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A student receives one-on-one attention at Sasebo Elementary School on Sasebo Naval Base. Photo By Paul Stevenson, DODEA

New 21st century school opens at Sasebo

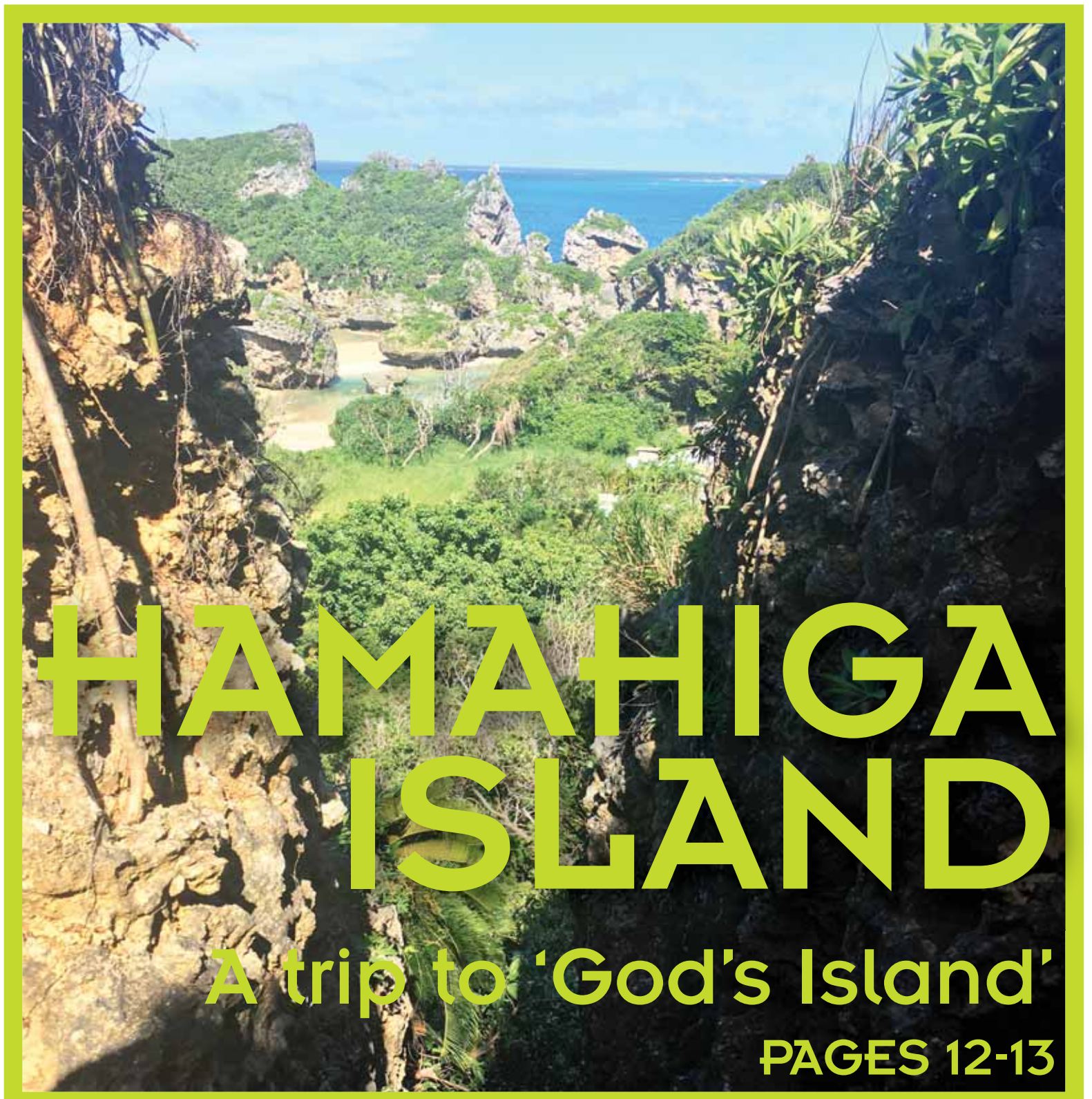
BY JAMES BOLINGER,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: September 26, 2019

Children, parents, teachers and administrators celebrated the opening of a new \$57 million school Sept. 25 at Sasebo Naval Base in southwestern Japan.

Sasebo Elementary School took three years to build and serves approximately 220 children from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade at one of the country's busiest naval bases. Sasebo is the home of the Navy's amphibious fleet in the Far East.

EXCLUSIVE NEWS FROM:
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HAMAHIGA ISLAND

A trip to 'God's Island'

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Between blind faith and stranger danger

Before our girls went back to college this year, we gave them the usual advice. Don't walk on campus at night alone, don't take rides with strangers, etc. I stopped short of arming them with pepper spray.

I wondered, do they really need to have their thumbs poised, ready to blind someone with pepper spray? Or, has our culture become paranoid?

As a freshman at Miami University in tiny ivy-covered Oxford, Ohio, I was utterly naive. Violent crime seemed some far-off rarity that happened in New York City or Los Angeles. So, when a strange man with a thick foreign accent offered me a ride when I was stranded at the Cincinnati bus station, I took it.

I was on my way back to school from my cousin's wedding in Louisville, Ky. Due to some kind of mechanical failure, my bus was late arriving in Cincinnati, causing me to miss the one daily connection to tiny Oxford. I used my last coins at the pay phone trying to call my dorm phone to see if anyone could make the 50-mile drive to pick me up, but no one answered.

I sat in the vinyl bus station chairs and glanced around the shabby terminal. Realizing I would have to wait for the next day's bus, my mind raced. "I'm

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Lisa Smith Molinari



out of money. No one knows where I am. I have to spend the night in the bus station. What am I going to do?"

I began to cry.

Mid sob, a thin man with a brown face and a thick Indian accent tapped me on the shoulder.

"Es-cuse me, Miss, can I help you?" he said.

I was so relieved to have some kind of human contact and looked up at the man with tears flowing from my eyes.

"I missed my bus back to school!" I sobbed.

He inquired where I needed to go, and after a moment of thought, offered to drive me to Oxford.

"Are you sure?" I asked. "It takes about an hour." But he agreed, and I followed him out of the grungy bus station to his car — a brown Ford Fairlane sedan with no distinguishing features.

The stranger closed the passenger's seat door after I willingly got in with my backpack. I didn't even know the way to Oxford, and could only tell him to go north. He headed out of the city on unfamiliar roads, looking for signs along the way.

Soon, the last traces of suburban sprawl were in the rear-view mirror, and we were surrounded by the vast cornfields of southwestern Ohio. Not many cars on the road; no one really noticed the plain brown sedan with the foreigner and the 18-year-old girl. No one — not my roommates, my parents, my aunt in Kentucky — had any idea that I was in the middle of a cornfield, locked in an unmarked car with a strange man.

It would take hours for them to realize that I wasn't on that Greyhound bus. The stranger had plenty of time to hide my lifeless body in a cornfield and

get back to the anonymity of the city, and his secret life as a serial killer.

But that didn't happen.

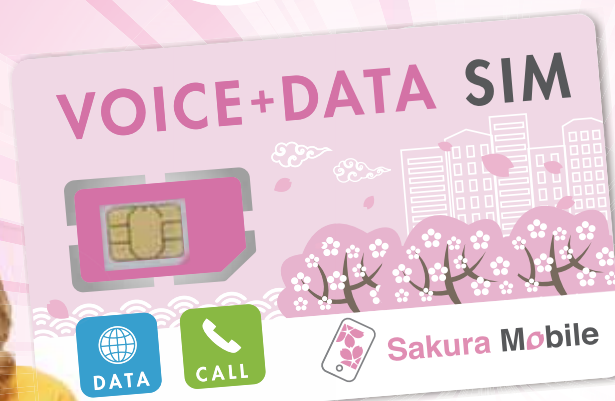
"Thanks so much for the ride, Mister," I said to the stranger as he pulled up to my dorm. I offered to run inside and get money to pay for gas, but he politely refused, only asking me to point out the nearest fast-food location.

Without the need of pepper spray, my faith in human kind was blissfully blind, and I gratefully waved farewell as the stranger pulled away.

What am I saying? Should we unlock our doors, unzip our purses and tell our teenage daughters to take up hitchhiking from city bus terminals?

Definitely not a good idea, but who wants to live with the pessimistic assumption that all strangers are dangerous? Sure, there are a few wackos out there who make it smart to carry pepper spray, but as we protect ourselves, let's not chastise the entire human race.

