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# STARS STRIPES.

**Community Publication** 

VOLUME 6 NO. 31



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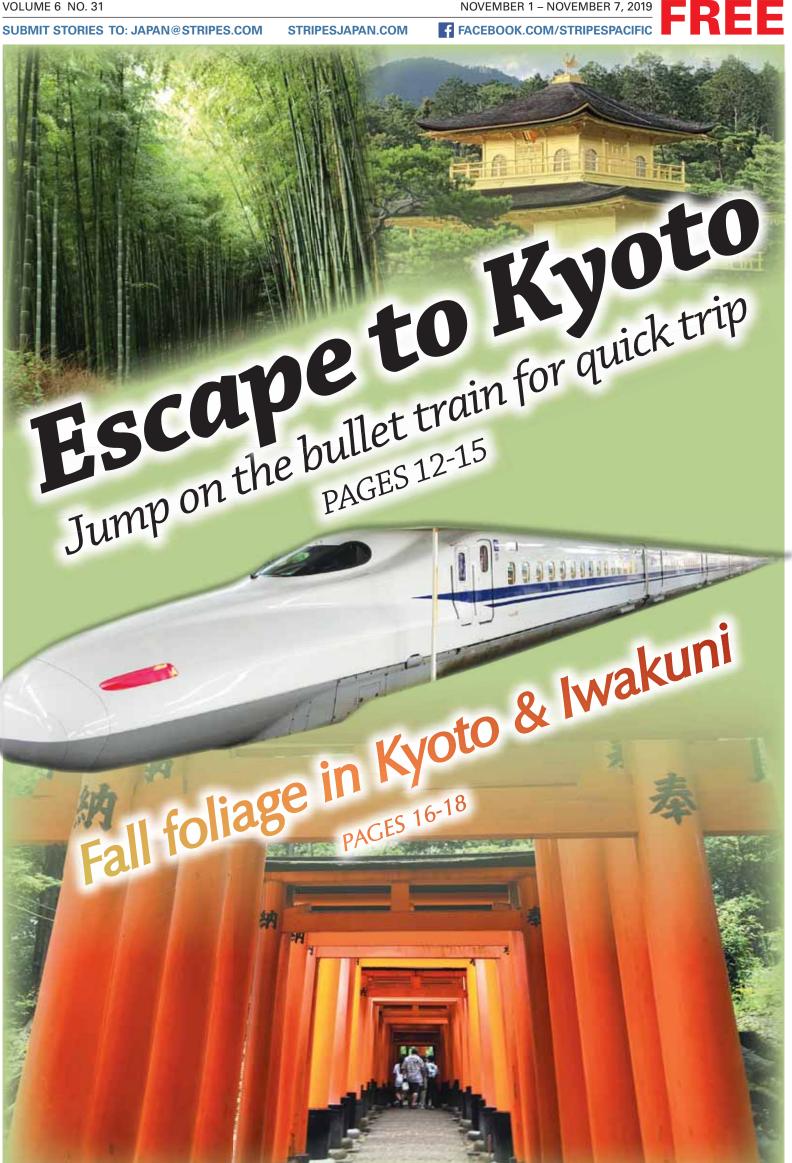


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# Overcoming tough times

STRIPES JAPAN

"If you're going through hell, keep going."

- Winston Churchill

or military members, deployments away from home are a reality. However, my assignment locations have given me more opportunities for short trips away than long deployments. In fact, it had been over 10 years since I experienced being away for more than several weeks.

Fate caught up with me and I found myself at an austere location in unbearable heat separated from my loved ones by what felt like millions of miles. I was in deep thought about the many months I

would be away. I was feeling sorry for myself. "What did I do to deserve this?" I thought to myself. "This is what hell is like and I am in hell."

Fortunately, a miracle happened. Reading and listening to personal development books

inspired me. I found a way to overcome the dreadful feeling of hell and make the most of unfavorable circumstances. In fact, I did more; I found

a way to love any circum-stance.

I realized I had no guarantee of tomorrow. Life is delicate, and we can perish at this circumstance so I could learn and grow. any time. I asked myself if I would regret

not making the most of my time. I recognized happiness was a choice and that the problem was not my circumstance. I was the problem! To overcome, I had to go further than making the most of the circumstance. I needed to fall in love with it. To do this, I needed to inject the things I love into my circumstance and turn it into an opportunity.

The first step was making a list of what I love. For me this is God, family, serving oth-

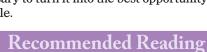
ers, learning and teaching. I then brainstormed ways I could integrate these things into my circumstance. I changed my focus from being a victim into making the most of it. I realized this opportunity gave me time to focus on my relationship with God, volunteer to serve others, read personal development books, and host a professional development seminar. I shifted my perspective into passion by engaging in mean-

ingful activities that gave me purpose. This reignited my enthusiasm to charge forward and restore my feelings of reward for my actions. As I did this, I gained a clear perspective of what is most important and made sure my actions were in line with my priorities.

The process took time. I examined the time spent on trivial things. I had to cut out the trivial to include more of the things I love

into my daily routine. As I did this, my spirits rose and I felt a deep sense of gratitude and love for God. I recognized He put me in I could use the natural gifts and talents He gave me to bless the lives of others. I found this especially true in my relationship with a co-worker who went through a difficult career-altering circumstance. I was able to support him, and we became great friends. Being grateful for the things in the moment, I found my blessings outweighed my challenges.

I changed my negative perspective and focused on improving personally and professionally, as well as having gratitude and not taking things for granted. As I continue to improve. I will return to my family stronger. healthier, and better able to care for them. This experience taught me to place more value on my family and motivated me to make the most of our time together when I return. It turns out this deployment has been the best thing for me. I challenge you to consider your current circumstance and take the steps necessary to turn it into the best opportunity possible.



-Man's Search for Meaning – by Viktor E. Frankl -How to Stop Worrying and Start Living

– by Dale Carnegie -Live it! Achieve Success by Living with

- by Jairek Robbins

# COMMENTARY

MSgt. Erik Larson

About the writer: MSgt. Erik Larson is stationed at Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, but is currently on a 7-month deployment to Djibouti. He writes so he can "give perspective on my military/personal life to make a positive impact in the lives of others."





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This undated Air Force photo shows Building 800 at Yokota Air Base.

# **WWII** hangar razed for new facility on Yokota

**EXCLUSIVE NEWS FROM:** 

www.stripes.com

BY SETH ROBSON. STARS AND STRIPES Published: October 21, 2019

YOKOTA AIR BASE — An 80-year-old building that once housed secret Japanese aircraft during World War II is coming down at the home of U.S. Forces Japan and the 5th Air Force in western Tokyo.

A maintenance and fabrication facility will go up on the site on Yokota's flight line, Air Force officials said.

Demolition of the hangar began last month following a ceremony that involved a Shinto priest praying for the safe completion of the project, said 374th Engineer Squadron environmental engineer Yoshitaka Yamagu-

chi, in a video released by the Air Force on Oct. 10.

Known Building 800, the hangar was

constructed by the Japanese Imperial Army in the 1930s when Yokota was known as Tama Army Airfield, Yamaguchi said.

"The Imperial Army used it for maintenance, training and secret aircraft testing and evaluation during World War II," he said.

During a tour of the hangar Oct. 10, demolition workers pointed out the names of merchants printed in kanji — Chinese characters used in Japan's writing system — on exposed wooden frames. The workers said they also uncovered an Imperial Army-era painting of Mount Fuji behind one wall; however, it was destroyed when that part of the building was demolished.

A colorful volcanic boulder in

a garden near the building, a gift from Emperor Hirohito in April 1944, is still in place.

Among the planes maintained in the hangar was a Kawasaki Ki-61 Hien single-engine fighter, one of the types used in kamikaze attacks at the end of the war.

That aircraft, which was displayed at Yokota until 1953, can be viewed at Gifu-Kakamigahara Air and Space Museum in Gifu city, Yamaguchi said.

The hangar was used during Operation Tomodachi, the U.S. relief effort after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, Yokota spokeswoman Kaori Matsukasa said in an Oct. 4 email. "Bldg. 800 and other subordinate buildings will be replaced with a new

'Consolidated Maintenance/ Fabrication Complex," she said.

