

A Historical Walk Around Kyoto

Viewing Moon in Autumn



The harsh glare of the sun has moderated gradually and comfortable breeze is blowing these days. People feel the arriving autumn. The autumn is also a great season for viewing the moon.

Autumn brings the sunny and clear sky, and bright moon shining. So the moon around this season is said to appear most beautiful in the year.



Moon-viewing event is said to come from China. This tradition spread in the royal court and nobilities in Japan. The nobility seemed to rather view the moon directly; they indirectly admired the moon reflected on the pond or in sake poured into a cup. The nobility enjoyed describing their emotions or their state of feelings in a Tanka (Japanese lyric poetry having syllables). Such customs spread among people in Edo era. People have held festivals to pray and celebrate harvest of crops, while admiring the beauty moon.



In September, there are moon viewing festivals around Kyoto. At Daikaku-ji in Saga-Arashiyama district in Rakusai area; in western Kyoto, moon-viewing parties; Kangetsu-no-yube are held, where people float boats on the Osawa-no-ike (a pond in the temple) and admire the moon. Also at Shinsen-en garden in Rakuchu area; in central

Kyoto, moon-viewing and boating parties are held on the pond. In such parties, people can experience the unique Kyoto way to enjoy the moonlit night.

Beyond times, yet people may still possess the same nature to fascinate the moon. Why not explore in the autumn evening and view the moon?