

Atelier Chikudo



Thomas Goulpeau

Le Ruisseau des Fades

46100 FIGEAC

+33 (0)5 65 39 78 81

chikudo@protonmail.com

www.chikudo-bamboo-flutes.com

Siret : 50992216700010

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Information about pricing

When searching about shakuhachi flutes, the matter of price is quite surprising.

From cheap plastic shakuhachi priced about 40 € up to several thousands euro flutes... !
It is then difficult to understand what makes the value of a shakuhachi and how can a bamboo flute be so expensive.

Despite it's simple or even rough appearance, the traditional method of making shakuhachi require high skills, a lot of time and years of experience and studies.

First of all, the base material isn't easy to obtain and represents already a cost in work or money. Most of the makers living in urban areas need to buy well selected and cured bamboo from suppliers (a good piece pricing between 100 and 200 €). Even with access to a big madake bamboo forest, it's still not easy to find the good pieces fulfilling all the requirements in terms of shape, size, age, node repartition...

The making process then is very complex because the bore (inner tube) is irregular and needs a lot of precise adjustments to achieve a good well balanced and tuned instrument; it is very rare to find a piece of bamboo with the perfect bore design. This work is purely empirical and needs to be done with prudence and at a slow pace.

Price criteria

The acoustical qualities of a shakuhachi are of course essential. The tuning, power, tone colour and general balance of the instrument are it's main qualities. But there are also a number of rather aesthetical characteristics that are counting (especially in Japan) and even sometimes prevailing on the acoustical ones. For instance, the type of bamboo used, its number of nodes (ideally 7) and their repartition, the shape or curve of the bamboo, the weight and aspect of the root end...

Some finishings can also raise the value of a shakuhachi such as rattan bindings, the use of expensive material like ivory, silver or gold. The Japanese lacquer *Urushi* is also an expensive and delicate material to work with.

The reputation of the maker is also very important. There are some high ranking shakuhachi like the Stradivarius in the violin world.

My personal pricing policy

Over the years, my prices have raised as the quality of my work improved.

As for traditional shakuhachi, their quality is always improving as their prices will do. I rely on the feedbacks I can get from professional players or makers especially my teacher to value my work.

_ "How long does it takes you to make a flute ?"

_ "Several hours and some 20 years !"

Fuke Shakuhachi

Edo-style ji-nashi

Characteristics :

- *Ji-nashi* shakuhachi in the ancient style of *Edo* period
- Root end bamboo
- *Myoan* style *utaguchi* inlay in deer horn
- *Neri Bengara* dark red *urushi*

Price :

from 500 to 800 €

Ji-nashi Shakuhachi

Characteristics :

- Roots-end bamboo (French or Japanese Madake)
- *Kinko* inlay at *utaguchi*
- bore designed without 'ji' plaster
- Black *urushi* lacquer

Price :

Three grades :

* : 400 to 600 €

** : 600 to 800 €

*** : > 800 €

Options :

Japanese *madake* bamboo : + 100 to 150 € (Depending on bamboo qualities)

Ji-mori (some 'ji' is added at critical points for better balance) : + 100 €

Description of the different grades characteristics

* : The tuning is not highly accurate and the overall balance is uneven. This grade of shakuhachi is suitable for beginners or solo practices and meditation uses of the instrument.

** : The tuning is accurate but the acoustic balance is not perfect. This grade of shakuhachi is suitable for studying the instrument but might be limited after a few years of practice.

*** : Both tuning and acoustical balance are of a high standard. This grade of shakuhachi is suitable for the requirements of advanced players or concert flutes.

Ji-Ari Shakuhachi

Built only with Japanese Madake self harvested in Japan and cured with the traditional methods. Dried for several years.

Characteristics :

- Two pieces shakuhachi (*nakatsugi-kan*)
- Bore designed with 'ji' plaster for optimal resonance
- Kinko inlay (optional with silver)
- reinforced rattan rings at joint parts
or Stainless steel rings + rattan or cherry tree bark
or Brazed silver rings + rattan, cherry tree bark or urushi artwork

Price :

Starts from **1000 €**

Repairs

Any price quote for restoring a shakuhachi can be done only after expertise and complete testing of the instrument. The prices above should then be considered as indicative. I am able to give the final price only with the shakuhachi in my hands.

Expertise, tests and estimation : 20 €

Cracks repairing

- External bindings strengthened with urushi : **20 €** / binding
- Inlaid bindings with rattan finishing : **50 €** / binding
- Inlaid silver pledges : **35 €** / pledge
(for cracks between roots only)

Utaguchi repairing

- Utaguchi inlay repair : **10 to 40 €**
- Utaguchi inlay replacement : **70 €**
(+ urushi lacquer)

Nakatsugi joint repairing

- Loose joint refurbishing : **50 to 80 €**
- Rings repair/replacement :
 - Rattan : **30 to 60 €**
 - Stainless steel rings : **40 to 70 €**
 - Silver rings : **80 to 120 €**

Work on the bore

- Filling gaps or chips in the : **100 to 150 €**
- Bore enhancement : starts from **200 €**

Work on tuning

- Modification on tone-holes : **20 to 50 €**
- Modification of overall tuning : **100 to 200 €**

Every repairing and restoring work includes a one year guarantee