

G7 Ise-Shima Summit Special

May 25 — May 27, 2016



Shima Kanko Hotel The Classic (top) and Shima Kanko Hotel The Bay Suites (above right) are the venues for the G7 Ise-Shima Summit. The Sun Arena (above left) is the venue of the International Media Center. SHIMA KANKO HOTEL/SCULTURE-MIE



Leaders expected to focus on economy, refugee crisis

Ayako Mie
STAFF WRITER

When the Group of Seven leaders meet in Ise-Shima, Mie Prefecture, on Thursday for the two-day summit meeting, the global leaders will spend much of their time discussing wide-ranging issues from terrorism and the refugee crisis to China, which has been asserting its military power in the South China and East China seas. Additionally, a great deal of time and focus will likely be centered on how to prop up the decelerating global economy, which was triggered by slowdowns in emerging economies and plunging oil prices.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who chairs the meetings, will be tested for his leadership in bringing together the other six countries, as each member state has slightly different views on how to address the global economy and when China, the world's second-largest economy, is not a member of the G7.

"There is an increasing risk of economic slowdown and growing economic volatility," noted Abe during a press conference in London earlier this month. "The biggest challenge for the Ise-Shima summit would be how the group of seven countries can coordinate to counter against it."

First proposed by former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in 1975, the Group of Seven summits have provided a rare opportunity for global leaders to sit and talk about pressing global issues. Historically, the economy dominated the conference, especially because there was no mechanism to coordinate economic policies among the global powers.



Japan has been the member since the inception and so far hosted five summits, with the last meeting in Japan taking place eight years ago in Toyako, Hokkaido.

As this year's chairperson, Abe has been spending much political capital to help ensure he hosts a successful summit meeting, earlier this month traveling to Europe, where he met with Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, French President Francois Hollande, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, as well as British Prime Minister David Cameron, to lay the groundwork for the meeting. He also met with European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker earlier this month during his European tour.

At the summit Abe hopes to pitch economic measures that mimic his three arrows of economic policies — fiscal and monetary policies and structural reform — with an emphasis on a

bold public spending measure to shore up the global economy. The prime minister secured clear support for fiscal stimulus from France and Italy during his European trip. Yet a rift over increasing government spending remains among Japan, the U.K. and Germany.

During talks with Merkel, Abe suggested that each country should boost their stimulus spending. Yet the German chancellor, who is known for fiscal discipline, hinted that Germany is already doing enough and said domestic consumption has been whetted by the massive inflow of refugees. She was noncommittal in prioritizing aggressive fiscal spending, while emphasizing the importance of simultaneous implementation of fiscal stimulus, structural reforms and monetary policy.

Cameron also echoed Merkel and emphasized the importance of structural reform. While noting the need for G7 countries to coordinate for global economic growth, Cameron said a balanced approach to implement three arrows by reflecting the situations of each country.

Despite these differences, during a Diet session last week, Abe said that the G7 countries agree on the need for fiscal stimulus and noted that the G7 does not decide things by majority vote.

Japanese government officials also expressed optimism. Masatsugu Asakawa, vice minister of finance for international affairs at the Finance Ministry, told the Nikkei Shimbun last week that coordination among the major powers means each country can mix policies depending on its situation.

The global leaders are also likely to discuss issues involving corruption, following the release of the Panama Papers, which showed that the rich, famous and powerful have been hiding their assets in tax havens. During the recent anti-corruption summit in London this month, Cameron called for global efforts to fight corruption and Downing Street said it plans to expose the names of foreign property owners.

Yet G7 leaders are also tasked to differentiate themselves from the Group of 20, an international meeting for the leaders and central bank governors from 20 economies, including China, India



Flags of the Group of Seven countries ISTOCK

To read more articles on the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, see <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/national/ise-shima-summit/>

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SEIKO

Summit agenda laden with difficult international issues

Kiichi Fujiwara
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

The G7 Ise-Shima Summit in Mie Prefecture is expected to be a major opportunity to present Japan under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe as a key member of the international community.



Abe has been consistent in expressing his desire to end decades of Japan's economic and political decline, and to put Japan back on the map, or to have Japan recognized as a major economic, military and political power. Therefore, the summit provides an opportunity to advance Japan's global reputation, a sort of effort at public relations at the international level. The summit is expected to work as public relations at the domestic level as well, an event that shows Abe as a global leader to the Japanese public in an election year, with the forthcoming Upper House elections.

This will be the last summit with U.S. President Barack Obama, and it is quite appropriate that Obama chose to visit Hiroshima on this occasion. We must not, however, forget that this summit takes place in our global winter of discontent. The eurozone has suffered from economic setbacks, a refugee crisis, the revival of strict border regulations and

the menace of "Brexit," the possible exit of Britain from the European Union, hangs over the future of Europe, causing alarms extending over other regions as well. The collapse of governance in the Middle East and northern Africa, with the crisis in Syria and Libya as the most salient cases of state failure and civil war, are no longer regional issues, but have become global concerns, with extremist violence linked with radical Islam breaking out in Paris, Brussels and other cities.

The agenda for the summit meeting, then, will most certainly include international responses to the gradual decline of the global market, with economic contraction in China and the continuing instability crisis in the Eurozone; what is to be done in face of the state failure and civil war in Syria, where the international community failed to protect human lives; and what opportunities recent changes in Iranian foreign policy may provide.

Rare is a G7 summit that carries so much on its agenda. However, there lies an even more important task that relates to the two big players that are absent in the summit: Russia and China.

Russia, of course, is not attending the summit because of the rift that has emerged between the East and the West over Russian annexation of Crimea and military advances in Eastern Ukraine. In spite of the many international denouncements over Russia's advances, the administration of President Vladimir



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe serves the chair of the summit, where many pressing issues facing the world are expected to be discussed. AFP-JIJI

Putin has remained adamant in its pursuit, raising concerns that Russia may not be a member of the international community that shares common ideas on the normative basis of the international community. As of today, few major powers are eager to invite Russia back to the summit table.

The Abe administration's approach to Russia, however, has been more accommodating than others. Right before the G7 summit, Abe visited Russia, meeting Putin and agreeing that the territorial disputes between Japan and Russia should be settled before the end of their terms. Here, Japan seems eager to convince the G7 member states to invite Russia back to the table.

Why should this be? For Abe, settling the territorial debate on the Kuril Islands, which have been under Russian control since the end of World War II, was one of the two key points that had been neglected by previous administrations, along with the revision of the Constitution. It is Abe's determination to confront the unresolved dispute that is pushing Japan to a more accommodating policy toward Russia than Japan's partners in the West. Strengthening ties with Moscow might also increase Japan's leverage in foreign relations, especially because, aside from the U.S., Japan lacks partners to face a rising



Leaders pose for a photo during last year's G7 summit in Schloss Elmau, Germany. KYODO

China. Approaching Russia, therefore, is a rational choice for Abe both in terms of domestic politics and foreign policy.

Whether G7 members will share Abe's conciliatory approach to Russia is unclear at this moment. On the one hand, Russia's relationship with the West has further deteriorated after Russian airstrikes in Syria. The U.S. and EU, however, have also sought Russia's participation in the cease-fire talks in Syria. At the moment, the balance seems to have shifted from accelerating tension to a search for reconciliation; it will be a major achievement for Abe if he can convince the U.S. and EU to invite Russia to future summits.

Regarding China, all Western nations are divided in their approach. China's maritime adventures, what with the construction of artificial islands in the South China Sea and the Chinese navy increasing activity in waters proclaimed to be Filipino, Vietnamese or Japanese territories, has caused much alarm among the East and Southeast Asian nations, casting doubt on previous engagement policy. On the other hand, China's economy, which has provided economic opportunities for the West, has been declining in recent years, causing anxiety that a crash in the Chinese

market may lead the global economy into further decline, if not a financial crisis.

The dilemma here is that geopolitics tells us to be cautious about engagement policy, while economics tells us that further engagement and cooperation with China is crucial in the prevention of a global crisis. Generally speaking, EU nations have tended to take China more as an opportunity than as a military threat, while Japan has taken the military challenge from China more seriously, mainly because of geographical proximity, with the U.S. placed in an uncomfortable middle role.

Abe has been known to be skeptical about engaging China, paying more attention to the military aspect of China's rise. Although it would be unfair to illustrate Abe's policy as an attempt to isolate China from the world, there is no question that Japan consistently took the lead in addressing China's challenges to maritime security. After meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping in late 2014, however, bilateral relations between Beijing and Tokyo are more stable than before. This G7 summit is being held precisely at the moment when Japan's policy toward China may or may not become more accommodat-

ing. Will Japan continue its effort to address the danger of China's military expansion as a threat to maritime security? Will Japan soften its approach and try to show common ground that both China and the rest of the world share? If Japan turns to the second alternative, there is even a possibility that Japan might suggest inviting China to the summit table. It is ironic that the Abe administration, known for an alarmist policy toward China, may call for engagement.

All this shows that Abe's administration is not a mere supporter of the U.S. Of course Japan is a member of the Western alliance, with Abe showing no inclination to leave, but Abe belongs to a relatively small number of Japanese prime ministers who have worked to show initiative and leadership outside of the U.S.-Japan alliance. The big question that remains to be answered is whether Abe's initiative will further strengthen Japan's position in the G7, or invite reluctance to accept Japan's active diplomacy.

Kiichi Fujiwara is director of Security Studies at the Policy Alternative Research Institute and professor of International Politics at the University of Tokyo.



It remains to be seen how the G7 countries will move forward on matters involving Russia and China. AP/REUTERS



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Syrian refugees eat outside their classroom at a makeshift school, where only Syrian students are enrolled, built by NGO Kayany Foundation in Saadnayel, Lebanon, on May 12. The leaders of the Group of Seven are likely to discuss, among other subjects, providing sufficient education to refugee children. AP

Asian security, terrorism high on summit agenda

CONTINUED FROM B1
and Brazil. China will be the chair of this year's G20 meeting, and the group has similar positions on addressing the global economy.

At a February meeting in Shanghai, the G20 finance ministers and central bankers said that they would use "all policy tools" — monetary, fiscal and structural policies — to shore up the global economy. They also warned against countries that do not comply with the OECD standards on tax transparency at a meeting in Washington D.C. in April.

On the diplomatic and security front, the G7 will work on an action plan against terrorism, which was promised during the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting last month in Hiroshima, following heinous terror attacks in France and Belgium. Japanese media reported that the plan is likely to call on sharing information from Interpol, using airline res-

ervation information, as well as cracking down on terrorism financing.

The leaders are also expected to talk about Syria and the refugee crisis. Ahead of the summit meeting, Japan announced that it would receive 150 Syrian exchange students over the next five years starting in 2017. Tokyo apparently made that pledge to dodge criticism that Japan accepts too few refugees and asylum seekers as its standards are too high. The group of seven educational ministers last week also adopted the "Kurashiki Declaration," in which the countries pledged to step up their efforts in providing education for refugee children and those who are in dire poverty.

Additionally, Abe also hopes to address the issues of North Korea and China as this is the first time in eight years that the summit will be hosted in Asia. In the years since the last summit, China has been beefing up its military

arsenal and has been conducting reclamation projects in the South China Sea. North Korea also has escalated tensions by conducting more nuclear tests and launching missiles despite continuous international calls against them.

However, the European G7 members would appear to prefer to not provoke China as they have strong economic ties with the world's second-largest economy. Also, Beijing does not directly pose a threat to them at this time. The communique is likely to follow last year's by mentioning the maritime security issue in the East and South China seas without naming China.

Japan is also expected to bring up maritime security at the outreach meeting during the summit. Tokyo invited non-G7 countries to participate in the outreach meeting, including Asian countries such as Laos, Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, as well as Oceania's Papua New Guinea.

summit messages and leaders' profiles

G7 leads the way in stable, sustainable economic growth

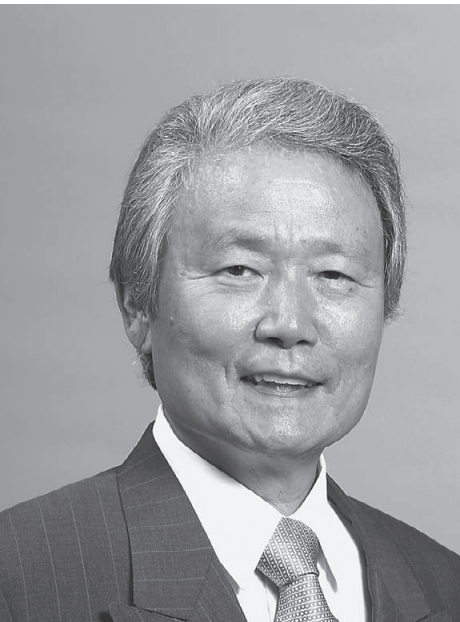
Sadayuki Sakakibara
CHAIRMAN, KEIDANREN

On behalf of Keidanren, I wish to extend my warmest welcome to the G7 leaders participating in the Ise-Shima summit.

This summit is to be held at a time when the state of the world economy is far from reassuring in light of the slowdown of emerging economies and the instability of financial and capital markets.

Keidanren hosted the "B7 Tokyo Summit" on April 20 and 21, to facilitate an in-depth discussion on the world economy, trade and investment, the digital revolution and other global agenda among the heads of major business federations in G7 countries. The outcome of the discussion was submitted, in the form of the B7 Joint Recommendations representing the consensus of the G7 business communities, to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

The essence of our message is that it is incumbent on the G7 nations, sharing fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, rule of law, basic human rights and



the market economy, to play a leading role in achieving, through close policy coordination, the stable and sustainable development of the world economy.

As chair of the B7 Tokyo Summit, I would like to once again call on the G7 leaders to collectively implement flexible fiscal policies and carry out bold structural reforms while avoiding exclusive reliance on monetary policy.

United front needed in fight against global infectious diseases

Yasuhisa Shiozaki
MINISTER OF HEALTH, LABOR AND WELFARE

The international community trembled in fear over the recent Ebola virus disease epidemic, which taught us many lessons. Public health is now a global issue.

In order to fight against the global risks of infectious diseases, it is indispensable to strengthen the emergency response capacities of the World Health Organization, and formulate an international cooperation arrangement for significant crisis. At the same time, it is necessary to secure lifelong public health services in preparation for the prevention of noninfectious diseases.

The achievement of universal health coverage will be the foundation of all those things. Japan, possessing the necessary experience and capacities, wishes to make positive contributions to the global society.

Additionally, the issue of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) has become a universal threat to the entire human



race and animal kingdom. In April Japan hosted the Tokyo Health Ministers' Meeting on AMR and launched the Asia-Pacific One Health Initiative.

Japan, taking a leading role in the world's public health, plans to initiate global discussion on these issues at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, as well as at the G7 Kobe Health Ministers' Meeting in September.

Ise-Shima Summit Agenda

- AGENDA
- Global economy & trade
 - Foreign policy
 - Climate change & energy
 - Development
 - Quality infrastructure investment
 - Health
 - Women

Profile of leaders to participate in the G7 summit

KYODO

The following are profiles of Group of Seven leaders who will gather in the central Japan prefecture of Mie for the Ise-Shima summit on May 26-27.

Britain

Prime Minister David Cameron
Cameron will attend his seventh summit after hosting the anti-corruption



summit in London on May 12, where he sought to take the lead in cracking down on tax evasion in the wake of the massive Panama Papers document leak. Cameron himself has been criticized for profiting from selling shares in a fund set up in Panama by his father.

The 49-year-old faces a historic referendum June 23 on whether Britain should leave the European Union. Cameron urges the British people to vote in favor of the country remaining in the bloc, though the public appears split over the decision.

The British leader hopes to win backing from other G7 leaders for Britain remaining in the European Union.

During the meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe earlier in the month at his country house retreat of Chequers, Cameron said Japan is Britain's closest security partner in Asia.

Canada

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
This year's summit will be the first for



the 44-year-old Trudeau, who came to power following his Liberal Party's landslide victory over the ruling Conservative Party last October.

The newly launched Cabinet consist-

ing of 15 women and 15 men, besides Trudeau himself, is notable for its diverse makeup, including a former refugee and an aboriginal.

