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Community Publication

JAPAN

JUNE 26 – JULY 9, 2020

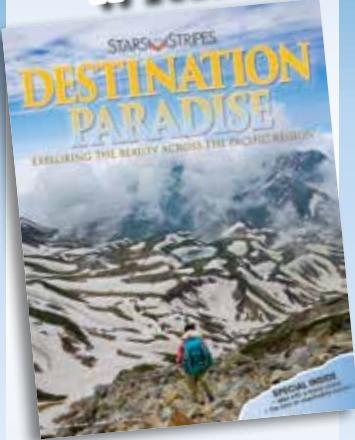
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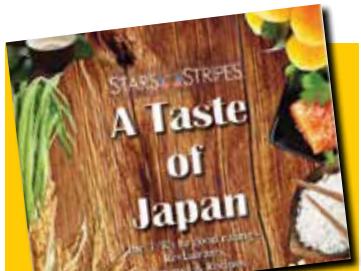
Share your piece of paradise with us



Stars and Stripes is asking readers to write about their own piece of paradise. Yes, that means you! Our annual Destination Paradise magazine highlights must-see travel spots across the Pacific – and your bit of paradise could be included in our 2020-21 edition that hits the streets on Pacific bases in September. Submit your story and photos to paradise@stripes.com by July 19. We'll make you famous!



Check out our previous Destination Paradise mags



Special 12-page pullout inside!

Sasebo Navy couple turns to yoga

Page 4

Tataki of katsuo File photo



A how-to: Starting a book club for your kids

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ALLIE WHALEN,
STRIPES JAPAN

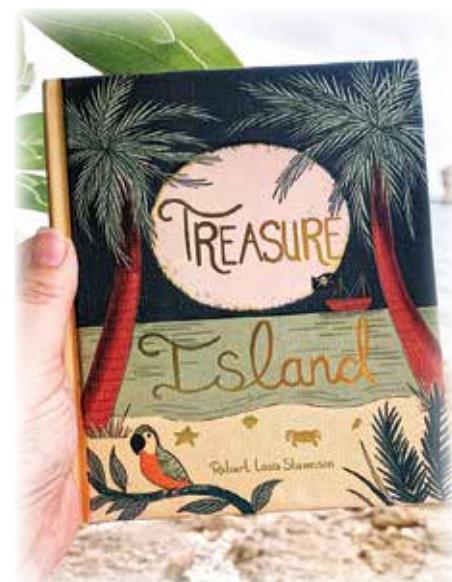
One of my favorite parts about homeschooling my kids are the books we get to enjoy together! We love reading chapter books aloud and sharing our favorite parts. As a book lover, it's only natural to foster that love in my kids and want to share it with friends, too! I have wanted to start a book club for kids since my own kids were too young to appreciate it. When I met a like-minded homeschooling mom here in Okinawa that was also interested in starting a book club, I knew I hit the jackpot!

Ashley and I met through a wonderful network of homeschool moms that connect through a group called Wild + Free. We have kids that are similar ages and we have a love for the classics, so it didn't take us long to figure out that we should start a book club

together! About a month later our Wild + Free Okinawa Book Club was created and we have enjoyed seeing not only our kids, but also the moms, create friendships over a shared love of books.

Our first Wild + Free Okinawa Book Club met in January after the rush of the holidays and our book choice was Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell. Ashley and I both read the book as kids (and loved it!!) so we were thrilled to share it with our own kids! We knew we wanted a location that would do the book justice so we met at a remote beach in the rugged northern parts of our little island. Everyone brought a picnic lunch and a craft to share. We had activities including cave drawings, jewelry making, and animal matching cards.

SEE BOOK ON PAGE 10





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Pandemic ramps up PCS move rivalries

The Meat and Potatoes of Life

Lisa Smith Molinari



It's summer PCS season, when 40% of the 400,000 military and DOD civilian moves take place each year. This time brings back memories of our family's final military move in May 2017. It was our 11th in 23 years of marriage, and it was pretty much like all the rest — a stressful experience involving tedious planning, unexpected crises, broken and lost belongings and physical exhaustion.

Like most military spouses, I've told stories of PCS moves to my friends around kitchen islands, bunco tables and backyard patios. Like the time the movers snapped the leg off our dining room buffet, or when they neglected to put our crib back together when I had a newborn baby and a toddler, or that move when my husband's entire collection of military challenge coins disappeared. Within military spouse culture, telling tales of moving mishaps is a sort of competitive sport. Kind of like talking about childbirth. The spouse who has endured the most misery wins.

It's hard to imagine the PCS experience getting worse for military families, but thanks to the coronavirus, moving hassles have reached epic new levels. The Stop Movement Order announced by Secretary of Defense Mark Esper in April has

been extended through June 30, causing delays that could last until the end of the year.

Two-thirds of PCS moves have been delayed, causing a massive backup. Some military families who had already started the moving process got trapped in limbo between two locations, paying double housing costs due to leases or mortgages executed before the Stop Movement Order. Others shipped household goods and moved into temporary housing, then got stuck without their belongings. Parents can't register their children for the 2020-21 school year because they don't know where they will be living. Kids who planned to enter new schools at the end of summer may have to enroll mid-school year, making it more difficult for them to adjust socially and academically. While Congress is working to pass legislation that would provide financial relief to many of the affected families, uncertainty and stress

abounds.

To make matters worse, the backup is further complicated by the military branches' efforts to offer incentives to delay retirements and separations, and to reenlist those who had already retired or separated. They hope these strategies will balance the drop in recruits caused by the COVID-19 shutdown, and provide medical personnel and troops who can deploy immediately so that readiness is not further compromised. However, moving priority will go to those who can deploy or fill medical billets, while waiting families will be pushed back in the line.

The Pentagon says that it will allow 30,000 waiting families to be granted waivers to move before June 30. However, those who are able to move will be required to follow mandatory coronavirus prevention guidelines that could further delay the process. No matter which way you cut it, military families will

endure major PCS hardships this year.

One day, when life returns to some form of normalcy, military spouses will inevitably gather together like they always have, to chat around fire pits, bunco tables, kitchen islands, base housing patios, backyard barbecues and coffee shops. They will share bottles of wine and pots of coffee; they will laugh, and they will tell miserable tales about childbirth, deployments and PCS moves — just like military spouses have for decades. The only thing that remains to be seen is, now that the pandemic has upped the ante, who will win the unspoken competition over who has endured the most hardship?

I, for one, will resist the urge to offer up my often-told PCS stories while in the company of anyone who has endured a PCS move during the pandemic. Out of respect, I will graciously concede defeat.

But there's no guarantee I won't try to get back in the game with a good labor and delivery story. Our firstborn weighed more than nine pounds, so it's a doozy.

Score.

Read more of Lisa Smith Molinari's columns at:
themeatandpotatoesoflife.com
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Mental Notes with Hilary Valdez

Surviving love and loneliness

BY HILARY VALDEZ,
STRIPES JAPAN

Being alone and loneliness aren't the same. When you're enjoying your solitude, you don't feel isolated in a negative way or crave contact with others. Loneliness isn't the same as being alone. You can be alone, yet not lonely. You can feel lonely in a crowd of people. Loneliness is when you feel no one is there for you and you need to connect with people. It's a feeling that you're disconnected from others, with no one to confide in. It's a lack of meaningful relationships. Isolation and loneliness often go hand in hand, and can affect your emotional health and well-being. It's common for people to feel lonely.

Having morning coffee with my mother in the kitchen, she admitted she was lonely. I was surprised and replied, sadly, "Okay mom, let's talk about this after I cook breakfast." Afterward during our walk to the movie theater, she said she was tired of being left home alone. My father had to travel frequently. So, mom was frustrated, just hanging out with her sister, going to Vegas and attending television game shows in Los Angeles. She wanted more meaning in her life. She was bored, frustrated, and lonely. So, we talked about overcoming challenges in her life.

While walking, we took deep breaths. Mom had the symptoms for people feeling lonely: stress, tension, not sleeping well, tension headaches, feeling tired, and easily upset. I suggested going to the gym a few times a week, taking a fun class, or becoming a volunteer. She didn't like those ideas. Mom enjoyed coffee, donuts and red wine. I asked what was upsetting her the most. And, what was the worst part of dad being away from home?

"I'm married, not single. I don't like watching TV by myself," she replied. I scratched my head suggesting, "Be happy for what you have. Stay enthusiastic about life." She glanced at me, smirking, shaking her head no. "What's missing in your life?" I asked. She was quiet, looking straight ahead.

"What can I change?" she asked. I suggested not jumping straight to negativity and not letting the negative voice in her mind win. I suggested replacing negative talk with positive self-talk. "That's easy for you to say," she pouted, shaking her head. "I earned my bad attitude," she continued.

While we waited to pay for our movie tickets, I suggested adding a few short-term goals, maybe some exercise and spending time with friends who have positive attitudes. "I don't like exercise," she said shaking her head, adding that she belonged to a wine club already.

Standing in the popcorn line I asked, "What are the positive and the negative aspects of being apart? What can you do to feel closer to your husband? What can you do to stay motivated and passionate toward the relationship?" Munching on her popcorn, she replied sarcastically with a smile.

"I can send him a love letter. I can say something positive about our relationship. I can plan a homecoming. Or send him interesting photos of me," she said with a playful grin, grinding forcefully on more popcorn. As we walked to our seats, I told her loneliness and isolation are everywhere. I urged her to be nice to herself and not become a victim of despair. She listened, aggressively crunching on her popcorn while I suggested including her husband in her trips to Vegas and to attend game shows in Los Angeles together.

Soon, "Heat," the movie we were watching, started and she was distracted. Afterward, at a café she began to appreciate the strong bonds she had with people. She admitted her loneliness came from a lack of meaningful social interaction, but she was lucky to have the support of her sister and friends. Mom was in a great relationship and was fortunate to have a reliable partner. She had a lot to be thankful for but felt like she needed a sense of purpose.

