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## INSIDE INFO



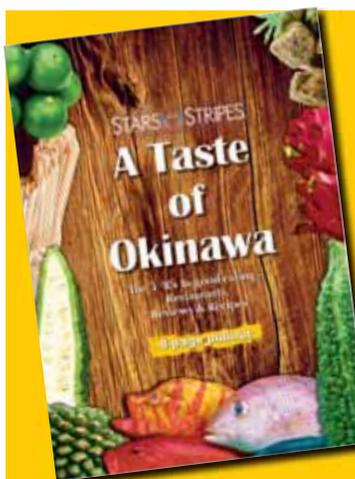
**OVER-WRAPPED!**  
 HOW TO LIMIT PLASTIC  
 WASTE WHILE IN JAPAN  
 PAGES 4-5



**15 JAPANESE PORK  
 DISHES YOU'VE  
 NEVER HEARD OF!**  
 PAGE 8-9



**BRING OKINAWA  
 TO YOU WITH TASTY  
 TREAT AT HOME**  
 PAGES 10



**Special 4-page  
 pullout inside!**

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## Women's equality resonates with ground-breaking officer

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. RAQUEL BIRK,  
 U.S. ARMY

KADENA AIR BASE – 2nd Lt. Anmol Narang, Roswell, Georgia native and air defense officer with 1st Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery Regiment, was awarded the Federally Employed Women's Meritorious Service Award during the annual FEW virtual leadership conference Aug. 10.

FEW's Military Meritorious Service Awards recognize outstanding military service members within the Armed Forces who have distinguished themselves with significant contributions to their service and the U.S.

"2nd Lt. Narang constantly engaged with her subordinates and

mentored female Soldiers in Delta Battery," said Capt. Daniel Emig, Delta Battery, 1-1 ADA commander. "The future of the battery and the [1-1 ADA] battalion are bright with phenomenal young leaders like 2nd Lt. Narang. She was nominated for the FEW's Military Meritorious Service Award by one of her mentors, Lt. Col. Rosanna Clemente, former commander of 1-1 ADA, because of her outstanding leadership in Delta."

Narang made history in 2020 by becoming the first observant Sikh to graduate from United States Military Academy at West Point.

"I was hopeful that my efforts to represent my religion

**SEE EQUALITY ON PAGE 2**



# Mesmerizing mangroves

**Pages 6-7**

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# EQUALITY: Family, sacrifice key to success

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

and community will encourage Americans to learn more about Sikhism,” said Narang. “The hardest change for me, especially in regard to my religion, was being displaced from my family and anyone else who practiced Sikhism but the academy, and now my unit, are very good ambassadors of diversity.”

Family and sacrifice were pivotal in Narang’s decision to serve.

“My grandfather was in the Indian Army in the 1960s and 70s,” said Narang. “He embedded a culture of service and giving back to your country.”

A visit to Pearl Harbor National Memorial in Hawai’i during Narang’s junior year of high school solidified the desire to follow her grandfather’s example.

“Seeing the sacrifice those service members made and the results of that sacrifice was really impactful,” Narang said.

Her decision to select the Air Defense Branch upon graduation from U.S. Military Academy West Point was based on the concept of deterrence.

“Air defense units play a

Brig. Gen. JB Vowell presents 2nd Lt. Anmol Narang with a USARJ coin of excellence.  
Photo by 2nd Lt. Jeronne Carter, U.S. Army



pivotal role in ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific region and help ensure that events like the bombing of Pearl Harbor doesn’t happen again,” said Narang. “I’m honored to serve with my teammates and share such an important mission in the Pacific.”

Narang serves as the fire control platoon leader for Delta Battery, 1-1 ADA,

consisting of a diverse group of soldiers that operate U.S. Patriot Advanced Capability (PAC-3) systems.

“Diversity is important to our organization,” said Emig. “The Army is making strides to ensure that we get the right mix of talent that will represent the nation we are sworn to defend.”

Narang was honored to

receive the FEW Meritorious Service Award and strives to inspire others.

“I want my soldiers and future soldiers to know that gender and religion do not hinder a person’s ability to be successful,” said Narang. “That’s the great thing about the United States military: it brings together people from all corners of the world.”



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Courtesy photo of U.S. Marine Corps



# Okinawa Marines bring big ideas to Pacific

BY MATTHEW M. BURKE,  
STARS AND STRIPES  
September 24, 2021

CAMP COURTNEY – Marine Maj. Jenkyn Kittrell’s experience providing water to thousands of Filipinos in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013 yielded innovation from necessity.

“One of the vital things we tried to get in there was water,” the 32-year-old from Baltimore recently told Stars and Stripes at Camp Courtney. “We had a lot of water purification and a lot of bulk water sites but then we couldn’t really distribute that to the populace.”

Kittrell’s simple, cost-effective way to solve that problem earned him the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal from Lt. Gen. Stacy Clardy, commander of III Marine Expeditionary Force. His invention is also being developed for use by the force.

Kittrell’s was one of several proposals highlighted Sept. 15 at an award ceremony for III MEF’s second annual Big Ideas Challenge. Winners, this year, focused on solving problems in humanitarian and expeditionary advanced base operations, a new warfare concept in the Indo-Pacific region.

The challenge is open to U.S. military affiliates in Japan and this year accepted 94 submissions between April 28 and June 6, III MEF spokesman 1st Lt. Kazuma Engelkemier said Tuesday. Clardy presented awards to 11 finalists, including a civilian, at the ceremony at III MEF headquarters aboard Camp Courtney.

The Marines select dozens of innovations each year to further develop, Lt. Col. Matthew Neely, the force logistics innovation officer, said Tuesday at Courtney. He said some are sent to higher headquarters and some are developed within III MEF on Okinawa, depending on cost and scale.

Kittrell, at the time a III MEF operations officer, supervised deploying Marines on a relief mission to the Philippines in Haiyan’s

wake.

His Marines kept reporting bottlenecks at distribution sites, where thousands of people lined up for water at five or 10 access points. Debris prevented trucks from moving water around.

The problem stayed with Kittrell, and in 2020 he built his own solution at Camp Hansen using two-by-fours, PVC pipe and garden hoses.

“We took this A-frame and we essentially put this PVC pipe on top of it with 10 garden hoses hanging down,” he said. The field-expedient water distribution system was born.

The system plugs into an already established, recirculating bulk water site, Kittrell said. Hoses are laid around the city and the system is positioned at intervals.

“That allows people to walk up and go directly underneath the garden hose, turn it on and fill up their water bottle,” he said. “If I have a hose that runs a quarter of a mile, I can set these up continuously all the way down there, and now, at one go, you can have 1,000 people come up and get water.”

The idea may have withered on the vine if not for the Big Ideas Challenge, Neely said.

He said the challenge allows Marines like Kittrell to put good ideas in front of a three-star general, who can act quickly.

“It’s a great way to just pitch the idea and see if it even makes sense, if it’s feasible, if it is a good idea,” Kittrell said.

Other proposals this year included a cloud-based supply program and fuel trucks built for the Pacific that fit aboard the Corps’ C-130 fleet, Neely said.