The decision to demolish the hangar was taken due to its poor condition and a request by U.S. forces to build a new facility, according to a North Kanto Defense Bureau spokesman.

The nearly \$60 million construction project, funded by the Japanese government, will begin sometime around 2021 and is expected to end around 2025, the spokesman said.

Several other Imperial Armyera hangars are still standing at Yokota, Matsukasa said.

Stars and Stripes reporter Hana Kusumoto contributed to this report.

robson.seth@stripes.com Twitter: @SethRobson1



A Shinto priest prays during a ceremony inside Building 800 in September.







Lake Shikotsu Ice Festival & Otaru City & Chocolate factory visit! \*Price includes Adult: \$1,218

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Ve did a lot in our time in Hokkaido! here was good variety in the itineran erything was well organized Overall this was Tour guides did a superb job! Thanks for such a pleasant experience

# THANKSGIVING DAY SPECIAL

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(Nov.27 departure - Dec.01 return)



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Yamashiro, located in the northern part of Iwakuni City, is made up of Hongo machi, Nishiki machi, Mikawa machi and Miwa machi. The Nishiki river is widely known as a clear, clean stream and the fresh air brought about by the luxuriant forest and fertile land make Yamashiro an area rich in natural resources. Come and check out our products!



#### • Ganne-kuriemon

A cake made from chestnuts and a little sugar. The sugar enhances a chestnut's original flavor.

Ganne-guri no sato Inc. Tel: 0827-97-0727



#### **2**Ganne-guri marron pie

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# **3**Ganne-guri shochu

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#### **O**Ganne marron pie

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Konditorai HAKU



# **6**Kuro-main / **Kuro-main sparkling**

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## **6**Beppin-manju

A steamed bun stuffed with lees of Kuro-main sake.

The fragrance of sake lees and special bean paste make the buns taste excellent.

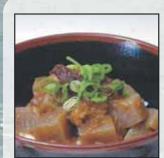
Mikamoto kingetsudo Tel: 0827-72-2520



# Beppin-Ice cream

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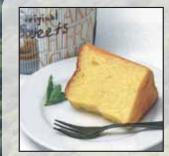




#### Mikuchan's Pickled Wasabi

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# **©**Wasabi Manjyu

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#### @Ganne-guri Daifuku

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# **@Mori no kaori – Wood** aroma oil

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Fairy S. Garden Tel: 0827-96-0960



## **©**Cutting board

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Mikawa Wood Work Inc. Tel: 0827-77-0903



#### **O**Original Tenugui

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Pick up a "tourist map" and "introduction of specialty products" pamphlet.

Nishiki-gawa tourist association Tel: 0827-72-2354



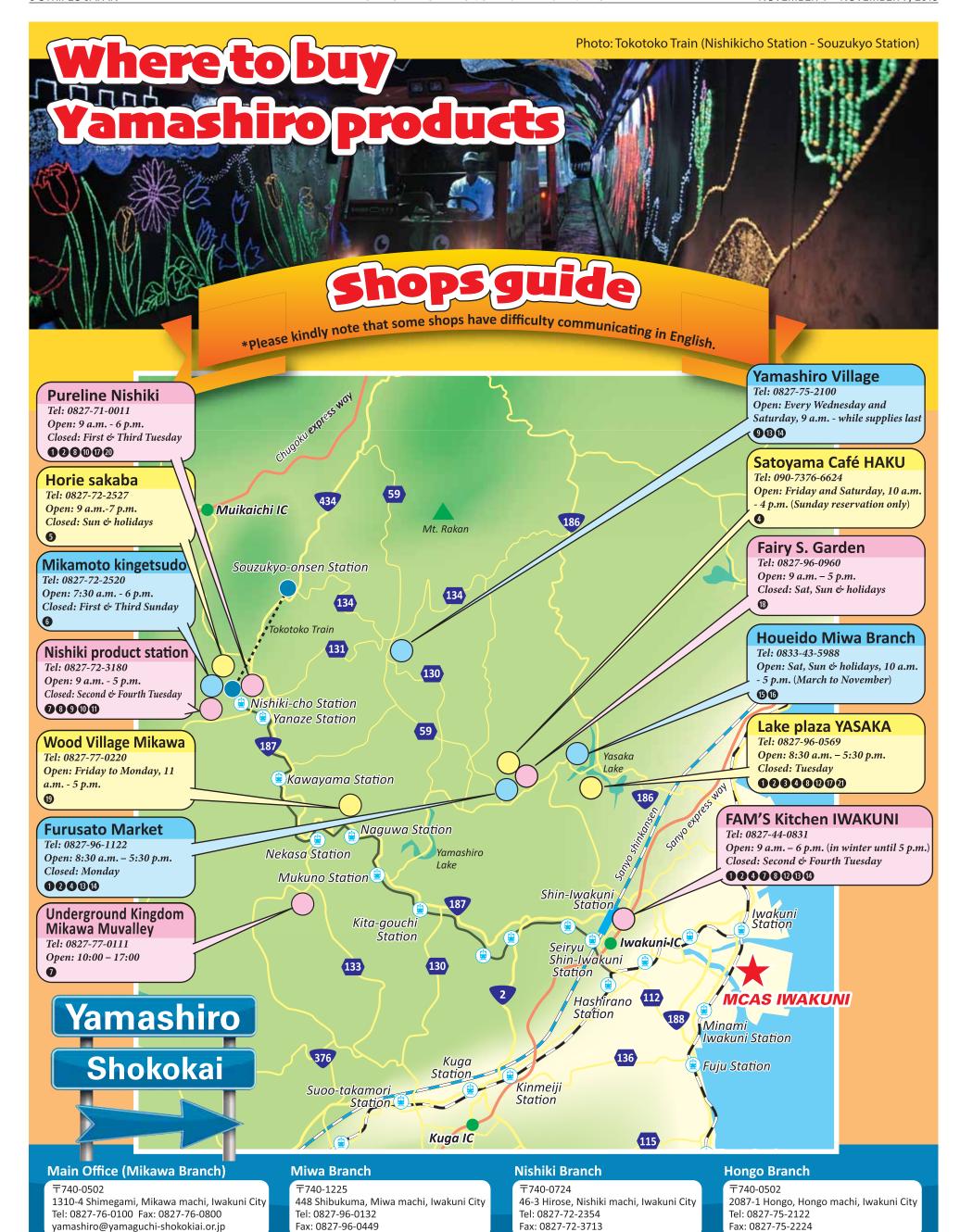


#### **@**Kachi-guri Strap

A tribute to the Japanese ancient lucky charm "Kachi-guri." Great accessary and wonderful gift idea.

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Turn to next page to check out location of shops that sell these products.









# MCAS Iwakuni hosts 2019 Special Olympics

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPLTRITON LAI, MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION – U.S. Marines and Japanese families attended the 13th annual Special Olympics at MCAS Iwakuni on Oct. 13.

The Special Olympics was coordinated by Frank Thornton, assistant director of the national sports committee of Special Olympics Japan and Marine Corps Community Services.

"We tried to provide a place for the athletes to get involved and let the community get to know the athletes," said Thornton. "We have 184 people coming from off base including families and coaches."

It provided events for athletes to compete in such as; disc golf, a bicycle race and soccer.

Over 100 volunteers helped with the event, one of those

volunteers was Cpl. Tyree Dodson, a mobile facility technician with Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 12.

"It was definitely a positive and fun experience for me, seeing the athletes interacting with the volunteers and enjoying themselves, it felt great and fulfilling," said Dodson.

In addition to the sports events, the Olympics provided the opportunity for residents on base to learn more about the Japanese communities and athletes from off base.

Thornton said the Special Olympics is a lifestyle and is a part of his life and he wouldn't know what to do without it.

After the events, the athletes and Japanese families ended the night with bowling at the Strike Zone Bowling Center on base.





Surrounded by clear blue sea, Yashiro Island is great for hitting the beach in the summer and fishing year round. It is known as a place of solace and repose, offering an excellent place to enjoy cherry blossoms in the spring and mandarin orange picking and hiking in the fall.



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https://www.instagram.com/flat.showta/

Address: 158-54 Komatsukaisaku, Suo Oshima-cho, Oshima-gun, Yamaguchi Pref.