On the walk home I encouraged her to take care of the neighbor's children once in a while. Give support to others. Get a good night's sleep without drinking. She admitted being lonely made her feel more negative, critical and judgmental. That wasn't fun. We agreed to focus on good things that are happening everyday all around us. As I left, we looked at each other and hugged, grateful for our relationship.

If you woke up today, that's a start. The rest is up to you.

Hilary Valdez is a retiree living in Japan. He is an experienced Mental Health professional and Resiliency Trainer. Valdez is a former Marine and has worked with the military most of his career and most recently worked at Camp Zama as a Master Resiliency Trainer. Valdez now has a private practice and publishes books on social and psychological issues. His books are available on Amazon and for Kindle. Learn more about Valdez and contact him at www.hilaryvaldez.com or at InstantInsights@hotmail.com



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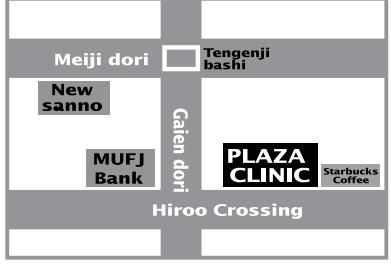
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Photos courtesy of Torres Family

Sasebo couple connects, strengthens bond through *yoga*

Editor's note: At Stripes Japan, we love to share your stories and share this space with our community members. Here is an article written by Rosie Torres, a Navy spouse at CFAS Sasebo. If you have a story or photos to share, let us know at japan@stripes.com.

BY ROSIETORRES,
STRIPES JAPAN

I am no stranger to Navy life. I am a Navy spouse, was prior enlisted and have been an ombudsman of my husband Miguel's command for the last four years. On top of that, I am currently halfway through earning my doctoral degree in psychology. Navy life is busy and as a couple, my husband and I have grown up together and learned through our changes as we continue to grow.

For us, acro yoga, or partner yoga, has been beneficial both on individual and collective levels in our relationship and outside of it. I cannot emphasize the psychological and physiological benefits of yoga enough. Not only have we strengthened our initial partnership but also learned to be more mindful and in control of our emotions, thoughts and behaviors. These positive effects are also reflected in our daily lives and interactions at home and in the workplace.

Our introduction to partner yoga was back in 2013 when we were stationed at Misawa Air Base. Like most sailors, my spouse's work schedule varies, and we attempted to practice at home, the gym, or outside whenever time permitted. Our children, then ages seven and five, would get a kick out of watching us practice partner yoga as it involved many fall outs due to

trial and error. The laughs were a bonus and for the children, it was a great example of physical fitness and bonding.

In the fall of 2016, we PCSd to CFAS Sasebo, our current home until we PCS again to Yokosuka Naval Base this fall. At Sasebo, we took advantage of the travel opportunities and had almost forgotten how much enjoyment acro yoga brought us.

As COVID-19 approached and the subsequent lockdown happened, we dove back into our partner workouts at home. We had come along way over the years as we reflected on some of the photos we took of our past poses. During this time, we used our short runs along the trails of the beautiful Huis Ten Bousch park near Sasebo, we made stops to grab quick snapshots of yoga poses together. We were proud of the progress we'd made since starting in 2013.

In May, we even participated in a community group online yoga challenge where we recorded simple beginner partner yoga poses/stretches to share with others who had never tried acro yoga. Although the practice is something we enjoy on our own, we were happy to have shared our experiences with other spouses in our community.

Through partner/acro yoga we have strengthened our relationship through better communication, trust, patience, and support. All of these concepts are quickly put into use with each pose and practice.

Too often, we get complacent with our roles within a military

career and that of a supportive spouse. By engaging in this practice, it has allowed us to keep our initial foundational focus of us at the forefront. It has brought comfort and strength to many areas of our personal and professional roles in life thus far. The gains in communication and support has taken us a long time to achieve, but the benefit of acro yoga has stayed with us throughout our marriage.

Rosie Torres and her husband, Miguel, are originally from San Antonio, Texas. Torres served in the Navy and is currently working on her Ph.D. in Psychology. The Torres Family will PCS to Yokosuka Naval Base in the fall.

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Get moving with this home workout

BY AMANDA HAYWARD,
STRIPES JAPAN

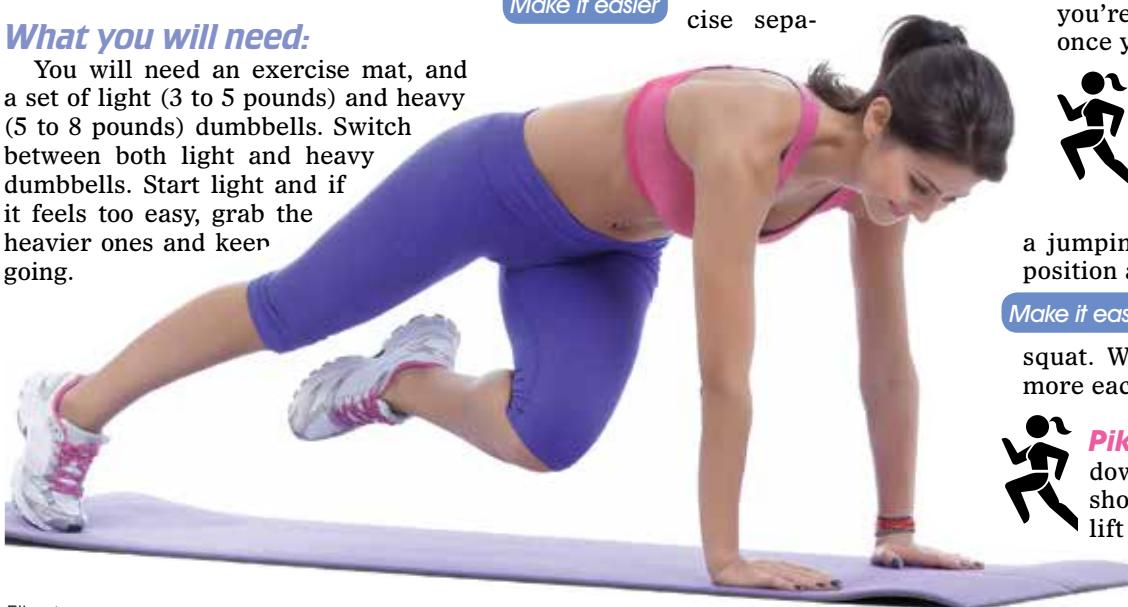
This circuit is one of my favorites that I enjoy doing in the comfort of my home, inspired by Shape Magazine. Why is this workout so impactful? Each move targets multiple muscle groups in a short amount of time. By doing this, you spend less time working out, and burn just as many calories as you would during a slow, one-hour gym session. This 30-minute routine is perfect for busy days or when you're just able to leave the house. It's an intermediate/advanced circuit, so go at your own pace (see below for alternative, beginner movements). There are eight moves which alternate between cardio blasts and strength exercises. (Note: Always keep your core engaged and stop if you feel like you are no longer maintaining good form. Without proper form, you will not benefit from the exercise.)

How it works:

Perform this workout two to three times per week for four weeks, beginning with 10 to 12 reps of each exercise with minimal rest in between. Begin with two sets. Each week slowly add more reps until you reach at least 15 reps. The final week, really bust through and do three sets, at least 15 reps each. You will be surprised how quickly your body can catch on.

What you will need:

You will need an exercise mat, and a set of light (3 to 5 pounds) and heavy (5 to 8 pounds) dumbbells. Switch between both light and heavy dumbbells. Start light and if it feels too easy, grab the heavier ones and keep going.



File photos

Let's get started

Begin with a 5-minute warmup. For example, you can do three rounds of running in place, jumping jacks, plank walks (start in standing position and slowly walk your hands out to plank, hold for one count, and then slowly walk back to starting position as you raise your arms overhead), arms circles, or high-knees and butt-kicks. Whichever warmup you do, make sure you mimic the workout you are about to tackle.



Plank Tucks — Start in high-plank position. Looking forward, jump and tuck both feet in toward your chest and straight back to starting position without touching your toes to the ground.

Make it easier

Jump your feet in, land in tuck position and jump back. Do this until you've mastered the coordination, it's a tough one!



Lunge and Shoulder Fly

Begin in standing position holding a pair of dumbbells in each hand, palms in. Lunge forward with your right leg, bringing arms out to sides with a slight bend in your elbows. As you bring arms back down to sides, step back to starting position and switch. That completes one rep.

Make it easier

Do each exercise separately.

rately; first lunge, return to standing and then do a shoulder fly.



Jump Switch — Start in high-plank position. Looking forward, jump right leg just to the outside of your right arm. Immediately jump and switch legs, bringing your left leg to the outside of your left arm. This completes one rep.

Make it easier

Step your leg up and back rather than jump as fast as you can.



Squat and Curl — Begin in standing position, feet hip-width apart holding a pair of dumbbells in each hand, palms facing up. Slowly lower yourself into a squat (like you're sitting into a chair, shoulders down, butt out and knees in line with toes). As you squat, slowly do a bicep curl keeping your elbows tucked into your sides. Lower dumbbells back down to sides as you return to starting position.

Make it easier

Lower into a squat without the curl. If you're feeling ambitious, curl once you are in standing position.



Jack Jumps — Start in a squat position, arms by your sides. Jump straight up while bringing arms up overhead like you're doing a jumping jack. Land back in squat position and repeat.

Make it easier

Lower into a partial squat rather than a full squat. Work your way down a little more each time until you're there!



Pike Pushup — Begin in downward dog position, arms shoulder-width apart. Slowly lift up your right leg behind you and lower chest to the floor. Push up and return to starting position.