Big Ideas taps the wisdom and experience of all Marines, Kittrell said.

“You can have Marines at all levels find solutions that are really practical and sometimes really simple,” he said. “And you just wonder to yourself, ‘Why have we never done this?’”

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## SHELL MOUND AGE: CORAL SEA, DUGONG, AND HUMAN IN OKINAWA.

Okinawa has 354 discovered shell mounds within the prefecture, with the oldest dating back 7,000 years as people maintained the foraging lifestyle for 9,000 years until farming in Okinawa started in the 11th century. The finds include bones of animals people ate, like sea creatures and wild boar, telling us about their past lives. The exhibition presents excavated items and research results describing the relationship between the sea and people in ancient Okinawa.

**Part 1**  
**Mysteries of shell mounds**  
A shell mound as an archive of human history.

A model of the Kaguchiyanu shell mound. (Uruma City)

**Part 2**  
**Human history with Umisachi (seafood)**  
Dugong was used for food and impacted greatly the ancient people's spiritual culture.

A product made of dugong ribs. (Murokawa shell mound, Okinawa city)

**Part 3**  
**Excavation of shell mounds**  
Ogido (Kitanakagusuku) and Iha shell mounds (Uruma) were excavated about 100 years ago.

A snapshot of the excavation of Gushihara shell mound (Iha village, 1963)

**Part 4**  
**Maritime cultural history**  
An analysis of a shell mound tells about the ancient climate, environment, distribution of goods, and changing of diets.

A face reconstructed from a skull. (Y. K. Shiga)

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\* Schedule and exhibition method are subject to change to prevent new Corona infections.  
\* Related events such as cultural lectures will be held during the exhibition period. Please check the official website on how to participate.

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# Over-wrapped!

## How to limit plastic waste while in Japan

BY LUCIO MAURIZI,  
LIVE JAPAN

**F**or newcomers to Japan, one of the biggest surprises may be the sheer amount of unnecessary packaging – particularly with plastics. While some Japanese retailers have recently taken proactive steps to encourage consumers to use eco-friendly reusable bags, these approaches have not yet been more widely adopted or imposed by the government.

However, as the Tokyo 2020 Olympics approach, eco-conscious

discussions have to some extent been reignited, with Environment Minister Yoshiaki Harada saying at a press conference in June 2019 that his ministry plans to introduce legislation curtailing the use of single-use plastic bags that are currently offered for free. Despite this positive step, Japan continues to be one of the largest producers of plastic waste per capita in the world.

So if during your trip to Japan you find yourself being bombarded with excess packaging, here are some key phrases and tips on how you can cope!



Pristine fruit, packaged impeccably to avoid bumps and bruises. Photo by JudeAnd / Shutterstock.com

Background: Why is Japan infatuated with plastic and packaging?



The simple answer is that Japan is a very detail-oriented society that values quality, presentation, and customer satisfaction. One of the results of this is that attention to packaging is paramount. To stores and their staff, wrapping the product with a good package shows the care they have for the customer. A well-wrapped item will not only be beautiful and well-presented, but there is a practical aspect: it will also be protected and in pristine condition.

To achieve these levels, though, a relatively large amount of packaging material is needed. Similarly, in order to guarantee a comfortable transport of your purchase (or for convenience when you purchase multiple items as gifts), you'll often be given or offered multiple bags.

Of course, all of us like comfort, and no one would complain about amazing customer service and care, but, if you're environment-conscious and want to be able to do your part and avoid waste while visiting Japan, it will help to know what to expect from Japanese stores, and how to ask to avoid unnecessary usage of plastic and paper.



Saying  
« NO »  
to unnecessary packaging:  
General phrase for all situations



Regardless of the store you visit, once they are about to hand you a bag, or pack your purchase you can say “*Iranai desu* (I don't need it),” referring to both bagging and wrapping (or either one of them).

To make things even easier for yourself, there is also a common gesture that means “no” or “I don't need it.” Make an X with your arms (or open hands if you want the gesture to look softer) and you'll be all set.

Now that you know the basics, let's take a look at some specific situations you're likely to find yourself in and what phrases can be used.



Saying  
« NO »  
to unnecessary plastic:  
At convenience stores



Convenience stores are something of a godsend for many foreign tourists, as they offer practically all of the basic necessities, from snacks and prepared meals to things like SD cards and power banks. And for the most part they are open 24/7 and happy to serve. Their service also shines in the way they treat patrons. The attitude of the staff will always be polite and helpful, and they will make sure you have enough bags for whatever you need, or don't need, or didn't even think you may have wanted.

### Common situations and polite ways to address them

1. Staff will usually pack items in several bags, even when one slightly larger one would do the trick. Before they start packing, you can ask: “*Hitotsu no fukuro ni matomete moraemasuka* (Could you please put everything in one bag?).” They will surely oblige.

2. When buying food, such as a bento lunch box or prepared pasta, you'll likely be given plastic cutlery or chopsticks – or sometimes both.

**Useful approach:** If you're planning on eating in your hotel room, you're probably not going to need cutlery anyway. Depending on your circumstances, you might want the cutlery and/or chopsticks, but not the bag – or you might want only the meal.

If you do need some cutlery, chances are you won't need as many items as they are going to give you.

**In this case you could say:**

- “ *\_\_\_ iranai desu.* ”
- *Hashi* = chopsticks
  - *Fo-ku* = fork
  - *Naifu* = knife
  - *Spoon* = spoon
  - *Fukuro* = bag

If you just want your purchase and don't need a bag or any cutlery, you could say: “*Sono mama de kudasai* (As it is, please).”

3. Furthermore, should you buy drinks, along with cold and hot food, you'll likely be asked if you want these items to be bagged separately: “*Fukuro owake shimasuka?*”

Should you not want the items to be bagged separately, you could respond with: “*Issho de daijoubu desu* (Everything together is ok).”





Saying  
**« NO »**  
 to unnecessary plastic:  
 At cafés



→ In convenience stores you can get coffee and other drinks, but often these will also come with plastic. Meanwhile, at cafes you can often get drinks in a mug. Even if a paper or plastic cup is offered instead, a plastic straw, plastic muddler, and things like single-serving creamer and sugar will be automatically placed on your tray – or included in a takeout bag.

**Common situations and polite ways to address them**

When visiting a café drinks are often served in paper or plastic cups. Depending on the café, though, if you're planning on sitting and enjoying your drink within the café, they will give you the same beverage in a glass, or ceramic mug.

When you order, tell them: *“Koko de nomimasu (I'll drink here).”* or *“Mug cup de dekimasu ka? (Can you put this in a mug please?)”*

Sometimes, though, the drink (especially coffee) will come in a plastic cup and a straw, or a paper cup no matter what. There's really no way around it, but you can use our magic formula *“iranai desu”* for anything we don't need (straw, or muddler).



Saying  
**« NO »**  
 to unnecessary plastic:  
 At souvenir shop



You'll most likely end up in small or big souvenir shops looking for mementos for yourself and presents for your friends and family back home.

