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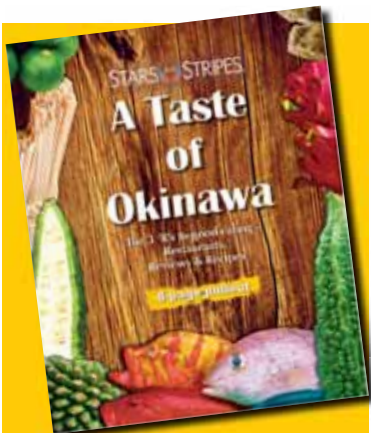
**INSIDE INFO**



**MY FAVES**

TASTY CRISP JAPANESE TEMPURA

PAGE 9

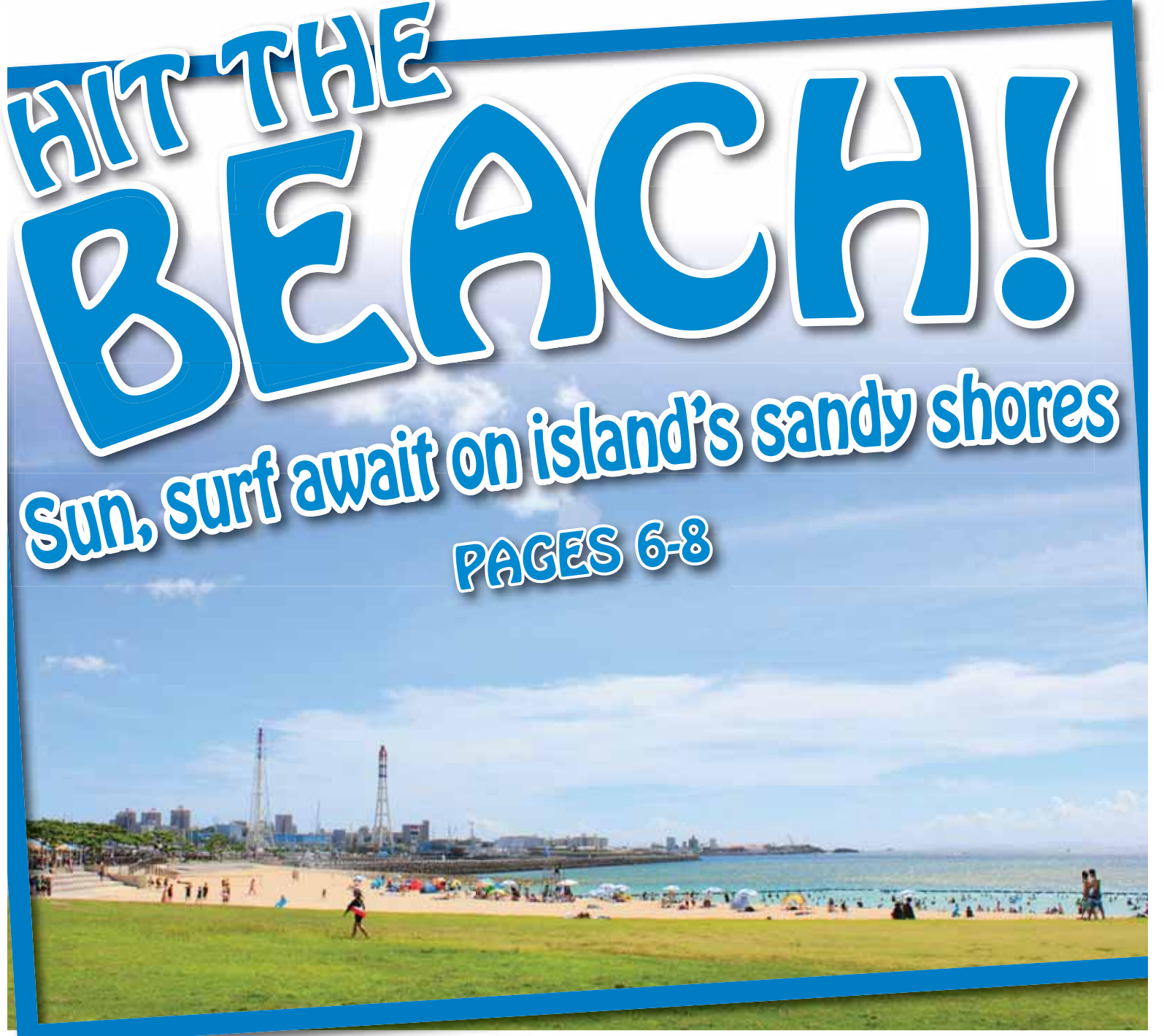


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**HIT THE BEACH!**  
 Sun, surf await on island's sandy shores  
 PAGES 6-8



**REVIVING OKINAWA'S TATTOO TRADITION**

PAGES 4-5





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## Mental Notes with Hilary Valdez

### Children in pain

BY HILARY VALDEZ,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

Quite a few years ago, one Christmas Eve on Atsugi Naval Base, a condominium fire led to the displacement of several children in the complex. Afterwards, in the de-briefing session with several tiny kids, I could tell it was painful for them. As a counselor, it painful for me, too. Their questions were emotionally upsetting, such as: “Will Sant Clause return?” “What happened to my cat?” “Will we still have a turkey dinner?” “Will I still have Christmas presents?” “Where will we sleep?”



In a child’s mind these are serious question pertaining to their reality and emotional well-being. Children often have ups and downs that affect the way they feel and behave. But sometimes children don’t “bounce back” from the downs, and this starts to affect other parts of their lives. This can be a sign that children are having mental health problems.

The children were afraid. I asked them about their reaction to the fire. Their reactions were on the smell of the smoke, about running into the darkness, running for safety, the big flames they witnessed or the cold air they met once they were away from the building. Childhood trauma is defined as an experience caused by an event that is emotionally painful or distressful resulting in lasting mental and physical effects, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Psychologically, it may present itself in children as a bottling up of emotions or fear to express emotions leading to depression, anxiety, or anger. As a trauma specialist, I have found that a common symptom of exposure to a traumatic event leads to short-term emotional distress.

Children, like adults, differ in their reactions to traumatic events. The reactions of children may be influenced by their maturity level, ethnicity, cultural factors, personality traits, and previous trauma exposure. Many children and adolescents express some kind of distress or behavioral change in the acute phase of recovery from a traumatic event. Not all short-term responses to trauma are problematic. Developing resilience skills take practice and time.

Pain is a personal experience, the American Academy of

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry asserts. It involves not just a physical sensation but impacts on emotional and mental well-being. Pain is often described as either acute or chronic. Acute pain is pain that occurs within the normal period of healing, for example after an injury like a broken bone or sprained muscle, illness, infection or surgery. Chronic pain (or persistent pain) is when it continues beyond the usual period of healing. This is often defined as pain that lasts for three months or longer

According to the Parenting Research Center, if your child has repeated tantrums or consistently behaves in a defiant or aggressive way, seems sad or unhappy, cries a lot, consistently is afraid or worried, or avoids social situations, has trouble paying attention, or can’t sit still or is restless, it’s time for an intervention. If you notice a sudden change in your child’s mood or behavior, encourage your child to talk with you about their feelings. Then, of course, seek individual counseling.

If you’re not sure how to talk with your child about mental health issues, try telling your child that you’ve noticed they seem sad, and you want to help. Create a safe space free of judgment and reactions, so they can feel free to express their feelings. Acknowledge their reactions as a normal response to an abnormal event, remind them that it is normal to be stressed, worried or sad sometimes.

The Australian Psychological Association suggests other ways for parents to help children cope with stress in healthy ways. Some of these include providing a safe and stable home, managing parental stressors, encouraging physical activity, monitoring television or online content children are consuming and providing children opportunities to make choices and have some control in their lives. The more your child feels they have control over a situation, the better their response to stress will be.

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](http://www.hilaryvaldez.com) or at [InstantInsights@hotmail.com](mailto:InstantInsights@hotmail.com)



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# Bechtel Elementary to get makeover

STORY AND PHOTO BY FRANK ANDREWS,  
STARS AND STRIPES  
Published: February 24, 2022

**CAMP MCTUREOUS** – A major makeover for William C. Bechtel Elementary School on Okinawa will bring it into the 21st century, according to the Department of Defense Education Activity-Pacific.

