in the numerous photos we had taken. We would never forget the fresh, unprecedented and fascinating experience of wearing kimono.

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