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## INSIDE INFO



**MENTAL NOTES**  
 DEALING WITH GRIEF  
 IN THE MILITARY  
 PAGES 4-5



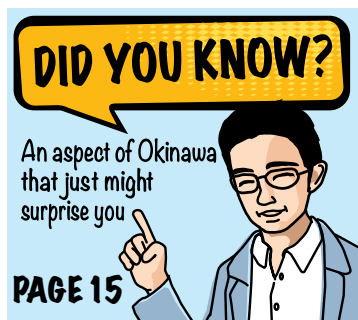
**TAKE YOUR TIME**  
 ON TAKETOMI  
 PAGE 12



**SLURPEES**  
 ARRIVE  
 IN OKINAWA  
 PAGE 14



**EMPEROR TO BE**  
 ENTHRONED OCT. 22  
 PAGE 16



An aspect of Okinawa  
 that just might  
 surprise you

PAGE 15

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**Special Package**  
**PART 2**  
 Trip to Enoshima-Kamakura

**My first trip to JAPAN**

For me, everything –  
 from tiny signboards  
 to people's clothing –  
 was exotic and different.

PHOTOS AND STORY BY CHIHON KIM,  
 STRIPES KOREA

My worktrip to Tokyo in June was amazing. There are many parts that I enjoyed and many more that I will not soon forget. The beautiful landscapes, countless shrines, old temples, the laughs I shared with my team members and the kindness of the locals still remain in my heart, now a few months since my visit. And thinking back on the trip, it still feels as peaceful as the sound

**SEE FIRST ON PAGE 6**



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# Only 4 hubs for naturalization appointments to stay open overseas

BY CAITLIN M. KENNEY,  
STARS AND STRIPES  
Published: September 30, 2019

WASHINGTON — Servicemembers and their families stationed overseas who are seeking to become U.S. citizens will now only have four international offices where they can complete the process as U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services closes more than a dozen locations, the department announced Monday.

USCIS had previously announced it is closing 13 overseas locations in the next year, leaving only seven in operation. But in order to support servicemembers and their families stationed overseas, the agency is now opening what they are calling “hub” offices at military bases, for one week every three months.

“After careful consideration, USCIS has determined it will maximize agency resources by shifting the processing of in-person benefit requests to the Department of State’s Consular Affairs or through the deployment of USCIS domestic staff on temporary assignments,” USCIS spokesman Daniel Hetlage wrote in an email.

The rollout of these four offices on military bases will happen during the next nine months and will be the only places overseas for servicemembers and their families to process naturalization applications. The locations will



Courtesy photo

be at Camp Humphreys, South Korea; Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan; U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart, Germany, and Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy.

Applicants who go to these hubs will already have everything completed before setting up an appointment to meet with a USCIS officer for their interview and final adjudication, said a USCIS official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the new overseas offices.

“So the hope is that everything is going to be able to be completed in that one visit,” the official said.

Applicants have always been responsible for their travel during the naturalization process, the official said, and they should

be working with the Defense Department to help with traveling to the hub locations if they are not already based there.

Amid the office closures, the amount of military naturalization applications has increased during the last fiscal year. According to USCIS, they have received 520 overseas applications in fiscal year 2019, compared to 347 that they received in fiscal year 2018.

The four offices will only have appointments for one week each quarter of the year. The official said the number of applications is “manageable at this point” and she did not believe at this time that families would be seriously impacted by only having the office open for one week every three months. She said if the agency finds they have more applications than anticipated, they will consider adding an additional visit to the office.

The first two locations on the military bases to open will be in South Korea and Japan, in part because the original Seoul office is closing Monday. The first visits by USCIS officers will be in late October and early November.

These four specific bases were picked because they’re located in areas where most of the overseas military naturalization services has been provided, so the impact is expected to be “minimal,” according to Hetlage. Of the 520 overseas applications received so far, 355 of them were received at the Seoul office, according to the official.

The official said the closures were not meant to make the naturalization process more difficult for servicemembers.

“Our first priority has been and always will be our military personnel,” the official said. “I anticipate that once this new process gets going, that I think everyone will see that also, and will see that that we are able to still complete cases in a timely and efficient manner.”

Servicemembers and families who have questions can call the USCIS toll free military help line at 877-247-4645, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Central Standard Time, or email them at [militaryinfo@uscis.dhs.gov](mailto:militaryinfo@uscis.dhs.gov).

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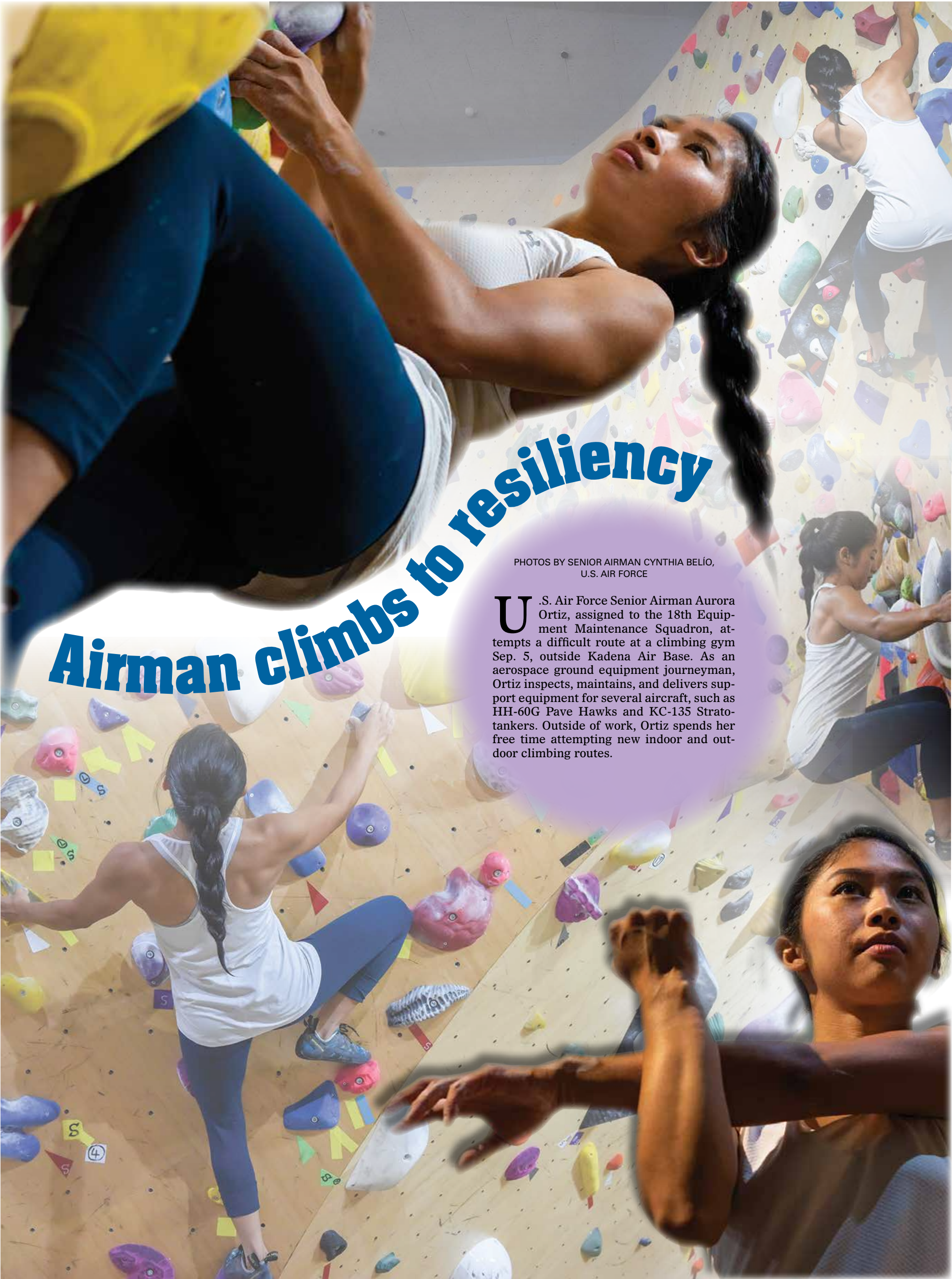
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**Airman climbs to resiliency**

PHOTOS BY SENIOR AIRMAN CYNTHIA BELÍO,  
U.S. AIR FORCE

**U**.S. Air Force Senior Airman Aurora Ortiz, assigned to the 18th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, attempts a difficult route at a climbing gym Sep. 5, outside Kadena Air Base. As an aerospace ground equipment journeyman, Ortiz inspects, maintains, and delivers support equipment for several aircraft, such as HH-60G Pave Hawks and KC-135 Stratotankers. Outside of work, Ortiz spends her free time attempting new indoor and outdoor climbing routes.