DODEA is spending \$94.85 million on the renovation project at the school on this Marine Corps base. The project is scheduled to begin in summer 2023.

During construction, Bechtel’s approximately 670 students will be bused to schools at Kadena Air Base, 6 miles away, until the work is finished, according to a Feb. 4 news release from DODEA-Pacific spokeswoman Miranda Ferguson. Some students will be relocated in the school year that begins Aug. 22.

Bechtel Elementary is the latest school for military dependents in Japan to undergo improvements under DODEA’s “21st Century” facilities’ program designed to prepare students for tech-focused jobs.

The upgrades include an open floor plan that removes walls and doors to create a peer-to-peer learning atmosphere. There will also be new furniture, including bouncing balls for chairs; laptop docks, smartboards; and water-bottle stations.

The Bechtel makeover will



William C. Bechtel Elementary School on Okinawa is in store for a nearly \$95 million makeover, according to Department of Defense Education Activity-Pacific.

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include renovations to the main building; a new, 81,000-square foot-building; new furnishings; and playground improvements, according to the release.

“The planned renovations and new construction at Bechtel Elementary School will provide our students residing on camps Courtney and McTureous, as well as the off-base attendance area, with an updated facility that promotes collaboration and supports the needs of

21st century learners,” Jackie Ferguson, the acting superintendent for DODEA-Pacific South, said in the news release.

Three other DODEA schools in Japan, including one on Okinawa, were upgraded in 2021.

Renovations at Bob Hope Elementary at Kadena totaled \$75 million. A pair of schools at Misawa Air Base in northeastern Japan were renovated and consolidated into one school, Edgren Middle/High School, at a cost of \$33 million.

In preparation for Bechtel’s planned

renovation, the district will relocate approximately 150 students to Ralph Stearley Primary School and Amelia Earhart Intermediate School at Kadena Air Base for the 2022-23 school year, according to the DODEA news release. That group includes students living off-base south of McTureous.

After Bechtel Elementary closes for construction, all remaining Bechtel students will be sent to Ryukyu Middle School at Kadena until work is complete, according to the DODEA statement.

Those students’ families will be contacted via email by the student transportation office this summer with information regarding new bus schedules, according to a letter from Bechtel principal Scott Tefft on Feb. 3. Bus stop locations will remain the same, he wrote.

“While times of transition can be difficult, I am confident this project will ensure Bechtel Elementary continues to proudly serve military-connected students and their families for many more years. Please reach out to our office if you have any questions,” Tefft said.

The school’s namesake, William C. Bechtel, was a Marine stationed on Okinawa during World War II. He returned to the island as a DODEA administrator and school principal. Bechtel elementary, home of the Bulldogs, was built in 1987 and serves pre-kindergarten through fifth grades.

andrews.lynn@stripes.com  
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# Camp Foster center offering tax help through June 17

STORY AND PHOTOS BY LANCE CPL. ALEX FAIRCHILD,  
MARINE CORPS INSTALLATIONS PACIFIC

**CAMP FOSTER** – As service members across Okinawa prepare their financial reports and statements to submit for filing from 2021, many options are available to execute the task. One of the available services to assist service members in this process is the Tax Center, located in Building 5717 on Camp Foster.

The Camp Foster Tax Center assists eligible taxpayers with the preparation of e-filing both federal income tax returns and state income tax returns, as applicable. The team at the Tax Center not only assists service members of any branch, but also any eligible taxpayer that has base access. This includes, but not limited to, retired service members aboard Okinawa, dependents, and status of forces agreement personnel.

“If a service member wants to set up an appointment to file their taxes, the first step is to email us at [mcb\\_oki\\_taxcenter@usmc.mil](mailto:mcb_oki_taxcenter@usmc.mil) so we can provide you with the necessary information and documents you need to bring,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Hammack, staff noncommissioned officer in charge with the Camp Foster Tax Center Headquarters and Support Battalion, Marine Corps Installations Pacific. “After an appointment has been booked, the first thing that service member does is come into our building and fill out a detailed questionnaire so we can get a background on their filing information.”

Hammack, a native of Modesto, California, explained that once the questionnaire is filled out correctly, a team member with the Tax Center will assist the customer with the rest of the process, answering any questions along the way and submitting their taxes. He said that the process typically takes a half hour, depending on each customer’s specific situation and what kind of filing they need to submit.

The Camp Foster Tax Center first opened on Feb. 7 and will be available until June 17. Over 60 customers have already been successfully filed and taken care of through the team at the Tax Center in just the three days it has been open in 2022.

“Every return and document is carefully examined and goes through a quality control process before it is submitted to the internal revenue service,” said Sgt. Chyler Corona, non-commissioned officer in charge with the Camp Foster Tax Center H&S Bn, MCIPAC. “The process, ending with a final review from the Tax Center SNCOIC, is so thorough that we hardly ever experience any resubmissions or kick-backs.”

Corona, a native of Fresno, California, explained that as one of the Camp Foster Tax Center NCOICs, he assists customers and ensures they have the correct information they need to begin filing. He said that another one of his responsibilities is to oversee the quality and accuracy of returns and assist Marines under his charge with any questions.

The Marines at the tax center come from a melting pot of backgrounds and military occupational specialties, ranging from combat-orientated specialties to administrative and legal professions. Each Marine is fully qualified and highly trained to assist customers in everything from filing their federal and state taxes to solving unique questions pertaining to each customer’s situation.

“It is paramount that we work as a team and have effective communication with each other, especially with Marines from a plethora of different backgrounds,” said Hammack. “We are a customer service-based operation, and each one of us has a passion for helping others. Every customer that seeks to file their taxes through us or even has a simple question will be assisted properly and taken care of.”



U.S. Marine Corps Pfc. Dante Solano provides a customer with the necessary email.



U.S. Marine Corps Pfc. Dante Solano assists a customer at the Camp Foster Tax Center on Camp Foster.



# REVIVING A STIGMATIZED TRADITION

## Artist's project highlights Okinawa's tattoo culture

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KIM KAHAN,  
METROPOLIS MAGAZINE

Many westerners don't know that Okinawa was actually a completely different country with a different language and different beliefs to the Japanese mainland, until about 150 years ago. Japan annexed Okinawa – known as 'Ryukyu Okinawa' – in 1879, and started to assimilate the Ryukyu Okinawans into mainland Japanese culture.

In Japan, whilst tattoos were seen as a sign of violence thanks to their association with the Japanese Yakuza gangs, in Okinawa tattoos were a normal part of the culture. It was mainly women who had the tattoos, tattooed predominantly on their hands by the local shamans.

As the tropical islands became throttled by Japanese mainland views and beliefs, the tattoos, previously a sign of pride and womanhood, became shameful to the Okinawan people, who started to reject them for themselves by the 1950s.

Moeko Heshiki, a hajichā (hajichi tattoo artist), has started the Hajichi Project in order to bring about awareness of hajichi and Ryukyu Okinawan culture and to spread the hajichi as 'lucky charms,' far and wide. We spoke to her about how she tattoos and why she got into it, ahead of the event she is taking part in on 26th February, alongside fellow hajichi tattoo artists, Taku Oshima and Tamiki Hanzawa.

**METROPOLIS:** Tell us about yourself.

**MOEKO HESHIKI:** My name is Moeko Heshiki. I'm 29 years old and was born and raised in Utsunomiya, my dad is from Okinawa. I graduated in oil painting from Tama Art University. After graduating I lived in Berlin, and started the Hajichi Project soon after. I'm currently based in Tokyo.

**M:** How and when did you become interested in Hajichi?

**MH:** I actually first came to know of Hajichi from Pinterest haha..

I kind of just wanted to get a tattoo, and thought it would be good to get something that was related to my roots [family history]. I had a hunch that Okinawa would probably have a sort of tattoo from way back, so I looked and there they were, on Pinterest! I found that pretty funny.



Moeko Heshiki

And I genuinely wondered why I didn't have a Hajichi tattoo. I wanted to get one and from there my interest in Hajichi started to grow. It was about a year after that that I actually got hajichi.

**M:** Even in 2022, with tattoos becoming more commonplace and slightly more accepted in Japanese society than before, hajichi is still very rare. How did you learn how to tattoo Hajichi? If you had started hajichi 10 years ago, for example, do you think it would have been harder to practice?

