

WIN
GIFTS
INSIDE!

Season's Hints

The Japan Times

Winter 2014

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A seasonal icon in Ginza, MIKIMOTO's huge Christmas tree is lit for the last time this year. 2014 marks the 37th year for the tree, which will be illuminated until Dec. 25.

Discover how to make this holiday season even more special with our suggestions from gift giving to enjoying a night out

GIFTS



Built in the early Showa Era, Kyobunkwan's building in the heart of the Ginza shopping district welcomes visitors to its "House of Christmas" in peace.

European Christmas ornaments in Ginza

Wainright Hall on the ninth floor of Kyobunkwan bookstore is currently holding the "House of Christmas" seasonal sales event through Dec. 25.

Founded as Methodist Publishing House in 1885, Kyobunkwan opened its bookstore in the Ginza district in 1891. The publishing arm of Kyobunkwan is also known as the place where the female pioneer of Japanese translators Hanako Muraoka (1893-1968) worked as an editor. Muraoka's life, including the translation of L.M. Montgomery's young-adult novel "Anne of Green Gables" into Japanese, was depicted in NHK's morning drama "Hanako and Anne" this year.

Facing Chuo-dori in the middle of Ginza, Kyobunkwan has garnered popularity as a long-established bookstore, providing various books for adults and children in Japanese, English and more, including an extensive collection of Christian texts. The nine-story building was constructed in 1933 and

survived the air raids during World War II and still stands today.

The "House of Christmas" event is offering around 3,000 items directly imported from European countries such as German Schwibbogen (candle holders), Christmas pyramids, nutcrackers, Räuchermann (incense smokers) and Schneekugeln (snow globes), as well as French music boxes, Portuguese cribs, American Advent calendars and many ornaments made of wood, lace, tin and other materials.

Also, there are bottled Glühwein (mulled wine) and Christmas Stollens.

The shop is decorated with lovely shadow pictures by Japanese artist Seiji Fujishiro, further adding to the merry Christmas mood. Kyobunkwan's foreign book division on the 5th floor is offering a Christmas discount from 10 percent to 30 percent through Dec. 25.

Kyobunkwan bookstore is near Exit A9 of the Tokyo Metro Ginza Station or five minutes from JR Yurakucho Station. "House of Christmas" is open daily from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. through Dec. 25; hours vary for each floor and day. For more information, visit www.kyobunkwan.co.jp



L.M. Montgomery's "Anne of Green Gables" was translated into Japanese by Hanako Muraoka and published in Japan in 1952.



House of Christmas is offering Christmas ornaments imported from Europe, including German-style snow globes, through Dec. 25.

NORITAKE GINZA OFFERS SEASONAL GIFTS

Nestled in Tokyo's upscale shopping district, Noritake Ginza is a store directly managed by the prestigious Noritake Co., Ltd., one of the world's largest tableware companies.

The store beautifully displays a variety of dinnerware sets in such patterns as Imperial Suite and White Palace, all of which evoke a classic and luxurious image.

In the "cher blanc" corner, which showcases the company's casual, yet still refined dinnerware, modern settings are sublimely on display.

Ahead of the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the store is offering some limited seasonal items.

A porcelain sheep embodies a sweeping form in a modern finish while maintaining a traditional Japanese style. In the Chinese zodiac, 2015 is the year of the sheep, an animal symbolizing a peaceful family life.

Another recommendation is the 2014 Christmas plate featuring lovely Ragdoll cats, produced by Okura Art China, one of the Noritake's group companies.

Noritake Ginza (Bunshodo Bldg. 2F, 3-4-12 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo) is one minute from Exit A13, Ginza Station on



Porcelain sheep (¥16,200)



2014 Christmas plate featuring Ragdoll cats by Okura Art China (¥19,440)

the Ginza, Marunouchi and Hibiya lines; open 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Closed New Year's holidays only. 03-3567-6121

Giveaways

The Japan Times celebrates the season of giving and is happy to present some holiday gifts to our readers. Hope you can find something you like from the items below.

1. Intersect by Lexus

One of the world's premier automakers, Lexus's brand experience space, "Intersect by Lexus," in Aoyama offers people an insight into its philosophy. Arts and crafts of timeless beauty created by a new generation of Japanese artists are available at the "Crafted for Lexus" store. Among the works, ceramics brand One Kiln in Kagoshima Prefecture is offering limited-edition colored mugs for Christmas. Three readers have a chance to win one of the 20 mugs available.



5. Kogetsu

Kogetsu Co., a Japanese confectionery company founded in 1945 in Kyoto, celebrates the Christmas season with the introduction of a new flavor of Buche de Noel made with sweet bean paste, available through Dec. 25. To allow people try a unique Christmas taste this year, the Japanese-style Buche de Noel will be presented to 10 lucky readers. Kogetsu's new store opens in Tokyo's Kagurazaka district on Dec. 5.



2. Dr. Taffi

Dr. Taffi, Tuscan-based cosmetic brand producing 100 percent natural beauty products, will offer a bath foam and room fragrance candle set from its Camelia Chic series to five lucky readers. Both contain camelia rose and coconut scents. The bath foam can also be used as shower gel and the room candle will last 30 to 40 hours.



6. Dr. Beckmann

Dr. Beckmann will offer its popular stain removal pen to five readers. This portable, convenient pen offers unprecedented effectiveness in removing tough stains from clothing.