Repeat using left leg. This completes one rep.

Make it easier

Don't lift your legs as you perform a pike pushup. Master this until you can push up with your leg lifted while maintaining good form. You can do it! You will be surprised in how much you progressed in only one week.



Tuck and Extend —

Now it's time for full-on abs. Sitting on floor with knees bent and arms behind you, elbows pointing

back and fingers in (like you're about to do a tricep dip) lift your feet off the ground.

Tuck your legs into your chest and extend them out to the right side as you slightly lean back, keeping back straight. Tuck legs back in and switch. This completes one rep.

Make it easier

Keep your back flat on the floor as you perform the leg extension.



Lift and Kick —

Begin by laying on your left side and legs bent, elbow directly beneath your shoulders and in line with body. Slowly lift your hips toward the ceiling until body forms a straight line, and kick your right leg out to full extension. Lower back down and repeat. Switch sides.

Make it easier

Don't kick your leg out when you lift up. Once you get this down, add in that kick!

There you have it. This workout targets your core, biceps, shoulders, triceps, upper and lower back, chest, obliques, glutes, quads ... just about everything! It's a tough one, so do this workout to your best ability, and you will be amazed on how quickly you progress. Keep at it while eating a healthy diet, and you just might need to buy smaller jeans.

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The 17th century once wrote of the "Green leaves in early spring, the season's first bonito, gatsuo," or the first arrival of ocean catch — and its first well as herald the winter alone, Japan devours according to its fisherman's calendar.

In May, chance asking for the first restaurants. It's eaten as (lightly seared but ginger, garlic, was also dried, smoked "suobushi," especially more common than raw assumed seafood in Japan as Bonito migrates north traveling along the Pacific to reach the Sea in July. They remain in season a short while through October. But only

tional migration fish as hatsugatsuo. The fish typically or June in mainland April in Okinawa continuous through October with pole and line, now commercial markets on

is still caught exclusively with a
wa, according to Kyoko Hirata of
the Tourism and Visitors Bureau.

"The most tasty and well-shaded bonito in Okinawa is caught in May," says Gushiken of Motobu Fishermen's Association. He adds that the fishing season continues from March to November but, "Okinawan mertime is nothing but bonito fishing season for us."

In fact, in Motobu Town, on Okinawa's main bonito fishery, residents fly "katsuo-nobori," or banners, instead of the koi-nobori (fish banners) used throughout Japan to celebrate the Children's Day holiday.

"When we Motbu people see
birds flying at the port we know birds
will come," says Gushiken.

Okinawa used to catch more bonefish in the nation. But wartime battles. Fishing grounds were also cleared during the occupation. Along with the rise of U.S. military bases and the rise in economy, these events devastated the local fishing industry, according to Fujio Ueda, professor of marine biology at the University of Okinawa.

Okinawa's appetite for bonito.

While an average Japanese consumer ate 1.2 kilograms of dried bonito in 2017, an average yen, according to Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Communications.



Popular Japanese dish, Bonito "tataki" File photo



A photograph showing three men in a fish market setting. Two men are on the left, wearing blue aprons and white hats, working with large blue plastic crates filled with bluefin tuna. One crate has a red logo on it. A third man, wearing a pink patterned shirt and white boots, stands to the right, observing the process. The floor is covered with many more bluefin tuna, some of which are on ice. In the background, there's a wooden shelving unit and a clock on the wall.



Tataki of katsuo File photos
with
com
ill

Tanabata

Wishing on two lovers' legend on July 7

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES JAPAN

One of the most romantic and traditional festivals, Tanabata, also known as the Star Festival, is celebrated every year on the seventh day of the seventh month.

The Star Festival originated from the Chinese legend of two stars, Vega and Altair – lovers who were separated by the Milky Way and allowed to meet only once a year on July 7.

The legend of Star Festival in Japan varies according to the region, and one that I was told in my childhood goes like this:

Vega (a weaver and princess called Orihime in Japanese) was a beautiful daughter of King of the Sky. She always weaved celestial cloth for her father by the bank of the Milky Way. There was also a young herdsman named Altair (called Hikoboshi in Japanese). One day, the herdsman visited the princess when she was working with her loom and they fell in love at first sight. As Vega met her lover more and more frequently, she began weaving less and less. The king, who was suspicious about his daughter's change, finally saw her meeting with the herdsman. In anger, the king separated the two lovers across the Milky Way and forbade them to meet again. The princess became so desperate and continued weeping until her father finally allowed her to meet with the herdsman once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month.

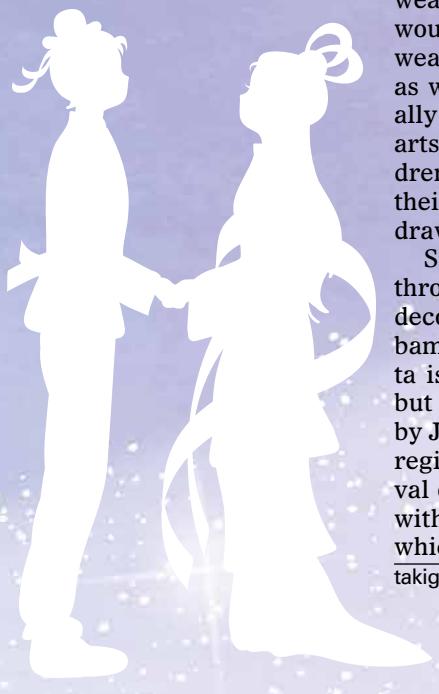
So, if you look up into the evening sky on July 7 and it is clear, you can see the two stars reunited. But if it is rainy or cloudy, know that they will try to meet again next year.

As part of the Tanabata celebration, Japanese tie fancy slips of colored paper - blue, red, violet or yellow and white - called tanzaku on bamboo branches. We write our wish on one of the papers and tie it to the bamboo branch, which is also decorated with shiny, metallic decorations, just like a Christmas tree. According to my mother, girls back in the day used to wish that their

weaving and sewing skills would improve, like the weaver princess. However, as weaver princess eventually became a guardian of arts in general, many children today wish improve their skills in hand-writing, drawing or singing.

Shopping districts throughout the nation are decorated with colorful bamboo branches. Tanabata is not a national holiday but is a tradition observed by Japanese families. Some regions celebrate this festival on July 7 in accordance with the old lunar calendar, which is Aug. 25 this year.

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BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES JAPAN

Constant gray skies and gloomy showers can only mean one thing in the so-called Land of the Rising Sun: The rainy season.

It starts to fall on Okinawa in late May followed by mainland Japan and Kyushu Island in early June. Cold northerly and warm southerly air masses collide to create 45 to 50 days of a continuous dreary weather front of clouds dropping anything from drizzle to torrential downpours.

But there's no reason to let the bad weather get you down. Look on the bright side.

The rainy season is cheerily referred to as "tsuyu," or plum rain, in Japan, as it coincides with the seasonal ripening of this luscious fruit. And with southern to central temperatures in the mid to high 70s (the high 60s farther north), Japan offers more seasonal outdoor activities than you can shake an umbrella at.

Keep in mind, for future trip planning, that Hokkaido is not affected by the rainy season and is a good option when trying to avoid the droplets and stifling humidity.

The rainy season doesn't mean long weekends with only video games or TV, as it does not actually rain every day. (For example, the average number of rainy days in June is only 12 in the Kanto Plain, according to Japan Meteorological Agency.)

Expect this season to give the surrounding areas a different look. The rain makes old temples, gardens and traditional houses seem all the more elegant. And, if you live off base, you may notice small ghost-like dolls made of cloth or tissue hanging from the eaves or on the windows of homes in your neighborhood. Often children, and even some adults, make these little "teruteru bozu," or sunshine monks, to ward off bad weather for the next day when a fieldtrip or other outdoor event is planned.

Why not make your own teruteru bozu?

Also, don't miss the opportunity to take in the beauty of seasonal foliage.

With plenty of water falling amid the early summer warmth, several pretty flowers are also in bloom this time of year. Both hydrangeas ("ajisai") and irises ("shobu") are in full bloom in mainland Japan, while irises and shell ginger ("gettou") are

Soaking in Japan's rainy season traditions

abloom on Okinawa. Flowering shell ginger heralds the rainy season on the southern islands; hydrangeas embody the season on the mainland.

The hydrangea's original colors can vary from white, pink, violet and blue, and they gradually shift to different colors. Some change from pink to purple, and others from blue to violet or fade in intensity throughout the course of the four- to six-week season.

Peak flower viewing season on Okinawa is mid-May to the end of June, while it runs from mid-June to early July on the mainland.

In Japan's central regions firefly viewing, or "hotaru gari," (literally firefly hunting) is another favorite rainy season pastime. Lightning bugs are active at riverside, ponds, bushes or rice fields in the humid evenings, right after it rains on windless nights without moonlight.

Countless slowly moving tiny lights filling the air and drifting from one leaf to another make

a spectacular sight. But don't catch them, as the endangered bug's life lasts only seven to 10 days. Like fireworks festivals in Japan, "yukata" (summer kimono) and an "uchiwa" (fan) are appropriate attire for this traditional pastime.

On Okinawa, rainy season usually begins just after the Golden Week holidays that take place around late April to the first week of May, and that means dragon boat races galore. Dragon boat races are held in fishing communities throughout Okinawa. These "hari" are also known as "kajin-sai" (unjami) or fishermen festivals; they are a way to give thanks to the sea god and pray for safe and prosperous fishing.

Many of the traditional festivals and events that go along with Japan's rainy season and upcoming summer are canceled due to COVID-19, but we can still enjoy the beauty these seasons bring to the nature that surrounds us.

