

WIN
GIFTS
INSIDE!

Season's Hints

The Japan Times

Winter 2015

INDEX

- Gifts B2-3
- Gourmet B4-5
- Events B6-7
- Illuminations B8



Oshare Hanabi 2015, fireworks with Christmas music and lights, is one of the most popular winter attractions at the Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse.

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



The Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse's Art Rink welcomes both children and adult skaters with its charming atmosphere over the holidays through Feb. 21.

GIFTS

Handmade soap and bath goods from Lush

Well-known for its environmentally friendly handmade soaps and cosmetics, Lush Japan Co. has created 40 different kinds of original gifts for the Christmas season.

The gifts are geared toward both adults and children, presenting customers with a wide selection to choose from, whether they are looking for a gift for loved ones, friends or families.

Each gift box is wrapped in a different material such as wrapping paper made of handmade Nepalese lokta paper, 100 percent recycled satin ribbon and handmade organic Indian cotton.

Some of the gifts began selling in October, and the items have increased



The 12 Days of Christmas (¥9,500)



Christmas Wishes (¥5,980)

as Christmas draws near. Now, the Christmas gift selections come in many shapes and colors and prices (from ¥1,480 to ¥28,600).

There are gifts such as the "Christmas Candy Box" for ¥3,280 that has several types of soap and bubble bath wrapped in a pink and light green box, which will surely bring a smile to whoever receives it, and the

Magic Carpet (¥7,800)

"Human Cannonball," which has five bath bombs in different colors, for ¥4,780.

Of special note is the "Secret Santa," with a bath bomb and bar of soap in the shape of Santa Claus. At ¥1,680, the gift is wrapped in a "knot-wrap" handkerchief made from Indian organic cotton.

All of these gifts can be bought (tax included) at most Lush outlets, or online at <https://www.lushjapan.com/products/christmas-gifts>.



Secret Santa (¥1,680)

NORITAKE GINZA OFFERS ELEGANT SEASONAL GIFTS

Nestled in Tokyo's upscale shopping district, Noritake Okura Art China Ginza is a boutique directly managed by the prestigious tableware brand Noritake.

The shop displays a beautiful variety of tableware and ceramic art pieces. All are created using the manufacturing processes and craftsmanship that have been honed over the company's 110-plus years of history.

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



Figurine "Monkey" ¥16,200 (tax included)

One such item is a figurine "Monkey" that embodies a sweeping form in a modern finish while maintaining a traditional Japanese style. In the Chinese zodiac, 2016 is the year of the monkey, an animal of charm that is believed to be a messenger of the *yama no kami*, or mountain spirits, in the Shinto religion.

Another recommendation is the 2015 Christmas plate featuring lovely ducks produced by Okura Art China, one of the Noritake's group companies.



2015 Christmas plate featuring ducks by Okura Art China ¥19,440 (tax included)

Noritake Okura Art China Ginza (Bunshodo Bldg. 2Fl., 3-4-12 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo) is one minute from Exit A13 of Ginza Station on the Ginza, Marunouchi and Hibiya lines. Open every day from 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., except during the New Year's holidays. Tel: 03-3567-6121.

Keeping warm with Matsuya Ginza

Christmas promotions at the Matsuya Ginza department store reach their peak in the days leading up to Christmas Day.

Shoppers can find some of the most popular gifts on the store's seventh floor with lifestyle goods such as slippers and blankets that will make Christmas at home all the more homey and warm. There are such items as a soft and light Norwegian Roros Tweed blanket for ¥28,080, Cloakrooms' pantoufle (slippers) with gorillas printed on them for ¥3,456 a pair. The twin

gorillas printed on the slippers evoke a stylish, but fun look.

A pair of made-in-Japan "Ion Doctor" ankle warmers will also keep people warm on cold winter nights. Originally used by nurses to prevent their legs from getting cold, 11 different kinds of natural mineral powder is adhered onto high-quality natural cotton pads, and the warmers affected by body temperature generate infrared heat, warming the ankles.

At ¥6,916, the antibacterial warmers don't need to be washed, as they can simply be turned inside out and dried in the sun. All prices include tax. For more information, call 03-3567-1211.



Roros Tweed blanket (¥28,080)



Ion Doctor ankle warmers (¥6,916)



Cloakrooms' pantoufle slippers (¥3,456)

Giveaways

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

1. Yaesu Shopping Mall

A beautiful arrangement of preserved flowers (worth ¥10,000) will be presented to three lucky readers by Yaesu Shopping Mall, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary in Tokyo station and home to about 180 shops. The arrangement includes red and pink roses inlaid with lame containing natural diamonds.



3. Roppongi Kagawa

The theater and restaurant Roppongi Kagawa will give away 10 pairs of tickets. The ticket, valid until March 31, will include a show charge (worth ¥3,500) for an oiran-za traditional Japanese dance and one food item and a beverage from the menu.



2. National Azabu

The National Azabu Supermarket, which sells a variety of imported foods and drinks, is offering strong plastic tote bags created by a prominent designer to 10 readers. Read more about the store on page B5.



4. Royal Park Hotel

Tickets will be offered to three pairs of readers to enjoy a countdown show and buffet (with drinks) on Dec. 31 (Thurs) at the Royal Park Hotel in the Nihonbashi district. The buffet will start from 10 p.m. at the Royal Hall banquet room, while the band performance will be from 10:45 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Enjoy the end of 2015, while ringing in 2016 with dancing and music.



Happy Holiday Sale

12/18(Fri.) ▶▶ 12/25(Fri.)

Roast chicken, turkey fryers, live lobster, organic vegetables, large selection of assorted cheeses, wine & alcohol, fresh seafood, Imported groceries, Christmas gifts & cards...and MUCH MORE.