7. bills

Australian restaurant bills has teamed up with Single Origin Roasters, a Sydney-based coffee roaster, and now offers the coffee at its four branches in Japan. Five readers' email addresses will be chosen at random and they will win a free cup of this exclusive coffee.



3. National Azabu

National Azabu is offering strong plastic tote bags created by a famous designer to 10 readers. You can read more about the store on page B5.



4. Meidi-Ya

Meidi-Ya's outlet in Hiroo will offer its Blueberry Jam Nouveau 2014 to five readers. There is more information about the store on page B4.



8. Royal Park Hotel The Haneda, Tokyo

Royal Park Hotel The Haneda, Tokyo, will offer an accommodation voucher for its Superior Twin room to one lucky couple. Located inside the international terminal of Haneda airport, the hotel is a great place to relax while traveling. The voucher is valid for six months from Dec. 22 with some exempted dates.

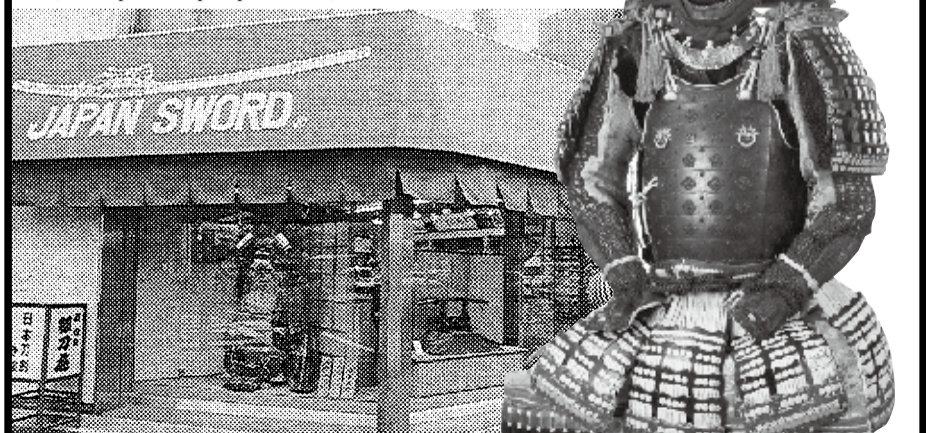


To apply, please email The Japan Times at jtad@japantimes.co.jp with your name, address, phone number, occupation/nationality and the number of your desired prize, with the subject line "Holiday Giveaway," before Monday, Dec. 15.

Note: Only winners will be notified. Personal information will only be used to send prizes.

SAMURAI ART

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Japan Sword Co., Ltd. 株式会社 日本刀剣

3-8-1, Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Open: 9:30 a.m. ~ 6:00 p.m., Sat. 9:30 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m. (except for Sun. & Nat'l Holidays)

<http://www.japansword.co.jp>

Tel. 03-3434-4321

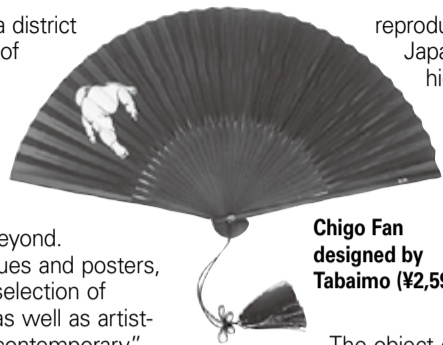
GIFTS

MUSEUM OFFERS STYLISH, UNIQUE GIFTS

Located in the Kita-Shinagawa district in Tokyo, the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art is one of the oldest museums of contemporary art in Japan. The museum hosts the most cutting-edge culture, including art, design, architecture, music and dance by artists from Japan and beyond.

In addition to exhibition catalogues and posters, the museum shop features a full selection of museum and designer gift items as well as artist-designed goods. Sticking to the "contemporary" theme, the museum promotes the newest styles and trends at the shop in an effort to make art an integral and enjoyable part of everyday life.

Among the recommendations is "Hammer House"



Chigo Fan designed by Tabaimo (¥2,590)

The object consists of eight interconnected cubes that can be opened in endless ways, but form a single cube when linked together.

The Hara Museum of Contemporary Art is 15 minutes from JR Shinagawa Station; open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Wed. till 8 p.m.) Closed Mon. Entrance fee ¥1,100 is required for the museum shop.

Web: www.haramuseum.or.jp



YOSHIMOTO CUBE designed by Naoki Yoshimoto (¥4,860)



Hammer House designed by Shiro Kuramata (¥15,660)



Miraikan Shop

SMART GIFTS FROM SCIENCE MUSEUM

The National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan) provides an open forum for all to understand the things happening in our world today from a scientific point of view, with a belief that science and technology are part of our culture.

In addition to permanent displays and exhibitions, Miraikan offers various programs including open experiments and talks, where visitors are able to experience the technological progress of today, while exchanging opinions and ideas with science communicators from simple day-to-day questions to the latest technologies, global environment and space exploration.

Miraikan's museum shop has a collection of original science goods perfect for souvenirs, ASIMO robot goods, products related to space, earth and the environment, observation and experiment kits and books on science.

Among the recommendations are original experiment kit that enables users to extract DNA from food; and original "Euglena Cookies," each containing about 200 million euglenas, which are expected to become a food of the future.