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com

Have a ghost of a good day

"Teruteru bozu," literally, sunshine monks, are small traditional handmade dolls made of white paper or cloth. Hanging them on the eaves, according to local lore, wards off rain and attracts good weather. Children often make them when they want the next day to be sunny. They are a common sight in Japan on rainy days.

You can make teruteru bozu very easily. Try it and see how it works this rainy season.

Materials

2 pieces of tissue paper, and some strings

Procedure

1. Crumple one tissue paper into a ball.
2. Place crumpled tissue paper in the center of the other tissue paper.
3. Wrap the second tissue around the ball.
4. Tighten the tissue around the ball by twisting it to form the head.
5. Tie a string and hang. If you like, you can draw a face on your teruteru bozu.

If you actually want it to rain the next day, lore has it that you should hang the doll upside down.

Rainy season in 2020

Here is the forecasted rainy season by the Meteorology Agency.

Rainy season dates

Okinawa: May 11 - June 12
Sasebo: June 5 - July 19
Iwakuni: June 7 - July 21
Kanto: June 8 - July 21
Misawa: June 14 - July 28

Teruteru bozu
File photos





Miura Peninsula is a haven for cyclists

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES JAPAN

decks fit for a nice break and an amazing view.

Tatarahama Beach is one of the eight stations. A relief of black ship shows that the beach is the location where Commodore Perry and his Black Ship Fleet made a historical arrival. Here, take a selfie with the relief, the historic white beach and shining blue sea.



Kurofune monument

Get info!



The other cycle stations are Kitashitaura Beach in Yokosuka, Miyagawa Park in Miura, Arasaki Park also in Yokosuka, Shonan International Village and Cape Chojagasaki in Hayama, Kotsubo Iijima Park in Zushi and Kamakura Beach Park in Kamakura.

Miura is a great location to hop on a bike and feel the wind in your hair.
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BOOK: Nurture a love of literature

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

But don't let all of our plans fool you! These kids (ages 2-11) had more fun running around, exploring the beach, and hiding in caves than they did with the activities. And that's ok! We talked about the book during snack breaks and the kids had so much fun being with their friends. And that was the most important thing after all. We encouraged stronger friendships in our community and those friendships grew a little more through the book we shared together. Book club is a great way for kids to forge closer friendships over a shared experience of great literature. The love of literature is a gift in itself!

Even if your kids aren't home-schooled, book club can be a fun way to pass the summer months! The summer is the perfect opportunity to help your kids and their friends coordinate a book club. The work load during the school year often doesn't leave time for reading extra books. Why not challenge your kids to choose a group of friends and two books that they're interested in?! You could choose two dates and meet at different locations to discuss the books. It will also help keep your kids motivated to continue reading during the summer months.

If you would like to start a book club for your kids, here are some things to consider that will help it be successful:

- Choose two coordinators or hostesses to run the group. The work load of managing the communication and social media pages is so much easier (and so much more

fun!) when you split the work load. Sometimes all you need is one other like-minded person to help get your idea off the ground.

- Choose someone to facilitate the book discussion. The perfect time to have a book discussion is after you've let everyone reacquaint with each other. You might even find that you have a captive audience while kids are eating.
- Pick a theme for your book and make a Pinterest idea board. You can easily share the idea board on a Facebook group page and everyone can pick a snack or activity to share with the book club.
- Read the classics! I feel like there is too little time to read all of the books on my "To Be Read" list. Book club is the perfect opportunity to work on the classics with your kids.
- Aim for quarterly meetings. If you try to fit in too many books in one year it will be difficult to keep up with. But planning your books and meetings with

the four seasons makes it manageable and fun!

- Remember that everyone has their favorite style for reading books. Some fun ways to read books are: listen to a book on Audible while driving, read a book aloud at bedtime, morning circle time, or for school!
- Meet at special locations for book club. Some fun places could be at the beach, at a botanical garden, or in the forest or woods.
- Book club can also be as easy as gathering a group of kids in your home and letting them enjoy some homemade cookies while you facilitate the discussion.

If you live here in Okinawa and you'd like to join our book club we'd love to have you! You can find our group on the Wild + Free Okinawa Book Club Facebook Page and you can find Ashley and myself on Instagram. The more, the merrier!

And if you enjoy checking off lists as



much as I do, I've got a checklist full of classic books you can enjoy with your kids, by yourself, or with your book club! Print it out and hang it up to encourage reading all year long!

I hope you've been encouraged to pick up a new book or an old favorite! And I hope you'll share your reading adventures with me!

I'll leave you with some encouraging words from Gladys Hunt – "Reading enlarges my vision of the world; it helps me understand someone who is different from me. It makes me bigger on the inside. We tend to see the world from our own perspective; it is good to see it from the eyes of others. Good literature helps me understand who I am in relation to what others experience. Far from being an escape from reality, good literature is a window into reality. I read to feel life."

.....

Allie Whalen is a culinary artist and amateur photographer with a genuine love for the outdoors. She has recently begun sharing her experiences online where she talks about natural and healthy ways to take care of your body and the world around you. She is a military spouse based in Okinawa near Camp Hansen. Allie and her family are excited to make beautiful Okinawa their best move yet. There they enjoy the rugged, tranquil life on the northern parts of the island. You can find Allie's blog at alliemwhalen.com, where she details her travels, basic conservation techniques, home education, and leading a healthy lifestyle.

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Answer

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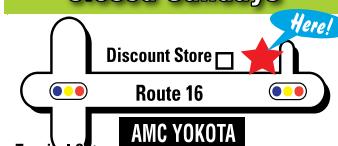


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DID YOU
KNOW?

In midsummer, many step out in yukata, or summer kimono, and gather in parks which are colorfully decorated with lanterns – to eat, drink and perform traditional dances to the beat of Japanese folk music. This type of gathering is called "Bon Odori," a traditional summer festival that is held throughout Japan.

Kanji of
the week

読
yomu/doku (Read)

Language Lesson

The food was delicious.

Sono tabemono wa oishii desu.

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

1	2							
5	4	1	3					
			7		6			
3		7	5					
		3	8			2		
7							5	
6		2		8				
2							1	
3	8	9	1					

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 Previous Sudoku:

7	2	6	9	4	1	5	3	8
1	9	8	5	6	3	4	2	7
4	5	3	8	7	2	9	6	1
5	1	4	2	9	7	6	8	3
8	6	2	3	1	4	7	5	9
9	3	7	6	5	8	2	1	4
6	7	1	4	8	5	3	9	2
2	8	9	7	3	6	1	4	5
3	4	5	1	2	9	8	7	6

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Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Parks in 1955 news
5 Playful water critter
10 Picnic staple
14 Comic strip penguin
15 Most writing
16 First-rate
17 Card balance
18 Carry out (crime)
20 Install as king
22 Set up, perhaps
23 Touch up, as text
24 Hammerhead part
25 Thanksgiving Day event
27 Milton's "____ Lost"
31 Little helper
32 Earliest stage
34 1,000 kilograms
35 Bit of slander
37 That group's
39 Close in on
40 Behind bars
42 Steer clear of
44 Caesar's seven
45 Not fit to eat
47 Full of testosterone
49 Planetary path
50 Plague
51 Egg entree
54 Closet repellent
57 Bag of tricks
59 Do as directed
60 One of the Waltons
61 Key word
62 Norwegian king
63 Broken-off branch
64 Has to have
65 Camping shelter

- 3 Deceptive action
4 Bronchial disorder
5 Frazier, to Ali
6 Pollster's find
7 Damaged, as a ligament
8 Psychic ability
9 Pot, in the past
10 Costner's "Bull Durham" co-star
11 Fertile soil
12 Penny ____
13 Hoe target
19 Grab the tab
21 Start over
24 Place for a pergola
25 "GoodFellas" Oscar winner
26 Detective Pinkerton
27 Grievance
28 Sure to happen
29 Kind of mail
30 Chill-inducing
33 Must, in legalese
36 Reminiscent

- 38 WWII's Rosie and others
41 Greg Louganis, e.g.
43 Cable competitor
46 Securing strip
48 PC start-over
50 Filled with ennui
51 Loads from lodes

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- 52 Nothing other than
53 Like some proportions
54 Parasitic insect
55 Emulate Pisa's tower
56 Uber rival
58 "Take ____"

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

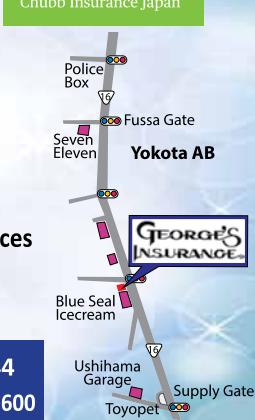
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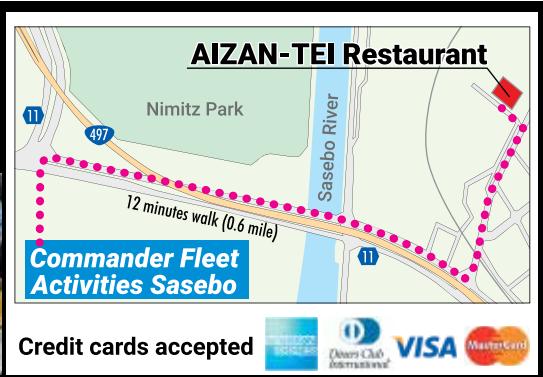