In contrast to his predecessor Stephen Harper, Trudeau accepted over 25,000 refugees from Syria, halted airstrikes against Islamic State militants, and shows desire to pursue nuclear disarmament.

During his visit to Japan for the Ise-Shima summit, he hopes to promote bilateral trade and investment through meetings with Japanese business leaders.

In his meeting with Abe in Washington in late March, Trudeau said his country will make efforts to meet Japan's expectations for an early start of Canadian natural gas exports.

France

President Francois Hollande
This year's summit could be the 61-year-old's last, as the president, whose term ends next May, is struggling with low public support ratings.

Hollande is set to call on his G7 peers



to take united action against terrorism, after his country suffered deadly attacks in Paris last November. Islamic State militants have claimed responsibility for the acts that killed 130 people.

In the wake of the Paris attacks, he dispatched the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle to the Middle East and called on the international community for cooperation in cracking down on Islamic State extremist groups.

He also pushed for the agreement on the landmark Paris climate framework last December, a long-sought deal committing nearly all countries to rein in greenhouse gas emissions.

In his meeting with Abe in Paris earlier in the month, Hollande said the summit should put emphasis on economic growth, agreeing with Abe that the G7 needs to employ flexible fiscal policy in light of the slowing global economy.

Germany

Chancellor Angela Merkel
Praised as Europe's top powerbroker, Merkel has played a role as a mediator in the Ukrainian crisis and also took the lead in sealing the agreement between European Union and Turkey on how to stem the flow of refugees into the bloc.

Assuming the post since November 2005 as the first female chancellor, she is the third-longest serving chancellor following Helmut Kohl and Konrad Adenauer. The 61-year-old will make her 11th appearance at the summit, the most among G7 participants.



An advocate of fiscal discipline, Merkel takes a cautious stance over taking fiscal stimulus steps to support the flagging global economy despite Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's hope for G7 states to take a united action in boosting public outlays.

She was a physicist living in East Germany before turning to politics in 1989.

Italy

Prime Minister Matteo Renzi
The 41-year-old Renzi, who became the youngest Italian prime minister in



2014, will attend the summit for the third time. Italy will assume the presidency of the G7 next year.

Renzi, a former mayor of Florence and known to be a reform-minded politician, faces the challenging task of reviving the Italian economy, beset by high youth unemployment.

The Italian leader is expected to pitch to accelerate structural reforms and implement fiscal stimulus steps to revamp the flagging global economy at the Ise-Shima summit.

He is known for taking a balanced approach to dealing with diplomatic issues and may explore the possibility of cooperating with Russia, although Moscow is condemned by Western countries for its annexation of the Crimean region of Ukraine.

Japan

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe
Abe will chair the Ise-Shima gathering in his fifth summit appearance, including when he served his first stint as prime minister in 2006-2007. He seeks to take a leadership role in compiling fiscal stimulus, monetary policy and structural reform policies to address the

slowing global economy at the summit.

He was responsible as the prime minister for the decision to host the 2008 Group of Eight summit in the Lake Toya



resort area in Hokkaido, but could not attend as he stepped down due to health problems.

Abe plans to guide his G7 peers to Ise Jingu shrine, Japan's most revered Shinto shrine, on the sidelines of the summit.

He will also accompany U.S. President Barack Obama during a historic visit to Hiroshima after the conclusion of the two-day summit. He sees the event as an opportunity to strengthen the Japan-U.S. alliance.

The U.S.

President Barack Obama
Obama will attend his eighth and final summit after becoming the first African-American president in 2009. He will use it as another opportunity for consolidating his legacy, which includes a nuclear deal with Iran and the restoration of U.S. diplomatic ties with Cuba.

Obama seeks to lead summit discussions to address the rise of Islamic State militants and the issue of the South China Sea, where China's alleged milita-



rization of the contested waters is stoking concerns in the region.

He also hopes to open a new chapter in Japan-U.S. relations through his visit to Hiroshima following the summit. It will be the first time that a sitting U.S. president has visited the city.

At home, he sees his public support ratings at above 50 percent, in a recovery from the Democratic Party's huge loss in the 2014 midterm elections. His attacks on Donald Trump, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, are also drawing attention.

G8/G7 Summit meetings since 2000

2015 Schloss Elmau Summit
Host: Germany
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: April 13, 14
Summit Meeting: June 7, 8

2014 Brussels Summit
Summit Meeting: June 4, 5

The Hague Nuclear Security Summit, 2014
Summit Meeting: March 24, 25

2013 Lough Erne Summit
Host: Britain
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: April 10, 11
Summit Meeting: June 17, 18

2012 Camp David Summit
Host: United States
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: April 11, 12
Summit Meeting: May 18, 19

2011 Deauville Summit
Host: France
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: March 14, 15
Summit Meeting: May 26, 27

2010 Muskoka Summit
Host: Canada
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: March 29, 30
Summit Meeting: June 25, 26

2009 L'Aquila Summit
Host: Italy
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: June 25 to 27
Summit Meeting: July 8 to 10

2008 Hokkaido Toyako Summit
Host: Japan
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: June 26, 27
Summit Meeting: July 7 to 9

2007 Heiligendamm Summit
Host: Germany
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: May 30
Summit Meeting: June 6 to 8

2006 St. Petersburg Summit
Host: Russia
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: June 29
Summit Meeting: July 15 to 17

2005 Gleneagles Summit
Host: Britain
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: June 23
Summit Meeting: July 6 to 8

2004 Sea Island Summit
Host country: United States
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: May 14
Summit Meeting: June 8 to 10

2003 Evian Summit
Host: France
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: May 22, 23
Summit Meeting: June 1 to 3

2002 Kananaskis Summit
Host: Canada
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: June 12, 13
Summit Meeting: June 26, 27

2001 Genoa Summit
Host: Italy
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: July 18, 19
Summit Meeting: July 20 to 22

2000 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit
Host: Japan
Foreign Ministers' Meeting: July 12, 13
Summit Meeting: July 21 to 23

economy

The benefits and trials of Abenomics

Mitsumaru Kumagai
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

It has been almost three and a half years since the administration of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe launched its economic policy known as Abenomics. What I would like to suggest here is that Abenomics is moving in the right direction and that real successes have been achieved.

Ever since 2009 when the Democratic Party of Japan came to power, the question of whether government policy should focus on economic growth or redistribution of income has been debated repeatedly. But the reality is that during its entire three years in office, the DPJ never managed to get Japan's economy back on track with its income redistribution policy. This is because they were putting the cart before the horse.

The order in which economic policies are implemented is extremely important. When corporations are forced to carry out an income redistribution program without an appropriate growth strategy in place, their financial conditions can only worsen, and the result is ultimately a decline in household income.



The problem was that Japan's corporations suffered from the effects of a strong yen, lagging in free trade practices, tough environmental regulations, labor regulations and a high corporate tax rate, leading production operations to relocate overseas. The result was the hollowing out of Japan's industry. In addition, there was the problem of insufficient electric power and rising energy costs, as well as a deteriorating relationship with China. In short, Japan's economy suffered.

Abenomics has taken the right approach to the above-mentioned problems. First of all, it represents an about-face from the former anti-business policy. The current pro-business economic policy focuses on the creation of wealth, providing for redistribution of income.

Japan's economy continues to move steadily toward recovery with a strong labor market, even as foreign affairs, such as relations with China, may bring a note of uncertainty. Thanks to Abenomics, corporate earnings have achieved record-high levels, and employment has grown by over two million jobs. Meanwhile, the active job openings-to-application ratio, which indicates the extent to which the employment market is strong, has risen to the highest level seen in the past twenty-four years. Moreover, growth in employment is centered on women. The number of women employed has grown by over 1.6 million since Abe took office. And to top it off, the stock market has recorded

major growth during the same time.

The next challenge for Abenomics is to move beyond the classic growth versus income redistribution argument; both of which need to be pursued, but in the right order.

One problem is that in focusing on growth, the original "three arrows" of Abenomics (monetary policy, fiscal policy and growth strategy) overemphasized monetary policy.

Rather than boldness in monetary policy, what is needed is a flexible fiscal policy. This is the second arrow. There's nothing wrong with implementing aggressive fiscal policy, but ultimately, what is important is to maintain fiscal discipline in the long-term through the implementation of drastic reform of the social security system.

As for the third arrow, growth strategy, the Abe administration has made steady progress in deregulation of areas that have long been considered taboo in Japan. For instance, reforms have taken place for the first time in over 60 years in agriculture and energy. The Abe administration has also laid the foundations for growth by implementing reforms in the areas of corporate governance, measures for dealing with the decreasing birthrate and aging population, encouraging a more active role in society for women and labor market reforms.

However, further reforms are still needed in the areas of agriculture, medi-

cine and nursing care and labor. These are all areas with entrenched interests having what are known as bedrock regulations, requiring even more drastic reforms. The biggest challenge for the Abe administration is finding a means of resolving the polarization of the labor market caused by Japan's lifetime employment system that divides the labor market into privileged regular employment and insecure non-regular employment.

The second challenge for Abenomics is strengthening policy oriented toward redistribution of income.

The sectors that have gained the most benefit under the original three arrows are major manufacturers, high-income urban dwellers and the elderly. The Daiwa Institute of Research estimates that the weak yen brought on by Abenomics resulted in growth of recurring profits for Japanese corporations overall totaling ¥4.3 trillion. However, looking at the breakdown of this figure by industry we see that growth in manufacturing was ¥3.1 trillion, while for non-manufacturing it was only ¥1.2 trillion. Meanwhile, when we look at the breakdown of this figure by the scale of the business, we see that major corporations have gained ¥3.5 trillion, while small business has improved only by ¥0.8 trillion.

Just under three and a half years have passed since the start of Abenomics, and the time has now come to move from the original focus on growth and place more



A man checks stock prices displayed at a Tokyo securities firm on April 22. AP

attention on redistribution of income. The challenge is to strengthen the redistribution of income to non-manufacturing, small business and low-income populations in the regional areas of Japan, including young people and families with young children.

The reorientation of the Abe administration's focus is reflected in the new "three arrows," which provide a foundation for the correct understanding of current problems: strengthening the economy, supporting child rearing and social security.

As Japan hosts the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, I would like to emphasize the importance of international policy coordination in this context. The key to halting the decline in the global economy and financial markets is proactive, coordinated fiscal policy on the part of the advanced nations and China. With the economies of the emerging nations and the resource-rich nations in decline, the world economy can no longer depend on the emerging nations

to act as engines for growth. The advanced nations must become the driving force in improving the world economy. But since the advanced nations have limited margin left for implementing monetary policy, it is essential that they implement major fiscal policy. As the host country of this year's G7 summit, Japan must take the lead in promoting such policy.

In addition to developing countermeasures to world economic decline, international coordination is also needed to fight terrorism. Meanwhile, the emergence of the Panama Papers underlines the need for a method of preventing tax evasion on an international scale. The international community faces a host of difficult problems, and under Abe's leadership, the G7 Ise-Shima Summit should be a meaningful one.

Mitsumaru Kumagai is the chief economist at the Daiwa Institute of Research.

'Womenomics' continues as a work in progress

Kathy Matsui
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

In 1999, we proposed that part of the solution to Japan's demographic crisis is higher female labor participation, which — at 57 percent at the time — was among the lowest in the developed world.

Japan stood out from its developed country peers with its pronounced "M-curve" of female employment, reflecting the fact that over 60 percent of Japanese women quit working after giving birth to their first child and typically stayed out of the workforce until their children were grown. Despite this, however, few paid any attention to this issue, and the term "diversity" was not part of the Japanese vernacular. The prevailing view was that low female employment was simply a fact of Japanese life, and for a variety of reasons — most of them cultural — the system would be impossible to change.

In our 2014 report, "Womenomics 4.0: The Time is Now," we argued that closing the gender employment gap could lift Japanese GDP by nearly 13 percentage points. When Prime Minister Shinzo Abe first highlighted "womenomics" — getting more women into leadership roles to boost the economy — as a core pillar of the nation's growth strategy in early 2013, many were deeply skeptical that top-down political



pressure would lead to any meaningful change. Remarkably, however, in less than three years, Japanese female labor participation has risen sharply to a record high of 66 percent, surpassing that of the U.S. (64 percent). What factors have driven this progress and what more needs to be done?

Labor shortages

Part of the recent spike in female employment is the result of acute labor shortages. Japan's unemployment rate has fallen to a historical low of 3.3 percent, and the job openings-to-applicants ratio stands at a 23-year high of 1.28X, meaning there are 28 percent more jobs available than Japanese seeking work. The situation is particularly harsh in service industries such as healthcare, construction, retail and transportation. While the government is permitting more foreigners to work in some of these areas, supply remains scarce and employers have been forced to tap into the female talent pool. However, the majority of women have been taking on part-time rather than full-time jobs. In order to cope with a prolonged period of deflation, companies shrank their cost bases by shifting employees from full-time to part-time contracts. As a result, part-timers now account for over 40 percent of total workers, with women accounting for around 57 percent of all temporary staff.

Child care, parental leave benefits

Another factor driving higher female employment has been increased child care capacity and child care benefits. In 2013, the government set a target of expanding day care capacity to eliminate

the 400,000 children on nationwide day care waiting lists by 2019. During FY 2013-14, day care capacity was increased by 219,000 spots, or roughly halfway toward the goal, and according to the updated plan, the 2019 goal has been raised to 500,000. While still insufficient, the government will likely target increased day care services in its upcoming fiscal spending package. In addition, the government augmented the ratio of replacement pay during parental leave from 50 percent to 67 percent for the first six months and extended entitlement to non-regular workers. Surprisingly, Japanese child care leave benefits now rank among the most generous in the developed world.

Diversity disclosures and targets

While there are more Japanese women working than ever before, there is still a dearth of females in leadership positions. To this end, on April 1, a new law, called the "Female Employment Promotion Legislation," went into effect. It requires large-scale private and public sector entities (>300 employees) to disclose gender diversity targets, accompanied by specific action plans. While critics argue that targets are not as effective as quotas since there is no retribution for non-compliance, we still regard this as a meaningful step forward since gender-related disclosures have been virtually absent, and this new legislation should improve transparency. (After all, it's hard to move the needle if you don't know where the needle is). We also believe that — similar to corporate governance reforms — target-setting and peer pressure will force many firms to start thinking about diversity

more seriously, since management will now be held accountable for meeting their diversity goals.

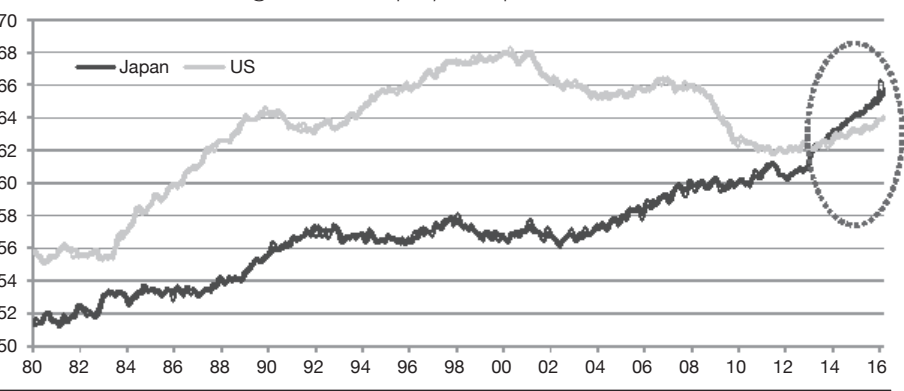
What more should be done?

Even with the progress seen since 2013, the fierce demographic headwinds mean that the government, private sector and society must work together to take even bolder steps to accelerate female labor participation. Japan is certainly not alone with its demographic challenges, so when the G7 leaders meet in Ise-Shima, Abe should underscore his commitment to womenomics with more concrete action such as the following recommendations:

- Neutralize the tax and social security codes: The current system of spousal tax and social security deductions need to be amended so they stop discouraging married women from working full-time outside the home.
- Legislate equal-pay-for-equal-work and introduce more flexible labor contracts: Due to the unequal treatment of part-time versus full-time employees, the government should look to the "Dutch model" of "equal-pay-for-equal-work" in order to raise the incomes and status of part-time workers. Moreover, the government should consider the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan's proposal to create a new type of "regular employee" labor contract that encourages women to return to the workforce as regular employees and retain pay and promotion opportunities.
- Expand caregiving capacity: Increase the capacity and affordability of day care and nursing care via greater deregulation.