"Your One-stop Shopping"
International supermarket

START A TRADITION HONEYBAKED

NATIONAL AZABU
4-5-2 Minami Azabu, Minato-Ku, TOKYO.
TEL.03-3442-3181
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 8:30-21:00

NATIONAL Den-en
2-6-21 Tamagawa Den-en-chofu, Setagaya-Ku, TOKYO.
TEL.03-3721-4161
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 10:00-21:00

NATIONAL AZABU HIROO GARDEN HILLS
4-1-11 Hiroo, Shibuya-Ku, TOKYO.
TEL.03-6419-4141
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 10:00-20:00

<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.

Happy Holiday Sale

12/18(Fri.) ▶▶ 12/25(Fri.)

Roast chicken, turkey fryers, live lobster, organic vegetables, large selection of assorted cheeses, wine & alcohol, fresh seafood, Imported groceries, Christmas gifts & cards...and MUCH MORE.

"Your One-stop Shopping"
International supermarket

START A TRADITION HONEYBAKED

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 Tuesday, Dec. 15.

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

GIFTS

ELECTRONICS, HOUSEWARES AND MORE AT TSUTAYA

One of the new attractions at the Futako Tamagawa Rise shopping mall, which was completed in May as part of a development project from 1982, Tsutaya Electrics is a unique appliance store. Founded in 1983 in Osaka, Tsutaya has expanded its business into a nationwide chain of video rental shops and bookstores, establishing a strong position in the entertainment market. In addition to entertainment contents as part of people's lifestyles, Tsutaya's next project is to address everyday life through electric appliances. However, Tsutaya Electrics is not as crammed full of electric products as

many mass retailers are. Instead, carefully selected home electrical goods, as well as books, furniture and greenery are displayed on their sophisticated, spacious and stylish floors. In a word, it's a store that focuses on selling "lifestyles," rather than just electrical goods themselves.

While the first floor focuses on technologies such as mobile phones, photographic equipment and audio devices, the second features more living environment, showcasing home appliances, furniture and plants, which are juxtaposed with books on food, cooking, health, beauty and more.

The Food and Cooking area presents high-quality electric appliances from refrigerators and ovens to rice cookers and hot plates in sophisticated designs. Visitors are able to experience a pleasant dining table with their five senses.

Among the items, a recommendation for a good present is Nescafe Dolce Gusto Jovia Very Version. Created in collaboration between an award-winning coffee maker



A selection of appliances and related books are on display.



Vermicular waterless cooker (22 cm) ¥29,000 (tax excluded)



Nescafe Dolce Gusto Jovia Very Version (¥13,704; tax excluded). Original menu board and coffee capsules are included.

and a renowned Japanese women's magazine Very, the cute, oval machine enables users to prepare tasty coffee in less than a minute. The machine will surely enhance communication among families and friends.

Besides electric goods, there are also various cooking tools. The Vermicular waterless cooker boasts high-quality made-in-Japan casting technology, which can draw the maximum umami taste from the ingredients, especially vegetables.

For those who want to know more about products, staff experts called "concierges" are ready to support visitors by giving explanations or demonstrations.

Another feature of Tsutaya Electrics is that there are many chairs, desks, sofas and low tables throughout the store. Visitors are welcome to find their favorite place to sit and relax while reading over a cup of coffee from the in-house coffee shop. Enjoying such a comfortable stay may lead them to discover another book or electric appliance



Compact Bruno hot plate in an original color ¥9,800 (tax excluded)

that may inspire them to create a new lifestyle.

Tsutaya Electrics is four minutes from Futako-Tamagawa Station on the Tokyu Oimachi and Denentoshi lines; open 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. (book and coffee shops on the first floor open 7 a.m.) Closed New Year's Day only. For more information, call 03-5491-8550, or visit <http://real.tsite.jp/futakotamagawa/>

Traditional Christmas Market in Hibiya Park

For those who cherish the season's joyous spirit and love connecting with family and friends at this time of the year, nothing could beat a night out at a Christmas market.

Although many people have never experienced a Christmas market — the tradition of Christmas markets originated in Germany — they have caught on in various regions around the world and Japan is no

exception. This Yuletide, Tokyoites can indulge in the winter wonderland experience without having to fly, because Hibiya Park in the heart of the metropolis — in a first for the venue — will host a 15-day holiday market from Dec. 11.

The centuries-old Christmas markets kick off in the four weeks of Advent leading up to Christmas day. Many open-air stalls selling regional crafts, handmade goods and traditional holiday gifts are set up along with booths offering plenty of gastronomic enticements. Beautiful holiday lights, joyful music and live entertainment often add to the magical atmosphere.

A total of 20 vendors will be lining up to offer unique Christmas delicacies, sweets and crafts; roast chicken and baked potatoes will scent the air while jubilant musicians and choirs will provide live performances on stage. Festival-goers can warm up with mulled wine — warm, spiced red wine — or hot fruit Lambic beer and munch on sizzling sausages while browsing the stalls for souvenirs or Christmas ornaments either to decorate their houses with or to give as Christmas presents.

Those stumped for last-minute holiday presents may fancy unique products from German giftware stores. These products include a cute, confectionery-shaped bath bomb from soap maker Badefee or Troika's high-quality metal crafts. Zack-Zack's lineup of authentic accessories made from small wooden toys crafted by artisans from Seiffen, Germany, are also a marvel. The environmentally conscious can go for the flameless LED candles, which can be turned off by blowing out the realistic flame.

Guests can also join in craft workshops to make *himmeli* (a traditional Finnish Christmas ornament), Christmas wreaths and candles.