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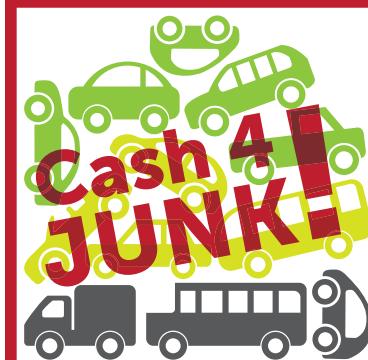
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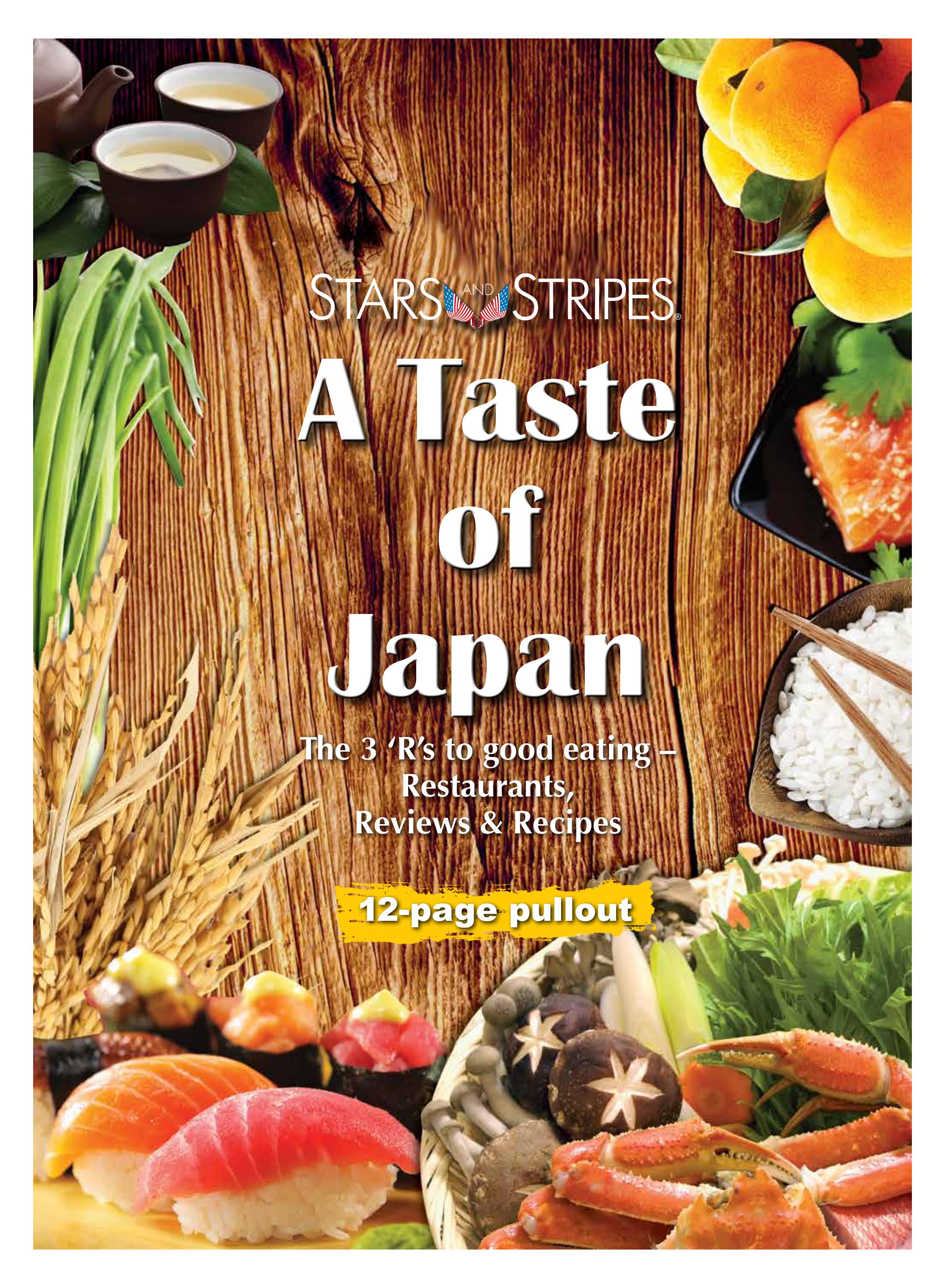
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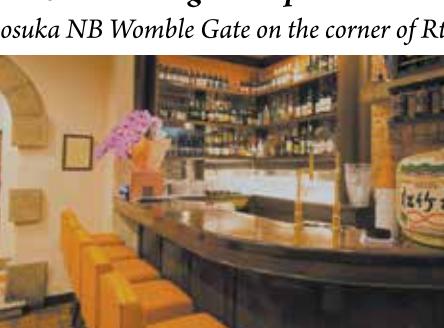
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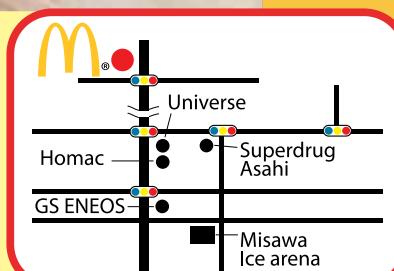
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10 Japanese food movies, anime to marathon while you #stayathome



BYFOOD

We are living in strange times at the moment, and we are all doing our part to flatten the curve and slow the coronavirus crisis by practicing social distancing and staying at home. With all of the unexpected free time we have right now, why not take this opportunity to catch up on some of Japan's motion pictures on your laptop or TV? While

you #stayathome, tune into Japan's greatest hits: these Japanese food movies and anime.

As food culture is huge in Japan, it's no surprise that there are countless Japanese films and anime that revolve around the topic of food. Delve into Japanese culinary culture by watching these top-rated Japanese food movies and anime, all while you stay home, snuggled up under your blanket.



1. Tampopo

Nothing is more central to Japanese food culture than ramen. *Tampopo* is a Japanese classic that involves a huge cast of wacky characters, each with their own food-related storyline.

In the beginning, the film follows two truck drivers, Goro and Gun, who seek solace in a humble, local ramen shop during a heavy downpour. The owner of the store, Tampopo, is a troubled widow who's striving to create the perfect ramen recipe, and naturally Goro and Gun decide to lend a helping hand on her quest. A mix of comedic and heartfelt moments, *Tampopo* is definitely one to watch, even better if you do so while slurping a bowl of ramen.



3. Sweet bean

Sweet Bean is a movie with the Japanese pancake dorayaki at the forefront. This treat is made of a generous amount of sweetened azuki bean paste sandwiched in the middle of two pancakes.

Watch this moving Japanese film, which follows the friendship of a dorayaki store owner and a 76-year old woman with a secret sweet red bean recipe. As she teaches her the techniques of dorayaki making, *Sweet Bean* sheds light onto the important morals involved in Japanese culinary culture, including patience, perseverance, and dedication. Not only does this movie teach you the meticulous yet satisfying process of making dorayaki, but the relationship between the two main characters also pulls on your heartstrings.



4. Akanezora: Beyond the crimson sky

This Japanese movie is set in the mid 1700s in Edo, which is now known as Tokyo. *Akanezora: Beyond the Crimson Sky* is based on an award-winning novel by the famous Ichiriki Yamamoto, and it follows the journey of a young tofu maker, Eikichi, who travels across the country, seeking to set down roots for his very own tofu-making business.

As Eikichi learns his tofu craft from a famous master in Kyoto, he realizes that his tofu doesn't suit the taste buds of the locals in the Edo region. *Akanezora: Beyond the Crimson Sky*, not only brings forth the fact that similar dishes can have significantly different variations around the country, but also educates about the place of tofu in Japanese cuisine and the beauty of its creation process.



2. Jiro dreams of sushi

Jiro Dreams of Sushi is a documentary about the life of Jiro Ono, the legendary sushi master behind the Michelin-starred restaurant, Sukiyabashi Jiro. The supporting roles are Jiro's sons who are both sushi chefs, following in their father's footsteps. Watch the compelling story of Jiro Ono, a man who has dedicated his life to the pursuit of perfect sushi, and his sons who have inherited both his legacy and the pressures that come with it.