Sometimes you'll opt for traditional items, other times for local food-stuff and sweets. Regardless, these stores will often bag each item you buy in a separate bag, not to mention that they will overly wrap with paper an already wrapped item to improve its presentation.

**How to avoid waste and be polite in the process**

You may not need 6 bags for six items (maybe you won't need bags at all if you have your own).

In these cases, you can once again say: *“Sono mama de daijoubu desu”* or *“Sono mama ii desu (It's ok as it is)”*. Or the ever-present *“iranai desu (I don't need it).”*



Saying  
**« NO »**  
 to unnecessary plastic:  
 At stationery shop



Stationery shops in Japan can be an attraction in their own right. Amazing brushes, pencils, pens, stickers or all kinds, not to mention notebooks, parchments or traditional Japanese paper virtually non-existent outside of the country. You would love visiting a nice stationery shop and chances are you're going to buy something functional – and adorable!

**Phrases to kindly let the clerk know you won't be needing too much packaging**

In these stores they also wrap everything many times over. Small items like pencils, erasers, markers are individually bagged and then placed in yet another bag along the other items.

However, these items can be easily stored in your purse, or whatever other bag you're carrying - and not require an excess of new bags. To avoid too much waste, you can refer to some of the phrases we used before: *“Sono mama de daijoubu desu”* or *“Sono mama ii desu (It's ok as it is)”*. Or the ever-present *“iranai desu (I don't need it).”*

When customers choose not to use bags after paying, the staff will mark each un-bagged item with a sticker, saving you from carrying a number of bags around (and helping you do your part for the environment in the process).

Saying  
**« NO »**  
 to unnecessary plastic:  
 On rainy days



Japan is big on trying to avoid anything that could bother people. Among these things, there's also the issue of wet dripping umbrellas in stores. We can all agree that walking on a wet indoor floor can be annoying, and even dangerous.

One of the solutions many stores adopt is that of offering plastic bags meant to wrap the head of your umbrella so not to have it drip inside.

1. There's usually a waste receptacle for the used plastic covers. While Japanese typically do not re-use them, you can choose to do so - and in most likely others would be none the wiser.



2. The very same stores tend to have umbrella racks right by the entrance. Some of them are even equipped with locks. (Umbrella theft in Japan is surprisingly high.)

3. Alternatively, you can bring your own reusable cover (most umbrellas come with it).



Items to consider packing for Japan

As alluded to above, there are certain preventative measures you can pack for or purchase once in Japan.

1. **Portable umbrella with cover; poncho**  
 And especially during rainy season, these can help make your trip so much more comfortable.
2. **Eco-bag, day pack, backpack**  
 You can simply place your purchases in these and make them much easier to carry around than bundles of plastic bags!
3. **Reusable chopsticks**  
 Not only do they make fantastic souvenirs, but if you have your own set of chopsticks for when you're on the go, you won't need to rely on disposable chopsticks when getting food at a convenience store or takeout.
4. **Water bottle**  
 Japan does not have public water taps in as many locations as in other countries, however you can fill up a water bottle at your hotel and bring it around with you, instead of relying on vending machines and plastic bottles at stores.
5. **Get a furoshiki wrap**  
 Furoshiki are traditional Japanese wrapping cloths that come in a plethora of different sizes, colors and designs. You can wrap souvenirs and other purchases in these and make them part of a gift to friends and family.

And here you have it. Following these few tips, you will still be able to enjoy the amazing attention to detail and to customers that Japan offers, but you won't have to feel like you're not doing your part for our planet.

# Mesmerizing Mangroves in northern Okinawa

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

**O**n a Monday morning in late September, I hit the road and headed north. With the end of Japan's State of Emergency being in sight, it was finally starting to feel okay to enjoy some outdoor activities.

A few months ago, I'd visited the same route for some snorkeling and cycling, but this time I was here to go for a hike.

I'd driven past the Wansaka Oura Park roadside station several times in the past but hadn't stopped before. Here there is a boardwalk taking visitors around and through a mangrove jungle. So, I made my way here for some exploring.

When I pulled into the parking lot of the station, there were only a few cars there. First, I paid a 360 yen entrance fee inside the station store and then made my way toward the boardwalk gate.

According to a brochure I received at the store, the total length of the course was 726 meters (approx. 2,382 feet). The boardwalk runs north cutting through shallow water that spread toward the east. On the left-hand side, or the west side, a jungle spreads beyond the edge of the water.

It was around 11 a.m. and the tide was high. Unlike resort beaches on the west side of the island, waters gleam in murky green, indicating that the bottom was carpeted with mud, not sand. If the tides had been low, I would have a chance to see fiddler crab and gobies crawling, and jumping on the muddy ground. I was a little disappointed that I could not see any of these small creatures, but the view and peaceful atmosphere made me feel good.

As I made my way across the halfway point, I caught sight of a cluster of mangroves resembling a small island. Once I came close, the boardwalk branched off to the deep part of the bushes. Mangroves roots ran intricately and densely at the bottom, as if to push the trees above the water. There were also some water channels running through the roots. The flowing current was slow and a few flower petals floated down, adding color to the green water.

I tried hard to look for creatures but had no luck. I reached a pavilion with a bench, so I took a seat and had a break. Here is where I was finally able to encounter some signs of life. As I was checking the photos I took, some humming noise was approaching from behind. No sooner had I looked up than I noticed that there was a beehive on the backside of the roof. I packed my camera gear and left the pavilion immediately.

The rest of the boardwalk led to an even deeper part of the forest. Still, no crabs or gobies. Perhaps they were lurking behind the roots or under the water to avoid being discovered by an intruder like me. Mangrove trees were gleaming in the dark, as lights bounced off puddles of water here and there.

The end of the boardwalk was at the north end of the shallow water. About an hour had passed. Given the length of this path, I spent way more time than needed to complete the route. The curious view of the tropical trees and the tranquility of the trickling water made me forget the time for a while.

Maybe on my next visit I can kayak to get closer to the resident crabs and gobies of this mesmerizing mangrove cluster.

[kudaka.shoji@stripes.com](mailto:kudaka.shoji@stripes.com)

## Wansaka Oura Park

**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.554785, E 128.040522

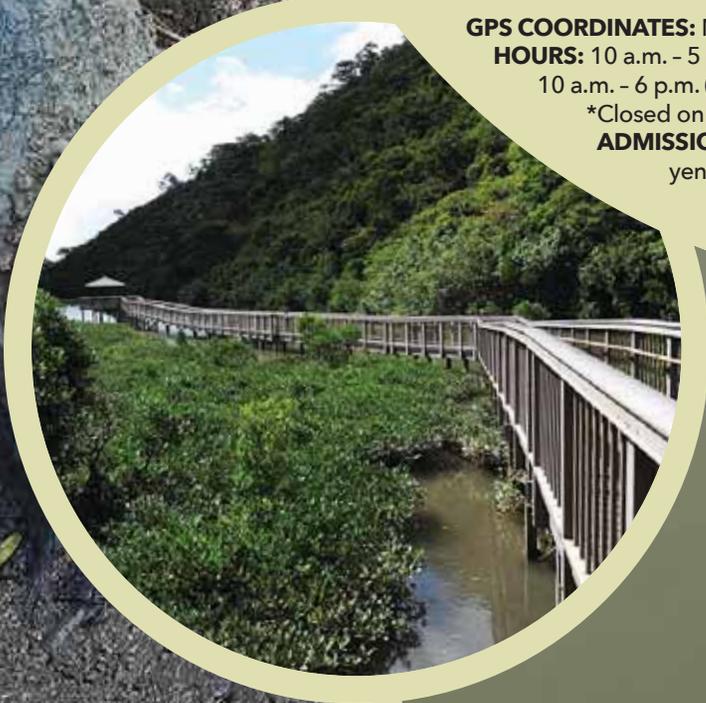
**HOURS:** 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Mon – Fri, last admission at 4 p.m.),  
10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Sat. Sun. holidays, last admission at 5 p.m.)