A tower welcomes visitors to the Tokyo Christmas Market in Hibiya Park.

exception. This Yuletide, Tokyoites can indulge in the winter wonderland experience without having to fly, because Hibiya Park in the heart of the metropolis — in a first for the venue — will host a 15-day holiday market from Dec. 11.

The centuries-old Christmas markets kick off in the four weeks of Advent leading up to Christmas day. Many open-air stalls selling regional crafts,



Zack-Zack's accessories are made from small wooden toys. ¥1,200 to ¥1,600 (tax included)



German incense smokers ¥6,000 to ¥8,900 (tax included)

The market will be held every day rain or shine from noon to 10 p.m. (L.O. 9:30 p.m.) except for the opening day, which will begin at 4 p.m. Hibiya Park is one minute from the A14 exit of Hibiya Station on the Hibiya and Chiyoda lines, five minutes from the B2 exit



Cake-shaped soap from Badefee from ¥550 (tax included)

of Kasumigaseki Station on the Marunouchi Line, or the A7 exit of Uchisaiwaicho Station on the Mita Line. Admission free.

SAMURAI ART

Antique Samurai Swords, Tsuba, Fittings, Artistic Items, Helmet, Armor, Matchlock-guns, Original and Reproduced
(We help with export procedures)




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

Japan Sword Co., Ltd. 株式会社 日本刀剣
3-8-1, Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0001
Open: 9:30 a.m. ~ 6:00 p.m., Sat. 9:30 a.m. ~ 5:00 p.m. (except for Sun. & Nat'l Holidays)
Tel. 03-3434-4321

GOURMET

Andaz Tavern (Andaz Tokyo)

The wholesome and hearty European provincial cuisine that is the hallmark of the Andaz Tavern features in lunch and dinner offerings that are perfect for a delicious Christmas celebration with loved ones, on offer from Dec. 19 to Dec. 25.



Tel: 03-6830-7739

Address: Andaz Tokyo Toranomon Hills 51F, 1-23-4 Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Hours: Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Dinner: Dec. 19-21 & 23, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Dec 22, 24 & 25, first seating from 5:30 p.m., second seating from 8:30 p.m.

Web: <http://restaurants.andaztokyo.jp/en/>

A festive Christmas

lunchbox is offered at ¥4,000 per person, with a choice of roasted scallops, red wine-cured duck breast, or beef cheek bourguignon along with other mouth-watering gourmet morsels, including foie gras mousse, while a four-course lunch for ¥5,000 per person starts off with cinnamon and maple-roasted salmon and invites diners to choose lobster linguini, roast chicken, or beef tenderloin for the main entree.

In the evenings, four, five and six-course dinners (at ¥18,000, ¥22,000, and ¥25,000 respectively) are served in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, offering such premium fare as foie gras, *otoro* fatty tuna, sea urchin, monkfish and Miyazaki beef tenderloin. On New Year's Eve, Andaz Tavern offers a one-evening only course dinner and live music throughout the evening. All prices exclude tax and a 15 percent service charge.



Café California (Sheraton Miyako Hotel Tokyo)

Couples hoping to enjoy a wonderful Christmas dinner in a prestigious, but cozy atmosphere can tuck into the fabulous "Menu de Noel" dinner course offered at Café California restaurant located on the first floor of the Sheraton Miyako Hotel Tokyo in the tranquil Shirokanedai district.



Tel: 0120-95-6661

Address: 1-1-50 Shirokanedai, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Hours: 6 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Web: www.miyakohotels.ne.jp/tokyo

From Dec. 18 through Dec. 25, Café California will be serving a French full-course menu consisting of five elegant dishes: an appetizer of vegetable terrine and marinated salmon with yuzu citrus; chestnut and mushroom soup; a plate of lobster prepared three different ways; beef Wellington; fromage blanc mousse and dark chocolate parfait.

There is also petit fours, bread and a drink at the end of the meal. The dinner is available for ¥12,000 per person (tax and service charge included).



The Prince Park Tower Tokyo

Brise Verte

The Prince Park Tower Tokyo will present a delectable Christmas dinner menu from Dec. 19 to Dec. 25 at its continental restaurant Brise Verte on the 33rd floor.

Guests can enjoy dishes prepared in the style of the famous Bouley restaurant in New York, while enjoying a beautiful Tokyo view.

Out of the three course menus ranging from ¥17,800 to ¥23,800 (tax included, service charge excluded), the ¥23,800 offers the most luxurious meal paired with distinguished Bollinger "Special Cuvee" Champagne. The course ranges from hair crab a la creme with caviar, foie gras presse, and sweet potato gnocchi with espuma of parsnip, to wagyu fillet steak, truffles with red wine-flavored puree, finishing with caramel and Earl Grey-flavored mousse and apple sherbet for dessert.



During the same period, Steak House Katsura will also offer two tasty Christmas menus for ¥20,000 and ¥25,000 (tax included, service charge excluded). The ¥25,000 course offers savory Sendai steak from Miyagi Pref. as the main dish. For more information and reservations, call the restaurant at 03-5400-1170.

Tel: 03-5400-1154

Hours: 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Address: 4-8-1 Shibakoen, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Web: www.princehotels.co.jp/parktower

Tel: 03-5400-1146

Hours: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.



Boulangerie Tokyo

Commemorating its 10th anniversary, The Prince Park Tower Tokyo's Boulangerie Tokyo patisserie will this Christmas feature limited edition "Couleur de Noel" Christmas cakes — with 10 different small and colorful Christmas cakes — in a gift box made of white chocolate, created under the image of a holy night star.