Japanese female labor participation surpasses that in the U.S.

% of women between ages 15-64 employed in part/full-time work, as of Feb. 2016



SOURCE: OECD

tion. One domestic solution would be to leverage retirees and stay-at-home parents to provide child care and after-school care within local communities. Immigration rules should also be liberalized to make it easier to hire foreign domestic workers and caregivers.

• Reform working hours and create more flexible work environments: Japan ranks second in the OECD for the longest number of hours worked annually. Much of this is caused by traditional seniority-based evaluation systems. Employers should adopt objective and performance-based evaluation plans and promote more flexible work arrangements (including job-sharing and telecommuting).

• Eliminate unconscious biases: Society needs to eliminate unconscious biases about gender diversity at work, schools and homes. Common myths about womenomics such as those that suggest that higher female labor participation will further depress Japan's birthrate (when empirical evidence proves the

opposite is true) need to be overturned. Gender-based stereotypes need to be challenged, and men need to be encouraged to be more active in the home. It is also critical to engage male leaders through initiatives such as "male champions of change" and similar actions.

Since Japan is leading the G7 and other developed countries in terms of the pace of its aging and shrinking population, it has a unique opportunity to become a positive template for other nations facing similar challenges. Japan's single-most valuable resource is its people, but with its demographic clock rapidly ticking, more aggressive steps must be taken to promote gender diversity so that everyone has the chance to maximize their full potential. Diversity is no longer an option, but an economic imperative and the benefits of greater diversity will be enjoyed by all.

Kathy Matsui is vice chair and chief Japan strategist at Goldman Sachs Japan.

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE GOVERNANCE

The Tokyo Foundation is engaged in public policy research into an array of political, economic, and diplomatic issues. As an independent, private-sector think tank, we are mindful of the expanding role that the nongovernmental sector is being called on to play today as countries face growing fiscal constraints.

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President

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Tsuneo Watanabe Senior Fellow and Director of Foreign and Security Policy Research, Tokyo Foundation

The Realism in Abe's Foreign Policy

The centerpiece of Prime Minister Abe's foreign policy is to promote regional cooperation within the framework of the Japan-US security alliance and through regional, multilateral arrangements. Until now, Japan's role had been severely limited because of constitutional and legal constraints, but with the enactment of new security legislation last September, the country should be able to make a more 'proactive contribution to international peace'—such as through capacity building support—in keeping with the rapidly changing security landscape.

approach to leadership, balancing the need to address emerging security concerns with efforts to promote economic growth through fiscal stimulus, monetary easing, and structural reform.

In that sense, he's hardly a revisionist, as some of his political opponents have labeled him. After all, key cabinet members like Foreign Minister Kishida and Defense Minister Nakatani belong to the liberal wing of the LDP, and he's strongly committed to strengthening—not weakening—the alliance with the United States.

He's also aware that government, especially those like Japan's with sizable fiscal deficits, can't protect the Asia-Pacific region's public goods alone, so he's been very active in tapping the resources of the private sector, including think tanks and NGOs.

Given that his approval ratings have been remarkably stable the Japanese public seems to be satisfied with the job he's been doing. Whether or not his legacy survives, though, will hinge on whether he can place the interests of the country ahead of his personal ambitions in choosing the right moment to step down.

The prime minister appears to be taking a very practical, realistic

Japan's public debt is around 230% of GDP, the highest, by far, among the G7 countries; the fiscal situation is nearly as bad as Greece. What's more worrisome is that Japan's population—that is, the number of taxpayers—is aging and shrinking. Some economists project that spiraling healthcare and social security costs could push up Japan's debt to as high as 600% of GDP by 2050.

If Japan continues to neglect its efforts toward fiscal consolidation, market adjustment in the shape of hyperinflation could devastate Japan's public finances well before 2050.

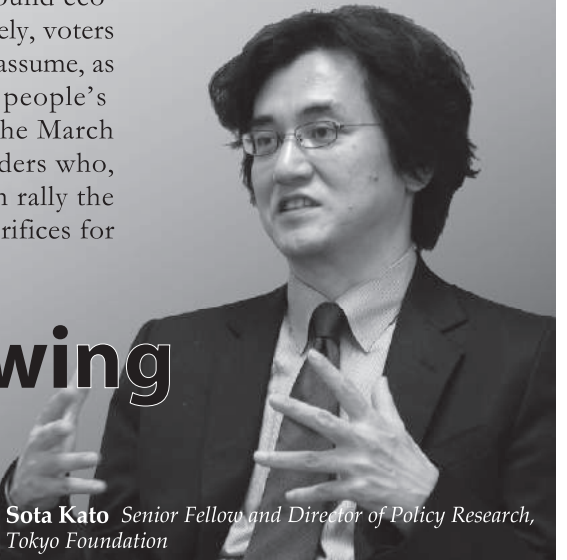
There are three approaches to achieving fiscal consolidation: economic growth, higher taxes, and fiscal austerity. Abenomics is an attempt to cut the deficit by encouraging growth, mainly through fiscal stimulus and monetary easing. But given Japan's rapid demographic changes, achieving growth high enough to ease the debt dilemma will be a daunting task.

Market credibility hinges on doing more than pursuing an uncertain growth scenario; the administration will also need to raise taxes and cut spending, which, unfortunately, are unpopular with voters.

Japanese politicians, like their Western counterparts, seem to be pursuing more populist policies. Voters must be made to realize, though, that by choosing candidates who promise to keep taxes low without slashing expenditures, they are, in effect, asking future generations—people who can't vote today—to pick up the tab.

Restoring fiscal health requires not only sound economic policy but political leadership. Fortunately, voters appear to be less selfish than most economists assume, as demonstrated by a willingness to put other people's interests ahead of their own in the wake of the March 2011 tsunami. What we need are political leaders who, instead of placating to populist demands, can rally the country around the need to make personal sacrifices for the good of their children and grandchildren.

Japan's Narrowing Fiscal Options



Sota Kato Senior Fellow and Director of Policy Research, Tokyo Foundation

public health

Japan plays leading role in global public health issues

Andy Crump
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

Satoshi Omura has long been regarded as preeminent in identifying antibiotics and other useful compounds originating from nature's microorganisms. His innovative and pioneering research has resulted in the discovery of many new microbes and over 500 novel chemicals, several of which have been developed into widely used medicines in human and veterinary health, as well as in agriculture. These include several leading antibiotics, plus the groundbreaking staurosporine, the forerunner of many of today's widely used and highly effective anti-cancer compounds, such as Gleevec and ivermectin, a truly extraordinary, exceptionally safe, multipurpose compound; the world's first "endectocide," capable of killing a wide variety of organisms inside and outside the body.

The trailblazing nature of his work has recently been recognized through his receipt of the 2014 Gairdner Global Health Award, rapidly followed by sharing the 2015 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine. It is remarkably uncommon that a biorganic chemist should receive two of the world's most prestigious prizes in global public health, the accolades being primarily due to the unheralded and unmatched discovery, development, distribution and global impact of the truly astonishing ivermectin. They were also



testament to Omura's pragmatic insight into the need to set up international public-private partnerships (with Merck & Co.) and his unwavering belief that nature's microorganisms hold the answers to all our health and many other needs. His career-long association with the renowned Kitasato Institute also instilled in him the primary philosophy of the institute's eponymous founder, namely that the fruits of scientific research should be exploited for the benefit of communities everywhere as quickly as possible.

As Omura constantly searches for novel antimicrobials, ivermectin has now been shown to be effective against, among others, insect disease vectors, bacteria, various parasites, viruses and cancer cells. Yet despite donated ivermectin being used by over 250 million people annually in campaigns to eliminate two of the world's most devastating and disfiguring tropical diseases, river blindness and elephantiasis, Omura continues to investigate new ivermectin analogues and drug combinations, just in case drug resistance should develop, which could cause the disease elimination efforts to fail. One of ivermectin's many extraordinary qualities is that, despite decades of monotherapy in people, no ivermectin resistance in humans has been observed, even though such resistance appears swiftly in other animals.

Today, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a fast-developing global crisis, recognized as one of the greatest threats to human health. It threatens the effective prevention and treatment of a burgeoning range of infections caused by bacteria, parasites, viruses and fungi. It is a cross-border phenomenon, increasing everywhere, with so-called superbugs flourishing in hospitals and health care centers worldwide. With few new products in development, we are speeding toward a post-antimicrobial era in which "minor" infections will again become fatal. If current trends continue, commonplace interventions, such as organ transplantation, joint replacements and anti-infective chemotherapy will become impossible. This situation heralds the end of modern medicine as we know it. And we need immediate, concerted, universal action to avoid that dire end.

As health and poverty alleviation are fundamental components of sustainable socioeconomic development, improving global health is a major challenge. Accordingly, infectious diseases have been receiving increasing international attention over the past three decades.

AMR was a major agenda item at the G7 summit in Germany (2015), and it will be at this year's G7 summit in Japan, alongside infectious diseases, dementia, universal health insurance and pandemic preparedness. An Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance, adopted by World Health Organization (WHO) Member States in 2015, aims to ensure that prevention and treatment of infectious diseases with safe and effective medicines becomes sustainable in the long term. The plan has five strategic objectives, including improving awareness and understanding of antimicrobial resistance; strengthening surveillance and research; and reducing

the incidence of infection. The plan also calls for the optimization of the use of antimicrobial medicines; and ensuring adequate investment in countering antimicrobial resistance.

But can the international community be relied on to follow through on new initiatives? The signs are not encouraging, with the WHO's 2001 Global Strategy for Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance being virtually ignored as the international community immediately shifted its attention to bioterrorism following that year's terrorist attacks.

The world would do well to look to Japan for direction, a nation with an enviable track record of being at the forefront of novel and effective health interventions. Omura's successes at the Kitasato Institute with ivermectin and other compounds reflects the accomplishments of past alumni, Shibasaburo Kitasato (originator of serotherapy) and Sahachiro Hata, who discovered salvarsan for syphilis, the compound becoming the world's first true chemotherapeutic agent. During the 1950's and '60's, Japan implemented successful health-improvement and disease control programs, involving mass screening and treatment that quickly allowed the population to attain one of the healthiest lifestyles in the world. In a mere 20 years, nationwide, interdisciplinary, mostly community-driven campaigns against parasitic diseases led to the control of ascariasis, trichuriasis, hookworm and other soil-transmitted parasitoses, plus eradication of other major diseases such as malaria, schistosomiasis and elephantiasis.

Japan's unique overseas development aid philosophy, founded on the basic concept of self help and human security, has exported the unparalleled achievements in disease control and provided support for disease research and control activities internationally. Japan has been a proactive and innovative leader in global health, notably at G7 summits, from the 1998 Hashimoto Initiative, through the Okinawa Infectious Disease Initiative and the subsequent Health & Development Initiative. Japan's initial proposal in 2000 led to creation of the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis (GFATM). The nation is also continually promoting capacity building and improved national health infrastructure, as exemplified by the 2008 Health Systems Strengthening initiative.

International commitment has also been substantial for over 20 years, culminating in leaders from governments, industry and global health organizations issuing the London Declaration on Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in 2012, a turning point in international action to control and eliminate NTDs. Commitment from the international pharmaceutical industry has also been staunch, Merck's unprecedented drug donation of ivermectin (Mectizan) to tackle river blindness in 1987 being followed by subsequent drug donation programs from several major pharmaceutical manufacturers. Japan's pharmaceutical companies have also been creative, Sumitomo Chemical Co. not only producing the best anti-malarial, long-lasting insecticidal



A Ugandan drug distributor inventories ivermectin and albendazole tablets being used to combat river blindness and elephantiasis. ANDY CRUMP

bednets, but having the foresight to establish a production factory in Tanzania, meaning that local community members gain employment, as well as better health.

The new paradigm of international, multifaceted mobilization for global health was further galvanized by the appearance of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) in 2000. The BMGF represented new leadership, creating and expanding multidisciplinary partnerships with NGOs, countries, academia and industry, including the 2013 launch of the Japan-driven Global Health Innovative Technology (GHIT) Fund, based in Tokyo. Inaugurated in 2015, Japan's Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) was created with the goal of facilitating and expediting translation of basic research



Professor Satoshi Omura collects a soil sample at the Kawana Hotel Golf Course in Shizuoka Prefecture, where the microorganism that produces avermectin was discovered. ANDY CRUMP

into practical applications, following the lead of the GHIT Fund.

Integrated measures against HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis have been highly successful since the GFATM launch, proving that concerted, multi-stakeholder health interventions can conquer intractable diseases. But global health problems are dynamic, forever evolving, so constant vigilance from world leaders, innovative

thinkers and visionary scientists will be required to find the much-needed new wonder drugs such as penicillin and ivermectin, safeguard their use, and so protect the long-term health of all global citizens and future generations.

Andy Crump is a visiting professor at Kitasato University and Keio University.

Lixil, Saraya working to address hygiene issues

Masaaki Kameda
STAFF WRITER

In a bid to save lives and improve the quality of life for millions of people in the world, Japanese companies have worked over the years to improve poor sanitation in developing countries.

A recent report by the World Health Organization and UNICEF estimated that 2.4 billion people are still without sanitation facilities in 2015, including 946 million — about one in eight of the world's population — who defecate in the open. In particular, the report warned that the lack of progress on sanitation threatens to severely undermine the survival of children.

According to UNICEF, children under five years old suffer 1.7 billion cases of diarrhea every year and about 300,000 of those — more than 800 per day — die from diarrheal diseases linked to inadequate sanitation, hygiene and water.

In addressing such a pressing issue, Lixil Group Corp. (www.lixil.com), Japan's largest housing fixture maker, has committed to providing improved access to toilets in developing communities.

The firm believes such efforts could reduce the threat of illness and advance hygienic living, saving children's lives, as well as offering safe access for women and girls, who could be at risk when they leave their homes to use the toilet.

A strategy announced by Lixil in March addresses the issue of global hygiene and sanitation, with the company stating it hopes to, "Promote and enable access to safe and hygienic sanitation practices, especially for women and girls, while preventing the harmful transmission of diseases among children."

"As a global citizen, we are more engaged in global social issues today than ever before, and recognize the need to embrace our role as a problem solver where our global network, expertise and experience can make a difference," Kinya Seto, Lixil's COO said when announcing the firm's strategy.

To that end, Lixil has set out a lofty goal, with plans to provide improved access to sanitation and better hygiene for 100 million people by 2020. The effort utilizes the SaTo (Safe Toilet) pan invented by American Standard in 2013, a U.S. subsidiary of the firm.

The SaTo was created to contribute in reducing disease transmission and improving sanitation facilities in Bangladesh.

Featuring water seals with a trapdoor mechanism to shut off pit latrines from the open air, the simply designed SaTo works to ward off flying insects from scattering pathogens through contact with human excrement.

More than 810,000 SaTo are already in use across the globe, greatly improving the quality of life for over four million people, according to Lixil.

For inventing the hygienic SaTo pan technology, American Standard received the Patents for Humanity award last year from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Launched in 2012, the Patents for Humanity program recognizes those who use innovative technology to address global humanitarian challenges.

Another Japanese company is working to improve the hygienic environment of hospitals in Africa to prevent health care associated infections or hospital-acquired infections that can lead to death. In addition to the human cost, these infections



Co-inventor Jim McHale (right) field tests a new model of the SaTo pan in Rwanda. LIXIL

could place serious financial burdens on health systems.

WHO statistics showed 10 percent of hospitalized patients at any given time in developing countries will acquire at least one health care associated infection.

Saraya Co., a maker of hygiene products such as soap and detergent, started a program dubbed the Wash a Million Hands Project in Uganda in 2010, aiming to save lives lost due to poor hygiene by boosting hand-washing access and education for children and mothers.

Through the project, the firm said they realized medical facilities also need support to create more hygienic environments. It prompted them to establish the 100% Hospital Hand Hygiene Project in 2013 in the eastern African country that encourages the use of alcohol hand sanitizers at Uganda's hospitals and clinics.