Miraikan is five minutes from Fune-no-kagakukan Station or four minutes from Telecom Center Station, Yurikamome Line; museum shop is open daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Tues. and Dec. 28 to Jan. 1. Web: www.miraikan.jst.go.jp



Miraikan's original "DNA Extraction Kit" experiment set (¥1,543)

KYOTO-STYLE SKIN CARE

Founded in 1904 in Kyoto, cosmetic company Yojiya is known for "aburorigami" (oil-blotting facial paper), a special type of Japanese paper which prepares the skin for smooth makeup application by absorbing excess-oil.

The company also offers a variety of cosmetics, traditional makeup tools and natural skin care products. Yojiya's hand-sized pack of facial paper soap is light, thin and natural, gaining popularity as a

Facial paper soap (¥367)



A limited Christmas set (¥4,644)

convenient travel item.

Besides 10 shops in sightseeing areas around Kyoto, Yojiya has branches in Tokyo and Osaka as well as Haneda, Narita and Kansai international airports.

Web: www.yojiya.co.jp



Euglena Cookies (¥463)

▲ MEIDI-YA

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12/5 (Fri.) ▶ 12/25 (Thu.)

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1st Floor Hiroo Plaza, 6-6, Hiroo 5-chome, Shibuya-ku
Open every day all year round from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Tel: (03) 3444-6221

www.meidi-ya-store.com

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TEL.03-3721-4161
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
STORE HOURS 09:00-21:30
2-6-21, Tamagawa Den-en-chofu, Setagaya-Ku, TOKYO.

http://www.national-azabu.com

Home delivery service available (Please see Homepage for more details)

*Due to situations beyond our control, advertised items may not be available, we apologize for any inconvenience.

GOURMET

Andaz Tokyo Toranomon Hills

Andaz Tokyo is proud to introduce its "New Year's Eve Countdown Gala Dinner," an evening of festive live music to ring in the New Year in style, surrounded by the beautiful and exciting night views of Tokyo from the 51st-floor Andaz Tavern.

While enjoying the last hours of the year in a sophisticated, yet warm atmosphere, a wonderful dinner will be served, featuring delights such as Champagne soup, caviar and Japanese F1 beef sirloin, prepared by Executive Chef Gerhard Passrigger.

On Dec. 31 the first seating will be the Gala Dinner from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. including a choice of four or five courses (¥16,000 or ¥18,000), while the second seating, the Countdown Dinner (¥29,000) will begin at 8:30 p.m. with a five course menu, unlimited Veuve Clicquot and a wine pairing for each dish.

For night owls, a party will be held on the 52nd floor, which can be joined for free by any Gala Dinner customers. Others: ¥6,000, including one glass of Champagne.



Reservations: 03-6830-7739 or email tokyo.restaurant@andaz.com
Address: 1-23-4 Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo
 Five minutes from Tokyo Metro Toranomon Station
Web: <http://tokyo.andaz.hyatt.com/hotel/dining>

ARMANI / RISTORANTE

How quickly this year has passed. On the 10th floor of the ARMANI / GINZA tower, the restaurant under Giorgio Armani's name, ARMANI / RISTORANTE has prepared another sumptuous selection of culinary treats for the festive period from Dec. 20 to 25.

Chef Francesco Mazzi has crafted a Christmas menu called Natale (Christmas in Italian) that will allow customers to enjoy the sights, smells and tastes of the exquisite ingredients.

With an exciting Italian twist on traditional fare, all six courses are prepared with luxury products such as 18-month-aged Parma ham, Oscietra caviar, black truffles and matsutake mushrooms.

This year, a glass of Laurent Perrier Grand Siècle will be included as an aperitif.

The course will be available at ¥25,000 per person including tax, but is subject to a service charge.

For a more private experience, booths, enclosed in elegant gold screens designed by Giorgio Armani himself, offer a discreet and comfortable space to make the experience even more special. Booth charge is ¥10,000, including tax.



Tel: 03-6274-7005
Address: ARMANI / GINZA TOWER, 10F, 5-5-4 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo
 One minute from Tokyo Metro Ginza Station
Hours: Lunch 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. (L.O.), dinner 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. (L.O.), Sundays and holidays until 9 p.m. (L.O.)
Web: www.armani-ristorante.jp

Aoyama Laputa Garden

Laguna Terrace (California Cuisine)

Aoyama Laputa, a popular rooftop destination in the heart of Aoyama, has completed its renovations and has emerged as a more sophisticated and luxurious resort-like restaurant.



The newly opened Laguna Terrace restaurant, serving original California food based on European cuisine, will offer a Christmas menu from Dec. 19 to 25.

From starter to dessert and a cup of coffee, five exclusive courses made with the finest and freshest products from both the land and the sea such as scallops, organic vegetables and fillet of Matsuzaka beef will delight diners' palates.

The dinner will be available for ¥20,000 per person and comes with a glass of Moët et Chandon Champagne. The price includes tax, but the meal is subject to a service charge.

The restaurant's chic white interior provides an elegant atmosphere, while the illuminated azure swimming pool and splendid night view of Tokyo add the perfect accents to a celebratory evening.

Tel: 03-6804-3682
Hours: 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. (L.O. 10 p.m.)