Besides, without the kindness of strangers, I might still be stuck at that bus station in Ohio. Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at: themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
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From left, DODEA Pacific East superintendent Judith Allen; DODEA director Thomas Brady; DODEA Pacific director Lois Rapp; and Sasebo Naval Base chief of staff Cmdr. Douglas Kennedy cut the ribbon for a \$57 million elementary school. Photo By Erin Arocho, DODEA



Photo courtesy of U.S. Navy

SASEBO: School first of its kind on base

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A ribbon-cutting ceremony at the school included Department of Defense Education Activity director Thomas Brady and area superintendents, but the doors opened for class Aug. 28.

Principal Hattie Phipps, who spoke to Stars and Stripes via telephone after the ceremony, said the students have already taken ownership.

"I asked my education technologist to put together a video of everything inside the school to show today," she said. "As the video was playing the kids start pointing and saying, 'That's my classroom. That's my culture classroom. That's our neighborhood. That's my school.'"

The school is the first of its kind at Sasebo and is part of a \$3.7 billion DODEA plan to rejuvenate and modernize 134 schools worldwide.

The school is built around a concept called 21st Century Education that features open, collaborative workspaces called neighborhoods and studios instead of traditional classrooms.

According to a factsheet provided to Stars and Stripes, a school built around the concept includes an interactive element. For example, the building becomes a teaching tool with systems and building components exposed to provide real-world relevance and examples to reinforce STEM curriculums. STEM

stands for science, technology, engineering and math.

"One of the other differences you will see between a traditional school with classrooms, and a 21st Century Education design is very few desks and tables," Phipps said. "Instead there are more table groups, and less chairs. Seating is flexible. One child might be in a chair and another is sitting on an ottoman."

The school also has increased energy efficiencies with teaching models of renewable energy production that reinforce energy independence.

The school has a system that shows children how much energy is being used at the building each day, Phipps said.

Teachers don't have desks in studios or neighborhoods, like they would in a traditional classroom, she said.

Teachers are not isolated from one another. Instead they have a workstation near the students, but keep their course materials in a staff collaboration lounge, where they can share ideas and work as a team.

Phipps said the school is a safe, secure facility that will provide the children of sailors stationed at Sasebo a stable learning environment and a sense of community. She said her teams capitalize the UNITY part of that word because they strive to unify the people, big and small, to whom Sasebo's new school is a home.

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⑦Beppin-Ice cream

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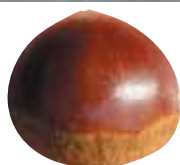
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⑳Original Tenugui

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Nishiki-gawa tourist association
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㉑Kachi-guri Strap

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Where to buy Yamashiro products

Photo: Tokotoko Train (Nishikicho Station - Souzukyō Station)

Shops guide

*Please kindly note that some shops have difficulty communicating in English.

Pureline Nishiki

Tel: 0827-71-0011
Open: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Closed: First & Third Tuesday
① ② ③ ⑩ ⑪ ⑭ ⑮

Horie sakaba

Tel: 0827-72-2527
Open: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Closed: Sun & holidays
⑤

Mikamoto kingetsudo

Tel: 0827-72-2520
Open: 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Closed: First & Third Sunday
⑥

Nishiki product station

Tel: 0827-72-3180
Open: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Closed: Second & Fourth Tuesday
⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩ ⑪

Wood Village Mikawa

Tel: 0827-77-0220
Open: Friday to Monday, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
⑫

Furusato Market

Tel: 0827-96-1122
Open: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Closed: Monday
① ② ④ ⑬ ⑭

Underground Kingdom Mikawa Muvalley

Tel: 0827-77-0111
Open: 10:00 - 17:00
⑦

Yamashiro Village

Tel: 0827-75-2100
Open: Every Wednesday and Saturday, 9 a.m. - while supplies last
⑨ ⑬ ⑭

Satoyama Café HAKU

Tel: 090-7376-6624
Open: Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Sunday reservation only)
④

Fairy S. Garden

Tel: 0827-96-0960
Open: 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Closed: Sat, Sun & holidays
⑮

Houeido Miwa Branch

Tel: 0833-43-5988
Open: Sat, Sun & holidays, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (March to November)
⑮ ⑯

Lake plaza YASAKA

Tel: 0827-96-0569
Open: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Closed: Tuesday
① ② ③ ④ ⑧ ⑫ ⑬ ⑭ ⑰

FAM'S Kitchen IWAKUNI

Tel: 0827-44-0831
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① ② ④ ⑦ ⑧ ⑫ ⑬ ⑭

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yamashiro@yamaguchi-shokokai.or.jp

Miwa Branch

〒740-1225
448 Shibukuma, Miwa machi, Iwakuni City
Tel: 0827-96-0132 Fax: 0827-96-0449

Nishiki Branch

〒740-0724
46-3 Hirose, Nishiki machi, Iwakuni City
Tel: 0827-72-2354 Fax: 0827-72-3713

Hongo Branch

〒740-0502
2087-1 Hongo, Hongo machi, Iwakuni City
Tel: 0827-75-2122 Fax: 0827-75-2224

Soldier's advice: Get off base, explore the culture!

BY SGT. ERICA EARL,
U.S. ARMY

There is something vital lacking in many service members, and that is curiosity of life outside of America's borders.

The first time I directly noticed this was during a training exercise in Japan. The day after the closing ceremony, we were given one day, or about ten hours, to take a train into the nearby city of Sapporo to explore.

I had been looking forward to the chance to get a taste of the local culture and had been talking to our native counterparts about their recommendations. By the time our free day was near, I had the train schedule and a list of things to see and do.

The problem was, I was seemingly the only Soldier with wanderlust.

Here we were, with an opportunity to explore the sights of another country, try authentic food and experience a culture wholly different from our own, and I was struggling to find anyone willing to leave the barracks.

Responses ranged from reluctant hesitation (What if I don't understand the trains?) and unreasonable worry (What if there is a strike on the public transportation?) to flat-out apathy (I just want to stay in and watch Netflix).

When I finally found a small group interested, the most junior Soldier asked, unironically, "So can we please eat at McDonalds? I don't want to try the food. It seems weird." Somehow I knew this was going to be the precursor to the rest of the trip.

Once in Sapporo, the fifth largest city in Japan and host to many temples,



There is a world out there waiting to be explored and engaged with. Take the opportunities you can to immerse yourself. Photo illustration by Sgt. Erica Earl, U.S. Army

marketplaces and gardens, it was a losing struggle to get any of my peers away from the train station, which boasted a large, Western-influenced shopping mall. I only managed to get them about a block away to try a restaurant that wasn't American fast food. The one who had commented about the food's weirdness refused to eat and sat with his arms crossed in protest the entire meal.

On the flight back two days later, another exasperated Soldier said, "The first thing I'm doing in America is taking a huge bite of a Big Mac."

We had only been in Japan one month, and he was sounding like he had been incarcerated and sustained on only bread and water. All I could think was perhaps it

was because he had confined himself.

I couldn't help but feel frustrated, but that eventually gave way to empathy and even a bit of sadness. Would some of my peers, either weeks or years later, be filled with regret about being so close to experiencing the culture of Japan but choosing not to? I felt bad that they passed up having a new adventure and creating those "remember when?" moments of exploring the Sapporo streets with their unit, missing the potential of creating new inside jokes and capturing photos and being immersed in something that was unfamiliar and didn't have direct American influence.

It is easy for me to assume that this is purely driven by a

lack of curiosity, or a lack of interest in our foreign counterparts, but I'm willing to admit there is more to it. It could be a fear of going out in big crowds, for example, or wanting to stick to a budget. Maybe it is a case of discomfort of the unfamiliar. Navigating a foreign country's transit system, in another language no less, can be intimidating. However, these concerns are not insurmountable.

One way around this is to have genuine conversations with counterparts about their country. In many cases, locals are excited to get a chance to show off their home and get excited about giving travel advice. This involves reaching out to have that conversation and, again, being curious. Many Soldiers who

I have seen leave post, not just in Japan but in Europe as well, haven't strayed far from Western comforts, such as shopping malls and movie theaters, and expressed doubt and hesitation about traveling beyond such places. But there's so much else to see! Natural sites, like hot springs and beaches, cultural and historical sites, like temples or castles, even a simple city block in another country may look very different from what is at the perimeter of the installation. By only sticking to the familiar, Soldiers are robbing themselves of an authentic experience that may not come later in their lifetimes. I don't want to see anyone regret missing that chance in favor of video games and American chain restaurants and big box stores.

It is also true that soldiers may be discouraged from the wonders of travel. Horror story hyperbole from briefings ensure safety by discouraging any exploration. It is like the cliché: a ship is safe in the harbor, but that is not what ships are for. Only staying on the American base can also be seen by hosts in a foreign country as lack of interest or cultural respect on our part. There is a line to draw between traveling safely and responsibly and being completely fearful or dispassionate of experiencing our allies' and partners' cultures and an environment outside the familiar.