The ¥16,000 chocolate box contains various cakes, including cassis marron, caramel chocolate, coconut mango and orange white chocolate. With a different color used for each cake, the box is a feast for the eyes as well as for the palate.

Another highly recommended Christmas cake is the stylish and beautiful "King of Chocolat" made from two different kinds of rich dark chocolate, for ¥5,800. The cakes are limited to 30 and are available for order until Dec. 23 at the hotel's Boulangerie Tokyo, or Pikake Tea Salon at The Tokyo Prince Hotel (03-3432-1144).

Guests must book at least two days in advance and they can pick up cakes between Dec. 18 and 25 (11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.) from the shop they ordered from.



Conrad Tokyo

The Conrad Tokyo is celebrating its 10th anniversary with a series of events, including stylish Christmas dinner plans.

On offer at the hotel's prestigious Michelin-starred

Collage restaurant is a modern French full-course meal prepared by acclaimed chef Shinya Maeda, who adds extra flair to the mouthwatering dishes with his masterful craftsmanship and presentation techniques. The dinner is available from Dec. 23 through Dec. 26 for ¥16,500 per person for the Select Course and ¥23,500 for the Premium Course. Both menus are available with a wine pairing for ¥26,500 and ¥35,500 respectively.

Tel: 03-6388-8745 (restaurant reservation)

Address: 1-9-1 Higashi-Shinbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Hours: [Collage] 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.; [China Blue] Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Dinner: 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Web: <http://conradhotels3.hilton.com/en/hotels/japan/conrad-tokyo-TYOCICI/>

China Blue, another of the elegant hotel's award-winning restaurants, will be offering an equally delicious menu. From Dec. 23 through Dec. 25, guests can enjoy a sensational modern Chinese dinner, prepared by head chef Albert Tse. The classic menu, featuring elegant dishes, is available from ¥6,500 per person for the lunch course and from ¥16,800 per person for dinner.

All prices exclude tax and service charge.



Grand Hyatt Tokyo

Grand Hyatt Tokyo's "Gifts from Angels" Christmas charity program features various activities designed to support disabled people and children in the Tohoku region affected by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami, in collaboration with Kids Earth Fund and Re Kikou. Since then, the hotel has strived to assist



Tel: 03-4333-1234

Address: 6-10-3 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Hours: 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

(Fiorentina Pastry Boutique)

Web: <http://tokyo.grand.hyatt.jp>

those affected with monetary donations, charitable contributions and volunteer efforts.

This year, enjoy charity gift baskets sold by Fiorentina that are filled with seasonal products, as well as recycled-cork Christmas ornaments made by disabled people in angel, snowflake and sheep motifs, with partial proceeds going to charity.

Guests can also enjoy a charity accommodation plan and a photo spot in the lavishly decorated lobby where they can take pictures and post them on social media under the program's hashtag (#GrandHyattAngel) to help raise awareness of the program.

The number of photos posted will be multiplied by ¥100 and the resulting amount will be donated. Money collected from the Christmas charity program will be used to assist the children of Tohoku via Kids Earth Fund.



Il Teatro (Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo)



There are many fun-filled Christmas activities of every kind that will delight children, but none could possibly beat an encounter with Santa Claus himself. To make this experience enjoyable for parents, too, Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo has coupled the event with a delicious meal at their elegant Italian restaurant Il Teatro.

From Dec. 23 through Dec. 25, Il Teatro will be serving an authentic Italian lunch in its private dining room, with the highlight coming with a visit from Santa. The festive feast, available for ¥12,000 per adult, is a five-course meal of an appetizer, saffron risotto, steamed prawn and flounder, wagyu sirloin steak and a classic panettone.

Tel: 03-3943-5489 (9 a.m. to 8 p.m.)

Address: 2-10-8 Sekiguchi, Bunkyo-ku, Tokyo

Hours: From noon and from 3 p.m.

Web: <http://hotel-chinzanso-tokyo.jp>

Children will be treated to a three-course meal for ¥2,500. Father Christmas will make a grand appearance a little over an hour into the meal — with seatings at noon or 3 p.m. — and children will have a chance to take a souvenir photo with the red-suited, white-bearded Saint Nick. Reservations must be made at least three days in advance. All prices include tax and service charge.



Motif Restaurant & Bar (Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Marunouchi)

This holiday season, the Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo at Marunouchi will offer a delicious menu created by head chef Hiroyuki Asano, at its signature French dining Motif Restaurant & Bar. As the restaurant opened in April, this is its first opportunity to celebrate the Christmas season.

Located on the seventh floor of the hotel with breathtaking views of the iconic Tokyo Station, the restaurant offers a true culinary journey with its creative French cuisine in a luxurious, yet relaxed setting, along with warm hospitality. It puts a strong emphasis on classic cooking techniques combined with seasonal fresh produce and ingredients.

The ¥18,000 Christmas course starts out with an onion tart, fried scallops with *shiso* (perilla) and wasabi, Biwa trout marinated with soup, seasonal vegetables with truffles, caviar and abalone risotto with sepia sauce. The main dish is succulent Challandais duck roasted with leeks and salad. A dessert of chestnuts and cassis rounds out the meal.

Tel: 03-5222-5810

Address: Pacific Century Place, 1-11-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo

Hours: 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. (L.O. for course is 9 p.m.)

Web: www.motiftokyo.com

There is also a ¥23,000 course, where guests are treated to caviar, foie gras, king crab, seasonal vegetables with truffles, jumbo shrimp, and wagyu beef tenderloin grilled with wasabi and red wine sauce as the main dish.



GOURMET

Palazzo (Royal Park Hotel)

During the holiday season, a hearty Christmas lunch buffet and several dinner courses will be on offer at the Palazzo restaurant and banquet room on the 20th floor of the Royal Park Hotel Tokyo.