Address: Unimat Aoyama Bldg., 9F, 2-12-14 Minami-Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo. Four minutes from Tokyo Metro Gaienmae Station.
Web: www.aoyama-laputa.jp



Thirty Six (Bar & Lounge)

Sharing space with the restaurant, the rooftop bar & lounge, Thirty Six, is also pleased to offer discerning guests a Christmas dinner on from Dec. 19 to 25.

An appetizer, main dish, coffee and dessert will be available. Delicious dishes, created using choice ingredients, such as grilled fillet of U.S. beef, scallops and organic vegetables will be on offer.



The dinner will be available for ¥8,000 per person, or for ¥10,000, accompanied by a bottle of sparkling wine. Prices include tax. There are three seatings for 90-minutes each; from 5 p.m., 7 p.m. and 9 p.m.

Offering a variety of cocktails and an extensive selection of wines and spirits, the bar can cater to any need from a pre-dinner aperitif to a post-meal digestif. Its modern and stylish black interior

adds to the romantic atmosphere, while offering a breathtaking night view of the sparkling city lights.

Tel: 03-6804-3692
Hours: 5:30 p.m. to 2 a.m. (Sunday, from 5 p.m. to 11 p.m.)



Conrad Tokyo

For those who are thinking of preparing for the coming holiday season, the Conrad Tokyo will be accepting reservations for their take-out Christmas dinner from Dec. 1 to 19.

Hoping everybody can enjoy the holiday spirit and share happiness with their family and friends, the hotel offers a take-out dinner so people can enjoy the exclusive hotel dinner at home on Dec. 24 or 25.

The set for two contains roast beef, gravy, horseradish mashed potatoes, butternut squash with cinnamon and nutmeg, fricassee and a panettone for dessert.

The set will be available for ¥15,500 for two and a set that comes with a half bottle of Louis Roederer Champagne is ¥21,000. Prices exclude tax and service charge.

Other Conrad restaurants will offer Christmas menus as well. The hotel's elegant French restaurant Collage will offer a dinner prepared by the Michelin-star winning chef Shinya Maeda.



Tel: 03-6388-8745
Address: Tokyo Shiodome Building, 1-9-1 Higashi-Shinbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo
 One minute from Shiodome Station (Yurikamome and Oedo lines) or seven minutes from Shinbashi Station (various lines).
Web: www.conradtokyo.co.jp

Grand Hyatt Tokyo

Through Dec. 25, Grand Hyatt Tokyo's "Circle of LOVE" charity program will work to support both the disabled and children in the Tohoku region, an area hit by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami.

Working with Re Kikou, a nonprofit organization that recycles wine and champagne corks into new products, corks from the hotel are made into original Grand Hyatt



Tokyo items, from which a portion of the sales will be donated to charity. A portion of some accommodation rates will be donated to the Kids Earth Fund (KEF).

Additionally, the lobby will feature the Circle of LOVE Tree, decorated with recycled-cork ornaments made by the disabled. The ornaments are available for purchase in all hotel restaurants, with a part of the revenue donated to Tohoku children via KEF.

The hotel's Christmas cakes and hampers are another way to celebrate the season. There are three different "Circle of LOVE Hampers," which contain colorful snacks and a bottle of sparkling wine in a recycled cork box (only 30 available). Reservations are available through the Fiorentina Pastry Boutique at 03-4333-8713.

Tel: 03-4333-1234
Address: 6-10-3 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo
 Three minutes from Roppongi Station on the Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line, or six minutes from Roppongi Station on the Oedo Line.
Web: <http://tokyo.grand.hyatt.jp>



MEIDI-YA: MORE THAN FOOD

Meidi-Ya supermarket has long been known for its selection of imported foods. The branch in Hiroo, home of many expats and embassies, has long provided the local community with quality products.

The second floor of the Hiroo branch in Hiroo Plaza has, since June, been home to the Meidi-Ya Store Annex, which sells a variety of kitchenware and other items.

For those who want to buy souvenirs for the people back home, the annex offers goods with Japanese designs and decorations, including plates, towels and other items adorned with images of Mt. Fuji, kimono-clad medieval women or next year's "eto," zodiac animal, sheep.

A face towel with a sheep print sells for ¥1,100 yen and two pairs of wooden chopsticks — one set featuring Mt. Fuji with the sun and the other bearing Mt. Fuji with clouds — are ¥950.

In addition to imported items, Meidi-Ya Hiroo boasts Japanese delicacies, including "osechi ryori," Japanese New Year's cuisine that contains many traditional dishes. For osechi ryori sets, customers have to place orders by Dec. 25 to be picked up Dec. 31.

Osechi ryori is typically eaten over several days at the beginning of the year.



The store also has a special sake, "Yuki Otoko" (Snowman), for the holiday season for ¥980 for a 720 ml bottle. The dry sake is made in Uonuma, Niigata Prefecture, which is known for its high-quality rice. Meidi-Ya also stocks everything from fresh meats and vegetables to wine, tofu and ready-to-eat items.



Entrance of Meidi-Ya Store Annex



Osechi ryori is a traditional food for the New Year.



Meidi-Ya has many New Year's goodies.



GOURMET

Symphony (Royal Park Hotel Tokyo)

The popular Symphony lounge restaurant in the Royal Park Hotel Tokyo, which lies in the heart of the Nihonbashi district, is holding a savory Italian food fair at dinner time through Dec. 19.

During the fair, the restaurant is offering about 30 varieties of authentic Italian cuisine, available on both the buffet and a la carte. Buffet recommendations include two kinds of pasta, pesto and spaghetti alla puttanesca, made to order by a chef as customers look on.