# A career counseling, consoling servicemembers

**H**ilary Valdez is a retiree living in Japan. Prior to his retirement, Valdez was a Master Resiliency Trainer at Camp Zama. Valdez has extensive experience working with the military as a certified Substance Abuse Counselor and Emergency Trauma Specialist. He continues to counsel members of the military community and is also a freelance writer, publishing books on relationships, psychology, mental health and the military. He'll also be writing a column that will appear weekly in Stripes Japan. We recently sat down with Valdez to get to know him a little better. Here's what he had to say.

## What does a resilience trainer do?

Resiliency Trainers focus on positive psychology and finding positive elements in a person's everyday life. The aim is improving well-being through enhancing: Self-awareness or identifying strengths emotions and behaviors; Optimism or what is controllable while being hopeful; Self-regulating emotions, and impulses; Mental Agility, or thinking flexibly, identifying a person's top strengths and talents; and, Connection or improving positive communication, asking for support from others and increasing communication and strong relationships.

## How long did you serve in the Marine Corps and what made you go into this field?

I served four years in the Marine Corps as an NCO then four years as a Civilian GS worker. When I was about 9 or 10 years old my neighbor had his Dress Blues hanging on the door, I was "wowed" at how beautiful the uniform was. I wanted to wear dress blues and join the Corps when I grew up. But, for the honor of wearing the "Blues" came with a heavy price. Eventually, I worked for the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., as a Conciliation Specialist and Field Agent negotiating a broad range of civil and criminal activities. The Department trained me in various aspects of conflict resolution techniques. After that, more schooling and training with the Army and Navy with a focus on Trauma and Critical Incident psychology.

## What are some of the mental health challenges troops and retirees face in the Pacific?

For the troops: loneliness. A degree of social isolation and alienation. Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. For retirees, depending on their retiree status, having limited access to quality medical and dental care; for some, no access to the commissary or PX; having enough money to make ends meet; health related issues from active duty; feelings of being alienated from America and uneasiness of adjusting to American life if they chose to return. Many military retirees are in mainland Japan, Okinawa, Thailand, Philippines, and Korea.

## You've spent decades working with our military and their families, how do you cope with all the heartache you deal with? Who takes care of you?

I try not to personalize events. I want to stay objective and concentrate on the immediate needs of the family while keying into their emotional needs and well-being. It doesn't do the client any good if I'm crying my eyes out while they are crying. However, as a helper, there is always a residual emotional side-effect of dealing with sorrow, you get emotionally "singed" to a degree. I have a support group and other Counselors who I speak with. I don't sit around saying to myself: "Poor me, Poor me, Pour me a drink." I don't cope with my emotions by drinking. Alcohol is a depressant: I don't want to be depressed, so, I go to the gym and ride my bike.

## You're retired but continue to work with patients. Tell us about your connection with the military community.

I'm retired, but my knowledge, skills, insights, and abilities remain. Concepts of retirement have changed. It's not like great-grandpa days where you hobble around and do very little. Today, no such thing as retirement, you just change your role in society. You shift gears and transition into a livelihood that fits your lifestyle. For me, I enjoy helping people. Currently, I conduct Cultural Seminars to Japanese and I have a private practice catering to young businessmen dealing with international marriages. Occasionally, I give seminars on Substance Abuse and Resiliency when called upon. However, I have active duty, civilian, and retiree friends in Japan, Korea, Manila and Bangkok, who I contact and meet regularly. All my closest friends and support groups are military associated. We chat at the gym, at breakfast, at the food court. My military friendships have become everlasting and meaningful.

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## Mental Notes with Hilary Valdez

# A fallen soldier: A widow's grief

BY HILARY VALDEZ,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

**W**hen my brother died, my mother never recovered. Her grief never subsided. She was perpetually angry. Her despair and mood swings shifted through various states of depression, interspersed with crying spells. My father was quiet and supportive. I didn't know what to do or feel.

Later, I joined the Marine Corps, and during Vietnam, as a bugler, I played Taps at countless funerals, witnessing the sorrow of family members. After one burial, an inconsolable father grabbed my shoulders, and shaking me shouted, "Why is my son dead? Why are you alive?" Then collapsed in my arms, sobbing.

After post-graduate school, I served with Marines from the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines and 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, at the 29 Palms Combat Center. That Christmas, in 2005, 32 Marines were killed during combat operations of Operation Enduring Freedom, followed by two suicides.

As a trauma counselor, I was tasked with providing defusings, which are psychological decompression sessions, for widows, family members and Marine survivors. After this duty assignment, I spent two years dealing with my own post-traumatic stress, compassion-fatigue, bewilderment, nightmares, anger, and remorse. I had to re-wire my head, re-calibrate my psychological senses, re-boot my humanity, and outlook on life.

My next role was with the Army as a Survivor Outreach Manager, while training Casualty Assistance Officers dealing with active duty deaths. A military death is filled with complications. Death does not bring out the best in anyone, it is painful to witness the deep sorrow of the families left behind.

Military widows come in all ages, races and nationalities. Most of the husbands or wives had died suddenly and violently, in a foreign country, many were young. For a widow, the loss is life-changing. Their loved one is never coming home. The widower loses more than that person: they also face losing a part of themselves. And, children only complicate widowhood further.

There is no quick or pain-free way through grief. How and why a servicemember dies has a great impact on grief. The ordeal of military widowhood is just beginning. A nightmare has invaded the person's life. There is a loss of purpose and a heightened sense of fragility emerges. The widows are forced to face their own mortality as the death has erased security from their lives.

Death is a critical time. Depression, anger, fear, emptiness, guilt, are common emotional reactions to sudden death. Grief affects every part of you, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and psychologically. Pain and sorrow are the price of a love lost to death. Your emotions follow you and there is no geographical cure. Protecting America is a dangerous profession.

A Casualty Assistance Officer (CACO) is assigned to a family member at the time of death. The Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) may be a spouse, parents, siblings or other family members including children, remarried surviving spouses (does not include a divorced remarried spouse). Being designated as PNOK does not, in and of itself, designate a survivor as a beneficiary for benefits. For support, clarification, benefits and on-going help contact: Department of Veterans Affairs, [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov); Social Security Administration, [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov); Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS); Thrift Savings Plan, [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov); Tri-care – Military Health Plan, [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil); Gold Star Wives, <http://www.goldstarwives.org>; Military One Source, <http://www.militaryonesource.com>; Society of Military Widows, <http://www.militarywidows.org>; Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, Inc. (TAPS) <http://www.taps.org>; United Warrior Survivor Foundation (UWSF) <http://www.FrogFriends.com>.

Death is complicated. Prepare for paperwork at a time of severe emotional grief. There are numerous resources for the widow or widower, too many to provide in this article. A more complete list of resources is available at: Military Widow: A Survival Guide/Steen & Asaro.

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)



HILARY VALDEZ

## Feel the Glory of Ryukyu Kingdom

# SHURIJO CASTLE FESTIVAL

Oct. 27 (Sun) Nov. 3 (Sun)

Admission: Required for Pay Area Only

Place Shurijo Castle Park and surrounding areas, and Kokusai Street

Feel the splendor of the kingdom through the elegant Ryukyu Buyo dance, historical Emaki Ryukyu dynasty picture scroll procession and other events.



