

# A BEAUTIFUL LIFE IN YAMANAKA-KO

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**Who is??**

**Yoko Sugimoto**

Yoko Sugimoto is a wreath artist who lives in Yamanaka-ko. When she was 60 years old, she moved to Yamanaka-ko from Tokyo. One of her friends who has a house there took her there in the past, and she fell in love with Yamanaka-ko.

Now she is doing a wreath business. She doesn't have a store but she is starting a online store soon :)





# What does Ms. Sugimoto do at work?

## Creation of sustainable wreaths!



She creates sustainable wreaths using natural materials from the foot of Mount Fuji.

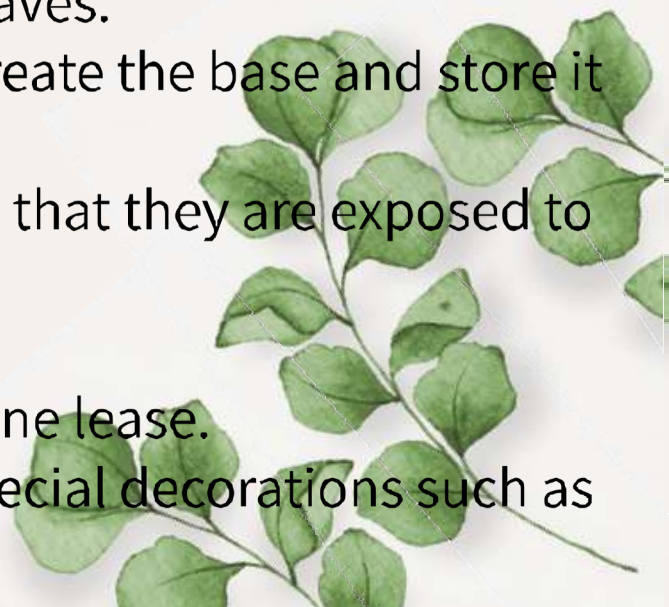
She started making wreaths based on her friend's dried flower creations.

Photo from Instagram of her shop  
(forestcrown\_\_yamanakalake)

## Workflow

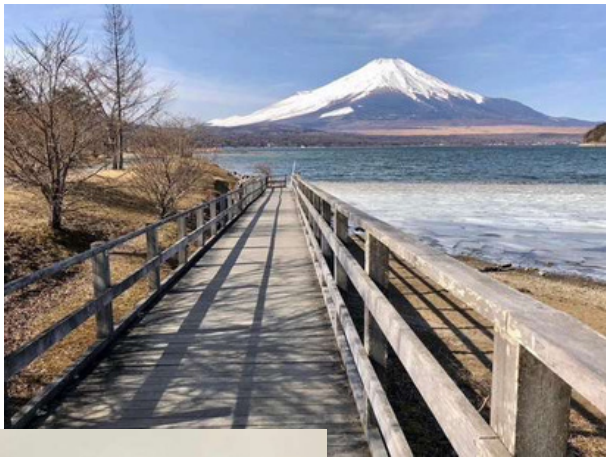
- When the materials for the wreath arrive from the supplier, sort the branches and leaves.
- While the vines are still soft, create the base and store it in a well ventilated place.
- Store the leaves in a bucket so that they are exposed to rain. Then, create the wreath.

It takes about a week to make one wreath. During the Christmas season, special decorations such as bells and ribbons are added.



# Background

She attended a junior college for clothing in Saitama Prefecture and later got a job at an apparel company in Tokyo. After leaving that company, she worked for a financial firm. She had an acquaintance who owned a vacation home near Lake Yamanakako, and she wanted to live there, so she moved. Inspired by a friend's hobby of making dried flowers, she started making wreaths.