The dinner buffet is ¥5,000 per adult on weekdays (¥6,000 on weekends and holidays) and customers who arrive after 7:30 p.m. on weekdays pay only ¥4,000. Prices exclude tax and service charge.

From morning to evening, Symphony serves a delightful variety of sandwiches, salads and cakes, making it a perfect place to drop in anytime and feel right at home in the warm and relaxing atmosphere.

Tel: 03-5641-3600 (9 a.m. to 8 p.m.)
Address: 2-1-1 Nihonbashi-Kakigara-cho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo
 Direct access from Tokyo Metro Suitengumae Station.
Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. (open from 7 a.m. on weekends and holidays)
Web: www.rph.co.jp

Royal Park Hotel The Shiodome, Tokyo



Royal Park Hotel The Shiodome, Tokyo will offer a Christmas dinner buffet in its Shiosai ballroom, from Dec. 23 to 25.

A range of dishes, including smoked salmon trout, cold spaghetti salad with crab, shrimp and sea bream acqua pazza and roast turkey with cranberry sauce will be available. Additionally, mushroom and foie gras risotto and roast beef will be served to order. An assortment of desserts, including assorted fruit and Buche de Noël will be also be offered.

The dinner will start from 6 p.m. and last until 9 p.m. (8:30 p.m. last admission) and will cost ¥6,000 per person and ¥3,000 for elementary school students. Prices include tax and a service charge.

From 7:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., a live jazz vocal performance will help add to the ambiance and atmosphere of the special night.



Tel: 03-6253-1111
Address: 1-6-3 Higashi-shinbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo
 One minute from Shiodome Station on the Yurikamome and Toei Oedo lines
Web: www.rph-the.co.jp/shiodome

NATIONAL AZABU: ONE-STOP SHOP FOR HOLIDAY NEEDS, NO MATTER HOW YOU CELEBRATE

National Azabu Supermarket, in the Azabu district of Tokyo, has been serving foreigners and Japanese with imported foods, drinks and other items such as kitchen goods or Western seasonal decorations for 52 years.

This popular shopping destination for foreign workers and embassy officials began operating in 1962 in Azabu, Minato Ward.

"I want family and friends to enjoy the holiday season together, and I hope that by shopping here they can leave 2014 on a stomach full of great holiday foods," said Dale Toriumi, the store manager of National Azabu Supermarket.

The store's first floor ensures this is possible. Shelves are stocked with imported goods that are sure to



A selection of over 200 types of cheese

evoke nostalgia for those who have been overseas. The produce section spills over with vibrant vegetables and the deli boasts a delectable selection of meats. Popular holiday meats are the imported whole turkeys — ranging in price from ¥3,640 to ¥11,590 — and honey-baked hams. The deli also offers tasty local meat products.

On the way out of the store, try the peanut butter machine to take home a fresh batch of DIY peanut butter.

For customers that spend over ¥5,000, National Azabu also offers free delivery to parts of Minato, Shibuya, Chiyoda, Meguro and Chiyoda wards. Please consult shop clerks for details.

For more information, please visit www.national-azabu.com.



Fresh, warm peanut butter in the making

Charles Heidsieck: This season's recommended Brut Champagne



Reserve and order your rotisserie chicken for holidays.

Café California (Sheraton Miyako Hotel Tokyo)

Café California is located on the first floor of the Sheraton Miyako Hotel Tokyo in Shirokanedai, a tranquil residential district of Tokyo easily accessible from both Ebisu and Roppongi.

Café California offers fusion cuisine, taking inspiration from French, Italian and other European influences combined with traditional Japanese seasonal ingredients.



To celebrate Christmas, the restaurant will offer a special dinner course called "Menu de Noël" from Dec. 19 to 25. The course will feature a wide range of choice ingredients, including lobster, Japanese beef and foie gras. The items are fine French style cuisines, featuring accents in Christmas colors to help to create a memorable night.

The course will be available for ¥13,000 per person, including tax and service charge.



Tel: 0120-95-6661
Address: Sheraton Miyako Hotel Tokyo 1F, 1-1-50 Shirokanedai, Minato-ku, Tokyo.
 Four minutes from Shirokanedai Station (Namboku and Mita lines)
Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., closed from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays.
Web: www.miyakohotels.ne.jp/tokyo

ANA InterContinental Tokyo

Pierre Gagnaire Pains et Gateaux

For those growing impatient for a Christmas party, the ANA InterContinental Tokyo has started accepting preorders for its Christmas cakes at the hotel's Pierre Gagnaire Pains et Gateaux shop.

The shop offers special cakes prepared by Michelin three-starred chef Pierre Gagnaire, one of the world's most famous chefs. The *Bûche de Noël Marron* (¥6,480) is made with chestnut mousse mixed with milk chocolate and yogurt. A chestnut confit and cherries inside beautifully complete the cake.

Also recommended is the *Pistache Mandarin* (¥6,480), which features two flavored mousses; Mandarin orange with pralines and pistachio with raspberries are placed on a tart and connected with red-colored chocolate wafers.

The two cakes are only available through reservation, however a selection of the hotel's other cakes are available.

Reservations are accepted through Dec. 12, and the cakes can be picked up between Dec. 20 and 25 from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the shop on the hotel's second floor.



