**What it means to be ‘Made in Japan’**

**Architect and writer Naomi Pollock shares her favorite aspects of Japanese design**

Alice Gendner

**M**ade in Japan—where to start? The question has the same simplicity, yet is similarly complex. It is the question that design writers and economists are still grappling with these days, ever since the 1980s. Is it the minimalist aesthetic? The high-quality production? The architecture that defines the Japanese skyline? The space-saving household goods? The heritage of craftsmanship? The design for urban environments, or the design for rural living? The national pride that led to an obsession with quality? The national obsession with quality? The people who identify themselves as (Japanese) designers? The people who stand behind the, often anonymous, makers of the products? The people who influence the designers? The people who wear the products? It’s a question that can encompass every aspect of life.

**In Japan**

Tokyo-based architect and writer Naomi Pollock shares her favorite aspects of Japanese design..."I was there for about two weeks and was able to see a lot of things..." What I found there was an opportunity to learn more about the design and lifestyle of Japan. The architecture was amazing—minimalist, yet functional and beautiful. The products were amazing too—stylish, yet practical and well-made. It was a great trip, and I really enjoyed my time in Japan. I hope to go back soon..." I met with architects and designers who were passionate about their work and eager to share their experiences. It was great to see how much they care about their work..." I was lucky enough to visit a few design studios and factories, and it was fascinating to see how the products are made..." I was able to interview some of the designers, and it was interesting to hear their perspective on how they work..." Overall, it was a very enriching experience. I hope to continue learning more about Japanese design in the future..."