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Oshima Ohashi Bridge

HAWAII MUSEUM

Yashiro Island

JAM'S GARDEN

437

KAWAI SUSHI

**OKAMOTO FACTORY** 





U.S. Marine Corps recruits eat Meals, Ready-To-Eat at Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, Ga., Sept 4. Photo by Yamil Casarreal, U.S. Marine Corps

# Army: Don't blame MREs for your tummy troubles

BY J.P. LAWRENCE, STARS AND STRIPES Published: October 23, 2019

onsuming nothing but Meals Ready-to-Eat for three weeks may not be the most appetizing thing to do, but a study by Army scientists has found that it doesn't harm gut health.

That may come as a surprise to anyone whose stomach has rumbled after eating the highly processed military rations for just one day, let alone 21, which is the maximum time the Army says MREs should be the sole source of subsistence for soldiers.

"It's not MREs underlying a lot of anecdotal reports of gastrointestinal discom-

fort," said Dr. J. Philip Karl, a scientist and research dietitian at the U.S. Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine, and lead author on the study published in this month's Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry.

Service members usually eat MREs when they're training or on a mission, in harsh terrain, under stress and possibly overseas, where hygiene might not be at high standards, Karl said in a phone interview. They may also be dehydrated, he said.

The study set out to determine if it's the rations or the environment that causes the digestive issues service members often associate with MREs.

Sixty-four people, mostly men, responded to the Army's 2015 call for volunteers to eat only MREs. Four dropped out for reasons including gastrointestinal distress and not sticking to the study protocol.

Participants were divided into two groups, one of which ate their usual diet while the other ate nothing but MREs for three weeks. The MRE group could have water and up to three cups of black coffee a day in addition to the rations, but that was it.

The volunteers kept logs, while dieticians monitored their weight and adjusted food intake

if they gained or lost weight. Researchers collected blood, urine and stool samples from the volunteers several times during the study and analyzed the samples to determine if MREs were impacting health by causing changes to gut microbiota – bacteria, fungi and viruses that live in the intestines.

Research suggests gut microbiota influence our moods, digestion and immune systems, Karl said. Even a small change can alter how nutrients are absorbed, or inflame the intestinal lining, leading to stomach pain and even chronic diseases, he

said.

But Karl and his team of researchers found almost no difference in gut chemistry be-

tween those who ate only MREs and those who continued to eat normally.

Those who ate just rations did have one fewer bowel movement per week, the researcher found. The just-MREs group also had lower levels of gut bacteria that have been found in other studies to increase the frequency of defecation.

Many people get those helpful bacteria by eating fermented food, such as yogurts and cheeses, which are not included in MREs.

While MREs contain similar amounts of carbohydrate, fat, protein and fiber as the average American diet, they also need to withstand tough conditions and maintain a three-year shelf life, the Army said in a statement last month. As a result, they contain no fresh foods.

Then again, the average American also consumes too few fresh foods, Karl said.

"Americans tend not to eat enough fruits, vegetables and whole grains," he said. "The MRE actually provides more fiber and more of several vitamins and minerals compared to people's typical diets.

"I think MREs get a bad rap." lawrence.jp@stripes.com

BICE

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STORY AND PHOTOS BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI, STRIPES JAPAN

hen planning a trip to Kyoto, taking a car might seem like an attractive option. That is, until you realize that traveling there from any of the military installations in the Kanto Plain will have you driving nearly six hours on the Tomei Expressway. This highway is notorious for heavy traffic especially around the Ebina and Nagoya junctions, adding more drive time to what a quick weekend trip should entail.

What about flying, you may asl Considering that the nearest airport to Kyoto is an hour away via limousine bus, this option might also not be a good one.

For trips to Japan's picturesque old capital, riding the rail on the Shinkansen is the fastest and most popular. But keep in mind that it can also be the most expensive option.

Running at speeds of up to 200 mph, the bullet train, as it's also called, connects Tokyo and Kyoto in around two hours.

Since the first model of the Shinkansen was introduced in 1964, it has connected Tokyo to most major cities around the country with a total rail length of 1,729 miles. It is also considered the symbol of Japan's innovative technology.

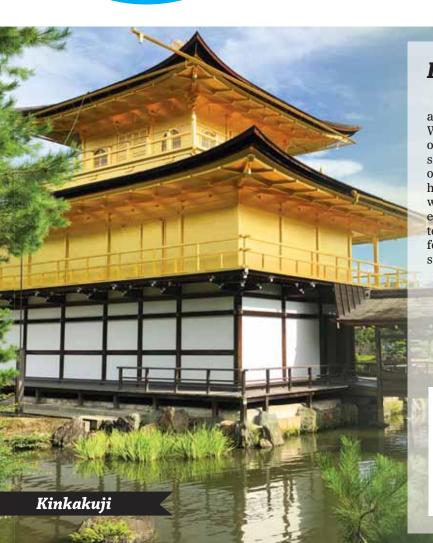
We chose the bullet train as our means of travel

when my wife's sister and her family were in town visiting from Guam. Having visitors was a great opportunity to hop on for an trip to Kyoto.

There are three types of Shinkansen between Tokyo and Kyoto you can purchase tickets for: "Nozomi" (wish), "Hikari" (light) and "Kodama" (echo). Nozomi is the fastest, with fewer stops and a quicker route, so in order to have more time in Kyoto, we rode this one.

We boarded at Shin-Yokohama Station and were surprised by how

busy the platform was even for our 6:12 a.m. departure time. The rocket-like super express trains look more like white jets on the rail than trains. Bullet trains were arriving and departing in a matter of minutes. According to the time table, there were anywhere between



# Kinkakuji (Golden Pavilion)

Kinkakuji, or the Golden Pavilion, is another one of the city's many UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The third shogun of Muromachi Shogunate, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408), built the hall in his own villa, called Kitayama-den. Just as a handout says, the pavilion and its garden were fashioned to represent the Buddhist's earthly paradise. The gorgeous, golden exterior is striking against the dark green forest and blue water pond in the garden surrounding it.

HOURS: Mon - Sun, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. LOCATION: 1 Kinkokujicho, Kita-ku, Kyoto City, Kyoto Pref. ADMISSION: adulst: 400 yen, elemen-

SEE MORE

KYOTO

ON

*PAGE 14* 

ADMISSION: adulst: 400 yen, eleme tary and middle school: 300 yen URL: www.shokoku-ji.jp/kinkakuji/TEL: 075-461-0013

IEL: 0/5-461-0013



# 'Capital of One-Thousand Years'

yoto is home to numerous UNESCO
World Heritage sites packed into an
area of around 828 square kilometers.
Over 250 shrines, as many as 1,600 temples
and other cultural properties within the city
have been impressing foreign visitors for ages.

Tokyo may be huge with its sprawling city blocks lined with skyscrapers and bright lights, but its old flavor is now secluded to certain spots or neighborhoods. Kyoto, on the other

hand, has an opposite approach with neighborhood keeping their traditional character and feeling. But make no mistake, Kyoto is a modern city.

Kyoto is often associated as "the Capital of One-Thousand Years," as it was established in 794 and had been the capital of Japan for more than 10 centuries before Tokyo took over the position in 1868.

Kyoto is the eighth largest city in

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# Tokyo

Shinagawa Shin Yokohama



# n to Kyoto

eight to 10 bullet trains heading to Kyoto within simply fantastic. Althe hour.

Before boarding, stop at one of the various shops selling special train bento boxes and drinks. These make for a great snack or meal as they're packaged so that they're easy to carry and fit on the trains' seatback trays.

When you purchase your shinkansen ticket, pay attention to the car number and line up according to the numbers you'll find on

the platform floor and on the digital signs above.

If you didn't have a chance to buy snacks or bentos on the platform or station, don't worry, there are attendants aboard with a cart full of tasty treats available for purchase.

With our sandwiches and drinks (beer, includ-

ed), we enjoyed the view from the train. It was simply fantastic. Although it was not a clear day, we were still able to see majestic Mt. Fuji

shrouded in clouds and many wooden homes as we passed through villages and factory towns. Despite the extreme high-speed, it's a smooth ride. There is also free wi-fi onboard.