Pierre Gagnaire

For the coming holiday season, one of the world's most renowned chefs, Michelin three-star awardee Pierre Gagnaire is preparing an exclusive dinner course "Menu de Noël 2014" at his eponymous haute cuisine French restaurant Pierre Gagnaire, on the 36th floor of the ANA InterContinental Tokyo, from Dec. 22 to 25.

Said to be the canvases of the "Picasso of the Kitchen," Gagnaire's plates hold six gorgeous courses, including three elegant desserts and coffee, using high-end ingredients such as foie gras and selected Japanese beef fillets.

With a dazzling night view of Tokyo as a backdrop from the 36th floor of the hotel, the gastronomic wonders are sure to add a spark to a romantic evening.

The course will be available for ¥27,000 per person including tax, but subject to a service charge. There are two seatings, with the first from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and the second from 8 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., and advanced reservations are required (03-3505-1185).



More festive dinings

Celebrating the season of giving, the ANA InterContinental Tokyo is holding a Christmas fair at its restaurants with colorful seasonal dishes on offer.

The hotel's buffet restaurant Cascade Café on the second floor, will offer a Christmas buffet from Dec. 20 to 25. From savory entrees to Christmas desserts, the restaurant will serve customers a variety of dishes such as roast beef, turkey, garlic shrimp, stollen and panettone.

For lunch and dinner there are two seatings; 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m., and 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. On Dec. 25, there will be only one seating from 6 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.



Lunch will be available for ¥4,545 per person and ¥8,500 for dinner (prices vary for children and seniors).

Other restaurants: MIXX Bar & Lounge, The STEAKHOUSE, Teppanyaki Akasaka, The Champagne Bar and Karin the Chinese restaurant will also welcome customers with Christmas feasts.



Tel: 03-3505-1111 **Web:** www.anaintercontinental-tokyo.jp
Address: 1-12-33 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo. Five minutes from Tameike-Sanno Station (Ginza and Namboku lines)

EVENTS

MET Live Viewing will feature Richard Eyre's mesmerizing production of French composer Georges Bizet's steamy melodrama "Carmen" at Shochiku movie theaters from Dec. 13 to 19. Georgian mezzo-soprano Anita Rachvelishvili sings the lead role. Tickets are ¥3,600.



ENJOY OPERA AND KABUKI AT MOVIE THEATERS ACROSS JAPAN

First-class opera and kabuki performances are available and affordable on the big screen at movie theaters across Japan.

"Metropolitan Opera Live in HD" is a series of live opera performances transmitted in high-definition video via satellite from the Met in New York City to selected movie theaters in the U.S. and other parts of the world. Since launching at the end of 2006, the series has gained increasing popularity, with screenings at around 2,000 theaters in 67 countries during the 2014-15 season.

In Japan, Shochiku Co. has presented the screenings with Japanese subtitles under the name "MET Live Viewing" a few weeks after the actual performances in New York.



Bando Tamasaburo as Fujimusume

Even though far removed from New York, people can enjoy world-class opera in a relaxed movie theater environment for a reasonable price.

Shochiku also organizes Cinema Kabuki, which enables people to casually enjoy kabuki on the screen,

a good opportunity for those unable to attend the traditional performing art.

For the New Year's season, "Fujimusume" featuring Bando Tamasaburo and Nakamura Shichinosuke will begin on Jan. 3 at the Togeki Theater in Tokyo prior to nationwide screenings from Jan. 17. Tickets are ¥2,100.

Web: www.shochiku.co.jp/met/ (opera)
www.shochiku.co.jp/cinemakabuki/ (kabuki)

USING DESIGN AS SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL CHALLENGES

Japanese design company D&Department Inc. has launched its "Bag from Lifestock" program as part of its D&Department Project activities to promote "long-life design."

The textile industry, which used to be one of Japan's key industries, has been in steady decline following the collapse of the bubble

economy, despite strong capabilities.

D&Department collaborates with such domestic textile producers in creating bags made from recycled textile samples showcasing a variety of attractive, high-quality fabrics made in Japan. By using such a familiar item as a bag, consumers will be able to feel and understand the high quality of Japanese textiles.

From Dec. 13, D&Department will hold an

exhibition titled "P to P STORE problem to product" at the d47 Museum in Shibuya Hikarie to introduce a project to address the challenges facing the nation's 47 prefectures, such as depopulation and environmental concerns. The project involves the design and sales of the resulting products as solutions to these challenges.

The company's "d design travel" series is also underway. The series is a new kind of guidebook that provides insights for visitors to specific regions. In each volume, unique characteristics of local aesthetic, culinary and cultural practices of a prefecture are introduced through the eyes of cutting-edge designers.

The series, with text in Japanese and English, has featured 14 prefectures so far with the most recent release covering Yamagata Prefecture. The "d design travel"



d47 Rakugo performance talking about Yamagata takes place at the d47 Museum in Shibuya Hikarie on Dec. 11 at 8 p.m. Tickets cost ¥3,000.

series will continue until books on all 47 prefectures in Japan are published. Each volume costs ¥1,512 and is available at D&Department Project shops, bookstores or via the Internet.

As a related event to d design travel, d47 "Rakugo" (Japanese traditional comic story telling) performance talking about Yamagata Prefecture takes place on Dec. 11 at the d47 Museum in Shibuya Hikarie in Tokyo.