In 2014, Saraya started producing alcohol hand disinfectant at a factory in Uganda operated by its subsidiary Saraya East Africa Co., aiming to supply the product at affordable prices for local medical facilities while maintaining Japanese quality and know-how, the firm said.

Saraya hopes to spread the prevention effort to medical institutions in other countries in East Africa.

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As the world's leading sanitary ware company, LIXIL is committed to promoting access to safe and hygienic sanitation practices.

Working with international NGOs and local partners in countries including Kenya, Uganda, Bangladesh and India, our target is to enable improved access to sanitation and hygiene for 100 million people by the year 2020. We do this through innovative and sustainable solutions that prevent open defecation and the harmful transmission of diseases, support improved water resource management, and address waste treatment issues.

Through constant investment in technology and innovation, and a collaborative approach with our partners, we will continue to improve sanitation and hygiene, one person and one community at a time.

LIXIL GROUP MAJOR BRANDS



SaTo™ (Safe Toilet) pan



Green Toilet System



Micro Flush Toilet



LIXIL Group Corporation
www.lixil.com

Mie Prefecture

(Publicity)

Lush nature envelops sacred spirit

Mie Prefecture, home to the Ise-Shima region that is set to host the G7 summit, is full of unique cultural sites that are must-sees for Japanese and non-Japanese alike.

Ise Jingu (Ise Grand Shrine) enshrines the progenitor of the Imperial family and is the nation's most revered Shinto shrine. *Ama*, or female divers, carry on a tradition that dates back several thousand years to dive deep into the Pacific Ocean off the prefecture's coast to catch abalone, clams, seaweed and other seafood. The Iga area of the prefecture is famous as the birthplace of one of the country's two famous ninja clans.

Of the many tourist highlights in the prefecture, Ise Jingu sits as the crown jewel of them all.

Ise Jingu is most famous as being the spiritual center of Japan, enshrining the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami, the predecessor of the Imperial family and supreme deity of Shinto, for about 2,000 years.

Ise Jingu, where more than 1,500 rituals take place each year, is visited by millions of visitors every year who pray for the prosperity of the Imperial family, world peace and bountiful harvests. It is customary for the prime minister and the minister of agriculture, forestry and fisheries to visit Ise Jingu on the first working day of the year, typically Jan. 4, unless it happens to fall on a weekend.

Amaterasu Omikami was originally worshipped in the Imperial Palace by successive emperors of Japan. However, during the reign of the 10th Emperor, Sujin, the sacred mirror (the symbol of Amaterasu Omikami) was removed from the Imperial Palace.

Later, during the reign of the 11th Emperor, Suinin, the emperor ordered Princess Yamato-hime, to seek the most appropriate place to permanently enshrine and worship Amaterasu Omikami. After searching across many regions about 2,000 years ago, the princess finally received a revelation that Amaterasu Omikami should be enshrined and worshipped eternally in Ise.



Ise Jingu is the most revered Shinto shrine in Japan. MIE PREFECTURE

Ise Jingu, whose area is roughly the same size as Paris, contains 125 shrines, with the two main sanctuaries being the Kotaijingu Inner Shrine, or Naiku, which is dedicated to Amaterasu Omikami, and the Toyouke Daijingu Outer Shrine, or Geku, dedicated to Toyouke, an agricultural goddess who was summoned from the north of Kyoto Prefecture and enshrined at Ise about 1,500 years ago.

Since then, Ise Jingu has been considered the nation's most revered Shinto site. During the Edo Period, millions of people have visited Ise Jingu in a single year as part of mass pilgrimages, known as Okage Mairi, that occurred about three times over a roughly 60-year cycle. The number of visitors was remarkable, considering that the nation's population was only about 30 million at the time.

The pilgrimages came to be as priests encouraged people to visit the shrine, which had been devastated by many years of chaos in the Sengoku (Warring States) Period, which preceded the Edo Period.

In Okage Mairi, people would sneak away without telling their parents or employers and spend weeks walking to Ise Jingu. It was considered a special occasion when disloyalty to superiors was to be pardoned in the name of paying respect to the sacred Shinto site and even the poor should have the opportunity to receive blessings.

Of the rituals taking place at Ise Jingu, Shikinen Sengu is the biggest event. Shikinen Sengu refers to the periodic rebuilding of the shrine.

Every twenty years, an identical divine palace with the same dimensions as the current one is constructed at a site adjacent to the main sanctuary. The sacred costumes, furnishings and divine treasures to be placed inside the sacred palace are also remade. Once they are prepared, priests move the Holy Mirror to the

new sanctuary. This whole process is called Shikinen Sengu. All in all, it takes about eight years to conduct all the rituals and events needed for Shikinen Sengu.

Shikinen Sengu comes from the Japanese traditional concept of *tokouaka*, or eternally young. It is a custom of keeping things clean and fresh in an idea of revival of spirit and new energy, eternity of mankind and universality of the universe.

The first Shikinen Sengu of Naiku was conducted in 690, under the reign of the 41st Emperor Jito. The last Shikinen Sengu, which was conducted in 2013, was the 62nd.

To commemorate the 62nd Shikinen Sengu, Ise Jingu established the Sengukan Museum, located on the Geku premises.

The museum, which features a mixture of modern and traditional architecture, has exhibits demonstrating the craftsmanship and spirit passed down to generations via Shikinen Sengu. It also houses the Sengu Theater and educational materials for visitors to learn about Ise Jingu, Shikinen Sengu and Shintoism, and holds workshops and other events. Additionally, it has some areas where visitors can rest while enjoying the beautiful natural surroundings.

The museum is open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and is closed on the fourth Monday every month. When the fourth Monday falls on a national holiday, the museum is closed the following day.

A place for transcending cultural differences

Eikei Suzuki
MIE GOVERNOR

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Ise-Shima in Mie Prefecture for hosting the 2016 G7 summit, while welcoming the leaders and other people from all over the world. It is a great honor for Mie residents that world leaders come to our prefecture.

While visitors can experience traditions and culture such as the 2,000-year-old Ise Jingu, or ancient *ama* (female divers), the Ise-Shima region is an area where people can admire the beautiful nature such as Ago Bay, considered to be a vista that perfectly represents Japan.

Particularly Ise Jingu, where Japanese people have offered thanks and prayers for peace since ancient times, provides people with a special feeling toward the world. Such feelings surrounding Mie Prefecture are a way of thinking that we shall flexibly accept diversity and move on, transcending differences of race, religion, sex or age. There is a clear message here to realize global peace in today's world.

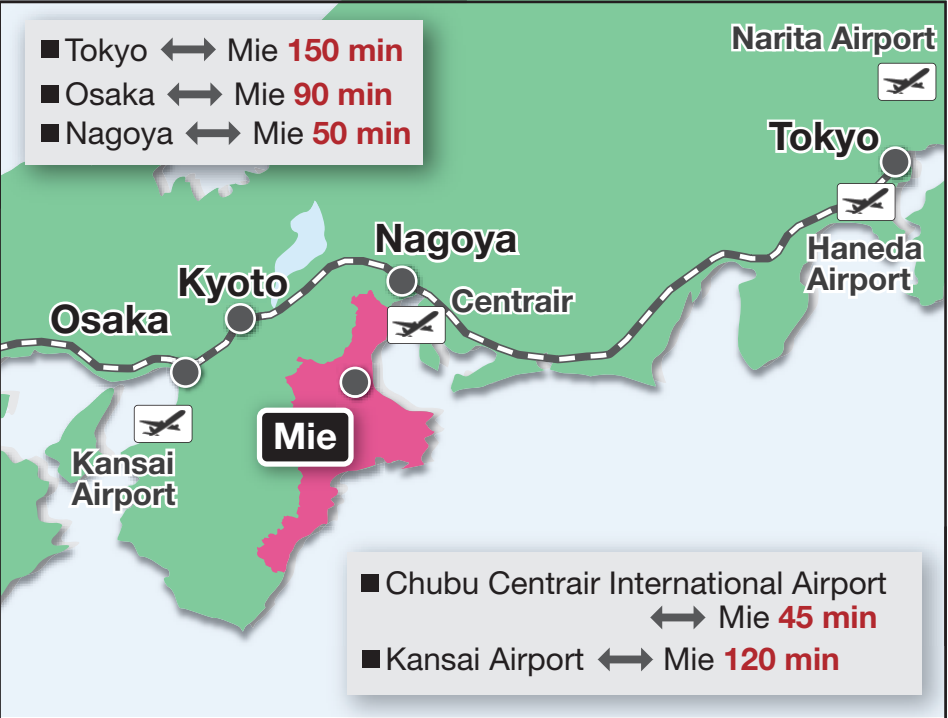
As for the G7 leaders' discussions,



I hope clear ideas will be proposed aimed at resolving various issues our world faces today. I also hope a message will be delivered from the land of Ise-Shima, one of the symbolic places of peace in Japan, to the rest of the world to realize peace.



More than 1,500 rituals take place at Ise Jingu, which is visited by more than 8 million people each year. MIE PREFECTURE



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Ujibashi Bridge, Ise Jingu

Ise-Shima culture, gourmet

‘Ama’ divers preserve fishing tradition in Mie Prefecture

Ama, or female divers, make their living diving to the bottom of the sea in search of seaweed and shellfish such as abalone and clams. They now exist only in limited areas; Mie, Iwate and Ishikawa and other prefectures. The cities of Shima and Toba in Mie Prefecture have the largest number of ama in the country. Approximately 1,000 ama are active in those cities, and it is estimated that they represent about half of all ama in Japan.

There are a few men doing the same work, but the number of women engaged in it is far larger, so in general, it is recognized as a profession for women. The reason for this wide gender gap is because women can retain body heat better in the cold sea due to having more subcutaneous fat than men. It is said that because they only wore a loincloth in the past, even during the winter, maintaining body heat was a matter of life and death. Ama first swim to the spot where they hope to find their catch, then dive deep to the sea bottom to look for it. They spend about a minute underwater on each dive, and dive between 50 and 100 times. Their safety is heavily influenced by the weather and sea conditions, meaning they have to work hard in hand with nature and making the work a rather dangerous profession.

Traditional ama fishing in the cities of Shima and Toba was designated as an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Mie Prefecture in 2014 — the first time for ama to receive such designation. In a report of the Council for the Protection of Cultural Properties, passing the skills to identify the sea bottom terrain and fishing grounds down throughout the history of ama fishing without substantial change and voluntarily playing a role in resource management by limiting catches, were noted as being highly evaluated points.

There is a movement that aims to register ama fishing on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. This movement began on the private level from around 2007. In order to build momentum for the registration, the cities of Shima and Toba have hosted an



Ama female divers spend about a minute underwater on each dive, and dive between 50 and 100 times. MIE PREFECTURE

“ama summit” five of the six times it has been held since 2009. The 6th summit was held in Toba on Nov. 7 and 8, and ama from Japan and South Korea, the only two countries active in this area, agreed to disseminate ama culture for the G7 Ise-Shima Summit. The effort to register ama fishing on the UNESCO list was also discussed.

Being designated a cultural property of a country is one of the requirements for UNESCO’s registration. The nine prefectures — Iwate, Miyagi, Ishikawa, Fukui, Shizuoka, Mie, Tottori, Yamaguchi and Tokushima — that participated in the Ama Cultural Preservation and Promotion Conference agreed to survey and promote ama culture on a national scale.

In recent years, *amagoya* (ama hut), a place for ama to warm up and recover after diving have opened to visitors. People can enjoy the fresh seafood caught by ama, while having a friendly conversation with them, enriching their understanding of this unique culture.

Food, nature and so much more
Mike tsu kuni is one of the historical phrases to describe the Shima area. In old Japanese, the words mean “the nation dedicated to providing food for the emperor.” In the seafood-rich Mie Prefecture, Shima is especially known for the wide diversity of the catch. In “Manyoshu,” supposedly the oldest surviving anthology of Japanese poetry, there is a poem by Ootomono Yakamochi using the term *mike tsu kuni* as a poetic epithet, describing a small boat with ama divers.

In “Kojiki,” Japan’s oldest historical record, there are a few sections that make a strong case that Shima was the source of seafood for the Imperial Court well before the Asuka and Nara Periods of Japanese history. Wooden signs with the names of seafood such as abalone, giant clams and sea cucumbers have been excavated from the ruins of Heijo-kyo, the onetime capital of Japan. These facts indicate that seafood was provided to the Imperial Court from Shima throughout Japanese history.

To enjoy the natural beauty of the area, a visit to Ise-Shima National Park is highly recommended. It boasts graceful vistas formed by islets and a line of deep coves stretching from Toba Bay to Matoya, Ago and Gokasho bays. Ise Jingu is the collective name given to 125 different shrines, including the Kotajingu Inner Shrine in Ujitachi, Toyouke Daijingu Outer Shrine in Toyokawa and other sanctuaries. Most of these shrines lie within Ise-Shima National Park. Another highlight of the park is the Mount Asama Observatory; the highest point in Ise-Shima National Park (555 m above sea level), where visitors can appreciate a panoramic view of the Shima, the Atsumi and



Mie Prefecture is home to the largest number of ama female divers in Japan. There is a movement to register ama fishing on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. MIE PREFECTURE

Chita peninsulas, as well as the iconic Mount Fuji in winter. The famous Meoto Iwa (married couple rocks) have been a popular place to worship the sunrise since ancient times. The sun rising between the two rocks is especially beautiful on clear days from May through July.

For visitors who feel like staying few days in the area to enjoy the beauty of nature and the local hospitality, there are quite a few hotels in the area. From campsites to top-tier Japanese and Western resort hotels, there is something for everyone. Many of them have *onsen* hot spring facilities, and offer activities such as marine sports, hiking, cycling or golf on or near their properties.

In addition to having much to offer in terms of sightseeing and food, Shima boasts a long history of cultivating a rich culture through to the modern age.



Barbecued Ise-ebi Japanese spiny lobster, abalone and clams MIE PREFECTURE



Ninja tours are popular with people visiting Mie Prefecture. MIE PREFECTURE

Discover the clandestine world of the ninja

If sushi, *sakura* cherry blossoms and Mt. Fuji are representative icons of Japan, ninja should probably be in the same category, as movies and anime inspired by the athletically gifted Japanese spies have garnered quite a bit of popularity around the world, serving as the basis for such characters as Naruto and the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Iga, in western Mie Prefecture, is the birthplace of the Igaryu (Iga clan) Ninja, one of the two main ninja clans; the other being the Kogaryu from Shiga Prefecture.

The image that comes into most people’s minds when thinking of ninja is often inaccurate. In movies and anime, ninja are portrayed as flying through the sky, or camouflaging themselves as trees to escape their many enemies. Often, they are shown sneaking behind enemy lines to assassinate senior military leaders. However, these portrayals are far from the reality.

The roles of ninja were divided into the two main areas of performing espionage and strategy under a methodology known as *ninjutsu*.

When engaging in espionage, ninja carefully gathered intelligence about their enemies and analyzed their military strengths.

Strategic activities are those that reduced the enemy’s military power. Ninja did not fight strong enemies directly at their strongest, but waited to battle them after reducing their military power.

The ninjutsu of Igaryu and Kogaryu stem from the same source, and are said



The Iga area is the birthplace of Igaryu Ninjas. MIE PREFECTURE

to be the highest level of the ninja art. The exact origins of ninja are unclear. In one theory, a man named Otomono Sahito, who served ruler Shotoku Taishi (574 to 622), is said to be the father of ninja, but a lack of concrete evidence makes the theory nothing more than a folktale.

In Iga, the origins of ninja are said to date to the Kamakura Period (1185 to 1333) when area residents fought against land-owning aristocrats. The residents learned *shugendo*, a practice involving mountain training and adapting to extremely hilly, difficult-to-manuever-in terrain. Their fighting

methods later evolved to ninjutsu. Ninja were deployed in many wars as spies and warriors especially in the Sengoku (Warring States) Period, from the late 15th to the late 16th century.

Igaryu Ninja are known for their skills in gathering information and the use of fire.

They also used smoke bombs, flaming arrows, signal fires and guns. It is fortunate that the area had an abundance of the ingredients needed to make gunpowder, as well as many people who were familiar with it. The art of mixing explosives was the most closely guarded secrets held by ninja.

