

# Beautiful Bundles

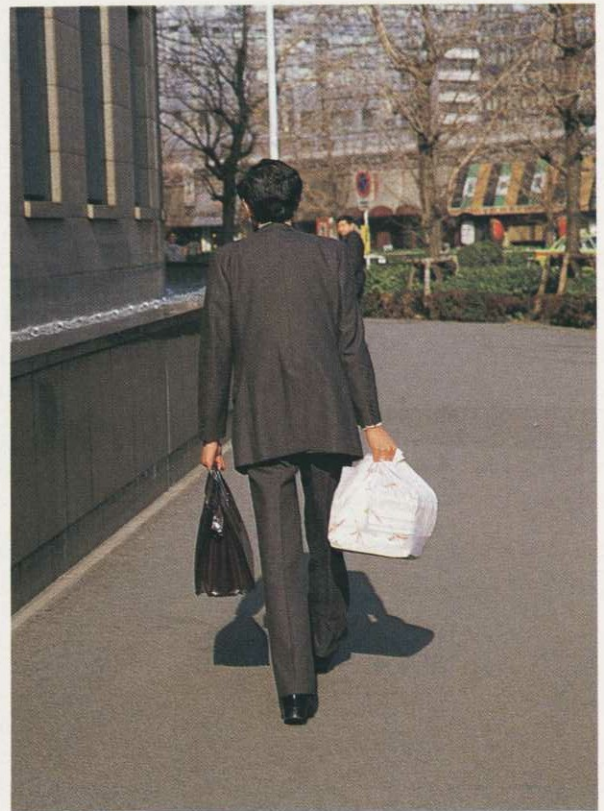
Photos and essay by Sonia Katchian



**F**uroshiki have been in use in Japan for some 300 years. In essence just a square piece of cloth, often very beautiful and made of silk, cotton or nylon, *furoshiki* are folded and tucked away—very much like the French filet—when not in use.

Originally used by Edo period Japanese to wrap their clothes while they enjoyed a soak in a public bath (*furo*, bath and *shiki*, wrap), *furoshiki* have since evolved into the versatile carryalls that can be seen everywhere in Japan today. Above: a *furoshiki* protects a casserole being taken to a relative's house. Left: purple *furoshiki* stretched to the limit to hold *bento* lunches on their way to the Tokyo Stock Exchange. Opposite: *furoshiki* in their most popular role today—holding documents and books.





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