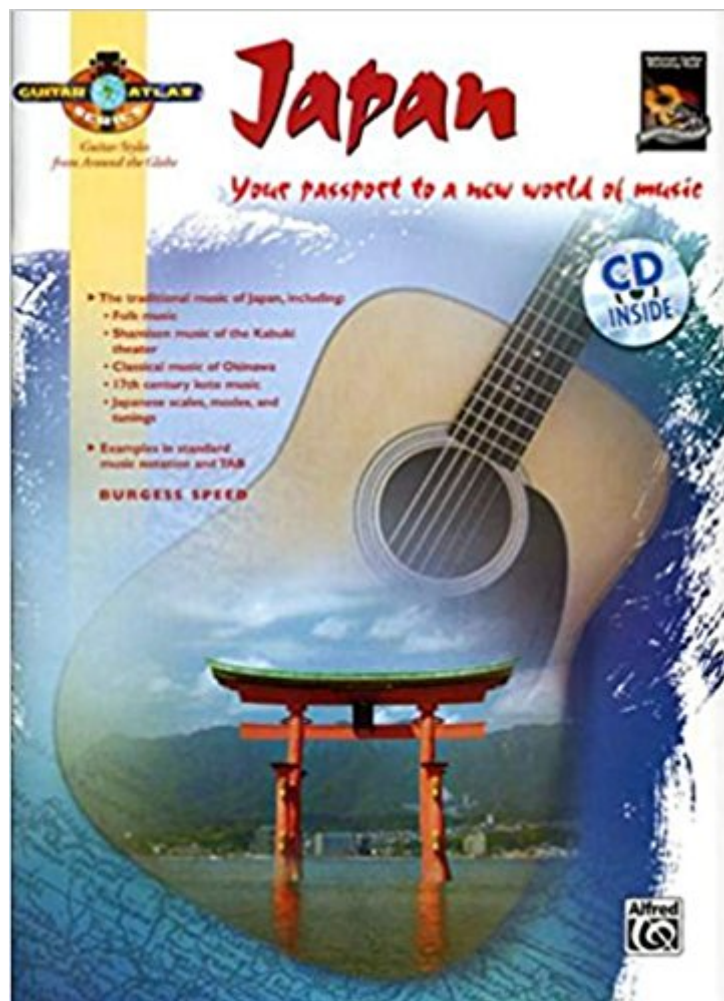




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# Guitar Atlas Japan: Your Passport To A New World Of Music, Book & CD



## Synopsis

To most of us, Japan is an exotic and faraway land. When we see images of Shinto shrines, pagodas, geishas, and Kabuki actors in face paint, our imaginations are immediately captured. Now you can experience this rich and mysterious culture through its music. In addition to arrangements of classic folk tunes such as "Sakura" and "Edo Komori-uta," *Guitar Atlas: Japan* teaches about Japanese scales, modes, and tunings, and traditional instruments such as the shamisen, koto, shakuhachi. Learn guitar techniques to emulate the sounds of these exotic instruments. Discover the fascinating world of Kabuki music, including a style of shamisen playing called ozatsuma. The book also informs about the Bon odori, or bon dances, held during the summer festival of Bon. This exciting introduction to the music of Japan offers new and interesting music to add to your repertoire, and teaches techniques, theory, and traditions that will enhance your playing and enrich your spirit. A CD demonstrating all examples and compositions is included.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Nice examples for a small book & CD.

I love this book. I'm a songwriter and I find this book very inspiring. The previous review gives all the details. It has some really nice pieces. Some of the pieces also use alternate tunings which are fun. I also bought the Middle East one. I'm sure I'll end up buying a few more in the series! If you like

Japanese music, especially the Koto, you won't be disappointed. Although the description doesn't mention it, the books are intended for intermediate to advanced players. There are some stretches (for me anyway. I have small hands). Enjoy!

love it

The Guitar Atlas: Japan book & CD by Burgess Speed is a guitarist's guide to understanding and recreating the sounds of traditional Japanese music. The book's first three chapters cover some important fundamentals. Chapter 1 is a brief one-page history lesson which breaks down the history of Japan into five major eras and observes how musical styles have evolved from the sixth century until the present day. In Chapter 2 the author explains many of the traditional instruments of Japan. These include the shamisen & sanshin (three-string banjo-like instruments), koto (a 13-string harp), biwa (a type of four-string lute), shakuhachi (bamboo flute) taiko, gakudaiko, dadaiko, and tsuzumi (drums) and binzasara (wooden clappers.) Chapter 3 delves into Japanese scales and modes and presents some really interesting insights into how these concepts have been influenced by ancient Chinese music theory which relates concepts such as Yin and Yang and the elements of Wood-Fire-Earth-Metal-Water to the traditional pentatonic Yo and In scales that are the basis for most traditional Japanese melodies. If you're not big into history these first 3 chapters may seem a bit dry, but they are absolutely essential reading if you want to fully understand and appreciate the guitar arrangements that follow. The author makes a point to include detailed background information on each of the songs presented and uses his understanding of the instruments to develop specialized guitar techniques and tunings that will deliver a wide range of distinctive and exciting sounds from the guitar. Some of these techniques include: using combination of fretted notes and open strings to recreate the harp-like sound of the koto, alternate tunings that mirror those used on the shamisen & sanshin, capos used to change timbre, using a thin pick to emulate the sound of the shamisen, and the use of bends and legato techniques to elicit a vocal quality in some songs. There are a total of seven arrangements in the book (and several shorter Kabuki interludes) which are broken down into the following chapters: Folk Music, Classical Music of Okinawa, Shamisen Music of the Kabuki Theater and Koto Music. The two most familiar pieces are "Sakura" (Cherry Blossoms) and "Kimi Ga Yo", Japan's National Anthem. All of the other pieces were unfamiliar to me, but I did enjoy trying my hand at them and the 36-track CD was a huge help in understanding how to convincingly phrase and interpret these songs. Guitar Atlas: Japan was definitely a fun journey and I'd recommend it to intermediate to advanced students who read

standard notation and tablature and don't mind retuning their guitar once in a while. Beyond learning about the music of Japan, I also took away some fresh ideas about how to approach my own arrangements using some of the colorful techniques that are utilized throughout the book. Finally, if the music of Japan is not your thing check out the entire Guitar Atlas series of books. Titles available include: Africa, Brazil, Cuba, India, Italy, and the Middle East. Originally posted at [...]

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