Our train only made one stop at Nagoya before reaching Kyoto and we were there less than two hours after we boarded in

Shin-Yokohama. The train ride was so comfortable that we wished our destination were further so we could stay on longer.

We stepped off the train and found ourselves at Kyoto Station, in the center of the old capital. It was 8 a.m. sharp and we had a full day of exploring the areas UNESCO World Heritage sites ahead of us.

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com

# Travel on the Shinkansen for less!

According to the JR Tokai website, one-way Shinkansen tickets between Shin-Yokohama

and Kyoto are 12,420 yen (non-reserved seat) (about \$115), 13,250 yen (reserved seat) and 18,030 yen (luxurious Green Car seat).

At about \$230 per round-trip, traveling to Kyoto via bullet train is not cheap! But don't forget to check your local ITT office or travel agencies for package tours that can cut the cost and also include a hotel stay.

I booked our tickets through JTB, a well-known travel agency in Japan, and paid 21,000 yen (\$190). The package included round trip Nozomi Shinkansen tickets and a room at a great hotel that was only a 2-minute walk from Kyoto station.

If you have visitors from out of town,

I suggest they purchase a JR Rail Pass. This is a special pass exclusively for those on tourist visas. The pass covers most bullet trains and the nation-wide JR railway service. The tickets range in price from around \$300 to \$400 per week and need to be purchased in advance. Visit <a href="https://global.jr-central.co.jp/en">https://global.jr-central.co.jp/en</a> or call at 050-2016-1600 for more information.



# oto Prefecture

nation and is e to a popunof 1,467,702 f June 2019).

n the walk leading to estic Kiyomizudera Temple, Il see the classic wooden homes

esteryear. A stroll along the small r in Gion District will transport back in time as you pass young women in

rental kimono and yukata. The center of o made us feel as if we'd strayed into the ous age of the old capital.

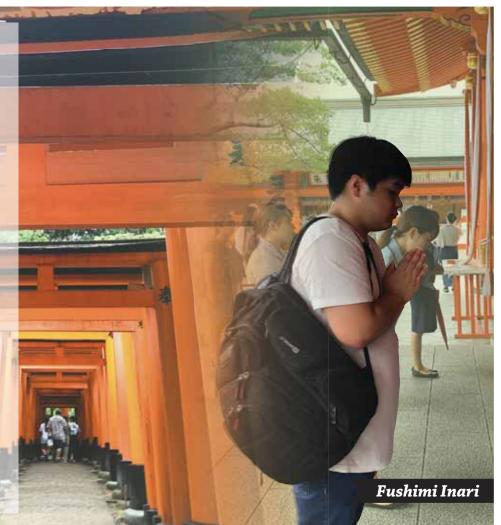
ivided into five districts, Rakuchu (cen-Rakuhoku (north), Rakunan (south), Ra-(east) and Rakusai (west), Kyoto's public sportation system is easy to use and very renient. Check out the one-day bus and vay passes ranging from 600 to 1,500 yen. u have a Suica or Pasmo card, you can also hem in Kyoto.

# Fushimi Inari

Easily one of the most recognizable and most popular of Japan's shrines, Fushimi Inari sits at the foot of the 764-foot-high Inariyama Mountain. After I worshipped in front of the beautiful main shrine, my family and I walked through more than 1,000 bright torii gates towards Inariyama summit. Although we gave up midway, if you have time, hike to the top of mountain for stunning views of the city from high above.

LOCATION: 68 Fukakusa Yabunouchimachi, Fushimi-ku, Kyoto City, Kyoto Pref. ADMISSION: adults: 600 yen, high school: 400 yen, elementary school: 300 yen URL: http://inari.jp/en TEL: 075-641-7331











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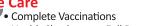




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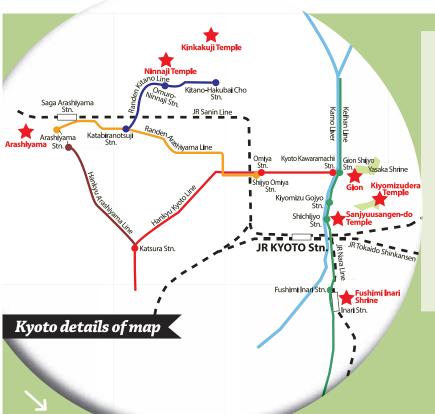












# Sanjuusangen-do Temple

Officially named Rengeooin Temple, Sanjusangen-do (literally meaning 33-intervals temple) in the east of Kyoto was established in 1164. The 393-foot-long temple hall is home to 1,001 statues of Kannon (Buddha of Mercy), making for an incredible sight. A gigantic statue of Senju Kannon (1,000-armed Buddha of Mercy) sits at the center, surrounded by the thousand statues.

HOURS: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
LOCATION: 657 Sanjusangendo Mawarimachi,
Higgsiota

ADMISSION: adults: 600 yen, high school: 400 yen, elementary school: 300 yen

URL: www.sanjusangendo.jp/ TEL: 075-561-0467

Sanjyuusangendo Temple



Ninnaji Temple is another UNESCO World Heritage site in Kyoto and one of the largest and most prestigious temples in the city. This temple was founded in 888. Its large temple gate, bell tower, main temple hall, Kannondo hall and 5-story pagoda draw less tourists than other sites here, so enjoy it at your leisure.

A 2-minute walk from the main temple gate, head to the wooden building housing the Omuro-Ninnaji Station of the Randen Line – a small one-car train running around the Arashiyama District. Be sure to hop on one when you go back to center of the city.

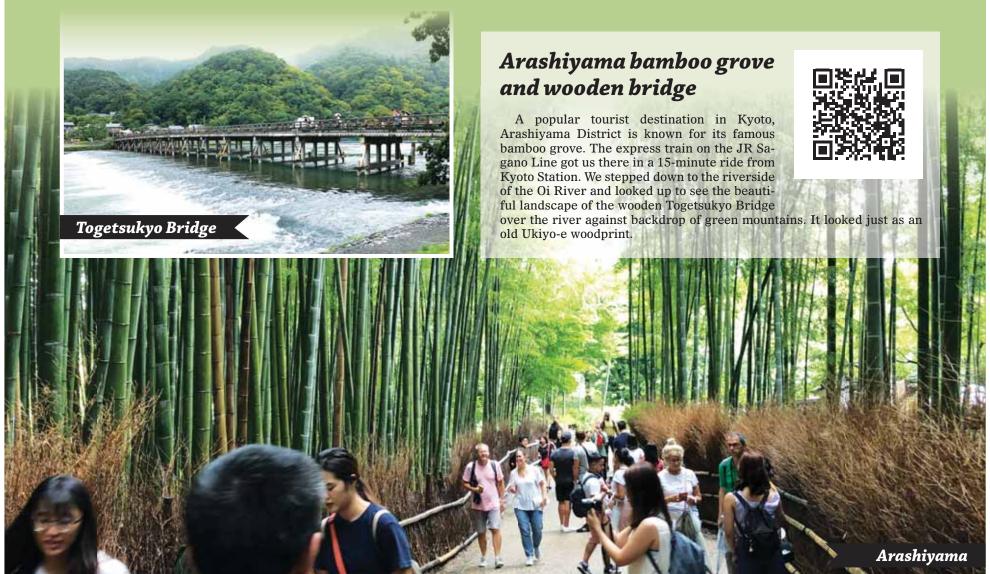
#### Ninnaji Temple

LOCATION: 33 Omuroouchi, Ukyo-ku, Kyoto City, Kyoto Pref.

URL: http://www.ninnaji.jp/en/









STORY AND PHOTOS BY NANO BETTS, TRAVELWITHNANOB.COM

ith shorter days and crisper air – plus all the seasonal produce like mushrooms, chestnut and sweet potato filling up the shelves - I feel sad to bid goodbye to vibrant summer days but feel equally excited for autumn and that proper feeling of hygge we all crave. Most of all, I look forward to seeing colors turn. There is something truly majestic about autumn in Japan: the eye-catchy yellow gingko trees lining up the avenues and draping maple trees seem matching so perfectly with time-kissed wooden shrines and landscape gardens. If you happen to find yourself in Kyoto during this time, you'll know what I'm talking about.