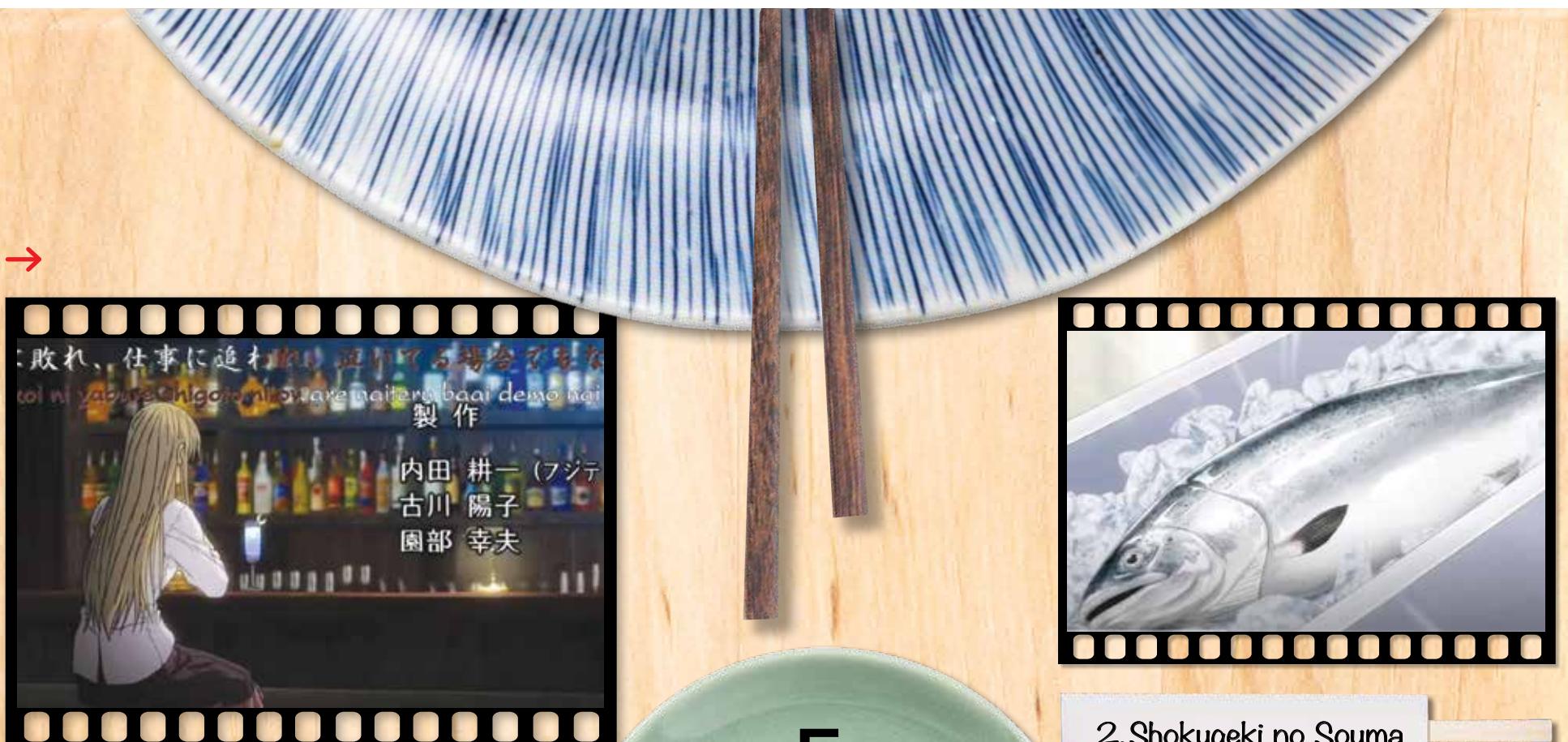


5. Papa's lunchbox is the best in the world

There's nothing like a packed lunch from a mother. *Papa's Lunchbox* is the Best in the World offers a twist on the traditional family dynamic. Instead of having the matriarch of the family preparing the lunchbox, or bento in Japanese, this movie follows the journey of a father, as he visibly struggles to prepare bentos for his high school daughter.

Papa's Lunchbox is the Best in the World offers an insight to the importance of the bento. Traditionally, a bento always contains rice and one main dish with several other side dishes, all presented appealingly. While many may feel like it's just an ordinary lunch meal, Japan takes it to a whole new level. By the end of the movie, you'll learn that the Japanese bento is not just about the food, but the love, connection, and dedication put into it by family.





1. Bartender

While this anime series, Bartender, doesn't focus on food, it pays tribute to the exquisite drinks one can get at an upscale bar and shows the art of concocting elaborate cocktails. This isn't the entire premise of the show, however. The customers come in with a set of problems of their own, and the bartender aims to help them with soothing, flavorful drinks.

Craving the kind of connection you used to have at your local bar? Join the Online Happy Hour in Japan for a virtual cocktail class and a chat with a food tourism professional in Tokyo.

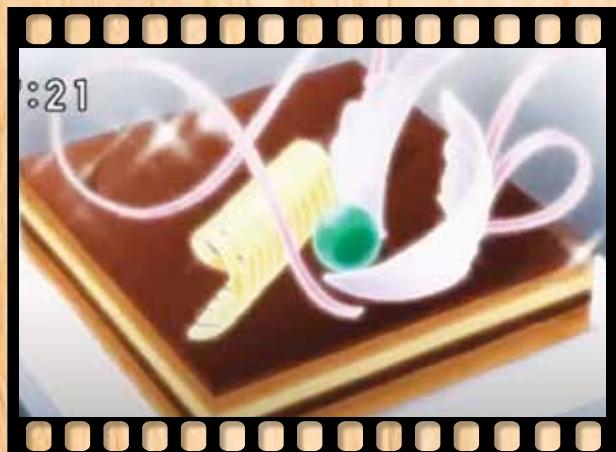
5 Japanese food anime to marathon

After you've run out of Japanese food movies, you might be wondering if there are other things to do at home. Continue your binge-watching session with these Japanese food anime.

2. Shokugeki no Souma

The first Japanese food anime on your list should definitely be Shokugeki no Souma. This anime is arguably one of the most popular cooking anime series ever, and it follows a teenage boy's journey on his quest to become the best chef in his culinary academy.

Every episode definitely features the culinary academy, which is known for food wars where students partake in cooking challenges to showcase their skills. The elaborate acts and unbelievably real-looking dishes will get you into the competitive spirit of Shokugeki no Souma.



3. Yumeiro Patissiere

Another Japanese food anime to have on your list is Yumeiro Patissiere. It's no secret that the Japanese are head over heels for pastries, and this anime just emphasizes the significance of baked goods in the Japanese life.

While the anime series targets the younger, female audience with the dash of romance, it's suitable for everyone to watch, following the competitive cooking and mouth-watering baked goods featured in the anime. Best believe that you'll be craving a pastry after every episode of Yumeiro Patissiere.



4. Toriko

Named after the main character of the anime, Toriko follows the adventures of a food investigator who aims to find the most unique ingredients in the world. His trusted partner, Komatsu, joins in on the journey. While it may sound like a peaceful experience at first, expect more than a few fighting scenes in every episode.

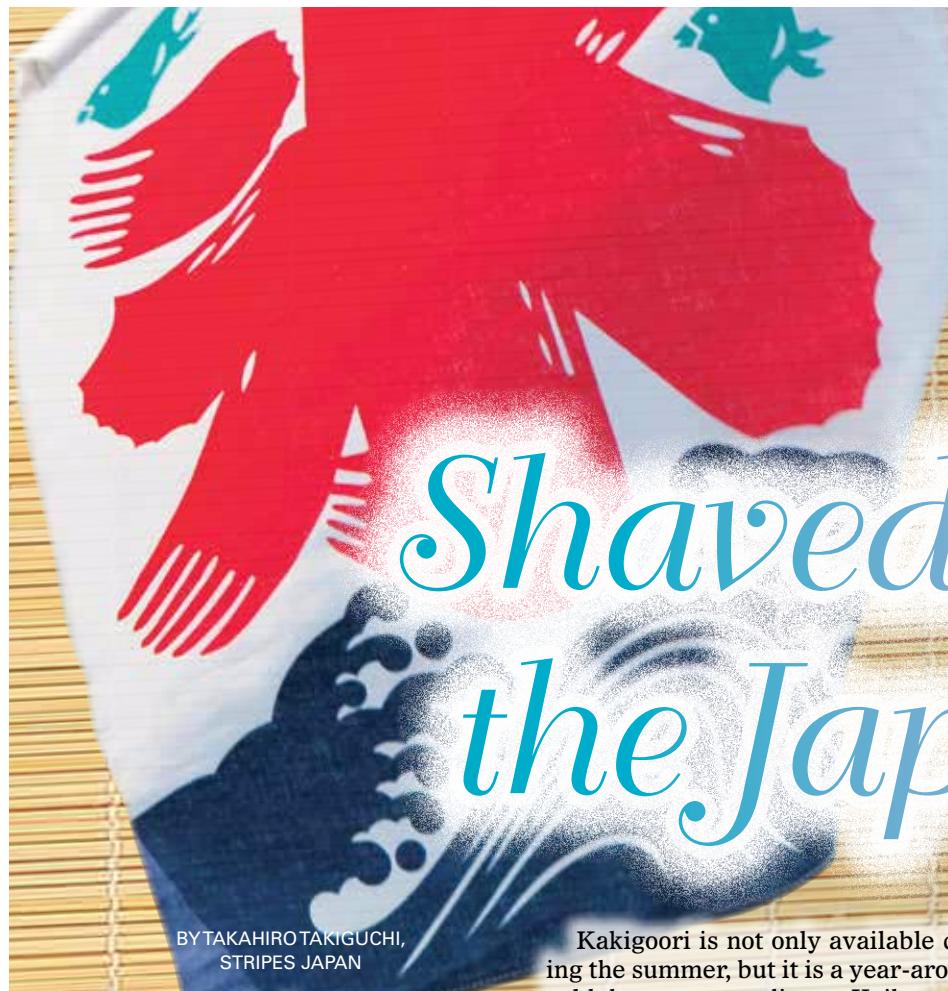
The duo faces obstacles like monsters that they have to fight if they would like to use them in the dishes they're creating, ultimately piecing together servings of their dream Lifetime Full Course Menu.



5. Ben-to

Have a breather from the standard cooking anime and get started on Ben-to, which is mainly about people fighting over the best food offered that day. To be more specific, these people fight for the traditional Japanese lunch boxes. From this anime alone, you'll understand that the Japanese don't kid around when it comes to their bento.

With this list of Japanese food movies and anime alone, you can dive into the culinary culture of Japan, without even hopping on a plane! From the history of ramen and sushi to the significance of lunch boxes, it just goes to show that cultural immersion can still be achieved even when you stay at home.



Shaved ice cools down the Japanese summer

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES JAPAN

Summer in Japan gets scorching and steamy. Mid-summer temperatures often reach 95 F or higher depending on the region. Along with beer, watermelon and soomen (cold udon noodle), kakigoori (shaved ice) is a popular cold food that cools us down during summer.

For many Japanese, the memories of a banner with the red kanji letter of koori (ice) in white and a blue background are fond ones. These banners are seen outside shops offering kakigoori and often meant a sweet, snow-like treat to help us cool down as kids.

Besides at local sweets stores, kakigoori can be found at matsuri and bon odori festivals or fireworks events, along with other festive foods.

"Kakigoori is one of the most popular traditional cold sweets throughout history," says Ryusuke Koike, managing director of Japan Kakigoori Association. "This cold food goes back to more than 1,000 years and has been enjoyed as festive food for special occasions."

Kakigoori is not only available during the summer, but it is a year-around cold dessert, according to Koike.