These are not war-torn areas I am talking about, but countries with high safety ratings from the State Department's recommended areas of travel.

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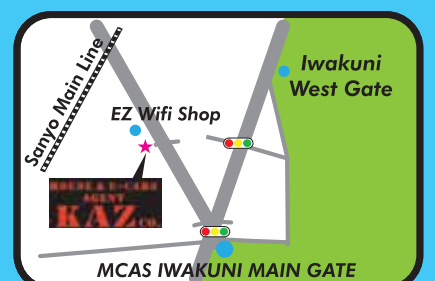
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EXPLORE: Be a gracious guest

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

opportunities to service members to stay in some pretty beautiful and awe-inspiring places, and I am a huge proponent of seizing the chance to venture outside the gates and enrich myself in another country's traditions once the mission is over. But I almost always find myself at a loss for a partner to explore with, which is usually a mandatory requirement when overseas. So what I am asking of everyone is, simply, "Why?"

Is it truly apathy? Is it just needing guidance for making travel plans and navigating a foreign city? Is it their commands instilling fear to not engage in another culture? I don't know, but I feel like too many Soldiers miss out on authentic experiences that will educate them and strengthen host nation bonds when they travel overseas for work.

Understanding our allies, after all, is a formidable part in strengthening our connection with them and forging trust, and actually experiencing their country and expressing interest in their culture is a great starting place.

American troops stationed overseas already run the risk of natives forming and maintaining the opinion that Americans only want Westernization and to rob them of their cultural identity, or that we are there for ourselves more than for them, ideas instilled and perpetuated by anti-military media or potential adversaries' propaganda. In truth, our goal is shared training, cultural understanding and security of our allies' and partners' regions. Choosing not to engage in another people's lifestyle, customs and way of life or culture identity has the potential to disrupt diplomacy, public image and trust.

From food to dress to mannerisms, things in a foreign country may seem strange, but this is where curiosity and authenticity with our counterparts come in to play for a chance to lean in. Ask questions about the things that seems strange. Foreign visitors in America likely think the same things about our dress and culinary options. A Romanian local once told me he would never forget trying a mac-n-cheese stuffed burger in the states.

There is a joy in the shared experience of doing something outside your personal norm. Try that dish that seems unsettling; it could create a funny memory or be your new favorite thing. Try to pronounce that new word. Learn another nation's history. The willingness to try something new is a sign of bravery, a memory maker and a bridge between all humans.

There is no mandate that troops have to love every overseas station to which they are assigned. Chances are, they won't, and that is alright. But close mindedness or refusal to leave the boundaries of comfort zones should not be the norm. Years down the road, when reflecting on foreign travel, those who don't leave the installation gates are likely to regret the missed memories, photographs and cultural and linguistic knowledge that could have been gained. In other words, you don't have to like the sushi, but please, be a gracious guest and give it a try.



File photo



A banner advertises the Rugby World Cup outside Yokota Air Base on Sept. 23. Photo by Theron Godbold, Stars and Stripes

Rugby World Cup

Tough sport thrills some US troops as tourney kicks off in Japan

BY SETH ROBSON,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: Sept. 23, 2019

TOKYO — The best international rugby teams in the world will be in action in Japan over the next six weeks with dozens of matches scheduled as part of the Rugby World Cup, which kicked off Sept. 21 at Tokyo Stadium.

U.S. sports fans may not be too familiar with rugby but some servicemembers in Japan are taking advantage of the event to get to grips with one of the world's toughest sports.

For rugby fans in Japan the World Cup is a kind of Valhalla. While there's plenty of on-field action, fans are known to party hard and there have been warnings about beer shortages in the Japanese capital.

Japan — home to 125,000 rugby players — has been promoting the tournament, seen as a test run for next year's Summer Olympics. Colorful street banners show a greatest moment for Japan's national team, the Brave Blossoms — their victory over South Africa at the 2015 Rugby World Cup.

Japan defeated up-and-comers

Russia 30-10 in Friday night's match and have an outside chance of reaching the tournament quarterfinals for the first time.

The U.S. Eagles will play their first game against another traditional powerhouse, England, in Kobe on Thursday. They take on France in Fukuoka prefecture Oct. 2, Argentina in Saitama prefecture Oct. 9 and Tonga in Osaka Oct. 13. But the Eagles need an upset to reach the quarterfinals for the first time.

U.S. military personnel and their families can watch many of the games on national broadcaster NHK's free-to-air service that can be accessed on American Forces Network digital decoders.

Match tickets are in short supply, although some may still be available from the Rugby World Cup official website — rugby-worldcup.com. Those who miss out can gather at "fan zones" all over the country where crowds can enjoy beers and watch the games on giant screens.

For some American servicemembers the tournament is their first experience of rugby.

Air Force Master Sgt. Mark

Morgan, 42, who serves with the 730th Air Mobility Squadron at Yokota Air Base in western Tokyo, joined an online ticket lottery with a friend ahead of the tournament.

He ended up with a ticket to a clash between the New Zealand All Blacks and the South African Springboks at International Stadium Yokohama on Saturday night.

The All Blacks performed the haka, a Polynesian war dance, before besting their rivals 23-13 in a thrilling encounter that lived up to its billing as the most anticipated pool match of the tournament.

"It was phenomenal. I had a blast — the most fun I have had

at a sport event in a long time," said Morgan after seeing rugby for the first time.

The Oklahoma City native tuned in over the weekend to watch another top team, Ireland, beat Scotland 27-3 and plans to check out more matches at some of the fan zones.

Staff Sgt. Nathan Martin, 29, of Chicago, a member of the Air Force Band of the Pacific, started playing rugby two years ago and plays socially for the Tokyo Crusaders at "lock" — a position that's roughly equivalent to a football tight end.

He was in Yokohama on Sept. 26 to watch Ireland beat Scotland.

Martin has already been to

two World Cup matches and a fan zone in Tokyo and plans to watch the U.S. games against France and Argentina.

"I really like that it's a sport for everybody," he said. "You have your big guys who play up front and your fast guys who play out back. It's a physical game like the NFL but it's got this international vibe."

Japan's red-and-white striped national team jerseys are ubiquitous around stadiums but so are the uniforms of visiting teams. Fans from archival teams can be seen drinking together before and after games.

Part of rugby's culture is to leave the violence on the field. Players who might have been punching each other in the heat of battle shake hands and remain friends when the final whistle blows.

"You can go to any sports bar in Tokyo and they are packed with people having a beer and watching the games," Martin said. "At convenience stores near the grounds, people from different countries are drinking together. It doesn't matter who you are rooting for when you are having a beer."

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Twitter: @SethRobson1



The red-and-white jerseys of Japan's Brave Blossoms will be a common sight over the next six weeks as the country hosts the best international rugby in the world for the Rugby World Cup. The tournament kicked off on Sept. 20 at Tokyo Stadium. Photo by Francois Nel, World Rugby via Getty Images