*attending a colleague for clothing in Saitama*

*→getting an apparel company in Tokyo*

*→working for a financial company*

*→moving to Yamanakako*

*→starting making wreaths*



## Commitment

- Strive to create **sustainable wreaths**



- Contract with a landscaping company in Fujiyoshida City that holds a felling permit based on the Forest Law, including landscaping.
- Ask for donations of branches, leaves, and vines that will be discarded or left after thinning.
- While helping out at grape farms in Kofu, they sometimes give me discarded vines for free.

## A life in Yamanaka-ko

Ms. Sugimoto and her husband retired in 2020 and moved to Lake Yamanaka. The year 2020, when Ms. Sugimoto began her move to Lake Yamanaka, coincided with the outbreak of the coronavirus. She said, "Due to the coronavirus outbreak, Lake Yamanaka was quiet with no one around during that time. Compared to now, there were no shops open at all. "She is now creating wreaths using materials from the natural surroundings of Yamanaka Lake. She added,"

Participating in markets and events to sell wreaths allows me to communicate directly with local residents and people from overseas, which is a joy for me."

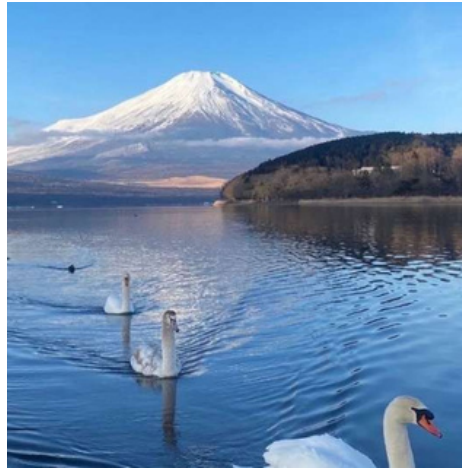
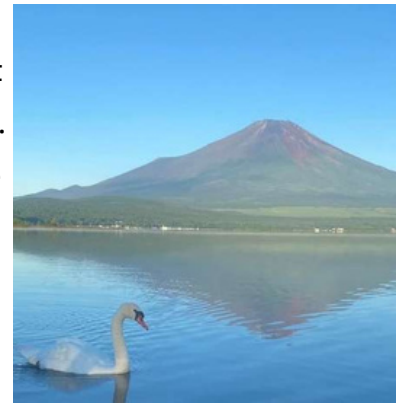


## About Mt. Fuji

She said, “everyone in Kawaguchi-ko likes Mt. Fuji”, and of course, she likes it too. She enjoys looking at it across Kawaguchi-ko and often takes photos of it. She said that even after living there for several years, she is still moved by the fact that she can see Mount Fuji every day.



All pictures in this paper were taken by her. When it is sunny, you can enjoy viewing Mt. Fuji reflected in the lake.



People in Kawaguchi-ko can enjoy Mt. Fuji with seasons. There are swans, and it use to be frozen to ice skating in winter.

**No matter what time of year you come, you can enjoy a different and beautiful view of Mt. Fuji.**

## About Foreign Customers

- Some foreign customers choose to buy wreaths instead of flower bouquets.
- One customer from Singapore visited the shop and purchased a wreath.
- This shows that international customers may have different preferences when it comes to floral items.





# Outlook for the future

- About online shopping: She does not do online shopping now, but would like to try it this year with the help of her daughter.
- Embroidery: In addition to handmade wreaths, she also makes embroideries. At present, she creates embroideries based on original designs, but said she would like to create her own designs in the future.





# Thank you

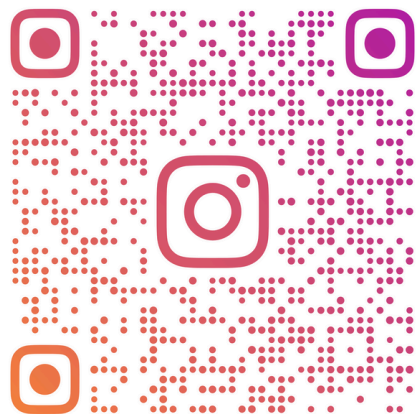


## Information



MORI NO OOKAN

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Yamanashi



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