For more information, visit www.d-department.com/jp/



"Bag from Lifestock" using different recycled textile samples from 47 prefectures (¥3,024-¥4,968)



Hibiya Simmons Gallery Toho Twin Tower Bldg., 1F, 1-5-2 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0006 Tel: 03-3504-2480

Simmons Gallery

Sapporo Simmons Gallery Tel: 011-223-6340
Dunlop SK Bldg., 10-4-16 Odori-Nishi, Chuo-ku, Sapporo 060-0042

Nagoya Simmons Gallery Tel: 052-220-2871
NBF Nagoya Hirokoji Bldg., 2-3-6 Sakae, Naka-ku, Nagoya 460-0008

Osaka Simmons Gallery Tel: 06-6449-7266
Daini Fuji Bldg., 1F, 1-5-15 Utsuhoonmachi, Nishi-ku, Osaka 550-0004

Hiroshima Simmons Gallery Tel: 082-545-6890
Sankyo Hiroshima Bldg., 1F, 3-25 Komachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima 730-0041

Fukuoka Simmons Gallery Tel: 092-737-1511
Across Fukuoka B1F, 1-1-1 Tenjin, Chuo-ku, Fukuoka 810-0001

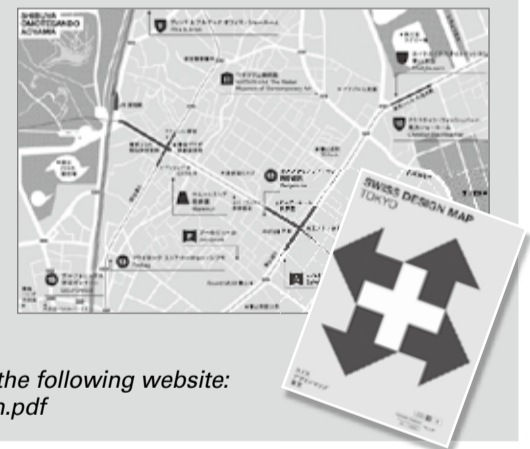
www.simmons.co.jp

ENJOY SWISS DESIGNS IN TOKYO

As part of year-long projects to commemorate the 150 years of diplomatic relations between Switzerland and Japan, the "Swiss Design Map" introduces selected spots related to Swiss Design, which are accessible by everybody in Tokyo. The spots represent a variety of creative and contemporary Swiss products and architecture.

With this map, you can enjoy the metropolis as a venue of Swiss-design exhibition.

The map can be downloaded from the following website: www.swissdesign.jp/imgs/swissdm.pdf



FINDING THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS PRODUCT

Christmas markets can now be found in many places in Japan during the holiday season. In these markets, visitors can find European seasonal ornaments, various foods, gifts and other goodies to add even more color to the holidays.

One of the largest and most popular Christmas markets is a large German-style one at the Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse that runs through Dec. 25.

After welcoming more than 600,000 people last year, the market celebrates its fifth anniversary this year. Greeted by a 10-meter Christmas tree, people can look at various products and enjoy different food such as German sausages, stollen and mulled wine on offer at many colorful German hutte (huts), standing side by side in the venue. There will also be several workshops available.

From 7 p.m. on Dec. 12 and 19, a fireworks show will be held to heat up the festive air.

For more information, visit www.yokohama-akarenga.jp.



The large German-style Christmas market in Yokohama is one of the most popular. — AMANO STUDIO

EVENTS

SADO CONDUCTS "DAIKU" THIS WINTER

The "season" of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 has come. The ninth, referred to as "Daiku" in Japanese, is a favorite classical piece that is often performed at the end of the year in Japan. This year, nearly 100 major concerts (and many smaller ones) featuring the piece have been scheduled across the country for December.

Among the highlights are the series of concerts by the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne under the baton of renowned Japanese conductor Yutaka Sado.

On March 26, 2011 — only 15 days after the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami on March 11 — the orchestra and Sado, along with another major German orchestra, performed Daiku at a special concert in Düsseldorf, Germany, praying for disaster-hit Japan and

the affected people.

The German orchestra's upcoming Japan tour focuses on Daiku and will perform seven concerts in Tokyo and three in Osaka, once again in collaboration with Sado. Singers include soprano Susanne Bernhard, alto Marion Eckstein and bass Andreas Bauer from Germany and Japanese tenor Satoshi Nishimura, along with the Tokyo Opera Singers and the Shin-yukai Choir.

Yutaka Sado & WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne performances of Beethoven's Ninth take place from Dec. 11 to 18 in Tokyo (various venues) and from Dec. 20 to 22 at Festival Hall in Osaka. Tickets cost between ¥12,000 and ¥20,000. For more information, call 03-3234-9999 (Tokyo), 06-6231-2221 (Osaka) or see <http://yutaka-sado.meetsfan.jp/>



Yutaka Sado TAKASHI IJIMA

SACRED ITALIAN VOICES
CARRY CENTURIES OF SOUND

World-renowned Capella Musicale del Duomo di Milano (Milan Cathedral Choir) is bringing its wonderful and talented singers to Japan for the first time.

The choir has a centuries-long association with the cathedral dating back to the end of the 14th century, when construction of the cathedral began. Amazingly, the group's origins can be traced back even further to the cathedral's theological college before the 11th century. The group has continued its musical activities without disruption until present day.

