From time immemorial, Japanese people have devised inventive and ingenious ways of making life pleasant during the hot, humid summers. Today, that ancestral wisdom continues to create refreshing summer moments and soothing scenes.

Spectacular fireworks (hanabi) brighten up evening skies, a seasonal tradition that brings flowery colors to the Japanese summer. Tokyo is known as the home of Japan’s oldest fireworks maker, with over 360 years of history, and hosts many prominent events. With pyrotechnics ranging from traditional fireworks to modern ones utilizing the latest know-how, the intricate designs of master artisans burst into magnificent rings of breathtaking beauty.

The “heat of vaporization” effect, in which water absorbs heat energy from the atmosphere as it evaporates, has recently drawn attention as a way to lower air temperature. The custom of sprinkling water (uchimizu) on streets, which has been passed down by Japanese households from ancient times, is a form of inherited wisdom that also takes advantage of that effect. The tradition has been enthusiastically embraced as a method to cope with modern urban heat, with attempts to bring coolness to entire cities being carried out nationwide.

Transparent glass wind chimes cool even the eyes, adding another dimension to the refreshing effect felt in our ears.