Visitors to Iga are able to experience life as ninja themselves. For example, at the Igaryu Ninja Museum *kunoichi* (female ninja) and ninja guide visitors through the Ninja House, showing and demonstrating tricks, including trapdoors and places for hiding swords. In thrilling performances, ninja demonstrate their skills with various weapons such as Japanese swords, *shuriken* throwing stars and *kusarigama* (chain-sickles.)

The museum also has various exhibits showing ninja tools and weapons, old documents on ninja, photos and books and manga featuring ninja.

Ninja no Mori, or ninja forest, is an athletic field where visitors can try on ninja attire and have a firsthand chance to use some ninja tools and train in ninja skills such as climbing, jumping, hiding and walking on water. Visitors can also earn certificates of full ninja mastership.



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agriculture and Japanese cuisine

Increased efforts made to expand Japanese food exports

Michiru Mekata
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

Vegetable and fish tempura fried crisp and crunchy, paper-thin slices of wagyu changing color as they are dipped in a steaming hot *shabu-shabu* pot and delicate *wagashi* (Japanese confectionery) borrowing seasonal motifs from nature and classic Japanese literature are only a few examples of Japanese food that has come to win worldwide acclaim.

Japanese cuisine is prepared from choice seasonal ingredients, with careful attention paid to appealing to the five senses. "It's not merely about flavor and aroma. Japanese care about how the sizzle and sound excite the ears, while at the same time food needs to tempt the eyes with a fine presentation on elegant ceramic plates and lacquerware. Also respectful of seasonality, I think all those elements combined have allowed *washoku* (traditional Japanese cuisine) to be added to UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list in 2013," said Makoto Kondo, deputy director of the Export Promotion Division at the Food Industry Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).

"Taking advantage of such global recognition, MAFF is starting to collaborate with other ministries and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO). Altogether, we are trying to promote further exports of Japan's farm, forest and marine products,"

continued Kondo. Specifically, the ministry aims to raise the export value of such items as sake, wagashi, beef, dairy products, rice, vegetables, fruit, flowers, green tea, fish and processed marine products to a total of ¥1 trillion before 2020.

"Concurrently, Japan has taken strict and stringent control measures to assure product safety and quality after the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident. Such action was crucial for eliminating the anxiety of other countries over the Japan's post-accident produce," noted Kondo. As a result, many countries and people are now beginning to again accept things made in Japan. "Taking such a moment as an opportunity, the government, related ministries and the private sector are uniting in their efforts to propagate and diffuse the Japan brand in a single voice," he said.

Specific actions taken include the establishment of Japan pavilions at overseas food trade shows, public-private seminars and cooking schools for Japanese cuisine, arrangement of business meetings among traders from various countries and Japan, establishment of in-store Japan shops at commercial facilities overseas and others.

At the G7 summit, the Japanese government will host the reception for the delegations, preparing dishes solely using Japanese ingredients, while there will be other opportunities for the media and the general public to try out cuisine made with

Japanese ingredients. "It's a great opportunity for Japan to let the world know about great vegetables, wagyu and seafood in this country," said Kazuhiro Shimane, deputy director at the ministry's Food Cultures and Market Development Division.

Additionally, the government is encouraging the expansion of export destinations that have so far been relatively limited to neighboring countries and regions such as Taiwan, China, Hong Kong and South Korea. "To this end, related ministries have recently come together to conduct and compile a research paper on the trade trends of countries around the world. Based on such study findings, we're starting to take more effective measures and actions that respond to the specific needs of each nation and region. For example, we are now promoting the export of halal meat to Islamic countries," explained Kondo.

In terms of the health benefits provided by Japanese food, various studies and research, including the 2015 OECD Statistics on the Non-medical Determinants of Health, indicates the exceptionally low figures of those that are overweight or obese in Japan, as compared to the figures for other advanced nations such as Germany and the U.S.

Furthermore, Japanese food is assumed to be the main factor in contributing to the longevity of Japanese, which currently is the longest in the world at 84 years of age (male/female



Wagyu sukiyaki is one of the most popular dishes in Japanese cuisine. The government is working to expand exports of wagyu all around the world. KOJI CHIKADA

average, 2015 WHO statistics). Something else that should not be overlooked is that many Japanese dishes contain no gluten, meaning those suffering from such illnesses as celiac disease can eat it.

In recent years, there has been an ongoing global fad for Japanese food and many people actually say they prefer it to other cuisines such as Chinese or Italian. The main reasons for

their preference, they say, is due to the deliciousness of Japanese dishes, while also being healthy, fashionable and safe (2014 JETRO survey on Japanese food conducted in Moscow, Ho Chi Minh City, Jakarta, Bangkok, Sao Paulo and Dubai).

However, 40 percent of those surveyed in the study believe Japanese food is expensive.

"Saying that Japanese food is expensive

is inaccurate. There are many tasty Japanese dishes that are surprisingly cheap. I therefore look forward to increased exports of Japanese food contributing to further *washoku* diffusion. Through such expansion, I envision the status of Japanese cuisine moving from being something posh to tasty and healthy casual fare that can be eaten every day," concluded Kondo.

Government working to promote wild game as a delicious and healthy cuisine option

Mami Maruko
STAFF WRITER

While wild game dishes made with deer and wild boar meat have traditionally been popular among the European aristocracy, gibier, as it is known in Japan after the French word for game, has never been the norm here — at least until recently.

In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of wild animals damaging produce due to them eating and ravaging the rice paddies and fields. At the same time, there has been an increase in hunting as well as trapping the harmful animals.

The damage caused by animals exceeds ¥20 billion a year, with about 60 percent of it caused by deer and wild boars, according to the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry.

On the other hand, game has long been highly valued by chefs and the Western idea of making full use of animals killed is gaining more recognition in Japan.

Headed by Norihiko Fujiki, a French chef who prepares wild game at his inn in Chino, Nagano Prefecture, the Japan Gibier Promotion Council, a nonprofit organization was founded in 2014 to promote wild game cuisine that contributes to regional revitalization.

Together with regional governments and the private sector, including restaurants and distributors, game is gaining more popularity nationwide — especially with the increasing construction of new hygienic disposal and treatment facilities where animals are processed quickly and hygienically before they are cooked.

The council organizes seminars, cooking classes and the Japan Gibier Summit, which promotes advanced



Left: Agriculture Minister Hiroshi Moriama samples gibier items at the "Gibier Corner" of the G7 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting welcome reception, as chef Norihiko Fujiki looks on; Menchikatsu deep-fried ground venison cutlet. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

"More and more restaurants are taking interest in healthy and tasty gibier cuisine. The more supply there is, the more widespread gibier becomes to the general public," stressed Akiba.

A booth dedicated to gibier cuisine was among 10 booths at the venue of the G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting's welcome reception on April 23. Other booths offered sake, sushi, tempura, grilled Kobe beef, gluten-free pasta, roast beef, onigiri rice balls and *wagashi* Japanese confectionery.

The participating G7 agriculture ministers enjoyed Japanese gibier dishes made from ingredients from Kagoshima Pref.

"It's not quite right to hunt animals and just throw them away. We should be grateful for the natural blessings of wild animals and eat them thankfully. We also wish to continue to spread the recognition of delicious gibier dishes," said Akiba.



Gibier dishes served at the G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting reception on April 23 (from top): wild boar and Japanese leek on simmered daikon cooked in the salty-sweet sukiyaki style; roast deer meat with red wine sauce; venison potato salad. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES



Clockwise from top right: An abundance of colorful seasonal fruit can be picked all over Japan; Japanese seafood is well-deserving of global promotion; Healthy and tasty sashimi is one of Japan's signature dishes. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

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This is a rare image of Mt. Fuji called Perfect Double Diamond Fuji, and it is believed to bring good luck.



From top: Japanese tea; Rice paddies are common in rural areas. JAPAN TEA EXPORT COUNCIL/MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

Ise-Shima cuisine

Ise area is known for a wide variety of delicious cuisine

Makiko Itoh
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

According to the Nihon Shoki, the second-oldest book of Japanese history, around 2,000 years ago Princess Yamato-hime was ordered by her father, Emperor Suinin, to find a new, permanent shrine for the most important deity in the land, the great sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami. The princess, taking her task to heart, wandered the land for 20 years in search of a suitable home for the great goddess. Once she arrived in Ise, however, the goddess spoke to her and expressed a desire to establish her earthly abode in this bountiful area in between the mountains and the sea.

Ever since then, Ise Jingu shrine has been the home of Amaterasu Omikami, making it one of the most sacred places in Japan. The sun goddess resides in the Naiku, Inner Shrine — the most sacred shrine in Japan. Additionally, there's also the Geku or Outer Shrine where Toyouke, the goddess of food and the harvest is enshrined. Today, the region on the eastern coast of the Shima Peninsula in Mie Prefecture is commonly called Ise-Shima, home to the historic town of Ise and the spectacular natural beauty of Ise-Shima National Park.

The most striking feature of this region with its mild, warm climate and fertile soil is its coastline. Called a ria coast, its many bays and small islands make the marine life very diverse and abundant, and harvesting its bounties has been a way of life here for thousands of years. This is the area where *ama*, or female divers, who can stay under water for long periods, originate. While *ama* are best known as pearl divers, they also dive for other treasures of the sea. One of these is the *Ise-ebi* (always called by that name regardless of where they're caught) or Japanese spiny lobster. The *Ise-ebi*'s long antennae were traditionally regarded as signs of longevity, making them a must as centerpieces on the most festive occasions such as the New Year's holidays.

Fed by the nutrient-rich Kuroshio Current which flows from south to north along the Shima coast, the *Ise-ebi* caught here are especially prized for their sweet, firm meat that is enjoyed as sashimi, grilled, or simmered in dashi stock.

The peak season for *Ise-ebi* from Ise is the wintertime, but in late spring to summer another highly prized treasure from the sea comes into its own, *awabi* (abalone). The supply of abalone along the Shima coast is carefully sustained by limiting its season, as well as the length of time it can be harvested. An *ama* typically works for two hours per day hunting for abalone and then stops, so there is always some left for the next time. Not only does this prevent the supply of natural abalone from being depleted, it also allows them to grow to large sizes. Some of the best abalone are reserved as offerings for the gods who are enshrined at Ise Jingu, but there is still plenty left for us mortals though, and freshly caught abalone is something to be experienced when visiting the area. One of the best ways to do this is to visit an *amagoya* or diver's hut near the coast, where the *ama* will grill freshly caught abalone on a charcoal grill right in front of diners' eyes. The umami-rich juices of that flood the taste buds are simply heavenly.

Ise-ebi and abalone are the undeniable stars of Ise-Shima seafood, but there's plenty more to enjoy too. The area is also where cultured pearls were first developed and while the local pearl industry is not what it used to be, the edible cousins of pearl oysters are abundant and delicious. Oysters are usually only in season in the cold months, but here there is a variety called *iwagaki* (rock oyster) that is available in late spring to early summer. Firm and plump, rock oysters are delicious eaten on the half shell with just a squeeze of lemon. And for fans of *fugu* (pufferfish), a variety that's caught around the port of Anori called Anori fugu has a slight cherry-blossom pink hue and a subtle sweetness.

Madai (Japanese snapper), a must-

have at wedding feasts and May 5 Children's Day celebrations, is also popular. Seaweed varieties such as *hijiki* and *aosa-nori* are also harvested along the coastline.

While the bounty of the sea is what Ise-Shima is best known for, the land also yields delicious food, starting with rice. Great rice means that sake is made locally, too, and, like the local cuisine, the sake of Mie Prefecture is usually made in small batches, under the highest quality standards.

Just up the road from Ise-Shima is the city of Matsuzaka, which is world famous for having some of the best wagyu in the country. Although Kobe beef is well known around the world, in Japan Matsuzaka beef is arguably better known than its Kobe counterpart. While the seafood of Ise-Shima is a product of nature, Matsuzaka beef is a product of human innovation, pushing the limits of what tender, juicy and marbled beef can be.

In the early days, access to Ise Jingu was restricted to the Imperial family and later aristocrats and the upper samurai classes. Around the late 16th century, with the establishment of better roads, making a pilgrimage to Ise very popular, much like the pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela or Canterbury in Europe around that time. During the mid to late Edo Period (around the 17th to mid-19th centuries), it's estimated that one in six Japanese people made an Ise pilgrimage at least once in their lifetimes; amongst the citizens of Edo (current Tokyo), it was practically a craze. With so many regular folk making the trip to Ise, many of whom could not afford to dine on expensive delicacies, several down-to-earth dishes appeared to cater to their needs, as well as those of the regular folk who lived and worked there.

Many of these dishes are still popular today, such as *tekone-zushi*, marinated fresh *katsuo* (bonito or skipjack tuna) mixed with sushi rice that was originally enjoyed by fishermen on their boats; *Ise udon*, thick wheat noodles that are



Ise-ebi Japanese spiny lobster and abalone from the Shima coast. The peak season for *Ise-ebi* is winter, while the peak for abalone is late spring through summer. ISE PRESS CENTER

cooked in a dark broth until they are soft rather than chewy; and *sanma-zushi*, salt-cured Pacific saury pressed onto sushi rice. There are also some hidden gems to be found in area eateries that are popular with local residents, as well as tourists, such as spectacularly large fried shrimp, freshly made tempura and so much more. Whether exploring local

dives or enjoy elegant meals at a ryokan (traditional inn), there's something to please everyone's appetite.

Legend has it that soon after the abode of the great sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami was established in Ise, she became lonely and asked for one of her fellow deities to come and join her there and be her companion — the aforementioned

Toyouke, the goddess of food and the harvest. If one is allowed to indulge in a flight of fancy, it's nice to imagine the two goddesses, partaking of the delicacies of the area as they enjoy the mild weather, chatting away and smiling benignly at the people of Ise-Shima, doing the same, as they have done for millennia.



Tekone-zushi, marinated fresh *katsuo* mixed with sushi rice, a popular dish from Ise ISESHIMA TOURISM & CONVENTION ORGANIZATION



Clockwise from above: *Ise udon*, thick wheat noodles cooked in a dark broth; A French dish made from *Ise-ebi* Japanese spiny lobster; The Summit Beer 2016 from Ise Kadoya Microbrewery in Ise, Mie Prefecture; *Tai* sea bream with rice and Ise tea ISESHIMA TOURISM & CONVENTION ORGANIZATION/ISE PRESS CENTER



French dishes made with seafood from Ise, Mie Prefecture. ISESHIMA TOURISM & CONVENTION ORGANIZATION



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G7 ministerial meetings



KYODO

G7 Environment Ministers' Meeting

Date: May 15-16
Venue: Toyama
Chair: Tamayo Marukawa, minister of the environment

The G7 environment ministers adopted a joint communique that stipulates that the G7 nations commit to formulate long-term strategies to cut down greenhouse gas emissions to meet the goals stipulated in the Paris Agreement last year, as soon as possible and well within schedule. The ministers shared the view in the joint statement that the strategies, to be presented to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, are essential to meet the goals set in the Paris Agreement. The ministers also agreed on the "Toyama Framework on Material Cycles," a framework that lays out specific actions for efficient and maximized use of resources, promoting the ideas of reduce, reuse and recycle.



KYODO

G7 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting

Date: April 23-24
Venue: Niigata
Chair: Hiroshi Morioka, minister of agriculture, forestry and fisheries

The agriculture ministers of the G7 nations adopted the "Niigata Declaration" aiming at strengthening global food security and stable food supply worldwide at a time when the world population is growing and some nations are experiencing aging societies. In the meeting, the ministers recognized the significant need to encourage new and motivated entrants to the farming and agri-food industries, as well as the need to support worldwide research on climate change. The meeting also decided to hold a G7 Forum on Investment in the Agri-Food Sector to benchmark best practices, exchange policy experience on access to credit and facilitate responsible investment in agriculture and its related businesses, particularly in developing nations.



