

ジャパン・ツーリズム・アワード2024

北山村の観光筏下り事業が審査員特別賞受賞!

Ikada-Kudari Log Rafting won the Jury's special prize for Japan Tourism Award 2024.

林業が盛んな北山村では切り出した木材を河川で組み流送する筏流しが行われ、その歴史は約 600 年と言われていたが、近代になり木材搬送はトラック運送に代わり北山だけではなく全国の筏流しの文化は一度途絶えていた。

しかし険しい北山峡谷で筏流しを生業にしてきた北山村の筏師の技術は日本一といわれており、その伝統技術を失ってはいけなと、過疎地域で林産業自体が衰退していく中でも、これからの村の新たな産業として筏の技術を観光資源へと転用し、昭和54年に観光筏下りとして再始動をさせ、以来筏師の雇用と育成を続けている。伝統的な筏流しの姿を今に伝える全国唯一の例であり、現在は周辺地域の観光産業に寄与し続けている。

Timber rafting is a method of transporting felled tree trunks by tying them together and guiding them downriver. This method has been practiced for about 600 years in Kitayama village, which has a thriving forest industry, but in the present day, this method has been substituted with trucks, so the culture of timber rafting died, not only in Kitayama but all over Japan. However, the rafters in Kitayama village, whose skills are legendary thanks to their years of experience guiding timber rafts through the steep Kitayama valley, are determined to keep this traditional skill alive. Even though the forest industry itself is dwindling in underpopulated areas, they have turned their rafting skills into a tourism resource as a new industry for the village. In 1979, river log rafting was launched as a tourist activity and since then, the village has been hiring and training rafters. It is the only place in the country where one can see the traditional skills of a rafter and their efforts have contributed to the development of the tourism industry in the surrounding regions.

