

Ellen: 5/9

Upper: Why are some lanterns open on two sides?

>> I think the answer lies in what type of lantern it is. Because there's a whole bunch of types, I'll just list them here.

Paper Lanterns:

**Bonbori** 雪洞 is a Japanese paper lantern. In early August each year, bonbori lanterns are lit in the sacred precincts of the [Tsurugaoka Hachimangu Shrine](http://www.tsurugaoka-hachimangu.com/) in central Kamakura city. Other cities around Japan have similar lantern festivals. In Kamakura, lanterns are submitted by many artists, novelists and famous people. Roughly 400 bonbori with hand-drawn pictures, calligraphy, and poems are displayed in the shrine's precincts during the festival. Today, bonbori lanterns are commonly illuminated from within with electric bulbs, but sometimes (as in earlier decades) oil or candles furnish the lighting. The Kamakura Bonbori Festival began in 1939. Historically, bonbori lanterns were portable and distinctively hexagonal in shape, with wood or metal frames covered with paper (or glass in later years). They generally have poles attached horizontally to the frame for ease of transport.

<http://www.buddhist-artwork.com/bonbori-festival/html/bonbori.html>



Lighting candles for the Kamakura bonbori festival. Above photo montage by Gerry Harcourt (longtime resident of Kita-Kamakura)



### Chochin lantern

(<http://traditionscustoms.com/lifestyle/chochin-lantern>)

Chochin is a Japanese portable lantern whose source of light is a candle. On its top and bottom there are rings. Between them there is a spiral-shaped bamboo coil. This enables the fact that the lantern can be folded flat. Chochin lantern was designed in Odawara, Kanagawa prefecture. That is why the term Odawara Chochin is sometimes also used. According to folk beliefs these lanterns even have magical powers. They protect from evil spirits. Some materials needed in making of this lantern are brought from the Saijoji Temple on the holy mountain Daiyu. There is a belief that a long-nosed goblin Tengu lives there. Evil spirits can not harm the goblin. Chochin lanterns are resistant to the effect of rain or any kind of bad weather. They were used for different purposes. Some were put hung from the eaves outside restaurants and other buildings. People also carried them in religious processions.

### Stone Lanterns:

<http://www.japanesegardening.org/lanterns/> >> this site has an overwhelming amount of information about stone lanterns. While some vary by the structure, some of them have openings that vary by design.



Oribe lantern – 織部灯籠 - This is a type of lantern designed specifically for garden use by Lord Furuta Oribe (1544-1615). It has no foundation stone, but sits on a square pedestal (sao) planted into the ground for stability. This is the characteristic of the “buried base” group of stone lanterns known as “ikekomi”. The square light box (hibukuro) sits on a square central platform (chudai) with a tapered bottom. **It has square front and rear openings sometimes covered with shoji. The right and left openings are a crescent moon and full moon shape respectively.** It is usually lighted by a candle or small oil lamp. The light box is covered by a 4-sided, sloped stone roof (kasa), and crowned by a knob-like jewel (houju) resembling a lotus bud.

Image source:

[http://www.japanesestyle.com/sites/default/files/lantern\\_oribe2.jpg](http://www.japanesestyle.com/sites/default/files/lantern_oribe2.jpg)



Krishitan doro – キリシタン灯笼 - **A form of the Oribe lantern is known as the Christian Lantern (Krishitan doro).** Francis Xavier, a Roman Catholic Priest, arrived in Japan in 1549 and with support from Daimyo Oda Nobunaga, began to spread his religion. Nobunaga enjoyed interacting with foreigners and used these missionaries to control the Buddhist priests that opposed him. After his death, his successor, Toyotomi Hideyoshi became aware of the expanding power and holdings of the Catholic church and banned Christianity altogether.

The Kakure Kirishitan, or “Hidden Christians” continued to practice their religion in secret, meeting secretly and disguising their religious icons and graves as objects of Buddhist worship. **It is thought that this version of Oribe lantern may have the figure of Virgin Mary carved in the buried part of the base, along with the Greek monogram “IHS” (iota-eta-sigma) carved into the cross part of the base below the central platform .**

Image source:

[http://www.japanesegardening.org/lanterns/oribe\\_lantern.png](http://www.japanesegardening.org/lanterns/oribe_lantern.png)



Sankou doro 三光灯笼 - Also called "Sankou tourou", it is named "Three Lights" for the three openings in the shapes of sun, moon and stars.

It is a small lantern that can be moved ("Oki-doro" type) if desired. **The light box is a hollowed rectangular box with sun and moon-shaped windows on the front and rear, with a "star" window on the end. It is covered with a 4-sided sloped roof stone.**

This lantern is usually placed next to the pond to light the way for a boat.

Image source:

[http://www.japanesegardening.org/lanterns/Sankou\\_doro.png](http://www.japanesegardening.org/lanterns/Sankou_doro.png)



**Mizubotaru toro** 水蛭燈籠 - Also known as "Mizu Hotaru", this is the Water Firefly lantern . The glow of fireflies reflecting in the garden waters at night inspired this lantern. It is usually placed next to the water on the opposite side to provide the firefly reflections to the viewer.

The name may have originated from the famous Japanese novel, The Tale of Genji (『源氏物語』) by Lady Murasaki. Another story claims Prince Yakahito saw the reflection in the waters of Katsura Rikyu and mistakenly thought it was a group of fireflies over the water.

It is another "Ikekomi" type lantern, its round base planted in the ground. **The light box is square with square openings on the sides and double triangle windows on the front and back. It is covered with an unusually shaped roof.**

Image Source:

<http://www.japanesegardening.org/lanterns/mizubotaru.png>



**Yukimi doro** 織部燈籠 - Sometimes called "Snow-viewing Lantern". The exact origins of the Yukimi Stone Lantern are not known for sure, but it is generally thought to be from the Edo period (1600s). It is believed to have been used to mark peninsular landmasses for boats.

Although "Yukimi" is the Japanese custom of "snow-viewing", the original Japanese character describing this lantern may have meant "floating light".

The customary placement is at the edge of land and water – in the case of a three-legged lantern, one leg on land and the other two in the water. If this lantern were used to indicate the tide, the wide brim would cast light across the water and reflect the light to its base, showing the water level and indicating safe port or landing site for boats.

Like the "snow-viewing" window, this lantern is placed low and is known for its large kasa (roof). It is easy to see how one could appreciate this lantern in the snow, especially with a position at the edge of the landscape and the plane of a frozen lake.

**Generally, Yukimi doro has a six-sided light box.** The roof can be anywhere from three to eight-sided or round. It is usually supported by a four-legged base but can have from 3 to 6 legs. Sizes vary from .5 meter to over 3 meters tall (When specifying a size, keep in mind that yukimi is sometimes sized by the diameter of its roof). There are several forms of yukimi-doro. Locations are based on the shoulder divisions of the legs.

Image source:

<http://www.japanesegardening.org/lanterns/biqyukimi.png>