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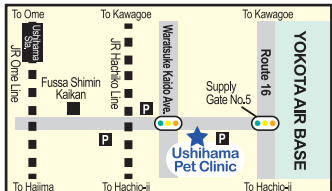
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GPS Coordinates: N 26.313432, E 127.959391
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Muruku Hama Beach
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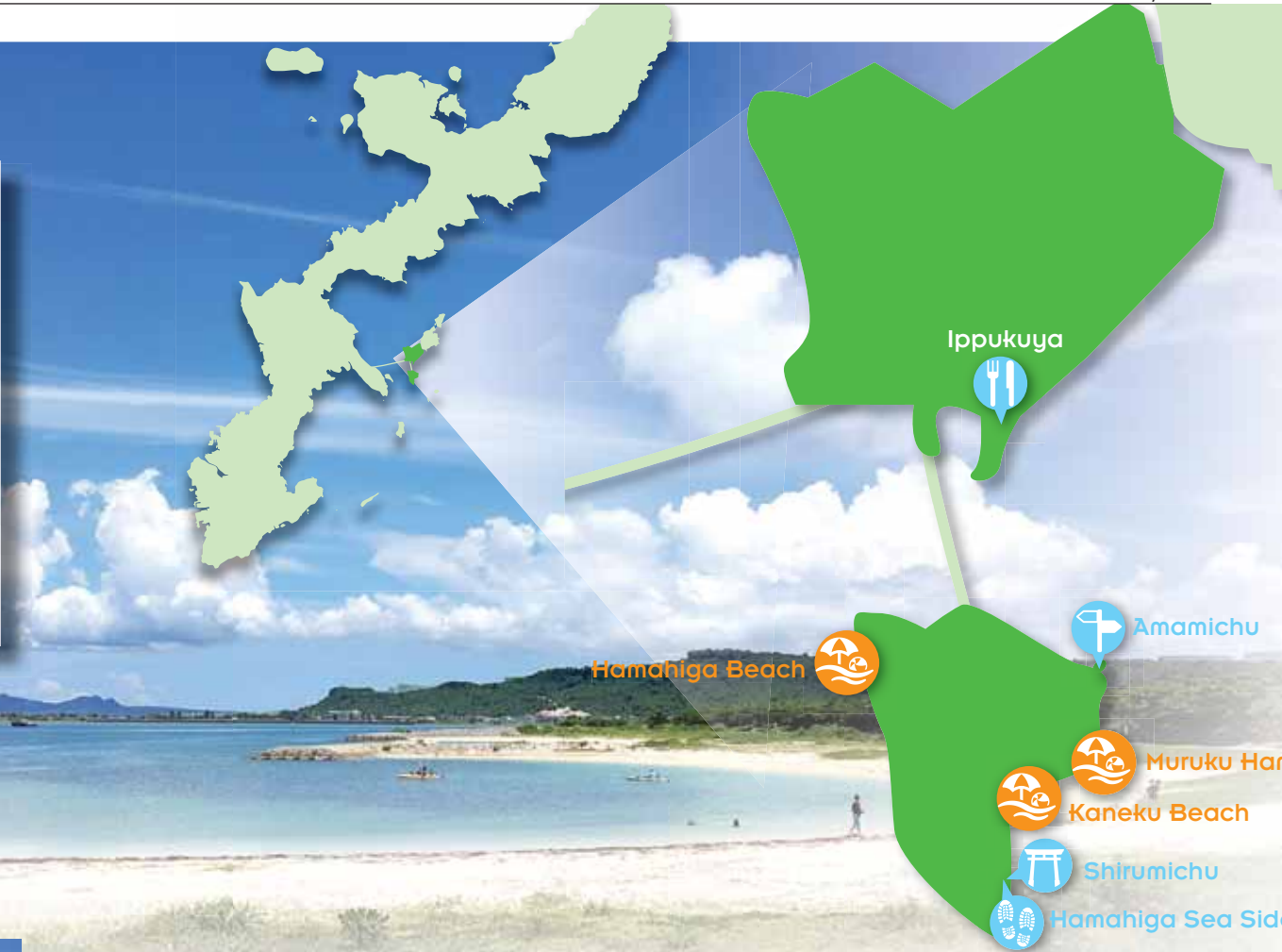
Hamahiga Beach
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Kaneku Beach
GPS Coordinates: N 26.312690, E 127.960583

Murukuhama Beach

Kaneku Beach

Amamichu



HAMAHIGA IS

Make 'God's Island' part of

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,
STRIPES JAPAN

Just east of Katsuren Peninsula, travelers will find an island known as “Kami no Shima,” translated to “God’s Island.” Hamahiga, the island’s proper name, is a small island with a lot to offer. Its landmarks and many shrines associated with the area’s ancestral mythology is why Hamahiga is known by its moniker.

Amamichu and Shirumichu are two of Hamahiga’s most sacred sites, named after a female and a male god, respectively.

Amamichu is a tomb considered a power spot for those praying for fertility. Find this spot in a small islet on the island’s northeast coast. To get there requires a short drive from Hamahiga Ohashi bridge and a short walk on a concrete road. Look for a small sign at the end of the bridge that will point you in the right direction.

The road circles around the islet with huge mushroom-like rocks on the side. These rocks are commonly seen in Okinawa and thought to get their interesting shape from the rising tides and sea waves crashing onto them. The tomb itself is built into the rocks, and though its name may give the impression this is a shrine for the female god, it actually enshrines both Amamichu and Shirumichu. According to Uruma City Office’s website, “Noro” priestesses and locals visit this shrine during the Lunar New Year

seeking blessings of productiveness, health, and fertility.

Close by on the side of a hill near the island’s shrine “Shirumichu” offers a different perspective.

Enter through a Torii gate and climb up 108 steps to get to a cave opening. According to Urumajikan, a site owned by Uruma City, this is a place where the gods are believed to have lived and given birth to children. It is also host to Lunar New Year ceremonies involving dances and music. Entry to the cave is prohibited but it is still a place of worship for those seeking to start a family.

Near Shirumichu, Sea Side Garden Hamahiga, a facility, has an observatory on a rocky hill on its premises that offers a vantage point of the island and the surrounding islands. Also, on the premises is “Mirumichi” with its two giant rocks appearing to lean on one another, similar to “Sefa Utaki,” a UNESCO World Heritage site in Okinawa. Even if you’re not a guest at this lodge, you can enjoy the grounds for a small 300-yen (about \$2.75) admission.

According to Uruma City, Hamahiga island covers an area of about 1.5 square kilometers.



Amamichu



Torii Gate for Shirumichu



Shirumichu



Seaside Garden Hamahiga

605 acres of land in a 4.1-mile circumference. It's a small island with many tourists eager to check out the sites. If you plan to visit this area, be aware that the streets are narrow and be respectful of the residential areas and especially the sacred sites you are sure to travel through. Drive carefully and enjoy all that Hamahiga has to offer.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com



Art works along coastal road

A stop on Henza Island

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,
STRIPES JAPAN

On the road to Miyagi Island, Henza Island takes only six minutes to travel through, often making it more of a passing point than a destination. But, make no mistake, you will not regret making a longer stop to enjoy the wonders of this small island.

On the side of a hill and overlooking the southern coast, Ippukuya is a café housed in a red-roofed cottage. To get there, take a small detour off the Kaichu Doro Causeway, which leads drivers on through the island.

Located in a quiet community, the café is decorated with sea-inspired curios and cacti, with a terrace presenting a superb view of Hamahiga Island beyond the bridge of the same name.

Here, try some reimen, or cold noodles, for 950 yen (about \$8.76), presented in the style of Morioka, a city in Iwate prefecture. The noodles are made of potato starch and wheat and are served up in cold and savory ox tail soup. Thin like Japanese soba noodles, and yellow in color similar to Okinawan soba noodles, Iwate's reimen, however, have a chewy and smooth texture. And the taste is completely different than both the mainland and Okinawan noodles.

In addition to standard toppings such as kimchi pickles and a boiled egg, at Ippukuya, reimen noodles are topped with pickled goya (bitter melon) and pork ribs to add a touch of Okinawa to the specialty dish. I found the chewiness of the noodles very enjoyable. Although I see myself as a die-hard Okinawan soba fan, the reimen was hard to resist.

For extra Okinawa flavor, pair your noodles with juice made from shiikwaasa, a tangy citrus fruit native to Okinawa and Taiwan (350 yen). The combo of the two is a refreshing way to cool down in the hot Okinawan summer.

After lunch, I headed back to the coastal road

to check out a 984-foot seawall featuring a number of colorful paintings. They were drawn by local children for an art competition called "Hiramiya Gogan Art Concur." The artwork depicts various scenes from local culture and life, livening up the huge canvas.

Past the colorful seawall, just before the road transitions to Miyagi Island, one of Henza's most

symbolic landmarks will come into view – a group of many large tanks. These 45 oil tanks contain more than 1.1 billion gallons of oil and form the southmost petroleum terminal of Japan, according to the Okinawa Central Terminal Station.

The tanks were originally constructed in the 1970s by Gulf Oil, which at the time was known as one of the "Seven Sisters" along with Mobile, Texaco, Chevron and others. The then-major oil company was behind the construction of Kaichu Doro Causeway, which in 1973 finally connected Henza and the Okinawa main island, according to Okinawa OCTS' website.

Before, locals either crossed the ocean at low tide or took a boat at full-tide to the main island. In the 1950s, a truck would transport locals at low tide, but accidents would raise Henza residents' desire for a bridge.

Once a lifeline for locals, today the causeway brings many tourists not only to the island, but also further to other surrounding islands, and the tanks are a reminder of that history.

With 1314.6 acres of land and a 4.3-mile circumference, Henza Island may not be big, but the views and history are a nice reason to pause and enjoy it over a cold bowl of reimen.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com



Oil tanks

Ippukuya

GPS COORDINATES: N 26.339907, E 127.960491
HOURS: noon to around sunset



Malt and hops

Hoppy times at Okinawa's Orion Happy Park

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: Sept. 12, 2019

If there is a recipe for happiness, it surely contains malt and hops — and there is plenty of that to go around at Orion Happy Park in Nago city.

Happy Park is home to the Orion Beer Plant, which makes Okinawa's most renowned brew, Orion Draft Beer, a champagne-colored slice of heaven synonymous with never-ending summer and Okinawa's tropical beach lifestyle.