Ryukyu Dynasty Procession

Oct. 27 (Sun), 12:30 – 14:30 Admission: Free  
Kokusai Street, Naha (Closed to traffic: 12:00 – 15:00)



Ryukyu Dynasty Festival at Shuri "Koshiki-Gyoretsu"

Nov. 3 (Sun/Holiday), 12:40 – 15:20 Admission: Free  
Shurijo Castle Park – Shureimon – Ryutan Street

## OTHER EVENTS

Bankoku Shinryo (Bridge of Nations) Candle Lights

Nov. 2 (Sat) & Nov. 3 (Sun) 17:00 – 21:00

Place Shurijo Castle Park and surrounding areas

Admission Required for the Pay Area Only

Arrival of the King and Queen

Nov. 1 (Fri)

Place Una (Admission Pay Area)

Admission Required for the Pay Area Only

"The Essence of Ryukyu Awamori" at Zenikura

Nov. 1 (Fri) – Nov. 3 (Sun)

Place Zenikura, Suimuikan

Admission Required for the Pay Area Only

Restoration Performance Commemorating of the 300th Anniversary of Kumidori

Nov. 2 (Sat) & Nov. 3 (Sun)

Place Una (Admission Pay Area)

Admission Required for the Pay Area Only



首里城公園 Shurijo Castle Park

Many other events will be held!

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Day3 fly back to Okinawa

### Sumo Tournament in Kyushu

3days from Okinawa  
Departure 10th - 21st November  
¥59,500



#### Itinerary

Day1 fly to Fukuoka  
Day2 Enjoy Sumo Tournament  
Day3 fly back to Okinawa

### Veterans Day Kyoto 4days

8th - 11th November  
¥72,300



#### Itinerary

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Day2/3 free at leisure  
Day4 fly back to Okinawa

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## We're here for you

**W**e believe the purpose of our community papers, websites, magazines and special supplements is to help you, the military community, make the most of your time while being stationed in the Pacific. For us to do our job properly, we go out and experience things first-hand so we can tell you about it, offer tips and give you directions. Our team, including our Okinawan writer, Shoji Kudaka, and our Korean writer, ChiHon Kim, gathered this past summer at our Tokyo headquarters for a week so our writers, page designers and web team could brainstorm story ideas and discuss how to best display and tell the tales of our adventures. Last week we published a 6-page spread in this paper about a day trip ChiHon, Shoji, mainland Japan writer Takahiro Takiguchi and editor Denisse Rauda took together to Enoshima and Kamakura during that summer session. They did so much, took so many photos and wrote so many stories, that we could not fit everything into 6 pages. So, this week we're publishing Part II. The guy standing in the photo out front is ChiHon. It was his first trip to Japan. Read on to see what he thought of the Land of the Rising Sun as well as stories from the rest of the crew during their fun day trip. Then plan your own!

— Chris Carlson,  
Publishing and Media Design Manager



### CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of the pan flute I heard at Ueno Park on my last day in Tokyo.

The time I spent visiting Enoshima Island flows slowly in my mind. The Enoden Train with its unhurried pace gave me the opportunity to fully take in the beautiful scenery of the coastline. Even Shonan Beach's dark sand and dark waters, though menacing at first, I hold warmly, as this is where I can now say I caught my first wave.

I won't quickly forget the fresh shirasu and sweet craft beer I devoured after a walk to the top of Enoshima. Nor will I forget the view of the dazzling sea from the restaurant pushing me to come back again soon.

At Mozen-Nakacho, on another fine day in Tokyo, in an attempt to escape tourist sites, I came across a fire ritual at Fukagawa-Fudo Temple. The sound of beating taiko drums and the blowing of conch shells by monks gave me the willies.

The ceremony also involved blessing personal belongings like a purse in the flames, so I handed my bag and hat to one of the monks forget that done. A unique experience that I have never experienced at a Korean temple.

I didn't seek out popular restaurants, as I already know that the fame of a restaurant doesn't guarantee the best dishes. There, on the streets around Tokyo, I found the tastes of the country.

In the bowl of ramen inside Ameyoko Market, the cup of coffee from the experimental café on Kiyosumi-Shirakawa Dori, and from the glass of sake at a pub at Golden Gai in Shinjuku on a rainy Monday evening, I sampled Japan.

And similarly, while tourist-popular Sensoji Temple in the center of the city was breathtaking with its grand architecture and lanterns, I found the beauty of Japan in smaller, down-the-beaten-path locales. It was in the delicate wood-carving of Nitenmon Gate at Shibamata Taishakuten Temple and in the thoughtfulness of those around me. I won't soon forget the kindness of the eel restaurant employee who ran out after me when I forgot my umbrella at the table.

Although crowded tourist attractions were not so attractive for me, I could feel the charm of Tokyo from the neatly arranged pretty flower pots I encountered in front of a small house at a residential area in downtown Tokyo and the colorful advertising lights of skyscrapers that stand alongside the highway as we drove back to the city from our daytrip to Enoshima.

When I woke up the next morning in Korea after the trip, Tokyo and everything I did felt like a dream. I felt like the butterfly of ancient Chinese philosopher Zhuangzi's Butterfly Dream story, exploring a beautiful country and feeling in a dream state after. Though, my time in Tokyo was short and felt like a dream, this work trip has given me memories to last a lifetime.





## Denisse

I'm Denisse Rauda from El Paso, Texas, but now living in Tokyo. I have been with Stripes almost five years. My interests include binge-watching tv shows, karaoke, CrossFit and exploring Tokyo. Nice to meet you!

Soy Denisse Rauda de El Paso, Texas, pero ahora vivo en Tokio. He trabajado en Stripes casi cinco años. Mis intereses incluyen maratones de series de televisión, karaoke, CrossFit y explorar Tokio. ¡Encantada de conocerle!



## Hiro

I'm Takahiro Takiguchi from Yokosuka City in mainland Japan. I have been with Stripes for six years. My interests include food, drinks, travel and music. Nice to meet you!

神奈川県横浜須賀町在住の滝口隆弘です。星条旗新聞でのライター歴6年。趣味は旅行、食べ歩きに飲み歩き、それに音楽です。よろしくお願いします!



## ChiHon

I'm ChiHon Kim from Pyeongtaek, South Korea. I have been with Stripes for about one year. My interests include cars, dogs, travel and adrenaline-pumping outdoor activities. Nice to meet you!

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## Shoji

I'm Shoji Kudaka from Okinawa. I have been with Stripes for three years. My interests include travel, sports, movies, TV shows, cats and dogs. Nice to meet you!

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Come with us to Komachi-dori!



## A special latte

As the writers and I made our way through the busy Nakamise shopping street, and I was dreading the (unnecessary) climb up to the top of Enoshima Island for shirasu-don, the signature fish delicacy of the region, a café caught my eye. This was not something I had seen the last time I visited the island back in 2015, it was the Japanese Tea House Hello Kitty Saryo Enoshima.

I'm a sucker for Hello Kitty-themed restaurants and visited the chain tea house location in Kyoto a few years ago, so I knew what this was.

Perhaps I was a bit naïve to think my co-workers would agree, or secretly hoped we could avoid a climb up to the top of the island, so I suggested we have our lunch here instead as we perused the cute plastic menu samples in the glass case outside the location. They had green tea soba, tempura shrimp-don, Japanese curry with a Hello Kitty-shaped rice center, and even a Hello-Kitty shirasu-don special.

Their unenthusiastic "okay," said it all – we would be heading up to the recommended shirasu-don place, where not only would the food not be cute, but it would mean I would be ordering sashimi instead.

But since I wouldn't be getting my way, I figured I might as well take advantage of the tea house's take out window. Here, wearied travelers can get Kyoto uji matcha treats of all kinds, including hot and iced teas, tea lattes, ice cream cones, matcha-dusted mochi and cream and adzuki bean stuffed dorayaki cake.

It was a hot day and I wanted something refreshing so I ordered the iced "Special Matcha Latte," for 450 yen (about \$4.20). It's served cold with whipped cream on top and a dusting of uji matcha. I usually take my coffee black, so I figured I'd take this latte unsweetened. My first sip was super bitter, so I had to go back to the counter and graciously ask the employee to add sweet syrup after all. A tiny swoosh and the tea latte was just right.

The packaging was cute. It had a Hello Kitty sleeve and a slip on the straw with another Hello Kitty graphic. Everything else about this latte was regular. It was refreshing and had the right amount of matcha, but it was gone too fast. It's a small drink and for the price, I'm not sure if I'd say this was worth it.

I don't think I'll be back to the island again anytime soon unless I'm taking visiting relatives or friends, but maybe I can convince them to stop in and have a sit-down Hello Kitty meal next time. This location also has a store with many Hello Kitty and other Sanrio character souvenirs and toys, so it's definitely worth checking out if you're looking for a fun gift.