I traveled there specifically to admire koyo (colorful autumn leaves in Japanese). I traveled during the fourth week and sadly only caught the tail end of the

season, but there still were plenty of nooks where maple trees were at their peak. Of course, it does vary from year to year and Japan-guide.com does a superb job providing foliage updates each season. While everywhere you look is beautiful, I put together this list to share some of the best places to view autumn leaves in Kyoto in case you plan a trip there. From the most touristy to the off the beaten track places in Kyoto, I'm sure you'll find a perfect place to enjoy the beauty of this amazing time of

# Arashiyama

While it is most popular for its bamboo grove, Arashiyama is stunning during autumn as well. Take a stroll along the river or, better yet, take a boat ride to enjoy the multi-colored thick gorge. Best of all, take a hike in its lush forest, and reward yourself with a tofu restaurant in the



# Adashino Nenbutsu-ji Temple

While in Arashiyama, make sure you also visit this truly gem of a place. hundreds of Buddhist statues cover the ground intended to commemorate those who died without families to remember them and create somewhat eerie atmosphere.

# Fushimi Inari Taisha

I've written aplenty about one of the most striking temples in Kyoto. Remember, the further up you go, less crowded it gets. Also, do stop at the udon restaurant on your way down and slurp to your hearts content as you admire the view of the forest from the comfort of your tatami seat (or chair, in my case).

# Kiyomizu-dera Temple

Touristy as it might be, visit to this temple is a must, especially in fall. I highly recommend coming just before sunset, because that magical golden cast upon the colorful hills make it even more stunning.

# Tofuku-ji Temple

Probably one of my favorite temples in Kyoto, Tofuku-ji has a beautiful gateway arch - the oldest in Japan - that leads to an expansive medieval complex consisting of 24 temples. Four contrasting gardens – both dry gravel and landscaped - are arranged around the main hall. In addition. I don't think anything can compare to the sight of the burnished maple trees that cover the entire grounds.





#### Enkou-ji Temple

This zen temple, first established in 1601 as an educational institution, is tucked away in the north-east of Kyoto. One of the primary features is a stunning garden containing a bamboo forest and numerous maple trees which is so picturesque as to attract crowds during fall. The garden also has a remarkable underground water basin that allows visitors to appreciate the delicate sound of dripning water

# Nanzen-ji Temple

Nestled in the forested foothills of Kyoto, Nanzen-ji was turned into a temple after the death of its owner - Empreror Kameyama - and became the most powerful Zen temple in

Japan for a time. The sprawling grounds feature enormous San mon (Triple Gate) symbolizing entrance into the sacred part of the precinct; a peaceful Leaping Tiger Garden and the brick aqueduct which serves as a nice photoshoot backdrop.

# Bishamon-do Temple

If you want to see the fiery red maple tree galore, then Bishamon-do Temple, located in Higashiyama Mountains, is a perfect place for you. This antient temple dating back to the 8th century AD can be reached easily by hiking from Nanzen-ji Temple. It's an easy stroll with a bit of gentle climbing.

Kodai-ji Temple Established in 1605 and  $\nearrow$ 

y serving as one of the largest and most important subtemples of Kennin-ji, Kodai-ji is renowned for its beautiful design and exquisite craftsmanship. There is so much to explore here, and the grounds were absolutely stunning during autumn. I enjoyed wandering around and taking in the scenery of the expansive garden of serene pools swimming with colorful koi, hills of meticulously tended moss, a forest of tall bamboo, tea houses with thatched roofs and the rock garden with raked grey gravel.

# Eikando Zanrin-ji

This zen temple dating back to the 9th century is undoubtedly one of the best spots for colorful foliage viewing in Kyoto. You could easily spend a couple of hours here admiring the scenery of maple trees, ponds, and rock gardens. The view of the pagoda nestled in the woods is one of the most iconic fall views of Kyoto and one of the



main features of the temple is the statue of Amida Buddha with a turned head.

# Ginkaku-ji Temple & Philosopher's Path

Ginkakuji, the brown sister of the famous Golden Pavilion in the opposite side of the city - has it all: landscape garden, antient wooden temple and a lush garden to compliment the scene. After you are done touring it, take a walk along the Philosopher's Path. It was beautiful in spring, I bet – it is equally so in autumn.

# Daigo-ji Temple

The temple features iconic one-storied pagoda set behind the vermillion bridge a colorful array of maple trees. Even if you don't paint, this place is so perfect, it will make you want to pick up the brush and start creating a landscape painting.

# Ennaruyama Reikan-ji Temple

This temple is truly off the beaten path, mostly because you can access it only a few times during the year, and autumn is one of those periods. Their maple tree grove contrasts so nicely with aged stone lanterns and the thick moss that covers the grounds. Quite picturesque, if you ask me. Honen-in Temple next door is also offers a beautiful foliage and a quite respite from the crowds.

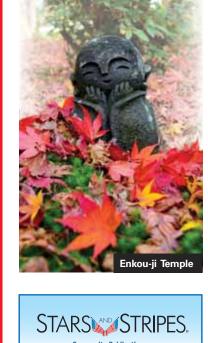
# Kifune Shrine

Northern mountains of Kyoto City which hide a dormant town Kibune which is home to Kifune Shrine. According to legend, a goddess traveled in a boat from Osaka all the way up the river into the mountains north of Kyoto, and Kifune Shrine was built at the



site where her boat journey had come to an end. Kifune Shrine is dedicated to the god of water and rain and believed to be the protector of those at sea. Here you can obtain a unique type of fortune written on paper slips (omikuji) that reveal their messages when dipped into water. Actually, many flood to Kibune to escape the summer heat and feast on a kaiseki meal served kawadoko style, when a covered tatami dining patio are extended over the river where visitors can enjoy a meal as the water flows beneath them, while lanterns and fireflies illuminate the surroundings in the evenings.







# 2019 Sasebo English Language Project Sunday, Nov. 17 **Enjoy a trekking trip with Japanese** interested in speaking English. Make new friends! Don't' be shy! Course 1 Makinotake Park → 2 Mountain Path 3 Shoyodokinenhi → 4 Ohashikannnon Precincts 5 Makinotake Park Guide provided by Yoshii Ecotourism Association. **Schedule** Snack Reception | Orientation | Departure End of tour /Conversation 9:30 a.m. 10 a.m. 1 p.m. noon

Communication Time at Makinotake Park during snack time.

Sign up

**E-mail**: syakai@city.sasebo.lg.jp

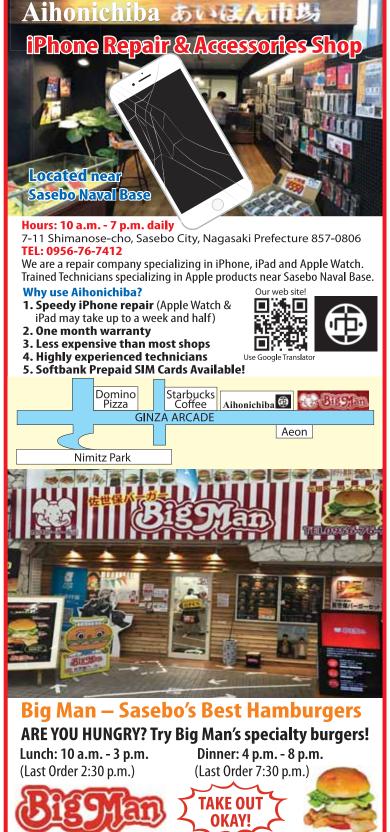
\*Registration necessary for participation

Meeting Place: In front of Makinotake Park Visitor Center

\*First come, first served basis

\*Prefered Age is 5th grade or older

\*Free of charge \*Maximum 10 people



# 18 STRIPES JAPAN all foliage fun near Iwak IWAKUNIFOODIE.COM t's almost that time of the year again. That time when sweaters and boots are being pulled out and soup recipes are being researched. I want to twirl around and sing, "It's the most wonderful time of the year!" Not only because I love soup and sweaters, but mostly because of my excitement for fall colors. The reds, yellows, and oranges that pop up all over the place every year in November. While Japan has so many beautiful spots to enjoy the fall colors, there are some amazing places in and around Iwakuni. These are some of my favorite fall foliage spots! Momijidani Park at Kintai This has long been one of my favorite fall foliage spots! I spend most of my lunch breaks walking around here just taking in the colors and this scenery. Most people don't even realize this gorgeous spot is in Iwakuni. Located in the Kintai area, Momijidani Park is one place I highly recommend during fall. This is also where one of the hiking paths up to the Iwakuni Castle begins. It's a nice little hike any time of the year, but it can be quite buggy in the summer.

