

# W h a t ' s U p , O I T A !

*Bringing the latest from Oita, Japan to all those connected to Oita thriving all across the globe.*

December 2016 No. 07



**Greetings!** from Shunro Hori <hori-syunro@pref.oita.lg.jp>, the Head of the International Policy Division in the Oita Prefecture Planning Promotion Department

Last month, 20 members of the local Tanzanian government who came to our prefecture to attend JICA training made a courtesy visit to the deputy governor. In response to the April earthquake disaster, alumni trainees collected money for donation in their home countries and presented it. Furthermore, 15 students from a school in Bayankhongor Province, Mongolia and groups from Vietnam's Tuyen Quang Province and Quang Ninh Province visited as well, meaning there were visits to Oita from all over the world.

## Oita International Students Made Commercials!

International students attending Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University created commercials designed to promote the attractions of Oita Prefecture abroad using “the point-of-view and feelings of international students.” In the third year of this project, two projects were chosen in an idea competition and subsequently created. Each project has both a three minute and thirty second version with subtitles available in English, Thai, Vietnamese, Korean, and Traditional and Simplified Chinese. We hope to increase the recognition level of the real “Oita” by selecting PR material and visual expressions that suit the needs and tastes of foreign audiences.

Make sure to show the video to your family, friends, and acquaintances. Share the videos on your social networks and help promote Oita to the world!  
【International Policy Division】



Four trips in Oita Prefecture. Will these really be stories from four different people? You're invited to witness these interesting tales!

3 min. version, English subtitles:  
<https://youtu.be/CwUHqE8MmLo>



*Check It Out!*



On graduation day, students from different countries gather together and speak about four years of memories. One student in the group remembers a trip everyone recently took together, and her talk of times past begins to unfold as they travel back through time.

3 min. version, English subtitles:  
<https://youtu.be/aox3Mij-ms>

Watch the full 2014 – 2016 International Student Commercial Playlist:  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSfYw6nGjo9jcC4C6LQaTKg/videos>

# Cats, Castles, and Kara-age in Nakatsu

**What do samurai** Kanbei Kuroda, famous Japanese economist Yukichi Fukuzawa (the serious-looking man from the ¥10,000 notes), and kara-age (Japanese fried chicken) all have in common? The answer is Nakatsu, a mid-size city in northern Oita Prefecture.

But we went to Nakatsu for something else the city is known for: beautiful autumn leaves. As it would happen, we were slightly too early to see the full extent of the changing leaves, but we saw picturesque countryside roads from the bus we road, and we walked through Kakisaki-Kasenshiki Park, whose leaves had just begun to turn colour. Although we didn't have time to visit Yabakei Gorge, Nakatsu's Famous "Eight Views in a Single Glance," the Gorge is another famous site for autumn leaves.



*Foliage at the Hirata Castle Ruins  
(located near Nakatsu Station)*

Next, we hopped back on the bus to meet with Kat Joplin, an American teacher of English on the JET Programme, currently living and working in Nakatsu. We wanted them to show us some of their favourite places in the city and to give us an idea what it was like to live in Nakatsu.

Part of what makes Nakatsu special, Kat told us, is the community of supportive foreign residents, many of whom are fellow English teachers contracted through the JET Programme. There are seven JET Assistant Language Teachers currently working in Nakatsu. The group regularly meet up to socialise and have a number of spots that they frequent together, such as local restaurants or sento (Japanese baths). We went to one of these local restaurants for a delicious pasta lunch.

Kat explained to us that Nakatsu was a perfectly-sized city because despite being fairly large, people in the city got to know you and would recognise you. True to her word, while we walked with Kat through the town, many groups of school children stopped to greet us, using English.

Kat explained to us that what's brilliant about teaching English in Nakatsu is that even the most rowdy misbehaving children will try their hardest to speak English if they see their teachers out and about in town, and children in Kat's class even use English to make jokes to each other – a clear sign that the children are making English their own.



**Yabakei**  
(November of 2015)



**Kat** (and a cat)  
Our interview subject!

# More from Nakatsu!

As well as being a great place to teach, Nakatsu is also brilliant for tourism, and Kat told us about Rakanji Temple, a beautiful temple in the mountain full of stone Buddhas. To get there, visitors have to use a chair lift or climb the mountain, and there is a stunning view in all four seasons. There are also many hiking trails, such as Hachimenzan. But perhaps the most famous attraction in Nakatsu is the beautiful Nakatsu Castle. Although the castle is a restoration, it is large and beautiful, and Kat took us there to get a view of the castle and river nearby, even introducing us to the famous ducks that like to swim in the castle moat.

On our way to the castle, we also encountered many cats (Nakatsu is full of cats), which seemed appropriate – walking through Na-KAT-tsu, being guided by Kat, and meeting cats. It added to the city's charm, and we were able to have a lovely day.

But don't just take our word for it. Why not take a trip to Nakatsu and experience its many charms for yourself?



*Bicycle rentals near Nakatsu Station are also available for all of your tourism needs!*



## Na-kastle!

Photo of Nakatsu Castle from [www.nakatsujyo.jp](http://www.nakatsujyo.jp)



## Na-kat -sightings!

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## Editors' Note

Hot springs are one of Oita's most famous features. With the weather growing colder and the days growing shorter, why not end a day of sightseeing by rediscovering the warmth of Oita's hot springs?

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