Guests can taste savory French dishes carefully prepared by the hotel's chefs while enjoying a fine view of Tokyo from the top floor of the hotel located in the heart of the Nihonbashi financial district.

The ¥5,000 lunch buffet runs from Dec. 23 to Dec. 25 and has a variety of world cuisine, including Norwegian smoked salmon, Brazilian roast chicken with mushrooms and chestnuts and an Indonesian shrimp pilaf.

There are three course menus available for Christmas dinner, priced at ¥12,000, ¥15,000 and ¥18,000.

The ¥18,000 course begins with New Zealand Shrimp Scampi and Israeli caviar, followed by steamed tilefish with sea urchin and a choice between two types of meat before finishing with cheese, fruit, ice cream and coffee or tea.

Tel: 03-3667-1111

Address: 2-1-1 Nihonbashi-Kakigaracho, Chuo-ku, Tokyo

Hours: Two lunch seatings from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.; Two dinner seatings from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Web: <http://www.rph.co.jp/restaurants/palazzo/>



The Peninsula Tokyo

Children can celebrate the festive Christmas season in style at The Peninsula Tokyo on Dec. 13, with a one-day gingerbread house workshop at the Sky Room on the 24th floor.

Under the guidance of The Peninsula's pastry chefs, children will learn the A to Z's involved in decorating the traditional Christmas creation. A huge amount of icing, cream, chocolate, cookies and candies will be prepared to deck out the gingerbread houses. While the kids indulge in their creations, the parents are invited to enjoy a Peninsula sweets buffet experience. The cost for one child (between 6 and 12 years old) is ¥3,000, while a parent and a child is ¥10,000, with ¥4,000 per additional adult (tax and service charge included).

Meanwhile, the holiday spirit at Peninsula continues with its annual "Trees of Hope" campaign, in which sales proceeds of SnowPage ornaments and dolls purchased by guests go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Japan for children fighting life-threatening illnesses.

This year, 300 limited edition Peninsula SnowPage dolls designed by Hong Kong luxury toy brand Papinee

are on sale for ¥10,000 until Dec. 25, with seven lucky doll boxes containing gift certificates for afternoon tea for two at The Peninsula Tokyo.

Tel: 03-6270-2888

Address: 1-8-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

Hours: 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (workshop)

Web: www.peninsula.com/tokyo



Premium Pound Kamiyacho

Discerning gourmards can't afford to miss the opportunity to dine on top-notch wagyu this Christmas at Premium Pound, arguably one of the hottest must-try steakhouses in Japan. From Dec. 22 through 25, the acclaimed eatery's Kamiyacho branch is offering a festive dinner featuring a stunning steak as a centerpiece.

To create its delicious dry-aged meat, the restaurant

takes an already succulent, beautifully marbled wagyu and enhances the depth of its flavor by dry aging the meat for over 45 days under strictly monitored conditions where the temperature and humidity around the beef are carefully controlled.

The main dish of the five-course meal centers on two impressive cuts of perfectly roasted Kobe beef with foie gras and garland chrysanthemum risotto with sauteed mushrooms. The starters and sides are equally attractive, not to mention the Christmas treat for dessert: a Valrhona equatoriale lactee chocolate and yuzu (Japanese citrus) buche de Noel.

The dinner is available for ¥18,000 per person (tax and service charge excluded).



Tel: 03-6435-8629

Address: 4-1-17, Kamiyacho Prime Place 2F, Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Hours: 5:30 p.m. - 11 p.m. (9 p.m. L.O.)

Web: <http://www.ts-corp.co.jp>

The Steakhouse (ANA InterContinental Tokyo)

For meat lovers who want to enjoy a hearty Christmas meal, The Steakhouse is offering a festive full course dinner featuring a rich and flavorful wagyu or Australian Angus Beef tenderloin steak, from Dec. 18 through Dec. 26.

Situated inside the ANA InterContinental Tokyo, the classic and elegant steakhouse provides the perfect atmosphere for a pleasant evening out. In addition to the char-grilled signature steak, the course also includes delicious vegetable and seafood dishes.



The course starts with beautiful shrimp and root-vegetable spring rolls and steamed abalone wrapped in cabbage leaves served with ravigote sauce, before moving on to various seasonal vegetable and seafood dishes, including scallops, salmon, caviar, foie gras, black truffle and lobster.

An expertly prepared steak comes as the main dish, and a subtle and refreshing dessert is served to wrap up the luxurious meal. The course is available for either ¥14,000 or ¥18,000 per person (excluding tax and service charge) and both come with a glass of champagne.

Tel: 03-3505-1185

Address: 1-12-33 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo

Hours: 5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. (L.O.)

Web: <http://www.anaintercontinental-tokyo.jp/rest/index.html>



Trader Vic's (Hotel New Otani Tokyo)

Forget falling snow, carol singing and crackling fireplaces as Trader Vic's Christmas is all about a tropical atmosphere and international cuisine with an exotic twist. Trader Vic's is an island-themed restaurant on the fourth floor of the Hotel New Otani Tokyo Garden Tower.

Throughout December, guests can celebrate the holiday season by digging in to hearty holiday cuisine accompanied by a great wine selection and cocktails at the lively eatery. On offer are a ¥4,900 three-course prix-fixe lunch (until Dec. 26) with a choice of either beef tenderloin drizzled with port wine sauce or sole stuffed with smoked salmon mousse, dressed up in a creamy champagne sauce as the main.