KYODO

G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting

Date: May 20-21
Venue: Sendai, Miyagi Pref.
Chair: Taro Aso, minister of finance, deputy prime minister

The G7 finance ministers and central bank governors agreed that extreme fluctuations and erratic movements in the foreign exchange markets negatively impact the global economy and the stability of worldwide financial markets. The yen increased to ¥106.27 to the dollar from ¥111.89 in just two days following the Bank of Japan's monetary policy meeting on April 28, in which it was decided not to take somewhat expected monetary easing action. The G7 nations reaffirmed that they will avoid resorting to measures to lower the currency to boost the economy. Instead, each of the member countries should use their own discretion on the balance between financial and fiscal policies, as well as structural reform, to boost the economy, they said. The G7 nations also committed to take the initiative on efforts to crack down on tax avoidance activities worldwide, and adopted the "G7 Action Plan on Combatting the Financing of Terrorism."

G7 Health Ministers' Meeting

Date: Sept. 11-12
Venue: Kobe, Hyogo Pref.
Chair: Minister of health, labor and welfare

Japan wants to take the initiative in discussions at the health ministers meeting on global issues such as the formation of universal health coverage programs, as well as combating high-mortality infectious diseases. The Kobe meeting will be held at a time when the global risks of infectious diseases were highlighted following the recent epidemics of the Zika virus in Brazil and the Ebola virus in Africa last year. The spread of Ebola in particular resulted in criticism on the response of the World Health Organization following the outbreak, with some health industry officials even calling for the creation of an international organization to respond quickly to major health crises. The ministers are also expected to discuss the needs for lifelong health programs in aging societies, especially in Asia as the number of chronic disease sufferers is likely to increase in the near future.



KYODO

G7 Education Ministers' Meeting

Date: May 14-15
Venue: Kurashiki, Okayama Pref.
Chair: Hiroshi Hase, minister of education, culture, sports, science and technology

The ministers discussed the significance of education and its potential role to settle threats — such as poverty and terrorism — to global societies. They also adopted the "Kurashiki Declaration" stipulating that the G7 nations will promote coordination aimed at solving those issues through education. The Kurashiki meeting followed the November 2015 Paris attacks and the movement of Syrian refugees into Europe. The declaration cited the need for educational programs to nurture the concepts of liberty, democracy and respect for life, in expectation that education will help solve those issues, as well as wealth discrepancies and unemployment problems facing younger generations.



KYODO

G7 Science and Technology Ministers' Meeting

Date: May 15-17
Venue: Tsukuba, Ibaraki Pref.
Chair: Aiko Shimajiri, state minister of science and technology policy

The G7 science and technology ministers reached an agreement that health sciences could play a significant role in solving problems related to aging societies, and this agreement was reflected in the joint "Tsukuba Communique." The joint statement stipulated that the G7 nations will cooperate in promoting research and international collaboration on brain research to help treat brain disorders such as dementia. The ministers agreed in the joint statement to promote open science and sharing of the outcomes of publicly financed research on the brain. At the Tsukuba meeting, the ministers also agreed to support global networking of female scientists, researchers and students. They recognized the need for monitoring, and, if necessary, taking action against gender stereotyping that is quite often seen in the academic and corporate worlds of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

G7 Transport Ministers' Meeting

Date: Sept. 24-25
Venue: Karuizawa, Nagano Pref.
Chair: Minister of health, labor and welfare

The G7 transport ministers held a meeting in Frankfurt in September, discussing a wide variety of topics related to the advanced driving assist systems, or so-called self-driving technologies. This year, the ministers will deepen discussions on the topic at the Karuizawa meeting. Driverless technology and cars with greater energy-efficiency are the hottest issue in the auto industry, not only for existing carmakers that are developing self-driving cars, but also for technology companies such as Google and Apple, who are conducting tests of cars running on their technology. Driverless technology is expected to reduce the number of traffic accidents caused by human error and ease traffic jams.



AFF-JIJI

G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting

Date: April 10-11
Venue: Hiroshima
Chair: Fumio Kishida, minister of foreign affairs

The G7 foreign ministers issued the "Hiroshima Declaration on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation" to reaffirm their commitment to creating a world without nuclear weapons, also naming Syria, Ukraine and North Korea as countries that may endanger that goal. In a separately adopted joint communique, the G7 nations condemn North Korea in particular for its repeated provocations. The Hiroshima meeting was held after the country conducted a nuclear test on Jan. 6 and launched ballistic missiles on Feb. 7. The joint statement condemned those activities "in the strongest terms." The ministers also shared concerns over the situation in the East and South China Seas, strongly opposing, in a separately issued joint statement, coercive or provocative actions to alter the present status quo.



KYODO

G7 Energy Ministerial Meeting

Date: May 1-2
Venue: Kitakyushu, Fukuoka Pref.
Chair: Motoo Hayashi, minister of economy, trade and industry

The energy ministers adopted a joint statement, the "Kitakyushu Initiative on Energy Security for Global Growth," endorsing the G7 nations' leading role in investment to develop oil and natural gas fields to secure sustainable global economic growth. The investment in particular will focus on upstream investment to secure stable energy prices, on technology development for clean energy, and for high-quality infrastructure investment. In the joint statement, the ministers shared the view that "current energy price levels and volatility hamper investment and add uncertainty to energy markets and the global economy." Additionally, Japan announced a plan to form a framework to introduce an LNG trading market in Japan sometime in the first half of the 2020's.

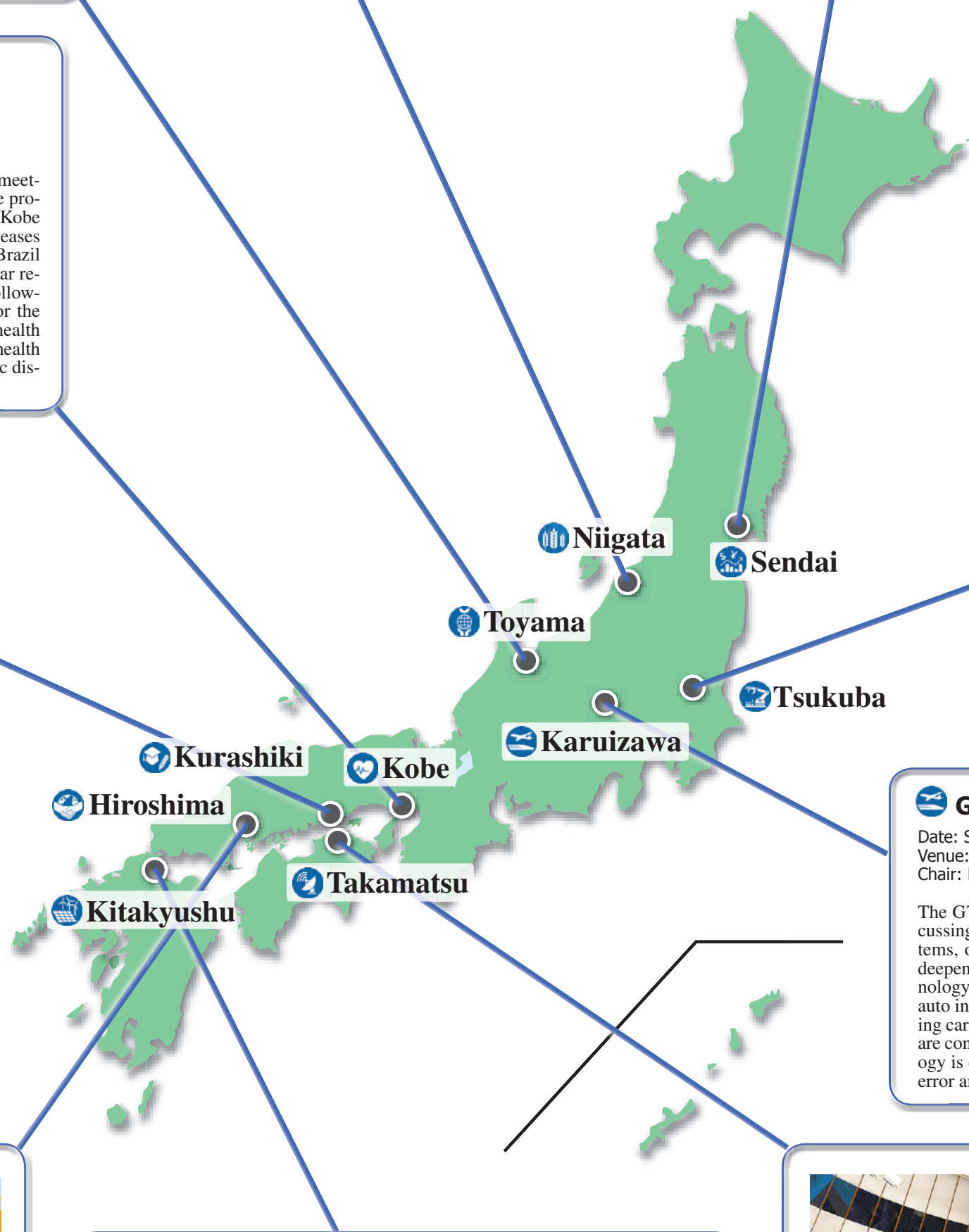


KYODO

G7 ICT Ministers' Meeting

Date: April 29-30
Venue: Takamatsu, Kagawa Pref.
Chair: Sanae Takaichi, minister of internal affairs and communications

The G7 ministers responsible for information and communications technology discussed promoting economic growth and establishing communications security in a society where the "Internet of Things" and the artificial intelligence are becoming more popular in use. It was the first ICT ministers' meeting of the G7 countries in about 20 years. The meeting adopted the "Charter for the Digitally Connected World," reaffirming member nations' fundamental principles to promote and protect the free flow of information. The meeting also adopted the "Joint Declaration by G7 ICT Ministers," which stipulates that G7 nations promote Internet openness and cross-border information flow, while opposing applicable policies that require access to, or transfer of, source code of mass-market software.



Nagano Prefecture

(Publicity)

Leading-edge technology in the heart of the country

A G7 Transport Ministers' Meeting will be held in Karuizawa, Nagano Prefecture, on Sept. 24 and 25. Located in the center of the country and boasting a variety of transportation networks, Nagano is easily accessible from anywhere in Japan. The prefecture is also known as a unique area where state-of-the-art technologies coexist alongside delicious cuisine, beautiful nature and a variety of cultures.

Nittoh Kogaku is one of the companies that Nagano proudly holds up as an example of its high-technology pedigree.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Suwa area, in the center of Nagano Prefecture, was a major silk-processing center and Nittoh Kogaku's predecessor was involved in this business. As the silk industry declined, the company decided to switch to manufacturing camera lenses in 1943. Leading camera companies, including Nikon and Konica, had moved to Suwa during the war. After researching lens manufacturing, the company briefly produced its original brand of camera lenses, Kominar, in the 1950s, but it switched to supplying lenses to major Japanese and overseas companies.

Nittoh Kogaku's strength is its integrated system running from R&D to the manufacturing of complete products. It is a process beginning with optical design, followed by the creation of high-precision lenses via elaborate molds, the development of the optimum customized mechanism and electronic control systems for the particular piece of equipment, through to the final coating and surface treatment. In addition to this integrated production system, they are well known for a diversity of core technologies coupled with the extremely high skill and expertise of their engineers.

They have many breakthrough prod-

ucts, including projector lenses and monitor lenses for videoconference systems. Among these, their "Theia Lens" for CCTV (closed-circuit television) cameras, an innovative ultra-wide-angle lens without distortion that Nittoh Kogaku jointly developed with an American company, was the one that caught the attention of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). In 2008, Nittoh Kogaku's lens was used in the environmental monitoring camera of the RQ-4 Global Hawk; an unmanned surveillance aircraft used for high-altitude, long-range Earth science missions. In 2014, two kinds of their lenses were used for MINERVA 2, a space probe carried on Hayabusa 2, a Japanese Asteroid probe developed by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency. The lenses for space probes are very different from lenses used in other environments. They need to not only be very wide angle with high resolution, but also able to withstand the strong ultraviolet light and radioactivity in the environment. These requirements could be met with their patented optical design technology.

The lens developed for MINERVA 2 weighed only 15 g was one-third the size of previous models. Manufacturing such small products may seem challenging, but manufacturing larger lenses is actually more difficult, since the demand for high accuracy increases as the size of lens gets larger. Nittoh Kogaku manufactures large lenses up to 600 mm in diameter, as well as processing glass materials into virtually any shape. These products are regarded as among the highest quality in the world, and are the result of both highly experienced craftsman and the most sophisticated equipment at each stage of production. The perfect balance of those two assets is the key to Nittoh Kogaku's



Left: Nittoh Kogaku's strength is the integrated system from R&D through the manufacturing of complete products. Right: Tamagawa Seiki Co.'s Singlsyn is standard on virtually all hybrid cars of global automakers.

success.

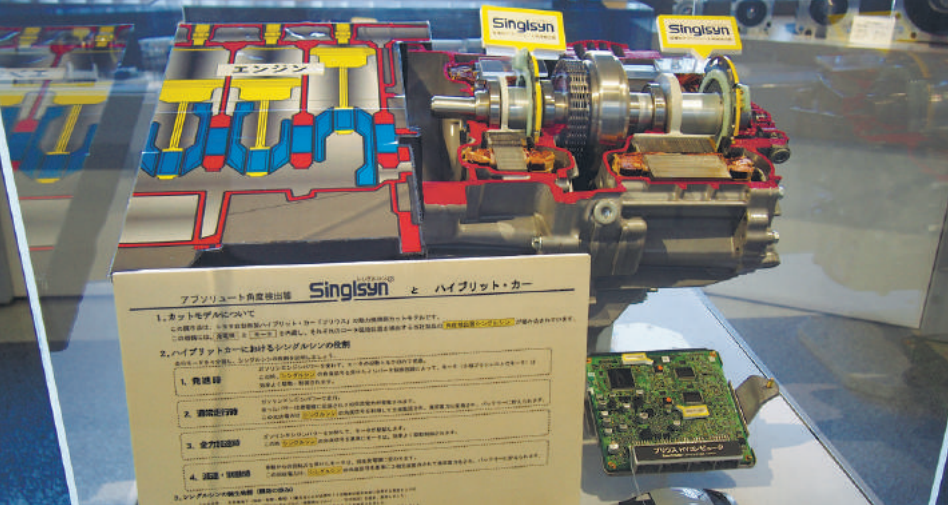
Another cutting-edge company, Tamagawa Seiki Co., is the leader of Nagano's efforts in the "Special Zone to create Asia's No. 1 Aerospace Industrial Cluster."

Established in 1938 in Tokyo, Tamagawa Seiki began as a manufacturer of oil-level indicators for aircraft. Improving their products over time, they expanded their business from the manufacturing of instrument motors and tapping machines to the development of technologies in a variety of areas. In 1994, they moved their headquarters to the city of Iida, southern Nagano, where they already had several plants.

Today, Tamagawa Seiki has an 80 percent share of the global variable reluctance (VR) resolver market. In fact, the company's Singlsyn VR resolver can be found on virtually all hybrid cars around the world. Singlsyn also received the Ministry of

Economy, Trade and Industry's "Mono dzukuri Nippon Grand Award."

The path to their success in hybrid cars began in 1993, when Toyota Motors started developing hybrids. Being a supplier for such a huge company in a new industry posed risks, but they decided try. Toyota's first generation Prius hybrid, which was rather futuristic at the time, did not sell well, but it did put Tamagawa Seiki on the map. Their name and reputation for Singlsyn steadily penetrated the industry because Toyota embarked on a rigorous campaign to expand the hybrid market, recommending Singlsyn to competitors. The time it took for the Prius to become popular allowed Tamagawa Seiki to invest in equipment and hire and train staff to create a stable supply line of VR resolvers for hybrids. The original Singlsyn developed in 1990, had 20 parts and weighed 800 g, but continuous improve-



Right: Tamagawa Seiki Co.'s Singlsyn is standard on virtually all hybrid cars of global automakers.

ment over 25 years saw a reduction to just five parts and 180 g.

Iida was designated the "Special Zone to create Asia's No. 1 Aerospace Industrial Cluster" by the government in 2014. Moving from a business making aircraft parts, and being a supplier for multinational corporations that design, manufacture and sell airplanes, Tamagawa Seiki has been focusing their attention on the aviation and aerospace industry. In the 10 years prior to being named the aerospace zone, they were calling on the city to be the hub of Japan's aerospace industry, under a prediction for increased demand for aircraft in the near future. In 2006, they started the "Iida Aerospace Project" with 37 companies to promote and speed aviation and aerospace growth in the area. As a part of the project, "Aerospace IIDA" (AI) was born through collaboration of Tamagawa Seiki and two other compa-

nies. One of the biggest problems facing the industry in Japan is that many companies are tier 2 or 3 in the manufacturing process; they can supply parts for bodies or engines, but are unable to make essential components or systems. Because 40 percent of aircraft manufacturing consists of components and systems, being able to make those are necessary to expand the industry in Japan. Tamagawa Seiki, along with other AI members, are coordinating resources with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry to achieve tier 1 status.

