

Konosu Darma Dolls 鴻巣のだるま

A Darma Doll is roundly-shaped and basically colored red. Another interesting characteristic of the doll is that its eyes are blank.

People buy Darma Dolls for their new year's wish in the hope of bringing good luck or success in exams, business, and many other kinds of goals.

The doll has no feet or hands, following the Zen school founder's legend. According to the legend, Darma was a monk who lost both his arms and feet from atrophy after a 9-year long meditation period. Following this amazing feat the monk gained a great reputation, which is why Darma Dolls are regarded as lucky charms for overcoming difficulties and challenges.

The magic of the doll works like this -- when you make a wish for your achievement you need to paint a pupil on one of the blank eyes. Once your wish comes true, you then paint a second pupil on the other eye in order to give thanks for the result. Once you have done that, you return the painted doll back to the temple where you bought it.

Most Japanese Darma Dolls are made from papier-mache. However, the ones made in Konosu are different because the Akamono method -- a traditional procedure whereby the dolls are created out of molded wooden powder.