Additionally, a four-course dinner with roasted duck smothered in cherry and green peppercorn sauce as the centerpiece is available from ¥13,800, as well as a holiday brunch buffet from ¥5,000 for adults and ¥2,900 for children between four and 12 years of age.

On Dec. 19, 20 and 23, in addition to the standard menu selection, the brunch will feature special Christmas dishes such as a roasted saddle of lamb stuffed with spinach and cream cheese (from ¥5,800 for adults, ¥3,300 for children).

Tel: 03-3265-4707

Address: 4-1 Kioi-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo

Hours: Lunch 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.;

Dinner 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Web: <http://www.newotani.co.jp/en/tokyo/restaurant/vics/>



NATIONAL AZABU HAS TURKEY, LOBSTER, BUBBLY, CHRISTMAS CARDS, EVERYTHING FOR HOLIDAYS

National Azabu Supermarket, in Tokyo's Minami-Azabu area, has been providing city residents with imported food, drinks and other items such as kitchen goods and Western seasonal decorations for 52 years.

This popular store has been a shopping destination for expats and embassy officials since starting operations in 1962.

The store's first floor contains a wide variety of food and drink. Shelves are stocked with imported goods. The produce section spills over with vibrant vegetables, including organic, and the deli boasts a delectable selection of meats. Popular holiday selections include imported whole turkeys and honey-baked hams.

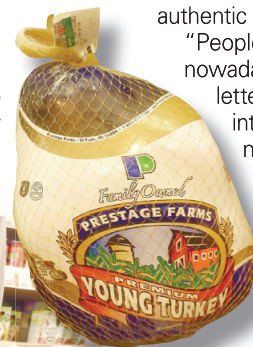
The store also sells other Christmas regular foods, including live lobsters.

The shop's second

Charles Heidsieck: This season's recommended Brut Champagne



Whole turkey



Holiday greeting cards

floor stocks

Christmas cards, including Western cards and those with ukiyo-e or other Japanese authentic design, and other non-food items.

"People can send email very easily nowadays. Although sending a card or a letter takes time, you put your heart into it," said Dale Toriumi, store manager of National Azabu Supermarket.

Customers are also welcome at the National Azabu Hiroo Garden Hills shop, opened in August.

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



Live lobsters

Victor's (The Westin Tokyo)

Victor's, an elegantly designed Baroque-style restaurant on the 22nd floor of The Westin Tokyo in Ebisu Garden Place, lures guests both with its exquisite culinary offerings and its impeccable service.

The restaurant this Christmas offers a limited menu from Dec. 19 to Dec. 25, together with a phenomenal city view of Tokyo Tower and the Tokyo bay area.

The restaurant menu has always been about vegetables and the Christmas menu centers around delicious produce carefully selected by Executive Chef Toshio Numajiri, beautifully presented with lobster, foie gras and truffles.

Lunch courses are ¥7,500 and ¥10,000, while dinner courses are ¥20,000 and ¥25,000. On Dec. 23 and 24, only the ¥25,000 course will be available.

For the ¥25,000 menu, an abundance of colorful plates make up the course, such as Christmas-colored mousse of lobster, zucchini and cauliflower with caviar, roasted wagyu tenderloin with Madeira sauce and spinach flan and girolle cheese gratin. Victor's original Christmas dessert comes at the end of the course to wrap up the memorable evening.

Tel: 03-5424-7777 (reservations, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.)

Address: 1-4-1 Mita, Meguro-ku, Tokyo

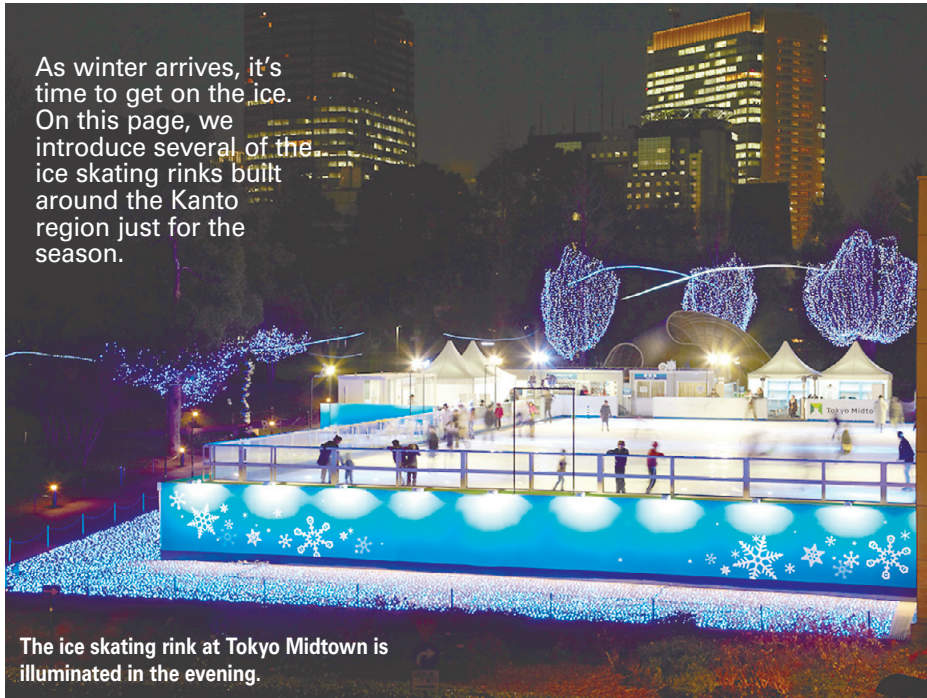
Hours: Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; Dinner: 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Web: www.westin-tokyo.co.jp



EVENTS

As winter arrives, it's time to get on the ice. On this page, we introduce several of the ice skating rinks built around the Kanto region just for the season.