The Happy Park gives free tours that allow guests to see how the pilsner is made. The result feels like the answer to the question; what would happen if Willy Wonka was replaced in his factory by Samuel Adams' Jim Koch and surf legend Kelly Slater?

The experience leaves visitors feeling like Charlie Bucket, as if they'd sampled the Fizzy Lifting Drinks and were handed the factory keys.

The company, known today as Orion Breweries Ltd., was founded by Sosei Gushiken on May 18, 1957, according to the Orion website. The island was firmly in the hands of the U.S. military at the time and Gushiken sought to develop manufacturing that would contribute to the economic and social reconstruction of an island decimated by World War II.

Two years later, the company's name was chosen by the public, the website said. After placing advertisements in local newspapers, it received 2,500 entries with 823 potential names.

Orion was chosen because the constellation is in the southern sky and Okinawa is a southern Japanese island. The stars symbolize dreams and aspirations, and the commander of U.S. forces governing Okinawa at the time was a three-star general.

The blue and red colors on the bottles and cans symbolize the sea and sky of Okinawa and the southern sun, the website said. They also stand for harmony with nature, freshness and purity, as well as burning passion, energy and solidarity.

Gushiken chose the factory location in Nago for the quality spring water from Mount Nago, according to factory staff. Orion Draft Beer was born in July 1960.

Early in its existence, Orion experienced growing pains, Okinawa's Ryukyu Shimpo newspaper reported in 2017. American beer reigned supreme on the island, with Yamato Beer in second place. Orion was disparagingly referred to as "island swill" at the time and treated as second-rate.

Gushiken refused to concede.

He dispatched employees to the cabarets and restaurants of Naha's Sakurazaka social district, selling Orion door to door, the Shimpo reported. "They developed their market by

selling beer directly to stores during the day and observing the pub-crawling customers and the goods being offered during the evening."

Gushiken's gambit paid off. By 1964, Orion accounted for 83% of beer consumed in Okinawa, the Shimpo said. It has been growing its market share ever since.

In 2002, Orion partnered with Asahi Breweries to produce and distribute Super Dry in Okinawa in exchange for nationwide distribution, the Shimpo reported. Today, Orion can be found on the Japanese mainland as well as in countries all around the world.

The refreshing draft — with its unique flavor profile that is light, crisp, malty, with a hint of citrus and a slightly bitter finish — has endeared itself to U.S. servicemembers and connoisseurs alike for decades. It is often the first thing mentioned by nostalgic veterans recalling their Okinawa deployments. Posts on social media detail what stateside stores carry the distinct brown bottles.

Tours of the Orion brewery must be booked in advance. This can be done online. While the tours are in Japanese, English scripts are available for English speakers to follow along.

The tours are 30 minutes long, followed by 20 minutes of tasting — and don't worry, designated drivers, non-alcoholic beer is available for you.

The tour starts in front of an old-style Okinawan sundries store, the site of Orion's genesis. Then it is off to see the carefully selected ingredients that go into each Orion beer.

Orion's main ingredients are malt — or germinated and dried barley — from Europe, Australia and Canada and hops from the Czech Republic and Germany, Orion literature said. Crushed malt is placed in a mash tun and heated, producing sweet wort.

This is filtered and transferred to a kettle. Hops are added into the mixture, which is then boiled.

The mixture is cooled and piped to fermentation tanks. The fermentation tanks at Orion's factory contain so much beer, that if you drank one beer a day, it would take 1,500 years to finish a silo's contents.

Yeast is added to the mixture and it takes about a week to turn into fresh beer. The beer is then transferred to maturation tanks, where it will sit for another 10-15 days.

After being filtered, the beer is ready for bottling and canning, the brewery literature said. Orion fills 19,200 bottles,



Non-alcoholic Orion Clear Free beer was among the beverages offered at Orion Happy Park in Nago on Aug. 14. Photos by Carlos Vazquez, Stars and Stripes

72,000 cans and 720 kegs per hour.

Everything at the factory is automated and moves seemingly at the speed of light, putting on a show. The swirling wort, massive kettles, whizzing cans and bottles, computers and even robot arms are a sight to see.

Two free beers are provided at the tasting, ice cold, the way Orion was meant to be consumed on a hot Okinawa day. Then visitors are unleashed on the Orion factory store where fresh beer is available by can or case, along with a smorgasbord of souvenirs.

Orion Happy Park is aptly named, and one of Okinawa's historic post-war golden tickets.

burke.matt@stripes.com
Twitter: @MatthewMBurke1



Machines bottle and prepare Orion beer.



Cans of Orion beer are displayed during a tour.



Orion beer cans are displayed during a tour.

- **DIRECTIONS:** 2-2-1 Agarie, Nago city, Okinawa, Japan 9050021; N 26.587057, E 127.989563
- **TIMES:** The factory is open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week. It is closed on holidays.
- **COSTS:** Brewery tours, including a sampling of Orion beer, are free. Fresh beer and souvenir items are on sale at the brewery store.
- **FOOD:** There is a restaurant on site where food and beer are available for purchase.
- **INFORMATION:** Phone: 0980-54-4103
Brewery tours can be booked on the Orion website, orionbeer.co.jp/brewerytour_en/. They are conducted in Japanese, but English-language materials can be provided upon request.

MY FAVES Noodle joints

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPE JAPAN

Japan, aka the nation of noodles, offers more than just ramen. In The Land of the Rising Sun you can taste virtually any type of noodle – hot or cold, white or grey, flour or rice, and with or without broth. Traditional udon noodles can be enjoyed with its springy or even sticky texture, while soba offers a chewy texture and wonderful aroma. Plus, each region twists the variety of noodles with its own local flavor. Here are some of my favorite noodle dishes and places to try them. While located in Japan, make sure you find your way to at least one of these noodle joints.

■ Kurayoshi (Tsuyu Yakisoba)

Tsuyu Yakisoba is a popular local dish created by Kuroishi residents. It features thick and chewy noodles with shrimp and mushroom tempura in soy-sauce based broth. They then perfect the dish by putting some Worcestershire sauce on top. I recommend sampling the noodles with broth before mixing in the sauce, so you can appreciate what the Worcestershire adds to the taste. It is really impressive as the taste of broth gradually got thicker and more bitter which made the flavor of shrimp and mushroom tempura stand out. The chewy texture of thick noodles go along well with the broth, as well. You can sample tasty tsuyu yakisoba at Kurayoshi, located in a building built nearly 200 years ago (2-hours from Misawa AB). This eatery offers a variety of other local dishes, such as tempura, sushi and shabu shabu, as well.

LOCATION: 13 Yokomachi, Kuroishi City
Aomori Prefecture, **TEL:** 0172-53-2111

■ Yajiguwa (Okinawa Soba)

Okinawa Soba is made up of thick, springy wheat noodles that resemble udon, broth flavored with kelp, bonito flakes and pork, and topped with fish cake, sliced scallion and a thick slice of stewed pork belly. Located in Nakadori district of Tsurumi City aka “Little Okinawa,” (15 miles south of central Tokyo), Yajiguwa is the oldest Okinawan restaurant in the district. Its popular Okinawa soba noodles contain sliced bacon, fish cake and spring onion. The white broth is flavored with pork and fish and goes well with home-made soft and chewy noodles. The restaurant has used its original recipe for more than 60 years. The restaurant also offers its popular goya set and tofu champuru.

LOCATION: 3-72-2 Nakadori, Tsurumi-ku,
Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, **TEL:** 045-506-5754.

■ Araki Soba (Soba)

Soba is a popular Japanese noodle dish made from buckwheat flour or a combination of buckwheat and wheat flours.

Kurayoshi



Araki Soba



Yajiguwa



Ichiraku Shokudo



Sai Gon



They are served either chilled with a dipping broth or in hot soup. Murayama City is known for many great soba joints packed in the area called “soba road”. Among the many soba joints in the district, Araki Soba is considered the best, and was named by prominent French gourmet project, “La Liste,” as one of the world’s top 1,000 restaurants in 2015. The dark grey, thick soba noodles come in a long wooden box, which is done because locals usually ate soba by sharing them in the box after their work on the farm. It was indeed the hardest and most chewy noodle I have ever experienced in my life. At first, I felt as if I wasn’t going to be able to finish, but as I got used to it, I became obsessed with its authentic taste and sweet aroma, and finished them off in no time. The broth, made from stock of herring, really went well with the extremely chewy noodle.