\*Closed on Tuesdays

**ADMISSION FEE** (for boardwalk through mangrove): 360 yen for adult, 210 yen for elementary and middle schooler, free admission for preschooler



**WEBSITE**



# Mangroves in Okinawa



## Pineapple Park worth a visit

“Papapapapapa Pineapple...”

If you have spent some time in Okinawa, you probably have heard this song with a funny tune.

This is a theme song for Pineapple Park, a theme park dedicated to the tropical fruits in Okinawa. This theme park is on Route 84, which cuts through Motobu Peninsula and is a recognizable tourist spot on the island, especially for first-timers.

Pineapple Park first opened its doors as the Nago Pine Garden back in 1979. Growing up on Okinawa, this park was popular for tourists, but I visited once when I was a kid. I can’t remember much about my first visit except for the tasty pineapple I tried there.

From Wansaka Oura Park, this theme park is only a 20-minute drive. So, visiting there after the walk through the mangroves crossed my mind and I’m glad I decided to head over.

As I walked through Pineapple Park’s pink-colored gate, I felt a little awkward, like a fish out of the water in a strange place. Once I passed through, however, the site of the park dissolved any of my concerns.

The first segment of the tour was a kart ride, which offered an overview of the park. The small yellow kart passed by pineapple farms and flower gardens. Here and there, some models of insects were exhibited. This is no Disneyland or Universal Studios, but I still found it quite amusing. Those artificial insects had a hand-crafted finish, which made

them more appealing.

Once the kart came to a stop, I began walking through gardens of tropical plants. Along with familiar plants such as pineapples, bougainvillea, hibiscus and fern trees. There are also unique ones such as anthurium and ananas.

Waiting at the last section of the tour was a group of robotic dinosaurs. I knew this type of attraction existed in other Okinawa theme parks as a way to entertain visitors, especially kids, but I was not expecting it here. I asked myself, “What do dinosaurs have to do with pineapple?”

However, once looking at the robotic triceratops and pteranodon hulk and roar in a goofy way, my small question didn’t matter anymore. Plus, who could not adore dinosaurs who play music like three amigos?

By the time I came to the exit, almost one hour had passed. Coincidentally, I spent the same amount of time at this park as I did in the mangrove forest.

To be honest, I was a little skeptical about visiting the theme park at first. But I was glad that I went. The theme park did not offer me a chance of seeing the curious wildlife of the mangrove, but the cheerful ambiance and handcrafted creatures made me smile and reminded me of my childhood.

**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.61585, E 127.96964

**HOURS:** 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. (last admission at 4:30 p.m.)

**ADMISSION FEE:** 1,000 yen for 16 years old and above, 600 yen for ages 4 to 15, free admission for 3 years old and less

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# 15 Japanese pork dishes you've never heard of!

But will want for dinner tonight

LIVE JAPAN

Across Japan, Japanese pork dishes can be found in a wide variety at all kinds of restaurants. You might be surprised at just how many ways you can enjoy pork!

Japanese pork is also a widely used meat which can be found in many different kinds of cooking, and in

particular, it is a central part of cuisine in Kyushu, Okinawa, and the Kanto region (East Japan). Probably pork's own version of Kobe beef can be

found in Kagoshima prefecture in Kyushu, which is famous for its kurobuta black Berkshire pigs.

In Okinawa there is another fairly well-known species of pig called "agu", which actually has quite a long history and dates back to the Ryukyu Kingdom.

Hungry yet? Here we'll share some of the most unique and delicious Japanese pork dishes that you'll want to add to your food list!

## Butadon



Quite similar to gyudon, or beef bowl, butadon, also known as "tondon", is a Japanese pork bowl dish. In it you will find thinly sliced pork as well as onions which have been simmered in a soy sauce broth until tender, and served in a donburi bowl over rice. This kind of cooking particularly became popular during a BSE scare earlier in the millennium when many restaurants temporarily stopped serving beef.

## Japanese Hamburg



Now Japanese hamburger might put you in mind of beef, but actually the best tasting version includes both pork and beef! It might sound odd, but you can even find mixed beef and pork mince in supermarkets which is perfect for making Japanese hamburger.

## Shabu Shabu and Rei-Shabu



This Japanese pork dish which again features thinly sliced meat, as well as bite-sized vegetables cooked lightly in a broth is known as Shabu shabu. The dish gets its name from the onomatopoeia "shabu, shabu" which means "swish, swish".

Quite often it is eaten with beef slices, but it can be eaten with pork as well. If you are cooking at home then you can easily find both pork and beef slices in supermarkets which have on the label that they are specifically for shabushabu (しゃぶしゃぶ).

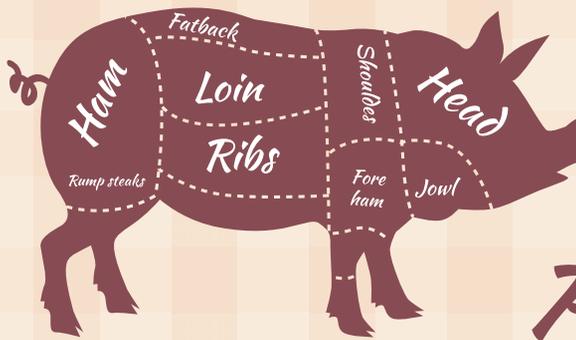
Buta shabu meat can be chilled and served cold over a salad or cold noodle dish for a refreshing meal in the summertime called "rei-shabu".

## Tonkatsu



Tonkatsu can be found pretty much everywhere in Japan, this is a deep-fried pork cutlet that has been breaded in crispy panko crumbs. This Japanese pork dish is served with a brown sauce, though there are different types of sauces, and quite commonly served with shredded raw cabbage, a rice bowl and miso soup.

In many restaurants, they will give you unlimited rice, so this dish can be particularly filling if you are also a big fan of delicious rice. There are also different versions of this dish such as katsudon (a bowl of hot rice topped with sliced tonkatsu, onions, and egg), katsu curry (Japanese curry and rice with tonkatsu), and a katsu sando (a sandwich of white bread, tonkatsu, and sauce).



Pork

## Tonkotsu ramen



Another version which you may or may not have tried is tonkotsu ramen! This started in the Hakata region of northern Kyushu and is one of the "Top 3" most popular varieties of ramen in Japan.