The spirit to never stop pursuing changing needs has been the core of growth for Tamagawa Seiki. Their main fields of business evolved from aviation to cars, robots and semiconductors, but today, they find themselves once again putting their energy into the aviation and aerospace fields. They are contributing to both Iida and the aviation and aerospace industry.



Watching wild monkeys bathing in hot springs is a popular activity for visitors from all over the world.

Nagano Prefecture is home to many tourist destinations and places of interest. Below are just few examples.

Snow Monkey Park is located in northern Nagano. It is about a 30-minute walk from Kambayashi Onsen and the mountain path provides some good exercise.

The park opened in 1964 alongside a ski resort. The idea behind the park is to show the natural habitat of wild Japanese macaques, the northernmost living monkeys. The natural habitat means that there are no artificial facilities to attract or contain the monkeys, simply their natural surroundings for them and visitors to enjoy.

The most well-known images of snow monkeys are likely those of them bathing in onsen hot springs. In 1970, a snow monkey appeared on the cover of Life magazine, and the bathing monkey sporting what appears to be a philosophical expression on the cover garnered them popularity abroad. Their habit of bathing in onsen is believed to have come about after a curious young macaque carefully dipped his toe in the warm water. Finding the sensation agreeable, the monkey eventually immersed his whole body. Other monkeys soon followed suit, mainly females and young monkeys.

The sight of them grooming each other is a tourist favorite, while the sight of them intimidating others to save their



Tomikura soba offers a unique texture and the aroma of buckwheat.

favorite spot in the hot spring is reminiscent of human behavior in certain situations. Visitors can stand quite close to the monkeys as they relax in the hot springs, but should not get too close to avoid scaring or angering them. Although bathing is the most popular behavior of monkeys seen by visitors from all over the world, merely sitting by the river and watching monkeys pass by is also interesting.

Over 190,000 visitors from all over the world visited Snow Monkey Park in 2015. The park manager works very hard to allow the monkeys to maintain their natural behavior patterns without feeling stressed or threatened and all visitors are asked to follow park regulations, includ-

ing not feeding the monkeys and not trying to touch or startle them. Using underwater or aerial photographic equipment, or approaching the monkeys with any type of special equipment is strictly prohibited. If the environment were to become too stressful for the monkeys, they may stop coming to the area, so following park rules is critical to maintain the unique opportunities for people to see wild macaques.

Being the fourth-largest prefecture in Japan, Nagano is known for a wide variety of traditional regional dishes. Although many of them are widely recognized and available in souvenir shops or restaurants in Nagano and major cities, some remain close to home. Tomikura soba and Kenshin sushi (a type of *sasazushi*, which is sushi wrapped in bamboo leaves) are two traditional dishes in the city of Iiyama, northern Nagano, that are hard to find in other areas.

There are many kinds of soba noodles in Japan, and although they are supposed to be different from each other, it is often difficult to detect the differences. But Tomikura soba certainly occupies its own unique place. It is made with *oyamabokuchi*, a thistle plant in the daisy family, which give the dough incredible strength and elasticity. The dough can be rolled so thin a newspaper can be read through it. The soba is semi-transparent and is

served al dente. In the past, it was difficult to get flour in the area, and thus people used *oyamabokuchi* instead. As a result, Tomikura soba offers a chewiness and interesting texture while maintaining the sweet aroma of buckwheat.

Kenshin sushi is the local name for *sasazushi*. The legend is that residents in the area created this style of *sasazushi* to honor Kenshin Uesugi, a general during the age of provincial wars, passing Tomikura on the way to battle. Kenshin sushi's ingredients are sushi rice, mountain vegetables, shiitake mushrooms, walnuts and radish miso on top of bamboo leaves. The ingredients are more or less the same as most *sasazushi*. However, the twist of Kenshin sushi is in the presentation. Instead of wrapping the rice and toppings with the leaves, Kenshin sushi is served like an open sandwich using bamboo leaves as plates. When eaten, the sushi is placed on the palm and the leaf is pulled until the rice separates from it. Once there is enough rice sticking out over the side of the leaf, the entire piece is eaten at once without the leaf. It is a fast food version of sushi that can be eaten without chopsticks. It is also less perishable due to the properties of bamboo leaves and vinegar.

Kenshin sushi is served at ceremonial occasions in the area and is certified as an Intangible Folk Cultural Property by Iiyama.

G7 Transport Ministers' Meeting will be held in Karuizawa, Nagano on Sept. 24-25

Date September 24-25, 2016 Venue Karuizawa, Nagano

Participants : Japan (Host country), Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the European Commission

Outline : Based on discussion in the G7 Transport Ministers' Meeting held in Frankfurt am Main, Germany in September 2015, Japan would like to discuss the following topics and issues toward the G7 joint declaration.

[1] Development and widespread utilization of advanced technology for automobiles and roads

[2] Basic strategy for developing new transport infrastructure and renovating aging and deteriorated transport infrastructure

For more information <http://g7nagano2016.jp/en/>

By Train

From Tokyo Station by Hokuriku Shinkansen Super Express train To Nagano Station (90 min.) To Karuizawa Station (70 min.)

◆ Nagano Prefecture is located in the center of Japan about 200 km from Tokyo and Nagoya. Convenient transportation makes the prefecture easy to access.

◆ The prefecture is home to many processing and assembling manufacturers that employ highly skilled engineers. There are active collaborative research programs between academia and industry, including Shinshu University, which is known for carbon nanotube research.

◆ The prefecture has an abundant amount of water and is the origin of eight water sources. There is no risk of tsunami and a low chance of earthquakes. The prefecture boasts a high ratio of sunny days and the climate is ideal for companies and factories.

◆ Snow monkeys, Zenkoji Temple and Matsumoto Castle are must-see spots for tourists. Recently, towns with ryokan traditional inns, such as the Tsumagojuku area, are also popular.

◆ With many mountains of 3,000 meters and higher, Nagano Prefecture is a major ski and snowboard resort close to Tokyo. The prefecture also offers many summer activities such as golf, hiking and boating.

◆ Nagano's soba is quite well known among Japanese traditional foods. The prefecture is one of the largest producers of grapes, apples, peaches and other fruit, offering visitors a range of tastes.

◆ Karuizawa, the host of the G7 transport ministers' meeting, is an ideal resort town to host international conferences.

◆ The area is suitable for retreat-type conferences, away from urban areas. In addition to meetings, attendees can also enjoy golf, tennis and other activities.

◆ It is conveniently only 70 minutes from Tokyo Station by shinkansen.

◆ Karuizawa is one of the most popular resort areas in Japan, with large-scale luxury hotels, traditional Japanese inns and many other accommodation options. They not only host international conventions, but also parties and weddings.

For more information <http://g7kotsu.nagano.jp/en>

Kobe City

(Publicity)

Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster

World-class medical hub sees bright global future

As the area with the largest concentration of medical research facilities in the country, there is good reason Kobe was chosen to host the G7 health ministers' meeting on Sept. 11 and 12.

The Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster (KBIC) is a science park that is home to some of the world's most advanced research and development facilities, where the first clinical applications of induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells are being conducted.

The city of Kobe embarked on the initiative to set up KBIC, which was designated by the state as a National Strategic Special Zone in 2014, in 1998, three

years after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake devastated the city and surrounding areas.

KBIC, which provides incentives to medical and pharmaceutical companies to encourage them to locate their research and development facilities there, has since grown to be a leading medical industry hub. It is home to the research centers and other facilities of 316 companies and organizations, including medical equipment makers, drug makers and universities as of March 2016, and the figure has steadily increased from 100 companies and organizations in 2006 and 200 in 2011.

Participating companies and organizations include Daiichi Sankyo Co.'s wholly owned subsidiary Asubio Pharma Co., Boehringer Ingelheim, Toray Industries Inc., Panasonic Corp., Kyocera Corp., Fujifilm Corp., Shiseido Co. and Kobe University.

The Japanese unit of global pharmaceutical conglomerate Boehringer Ingelheim relocated its research base to KBIC in November 2008 to take advantage of the concentration of medical-related companies and facilities there. Shiseido opened a research facility in 2014 to work on hair regeneration. Medical equipment makers are also able to enhance their development efficiency there.



Bird's eye view of the Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster

Kobe continues to take on challenges in pursuit of an exceptional tomorrow

Kizo Hisamoto
KOBE MAYOR

Sixteen years have passed since the concept of creating the Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster (KBIC) first came about in 1998. It has since grown into a leading medical industry hub in Japan, with over 300 facilities, universities and hospitals located there, and has also been chosen as the location to set up the successor to the K computer.

With a meeting of health ministers from the Group of Seven member countries taking place in Kobe this September, we are aiming to continue making strides



forward.

Kobe also offers an environment in which foreigners can live at ease, enshrouded in a rich natural setting surrounded by mountains and the sea that offer abundant farming and marine products. We have a solid educational environment comprising eight foreign schools in the city, and a medical environment in which patients can speak with doctors in English and other foreign languages at nearly 100 hospitals.

By effectively using the ground work of the KBIC and proactively engaging in various projects to conduct state-of-the-art research and create innovative medical technologies, we hope to generate plenty of excellent results, aim to become a world hub of medical-related industries and continue to take on challenges in pursuit of a better future.

We look forward to welcoming you in Kobe.

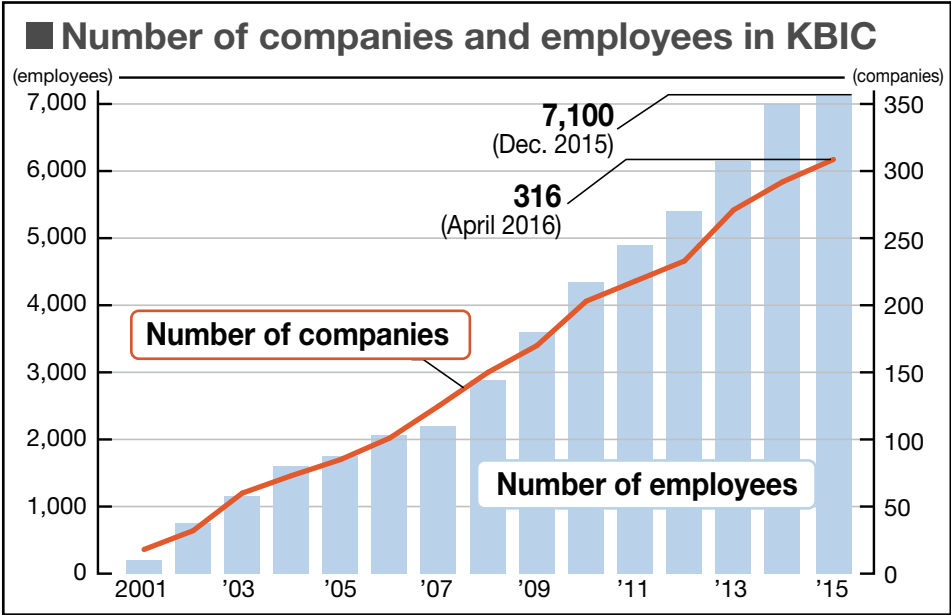
medical Research and Innovation (IBRI) which carries out translational research bringing the results of life science studies into clinical application. It researches bone marrow transplants, chemotherapy and other innovative therapies.

There is also the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology (CDB), which conducts fundamental and pilot studies in the field of developmental and regenerative biology. Its research fields include the mechanism of the birth of cloned mice and development of iPS cell technology.

The Kobe Minimally Invasive Cancer Center provides non-surgical cancer treatment, especially through the combined use of radiation therapy and chemotherapy.

The RIKEN Advanced Institute for Computational Science (AICS) maintains and operates the K computer, which possesses one of the world's top computing speeds, processing 10 quadrillion operations per second. The next generation supercomputer is also planned in the Simulation Area and is expected to begin full operations in 2020.

Straddling the three areas, KBIC has rental laboratories to provide opportuni-



ties for companies, especially small venture companies, to establish research centers.

Also, a number of universities, such as Kobe University, the Hyogo University of Health Science, Kobe Gakuin University and Konan University have also estab-

lished their presence in KBIC.

KBIC, with an exceptional density of high technology and highly advanced medicine where each party can take synergetic advantage of each other's technology, is expected to thrive as a global cutting-edge medical hub.

New eye center to provide treatment using iPS cells

The city of Kobe is planning to begin construction of the Kobe Eye Center (provisional name), a research and medical facility that will use induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells, this summer, aiming to open it in the fall of 2017.

It will be a facility where cutting-edge medical treatments in the field of ophthalmology, including retinal regeneration, will be put to practical use.

The Foundation for Biomedical Research and Innovation (FBRI), which operates the Institute of Biomedical Research and Innovation (IBRI), the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology (CDB) and the Kobe City Medical Center General Hospital in September 2014 conducted the world's first transplant operation using iPS cells on a patient suffering from age-related macu-

lar degeneration, an intractable retinal disease. One of the purposes of establishing the Kobe Eye Center is to accelerate this kind of research and treatment.

RIKEN CDB will handle the center's research while the foundation will be in charge of medical care. The center's operating structure has also been taking shape, as seen in the establishment of a public-interest organization providing rehabilitation for those recovering from major operations and intractable diseases in December 2014 under the initiative of Masayo Takahashi, project leader at RIKEN CDB, who is being involved in the world's first iPS clinical research.

In addition to rehabilitation, the center aims to train and increase the number of people who are able to work even with impaired vision.



Exterior rendering of the Kobe Eye Center

Computers accelerate drug development

The city of Kobe is becoming a center for *in silico* drug discovery, a process of identifying potential new medicines through the use of computers, as the Kobe Biomedical Innovation Cluster (KBIC) is home to the K computer.

Drug development is an exhaustive process, typically taking as much as a decade or more and costing hundreds of billions of yen, with a success ratio of just 20,000-to-1. Supercomputers are a valuable asset in speeding up drug discovery. Using them will shorten drug development, which is the process of bringing a new drug to the market once a lead compound has been identified through the process of drug discovery.

Using the K computer cuts ¥20 billion in costs and reduces development time by two to three years.

To turn Kobe into a global center for *in silico* drug discovery, the Foundation for Biomedical Research and



K computer


Innovation (FBRI) launched a promotion group in fiscal 2015 that began a computing platform project for drug discovery using the K computer and other computers.