**MH:** I don't use a machine to

tattoo, I handpoke, which is closer to the original method of Hajichi. I learnt how to handpoke from Hanzawa Tamaki, as she did the Hajichi on my left hand. I really admire her. She's really helped me in my public and private life.

I can't even imagine what it would've been like if I'd started 10 years ago... But I guess that if it had been 10 years ago then it would've been just after the Tohoku Earthquake. Around that time there was a lot of uncertainty in the world, so I think there would have been a demand for tattoos. But regarding tattoos now it's way more relaxed so I think that it's a much better situation to be in, compared to 10 years ago.

**M:** Hajichi requires specialized tools such as bamboo needles and Ryukyu awamori alcohol. I also read that long ago, hajichi was performed on women by shamans. I'm guessing you're not a shaman... (lol) To what extent do you stay true to the hajichi practice and what things have you changed? How do you source the more specialized items?

**MH:** Well... Maybe I am a shaman (lol). During his Ethnic and Folk Art Course, one of my professors at Tama Art University, Reiji Andō, told us that maybe artists are modern day shamans. I really liked this phrase, it really resonated with me. I guess that we are, in a way.

Hajichi is done using a method called 'handpoke,' which involves





Left: Crab ('Kan' in Miyako dialect) from Miyako Islands Right: Aman (hermit crab) from Amami Islands.

Ichichibushi (five-star) hajichi from Okinawa mainland.

→ using a needle and ink. The ink used in the past was a mix of Awamori and squid ink, so I just change the squid ink.

I don't use any specialized tools. According to nowadays methods, I can prepare everything hassle free – quickly and easily. It's more realistic. I believe that, in order to preserve the traditional methods, it's important to update them and bring them into the present day. I think it'd be nice if everyone was able to do hajichi themselves, like, tomorrow or something haha. I think that's the beauty of tattoos.

With regards to hajichi, there are records of girls around 6 years old, just tattooing each other for fun. I do think that the hajichi that most women used to have had that kind of playfulness and frivolity.

That's why [I think that] hajichis don't really differ from the mainstream hand-poke styles in Europe and America. Of course, I think that traditional styles of hajichi are important and sometimes I do those too. Changing the ink, for example.

But as a Hajichā, I'm really interested in actually using bamboo needles and other (hajichi) materials, to do fully-blown hajichi.

**M:** Hajichi was banned for many years by the mainland Japanese and it has been said that by after the war, Okinawans themselves became like Japanese people in their growing distrust of tattoos. By the 1950s, Okinawan women had almost completely refused them for themselves. Have you faced any negativity or stigma since you started?

**MH:** Yes, that's right. My great grandmother had hajichi but by her childrens' generation – my grandparents' – the stigma around hajichi had increased. And my parents' generation too.

As part of the Japanese assimilation period, my grandparents' generation (those born from Taisho to Showa

periods) were taught in Japanese, known as the 'common language.' I think there is more than a little awareness that this was the reason why Japanese things (as opposed to Okinawan) were seen as cool and high status, even in Okinawan society. In the midst of all this, the Ryukyu-Okinawan culture, language, traditions, and customs began to decline. Hajichi is one of them.

So if I could ask my Okinawan grandparents what they thought about hajichi, I think they would have a negative opinion. This is just an assumption, though.

I haven't had any prejudice or negative comments from my friends or people directly around me but I noticed that in the art world, there is less respect for tattooing when compared to other art forms. They wouldn't say anything to me directly but I get the feeling that there is a lot of implicit bias about. But I actually had quite a bit of bias about it myself [when I first started].

Also, I've had someone who isn't Japanese say that labeling hajichi as Japanese tattooing culture is cultural appropriation against indigenous Ryukyuan Okinawans. But in all honesty I never personally felt that the Okinawan culture was indigenous. Japanese culture and historical events aren't exactly black and white so can be interpreted in different ways. I think that it's something that we need to educate

ourselves about all the time.

**M:** You mentioned that as you can't speak certain dialects of Okinawa you don't know what some of the tattoos mean. I thought this was a very interesting point. Can you elaborate on this? Have you come up against any other particular obstacles when trying to practice hajichi? To what extent do you feel that obstacles are directly related to hajichi, as opposed to irezumi?

**MH:** In Okinawa, there are so many different dialects that they say that if you take a different road, the language will be different...

So for me, it's especially difficult and confusing because the dialect that the women used from 1935 and 1970 isn't really spoken anymore. It's a real obstacle – even if I look stuff up I still can't understand anything. I definitely think that I need to do more research, though.

Also, I refer a lot to research by someone from mainland Japan who interviewed 90 year old women in Okinawa, but since it's an interview, I think the answers and words can be pretty ambiguous (laughs).

Yes, it's an obstacle but I do think that it's a really interesting one.

**M:** Before 1879 when hajichi was commonly practiced, most people with hajichi tattoos would be Ryukyuan women, who had them solely on their

hands. Nowadays, what are your customers like? Do they tend to have tattoos on their hands or are there other popular placings?

**MH:** I have loads of different types of customers come through, from Japanese through to customers with Okinawan roots (Uchinaanchu) and people from abroad too.

I have absolutely no problem with tattooing on people who aren't Okinawan, although I do think that respect (towards the Okinawan/hajichi culture) is necessary. At one time, it was embarrassing to have hajichi so I want lots of different types of people to get hajichi and spread [love for] the culture. And I hope that the tattoos bring luck (like a lucky charm) to the people that have them.

Customers often get hajichi on their chest. In Japanese society it's still a taboo to have tattoos. If it's on their chest then other people won't spot it. It's (the taboo) such a shame and I find it totally frustrating.

**M:** There are many different styles of hajichi, from Miyakojima through to Ishigaki. Do you have a favorite?

**MH:** I have tattoos from the Okinawa mainland so I guess that the mainland style is my favorite (laughs).

**M:** Unrelated – can you tell us about your top five hajichi tattoos?



Aman (Hermitcrab) from Amami Islands and hajichi finger pattern from Miyakojima Islands.

**MH:** I think the Aman (hermit crab), with lots of varieties, is very interesting. It's so powerful and fascinating. In Ryukyu Okinawa, there is a legend that people actually came from the Aman world so it's a pretty special tattoo.

Also Ichichibushi (red-bank oak)... I can't choose five!

**M:** Hajichi tattooing is pretty rare in Japan yet you have a hajichi tattooing event coming up at Bonobo on 26th February, with four (?) other hajichi tattooists. I know you have appeared at previous tattooing events, too. Can you tell us – how did you meet each other and how did this event come about?

**MH:** So, I got tattooed by the tribal tattoo artist Taku Oshima, who did hajichi on both my hands during his Hajichi Campaign (he tattooed anyone who wanted to have a hajichi for free), and Tamaki san. A big reason as to why I started the Hajichi Project is down to these two mentors. They kindly asked me to join them [practicing hajichi].

We met the Bonobo people at the Oneness event and just rolled with it! I never thought we'd be able to do it in Bonobo of all places so I'm really happy that we can. It's wonderful that so many different types of people are interested in hajichi.

**M:** I actually found out about the event from a poster by one of the DJs. What can we expect at the event? How do we get tattooed at the event – how do we make reservations?

**MH:** Thank you. The event is divided into two parts – afternoon and night. During the afternoon you can get hajichi hand-poked. The deadline to reserve has already passed but you can also get one on the day.

The entire event is all about hajichi: Taku Oshima is going to do a talk all about hajichi and there will be a photo exhibition too, so lots of chances to get to know more about hajichi and for guests to get the feel for hajichi culture.

**M:** Thanks so much, Moeko!



File photo

# Soak up the sun

## Okinawa's beaches set to open soon

*Editor's Note: Due to the on-going pandemic, beach openings and activities are subject to change. Check ahead of your visit and don't forget to follow safety guidelines.*

BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

When March rolls around in Okinawa, that means beach season will be right around the corner. It's time to go to the surfside and chill out on a resort beach take a dive into nature. Before you hit the road, please note that beach openings at some locations, especially those on the north such as Uppama Beach and Emerald Beach can be affected by the large number of pumice stones washed off the coast of Okinawa or the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Still, the island got plenty of locations for you to soak up the sun and enjoy the water. Let's check out the best spring break beaches that Okinawa has to offer.