In its original form, it is a bowl of creamy white pork bone soup eaten with thin straight noodles served al dente, sliced green onion, and tender slices of barbecued pork char siu.

## Yakiton



This is the Japanese pork version of yakitori, basically bite-sized pieces of pork that have been skewered and grilled. In addition to more familiar cuts of meat like pork loin and pork belly, don't be afraid to try some of the more unique items like pork jowl and liver.

### Buta-Maki



Buta-maki is another version that can be skewered and grilled, but can also be pan-fried or steamed. Normally it is pork that has been wrapped with something, or even something wrapped with pork, for example bacon-wrapped cherry tomatoes, or thinly sliced pork rolled up with *shiso* (perilla herb).

### Shogayaki



Shogayaki is an easy dish to make and is often made at home or included in ben-to boxes. It is a dish of pan or grill fried pork loin, the pork is thinly sliced, and this is cooked with soy sauce, sake, and mirin along with ginger.

### Nikujaga



Nikujaga is a dish of meat and potatoes, made with thinly sliced pork simmered with vegetables in a dashi and soy sauce broth. The dish is considered to be one of the great comfort foods of Japan and reminds many people of their mother's home cooking. It's typically eaten as part of a traditional Japanese meal with rice, miso soup, and several vegetable side dishes.

### Motsu-Nabe, Motsu-Yaki Pork horumon-yaki and Nikomi



The term "*motsu*" refers to offal, the innards of an animal such as intestines and liver, and there are several popular ways of eating these particular cuts of pork in Japan. For example, a kind of hot pot which is famous in Fukuoka (Kyushu) is motsu-nabe, it is well seasoned with chili, garlic, and miso or soy sauce.

The strong taste of the broth holds up well to the distinct flavor of the organ meat, which can be beef or pork. It is a good dish to drink alcohol with, and with friends and family. Other motsu dishes to try include motsu-yaki, or grilled pork giblets, and motsu nikomi, a dish of pork giblets braised in a tender stew. Similar to motsu-yaki, horumon-yaki refers specifically to pork intestines, which are marinated in a sauce and grilled. It goes great with beer and sake.



See Offal

### Gyoza



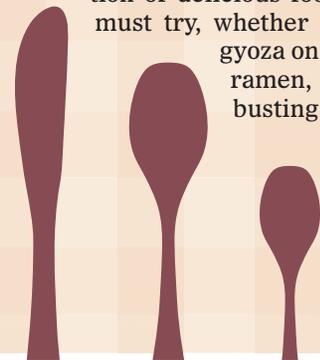
Gyoza originated in China, and was quite popular with Japanese soldiers serving overseas. When they returned to Japan they initiated a desire for a Japanese version of this steamed (or boiled or pan-fried) kind of dumplings. It is usually filled with minced pork and vegetables, but you can find other more unusual ingredients inside it. Nowadays it can be found as a side dish pretty much everywhere, from ramen restaurants to izakayas.

### Kakuni



Kakuni is a dish of pork belly cubes stewed slowly in a soy sauce broth until they become meltingly tender and rich. The dish is also known as "*rafute*" in Okinawa, where it is a highly prized local dish.

Japan is famous for its fish, and with good reason, and it is famous for its beef dishes, for example, yakiniku and sukiyaki, but we don't necessarily think of Japanese pork dishes when we want to eat Japanese food. However there is an amazing selection of delicious foods which you simply must try, whether that is a side-dish of gyoza on order along with your ramen, or enjoying a gut-busting large portion of katsu curry.



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# Bring Okinawa to you with tasty treat you can cook up at home

## SWEET POTATO!

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA, STRIPES OKINAWA

Umukuji tempura, or umukuji andagi, is an Okinawan snack food commonly sold at local supermarkets. Cooked with imokuzu (potato starch) and beniimo (purple or reddish-violet sweet potato), its soft, chewy texture and subtle sweetness are a delight to the taste buds. Plus, its purple color is very pleasing to look at. If you have tried “beniimo tarte” a popular snack sold at local souvenir shops, you would know the color that I am talking about.



**BENIIMO**

Though you can get umukuji tempura at your local market, nothing beats a fresh batch made at home.

Just recently, I had a chance to try cooking this Okinawan snack on my own. The recipe I found on the web was simple and didn't take a lot of ingredients. However, it required sweet potatoes to be steamed and pureed, which could be time-consuming. So, instead, I chose to cut corners by microwaving and mashing them in a bowl. Skipping the process probably cost me some smoothness in the tempura, but most of the softness, chewiness and sweetness was still there in the final product. The fresh umukuji tempura put me in the mood for a snack time with a cup of coffee.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com



### INGREDIENTS (makes about 12 pieces)

- Beniimo (purple sweet potato) 200g
- Imokuzu (potato starch) 133cc
- Water 100ml
- Sugar 15cc
- Salt 2.5cc
- Oil (reasonable amount)

### RECIPE



1 Rinse the sweet potatoes with water. Wrap them in Saran wrap and microwave them for 5 minutes or so.



2 Once soft enough to skewer through, peel them. (The potato gets really hot. So, I used chopsticks and a spoon for this step.)



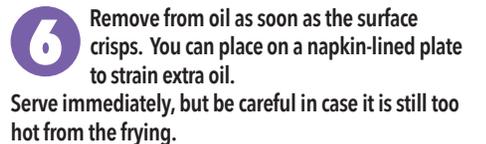
3 Mash the potatoes in a bowl and mix them with sugar and salt.



4 In another bowl, mix potato starch and water. While stirring the mixture, add it to the potatoes little by little. (The sweet potato should be as soft or hard as an earlobe)



5 Heat oil to 170 degrees Celsius (338 degrees Fahrenheit) in a pan. Mold the dough into small pieces (about the size of a thumb) and fry in batches.



6 Remove from oil as soon as the surface crisps. You can place on a napkin-lined plate to strain extra oil. Serve immediately, but be careful in case it is still too hot from the frying.

**TIP:** Normally, umukuji tempura is not served with any dipping sauce. However, its light flavor might go well with some butter or whip cream.



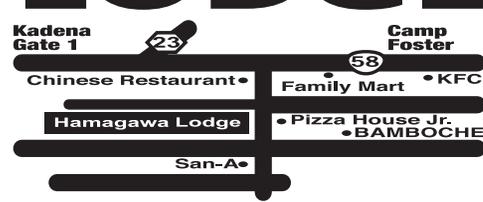
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# Stripes Sports Trivia

One of the most memorable moments in college football history, the "Hail Flutie" gave Doug Flutie and Boston College a last-second win over the defending National Champion Miami Hurricanes. What was the coach and quarterback duo that led Miami in the loss?