The ice skating rink at Tokyo Midtown is illuminated in the evening.

TOKYO MIDTOWN OUTDOOR RINK

Tokyo Midtown is home to one of the biggest outdoor ice skating rinks in the city, with a capacity of 210 people. Built every year since 2010, the seasonal rink

has become a popular winter site, attracting 35,000 visitors last season.

Nestled in a spacious green oasis in the heart of the city, families with small children, as well as office workers on lunch, can enjoy skating in the daytime, while visitors in the evening will be fascinated by the glittering illuminations surrounding the rink. There is a rink-side rest area where skaters can relax without removing their skates.



The rink will be open from Jan. 6 to March 6 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. at Tokyo Midtown, direct access via Roppongi Station, Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line and Toei-Oedo line. Admission is ¥1,500 (¥1,000 for junior high school students and younger). For more information, call 03-3475-3100, or visit www.tokyo-midtown.com.

MARUNOUCHI BUILDING OFFERS SKATING IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

Marunouchi has long been known for being one of Japan's largest business districts, and has more recently become known for shopping.

This year, a temporary ice skating rink has been created inside the Marunouchi Building as part of Marunouchi Bright Christmas 2015 event in the area.

In collaboration with world-renowned ice skater Yuzuru Hanyu, there is a life-size statue of Hanyu tying his skate laces at the venue.

Also near the rink is a Christmas tree that is illuminated from 6 p.m. to midnight. Additionally, books related to figure skating will be sold at the venue.

Part of the proceeds will be donated to



activities to revitalize the Tohoku region in the wake of the March 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami.

The rink will be open through Dec. 25 from noon to 8 p.m. at Marucube, on the first floor of the Marunouchi Building. Admission is ¥500 for 45 minutes, including tax, skates and insurance. For more information, call 03-5218-5100, or visit <http://www.marunouchi.com>.



A life-size statue of Olympic gold medalist Yuzuru Hanyu is on display at the temporary ice skating rink inside Tokyo's Marunouchi Building.

FUTAKO TAMAGAWA SKATE GARDEN

Futako Tamagawa Rise will upgrade its annual Skate Garden to an authentic ice skating rink this winter.

Located in Tokyo's Setagaya Ward, the area surrounding Futako-Tamagawa Station, nicknamed "Nikotama" is an upscale residential and shopping neighborhood within 20 minutes from Shibuya on the Tokyu Denentoshi Line.

For the past three years, the Skate Garden has been an eco-friendly synthetic ice rink. Acting on requests from skaters for a full-fledged facility, it will become a rink of real ice and will be relocated and expanded in the Central Square of the shopping mall.



The rink will be open from Dec. 23 to Feb. 29 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. (9 p.m. on Fridays; 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Dec. 23 to Jan. 10 and Saturdays; and from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Sundays and holidays) at Futako Tamagawa Rise, three minutes from Futako-Tamagawa Station on the Tokyu Denentoshi and Oimachi lines. Admission is ¥1,400 for adults, ¥1,200 for students over 13 and ¥1,000 for elementary school students and younger. For more information, call 070-5073-8451.

ART RINK AND SEASIDE VIEW AT YOKOHAMA RED BRICK WAREHOUSE

A winter favorite at the iconic Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse is the seasonal outdoor ice skating rink.

Every year, a select artist uses the ice skating rink as a canvas, turning it into a one-of-a-kind art rink. Marking the 11th edition, illustration unit Harapekomegane, made up of artist Shinya Harada and his wife Kaori Seki, will illustrate the rink under the theme of "Fruit Punch on the Ice." Visitors can enjoy skating while also appreciating the colorful fruit on the ice and the beautiful scenery of Yokohama's Minato Mirai area.

The Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse also hosts a large German-style Christmas market, one of the most popular of its kind in Japan, through Dec. 25.

The rink will be open from Dec. 5 to Feb. 21 (except Feb. 16) from 1 p.m. to 10 p.m. (weekends and holidays from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Dec. 21 to Dec. 31 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Jan. 1 from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and Jan. 4 to Jan. 6 from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.) at the Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse, six minutes from Bashamichi Station or Nihon-odori Station on the Minatomirai Line. Admission is ¥500 (¥400 for junior high school and elementary school students; ¥300 for children over three). For more information, call 045-211-1515, or visit www.yokohama-akarenga.jp/artrink2015.



The Art Rink is a major winter attraction at the Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse. FILM HOUSE AMANO STUDIO

SIMMONS

When you sleep in a great bed, it shows.

NIICO Group

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

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 Utsubohonmachi, 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

EVENTS

OPERA AND BALLET WARM HEARTS OVER HOLIDAYS

Listening and glittering, illuminations here and there draw people out despite the cold weather. As people move around the city, they will also be welcomed by various concerts and performances, including cheerful Christmas songs, solemn masses featuring pipe organs, Beethoven's famous Symphony No. 9 and many more.

Among the many venues around Tokyo, New National Theater, Tokyo in Shibuya Ward is Japan's foremost national center for the performing arts, including opera, ballet, contemporary dance and drama. During the holidays toward the yearend and New Year's, it offers a good opportunity to attend a genuine opera or enjoy a spectacular ballet with loved ones.

"The Nutcracker"

A family friendly Yuletide joy, the classic ballet "The Nutcracker" will return to the stage at the NNTT from Dec. 19 for a holiday run.

The fantastic tale based on the libretto adapted from Hoffmann's "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King" unfolds to Tchaikovsky's beautiful music. While the story varies from production to production, the NNTT version opens with a



"The Nutcracker" is performed at the New National Theater, Tokyo in December. HIDEMI SETO

contemporary urban scene and ends in an unexpected way. Also, there will be a surprise appearance by Santa Claus, a real treat for young children.