### 1 ANA INTERCONTINENTAL MANZA BEACH RESORT

**MARCH 12:** A ceremony is scheduled to be held at 10 a.m. Home to water activities such as ocean park (water obstacles), sea kayaking, jet-skiing, and more.  
**PARKING FEE COSTS:** 1,500 yen - **OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Subject to change)  
**TEL:** 098-966-2212 **WEBSITE:** <https://www.anaintercontinental-manza.jp/en/>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.505998, E127.859180 **40-minute drive from Camp Foster.**

### 2 SHERATON OKINAWA SUNMARINA RESORT

**OPEN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR:** Water activities such as banana boating, snorkeling tour, zip-lining are available.  
**PARKING FEE:** 600 yen per hour (2,500 yen at most)  
**OPEN:** 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (subject to change)  
**TEL:** 098-965-2222  
**WEBSITE:** <https://sheraton-okinawa.co.jp/en/>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.462128, E 127.811506  
**A 40-minute drive from Camp Foster.**

### 3 KARIYUSHI BEACH

**MARCH 1:** Water Land (obstacle courses) is scheduled to open on the same day. This beach is home to other activities such as parasailing, sea kayaking, jet-skiing, boat tubing, and more.  
**ADMISSION FEE COSTS:** 550 yen for 13 years old and above, 330 for ages 4-12, free admission for 3 years old and below.  
**PARKING FEE COSTS:** Free parking is available at Okinawa Kariyushi Beach Resort Ocean Spa. Visitors need to inform staff they're parking their vehicles for the beach.  
**OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (subject to change) **TEL:** 098-052-4093  
**WEBSITE:** <http://www.kariyushibeach.co.jp/>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N26.531863; E 127.929991 **One-hour drive from Camp Foster.**

### 4 KANUCHA BEACH

**MARCH 27:** This beach is home to water activities such as obstacles courses, parasailing, fly board, and more.  
**ADMISSION FEE:** 1,650 yen (adult, inclusive of tax), 550 yen (child), free admission for those who stay at the hotel **PARKING FEE:** Included in the admission fee  
**OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. **TEL:** 0980-55-8880  
**WEBSITE:** <https://www.kanucha.jp/en/>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.546329, E 128.077174 **A 20-minute drive from Camp Schwab.**

### 5 ZANPA BEACH

**APRIL 1:** This beach is home to water activities such as banana boat, parasailing, fly board, and more.  
**PARKING FEE COSTS:** Free **OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
**TEL:** 098-958-5000 (for info on water activities)  
**WEBSITE:** <https://www.daiwaresort.jp/global/okinawa/feature/1024857/index.html>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.435680, E 127.715947 **A 15-minute drive from Torii station.**

### 6 NABEE BEACH

**APRIL 1:** This beach near Cape Manzamo is home to water activities such as banana boat, sea kayak, and more.  
**PARKING FEE:** Free **ADMISSION FEE:** Free, Shower and locker usage cost 100 yen (two minutes) and 200 yen respectively **OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Subject to change)  
**TEL:** 098-966-8839 **WEBSITE:** <https://www.nabee.info/english/> **GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.502060, E 127.857871 **A 40-minute drive from Camp Foster.**

### 7 TIGER BEACH

**APRIL 1:** This resort beach in Onna village is home to water activities such as parasailing, banana boat, jet ski, and more.  
**ADMISSION FEE COSTS:** free, Usage fee for shower and locker: 1,000 yen, Parking Fee: 2,000 yen **OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Subject to change) **TEL:** 098-993-7108 **WEBSITE:** [https://www.hotelmonterey.co.jp/en/okinawa/\(hotel\)](https://www.hotelmonterey.co.jp/en/okinawa/(hotel)) **GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.454341, E 127.806077 **A 40-minute drive from Camp Foster**

### 8 EMERALD BEACH

**APRIL 1:** Adjacent to Expo Park, this beach dazzles visitors with its emerald green and cobalt blue.  
**PARKING FEE COSTS:** Free **OPEN:** 8:30 a.m. - 7 p.m. (subject to change)  
**TEL:** 0980-48-2741 **WEBSITE:** <https://oki-park.jp/kaiyohaku/en/inst/75>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.699195, E 127.877590 **A 90-minute drive from Camp Foster.**

### 9 ORION ECO CHURA-SUN BEACH

**APRIL 2:** A resort beach home to many events and concerts. Water activities such as sea kayak, banana boat are available.  
**PARKING FEE:** - 500 yen **OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (subject to change)  
**TEL:** 098-850-1139 **WEBSITE:** <https://churasun-beach.com/> **GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.156294, E 127.647378 **A 40-minute drive from Camp Foster. Close to Naha AirPort.**

### 10 TROPICAL BEACH

**LATE APRIL:** A resort beach near MCAS Futenma. Water activities such as banana boat and boat tube are available.  
**PARKING FEE COSTS:** Free **OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Subject to change)  
**TEL:** 090-4471-0581 (for reservation) **WEBSITE:** <http://www.ginowantrropicalbeach.jp/>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.28148 E 127.731782 **A 10-minute drive from MCAS Futenma.**

### 11 UPPAMA BEACH

**LATE MARCH OR EARLY APRIL (SUBJECT TO CHANGE):** A beautiful beach on Nakijin peninsula. Water activities such as jet ski, sea kayak and boat tube are available.  
**FACILITY USAGE FEE COSTS:** 300 yen **PARKING FEE COSTS:** 500 yen (subject to change)  
**OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (subject to change, the reception desk closes at 1700)  
**TEL:** 098-056-2767 (hotel) **WEBSITE:** <https://www.belparaiso.com/lang/english>  
**GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.691692, E 127.991841 **A 90-minute drive from Camp Foster**

### 12 SESOKO BEACH

**MID-APRIL:** A popular beach on Sesoko Island. This beach boasts beautiful views of Ie Island and Motobu Peninsula.  
**ADMISSION FEE COSTS:** Free **PARKING FEE COSTS:** 1,000 yen  
**OPEN:** 9 a.m. - 5 p.m (subject to change) **TEL:** 098-047-7000  
**WEBSITE:** <http://www.sesokobeach.jp/> **GPS COORDINATES:** N 26.650026, E 127.856139  
**A 90-minute drive from Camp Foster.**





# A quick getaway to Torii Beach

BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

Although Torii Station may not stand out when comes to its size and the number of servicemembers it hosts, the small Army base is home to a beachside recreational area that will leave a big smile on your face: Torii Beach.

Whether you're a family looking to play in the water and picnic, or a group of friends in the mood to camp, play a little volleyball and unwind, Torii Beach is the perfect location.

Located in the west part of the installation, beach access from Torii's main gate is very simple. All you need to do is go straight down the hill, make a left at the end, and you should be close to the beach's entrance in less than five minutes. Passing by sugarcane fields, the ocean blue and white beaches come into sight. It's beautiful and peaceful, the perfect place to get away from the daily grind. And, yes, if you can't go without your mobile devices, Wi-Fi



Photo by Aya Ichihashi,  
Stars and Stripes

## Torii Beach

**A**

TEL: 098-962-4659

DSN: 652-4659

**NOTE:** Facilities and equipment available for use include cabins (up to 6 people), pavilions, camp sites, bonfire pit, inflatable bouncers, ocean kayaks, grills, surfboard and more.

**FACEBOOK:** facebook.com/toriiwrokinawa

**FOR MORE INFO:** torii.armymwr.com/programs/torii-beach

with family and friends, or unit parties.

Although events like the Torii Beach Summer Party Series and Ghost on the Beach can draw a big crowd, this secluded location always gives off

is available.

Lining up along the long stretch of white sand are cabins, a campground, pavilions, a water slide fit for kids of all ages and shower and bathroom facilities. MWR Torii has you covered with any camping, grilling and water sport gear rentals, so it is the perfect place for beach parties

a relaxed vibe. It's a great place to run along the shore, read a book or sit alone enjoying the peaceful view.