– Denisse Rauda



## Well, Hello, Kitty!

BY CHIHON KIM,  
STRIPES KOREA

If you visit Nakamise shopping street, you're sure to come across the Japanese Tea House Hello Kitty Saryo Enoshima. If you don't have time to stop for a sit-down lunch, the location also offers a "take out" counter serving up various Hello Kitty-themed drinks and sweets.

For a sweet snack, I picked the matcha warabi mochi (450 yen, or \$4.18), because I was curious about the differences between Korean and Japanese mochi. Plus, I am a matcha lover!

This particular mochi is cubed and coated in Kyoto Uji Matcha powder, one of Japan's highest grades of matcha. It was served in a plastic cup with a paper sleeve prominently featuring Hello Kitty wearing a green kimono.

In Korea, "tteok" (Korean for rice cakes) can be found in pretty much every supermarket and convenience store. Like in Japan, these rice cakes made from glutinous rice are a favorite treat and are often included in a birthday or house-warming party spread.

When I bit into the Hello Kitty mochi, I expected it to be like tteok, but instead it was like jelly. The thin, green-powdered cubes were significantly less chewy

than Korean rice cakes, which have a wonderfully chewy texture and a bit of resistance.

Since the Hello Kitty mochi were actually "warabi mochi," they were made from bracken powder, giving them more softness and a gooey texture. Aside from the strange texture, the matcha powder coating was good but not as strong as I would've liked. I expected the green tea flavor to match the bright green color of the mochi pieces, but it didn't.

A few days later, I was able to find and try "dango," skewered mochi rice balls, from a shop in Fukagawa. These were a better sample to use for comparison with tteok. Dango was definitely closer to a taste of home, so to speak.

If you want to try mochi with moderate sweetness and less gooey texture, Japanese Tea House Hello Kitty Saryo Enoshima's take-out version is the one for you. But if you're looking for standard mochi, I would say to skip this even if you're a Hello Kitty enthusiast.

### Japanese Tea House Hello Kitty Saryo Enoshima

LOCATION: 1 Chome-4-4-12 Enoshima, Fujisawa, Kanagawa 251-0036

HOURS: 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. everyday.

MENU AND INFO: <http://www.hellokittysaryo.jp/menu?category=enoshima>





# Surf's up

Choeseoneul dahaseyo!

Gambari-masu!

Check out the video!



Photos by Denise and Hiro

## Overcoming childhood trauma

BY CHIHON KIM,  
STRIPES KOREA

When I was a little boy of about nine or 10, my family and I were enjoying a trip to the beach in Korea. I was sitting on an inner tube in the water when I suddenly slipped through the center. The water dragged me under and I swallowed a lot of salt water. My parents on shore didn't realize I'd fallen in, but my older brother did, and he rescued me from nearly drowning. Since then, I've only dared to dip my toes into the ocean a few times.

This changed earlier this summer when I visited the famous surf spot Shonan Beach in Japan. This is the very beach where in 2020, world-class surfers will converge to battle it out for the Olympics. The area is home to some of the best surfing beaches in Japan, so I decided that this would be the best place to not only learn how to surf, but also to overcome my fear of swimming in the open sea.

On a chilly morning, my colleagues and I arrived at Oceanglide Kai Loa, a quaint surf store on a quiet corner

which offers surf and standup paddleboard lessons for beginners like me.

After filling out the standard forms, meeting our instructor and three other participants in our class, it was time for Shoji and me to get our wetsuits on. Putting on a wetsuit was more difficult than I imagined, so don't be afraid to ask for help like I did.

We soon headed to the beach, about a minute away and started our warm-up exercises. First, we practiced paddling and jumping up onto the board on dry land. We rehearsed it multiple times and it became easier with every try ... that was until I had to go into the water.

The closer I walked towards the cool water, no matter that it was calm that day, I could feel the dread growing inside me. I tried to challenge my fear and stepped cautiously in. My only sense of security was the ankle cord attaching me to the surfboard.

I hopped on my board and paddled to where the coach was waiting to launch us into a wave. I looked down but couldn't see the seafloor, which meant that my feet might not

reach the bottom were I to fall off my board.

But, the lesson wouldn't stop for me to figure out whether or not I was in deep water, and the coach warned me a wave was coming. He set me up, told me when to paddle, and at last, when to shoot up to the standing position. On my first few tries, I lost my balance and fell into the water. I quickly realized that we were not in deep water at all and, at most, were in about 4-foot-deep water.

Soon, my fear let up and was replaced with fun and a strong sense that I needed to overcome the obstacle before me—standing on the surfboard and riding a wave.

I waited my turn and observed other's techniques to see if I could use any of that on my next try. At the coach's signal, I started to paddle and felt the board slightly rise in the water as the wave picked me up. The speed increased as the wave pushed me along, but I was balancing on the board. Finally, I had caught my first wave!

I could feel the adrenaline rush and at that moment, there was nothing else in the

world. The wave was small, but I felt like a professional surfer and was ready to compete in the Olympics.

The waves weren't big or choppy, and the coach was great at helping us with tips to perfect our technique. The others in my session seemed to be around the same level, so we were all sharing laughs when one of us took a tumble or cheering when we all finally caught a wave.

My trauma from nearly drowning as a child was forgotten while I stood on the board that day. I am sure that feeling of riding my first wave will last me a lifetime. And, Enoshima, with its laidback atmosphere and calm waves, was the best place to give surfing a try. I am ready to take on surfing in Korea and perfect my timing on the board to catch a couple of good waves there, too.

### SUP store: Kai Loa – Ocean Glide Marine Products

LOCATION: 2-9-10-101 Katasekaigan, Fujisawa City, Kanagawa Pref.

ONLINE: <http://www.kailoa.com/> (Only Japanese)

CONTACT: 0466-25-8211

ONE-DAY BEGINNER'S COURSE : 2-HOUR LESSON Fee: 5,400 yen

(Including rental surfboard, wetsuit and insurance)

(Excluding Shower facility - coin operated)

HOURS: 9 a.m. – 11 a.m., 1 – 3 p.m.

\*You need bring bathing suit, towel and sandals.



## Beginner's luck

BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

I've never considered myself a man of the sea. Surfing seemed to me the last sport that I would ever try, let alone enjoy.

To me, surfing has always looked cool with a laid-back vibe and surfers wearing stylish apparel. And yet, I questioned why people love the sport so much. So, I decided to give surfing a try, without the expectation of finding

out the answer.

Our instructor led six of us, including ChiHon, for our two-hour lesson on the popular beach.

After a warm-up exercise and a briefing on how to find waves to catch, paddling, and finally, riding a wave – the three basic skills of surfing – we were soon in the water. Though I wasn't scared of trying to surf, I was certainly relieved the sea was calm that day.

A short 60 feet away from the shore,

we launched ourselves in an attempt to catch a wave, one after another, with the instructor's help. In the first couple of tries, I fell off the board after less than a second.

Paddling back to the instructor, I couldn't help but try to figure out what went wrong. Before my mind could settle on a conclusion, I was set up for another shot and another fall. How to stand and keep balance on a surfboard remained a mystery, which scared me. But my perception changed on my fourth or fifth try. What made a difference was my right foot, which I managed to keep close to the rear end of the board. When a wave came, I could

feel my right foot "catch" the wave, and the board was pushed forward as if catapulted by the sea.

I was still a little nervous, which probably made my posture awkward. My right leg was stretched toward the rear of the board, while my left leg was positioned forward with the knee deeply bent more than necessary. With my arms spread out from my sides to keep my balance, I probably looked more like a "Silver Surfer" wannabe than a pro-surfer. At the same time, though, I was sure that I finally had a sense of what surfing is all about.

Who knows, I might even give it a try on my home turf in Okinawa.



# Stroll around the Great Buddha

BY CHIHON KIM,  
STRIPES KOREA

Every year, millions of tourists travel to the area to see the “Big Buddha,” one of the more common photographs circulated to illustrate the things you’ll see when you visit Japan. A short walk from Hase Station, I visited the Kotoku-in Temple, home of the giant buddha, the must-see attraction in Kamakura, for myself.

Checking out this buddha was a great opportunity to compare the differences of architectural beauty between Korea and Japan, and also to see first-hand the inspiration behind the buddha at the center of Korea’s Joseon Dynasty.