LOCATION: 65 Ookubo-ko, Murayama City,
Yamagata Prefecture, **TEL:** 0237-54-2248

■ Sai Gon (Pho)

Pho is a popular Vietnamese street noodle dish made up of chicken-flavored broth, rice noodles, herbs and meat (either beef or chicken). You can sample authentic noodles at Sai Gon in the multicultural Ichodanchi Housing Complex, 20-minutes from NAF Atsugi. This restaurant offers genuine and authentic tastes of South Vietnam. With many popular dishes, such as cha gio (fried spring roll), pho bo (beef pho) and banh xeo (crispy pancake), pho ga (chicken pho), Sai Gon exemplifies the traditional tastes of South Vietnam. Although it simple and less salty and did not have a particularly strong flavor that Indian, Thai and Korean cuisines have, mixed herbs and spicy sauce made the mild flavor intense. The broth is extremely smooth and full-bodied – various fragrant herbs combined with the gentle flavor of chicken help make it a really sophisticated soup, which reminded us of sampling superb consommé soup at a 5-star French restaurant.

LOCATION: 3173 (1F) Kami-lidamachi, Izumi-ku,
Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, **TEL:** 045-805-6081

■ Ichiraku Shokudo (Hirado Champon)

Ingredients for champon, a popular dish in the Nagasaki region, differ depending on the district. The dish typically features chewy noodles, fried pork, seafood and vegetables. Hirado City offers its local champon with extremely thick and chewy noodles, along with tasty pork-bone broth with “ago” (flying fish), squid, clam and local vegetables. Located near the center of Hirado City, the 85-year-old Ichiraku Shokudo will serve you up original Hirado Champon noodles at a reasonable price. Sample its signature “Ago Champon,” for an impressive dish.

LOCATION: 77 Kihikidacho, Hirado City,
Nagasaki Prefecture, **TEL:** 0950-22-2269

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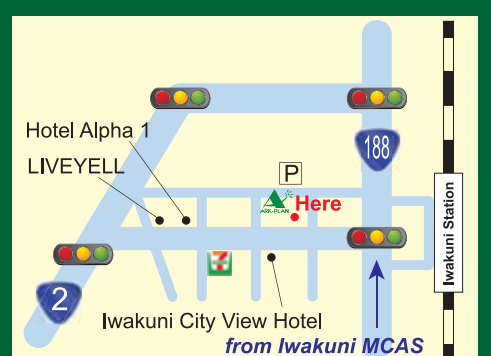
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Disney's HALLOWEEN 2019

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TOM ROSEVEARE, JAPAN TRAVEL

Halloween lands at Tokyo Disneyland and Disney Sea this autumn, with the festivities providing unique halloween-themed parades, exciting menus and exclusive merchandise.

Between September and October, Tokyo Disneyland transforms into a spooky, ghost-like world, with an eerie atmosphere promising plenty of thrills and chills sure to keep Disney fans entertained.

The twice-daily parade returns with the Spooky "Boo!" Parade, special edition plush toys—amongst other limited-edition swag—can be found at the park's retail locations, and a special The Nightmare Before Christmas menu can be experienced.

Over at Tokyo DisneySea, guests can experience the "Festival Mystique" harbor show, described as an eerie celebration featuring "Sea Witches."

Get you Disney costumes on and head over to Disney for spooky fun this season!

Disney's Halloween 2019
DATE: Sept. 10 – Oct. 31
TIME: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.
TICKETS AND MORE INFO: https://www.tokyodisneyresort.jp/en/tds/event/detail/tds_halloween2019/
INFORMATION ON RULES REGARDING COSTUMES: https://www.tokyodisneyresort.jp/treasure/fantasy/halloween2019/dressup/rule_en.html
ADMISSION FEE: ¥7,400 (1-Day Passport)
TOKYO DISNEY RESORT ADDRESS:
 1-1 Maihama, Urayasu, Chiba Pref.

Tokyo Disneyland and Tokyo DisneySea special menus

The Spooky "Boo!" Parade

Start training now and make your reservations



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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.konqersports.com and register now to **KONQER** in *Pristine Paradise Palau*



Fall wine and food tips for outdoor entertaining

Autumn is the ultimate time for outdoor dining. For your next gathering, bring the party out to the deck or patio for an evening of enjoyable light bites and delicious wines.

If you need some inspiration to create a delectable spread, one resource is St. Francis Winery and Vineyards, a certified-sustainable winery in Sonoma County, California. The winery offers luscious, fruit-driven varietal wines and a food-pairing program voted #1 Restaurant in America by Open Table.

If you are hosting an autumn gathering, elevate the evening with some tips and pairing ideas from the winery's culinary team.

White wine pairings

Chardonnay is a perfect white wine to drink in cool weather. Consider serving a Sonoma County Chardonnay 2016 (SRP: \$16.99), a classic, medium-bodied white wine that is refreshing, yet rich in flavors of green apple, juicy pear and melon. The winery achieves these aromas and flavors by picking the grapes in the cool of night and fermenting in French oak barrels.

Serve the Chardonnay alongside a tray of Smoked Salmon Mousse in Phyllo Cups. The creamy salmon mousse, paired with the crisp, bright flavors of the wine, refresh the palate and will have guests going back for seconds.

Another delicious pairing with Chardonnay is a Burrata, Beet and Grilled Peach Salad. Featuring fresh, seasonal produce, the sweetness of the

beets and peaches will pair wonderfully with the melon and citrus notes of the wine for an enjoyable combination.

Red wine pairings

With the brisk fall air upon us, add a spicy, rich and balanced Sonoma County 'Old Vines' Zinfandel 2015 (SRP: \$20.99) to your spread. This classic red wine, produced from 50 to 100-year-old vines, has enticing baking spice aromas and mouthwatering flavors of wild, crushed berries and red licorice.

You can serve this 'Old Vines' Zinfandel with a starter, such as Goat Cheese and Olive Skillet, a robust, easy-to-make dish perfect for dipping your choice of breads or crackers.

The cheeses with tomato sauce and herbs bring out the warm spicy scents and fruit-forward flavors within the wine. Better yet, the wine's velvety texture accentuates the olives' saltiness, making for a harmonious pairing.

One more appetizer option to make for your guests is Peperonata and Ricotta Crostinis, an appetizing blend of tomato sauce, red pepper flakes and garlic, topped with ricotta cheese. The Zinfandel's bold flavors and richness will balance this dish nicely without overpowering the creamy ricotta.

Create an evening to remember, complete with perfect pairings of two Sonoma wines and four appetizers. Your guests are sure to leave satisfied and impressed by an array of flavors that nod to the transition of seasons and help you welcome the tastes of even cooler weather.

– StatePoint



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www.sisaketbodyrejuvenation.com

The 3rd Sasebo Intercultural Project



Sports Day

10.26 (SAT.) International Friendship 2-4 p.m.

Venue : At Taiiku Bunka Kan (Small Gym)
6-17 Kougetsu-Cho, Sasebo City

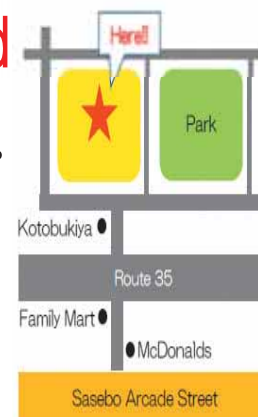
- Capacity: Limited to first 100 English speaking people.
- Military Community is Welcome!
- Admission is FREE - Get a Participation Prize Games Galore, Tug of War, Bite the Bread and Much More! (Must be at least 6 years old)

Pre-registration is required

Application Deadline: 21-Oct.
Go to QR code to sign-up!



Please bring indoor shoes!



Sponsorship : Sasebo Intercultural Project "Sports Day Team"
Co-host : Sasebo City, Sasebo City Board of Education

The iconic torii just off the coast of Miyajima, Japan, appears to be floating when the tide is high.



Not even restoration work can detract from the beauty of Miyajima

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JAMES BOLINGER,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: Sept. 19, 2019

The floating O-torii and Itsukushima Shrine at Miyajima south of Hiroshima are two of Japan's most popular attractions, but ongoing restoration work there shouldn't stop Americans stationed in Japan from planning a visit.

Miyajima, or the "Island of the Gods," is one of the three most scenic places in Japan,

according to the island's official tourist website, and a prime destination for an easy day trip or weekend getaway for those at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

It's especially popular for professional and amateur photographers who make their way around the picturesque landscape.

The most popular photo subject is the O-torii, which appears to float gently on the waves when the tide is high. The bright orange structure,

which stands nearly 60 feet tall in stark contrast to the dark green, forested hillsides behind it, was built in 1875 and is the eighth O-torii at Miyajima. The first was built in 1168.

Other photo ops include Itsukushima Shrine, a UNESCO World Heritage site, with its brilliant orange pillars and wooden walkways. There's also the five-story Tahoto Pagoda, which pokes above the

cherry trees, and the many scenic orange footbridges in Momijidani Park that cross a small river. They're perfect for family photos.