Just a 20-30-minute drive away from Gate 1 of Kadena Air Base, Torii Beach offers a quick getaway from the ordinary.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com

# Replenish and rejuvenate at White Beach

BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

White Beach Naval Facility is not just for ships making port calls to replenish their food supply and load up troops. The U.S. base is also a great place for servicemembers and families to enjoy some recreation and rejuvenation on Okinawa.

Located around the tip of Katsuren Peninsula, White Beach features fully-furnished log cabins located on a bluff in the middle of the facility. The view is beautiful and the cabins are only a short walk to the beach. Camping trailers and tent sites located next to the beach are also available for rent. Pet lovers, there are designated "pet friendly" cabins and campers available.

As you walk around this sprawling facility, the beauty of the ocean and tiny islets sprinkled off the coast draw your attention. The clean, white sandy beaches are perfect for tossing frisbees with friends, building sand castles with your kids or taking a jog.

You'll also notice local tombs spread along the coastline of the facility. Be respectful. And you may have the opportunity to come across



Photo by Shoji Kudaka,  
Stripes Okinawa

## White Beach

**B**

TEL: 098-954-1877

DSN: 622-1877

**HOURS (RESERVATIONS DESK):** Mon. - Fri. : 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**FACEBOOK (NAVY MWR, OKINAWA):** www.facebook.com/ NavyMWRokina

**FOR MORE INFO:** https://www.navymwrokinawa.com

some curious creatures because nature is well preserved on White Beach.

For those of you looking to break a sweat, basketball and tennis courts, a softball field and swimming pool are available.

When you get hungry or need a break from the strong sunshine, take refuge at Port of Call Club. Having a fresh sandwich at Subway or spicy wings at Wingz@Beach are quick solutions for those who don't feel like grilling at their campsites.

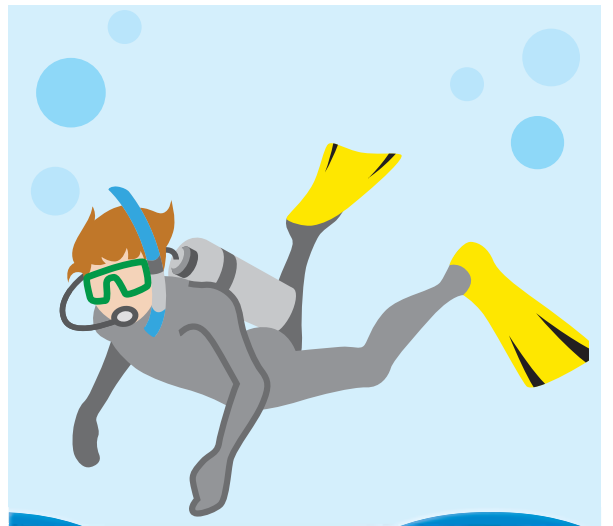
For those who run out of snacks

and drinks can count on Skoshi Mart for a quick replenishment. Plus, there are lounge chairs, game rooms with slot machines, pool tables and computer access when you need a timeout from camping.

There are places outside the gates of White Beach that people should also check out. There is a paintball facility about a 10-minute drive from the gate, as well as notable historic sites like the remains of a sugar factory located a minute away.

Located in a secluded area, is the perfect getaway for families and groups of friends. So take in the scenery, take advantage of the recreational facilities and rejuvenate a White Beach.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com



# GRAB A MASK AND SNORKEL!

## Explore Okinawa's marvelous water world



STRIPES OKINAWA

If you are on the island of Okinawa, you have the opportunity to see world-class reefs in crystal clear water. And you can explore this marvelous water world with a mask, fins and snorkel. Once you learn how to snorkel properly, it could become your favorite hobby during your stay on Okinawa. I guarantee that your encounters with all the marine species will be a lifetime experience.

I've had opportunities to dive and snorkel in Hawaii, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, La Paz, Baja Calif. and some islands in Thailand and Indonesia. But honestly, Okinawa is my most favorite place to snorkel because of the amazing colorful coral and countless tropical fish. There are many easy entry spots with shallow reef areas (5 to 30 feet) and dynamic drop offs. Water visibility is extremely high and on any given day, the sky is as clear as the water.

And if you're lucky, you'll also have the opportunity to swim along with turtles, manta ray and various types of reef sharks. You can literally spend hours floating over Okinawa's endless coral heaven.

### Here are a couple places I recommend for snorkeling while on Okinawa Island:

★ **Cape Maeda**, in the center of Okinawa, is the most popular snorkeling spot on island. Many diving shops offer snorkeling tours to this area. There is a wide variety of marine life, but one of the best parts is a cave you can swim into. If you're new to snorkeling, this is a great place to start. It also has good facilities - bathrooms, places to eat - at the site. Swimming can be prohibited depending upon weather. \*Current status is indicated on the following website.

<http://www.maedamisaki.jp/en/>

★ **Odo Kaigan, also known as John Man Beach**, near the southern tip of Okinawa Island, also offers good snorkeling and is less crowded than Cape Maeda. But note that there are a limited number of free parking spots.

SEE SNORKEL ON PAGE 8



# Speakin' Japanese

Pronunciation key: "A" is short (like "ah"); "E" is short (like "get"); "I" is short (like "it"); "O" is long (like "old"); "U" is long (like "tube"); and "AI" is a long "I" (like "hike"). Most words are pronounced with equal emphasis on each syllable, but "OU" is a long "O" with emphasis on that syllable.

## Beach babble

**"Beach (biichi) ni ikou!"**  
= Let's go to the beach!  
("ni" = to, "ikou" = let's go)

**"Dono biichi ga osusume desuka?"**  
= Which beach do you recommend?  
("dono" = which, "osusume" = something you would recommend, "desuka?" = do you~/ is it~)

**"Parasailing to surfing (saafin) ni chousen shitai deusu"**  
= I want to try parasailing and surfing.

("chousen" = challenge, "shitai deusu" = I want to do ~")

**"Biichi parasoru wo motte kimashitaka?"**  
= Did you bring the beach umbrella?  
("parasoru" = umbrella/parasol, motte

kimashitaka? = Did you bring~?)

**"Sono biichi niwa koko kara douyatte ikimasuka?"**

= How do we get to the beach from here?  
("sono" = the/that, "niwa/ni" = to, "koko" = here, "kara" = from, "douyatte" = how, "ikimasuka" = get to/go to~?)

**"Sono biichi wa itsu akimasuka/ shimarimasuka?"**

= When does the beach open/close?  
("itsu" = when, "akimasuka?" = does ~open?, "shimarimasuka" = does ~close?)

"Biichi taoru" = Beach towel  
"Hiyakedome" = Sunscreen  
"Mizugi/Kaisuipantsu" =

Bathingsuit/ swim trunks

"Kayakku" = Kayak

"Kanshiin/ Raifugaado" = Lifeguard

– Stripes Okinawa

# SNORKEL: BE SAFE



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Here are some of the recommended spots in the Okinawa Island chain.

★ **Yonehara Beach, Ishigaki Island:** This place has an amazing drop off at the outer edge of the reef. Please note the current is extremely strong at times, so snorkelers and divers should know what they are doing if they venture out a long way from shore. But if you do, you'll really enjoy the drop off. In this spot I once saw 10 sea turtles in less than an hour. This beach also has a shallow inner reef area for beginner snorkelers, but there are no lifeguards or jellyfish nets to protect swimmers. Current can be fast and it is advised to exercise caution. A camping site is located right behind the beach, which attracts many backpackers from not only Japan but around the world. It is not family oriented beach, but if you are looking for some wild beach life, this is the place.

★ **Nishibama Beach, Hateruma Island:** Hateruma Island is the most southern island in Japan. There are so many amazing snorkel spots around this island, which makes it very popular with both single backpackers and families. The water here is a beautiful emerald green. The beach offers a large inner reef for both beginners to experienced snorkelers. There is also a 10–15 feet drop off outside the reef for expert snorkelers to enjoy. Don't miss watching the sunset from this beach because it will be the best sunset of your life.

It takes practice and experience to be a good snorkeler. The key is being relaxed, which only comes if you spend a lot of time in water. I recommend practicing in a pool, especially if you are bringing along children. You can all practice clearing your mask when water comes into it, controlling your fins in the water and breathing through a snorkel properly.