Miyajima Miyajima is beautiful any time of the year, but

it is extra beautiful in the fall. Momijidani Park on Miyajima is my favorite spot to head to in November, but there are some other places that I love to visit for fall colors.

Be sure to walk all the way through the park and continue exploring around the back portion. It's really gorgeous all the way through.

Afterwards, head over to the Daishoin Tem-

Just like the Momijidani Park area, be sure to walk around the entire temple grounds.

Hiking up to Mt. Misen or taking the ropeway up is also very beautiful in the fall.



# Mitaki Temple in Hiroshima

Mitaki Temple is one of Hiroshima City's best kept secrets. Hard to imagine this temple and the lovely grounds that surround it are just 15 minutes away from downtown Hiroshima (depending on traffic).

There's a little pagoda on the grounds with a few maple trees around it that I love.

When walking up to the temple, there is a lovely spot on the left where you can enjoy a matcha and a sweet (for a fee) while looking at a garden with a waterfall.

I recommend visiting Mitaki Temple early in the morning. The parking lot is not very big and it fills up very quickly. The first time I went, I arrived a little after 8 a.m. (on a weekday) and I got one of the last spots. When I was ready to

leave, there were people waiting for a parking space to open up.

This is another spot that is really nice to visit just about any time of the year. I went in the rain one summer, and it was so green and so pretty. Be sure to walk around and see everything. The grounds are quite large.

They are open from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.



# Buttsuji Temple in Mihara

Buttsuji is also a temple that is nice to visit any time of the year. I first visited this temple in December a couple of years ago and really enjoyed walking around the temple grounds. As I walked around, however, I noticed all of the maple leaves on the ground. I started thinking about how amazing this place must be in the fall and decided I needed to come back the following fall.

It was pretty crowded, but so worth it. The colors were amazing! Looking at these photos is making me want to go again this year.

Last year, I visited Buttsuji on the 19th of November. It was very beautiful, but a lot of leaves had already fallen off so I couldn't help but wonder how it was the weekend prior to that. Of course, every year it is a little bit dif-

ferent because it all depends on Mother Nature. Typically, if you visit around the second and third week of November, you will be able to enjoy the pretty colors.

Buttsuji has a few different parking areas, but they do fill up pretty quickly and stay pretty full throughout the day. We had to park at one of the lots that was further away, but it was a very nice walk to the temple grounds from there so we didn't mind at all.

There are so many beautiful spots to enjoy the autumn colors that are not too far from Iwakuni, and I hope these places help you plan some fall adventures!

**EXPLORING THE BEAUTY ACROSS** THE PACIFIC



# DESTINATION PARADISE

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# Base contractor's new book a page-turner

STRIPES JAPAN

ordon Campbell has been working on military installations in the Pacific for a long time. He's now taken his experiences with him into storytelling in his first in series of novels, The Courier. Campbell describes the book as an espionage thriller with specific scenes depicting Yokota Air Base and Yokosuka Naval Base. The story is set in buildings and areas many stationed in Japan will be familiar with and the protagonist, Gregg Westwood, an unassuming businessman is hired by two intelligence agents as a courier unaware that the gig will lead him to an unknown world of violence and retribution.

Purchase your copy on Amazon (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07W89JND1?) or stay tuned to AFN for a chance to win a free copy.

Below learn more about the author and his journey to become a published novelist.

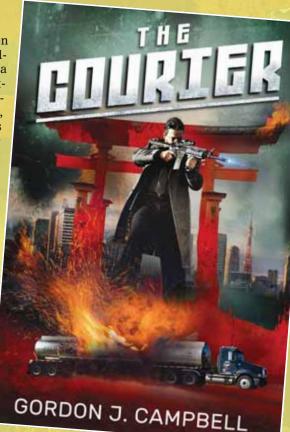
Gordon, you mentioned you've worked overseas for two decades. What is your full-time job, and how long have you been in Japan?

A: I'm the Regional Sales Manager for Rach Inc. We offer uniform and marketing solutions to US Government facilities in Asia and Europe. An example of our work would be the window graphics, logo mats, wall graphics, and uniforms used by the new Bayou Burgers, Po'Boys & Daquiris restaurant at Yokosuka's Club Alliance.

\*I spent nine months studying Japanese and working out at a Karate dojo in 1982 before returning to North America. A job was offered to me in Tokyo in 1985, and I thought it would be a two-year experience. I'm still living in Kawasaki.

Which bases in Japan have you worked in/continue to work in?

A: I visit Yokota, Atsugi, Zama, Yokosuka, and The New Sanno



regularly. We try to visit Sasebo, Iwakuni, Misawa, and the bases in Okinawa quarterly.

How did you get into writing, and what made you decide to write a novel?

A: I've written and published short stories and essays and have been blogging for several years. Writing a novel has always been one of my dreams, and it finally became a priority. The Courier's development and multiple rewrites spanned over three years.

: How many books have you written and how many are published?

A: The Courier is my first novel, and the second part of the Gregg Westwood Series is under development. You can purchase The Courier on Amazon in both E-Book and printed format. We release an audio version in November. The Amazon link follows:

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07W89JND1?

How did you choose your subject for this, and why did you set it in Yokosuka and Yokota?

A: I asked myself what would happen if a salesman without military training entered into a dangerous situation unfamiliar to anything in his world. Could he stand up, perservere, and protect his people?

Win

A FREE COPY

of the Courier

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Spoiler alert: The novel moves around Tokyo, Yokohama, Miura, Kawasaki, touches in Kyushu, and explodes through Bangkok. I've visited these places and feel the descriptions will come across as authentic. The Yokota Officers' Club Samurai Lounge appealed to mo

urai Lounge appealed to me as an excellent place to launch the story.

How do you think (besides in the setting) do you think this resonates with the military community and what do you want readers in the military to take away from it? What about the non-military community?

A: The reaction to the book will depend on reading tastes of both the military and non-military community. The Courier is a thriller novel with military, revenge, espionage, and conspiracy aspects. It might appeal to readers of Lee Child, Jack Carr, Ben Coes, and Mark Greaney.

: What were the challenges of getting a book published overseas? What advice do you have for other writers in the overseas military community?

A: There are incredible resources available to "indie authors" allowing the production of a professional quality product. A smart looking cover, excellent editors, and expert formatting technicians can be hired to groom

your novel. I'd be sure to invest in these services before offering work to a first novel competition or exposing your art to professional and amateur critics

**Q**: Besides working on bases in Asia, what is your military connection? Did you serve?

A: I was born in Canada and did not serve in the U.S. military. My friends, who are U.S. military veterans, offered a lot of support to add accuracy to the novel.

What's next in your writing career?

A: Book two in the Gregg Westwood Series will be released next year. It starts where The Courier left off.

: Any other info you'd like to add?

A: I'd be grateful for feedback from anyone in the Military Community who kindly reads The Courier. I promise to respond to anyone who leaves a comment or question on my author's website: www.gordonjcampbell.com





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# Iwakuni festival of traditional arts returns Dec. 1

BY TAKAHIROTAKIGUCHI, STRIPES JAPAN

n Japan, many consider autumn the best season to appreciate the arts. The nice weather makes visiting a museum or music hall extra enjoyable.

For those around MCAS Iwakuni, the Sora Culture Festival on Dec. 1 will bring the opportunity to wrap up the fall season with a fun event.

The festival will feature popular traditional Japanese performing arts, such as dancing, "konuka Odori" bon dancing, taiko drum and koto (Japanese harp) performances, along with shuuji (calligraphy) and Kendama (traditional ball

and stick toy).

This year's theme "Four Seasons," will include some of MCAS Iwakuni's very own on the koto harp and taiko drums. A choir made up of both Japanese and American children are also scheduled to perform.