**Answer**

*Jimmy Johnson and Bernie Kosar*



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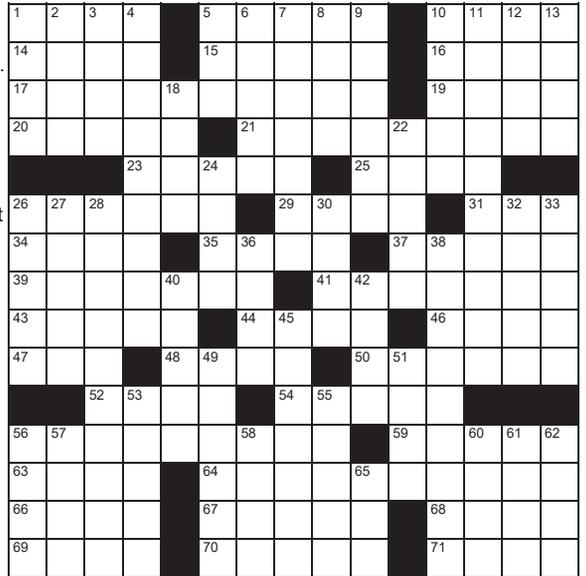
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## Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

### ACROSS

- 1 Hefty rival
- 5 Waterston's D.A. on "Law & Order"
- 10 Impassioned
- 14 Type of paper or pudding
- 15 Fictional Scarlett
- 16 "Fame" star Irene
- 17 Facing trouble
- 19 In the know about
- 20 Down-and-out
- 21 Sedimentary rock
- 23 Large bay window
- 25 Washstand vessel
- 26 Seven Wonders lighthouse
- 29 Remove the rind
- 31 Caps Lock neighbor
- 34 Tibetan monk
- 35 Ground beef option
- 37 Mournful song
- 39 Iron Man or Thor, in a film series
- 41 Kind of market
- 43 Extra inning
- 44 2014 Affleck flick, "\_\_\_ Girl"
- 46 Scrabble draw
- 47 Draw to a close
- 48 Foul smell
- 50 Breakfast order
- 52 Grimace
- 54 Doomed one
- 56 Be suspicious
- 59 Select group
- 63 Keep an eye on
- 64 Self-restraint
- 66 Part of ABM
- 67 Wickerwork willow
- 68 Many miles away
- 69 Ploy
- 70 Button material
- 71 1040, for one



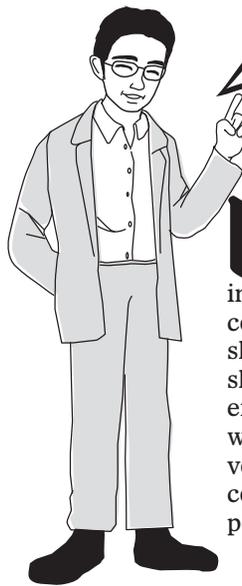
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### DOWN

- 1 Cheshire Cat trademark
- 2 Cash biopic "Walk the \_\_\_"
- 3 Stomach woe
- 4 Toiletry product
- 5 Grounds-keeper's task
- 6 Scene with stuntmen
- 7 Tree with white flower clusters
- 8 Lucy's "Kill Bill" character
- 9 Logging equipment
- 10 Critical
- 11 Streak in an aircraft's wake
- 12 Heavy metal
- 13 Copenhagen native
- 18 Beginner
- 22 Greta Garbo, for one
- 24 Wight, for one
- 26 Word with hot or home
- 27 Any port in a storm
- 28 Constitutional add-ons
- 30 Briefly unknown?
- 32 Light-footed
- 33 Military cap
- 36 Proof word
- 38 Protective sheet
- 40 Halloween spook
- 42 Lowly laborer
- 45 Type of farming
- 49 Church officer
- 51 Part of G.M.T. number
- 53 Nostalgic number
- 55 River critter
- 56 Celestial body
- 57 Remote button
- 58 Santa \_\_\_, California
- 60 What FAQ's offer
- 61 Capone trademark
- 62 School session
- 65 Indignation

### Answers to Previous Crossword:

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



**DID YOU KNOW?**

**F**rench engineer Francois Leonce Verny founded Yokosuka Iron Works, the former home of Yokosuka Naval Base, in 1871. He and other French engineers constructed it as the first Western-style shipyard with dry docks. Along with the shipyard, they built the nation's first Western-style Kannonzaki Light House, modern water supply from the Hashirimizu reservoir and a French language school, which contributed to making Yokosuka a modern port town with a French twist.

Kanji of the week

暗

kurai/an (dark)

## Language Lesson

What is this?

Kore wa nan desuka?

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## SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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:

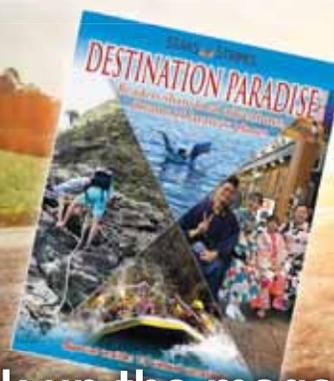
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3	9	7	4	5	2	8	6	1
8	7	4	1	6	3	9	5	2
5	1	9	2	7	4	6	3	8
2	3	6	5	9	8	1	4	7
4	6	3	7	8	5	2	1	9
7	2	1	9	4	6	3	8	5
9	8	5	3	2	1	4	7	6

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# DESTINATION PARADISE

STARS AND STRIPES



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Courtesy photos

# Traditional Japanese instruments that you can listen to today

LIVE JAPAN

**M**usic is a big part of Japanese culture—music influences the media, the economy, and even fashion subcultures. In the past, traditional Japanese instruments helped music grace the halls of royals and accompanied theater performances.

Today you can hear it on TV, at a kabuki show, or a festival. So, here are six traditional Japanese instruments you can listen to today!

## 1 Shakuhachi

One of the most popular traditional Japanese wind instruments is the shakuhachi. Better known as the Japanese flute, this instrument has been used by Zen Buddhists as a spiritual tool for meditation practices known as 'suizen' (吹禅).

Held vertically, the shakuhachi has four holes on the front and one on the back and is traditionally made of bamboo.

Used for meditative purposes, shakuhachi music was originally used for personal spiritual enlightenment rather than public performance.

Today, however, you can see monks play honkyoku, or traditional shakuhachi repertoire, in concert.

## 4 Shamisen

One of the most popular Japanese instruments today is the shamisen. The shamisen is a 3-string lute thought to be a variation of the Okinawan sanshin. While the neck of the shamisen is similar in length to that of a guitar, it has no frets.

During the Edo period, the shamisen was popularly used in traditional theater such as bunraku and kabuki, as well as accompanying vocal performances in styles such as Kouta, Jiuta, and Nagauta.

Today, shamisen has adapted and taken off. Modern shamisen players like the Yoshida Brothers have brought more personality to their music and style to bring shamisen music into the modern century. In fact, their song "Kodo" was seen in Nintendo Wii ads in North America in 2006.

## 2 Koto

Regarded as the national instrument in Japan, a koto performance needs to be on your must-see list. The koto is a Japanese string instrument that is placed on the ground and plucked and is similar to the Korean gayageum and Chinese Zheng.

Traditionally, the koto comes in two varieties, a 13-string type and a 17-string type. Now, you can find some with 20, 21, or 25 strings! The koto is very large — usually about 180 cm (about six feet!) long — and made of kiri wood.