If you time your trip right, you can catch the leaves on the Japanese maples changing color, or the cherry blossoms that blanket the entire town in pink and white flowers.

A long tramway makes its way through a primeval forest

to the peak of Mount Misen, which many tourists with physical fortitude choose to hike. From the top of Misen one can see the islands of the Seto Inland Sea.

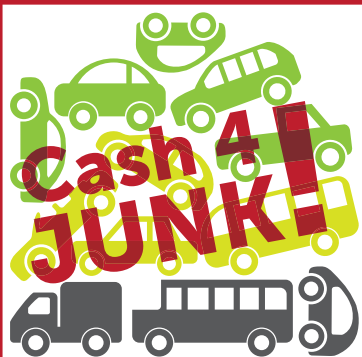
The kids will enjoy the wild deer that inhabit the island. They walk the streets and are friendly enough to pet.

My most recent adventure included a visit to the Miyajima Brewery to sample the three varieties of Miyajima beer. My favorite was the red ale, which

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The entrance to Itsukushima Shrine at Miyajima, Japan, is a photographer's dream with its brilliant orange pillars and wooden walkways.



Many of the wild deer that walk the streets of Miyajima are friendly enough to pet.



The five-story Tahoto Pagoda pokes above the cherry trees at Miyajima.

was strong but not overly hoppy. Best of all, the brewery let me take the cup with me, and I sat on the beach with my feet in the water enjoying the peaceful sound of the surf striking the sand.

The most popular dish on the island is grilled oysters,

and they are served at a variety of stands on the oceanside road. They are as big as an adult's hand, and from my understanding are quite tasty. I'm not an oyster guy, so I did not partake, but those who did seemed pleased.

Miyajima is halfway

between Iwakuni and Hiroshima and is best accessed by train. After arriving at Miyajima Guchi station, take a short walk following the signs to the ferry. A roundtrip ferry ticket costs 360 yen.

Visitors will want to bring plenty of yen for food and

shopping. I started my day with 5,000 yen (about \$45) and was running on empty after dinner, dessert and a few beers.

It's possible to see most of the sights on Miyajima in a day if one takes the tramway to the top of Misen and starts early. However, to see the entire

island and get the best lighting for your photos, I recommend more than one trip, especially if you want to hike to the mountaintop. The photo opportunities also change throughout the year.

bolinger.james@stripes.com
Twitter: @bolingerj2004

HOST FAMILIES, PARTICIPANTS WANTED FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Mike's English School is seeking volunteers from Yokota Air Base for our "Home Visit" cultural exchange events. Each event features a visit by Japanese children to the homes of foreign families, to play and socialize with international children living in Japan. To help cover hosting costs, we offer 9,000 yen as base compensation, plus an additional 500 yen per visitor. We're also looking for non-Japanese participants from Yokota or Tama city for our other fun events held off base, such as our Halloween Party, Christmas Party and traditional Japanese "Awaodori" dance performances. We also offer some compensation for coming to these events to help with travel costs.

For more information, please contact us by phone or email.

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STORY AND PHOTOS BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES JAPAN

In search of a casual Italian dining experience with homemade dishes at a reasonable? Mingo has you covered. And to make it even better, Mingo is within a stone's throw of the Hardy Barracks in Tokyo and is perfect for a quick, cheap lunch.

This place isn't stuffy. No fancy Italian restaurant seating here. Mingo's seating involves a wooden bar and wooden picnic tables for a casual, cozy dining experience. The restaurant accommodates 46 diners and is a great spot for hosting a party or large group. They even offer various party menu options, including all-you-can-drink options.

Mingo's owner and chef, Ikuhito Ono, opened the eatery in 2006 after learning authentic dishes in Sicily. He carefully hand makes Sicilian-based dishes using fresh seasonal ingredients every day, so you can sample the best possible Italian dishes throughout the year.

"I am trying to employ a good use of my cooking experience and expertise to make Mingo a restaurant where any guest can enjoy," Ono said.

Ono said he can accommodate diners on specific diets. Are you vegan or need a gluten-free meal? Ono has you covered, just ask!

Among the regular four lunch sets that are available throughout the year (at prices ranging from 800 and 1,300 yen), the "Great" lunch plate for 1,300 yen is a recommendation, as it contains 8 items - daily pasta and main dish, a slice of bread, mini appetizer, salad, soup, dessert and soft drink.

Since Ono's menu revolves around what is available at the market, the main dish and pasta vary every day. On the day I visited, my "Great" lunch plate came with sautéed tender pork rib with mustard cream sauce as the main dish, and spaghetti puttanesca with bacon and shrimp tomato



sweet and sour taste with stir-fried onion, tomato and olive oil. The slightly salted bacon and plump shrimp paired well with the rich cheese and cream on the noodles cooked al dente. Along with salad, appetizer and dessert, the lunch set nicely arranged in a plate actually reminded me of a luxurious full-course of Italian dishes.

For my soft drink, I had many to choose from. Mingo offers coffee, teas, juices, soft drinks and even drinks like lattes or cappuccinos.

I went for the cappuccino, a good choice to accompany the tangy panna cotta dessert included with my set.



Italian food, or just need that glass of wine, check out the unique atmosphere at Mingo. If you're bringing a crowd, make sure to reserve ahead.

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com

Italian Dining Mingo Nishiazabu

HOURS: Mon 5 – 11:30 p.m.; Tue, Thu and Sat, 11:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Dinner: 5 – 11:30 p.m.; Wed and Fri, noon – 3:30 p.m. Dinner: 5– 11:30 p.m. (close Sun and holidays)

LOCATION: 1-10-16 [1F] Nishiazabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo

URL: <http://www.mingo.co.jp/>

FACEBOOK: @mingo.nishiazabu

TEL: 03-6913-1511



Find out the best installations in the Pacific, chosen by your fellow Stars and Stripes readers!



WHO IS THE BEST OF 2019?



Photo courtesy of Yamaguchi Prefecture

Float away this fall near MCAS Iwakuni

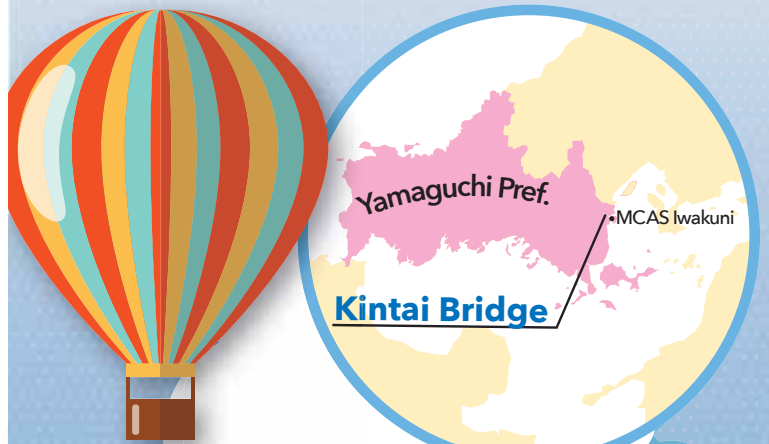
BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPE JAPAN

Float away this autumn on a hot air balloon near MCAS Iwakuni.

“Super view from the Sky” hosted by Yamaguchi Prefecture will fly guests above the famous Kintai Bridge and over the area’s fall foliage.

This is a limited event on a few weekends in November and requires reserving in advance. To reserve send in a postcard to the address below post stamped by Oct. 7 for a chance to hitch a ride on this fall balloon outing.

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com



LOCATION:

Kintai Bridge (Iwakuni City, Yamaguchi Pref.)

DATE:

1. Nov. 9, 6:45 – 8:45 a.m.
2. Nov. 10, 6:45 – 8:45 a.m.
3. Nov. 16, 6:45 – 8:45 a.m.
4. Nov. 17, 6:45 – 8:45 a.m.
5. Nov. 23, 6:45 – 8:45 a.m.
6. Nov. 24, 6:45 – 8:45 a.m.

FEE:

Middle schooler or older: 1,500 yen;
Elementary schooler: 500 yen; Infant: free.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

APPLICATION:

Send a postcard to the address below after you have written the following items:

1. Your favorite day (From the dates above)
2. Number of participants (adult/elementary/infant)
3. Your name and address
(In case applications exceed more than 200, they will conduct a drawing to determine the winners. Applicants will receive notification of selection.)