"Since a lot of kakigoori joints make their syrups and sauces using fruits in season, they offer different types of throughout the year," Koike said.

In fact, there are countless types of syrups and sauces. While many places offer the standard strawberry, cherry, lemon, green tea, melon and colorless syrup, others offer unique syrups made from vegetables, sake, wine, or even vinegar, miso or soy sauce.

Japanese kakigoori may remind many of a snow cone, but there are few significant differences between the two iced sweets."

"Japanese kakigoori has a really fine, smooth fluffy ice consistency, just like fresh fallen snow," Koike said. "While Americans make snow cones with extreme hard ice, we would never do that to keep it soft and fluffy."

Besides the difference of ice, snow cones usually come with artificial flavors, while kakigoori uses more natural syrups and ingredients, such as sweet beans, matcha and brown sugar.

But, despite a key difference in the flavoring, the main part of kakigoori is actually the ice,

according to Koike.

"Most of kakigoori joints pay more attention on the quality of ice, rather than varieties of syrups, since quality and condition of ice determines the taste of kakigoori," Koike said.

For Japanese kakigoori, extreme cold ice is not good. For a fluffy snow-like soft texture, the ice temperature needs to be kept around 14 F.

"Since ice in freezer is usually around - 4 F, we need to take out the ice and warm it up before we shave it," Koike said.

Clean and transparent ice is ideal, as it can make smooth, fluffy kakigoori. Water that takes a long time to freeze can make clean ice.

"Natural ice is considered the best," Koike said.

Why not make kakigoori yourself?

You can make a transparent ice yourself. Wrap an ice tray with a towel before putting it into a freezer. This will make the ice take longer to freeze which should ensure the ice is transparent, according to Koike.

Then, you can shave it by using a hand-spinning ice shaver, which can be found at various stores for around \$30-40.

The hand-cranked ice shaver is a popular kitchen item in Japan. It is fun making kakigoori by spinning a block of ice over a blade by turning the lever by hands. Syrups for kakigoori are available at most of supermarkets or grocery stores.

According to Japan Kakigoori Association, there are some tips to making tasty kakigoori at home: Use mineral water instead of tap water when you make ice. Serve it in a glass bowl to make the colors stand out, and be sure not to put on too many toppings as it can spoil the fluffy texture.

Now that you know, get out and enjoy the hot Japan summer with some cool kakigoori!

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Did you know?

Kakigoori is a popular cold treat in ball parks. Yokohama Stadium offers Mikan Goori (ice orange) while Jingu Stadium (Tokyo) offers Pine Goori (pineapple ice) during ball games. Koshien Stadium (near Osaka) offers simple "Kachiwari" (literally shaved ice).

Make your own

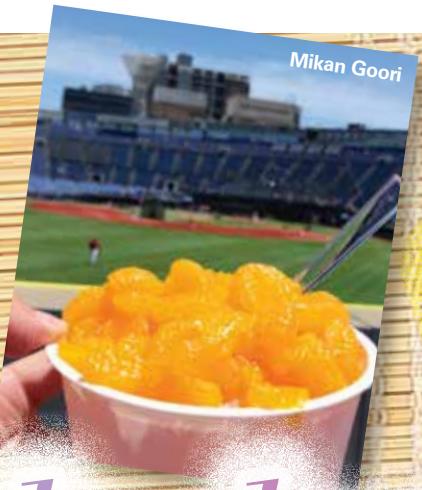
BY SHOJI KUDAKA,
STRIPES JAPAN

It doesn't get much better than eating shaved ice during the summer. But making the cold dessert at home offers a different sense of joy.

Kakigoori-ki (shave ice machine) is a common item for families with children in this country. Just like many flavors are introduced at shopping centers every year, shaved iced machines are also evolving with great variety. But there is a trend commonly known as "nostalgia."

"Kyoro-chan" is a shaved ice machine that looks like a cubby bear doll.

Originally released in 1976, this cute



Did you know?

In Japan, kakigori has been enjoyed for more than 1000 years. Makuranososhi, an essay by Seisho Nagon, has a description of people enjoying kakigori in the 11th century.

Kakigoori parlors near you

During summer months, you can find sweets joints and cafes serving kakigori virtually everywhere in Japan. The followings are some of the most popular and highly rated joints in the region. Visit one or more and enjoy the traditional treats.



Le Souverain (near Misawa)

Enjoy high-end kakigori at a reasonable price. Their popular "Ichigoori Soft" is made from shaved ice of frozen strawberry and fluffy ice cream for 680 yen.

Location: 4-18-13 Ruike, Hachinohe City, Aomori Pref.

Hours: 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

URL: le-souverain.com/



Wataboshi (near Zama and Atsugi)

Offers tasty kakigori made from natural ice from Mt. Yatsugatake. Among various options, Tiramisu for 850 yen is the most popular and must-sample.

Location: 1-24-12 Higashi-Kasugaya, Ebina City, Kanagawa Pref.

Hours: Tue-Sun, 11:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.

URL(Twitter): <https://twitter.com/wataboushi725>



Hinode-en (near Yokosuka and Zama)

The popular tea shop in Hayama Town offers kakigori in various tea flavors. Among more than 10 options, matcha or toasted tea Kakigori for 550 yen are popular.

Location: 1413-212 Nagae, Hayama-cho, Kanagawa Pref. (30-min. walk from Yokosuka Naval Base)

Hours: 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Facebook: [hayamahinodeen/](https://www.facebook.com/hayamahinodeen/)



MELANGE De SHUHARI (near Iwakuni)

They make quality ice for kakigori using pure water. Tiramisu, made from coffee syrup and mascarpone cheese sauce, is one of the most popular kakigori.

Location: 9-19 [3F] Hondoori, Naka-ku, Hiroshima City, Hiroshima Pref. (5-min. walk from Hondoori Station of Hiroden Line)

Hours: 11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

URL: tabelog.com/hiroshima/A3401/A340101/34019486/



Takabo (Sasebo)

This popular café in Sasebo offers two kakigori dishes - "ujikintoki" and "strawberry frappe (with milk)" during summer.

Location: 3-15 Sakaemachi, Sasebo City, Nagasaki Pref. (4-min. walk from JR Sasebo Chuo Station)

Hours: Mon. - Sat., 8:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

URL: retty.me/area/PRE42/ARE236/SUB23601/100001181909/



Popular versions of shaved Ice

- SHIROKUMA:** originated in Kagoshima Pref.: Shaved ice with condensed milk, small colorful mochi, fruits, and sweet bean paste, along with orange, cherry, pineapple, and raisins on top.
- YUKIUSAGI:** originated in Komazawa, Tokyo: Shaved ice with sake and sugar syrup, served on New Year's Day.
- UJKINTOKI:** originated in Okayama Pref.: Shaved ice made up of matcha syrup and sugar, along with sweet beans.
- SUDAMARI KOORI:** originated in Yamagata Pref.: Shaved ice with vinegar, soy-sauce and strawberry syrup.

- AKAFUKU GOORI:** originated in Mie Pref.: Shaved ice with sweet bean paste, rice cake, and matcha syrup on top.
- ZENZAI:** originated on Okinawa: Popular kakigori dessert on the island. Sprinkle shaved ice on sweet beans.
- COBALT ICE:** originated in Kumamoto Pref.: Shaved ice with bright blue syrup made from honey and condensed milk.



1926~



1976



2000~



(electric-powered machine for totally fluffy shaved ice) goes further back in time to dig up people's memory of shaved ice.

It is said that Kakigori-ki became commonly available in the Showa era (1926 – 1989). This machine has wheels and a logo that can remind Japanese of when they ate shaved ice at stores in their neighborhood back in the day.

Thanks to an updated system, this retro-looking machine can shave ice to fluffy flakes, something only stores could provide back then.

These shaved ice machines are closely associated with people's happy memories of having the cold sweets as a child. The sense of fun and nostalgia is so strong that you could feel it even if you didn't live in Japan in those days.

machine became a hit back then. When the handle on the top is turned, the cubby's eyes move left and right. The name Kyoro-chan refers to this gimmick, which was very appealing to kids.

Although it was discontinued for a while, Kyoro-chan was brought back in 2016 with the same design.

"Ice Robo III Hatsuyuki" is another popular

shaved ice machine with a retro look. At first glance, the yellow, red and green machine almost looks like a character out of an old Nintendo game. But, on the inside, this machine has an advanced system that can automatically make shaved ice, even allowing to adjust sizes.

"Dendo Honkaku Fuwafuwa Kakigori-Ki"



Bring restaurant-quality Italian to you with easy pasta Pomodoro recipe

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,
STRIPES JAPAN

If cooking isn't your forte, but a nice meal is something you want to try to master, try pasta pomodoro! With a variety of tomato sauces available in your local commissary or grocery store, this dish is easy to cook and a tough one to mess up.

One afternoon, after another Work-from-Home day, I threw on my apron and tried to recreate a familiar recipe from my days as a server at an Italian restaurant about

20 years ago. Although I've cooked it at home from time to time since then, the results have always been pretty consistent.

There are no secrets to the recipe

below, but I would like to share one tip: fry garlic at the beginning just until it's turned golden brown. Don't overcook because burned garlic will ruin the taste of the sauce. Like people say: the first step is always the hardest.

Give it a try but also make it your own as it goes well with many different toppings and ingredients. Other popular variations include bacon, tuna, and sausage. I love simple and spicy pasta, so I added eggplant, tomatoes, and red chili.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com

VIEW VIDEO!



