

# CAMPAIGN SETTING

## SAMURAI ROLE-PLAYING

The following is a suggestion for an ahistorical samurai campaign setting. Modify as necessary to suit your particular scenario.

### AHISTORICAL CAMPAIGN

An ahistorical setting allows for the use of any historical or fictional character, or interaction in any historical event, without regard to the actual timeline of history. The full panorama of Japanese history can be used in this type of setting.

Keep geography accurate, however. Castles and temples should be at their historical locations. Unless magic or science fiction is introduced, travel from one place to the next should be along plausible routes, e.g. characters will have to travel by sea to get from island to island.

### THE TABI “PILGRIMAGE”

A clan has a tradition of sending the heirs of its daimyo on a series of pilgrimages soon after his genbuku “coming-of-age ceremony.” During the pilgrimage, he will visit his clan domain, practice the martial arts, learn about the country, and experience its people, places, and things.

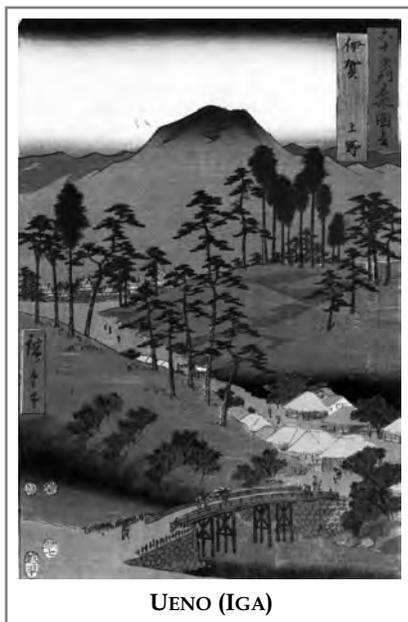
The sankin-kotai “alternate attendance” system is in effect, and so the family resides in Edo. Allowing the heir to leave the capital and go off on a pilgrimage requires the permission of the Shogun himself, and the daimyo must make the request personally.

The tabi will start a week or two after the daimyo returns in the early spring from a year in his domain to remain in the capital for the following year. The initial pilgrimage is for six months so the young heir is expected to return to the capital sometime in the fall.

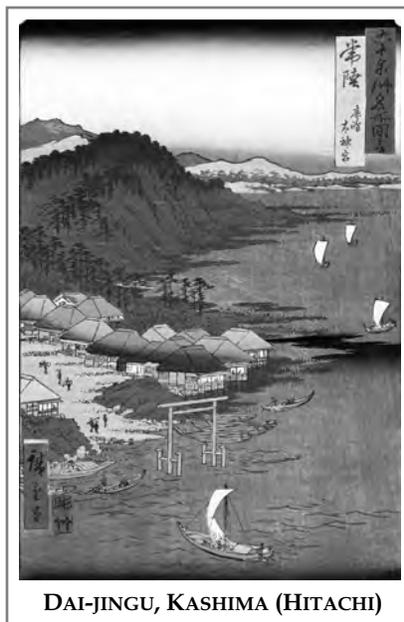
### THE PILGRIM PARTY

The daimyo’s son will be accompanied by a group of supporting characters:

- ▶ **Waka-tono “young lord”** -- The heir is around 15-years-old, trained at least in the martial arts of swordsmanship, archery, and horsemanship. He leaves behind his father, mother, and at least one brother and one sister from the same mother, and several half-siblings from different mothers.
- ▶ **Senior bodyguard** -- An experienced samurai in his 30s or 40s, perhaps an uncle, who has traveled between the capital and the clan domain



UENO (IGA)



DAI-JINGU, KASHIMA (HITACHI)



ISHIYAMA-DERA, LAKE BIWA (OMI)

– From the woodcut print series Famous Places in the Sixty-odd Provinces by Utagawa Hiroshigé (1797-1858).