The upcoming Christmas Concert in Tokyo features pieces from Gregorian chant, which is often referred to as the beginning of Western classical music due to its musical notation and multi-voices elaboration, which later developed into Western polyphony music. The program also includes selected seasonal favorites such as Mozart's "Ave Maria" and "Silent Night" by Franz Xaver Gruber.

The Milan Cathedral Choir's Christmas Concert takes place at St. Mary's Cathedral, Tokyo, on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. and tickets are ¥5,000. For tickets, call Ticket Space at 03-3234-9999. The choir will also perform in



The Milan Cathedral Choir will perform in Japan for the first time in its long history.

Munakata (Dec. 12), Fukuoka (Dec. 13) and Nogata (Dec. 14) in Fukuoka Prefecture. For more information, see <http://arstokyo.biz/>

NISHIZAWA PRESENTS HIS COMPOSITIONS

Japanese composer Kenichi Nishizawa will hold a concert to perform his original works, playing the piano in collaboration with Japanese musicians, violinist Koji Mizumura, cellist Wataru Mukai and baritone Atsushi Okamoto.

Born in 1978 in Tokyo, Nishizawa started studying piano and composition at age 15. Among his many awards, he won first prize at the 4th Tokyo International Composition Competition of Chamber Music in 1999. His more than 80 works so far have been performed in Belgium, Mexico, Italy and Japan.

The program includes Piano Trio No. 2; Four Little Melodies for Violin and Piano; and Cello Sonata No. 2, which were recently recorded by Italy's Altus Trio. Also featured is his latest song cycle titled "Suicides," based on the suicide notes of renowned Japanese literary figures such as Ryunosuke Akutagawa (1892-1927) and Osamu Dazai (1909-1948), as well as a key scene from Natsume Soseki's novel "Kokoro."

Rather than suicide itself, Nishizawa's intention is to examine the social situations surrounding each person and the survivors' contrition. "There are messages that could be best communicated by what classical music



Kenichi Nishizawa

tradition has cultivated," Nishizawa said. *Kenichi Nishizawa's exhibition concert takes place at Ako Studio in Harajuku, Tokyo on Dec. 14 at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are ¥3,000. For more information, call 03-5411-1090.*

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ILLUMINATIONS

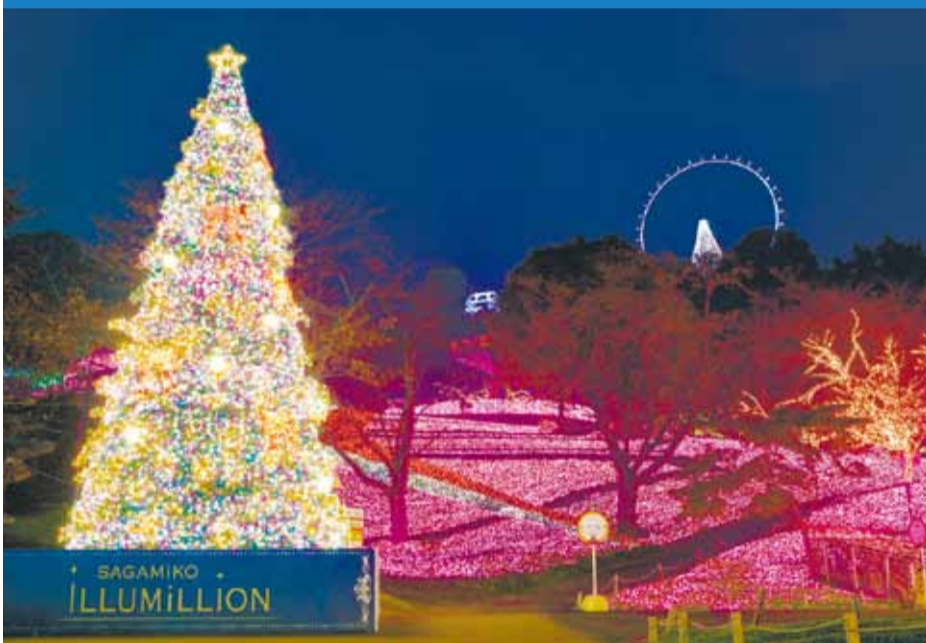


The Meguro River's new lights in Tokyo's Nakameguro area aim to replicate Italy's Blue Grotto (until Dec. 25).



Winter cherry blossoms around Gotanda are drawing attention (until Dec. 25).

Sagamiko Illumillion, the largest illumination display in the Kanto region, is made up of about 5 million light bulbs and is sure to delight (until April 12).



Sagamiko Illumillion (until April 12).



A gigantic tree, the "White Tree" appears to be snow dusted inside the KITE shopping complex in Tokyo's Marunouchi district (until Dec. 25).



Caretta Shiodome's illumination for this year is titled "Canyon d'Azur," will light up the night in beautiful blue (until Jan. 12).



Roppongi's iconic Keyakizaka Galaxy illumination shines bright for 400 meters. There are two "Hidden Hearts" this year, which are only lit for five minutes every hour (until Dec. 25).

Share with us your best illumination photos via <http://jtimes.jp/xmas14>

The Japan Times wishes you a memorable holiday season and a happy new year.

The Japan Times, Ltd.

Head Office: 4-5-4 Shibaura, Minato-ku, Tokyo
Crossmedia Sales Div. Tel: 03-3453-5242
Email: jtad@japantimes.co.jp Web: www.japantimes.co.jp