Performed by the talented dancers of the National Ballet of Japan, the production will enthrall audiences with its gorgeous sets and costumes.

"The Nutcracker" will take place on Dec. 19, 20, 22, 23, 26 and 27 at the New National Theater, Tokyo, direct access from Hatsudai Station, Keio New Line. Starting time varies. Tickets are between ¥3,240 and ¥12,960 and available at the NNTT Box Office at 03-5352-9999. For more information, visit www.nntt.jac.go.jp/english/

"Falstaff"

The three-act opera "Falstaff" is the last of the 28 operas by Giuseppe Verdi and one of his only two comedies.

Based on Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor" and "Henry IV," Verdi composed the masterpiece in his final days approaching the age of 80.

The opera tells the story of an old man Falstaff from the vanishing aristocracy who saw the better days in contrast with the rising bourgeois family of Ford.

Verdi's uplifting music gives a vital force to the opera, especially the final fugue "Tutto nel mondo e burla ... Tutti gabbati!" ("Everything in the world is a joke") sung by the whole cast is a magnificent display.

Directed by British master Jonathan Miller and premiered in 2004, the production will be staged for the first time since 2007.

Miller's direction focuses on human interactions, creating a vivid image of each character.

The title role will be performed by Georgian baritone George Gagnidze, who will collaborate with international singers and



A performance of "Falstaff" by Italian composer Giesepepe Verdi at the New National Theater, Tokyo. The scenery and costumes evocative of a Vermeer painting are a must-see. CHIKASHI SAEGUSA

the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Yves Abel.

It is a pleasant way to end the year with an opera laughing at life, and perhaps to open the New Year with another must-see, "The Magic Flute" by Mozart.

"Falstaff" will be performed on Dec. 6, 9 and 12 starting at 2 p.m. at the NNTT.

Tickets are between ¥4,320 and ¥23,760 and available at the NNTT Box Office at 03-5352-9999. For more information, visit www.nntt.jac.go.jp/english/

OJI SMOKED SALMON
since 1967

MONDE Selection
Grand Gold Quality Award 2012



NORWAY ATLANTIC
pre-sliced smoked salmon

Gold Quality Award 2012



NORWAY OSLAND
pre-sliced smoked salmon



Oji Taste Impresses You!

Oji smoked salmon opens up a new world of gifts.

The origin of Oji salmon dates back to London in 1967.

We have been following the taste our forerunners found at a restaurant in London.

Now we smoke the selected high-quality Norwegian salmon using an age-old technique in Hokkaido.

Oji smoked salmon has enjoyed a reputation as Japan's No. 1 smoked salmon for 48 years. It is as good as traditional European smoked salmon.



Ginza shop, 3-7-1 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo
(Matsuya Ave., in front of Oji Paper office)

TEL: 03-3567-6759 www.oji-salmon.co.jp

ILLUMINATIONS



Ashikaga Flower Park will be lit up with 3 million lights until Feb. 4



Yebisu Garden Place features an illumination event called "Baccarat Eternal Lights" with a huge crystal chandelier, decorated trees and illuminated areas. (until Jan. 11)



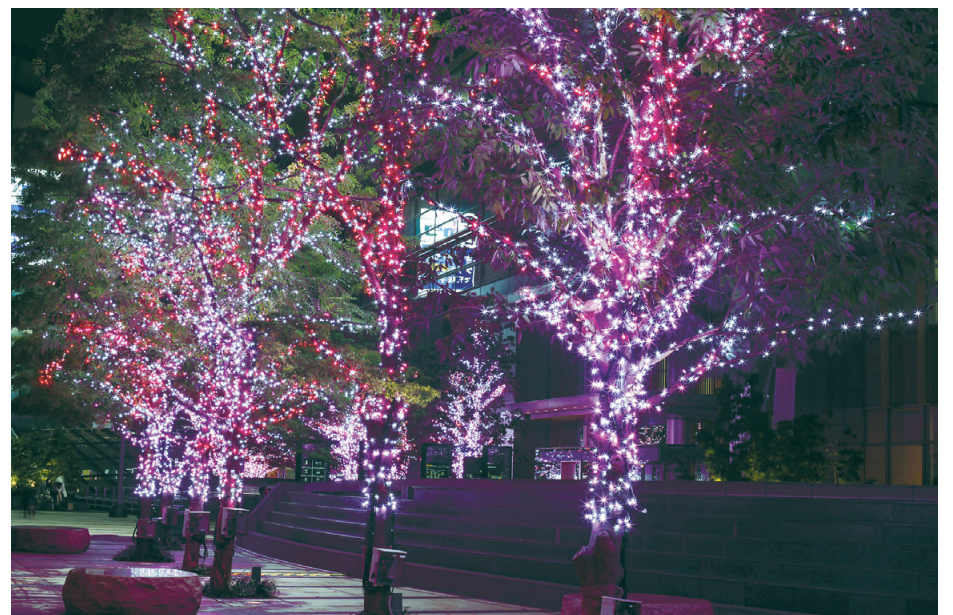
Marunouchi's Nakadori is illuminated until Feb. 14.



Sagamiko Illumillion, the largest illumination display in the Kanto region, is made up of about 5.5 million lights and is sure to delight. (until April 10)



Roppongi's Keyakizaka Galaxy illumination makes a shopping street bright. (until Dec. 25)



Tokyo Midtown's illuminations will light up Roppongi through Dec. 25.

Share with us your best illumination photos via <http://jtimes.jp/xmas15>

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