Even before entering the temple grounds, I could see the top of the big buddha. At a whopping 11.4 meters in height, it towered over the old trees near the ticket entrance.

As I approached “Daibutsu,” or “Great Buddha,” I was overwhelmed. It looked over the grounds and its green-colored bronze went well with the surrounding landscape creating a perfect balance and air of Zen.

Once housed indoors, the outer building kept getting destroyed by natural disasters and, so, beginning in the late 15th century, this Great Buddha became an open-air tribute.

Visitors interested in architecture or just curious on the inner workings of a sculpture like this, can enter the inner chamber of the buddha for a mere 20 yen (or \$0.18). Inside, you can see the traces of repeated reinforcement work and how the casting of this buddha in the year 1252 has lasted hundreds of years since.

As I stared up at the Great Buddha, a strong sense of déjà vu overcame me. The Kamakura Daibutsu evoked my memory of travel to the Gakwonsa temple that is a 45-minute drive from Camp Humphreys.

Both the Kamakura Daibutsu and the Gwakwonsa Buddha have much in common, and yet are different as well.

The Gwakwonsa Buddha, for instance, is a recent creation built in 1977. It sits 15 meters high making it about 3 meters taller than Daibutsu at Kotoku-in.

Each buddha statue show differences in their subtle allure. I found the charm of the Kamakura Daibutsu in Japan to be its restrained line and expression. Gwakwonsa Buddha and other buddhas

of Korea, on the other hand, tend to have a gentler smile and softer lines.

Though you can pull apart the differences and similarities of each, both will overwhelm you with their beauty and grandeur. And, both are great places to visit if you’re in Japan or in South Korea.

## Kangetsu-do (Moon-viewing hall)

Before leaving the grounds where Kamakura’s Great Buddha sits, a building in the back caught my eye. The building seemed familiar because it was a building from the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897) palace donated to Kotoku-in in 1924.

The old tile-roofed building is called Kangetsu-do Hall which literally means “a hall looking at the moon.” With a poetic name like that it was hard to imagine what this old building had to go through to get here or why it wouldn’t have remained in Korea.

According to the signboard in front of the hall, which visitors are not allowed to enter, it is thought to have belonged to the imperial palace where Seoul now stands. Kangetsu-do was used as collateral when the dynasty borrowed money from the Joseon Colonial Bank during the Japanese colonial period.

After that, the bank suffered from its own financial problems and took a loan from Yamaichi Securities and the building was passed to Kisei Sugino, a former president of the company, as a reciprocal gift. So, the building was moved to his house and later, he donated it to the temple.

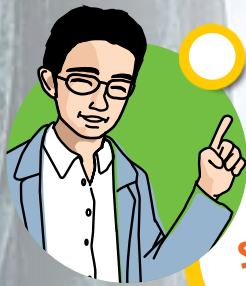
I felt sympathy for the situation of the old hall separated from the royal palace, which had lost its country and moved from place to place. I stood and observed it in reflection for a while, and when I left, I did so with hope that someday this humble building would return to its original home in Seoul someday.

Buddha in Korea



Speakin' Korean

- Try your best!  
Choeseoneul dahaseyo!
- That’s a big buddha!  
Keun bulsangineyo!
- How tall is it?  
Nopineun eolmana doelkkayo?
- I’ve never seen the inside of a bronze buddha.  
Jeoneun cheongdongbulsangui naebureul bonjeogi eopseoyo.
- How old is this buddha?  
I-bulsangeun eolmana orae dwaesseoyo?
- Let’s visit the gift shop.  
Seonmulgagero gayo.
- Let’s take some photos here.  
Yeogiseo sajineul jom jjigeoyo.



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Guam.Stripes.com



**ADDRESS:** 4 Chome-2-2-8 Hase, Kamakura, Kanagawa 248-0016, Japan  
**OPENING HOURS** APR. TO SEPT.: 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.,  
OCT. TO MAR.: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
**ENTRANCE FEE:** Adults - 200 yen,  
Child (ages 6-12) 150 yen.  
**CONTACT:** +81 467-22-0703  
**WEBSITE:** <https://www.kotoku-in.jp/en/> (ENG)

鎌倉  
かまくら  
KAMAKURA



# Tasty craft beer breaks in Kamakura and Enoshima

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,  
STRIPES JAPAN

There are few things more refreshing than sipping a cold beer on a sandy beach in Kamakura or while enjoying the panoramic vista from an Enoshima restaurant. And the region's local microbrews only help enhance the flavor and area's beach resort atmosphere.

During our day in Enoshima and Kamakura, I had the opportunity to enjoy several of the local craft beers.

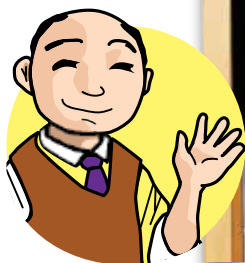
With our shirasu-don lunch, I sampled Enoshima Beer. The smooth, fruity flavor with silky-white fine foam paired well with the great view our table at the restaurant had. I was impressed with the beer's well-balanced bitter and sweetness, while the smooth texture enhanced the tasty whitebait dish.

Daibutsu Beer, which I had at the Enoden Kamakura Station, was clear with a bright, straw-yellow hue, and had a prominent but not extreme hop aroma. Slightly more bitter

than Enoshima Beer, its stronger, crisp aroma was refreshing.

Another beer I sampled was Kamakura Beer (Tsuki). At the end of a day full of sightseeing, this refreshing bottled beer tasted like it was just off the tap. I enjoyed this beer's complicated taste of blended bitter and roasted malt flavors, and its aroma reminded me of sweet brown sugar.

Though these craft beers share similarities in brewing methods and balanced malt flavor and hop aromas, they are unique in



## Local Craft Beer

ENOSHIMA BEER (AMBER)

DAIBUTSU BEER (KOELSCH)

KAMAKURA BEER

- TSUKI (ALT)

- HOSHI (PALE ALE)

- HANA (BROWN ALE)

their own right.

Kamakura Beer Brewery uses the top fermenting method, which applies relatively high temperature (between 59- and 68-degrees Fahrenheit) in the brewing process, making the yeast rise to the top. This method changes the flavor of the beer in comparison to major brand bottom-fermented pilsners.

In addition, the brewery says they don't filter the yeast out. Since the yeast in the bottle is still active, the flavor remains fresh and keeps the crisp hop aroma.

To maintain the high

quality, Kamakura Beer Brewery produces only 4,500 bottles during a single brewing process, according to its website. Although these craft beers are not very cheap - around 500 yen (about \$4.50) for a 300-milliliter bottle - they are really worth a try.

Sample some of the local craft beer when you visit Kamakura or Enoshima. The local brews are another way to taste the flavors of the region.

Enoshima and Kamakura beer can be purchased at souvenir shops, convenience stores and restaurants in the area.

## Kamakura Beer Brewery

LOCATION: 5-9-29 Omachi, Kamakura City, Kanagawa Pref.

URL: <https://www.kamakura-beer.co.jp/>

TEL: 0467-23-5533



## Speakin' Japanese

"Kono toppingu wa nandesuka?" = What is this topping?  
("kono" = this, "toppingu" = topping, ".wa nandesuka?" = what is..?)

"Zenzen sakana ni miemasen." = They don't look like fish at all.  
("zenzen" = not at all, "sakana" = fish, "ni miemasen" = don't look)

"Demo sakana desu yo." = But, they actually are fish.  
("demo" = but, ".desu yo" = this is..)

"Tabetemireba wakarimasu." = Sample some and you will see.  
("tabetemireba" = if you sample, "wakarimasu" = you will see)

"Hontoda. Mechakucha sakana kusai!" = Yeah! They are really fishy!  
("hontoda" = I see, "mechakucha" = really/awfully, "kusai" = smelly)

"Shirasu doggu wa suki desu." = I like this shirasu dog.  
("doggu" = dog, ".wa suki desu" = I like..)

"Nidoto tabetaku arimasen." = I never want to try this again.  
("Nidotoi" = never, "tabetaku arimasen" = I don't like to eat)

"Shirasu wa kimoi." = Shirasu is gross.  
("wa kimoi" = is gross)

- Takahiro Takiguchi

## Hot dog!

### A unique way to eat whitebait

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,  
STRIPES JAPAN

It may sound weird, but our obsession with the tasty small fish had grown since our shirasu-don lunch earlier on Enoshima Island. So, it was only natural that the signboard for the hot dogs featuring the regional specialty would draw our attention.