INGREDIENTS

- 7 garlic cloves
- Water [roughly 70% of a pot, enough to let pasta soak in]
- 120 grams of store-bought pasta [I used "Ma Ma Spaghetti" a Japanese brand with a thickness of 1.4 millimeters]
- Two tomatoes
- Two eggplants
- A few sprigs of parsley (for topping)
- 180~200 grams of tomato sauce [I used Prego Italian Sauce]
- Two red chilies plus a morsel of sliced red chilies (add as needed)

RECIPE (FOR ONE PERSON)

Before you start cooking, prepare ingredients by chopping garlic cloves into small pieces, dicing tomatoes into medium-sized chunks and dicing eggplants. Also, chop some parsley.



Eggplants



Garlic



Tomatoes



Parsley

3. While pasta is boiling, fry garlic and red chili with olive oil in a frying pan just until the garlic is golden brown.



4. Add sliced tomatoes and eggplants into the pan and fry for a minute or so until the vegetables are tender.



5. Next, add the tomato sauce and fry for another minute or so, then remove from heat. Wait until the pasta is cooked to the softness desired by the cook.



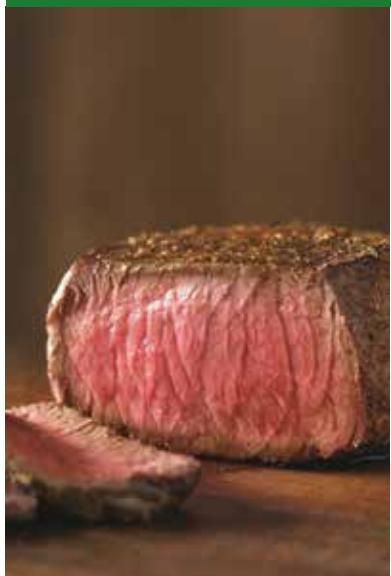
6. Once the pasta is ready, strain the water and incorporate the pasta into the pan with the tomato sauce. Fry over high or medium-high heat for another minute or so.

7. Plate your pasta and top with chopped parsley.



8. Enjoy!





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RESTAURANT INFO



One fine pickle!

Tsukemono an excellent quarantine cooking project

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SARAH B. HODGE,
STIRPES JAPAN

One of the great joys of living in Japan is experiencing the wide range of traditional Japanese pickles, or tsukemono, that are served with every meal. There are hundreds of varieties of tsukemono, but the major preservation techniques are salting, brining in vinegar, pickling in rice bran and fermenting in miso or sake lees.

Did you know you can also make your own Japanese pickles quickly and easily at home?

An excellent guide on the subject is my friend Nancy Singleton Hachisu's "Preserving the Japanese Way," (<https://amzn.to/2XYiyVr>) which features both traditional and modern interpretations of tsukemono with detailed how-tos and recipes. Elizabeth Andoh also gives an intensive two-day tsukemono workshop at her Taste of Culture program in Tokyo every summer, which I highly recommend (<https://tasteofculture.com/programs/>).

In November 2019, I had the honor of hosting Dutch tsukemono and fermentation expert Peter van Berckel (<https://petervanberckel.nl/>) on day trips to Mt. Takao and Fujinomiya, where we discussed Japanese foodways and his recent tsukemono cookbook. Fermentation is in Peter's genes; his ancestors were gin distillers and brewers since the 1700s. He has been involved with health food for 30 years, including making sourdough bread, kombucha, kvass, kefir and tempeh as well as incorporating Japanese macrobiotic products like miso, shoyu and tamari, natto, mirin, umeboshi and pickles.

"It really appealed to me that you can easily support your health with a very quick and accessible method, which at the same time gives a very tasty and crunchy result," Peter explains. "The workshop in turn gave rise to writing my book. I visited Japan and my knowledge was confirmed in everyday life. Fermentation is an adventurous and culinary exploration and I continue to see the positive effects on my health, digestion and vitality."

To make pickles at home, the type of pickle will determine the tools required. The most basic is salt-masaged pickles that can be made in a Ziploc bag; these are ready anywhere between 90 minutes and a couple

of hours. Nuka (rice bran) pickles also have a fairly quick fermenting time, but nuka pots require TLC. Much like a sourdough starter, Nuka's living single-cell organisms (mainly lactobacilli and yeast) require regular stirring and feeding. Japanese housewives add eggshells, scraps and peels, fish bones, and even beer to flavor and feed the nuka; adding togarashi chili or sansho pepper berries can help prevent spoiling.

For those new to pickling, I recommend starting with a salted pickle. Cabbage, daikon, and carrots are all delicious with this technique. And the Picklestone pickle press is the perfect tool to experiment with pickling at home!

Picklestone designer Tomonori Tanaka wanted to address food waste by reusing veggie scraps and found commercial plastic pickle presses lacking, so he decided to engineer and crowdfund his own. Made from durable glass, fragrant hinoki (cypress) and aji stone from Kagawa and Inai stone from Ishinomaki, the press (available in three different sizes) is both functional and beautiful.

To use, wash your vegetables (or scraps) and chop into bite-size pieces, sprinkle with salt (between 1 – 3% the weight of your veggies), add to the Picklestone, and put the weight and lid on. Leave on the counter at least half a day to ferment (this accelerates the growth of good bacteria), then place in the refrigerator. The next day, pour off the liquid and enjoy! You can also make pickles using vinegar or soy sauce. The Picklestone comes with

several suggested recipes in English including shibazuke, pickled ginger, soy sauce pickled cabbage and Fukujinzuke, a mix of seven different veggies in tribute to the Seven Lucky Gods.

My absolute favorite tsukemono are the squeaky, crunchy, magenta shibazuke. Originally a specialty of Kyoto, shibazuke can now be found in supermarkets across Japan, but making your own is a fun and delicious quarantine kitchen project! The brilliant red-purple color comes from salted red shiso leaves, a specialty of Ohara near Kyoto. Red shiso leaves are commonly available in Japanese grocery stores during the summer, but if you can't find them in your area, you can use red plum vinegar instead, which is the byproduct from making pickled plums. It will still give your pickles a lighter pink color, but not as pronounced.



SHIBAZUKE PICKLES

RECIPE: www.justonecookbook.com/shibazuke-pickles

PREP TIME: 20 mins Total Time 2 hrs 20 mins

Shibazuke is a popular pickle originated in Kyoto. These salty and slightly sour pickles have beautiful natural purple color from purple shiso leaves. Enjoy these pickles with steamed rice or Ochazuke.

SERVINGS: 2 cups

INGREDIENTS

- 3 Japanese/Chinese eggplant (400 g)
- 2 Persian/Japanese cucumbers (170 g)
- 3 Myoga ginger (54 g)
- 1-inch knob of ginger (22 g)
- kosher/sea salt (use half for table salt) (2% of total vegetables)

Pickling

- 20 Shiso leaves (Ooba)
- 4Tbsp ume plum vinegar
- 1 Tbsp mirin

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Gather all the ingredients. Wash the vegetables and weigh them. Use salt equivalent to 2% of vegetables' total weight.
2. Cut eggplants in half lengthwise and slice diagonally.
3. Soak the eggplants in water to prevent from changing color.
4. Cut the ends of cucumbers and cut again in half lengthwise.
5. Remove the seeds with a teaspoon and slice diagonally.
6. Cut myoga in half lengthwise and julienne.
7. Peel the skin and julienne the ginger.
8. Combine all the vegetables in a freezer bag and sprinkle the salt.
9. Mix all together and knead the vegetables. (If using Picklestone press, add them to the press in this step.) Press the vegetables with 2x weight of vegetables (roughly 1 kg). Leave at room temperature for half day.
10. Drain the vegetables into the strainer. Squeeze the liquid out from the vegetables and transfer back to the bag.
11. Cut the shiso leaves into julienes.
12. Add shiso leaves, ume plum vinegar, and mirin in the bag.
13. Mix and knead the vegetables.
14. Remove the air out of the bag and press with heavy object. Keep in the refrigerator for 2-3 days and you can start eating it. Transfer to an airtight container or mason jar and consume in 2 weeks.

RECIPE NOTES

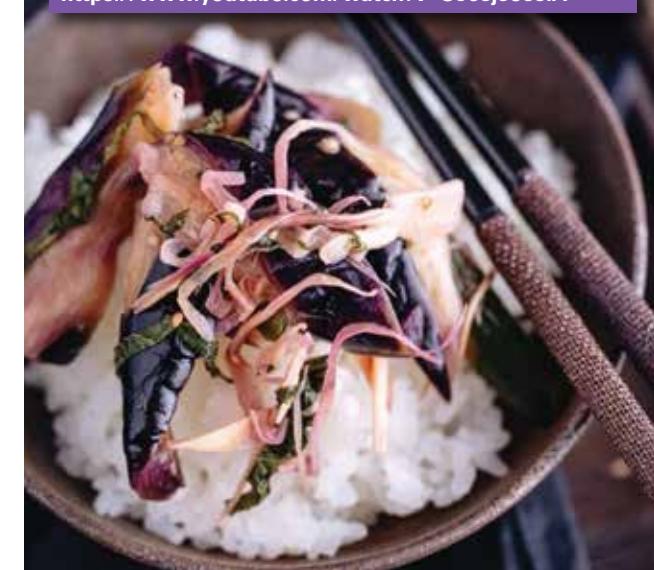
Use Red Purple Shiso Leaves instead of Green Shiso Leaves: Prepare 30 red purple shiso leaves and salt (2% of shiso weight). Divide the salt into 3 portions. Combine the shiso and 1/3 of salt and knead well. Squeeze water out and continue 2 more times. Then add 2Tbsp mirin and 2 Tbsp rice vinegar. Then transfer that to a bowl with tightly squeezed vegetables.

– Recipe by Namiko Chen, Just One Cookbook

You can order Picklestone through the official shop at <https://picklestone.theshop.jp>. Tanaka just launched a successful Kickstarter campaign to increase the scale of production, and you can read more about the Picklestone product here: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/231577951>.

VIDEO: How to use the Picklestone:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJ68j8o88iA>



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