The music made from the koto is said to be romantic. Notable koto artists include Yatsushashi Kengyo, Tadao Sawai, and Kazue Sawai.

## 5 Biwa

Another Japanese instrument you need to hear is the biwa. The biwa is a short-necked lute played with a large plectrum known as a bachi.

Traveling biwa players known as biwa-hoshi were popular for some time. The music accompanied stories, the most renowned of which was The Tale of the Heike.

Used in gagaku (traditional Japanese court music) since 7th century, the instrument eventually lost popularity with the influx of modern music during the Meiji Era.

The biwa has many variations, but typically has three to five strings and four to six frets. The most famous is the satsuma biwa.

In recent years, musicians have tried to revitalize the Japanese string instrument by incorporating it into Western music. One such composer, Toru Takamatsu, incorporates the biwa into Western orchestral music with compositions like "November Steps".



## 3 Sanshin

The island music of Japan is quite different than that of the Caribbean. The sanshin, a Japanese string instrument made with snakeskin from Okinawa, has more of a twang to it than the laid-back beats you might normally associate with island life.

'Sanshin' translates to 'three strings', and this instrument has just that. You have the male string, the middle string, and the female string, with the male string producing the lowest notes and the female string producing the highest.

The sanshin is often compared to the banjo, but unlike the banjo, it is plucked. The sanshin can be heard in traditional Ryukyuan folk music or at graduations and other special ceremonies in Okinawa. Interestingly, sanshin scores use Chinese characters as notes.

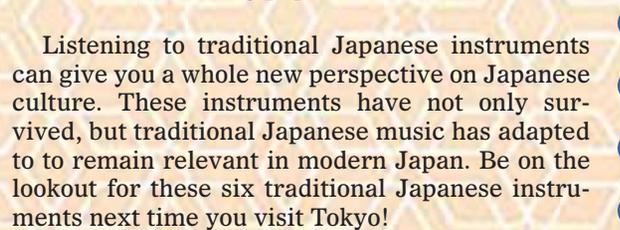
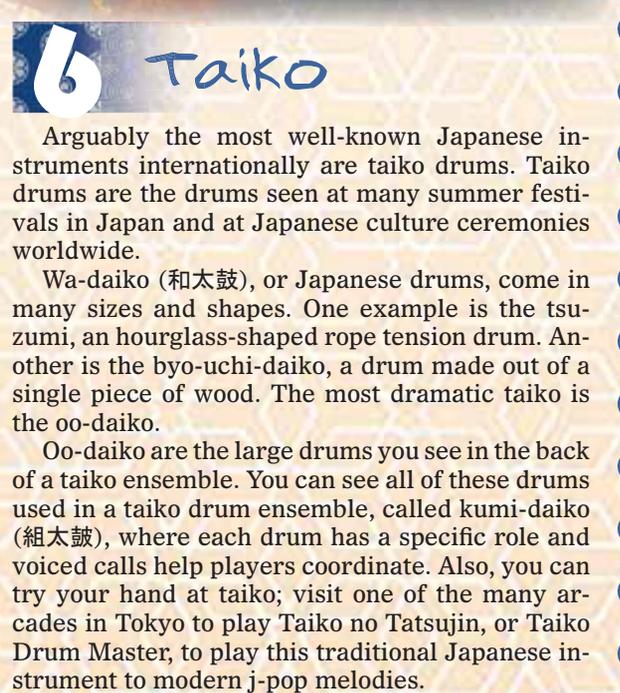
## 6 Taiko

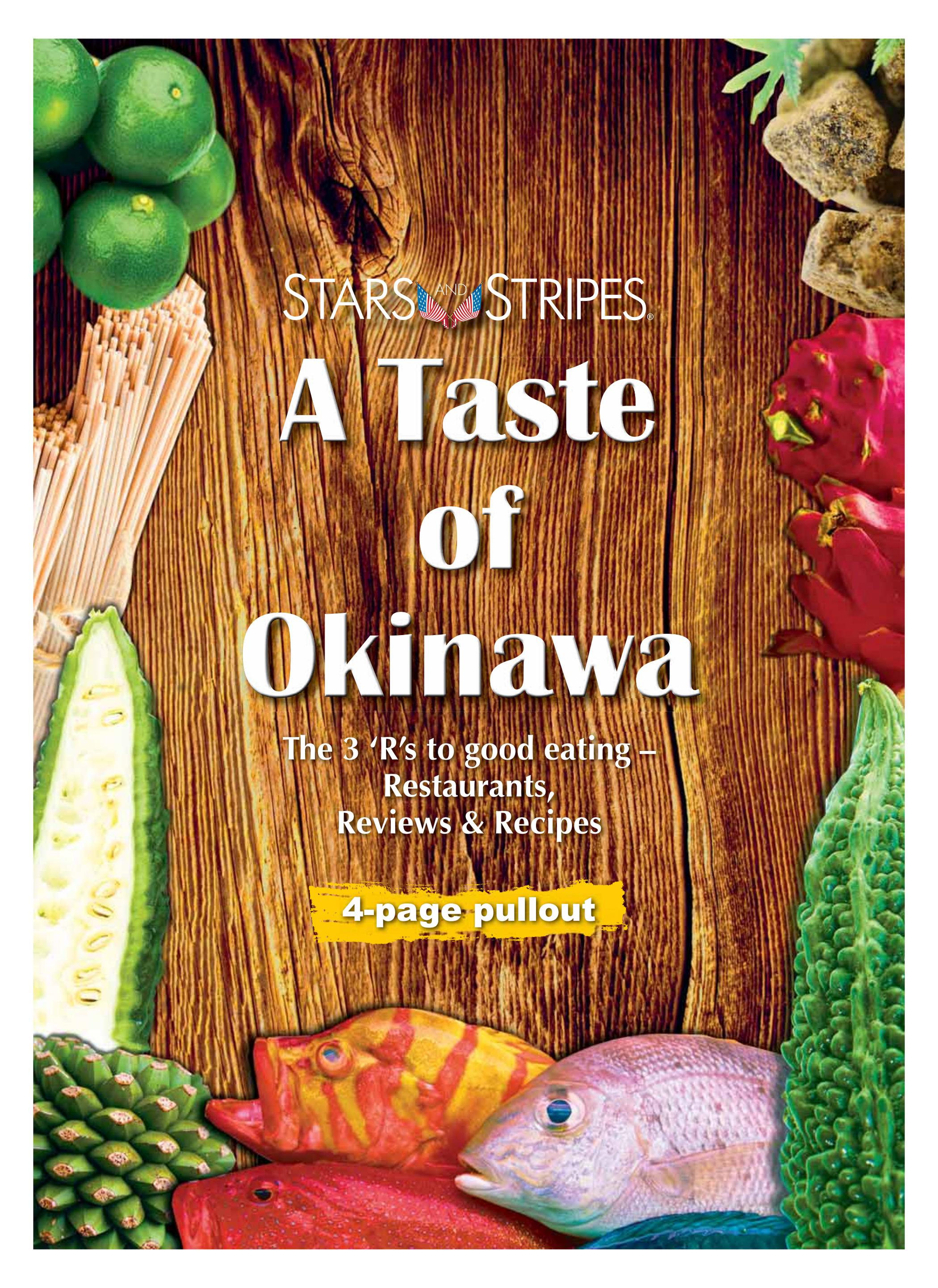
Arguably the most well-known Japanese instruments internationally are taiko drums. Taiko drums are the drums seen at many summer festivals in Japan and at Japanese culture ceremonies worldwide.