Listen, if you are not an experienced snorkeler, I highly recommend taking a snorkeling tour from a local diving shop, which will provide step-by-step instructions. Even if you are an experienced snorkeler, it is good to use local snorkeling tours because guides will brief you on the local fish, landscapes and condition of the area.

When I travel to Okinawa to snorkel and dive, I will always make sure I'm aware of the high/low tides, wind conditions and currents. Respect the ocean before entering it.

Now, go grab your gear and hit the water.

## SAFETY TIPS

Don't snorkel alone.

Wear a life jacket if you are not confident in the water.

Check the current and times of tides before entering.

Always remember the entry spot and look back often to check your location. This will help you to recognize if the current is pushing you.

If you are caught up by the current, swim parallel with the beach calmly until the current settles.

Respect the reef. One of the main threats Okinawa reefs face is damage caused by humans. Avoiding direct contact with the reef is the first rule of snorkeling.

Watch out for habu jellyfish and its poisonous tentacles.

Make sure to put on lots of sunscreen.

Drink a lot of water before and after snorkeling to prevent dehydration.

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# MY FAVES Tasty crisp Japanese tempura

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

According to Showa Sangyo, a major flour manufacturer/supplier in Japan, it was in the Edo Era (1603 – 1868) when tempura became of part of Japanese cuisine publicly.

Tempura involves battered and fried seafood or vegetables like squid, maitake mushrooms, kabocha pumpkin and more. The rise of the dish coincides with cooking oil becoming more available and yatai food booths becoming more common in the country.

Tempura, along with sushi, unagi (eel) and soba noodles, garnered popularity as fast food. Then, from the late Edo era through the Meiji era (1868 – 1912), dedicated restaurants and ryoutei (fancy Japanese-style restaurants)

emerged, establishing tempura’s position in the fine dining sector, Showa Sangyo notes.

Today, tempura remains available for casual and even fine dining. You’ll find many chain tempura restaurants and izakaya serving up the delicious dish at all price points in Tokyo and Osaka. Some people even cook tempura at home, while others head to their local supermarket deli’s for an easy dinner cooked to perfection.

Convenience stores have also jumped on the tempura wagon. On Okinawa, where I live, Family Mart convenience store chain began selling tempura at their stores in 2019, by teaming up with Uema Tempura, a popular chain.

Try the ika (squid), sakana (fish), chicken, and imo (sweet potato) tempura in the warmers next to the Family Mart registers. Thanks to these “conbinni” tempura, I can have tempura more often.

Another trend that boosted my consumption of tempura is udon (wheat flour noodle) chain restaurants such as Hanamaru Udon and Maru-game Seimen. If you’ve ever visited one of these eateries, then you might remember the tempura options as you go down the cafeteria line in route to the register. Since their crispy tempura goes very well with the chewy noodles, it seems to me almost impossible to eat udon noodles without having their big kakiage (tempura with a mixture of vegetables and others) or ika ten (squid tempura). Sometimes, I go to these restaurants because of the delicious tempura rather than the udon noodles.

Over the last few years, especially since the pandemic started, tempura has become my go-to snack food to quickly fill me up. Just like those in the Edo Era did it, I, too, regularly enjoy a happy tempura lunch.

Try one or all of my favorites next time you go to a restaurant, your local supermarket or even the conbinni!

■ **Geso tempura (squid/calamari tentacle)**

For regular squid tempura, a cook would cut the seafood’s main body into a rectangular slice or ring. In the case of geso ten, however, it’s their tentacles that will be dipped in the batter and fried, retaining the shape. The chewy texture will have you hooked.

■ **Ebi tempura (shrimp)**

This is a no-brainer. Shrimp is arguably at the top of the list for many when it comes to which ingredients for tempura. Crispy-fried ebi ten is a great way to enjoy the seafood’s flavor.

■ **Tori tempura (chicken)**

Given the versatility of chicken, it would be no surprise to see it as an ingredient for tempura. Though it may not top the charts when compared to seafood or veggie tempura, it is still quite popular on Okinawa. You can get tori tempura at many Family Mart convenience stores.

■ **Mozuku seaweed tempura / Kakiage tempura (tempura with a mixture of vegetables and others)**

Some people may find it difficult to eat seaweed, vegetables or both. But if you dip anything in batter and fry it, it is sure to be delicious. Mozuku and kakiage tempura are a great way to enjoy the nutritious merits of healthy ingredients.

■ **Sakana no tempura (fish)**

For many Japanese, shrimp would be their first choice for ingredients for tempura. In Okinawa, however, I will not be surprised to see locals pick fish tempura as their golden standard. Commonly available at supermarkets, convenience stores, and tempura shops, fish tempura is an Okinawan favorite.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com



Geso tempura



Ebi tempura



Tori tempura



Mozuku seaweed tempura



Kakiage tempura



Sakana no tempura

## GSA in Okinawa

GSA Global Supply® is now storing and delivering approximately 750 high-demand National Stock Number (NSN) items formerly stored in and shipped from the continental United States. The change reduces delivery time to a few days from weeks or months.



Customers can order using GSA websites (GSA Global Supply or GSA Advantage!®) or via existing customer logistics platforms (e.g., GCSS-Army). GSA’s systems recognize the items stocked in Japan and fulfill orders locally. Other items will ship from the mainland. An electronic catalog is available.



Cynthia McKeague

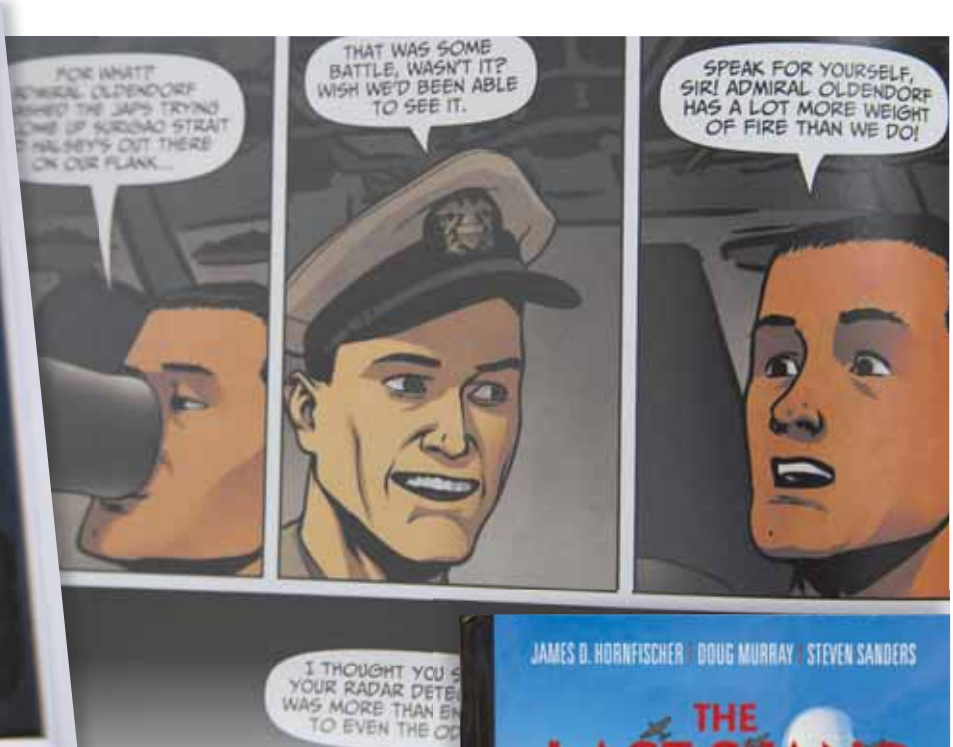
The new program does not replace existing retail stores managed by GSA in Japan. For more information, please contact your local Customer Service Director Cynthia McKeague at [cynthia.mckeague@gsa.gov](mailto:cynthia.mckeague@gsa.gov).