Stage performances scheduled to being at 3:30 p.m. but prior to that from 2 p.m., attendees can try out some of the traditional games and wooden toys at the event's challenge booths inside the Simphonia Iwakuni concert hall in Iwakuni

The program will offer narration in Japanese and English, so

all are encouraged to attend. Ayumi Yonemoto, president of Sora Culture Festival Executive

Sora Culture Festival "Pour Seasons

**HOURS:** Dec. 1, from 2 - 5 p.m.

LOCATION: Simphonia Iwakuni (1-1-1 Mikasa Town, Iwakuni City, Yamaguchi Pref., 10-minute walk from JR Iwakuni Station)

TICKETS: 900 yen (Oct. 25 - Nov. 30), 999 yen (Dec. 1)

**EMAIL:** havefun@sora.jpn.com

TEL: 0827-28-5558

#### **■ Challenge Booths**

- at Tatami room on the 2nd Floor (2-3:30 p.m.)
- 1. Shuuji (calligraphy) Try traditional ink-dip brush writing. Make your own original hand-fan.
- 2. Kendama Traditional ball and stick toy
- 3. Koto Paly the Japanese harp
- 4. Katanuki Cutting out pre-set shapes from a cookie
- Stage Program "A story of seasons"

at the Concert Hall (3:30 - 5 p.m.)

Committee worked for MCAS Iwakuni for 15 years, and while working on base, she noticed that, in general, both Americans and Japanese had a hard time explaining their regional traditions, arts and culture.

"I think this is because the opportunity to see or experience our traditional arts is getting rarer and rarer these days," Yonemoto said.

The experience drove her to organize a group and host the cultural festival featuring traditional Japanese arts.

"This is a great chance for both Japanese and Americans to get a glimpse of authentic traditional Japanese arts," Yonemoto said.

Tickets for this great fall event are on sale now. Don't miss the opportunity to experience the creativity and performances of the local community. takuguchi.takahiro@stripes.com





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## **KONQER** is returning to Palau for another two-day event.

November 30 and December 1

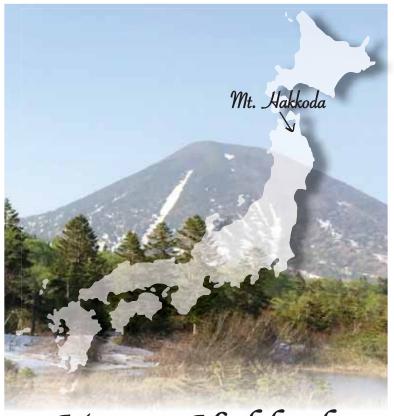
Palau offers a unique area for the obstacle course that makes the race all the more exciting designed for individuals or teams, we even have a special kids course.

**KONQER** is the first and biggest obstacle course event of the region that debuted in Guam in 2015. The obstacle course challenge is made up of several intense physical fitness activities that require participants to jump, crawl, swim, run and climb to the finish line.

**KONQER** is an event that hones in on teamwork, physical fitness and fun.

Also get a chance to experience diving in our pristine waters, tour around Palau, enjoy local traditional dishes and explore our rich culture and history during your stay.

Visit www.kongersports.com and register now to KONQER in Pristine Paradise Palau



# Mount Hakkoda offers natural beauty near Misawa

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TAKAHIROTAKIGUCHI. STRIPES JAPAN

ocated near Misawa Air Base, Mount Hakkoda consists of several volcanic peaks and is a must-see attraction.

Enjoy the majestic view snow-capped mountainsides driving while through the Hakkoda-Towada Gold Line.

You can enjoy the beauty of the natural surroundings, along with the pungent smell of sulfur – a telltale

sign of mineral-rich natural hot spring water.

The area is home to half

Sukayu Spa is located in an active volcanic zone with a sulfuric pond where you can explore along a short trail that leads to a stream fed by hot spring water.

The 1,180-foot-long, 400-foottall Jogakura Bridge - Japan's

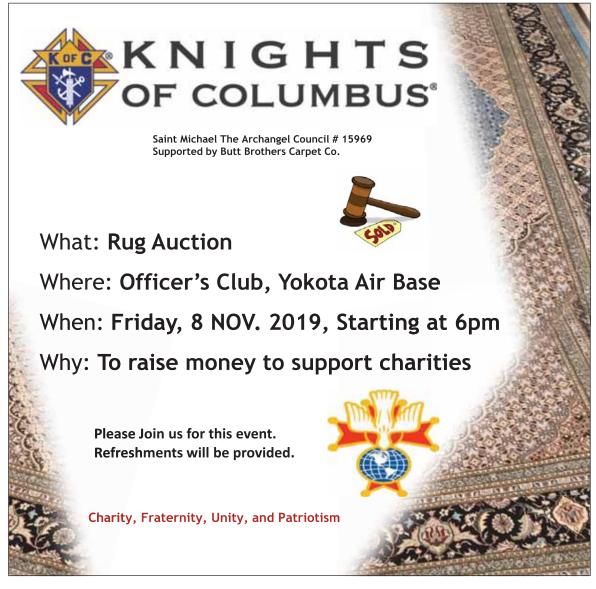
largest arch bridge is also nearby.

Don't miss beautiful Suiren-Numa swamp on your drive. The road in this area widens, allowing parking for several cars. There is a trail to a wooden observation deck that ofspectacular fers views of a lovely small pond, marsh and Mount Hakko-

da. The clear pond reflects the picture-perfect mountains like a mirror.

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com







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Koya Line Ltd Express

Station to Wakayamashi

Station. From there, take

the Nankai Kada Line to

Kada Station. Kada Port

is a 15 minute walk away.

Buy your ticket at the ferry's

ticket office. The ferry ride is

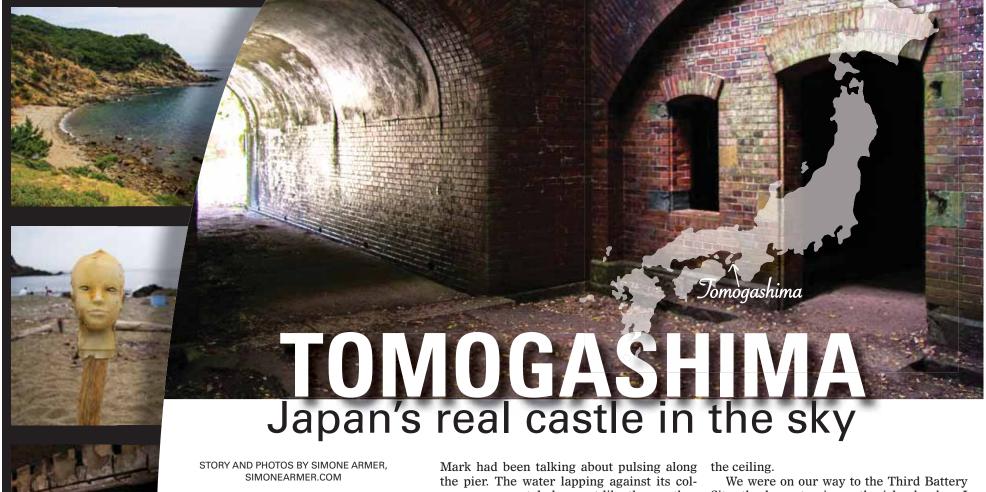
approximately 20 minutes.

For the ferry timetable and

tomogashimakisen.com/jikoku.

more information: http://

html



excitedly into the water.

I mumbled an acknowledgement, afraid that if I opened my mouth, something other than words would come out.

We had been bobbing up and down on a ferry for the last 15 minutes and it appeared I had left my sea legs back in Osaka.

We had set out early that morning from Nankai, taking a train to Wakayama, and then another to Kada. A short walk from the station, Kada Port was our second-final destination. If I managed to keep my breakfast down, we'd soon be exploring Japan's real life Laputa.

Okinoshima is one of four islands off the coast of Wakayama prefecture that are collectively known as "Tomogashima" (友ヶ 島). Floating on the Kitan Strait of the Seto Inland Sea, the island chain forms part of Seto-Naikai National Park and is the first of 28 destinations for Buddhist ascetics on the Katsuragi Pilgrimage. It is a treasure trove of lush forests, rare rock formations and diverse plant and animal life.