Wa-daiko (和太鼓), or Japanese drums, come in many sizes and shapes. One example is the tsuzumi, an hourglass-shaped rope tension drum. Another is the byo-uchi-daiko, a drum made out of a single piece of wood. The most dramatic taiko is the oo-daiko.

Oo-daiko are the large drums you see in the back of a taiko ensemble. You can see all of these drums used in a taiko drum ensemble, called kumi-daiko (組太鼓), where each drum has a specific role and voiced calls help players coordinate. Also, you can try your hand at taiko; visit one of the many arcades in Tokyo to play Taiko no Tatsujin, or Taiko Drum Master, to play this traditional Japanese instrument to modern j-pop melodies.

Listening to traditional Japanese instruments can give you a whole new perspective on Japanese culture. These instruments have not only survived, but traditional Japanese music has adapted to remain relevant in modern Japan. Be on the lookout for these six traditional Japanese instruments next time you visit Tokyo!





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# A Taste of Okinawa

The 3 'R's to good eating –  
Restaurants,  
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**4-page pullout**



## 1. Ramune

Classic Japanese drink!

Ramune is one of Japan's most famous carbonated soft drinks, maybe due to its unique bottle shape or its regular appearance in manga and anime. Ramune, a term coming from the English "lemonade," was invented in 1872 and thus is among the oldest of Japan's lemonades. The characteristic marble in the neck of the glass bottle earned Ramune the nickname of "marble soda" and is also the reason why many people might find it hard to open and drink.

Despite its fame, you won't find Ramune in vending machines or convenience stores in Japan, but rather have to check a supermarket or beverage store. However, this popular lemonade is a staple of Japanese summer festivals and can be found at numerous stalls in various flavors!

**Bonus:** To open a bottle of Ramune, simply use the little plastic opener provided with each drink and push down the marble!

## 2. Calpis

What you might know as "Calpico" is a milky Japanese drink that was inspired by the Mongolian airag - basically fermented horse milk. Calpis was Japan's first lactic acid drink, first sold in 1919. The drink is supposed to be mixed with water or milk, which is one of the reasons why it became immediately popular. And it's condensed, so this Japanese drink keeps well even without refrigeration.

Nowadays, the drinks you'll find in any convenience store and vending machine are Calpis Water, a pre-diluted version of the original, and Calpis Soda, which is carbonated Calpis Water. Of course, this classic Japanese drink comes in a variety of fruity flavors as well. Simply look for a white bottle with blue dots and enjoy a refreshing sip!

**Bonus:** The drink was renamed "Calpico" in the West because many people feel that Calpis sounds uncomfortably close to a less than appetizing word combination.



# T Quirky Japan

Looking for a nice, refreshing drink can be aisles and examine the colorful selection of names and beverages that you've might Naturally, Japan has a rich and fun selection of iced tea. Come with us on a wild ride through Japan!



## 10. Yakult

Japan's probiotic drink called Yakult is a success all around the world, but the yoghurt drink is a staple in Japanese convenience stores and supermarkets. There is even a job called "Yakult lady" - much like the States' Avon ladies, the duties of a Yakult lady are to ride a bicycle or motorbike and go from door to door, selling and promoting the probiotic drink.

No matter if you like it sweet or bitter, Japan's convenience stores and vending machines have a rich variety of original soft drinks that are sure to quench your thirst! Now your only job is to taste your way through each of them and find your favorite!

## 9. Melon soda

Ah yes, melon soda - although the bilious green color of this Japanese soft drink might seem scary, this is a favorite refreshment of many people all around Japan! The melon soda float version is particularly connected to a Japanese childhood. Find the sugary delight at convenience stores, sometimes in vending machines, and at chain stores such as Burger King and McDonald's!





### 3. Pocari Sweat

Undoubtedly, this Japanese drink regularly raises many eyebrows in the West for its seemingly questionable name. Pocari Sweat is a sweet sports drink with hints of grapefruit that was first sold in 1980. It supposedly restores all the electrolytes and nutrients that are lost when sweating, hence the name. While Pocari Sweat is available as powder and in cans, you'll most likely come across the PET bottles most of the time – they're an inherent part of every convenience store, vending machine, and supermarket.

### 4. Mitsuya Cider

This Japanese drink is almost as old as Ramune. Mitsuya Cider was first sold in 1884, and while you might think of an alcoholic beverage when hearing "cider," this classic refreshment is a carbonated soft drink. The standard Mitsuya Cider is best described as a cross between Ginger Ale and Sprite, but of course, there are various flavors on the market, including many seasonal ones. Mitsuya Cider is sold at any convenience store, most vending machines, and every supermarket.



**Bonus:** We highly recommend the Mitsuya Cider Candy, which is quite literally the classic drink in candy form. It even comes with the carbon fizz!



### 5. Qoo

Best known for its adorable mascot, Qoo is a non-carbonated fruit drink invented by the Coca-Cola Company, marketed mainly towards children and teenagers. First appearing in 1999, Qoo is available in pretty much all of Asia, but not in the West – it was sold in exclusively in Germany, for a brief period of time. Qoo is available in any convenience store and rarely in vending machines. As a Coca Cola product, however, it can be ordered at Japanese McDonald's!

# Top 10 Japanese Drinks!

LIVE JAPAN

its very own adventure when sightseeing in Japan. As you scour convenience store of the many vending machines found all around the city, you'll come across a variety never heard of before – what exactly is Pocari Sweat? Can you drink that?! tion of its own tasty soft drink varieties, from modern sugar delights to refreshing n's top 10 drinks!



### 8. Mugicha, roasted barley tea

Refreshing summertime Japanese drink!

When talking about tea in Japan, most people immediately think green. However, one of the most beloved drinks of the hot Japanese summer is actually mugicha, or roasted barley tea. The slightly bitter taste of barley tea is a wonderful refreshment, especially on brutally hot days. A staple of convenience stores and vending machines, barley tea is also sold in tea bags and often made at home in households all over Japan.

### 7. Iced green tea

Japanese drink of choice!

While the concept of iced tea is said to have been invented in the United States in the 19th century, iced green tea is a staple drink all over Japan. Generally unsweetened, this healthy refreshment is offered by various different companies and is quite literally found in every single vending machine and convenience store. If you want to quench your thirst in an authentically Japanese way, iced green tea is the way to go!



### 6. Canned coffee

Canned coffee is a real Japanese drink original that hit the market around 1970. This beverage is most notably found in vending machines in all kinds of varieties, from black and strong to milky and sweet. Japanese vending machines are famous for offering both hot and cold drinks, and canned coffee is a very notable example of this. Convenience stores have a rich assortment of different canned coffee creations as well.





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