- Send your postcard here:

Tourism Promotion Office,
Yamaguchi Prefecture
1-1 Takicho, Yamaguchi City,
Yamaguchi Pref., 753-8501

For more information, visit

<https://yamaguchi-magic.jp/event/autumn/1053/>
or call 083-933-3204



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(Nov.23 departure - Nov.30 return)



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- *Minimum 5 guests

BEIJING 5 DAYS

Hiroshima departure
(Nov.27 departure - Dec.01 return)



\$1,293

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- IACE group private tour with local guide and private car
- 5 star hotel stay
- Full day sightseeing (Great Wall and Forbidden City) included
- China visa application fee included
- *Minimum 6 guests

CLUB MED PHUKET 6 DAYS

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(Nov.26 departure - Dec.01 return)

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(Nov.24 - 28 departure)



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Hop on the sake train near Iwakuni for great views, great sake

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES JAPAN

Daytime is getting shorter and autumn is starting to creep in. Enjoy the crisp and cool weather at some scenic attractions off base. If you are located in the Iwakuni area or, will be in the area this season, take a ride on the limited-time "sake train" running along the scenic valley of the Nishiki River throughout autumn season.

Nishikigawa Railway Company will run "Kikizake Ressa" (literally "sake-sampling train"), every other weekend between Oct. 5 and Dec. 14 this year.

The 7,000-yen (about \$65) fare includes a round-trip ticket between Iwakuni and Nishikicho Stations on Nishikigawa-Seiryu Line, a gorgeous bento lunch box packed with local delicacies and five small sake bottle samples from local breweries. The train will take passengers through breathtaking scenic areas while they enjoy local sake and local foods.

Yamaguchi Prefecture is home to wonderful breweries that brew high-end sake of smooth, fruity texture with well-balanced flavors of bitterness and sweetness. You can sample five of the most popular brands of their products

NISHIKIGAWA-SIRYU LINE "KIKIZAKE RESSHA" (SAKE TRAIN)

DATE: Oct 5, 19, Nov. 2, 16, 17, 30 and Dec. 14

NUMBER OF SEAT AVAILABLE:
50 (Nov. 16 and 17: 70)

FEE: 7,000 yen (including round-trip tickets of Iwakuni - Nishikicho Stations, five small bottles of sake and a lunch box)

URL: <http://nishikigawa.com/>
Reservation and more information, call **0827-72-2002**.

- Gangi, Kinkankuromatsu, Kin-suzume, Gokyo and Dassai on this special train.

The sake train leaves Iwakuni Station at 12:30 p.m. and will take you on a 90-minute ride to Nishikicho Station. Once there, hop onto the optional "tokotoko" electric tram for some more sightseeing on another 90-minute tour of scenic Kusatsuki Spa for 500 yen.

The train will get you back to Iwakuni at 5:13 p.m., if you would take the optional tokotoko train. If you don't take the option, then you will be back at Iwakuni at 3:23 p.m.

It's absolutely a great idea to enjoy a beautiful autumn day in Iwakuni. Only 50 seats are available for each train. So, call Nishikigawa Railway at 0827-72-2002 and reserve your seats today! takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com



Photos courtesy of Nishikigawa Railway Company

MISAWA YOKOSUKA ATSUGI ZAMA YOKOTA FUJI IWAKUNI SASEBO OKINAWA MISAWA YOKOSUKA

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***Purchase by 28OCT *Minimum 20 guests required**
~For more details, please feel free to contact us~

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- Samurai performance by KAMUI (the Samurai Artist) during train travel

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Price 108,000 yen (982 USD)

Price includes:

- Round trip air fare between Haneda and Chitose
- 3 nights stay at Tokyu Stay Sapporo Odori
- Breakfast x 3, Lunch x 1 and Dinner x 1
- Tours to Tsudome (a family oriented site with a variety of snow and ice attractions), Chocolate Factory, Lake Shikotsu and Hitsujigaoka Observation Hill

Price 111,000 yen (1,009 USD)

Price includes:

- Round trip air fare between Haneda and Chitose
- 3 nights stay at Tokyu Stay Sapporo Odori
- Breakfast x 3, Lunch x 1 and Dinner x 1
- Tours to Nikka Whiskey Distillery, Lake Shikotsu and Hitsujigaoka Observation Hill

***Single room price: 114,000 yen (1,037 USD) for Kids Plan, 118,000 yen (1,073 USD) for Adult Plan**
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OKINAWA MISAWA YOKOSUKA ATSUGI ZAMA YOKOTA FUJI IWAKUNI SASEBO OKINAWA MISAWA

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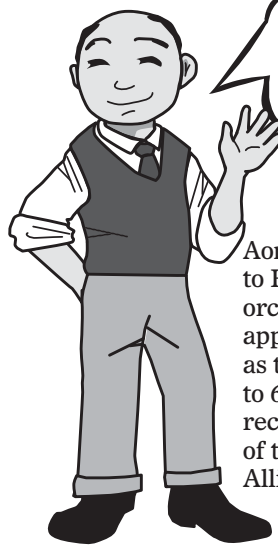
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Kanji of the week

泡

Awa or hou (Foam/bubble)

Language Lesson

Let's eat.

Tabemashoo.

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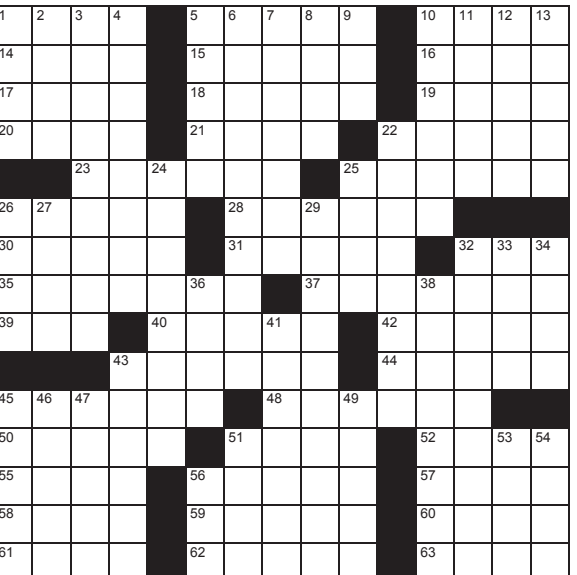


The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- Sidewinder sound
- Smart-mouthed
- Lends a hand
- Social starter
- "The Republic" writer
- Flat-bottomed boat
- Kind of mark
- Bold poker bet
- Stick up for
- Funeral pile
- Figure skater Johnny
- Cuban dance
- Periphery
- ____-than-life
- Element no. 5
- Demand
- Jennifer Garner series
- Trip planner's aid
- Dandy dresser
- Secure with straps
- Pizzeria herb
- Lawn starter
- Colorful parrot
- Done to death
- The Louvre, e.g.
- Gypsy's deck
- Secure
- Temporary teacher
- Full of chutzpah
- Novelist ____ Mae Brown
- Bit of rain
- Cheat
- Biblical length
- Like some beds
- Slender musical instrument
- Assign
- States further
- Take care of
- Bopper lead-in
- For fear that



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- Pitch-black
- Cooked in a wok
- Detour route, often
- Breed, as salmon
- Loyalty
- Most noticeable
- Awaken
- "Silent Night" adjective
- Separate into groups
- Cake topper
- Dakota maker
- Take an oath
- Boombox insert, once
- To such an extent
- Rail anagram
- Off one's trolley
- Spicy stew
- Replay feature
- Win-win transaction
- Cognizant of
- Longfellow, eg.

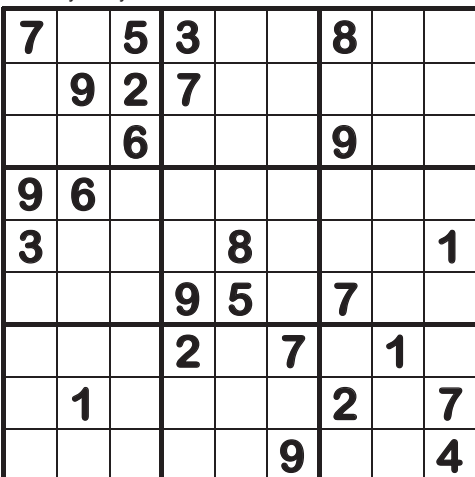
- Diluted art medium
- Type of seizure
- Within earshot
- Like the Lone Ranger
- Brothers' keeper?
- "Survivor" team
- Prey grabber
- Like some remarks
- Ann of true crime
- Racetrack figures
- Dennis, to Mr. Wilson
- Alley prowler

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:



SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy



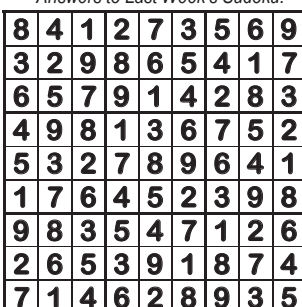
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Edited by Margie E. Burke

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 contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answers to Last Week's Sudoku:



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