From the Meiji period until the end of World War II, Tomogashima also served as an important military base. Today, visitors can explore the remains of old bunkers, underground tunnels and powder magazines by hiking the trails on Okinoshima.

These red-bricked ruins, slowly being reclaimed by nature, are likened by many to scenes from Hayao Miyazaki's Castle in the Sky, attracting fans of the anime in addition to history buffs and nature enthusiasts.

I guess I fall somewhere in the middle; I wouldn't exactly call myself a hiker, but I'd walk for a year if it meant the opportunity to take some cool pictures. Besides, we all know I can't resist a good set of ruins, or the chance to play out my LOST fantasies (which, in case you didn't know, manifest from the best TV show of all time). When we finally

stepped off the boat and made our way to the shore, I was finally able to enjoy the jellyfish

umns was crystal clear, not like the weather we were having.

The air was hot and sticky, and for the first time all day I wasn't looking forward to our hike. But it was either in this or the next day's forecast rain.

"Okay, let's eat!" I practically ran for a bench on the open grassy area that greeted us after the pier. Our three hour journey just to get to the island had left me more than ready to tuck into our stash of konbini snacks. We were advised to bring our own food and water, since there wasn't as much as a vending machine on the island (a fallacy for Japan).

"Haha, I guess they lied," I motioned to the shiny, red machine staring back at us from across the grass. At the start of the trail, we stumbled upon a restaurant too.

"There's another building back there with tables and chairs inside, and it looks like you can camp here too," Mark observed.

'So much for it being uninhabited," I retorted.

But as we continued to walk along the island's coast, the modern buildings fell away and we were treated instead to an abundance of vegetation and beautiful views of the surrounding nature. After a moderate incline, we reached the first set of ruins.

The site of the Second Weapons Battery is a fortress facing the Seto Inland Sea. It was bombed by the allies after the war and has been left as is. "RESTRICTED AREA," the sign read, "These remains of an artillery battery continue to erode and therefore are very dangerous. Please don't enter this area." And so, naturally, we did.

Once we'd finished looking around, I was drenched in sweat. "It got hot fast," Mark complained as I dug into my bag for a facecloth. It amused me to no end when we reached the top of the nearby lighthouse's steps and found a woman reapplying her makeup.

Built in 1872, the lighthouse is the eighth oldest in Japan and is still in operation today, helping local boats navigate the surrounding waters.

We took a break when we reached a small beach and tucked into more of our snacks, watching a group of elderly hikers scour the waters for crabs.

A long, winding path took us from there to the Old Navy Listening Office, which is one of my favourite ruins on the island. Built into the cliff side, the windows look out onto the sea and giant skylights let sun trickle in from

Site, the largest ruin on the island, when I felt Mark grab my arm. "Watch out!"

"Wha – AAAAARGH!"

My feet were running in the opposite direction before I could register what I had just seen. Then, berating myself for running at all, I turned around and walked back to him.

I was 99% sure that the limbless reptile slowly making its way across our walking path, less than a meter from where we were standing, was a Japanese pit viper.

Mamushi, as it's commonly known here. is second only to the Okinawan habu as Japan's most dangerous snake. Its venomous bite puts around 3,000 people in the hospital every year, where patients typically spend a week in the ICU followed by a month of outpatient treatment. Of those cases, about 10 result in fatalities.

The toes are one of the areas where the snake frequently bites and we had almost just stepped on it. I yelled and I put my hand up to my chest in an absent-minded attempt to calm my racing heart.

"なに, なに?" (What, what?) One half of the couple that had been walking behind us came running up to see what all the commotion was about.

"ヘビ!" (Snake!) I pointed in the viper's direction

"Ehhhhh! どこ?" (Where?)

"... こちら!" (This side!) The snake had not only arrested my heart but also my Japanese.

"マムシ!" (Mamushi!) He exclaimed, confirming my fears. "あぶない!" (Dangerous!)

We watched as the snake slithered off the path and coiled up into a pile of leaves. Like a chameleon, it blended into its surroundings and disappeared.

"Great," I said dryly, "we could have walked past a dozen already."

But excitement trumped fear when we reached a set of tunnels, the remains from one of the Yura Fortresses built by the Meiji Government to defend the Kitan Strait. This time I grabbed Mark's arm as he led us by iPhone through the pitch black. The ammunition chambers were also a treat. The old buildings really did look like they came straight out of a Studio Ghibli film.

We spent four hours in total exploring the island, and even then we didn't see everything. But for a 2000円 round trip, we certainly got our money's worth.

Exhausted, red, and sweaty, we collapsed onto the train back at Kada Station, ready for a shower and some sleep.

# Stripes Sports Trivia

Soccer, football - whatever you call it - the game is massively popular around the world. There are countless leagues across the globe, but right at the top of them all is the English Premier League. With 13 overall titles, including a pair of three-peats, which club stands above all others in the EPL?

Answer

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KNOW?

n Japan, hanko (stamp) or inkan (seal impression), which uses a pad of thick red ink called shuniku, actually serves as personal identification. This seal is necessary when opening a bank account, joining a new company or school or getting married. While you probably won't need to use one, they are a symbol of Japanese culture and make for a great souvenir.

Kanji of the week



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I'm fine.

Genki desu.

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50 Tuck's partner

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57 Knighted

**61** "Get the

Guinness

59 Margarita fruit

picture?"

53 Get used to

54 Mortise insert 55 Bias, in reporting

52 Where 'dos are

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#### The Weekly Crossword ACROSS 1 Close with a bang 5 Reunion goer, briefly

- 9 Commercial creator
- 14 Vegetarian
- staple 15 Bill of fare
- 16 Hosierv hue 17 Japanese
- sashes
- 18 Kind of grin 19 Candle holders?
- 20 Pinocchio, e.g. 23 For fear that
- 24 Come before
- 25 Fix firmly 27 Downey Jr. flick,
- "Chances 28 Exciting
- 31 Monk's hood 34 Assign authority
- 36 Far-many link
- 37 Embarrass 39 Young fellow
- 40 Subway fare
- 42 Parking place 43 First act
- 46 Blanched
- 47 Consumer
- response
- 49 U-turn from WSW
- 51 Fowl pole
- 52 Bar supply
- 56 Soothing stuff 58 Green energy
- source 60 False moniker
- 62 Get one's goat
- 63 Casserole fish
- 64 Wish granter
- 65 Half of an old
- radio duo
- 66 Flatten, in a way
- 67 Public spat
- **68** Periscope part 69 US currency unit

#### **DOWN**

1 Put one's foot

- 2 Type of pneumonia
- 3 All excited 4 "Annie" and
- "Evita" 5 Made some
- changes
- 6 Anti-flood embankment
- 7 Part of ICU
- 8 Vast quantity
- 9 "Modern Family" network
- 10 Casino worker 11 Former Bears
- coach
- 12 Awfully long
- time 13 Hatchling's home
- 21 " the ramparts...'
- 22 Give off
- 26 One of TV's
- Mavericks 28 Paddle
- 29 Yuletide tune
- 30 Affleck flick, 31 Baby elephant

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

32 Symphony

member

33 Flood mark

35 One kind of

college

concert

perhaps

41 Like a Carreras

44 Panthers play,

45 Keep bottled up 48 Territory

38 Rail rider

L A M P S T R A W S W A M A C E R P O A C H W A G E U N G R A T E F U L S I T U A T E D 

# SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

3 6

3

1

4

Edited by Margie E. Burke

#### HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must

Answers to Last Week's Sudoku:										
3	6	7	2	9	8	4	5	1		
2	4	9	1	5	6	3	8	7		
5	1	8	3	7	4	9	6	2		
4	2	5	8	6	7	1	3	9		
9	8	1	4	3	2	6	7	5		
6	7	3	5	1	9	2	4	8		
8	3	2	9	4	5	7	1	6		
1	5	6	7	2	3	8	9	4		
7	9	4	6	8	1	5	2	3		

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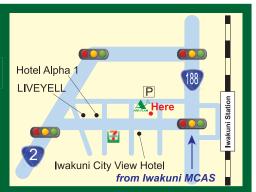
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