This is only one example of all the shirasu-related food items you can find in both Enoshima and Kamakura, but it was one I was ready to try. I went for the "Kamakura Dog," the flagship whitebait hot dog for 500 yen (about \$4.50).

I watched one of the employees prepare my food and was surprised when the hot dog bun went into deep-fryer.

"This neither a bun nor bread," she said to me. "We make our dog with corndog dough made from fish paste and cheese."

After the dough was deep-fried, it was brushed with brown soy-sauce butter, sprinkled with plenty of nori seaweed and finally, heaps of whitebait.

Since each dog is made fresh, I had to wait nearly 10 minutes before the employee handed me my warm delicacy.

The taste was completely new to me.

When I bit in, the extremely rich flavor of brown soy sauce butter, chewy cheese and soy sauce spread in my mouth. The crispy texture of loaded whitebait and seaweed stood out in the corndog made from fish paste. The tad bit salty and bitter whitebait went along nicely with the extremely rich flavor of cheese-and-fish-based dough.

It was tasty!

The complex medley of flavors packed into this dog made both the price and wait worthwhile to me. A complete departure from the typical American hot dog, the Kamakura Dog offers a great chance to enjoy whitebait in a unique way.

When you visit Daibutsu, be sure to drop by Kamakura Dog for another taste of the local flavor.



## Kamakura Dog

HOURS: 11 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

LOCATION: 1-16-25 Hase, Kamakura City, Kanagawa Pref.







# Impressive shrine sits on godly island near Iwakuni

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,  
STRIPE OKINAWA

One of Japan's three most scenic attractions, the must-see Miyajima Island is just 40-minute drive from MCAS Iwakuni.

The red-colored Itsukushima Shrine and its large torii gate built on the shore of the island are very beautiful and attract more than 4 million tourists every year.

Although most of the shrine is closed to the public, you can walk around its main deck, along the main altar and noh performance stage. And, when it is at low tide, you can walk along the sea floor right up to the gate for a close look. It's amazing that such a gigantic gate stands firmly by its own weight with four supporting pillars.

According to legend, because the island had been worshipped as a god for

## Itsukushima Shrine

**HOURS:** Daily 6:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**ADDRESS:** Miyajimacho, Hatsukaichi City, Hiroshima Prefecture

**ADMISSION:** Adults, 300 yen (\$2.50); high school students, 200 yen; elementary and middle school students, 100 yen.

**URL:** [www.miyajima.or.jp/english/index.html](http://www.miyajima.or.jp/english/index.html)

**TEL:** 0829-44-2020

centuries, the shrine could not be erected on the island. And to this day, there are no cemeteries on the island because no one is allowed to die there. Nor are folks allowed to be born there. When either time comes, it must be done on the mainland.

[takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com](mailto:takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com)



## Speakin' Japanese

### Autumn talk

Autumn has arrived! Here are some useful words and phrases that might come in handy when getting into the spirit of the season.

**"Suzushiku natte kimashita."** = It has gotten cool.

("suzushiku" = cool; "natte kimashita" = has gotten)

**"Aki ga totemo suki desu."** = I really like autumn.

("aki" = autumn; "totemo suki desu" = really like)

**"Tsukimi ga shitai desu."** = I want to go moon watching.

("tsukimi" = moon watching; "shitai desu" = want to)

**"Aki no mangetsu ga ichiban kirei desu."** = The autumn full moon is the most beautiful.

("mangetsu" = full moon; "ichiban" = most [literally, No. 1];

"kirei" = beautiful)

**"Aki no mushi no koe ga kikoemasu."** = I hear the song of autumn insects.

("mushi" = insect; "koe" = song [voice])

**"Octoobaa Festival ni ikimasho."** = Let's go to the October festival.

("ni ikimasho" = let's go)

**"Koyo ga tanoshimi desu."** = I am looking forward to seeing the red leaves.

("koyo" = red leaves; "ga tanoshimi desu" = be looking forward to)

**"Sanma ga oishii kisetsu desu."** = Local mackerel are delicious this time of year.

("sanma" = local mackerel; "kisetsu" = time of year [season])

#### • AUTUMN FOODS

"sanma" = local mackerel

"shiitake" = shiitake mushrooms

"shinmai" = the year's new rice

"budo" = grapes

"kuri" = chestnuts

#### • OLD JAPANESE SAYING

**"Aki nasu wa yome ni kuwaseruna."** = Don't let your wife eat autumn eggplant.

(This saying has two meanings. It means that autumn eggplant is too good to share with your wife. Another meaning is that autumn eggplant has less seeds so, it is bad luck for those trying to have babies.)

— Stripes Okinawa

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.



EXCLUSIVE NEWS FROM:  
STARS AND STRIPES  
www.stripes.com



Taketomi Island is famous for its traditional Ryukyu-style houses and white sandy roads.



A water buffalo cart goes slow while a guide sings Okinawan folk songs on Taketomi Island.

## Locals, visitors take their time on Taketomi Island

STORY AND PHOTOS BY AYA ICHIHASHI,  
STARS AND STRIPES  
Published: August 29, 2019

As soon as you step onto Taketomi Island, southwest of Okinawa, it's impossible not to notice that time flows much slower here than anywhere else.

Paved roads are few, and so are automobiles and traffic lights. There are no fluorescent-lit 24-hour convenience stores. A water buffalo ambling through the neighborhood is heavy traffic.

About 360 people live on Taketomi, enough to make a small high-school class. The island, part of the Yaeyama Archipelago, is just over 5 miles in circumference and only a 10-minute ferry ride from Ishigaki Island. It's a little less than 200 miles from Taiwan. From Naha to Ishigaki, it's about a 50-minute flight.

Once on the island, I pedaled to white-sand Kondo Beach, ranked the third-best destination by travelers in Japan this year by TripAdvisor. The sand is white, light and fluffy, and the beach stretches for a quarter-mile.

Famous for its sunsets and starry skies, Kondo Beach can entertain from morning through night. The water there is shallow and normally as calm as a backyard pool, so it's a good spot for families with small children.

There is no public transportation so getting around on the island comes down to walking, biking or taking a taxi.

Local shops will rent you a bicycle for 300 yen (about \$3) per hour. Most roads are sandy, so take care riding your bike.



Aged and distressed stone walls, red-tile roofs, shisa and bougainvillea are typical of traditional Ryukyu-style houses on Taketomi Island.

Biking around the island under a blazing summer sun, you'll need some refreshment. I strongly recommend grabbing a shaved ice or cold beverage at local kiosks to cool down every few hours.

A taxi for a private tour costs 3,500 yen (about \$33) for a half-hour but because Taketomi is so small, you can simply walk around, as well.

The island is famous for its beautifully preserved red-tile roofs and traditional Ryukyu-style houses and neighborhoods. Strict rules about building on the island preserve its look.

Repairs, new construction or

additions must be approved by the local assembly and be done in the traditional architectural style. For example, the walls must be made of coral stone.

A favorite pastime is looking for shisa – small, historic statues that depict a cross between a lion and a dog and are believed to ward off evil spirits. Each shisa is unique and typically found on rooftops or on stone walls.

Strolling the neighborhood, I came across a cart pulled by a water buffalo walking next to the green and pink bougainvillea, past the gray stone walls and red-tile-roofed houses — it was nothing but a Taketomi moment. I am not from

Taketomi, nor from Okinawa, but I felt a twinge of nostalgia and teared up a little.

A ride on a water buffalo cart is one of the biggest tourist attractions on the island. It takes about 30 minutes to go around the neighborhood and costs 1,200 yen (about \$11.30) for adults and 600 yen (about \$5.65) for children.

Most visitors come from Ishigaki for the day, but overnight lodging is available on Taketomi for a quiet island weekend.

About 10 minshuku-style inns on the island offer guests traditional futon bedding on a tatami floor. There is also one big resort hotel, Hoshinoya Taketomi Island, that offers 50 villa-style rooms.

For dining, my favorite is the Kanifu restaurant and its Salisbury steak lunch set, made from Ishigaki beef, for 1,500 yen (about \$14).

The Taketomi neighborhood almost feels like a movie theme park. However, respect private property — be careful taking photographs — and walking around shirtless is prohibited.

