

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.

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Greetings! from Mitsuru Tokuno <tokuno-mitsuru@pref.oita.lg.jp>, the Head of the International Policy Division in the Oita Prefecture Planning Promotion Department

All throughout the prefecture, the season for beautiful foliage has arrived. When I think of Oita, November is also the season for bamboo lantern events in Usuki, Kitsuki, Taketa, and Hita. The days and matches Oita is scheduled to host have been decided for the 2019 Rugby World Cup, and from here on out, preparation and attempts to attract visitors from overseas will be continuing at full speed. I would like for those who visit Oita, not only for Rugby but for the International Hot Springs Summit and the National Art and Culture Festival as well, to also delight in our nature, history, culture, and food. I hope everyone, from prefectural associations to international students, will continue to promote the charms of Oita to the rest of the world.

Los Angeles Oita Prefectural Association Holds 100th Anniversary Ceremony



On September 30th, Nanka (Los Angeles) Oita Prefectural Association held a ceremony to commemorate their centennial anniversary at Gardena Buddhist Church in Gardena City south of LAX. Eighty people gathered to celebrate this monumental occasion.

There were 14 attendees from Japan, including Vice Governor Andou, Oita City mayor Sato, Oita U.S.-Japan Council chairman Himeno, and Mr. Yakushiji representing Tokyo's International Oita Prefectural Association.

The ceremony included songs, an opera performance, a taiko performance, a talk regarding Oita's local dialect, and lastly, a raffle. The venue was brimming with people.



A Good Old Fashioned Time in Bungo Takada

This month, I stepped into the past in Bungo Takada's Showa no Machi.

Showa no Machi is an integral piece of the landscape of Bungo Takada. It is a small town, or rather several streets in the center of Bungo Takada, designed to take you back to the Showa Era. Although the Showa Era spans from the 1920s to the 1980s, the look and feel of the town was clearly focused on the former half of the time period. The charming town center cannot help but fill you with a sense of nostalgia.



Bungo Takada was also in the midst of promotion for movie *Miracles of the Namiya General Store*, which was primarily filmed in the city itself. Although the set of the general store has since been torn down, you can still go to its plot of land and “look” at it using a virtual reality app (COCOAR2) that the city of Bungo Takada itself promotes on its official website. There was also a pop up museum dedicated to the movie and the store as well and a guide map available of all the areas that appeared in the movie.



After exploring Showa no Machi, we discovered another one of Bungo Takada's hallmarks: soba. The Bungotakada Soba Dojo offers a soba making workshop that we all participated in. Making soba was an interesting process. I had never made any time of noodle or pasta by hand before, and it was fascinating to see a simple mixture of buckwheat and liquid transform into the beloved soba noodle. There were many steps involved, and our hands got pretty dirty, but we scored several bags of soba to take home with us.

There is no entry fee to Showa-no-Machi. There is a 3,600 fee per bowl of soba (ideal for between 2 to 5 people) and a 216 fee (per person) to taste the soba you've made. Advanced reservation required.

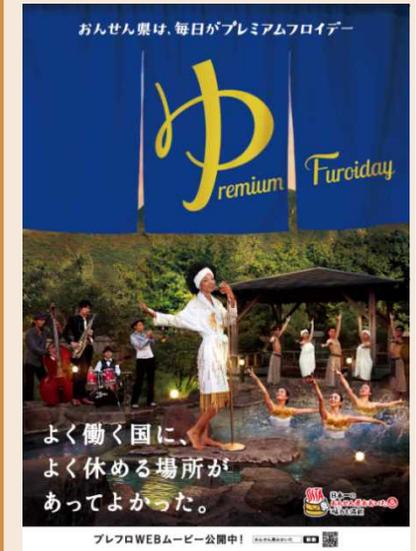
“Premium Furoiday” Promotional Video for Oita, the Onsen Capital of Japan, Is Now Playing!

Oita Prefecture, which boasts the highest number of onsen sources and the highest yield of onsen water in all of Japan, has released a new video called “Premium Furoiday.” While many diverse points-of-view are being discussed in regards to work reform, this video proposes a way to rest.

As the onsen capital of Japan, the video suggests that the viewer should “have more fun resting in premium baths!” The “P” in the “Premium Furoiday” logo is written with the Japanese hiragana character for “yu” (ゆ) and also means hot water. The German word “freude,” which sounds like “Furoiday” means “happiness and delight.”

The video has a decisive finish as it unfolds into a musical set in an onsen and is ultimately an enjoyable watch. Be sure to watch this fun and exciting video!

Official Premium Furoiday Website: <http://onsenkenoita.com/>



(Sun., Oct. 29th) First Cancellation of the International Wheelchair Marathon

Due to Typhoon 22, the 37th International Wheelchair Marathon, scheduled to be held in Oita City on the 29th, was canceled. There were leaves and branches scattered across parts of the course and multiple points had flooded. Due to these conditions, ensuring the safety of the athletes was deemed to be too difficult. This marathon has been held since 1981, but this is the first time the event has been canceled. This year, 224 people from 16 countries entered the marathon. “I await a lively race next year,” said Governor Hirose.

Editor’s Note

Making soba this month was a great deal of fun! As the season changes and gets colder, I look forward to finishing off nabe from beneath my kotatsu with a healthy dose of soba at the end!

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