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# A NEAR MISS

Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors graphic novel adaptation

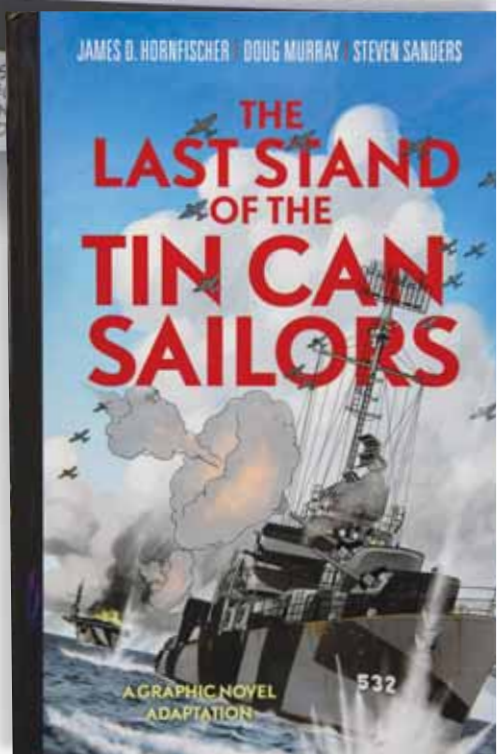
STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
DAVID KRIGBAUM,  
WWW.WAYFARERDAVES.COM

The current unpleasantness, through no fault of my healthy and vaccinated self, had us locked down again. So, all travel plans were canceled for a spell. On the upside, Doug Murray and Steven Sanders' adaptation of James Hornfischer's book about the Battle off Samar, *Last Stand of*

*the Tin Can Sailors*, is finally out. During the Battle of Leyte Gulf, Adm. Kurita's Center Force, composed of the battleship *Yamato* and her entourage of battleships, cruisers and destroyers, engaged Taffy 3, an American task force of destroyer escorts, destroyers and miniature escort carriers, providing air support for the ground invasion. *Yamato* by itself weighed more than the entire American task force combined. None of the American

vessels had guns which could penetrate even a cruiser's armor and their aircraft were equipped with depth charges and high-explosive bombs with no penetrating power. The outcome to the scenario which played out on Oct. 25, 1944 off the island of Samar should have been obvious. Center Force got a one-sided pistol-whipping and retreated. *Yamato* never again was able to fire its main battery in anger

against anything bigger than an Avenger. The graphic novel plays out like a 200-page action comic that narrates the battle's key events in a blow-by-blow style with flying projectiles and torpedoes, placing the reader on the decks and in cockpits. It plays to the visual medium's strengths of showing instead of telling as much as possible. Likely a stylistic choice, text panels are kept to a minimum and the information delivered is sparse to the point it can sometimes get confusing as to who I am following. The art style is technically proficient in its depiction of ships, aircraft and men, though has a certain stiffness to it and the layout is very static. Nothing exactly leaps off the page. The color palette is beautiful but a bit flat.



Hornfischer's colorful prose or bountiful contextual information. What makes Hornfischer stand out as a military author was his ability to be academic and detail-oriented but also deliver in a memorable way. This doesn't feel like an adaptation of a Hornfischer book but more like a World War II battle comic with a famous name plastered on the front.

If you want to read a graphic novel about a battle that delivers in storytelling and art, sharing the big picture and the little ones that comprise it, I recommend the works of Wayne Vansant. Like Murray, he's a veteran of Marvel's *The 'Nam*, and concerning World War II he has made graphic novels on the Battle of the Bulge, Normandy, Guadalcanal, and America's early days in the Pacific War. His dedication to his craft is impressive as his art and writing are backed by meticulous research making it as visually accurate as the story itself is true. He packs in more history with equally compelling battle scenes in 100 pages than this book did in 200.

Dead Reckoning, the US Naval Institute Press' graphic novel publishing branch which made *Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors*, published his historic fiction *Katasha: Girl Soldier of the Great Patriotic War*.

This graphic novel is worth a digital look, as the physical copy is not worth \$29.95. Kindle editions are sold by Amazon for half that price.

## Month of the Military Child

### Customize a T-shirt!

Once again, Stars and Stripes is shining the spotlight on military children during April's Month of the Military Child. To celebrate this year, we are offering custom-made T-shirts you can personalize!

These keepsake T-shirts can feature a photo of a child/children or artwork that they created. For just \$19.99 per shirt, they're perfect for proud parents and grandparents alike, as well as the children themselves. This year, you'll not only be able to say you're proud of your military child, you'll also be able to wear it!

To ensure high print quality, please scan the images at a minimum of 300 dpi or photograph them with a smart phone or digital camera.

The photo will be placed between our Stars and Stripes logo and "Month of the Military Child."

Customize a Month of the Military Child T-shirt with your child's/children's artwork or photo for only **\$19.99!**

If you are having difficulty with order form or have questions, please reach out to us at MOMCtshirts@stripes.com

Go to [printshop.stripes.com/momctshirts/](http://printshop.stripes.com/momctshirts/) to download order form

After receiving your form and image files, a Stars and Stripes representative will contact you to acknowledge receipt, arrange payment, and send a proof to confirm the t-shirt design.



# Stripes Sports Trivia

The longest tennis match in history was played at Wimbledon on June 22-24, 2010. The first-round match took 11 hours and 5 minutes over three days, lasting so long it was suspended because of darkness two nights in a row. Who were the two players involved?

**Answer**

American John Isner and Frenchman Nicolas Pietrangeli

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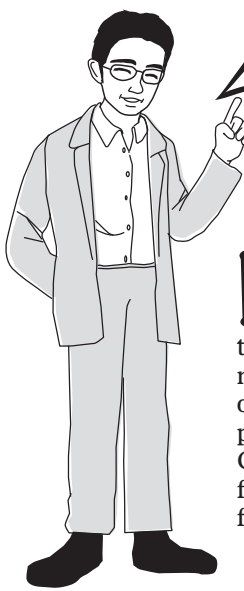


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**DID YOU KNOW?**

In Japan the last week of April to the first week of May is "Golden Week" – a string of four consecutive holidays. These national holidays along with regular weekend make up of one of the longest holiday periods in the year. Many large festivals take place around the nation, helping to make Golden Week an extremely popular time for travel and sightseeing. Things are often fully booked throughout this time.

**Kanji of the week** 私  
Watashi/shi (I/me)

### Language Lesson

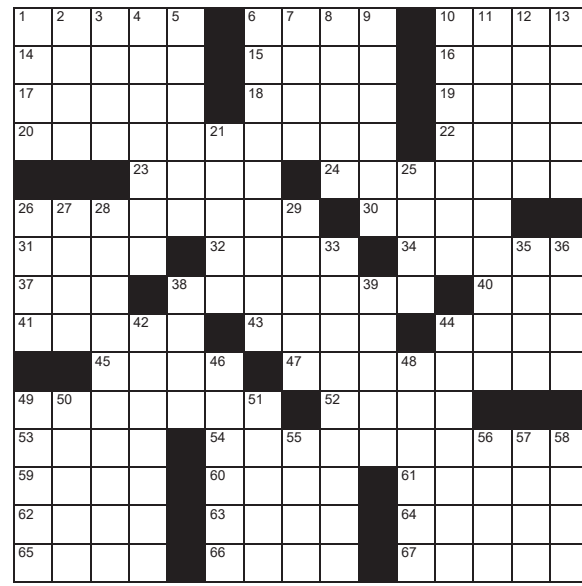
I'm happy.  
Ureshii desu.

### Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

#### ACROSS

- 1 Rigatoni, eg.
- 6 Cry from a crib
- 10 "Back In Black" band
- 14 Stopped a squeak
- 15 Ticks off
- 16 Boo-Boo, for one
- 17 Sensory stimuli
- 18 Country singer Vince
- 19 Certain sax
- 20 Moving backward
- 22 Fish stories
- 23 Vicinity
- 24 Extra helpings
- 26 Richie's gal on "Happy Days"
- 30 Glazier's sheet
- 31 Costner flick "\_\_\_ Range"
- 32 December song
- 34 Organ part
- 37 Female soldier in WWII
- 38 Baby-food choice
- 40 NHL surface
- 41 Melancholy verse
- 43 Slangy assent
- 44 \_\_\_ or less
- 45 Surveyor's map
- 47 Kitchen gadget
- 49 Movie ship
- 52 Coop group
- 53 "Woe is me!"
- 54 Type of pronoun
- 59 Cropped photos?
- 60 Miscellany
- 61 Dentist's directive
- 62 White as a ghost
- 63 W-4, e.g.
- 64 Corby of "The Waltons"
- 65 Best poker pair
- 66 Gratis
- 67 Joaquin's "Walk the Line" co-star



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#### DOWN

- 1 Down and out
- 2 Campaign worker
- 3 Vegas coin-eater
- 4 Topography
- 5 Gather on the surface, chemically
- 6 Like some birds
- 7 "Carmen" selection
- 8 Pinochle combos
- 9 Dead to the world
- 10 Pearly shell
- 11 "Because You Loved Me" singer
- 12 Like wood paneling, e.g.
- 13 Church figure
- 21 She played Thelma
- 25 Toy gun ammo
- 26 Rob, formerly of "The West Wing"
- 27 Fall birthstone

- 28 Container
- 29 Start of a toast
- 33 Abhorrent
- 35 "Race" anagram
- 36 Wanton look
- 38 Ink cartridge color
- 39 Crowd maker?
- 42 Bifocals, e.g.
- 44 Minuteman, for one
- 46 NBA game start
- 48 Give a response
- 49 Thin bark
- 50 Like a pelvic artery
- 51 Do a salon job
- 55 Regal address
- 56 Doing nothing
- 57 Flying formations
- 58 Coastal flier

#### Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

### SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Medium

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

**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.

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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

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# A Taste of Okinawa

The 3 'R's to good eating –  
Restaurants,  
Reviews & Recipes

**4-page pullout**





# 5 instant noodles you have to try in Japan

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

Ever since I started working from home about a month ago, instant noodles have become my go-to for a quick bite. Usually, quick ramen would just be a weekend snack, but these days it has helped remove some of the stress on cooking during the pandemic.

Below are five of my regular choices that I've enjoyed since I was a kid. Having these more regularly has definitely taken me back to those childhood memories. Instant noodles are not just a guilty pleasure. So, try one or all of the options below and itadakimasu!

## 5. Nissin Chicken Ramen Noodle

This is the original instant noodle, the first ever invented, according to manufacturer Nissin Foods holdings. Since its debut in August of 1958, this instant noodle became an instant hit. Sixty years later, it remains the most popular and recognizable on the grocery and convenience store shelves.

This was my mom's pick to cheer me up whenever I got sick as a child. Its chicken-consommé broth goes very



(From left top, clockwise) Nissin Yakisoba U.F.O., Maruchan Seimen Houjun-Koku Shouyu, Shin Ramen, Otafuku Okonomi Sauce Yakisoba, Nissin Chicken Ramen Noodle.

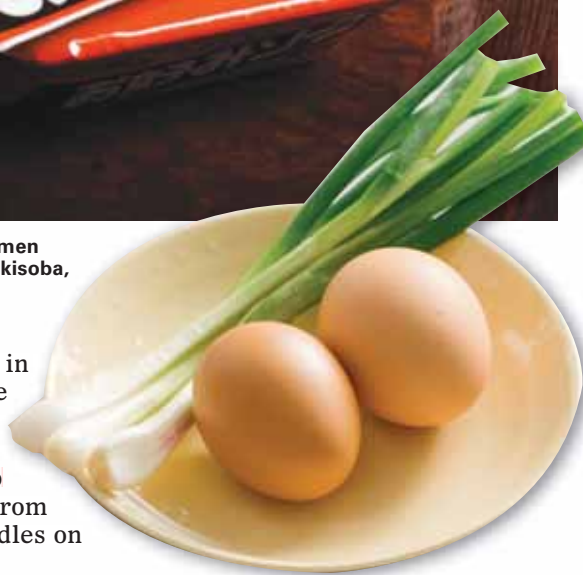
well with its wavy noodles. The combination is something I would have no problem with having every day.

## 4. Nissin Yakisoba U.F.O.

U.F.O. is instant chow mein I still like to eat even today.

This one debuted in 1976 and its name comes from its Styrofoam saucer Nissin used to differentiate it from other instant noodles on the market.

I remember that U.F.O. was already very tasty when I had



The combination of soft-but-chewy noodles plus smooth soy sauce-flavored broth has me hooked. The flavor is good enough to have alone but also versatile enough to allow you to be creative and add in your own favorite toppings like veggies or meat.

## 2. Shin Ramen (Shin Ramyun)

When trying to round out this list with a spicy variety, it's hard not to include Shin Ramen, the South Korean variety found at any grocery or convenience store in Japan.

As its name suggests, Spicy Ramen's red broth is spicy and will not disappoint piquant enthusiasts. Spicy but flavorful, the broth will want you to sip it alone even if it burns your tastebuds a little. A great option for lowering some of the spice is topping the noodles with a raw egg. Give it a try!

## 1. Otafuku Okonomi Sauce Yakisoba

This instant chow mein comes with a very fruity sauce, which is by itself a huge draw for many yakisoba (chow mein) fans. According to Sanyo Foods, the manufacturer of the noodle, the sauce was jointly developed with Otafuku Sauce, a major manufacturer of okonomiyaki sauce.

If you like okonomiyaki, you should give this a try. The noodles soften in about three minutes of soaking in hot water, but since I love chewy noodles,

I cut the cook time short to keep the noodles on the chewier side.

Not something I recommend for everyone but do experiment with the noodle soaking time to change up

the textures.  
kudaka.shoji@stripes.com

them in the 80s. However, this long-running food product has gone through many updates. Now, its chewy noodles and sweet and spicy sauce have made it even more addictive.

## 3. Maruchan Seimen Houjun-Koku Shouyu

Different brands advertise how closely their instant noodle offerings resemble noodles made from scratch at a noodle joint. Maruchan Seimen is the textbook example of noodles that are instant but don't taste like it.



Otafuku Okonomi Sauce Yakisoba

File photo





# Fry bitter melon and beat the heat

### INGREDIENTS (for two people)

- One Goya bitter melon (approx. 300g)
- Bacon (50g)
- Tofu (200g)
- Two eggs
- Pepper and salt (small amount)
- Dried Bonito flakes (as much as you want)



### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wash goya, tofu, and eggs with water.
  2. Cut goya into thin slices of about 5mm (approx. 0.2 inch) thickness.
  3. Dice tofu into small cubes of about 2cm (approx. 0.8 inch) sides.
  4. Cut bacon into small slices of 1cm (approx. 0.4 inch) width.
  5. Beat eggs in a bowl.
  6. Pour olive oil in a frying pan over medium heat, and add tofu.
  7. Add bacon and continue frying.
  8. Add in sliced goya.
  9. After the ingredients start to soften and brown, stir in beaten eggs and a pinch of salt.
  10. Cook through until the eggs are done.
  11. Plate your stir-fry and sprinkle with pepper and dried bonito flakes.
- \*Add olive oil if necessary when frying  
\*The amount of each ingredient mentioned above is just for reference. Please add or reduce them to cater to your taste.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

ideal for good health especially in the summer heat.

If you live on Okinawa, you might have heard about goya, a local cucumber-like vegetable also known as bitter melon. As the name suggests, this green, bumpy veggie has a bitter taste but is a favorite in the summer season. Goya is also considered an Okinawan superfood as it is rich in vitamin-C, iron, and fiber, which are thought to be

Goya is great raw in a salad, but the most popular way to consume this treat is fried up in goya champuru, a stir fry. Cooking it with other foods such as tofu, bacon, and eggs, you can lighten up the bitter taste.

Why don't you try some goya champuru and beat the summer heat?

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Check it out



## A Taste of Okinawa

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RESTAURANT INFO

# A Taste of Okinawa

## RESTAURANT & SUSHI BAR GEN



We're located just outside Camp Foster Globe & Anchor Gate No.3



Open every day 10:30-22:00  
(Last order 21:00)  
Cash Only(\$/¥)



## Gen a real gem on Okinawa

Offering authentic Japanese and Okinawan cuisine at a reasonable price, Gen was recognized in Stripes' Best of the Pacific 2013 as the best restaurant to experience the local culture on Okinawa. Owner and Head Chef Naoki Tsukayama highly recommends the "Fish Garlic Butter Combo," a popular dish among American customers. Tsukayama and his staff make you feel at home, so stop by and enjoy a delicious meal. Gen is located across from Camp Foster's fire station. Just look for shi-shi dogs on a traditional Okinawan tile roof outside Foster's Fire Station Gate.

RESTAURANT INFO