I recommend going to Kaiji Beach to look for star sand. It's not really sand; it's what remains of microscopic organisms. You can buy it at the souvenir shop, but it's more fun to find your own Taketomi keepsake.

After having a blast bicycling around the island, dipping into the waters, eating the chilled mango shaved ice and a delicious meal of Ishigaki beef and strolling around the beautiful neighborhood, I hopped back on the ferry to Ishigaki.

ichihashi.aya@stripes.com



The white sand beaches of Taketomi Island are among the most popular tourist destinations in Japan.



Photo By Theron Godbold, Stars and Stripes

Nikka Whisky From The Barrel is one of many spirits highlighted in “Japanese Whisky: The Ultimate Guide to the World’s Most Desirable Spirit.”

– Brian Ashcraft

# ‘JAPANESE WHISKY’ TAKES A DEEP DIVE INTO SPIRIT’S FAR EAST HISTORY

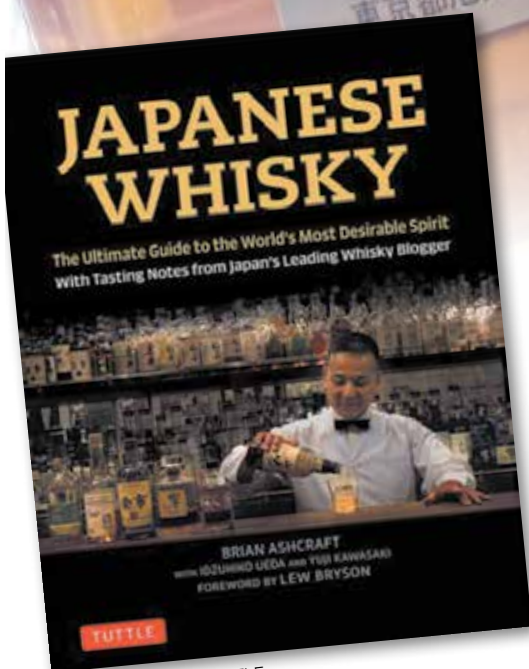


Photo courtesy of TUTTLE

BY THERON GODBOLD,  
STARS AND STRIPES  
Published: Aug. 25, 2019

Just as a guidebook is a familiar companion for visitors to new destinations, the world of small distilleries begs its own handbook for those with discriminating tastes.

If Japanese whisky is your destination, check out “Japanese Whisky: The Ultimate Guide to the World’s Most Desirable Spirit” by Brian Ashcraft with Idzuhiko Ueda and Yuji Kawasaki.

Ashcraft is an Osaka-based journalist

and author of several books on Japanese culture; Ueda is a professional photographer, and Kawasaki writes a Japanese blog, “One More Glass of Whisky.”

Their detailed 144-page guidebook takes the reader through the history, the process and the local cultures of whisky in Japan.

Ashcraft writes that to “truly understand Japanese whisky, you must understand Japanese culture. The country’s whisky tradition is a reflection of everything from national identity and industrialization to art and even religion. It’s more than just a drink.”

In an eponymous section, Ashcraft explains “What Makes Japanese Whisky ‘Japanese.’” Relating the concept of balance to Japanese whisky, Ashcraft uses language as a metaphor.

Calligraphy instructors, for example, teach their students to make only the number of strokes necessary to complete the character, no more and no less. The same principle applies

to whisky, which has risen to grace in Japan in a relatively short amount of time, he writes.

Proper Japanese whisky-making began in the mid-1920s after the country’s first legitimate venture, the Yamazaki Distillery, came to be. This venture split later to become the Suntory and Nikka distilleries, according to Ashcraft.

The book takes readers through a written and photographic tour of some of the more famous Japanese distilleries throughout the country. Nikka Whisky, one of many brands that Ashcraft discusses, has two distilleries. One is in the hills of Hokkaido prefecture west of Sapporo and the other North of Tokyo near the town of Sendai.

I tried a whisky from Sapporo, one of Nikka’s 28 varieties, called Nikka Whisky from the Barrel which ran about 25 dollars for a little over 16 ounces. Kawasaki’s tasting notes are right on:

“[A]s with whiskies of this strength the alcohol is noticeable. But behind that the aromas are sweet and fresh.”

Whisky from the Barrel went down easy like spring water. But the bite in subsequent sips was stronger and left a warm burn on the way to my insides.

Ueda’s beautiful photos may inspire readers to take a firsthand look at the places where the whisky is distilled. If the book inspires exploration, review the section on tasting notes at the distilleries the authors highlight.

The aroma of oak peat practically wafts from each page. Pour two fingers of Suntory into a tumbler while this volume takes you beyond familiar western brands of whisky.

“Japanese Whisky” is available for \$19.99 from Tuttle Publishing and can also be downloaded on Kindle devices for about \$8.

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Suntory’s Yamazaki Distillery near Osaka, Japan, matures its whiskies in many types of casks. The process can take decades but can lead to some of the most flavorful whisky in the world. Photo courtesy of TUTTLE



# Slurpee makes Okinawa debut

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

**G**ood news, 7-Eleven's iconic Slurpee has finally made it to the island!

As of Oct. 7, three Naha City 7-Eleven stores are serving up Coca-Cola and Fanta Melon Soda Slurpees. The drinks are available in three sizes starting at 100 yen (or about \$1). As of now, two stores on Kokusai Street and one on Route 58 have the drinks.

7-Eleven made its debut in July of this year on Okinawa and the addition of Slurpees to three of its locations is just one of the ways the company is bringing favorites to both locals and home-sick Americans alike.

kudaka.shoji@stripes.com

## Get your Slurpee

■ 7-Eleven Matsuo  
Icchoume-ten  
(on Kokusai Street)

GPS Coordinates:  
N 26.214595, E  
127.683440

■ 7-Eleven Kokusai Dori  
OTS Building-ten  
(on Kokusai Street)

GPS Coordinates:  
N 26.213814, E 127.681273

■ 7-Eleven Naha Matsuyama  
Icchoume-ten (on Route 58)

GPS Coordinates:  
N 26.217752, E 127.679933

STARS AND STRIPES  
Community Publication

## Home Business Directory

Yokosuka



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@bodybyning

Eyebrow Microblading  
 Eyebrow shading  
 Eyeliner tattoo  
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 Eyelashes  
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 full set  
 Eyelashes perm  
 and tint  
 Microneedling  
 hair growth  
 Microneedling skin  
 Rejuvenation  
 Massage  
[www.sisaketbodyrejuvenation.com](http://www.sisaketbodyrejuvenation.com)

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A Pledge when entering the country  
 A ban on non-reef sunscreen  
 A Marine Sanctuary  
 A Shark Sanctuary  
 A ban on plastic

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# Stripes Sports Trivia

The 1999 NFL Draft saw three quarterbacks go in the first three picks. Kicked off with Tim Couch to the Browns with the first overall pick, four other signal callers went within the next 11 selections. How many of those four can you name?

Answer

Donovan McNabb (1), Cade McNown (12), Daunte Culpepper (11), Akili Smith (3).

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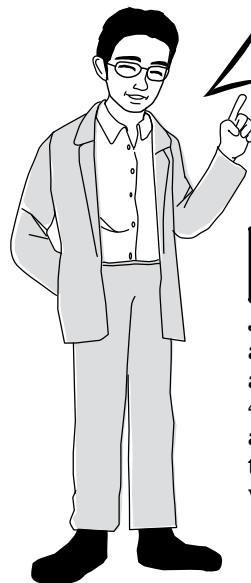
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STARS AND STRIPES

DID YOU KNOW?



In Japan, about 15.5 million fans attend about 21,000 horse races annually with 25 horse tracks throughout mainland Japan. But thanks to the recession and competition from other forms of amusement, the industry shrank from 45.5 trillion yen (\$422 billion) in revenues and 27 million participants in 1993 to 34.5 trillion yen and 15.5 million participants within only a decade.

Kanji of the week

鳥

Crow/Raven (Karasu)

Language Lesson

Let's talk.

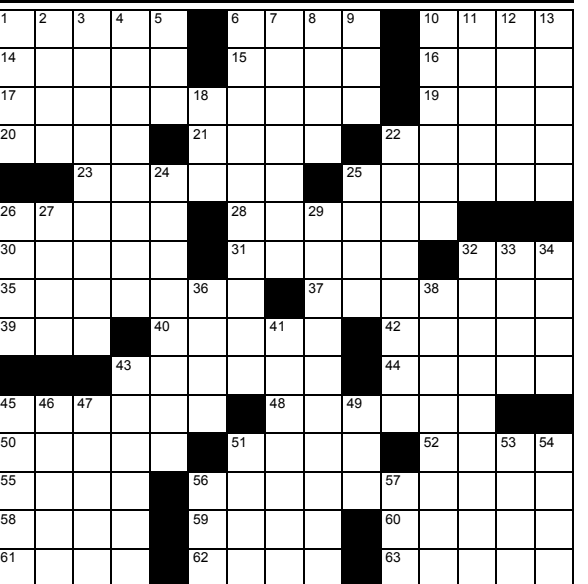
Hanashi mashoo.

## The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

### ACROSS

- 1 Dieter's lunch
- 6 Church area
- 10 Cry from a crib
- 14 Brady housekeeper
- 15 Calc. prerequisite
- 16 Black, in poetry
- 17 Putting on the ballot
- 19 Alliance est. in 1949
- 20 Title of property
- 21 Garden lane
- 22 Spiked, as punch
- 23 Laundry item
- 25 Take on
- 26 Big name in blenders
- 28 Leader of a procession
- 30 Lethal loop
- 31 Promotion basis
- 32 Kitchen meas.
- 35 Artist's composite
- 37 Mixed-breed dog
- 39 Compass heading
- 40 Starter home, for some
- 42 Athletic venue
- 43 Baggage handler
- 44 Unlike vegan fare
- 45 Pace
- 48 Conical quarters
- 50 Split-second
- 51 Ghana money
- 52 Sculptor's subject
- 55 Insurer's calculation
- 56 Like some circles
- 58 Biblical shepherd
- 59 Teensy bit
- 60 Nut-bearing tree
- 61 1995 film, "While You \_\_\_ Sleeping"



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- 62 Copycat
- 63 Insertion symbol

### DOWN

- 1 Ocean liner?
- 2 Moisturizer additive
- 3 Quarry rock
- 4 Conclusive trial
- 5 Lion's lair
- 6 Email file
- 7 Please, to Shakespeare
- 8 Hyperbolic trig. function
- 9 \_\_\_ roll
- 10 Word in a "Star Wars" prequel title
- 11 Way to be taken
- 12 "Psycho" setting
- 13 Positive terminal
- 18 30-day mo.
- 22 Pitt or Paxton, e.g.
- 24 Seattle's 206, e.g.
- 25 Three on stage

- 26 "It's \_\_\_": "I'm buying"
- 27 Any day now
- 29 Brinks vehicle
- 32 Money manager
- 33 On its way
- 34 Wiggle room
- 36 Reason for an R rating
- 38 Chinese brew
- 41 Thaw in hostilities
- 43 Predicament
- 45 Animal bedding
- 46 Sioux, e.g.
- 47 Stair separator
- 49 Diner staple
- 51 Chicken enclosure
- 53 Casino cubes
- 54 Genuine, in Germany
- 56 Cloak-and-dagger org.
- 57 SNL network

### Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

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

## 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 Last Week's Sudoku:

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

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# Crowds and pomp as Japan's new emperor to be enthroned Oct. 22

BY TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

Japan's new emperor will be enthroned Oct. 22, a day declared a national holiday. Most public offices will be closed and some public transportation will be on a weekend/holiday schedule.

In May, Emperor Naruhito succeeded the throne of outgoing Emperor Akihito as the 126th Emperor of Japan, which was the initiation of the new imperial era, *Reiwa*.

On Oct. 22, the new emperor will proclaim the imperial succession domestically and internationally by inviting heads of state and distinguished guests during *Sokuirei Seiden-no-gi*, or enthronement ceremony.

Around 2,600 guests, including envoys from 195 countries, representatives of political, academic and other fields, are expected to attend the ceremony, according to the webpage of Government of Japan. U.S. Vice President Mike Pence is expected to attend the event at the Imperial Palace.

The enthronement ceremony will take place in the most prestigious room of the palace known as the "Matsu-no-ma," or Hall of Pine, at 1 p.m.

According to webpage of Government of Japan, the



Emperor Naruhito Photo by 江戸村のとくぞう, Wikipedia Common

ceremony goes as follows:

After Heads of Three Branches, imperial family members, Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako in traditional formal attire have entered the hall, the new emperor and empress ascend onto high stages of "Takamikura," or the emperor's throne, and "Michodai," or the empress' throne, respectively.

To start, curtains on

the thrones are closed but at the beginning of the ceremony, at the sound of a gong, the new emperor and empress are presented to the audience. After the participants salute them, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will approach the emperor's throne. The new emperor will then give his imperial statement, addressing Abe and the public. Abe, in return, makes his congratulatory statement to the new emperor.

Abe will lead the crowd in three cheers of "banzai" to congratulate the new emperor's enthronement. Japanese Self-Defense Forces will then fire a 21-gun salute. This solemn ceremony is followed by a procession and receptions.

The newly enthroned emperor and his empress will parade the 3-mile route from the Imperial Palace to the Akasaka Castle to greet the masses gathered along the way. In the previous parade for the Heisei

Emperor in 1990, a total of 44 cars took the same route, while about 120,000 people along the street celebrated the emperor.

The enthronement ceremony and parade are usually broadcast live on television and offer a glimpse into the traditions of the Land of the Rising Sun. Make plans if you're in Tokyo for extra people and also to witness something that only comes around every few decades or so.

takiguchi.takahiro@stripes.com

## Enthronement and parade

- a rare opportunity

### 1. Sokuirei Seiden-no-gi

*Ceremony of Enthronement*

- Oct. 22, 1 – 1:30 p.m.  
- Matsu-no-ma Hall in the Imperial Palace

### 2. Shukuga Onretsuno-gi

*Parade*

- Oct. 22, 3:30 – 4 p.m.  
- From Imperial Palace to Akasaka Castle

### 3. Kyoen-no-gi

*Receptions*

- Oct. 22, 7:20 p.m.; 25, noon;  
29, 3 p.m. and 31, 3 p.m.  
- Imperial Palace

File photo

## A stroll through good-luck trees

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,  
STRIPES OKINAWA

The next time you head to the Okinawa Expo Park, think about taking a small side trip to the Fukugi streets in Bise settlement of Motobu town.

Bordering the north end of Emerald beach, the settlement is composed of old streets lined with tall trees. Take a stroll through the calm atmosphere and under the green roof created by the trees and their thick leaves. A walk in the shade can provide an escape from the business of daily life.

Often referred to as a view of "Good Old Okinawa," the trees have been there since the time of Ryukyu Kingdom – more than 250 years. According to the Okinawa General Bureau, local residents have maintained the trees, which act as fences

### Bise Fukugi Tree Street

- **ADDRESS:** Bise, Motobu-cho, Kunigami-gun (near the Emerald Beach of the Expo Park)
- **PARKING:** 500 yen per day
- **WATER BUFFALO WAGON:** 2,000 yen for four people
- **RENTAL BIKE:** 300 yen for 2 hours, 500 yen per day.
- **URL:** okinawatravelinfo.com/sightseeing/bise-fukugi/

or windbreakers.

The Bise settlement has now become a notable tourist spot. Many people go there to take a walk and enjoy the idyllic view. The entire area is about 1km between Emerald beach and Besezaki beach, which is the northwest tip of Nakjin Peninsula. The streets, which run parallel to the coast, are connected with each other by smaller streets called "Sooji." So, walking on the streets can feel like you're in nature's maze.

There are rental bicycles available for those who would like to tour the streets quickly. But, if you really want to enjoy the relaxed sense of time, you can hop in a cart towed by a water buffalo.

There are cafés and eateries and a sandy shore that runs parallel to the streets, providing a good view of Ie Island.

It may not only be a relaxation effect that the location has to offer. Those trees on the streets are called "Fukugi" in Japanese. If written in Chinese letters, the name means "Good Luck Tree." There are even trees called "Meoto Fukugi" (Good luck trees for married couples). Those specific trees stand next to each other and are connected at the bottom.

It is said that there are about 18,000 Fukugi trees along the streets in total, so stop by the streets the next time you're around for some extra good luck.

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Fukugi trees as high as 60 feet line up along the streets in Bise settlement.