Innovation for your business

<http://global.kobe-investment.jp/english/>

cuisine and attractions

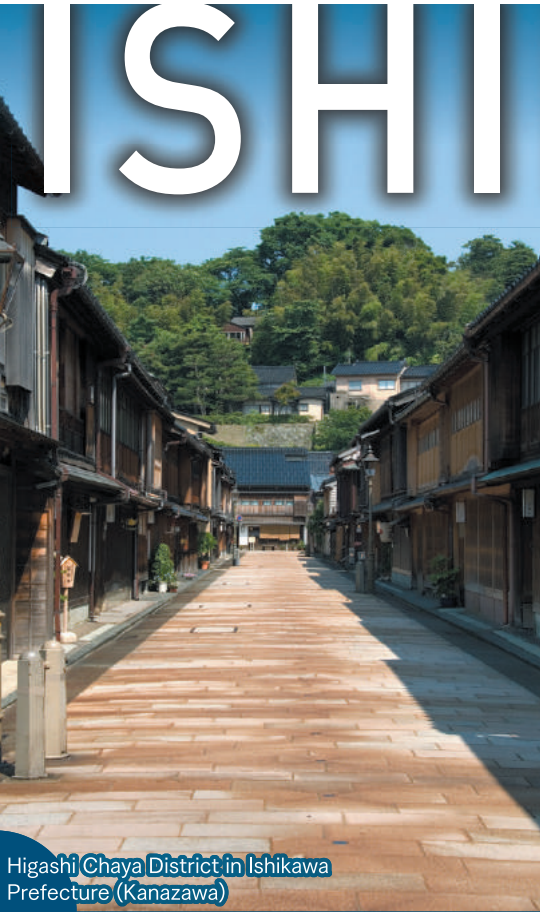


Ishikawa Kanazawa Toyama

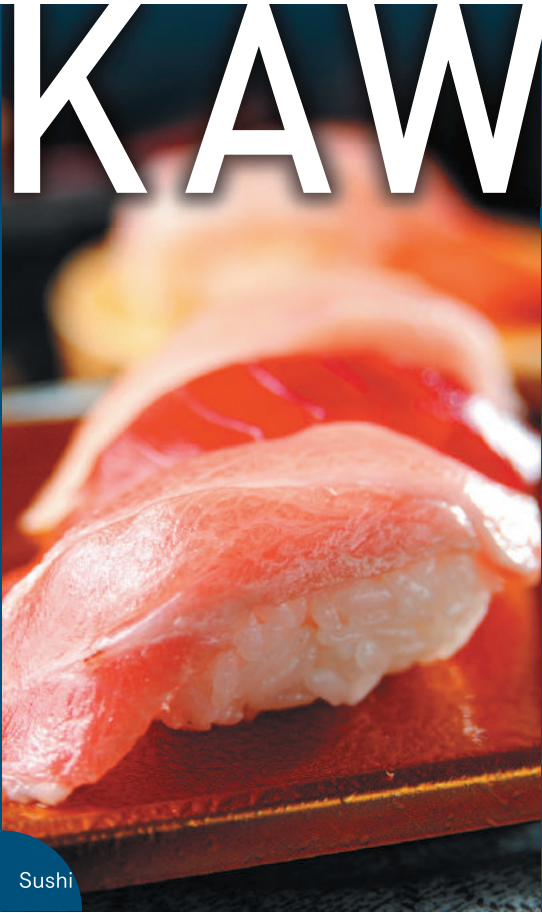
Hokuriku is an area facing the Sea of Japan, located in the Chubu region in the central part of Honshu. It is referring to the three prefectures of Toyama Prefecture, Ishikawa Prefecture and Fukui Prefecture.

The Hokuriku Shinkansen line opened to reach until Kanazawa on March 14, 2015, and four types of shinkansen (bullet train) including "Kagayaki," "Hakutaka," "Tsurugi" and "Asama" began their services. Top speed is 260 km per hour. The time for traveling between Tokyo and Kanazawa has been reduced to two-and-a-half hours from the original 3 hours 50 minutes.


Thanks to that, the major sightseeing spots in Ishikawa and Toyama are flooded with crowds of people and the redevelopment rush of the central parts of Kanazawa and Toyama also continues. The opening of the shinkansen line has been boosting the local economy in a way that was stronger than expected.




Higashi Chaya District in Ishikawa Prefecture (Kanazawa)



Sushi



Doraemon tram (Takaoka, Toyama Prefecture)



Glass shrimp

ISHIKAWA

TOYAMA

TOYAMA

Ramen Jigen

Perfecting the taste of 'Toyama Black' noodles




"Toyama Black" is the nickname for the city of Toyama's ramen delicacy that was created around 1955. As the name implies, Toyama Black is a very dark soup with soy sauce and lots of ground pepper. Because of its strong flavors and unique saltiness, it has both diehard fans and detractors.

Ramen Jigen's "kuro shoyu ramen," or black soy ramen, is their version of Toyama Black. It is the result of three year's worth of trial and error to find a recipe that suits a wide spectrum of palates, while maintaining the characteristics of the local dish. Jigen's soup is neither too rich nor too light, allowing everyone to enjoy every last drop, while the mildly thick and curly noodles hold the soup very well.

Menma bamboo shoots, fresh leeks and succulent *chashu* pork — that is simmered for more than five hours — are the toppings perfectly blended to bring customers back again and again. The restaurant is filled all day

with customers eager to enjoy the steamy bowls of noodles made with the owner-chef's passion and devotion.

Other recommended items include Jigen's "garlic yamitsuki ramen" and the "local delicacy gourmet set," which includes the popular kuro shoyu ramen, a Takaoka croquette and a *tororo kombu onigiri* (thinly sliced seaweed rice ball). Sticky pan-fried gyoza dumplings filled with delicious soup are a must-try side dish. One order comes with six gyoza, and they are especially popular among women because they use Japanese cabbage and herbs that do not leave diners with gyoza breath.



■ URL: <http://jigen-toyama.com/>

■ ADDRESS: Wing Wing Takaoka 1F 1-3 Suehirocho, Takaoka-shi, Toyama Pref.

■ TEL: 0766-25-2598

■ OPEN: Tues.-Sat., 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m. (L.O. 9:30 p.m.), Sun., 11:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Closed Mondays (irregular)

■ ACCESS: One minute from Takaoka Station (Ainokaze Toyama Railway)

ISHIKAWA

Kaikaro in Kanazawa Higashi Chayagai District

Enjoying traditional Japanese teahouse entertainment

On a street in Higashi Chayagai, visitors may hear the sounds of shamisen or *taiko* Japanese drums in the late afternoon while strolling the area of merchant houses in an atmosphere reminiscent of the Edo Period.

Chaya, or teahouses, were social meeting places where the upper class enjoyed eating, drinking and watching performing arts. Kaikaro is the largest teahouse in Kanazawa, located in the Higashi Chayagai district. The building, which exudes Japanese taste and beauty, has a history dating back nearly 200 years.

Built in 1820, Kaikaro has been designated as a Kanazawa City Preservation Architecture site and has received two stars in the Michelin Green Guide.

In the evenings, Kaikaro entertains numerous VIP guests from all over the world as a teahouse practicing *ik-kyaku ittei*, or accepting only one group of customers a night. Guests are invited to experience genuine Japanese tradition through dinner, dance and taiko performances by geisha. Kaikaro makes the night unforgettable with a great atmosphere, fine food, and classic decor providing a taste of authentic Japan.

Dinners with geisha entertainment can be tailored to suit the numbers and preferences of guests. Kaikaro is open to the public during the day. The admission fee is ¥750 and a historical cafe is also on site.



■ URL: <http://www.kaikaro.jp/eng>

■ "Geisha Evenings in Kanazawa:" <http://geisha.artexinc.com/>

■ ADDRESS: 1-14-8 Higashiyama, Kanazawa, Ishikawa Pref.

■ TEL: 076-253-0591

■ OPEN: 9 a.m.-5 p.m. daily

■ ACCESS: Four minutes from Hashiba-cho bus stop

Explore Japan Ishikawa

Ishikawa Prefecture is located almost in the center of Japan between Tokyo and Osaka while facing to the Sea of Japan, and its prefectural capital Kanazawa is only two and a half hours away from the three major cities of Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka.

A town runs over with samurai culture

Prefecture capital Kanazawa flourished throughout the Edo period (1603-1867) as the castle town of Kaga-hyakuman-goku (The Kaga clan) and is famous as a top tourist destination. Since it has survived war damages, the structure of the castle town still remains as it was, and with historical sites including one of Japan's Three Great Gardens, the top daimyo garden Kenrokuen, Kanazawa castle which lord Maeda lived, and Nagamachi-samurai residential area, the city still retains the atmosphere of the Edo period along with the scent of traditional culture that transcends eras, where the beautiful and unique appearance of the castle town can be enjoyed. On the other hand, there are also modern aspects such as the 21st century museum of contemporary Art Kanazawa, so you can enjoy the harmony of both old and new in this city.



Kenrokuen
The most beautiful samurai garden in Japan

Traditional crafts and performing arts passed down even now

Due to the encouragement of cultural and industrial development by the Maeda clan, who ruled what is now the Ishikawa Prefecture area during the Edo period (1603-1867) while avoiding conflict, various crafts and performing arts such as gold leaf and Kaga Yuzen have been developed. These include Kanazawa gold leaf, which accounts for 99 percent of national production, the dyeing craft Kaga Yuzen, characterized by its elegant and shiny style, lacquerware such as Wajimanuri and Yamana-kashikki, as well as Kutani, a variety of traditional crafts with high quality and beauty created through craftsman-ship have been passed down to today.

Traditional performing arts that have also been passed down to today include the beautiful elegant parlor tricks that are performed by geisha from the three tea house districts of Higashi/Nishi/Kazue-machi, traditional performing arts such as Hosho School of the Nohgaku (the art of Noh) encouraged by the Kaga clan, and Japanese traditional music played with the Japanese harp and shamisen.

In addition, due to the former lord's interest in the tea ceremony, the Japanese confectionery making techniques improved along with that of the tea ceremony, and so Kanazawa is said to be one of Japan's leading confectionery places. By taking various tours and experiencing spots of traditional culture, you can experience these traditional techniques.

Satoyama and Satoumi, where the original landscape of Japan remains

In the Noto Peninsula in Ishikawa Prefecture protruding into the Sea of Japan, Satoyama and Satoumi represented by Shiroyone-senmeida rice terrace and Chirihama Beach Driveway as the only places open to cars, are referred to as "Japan's original landscape" due to their picturesque scenery and the lifestyle of rustic yet kind local people. Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi were certified as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems for the first time in a developed country, and the way people in Noto live their lives in harmony with nature has been praised all over the world. During the Kiriko Festivals held in Noto Peninsula from summer to autumn, giant lanterns called Kiriko are built and paraded through the streets. In 2015, it was certified as a Japan Heritage.

To the south of Ishikawa Prefecture, Mt. Hakusan towers aloft as one of the three famous mountains of Japan, along with Mt. Fuji. Mt. Hakusan is famous for its mountain flowers, including many endemic species, and while mountain climbers flock to the mountain during the flowering season, tourists visit here throughout the year, since they can also enjoy winter sports.

There are also natural many famous hot spring resorts in the prefecture that can heal the mind and body of the visitors against this natural backdrop.



Kanazawa Castle
The symbol of Kaga-hyakuman-goku (the Kaga clan) located in the center of Kanazawa



Samurai residential area
Townscape where the former appearance of Kaga samurai coming and going can be seen



Geisha
Their performance is beautiful and great



Gold leaf
99% of all the gold leaf in Japan is produced in Ishikawa Prefecture



Wajimanuri
Elegant lacquerware representative of Japan



Kutani
Kutani is known as Japan Kutani




Shiroyone-senmeida
The typical terraced rice terrace of the GIAHS-designated Noto's Satoyama and Satoumi



Hot spring
There are many famous hot springs in the prefecture



Kiriko Festival
Giant lanterns festival



Kanazawa Station Tsuzumimon (the most beautiful station in the world)

Access to Ishikawa Prefecture



ISHIKAWA KANAZAWA

NAGANO

Nagoya About 2 and a half hours by express (some Shinkansen)

Haneda/Narita About 1 hour by Airplane

TOKYO

HANEDA

Osaka About 2 and a half hours by limited express train

Kyoto About 2 hours by express

W7 series ©West Japan Railway Company

2 hours 28 minutes by Hokuriku Shinkansen from Tokyo (fastest)

Hokuriku Shinkansen

Toyokaido Shinkansen

Sushi Fresh seafood

Kaga cuisine Kaga cuisine delights both the eyes and the palate

Rich food culture


In addition to the natural landscape and historical culture, food is also a big tourist attraction. Surrounded by the Sea of Japan and Mt. Hakusan, the prefecture is blessed with seafood, such as abalone and turban shell in the summer and crab and cold yellowtail in the winter, as well as local vegetables and other riches of the soil, and this wealth of food together with the local cuisine passed down in the Kaga area have generated the sophisticated Kaga cuisine coupled with a sense of unity between cuisine itself and its container, which is highly rated by foodies both at home and abroad.

📷 Ishikawa Prefecture Tourist Information <http://www.hot-ishikawa.jp/english/index.html>


📘 Ishikawa Prefecture Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/Discover-Ishikawa-Japan-1707686196110375>

cuisine and attractions


NAGOYA




Nagoya Castle




Chopped kabayaki eel on rice (Hitsumabushi)



Historical street (Sannomachi, Takayama)



Hida beef



The automotive industry has become the center of the Tokai region local economy, and two world famous companies including Toyota and Suzuki have their headquarters in this area. Including historical sites and sightseeing spots such as Nagoya Castle and Atsuta Shrine, unique "Nagoya gourmet" such as chicken wings, miso, and chopped kabayaki eel on rice (Hitsumabushi) can also be enjoyed. In the Hida-Takayama area, located about two-and-a-half hours away from Nagoya by train, the good old Japanese culture is remaining and you can enjoy a relaxing time in the streets filled with an atmosphere of history and culture.

GIFU-HIDA-TAKAYAMA

GIFU

Nagase Suppon Turtle Farm

Supplements from 'suppon' soft-shelled turtles aid in improving health and beauty

Located approximately in the center of the Japanese archipelago, the "Oku Hida Onsengo" hot spring area, already one of the most famous places for hot springs in Japan, has recently been gaining recognition around the world. There are a number of tourist attractions near the hot springs that are famous for their "old, refined Japanese townscapes," including the villages of Hida Takayama, Norikura, Kamikochi and Shirakawago.

"Hirayu Onsen" is the oldest hot spring in Oku Hida and has water coming from about 40 sources. It is said that the hot spring's history goes back to when injured samurai were led to the hot spring by white monkeys to have their battle wounds healed by its waters. The hot spring still heals travelers today with balneotherapy, which is said to be effective for neurosis and skin diseases.

Nagase Suppon Yoshokujo (Nagase Suppon Turtle Farm), in "Hirayu Onsen" of Oku Hida Onsen hot spring area, raises *suppon* soft-shelled turtles. The hot spring water of Hirayu Onsen is rich with minerals and natural elements, so *suppon* that are raised in this water are healthy. Additionally, the quiet environment of the Oku Hida Onsengo is ideal for the noise-sensitive animal.

Hirayu *suppon* have recently been featured on Japanese TV programs such as popular food shows and *suppon* is now considered the new specialty of Oku Hida Onsengo's Hirayu. The Japan Food Research Laboratories has stated that *suppon* are highly nutritious, containing high-quality collagen, and 18 out of 20 amino acids beneficial to people. The *suppon* are also considered good for beauty and help people maintain good health in today's stressful society. The Chinese have long touted the nutritional benefits of *suppon*, which have been eaten in China for more than 4,000 years, while in Japan *suppon* has been treated as rare nutritious food that people are unable to eat frequently. In the hope of letting more people benefit from *suppon*, Nagase Suppon Turtle Farm started manufacturing and selling *suppon* dietary supplements 30 years ago. The company's products have seen strong customer support over the years.

Nagase Suppon Turtle Farm is raising approximately 40,000 *suppon*, and in addition to the farm's retail store, they operate a *suppon* processing facility and a filling facility for *suppon* nutritional supplements. They are producing specialty products in an integrated system covering farming to processing. Today, it supports the beauty and health of people in modern society hand-in-hand with Hirayu Onsen hot spring.

A beautiful natural setting and quality hot springs make "Suppon no Sato (home of *suppon*)" — Hirayu Onsen hot spring" along with "Hirayu *suppon*," an ideal place for both internal and external beauty and health.

For those interested in pursuing a healthier life, a trip to the "Oku Hida Onsengo Hirayu Onsen" hot springs is well worth it and we look forward to your visit.

- URL: <http://suppon.co.jp/>
- ADDRESS: 362-1 Hirayu, Okuhida Onsengo, Takayama, Gifu Pref.
- TEL: 0578-89-2252
- OPEN: 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. daily
- ACCESS: One hour by car from "Takayama Interchange" on the Tokai Hokuriku and Chubu Jukan expressways



GIFU

Shinhotaka Ropeway

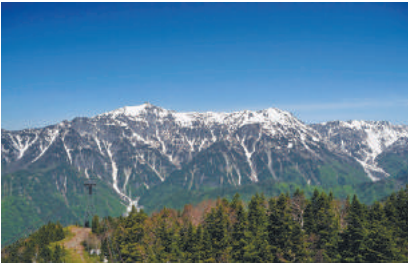
Trip boasts breathtaking, panoramic mountain views

The Shinhotaka Ropeway, located in the heart of Gifu's Oku Hida *onsen* (hot spring) village, is known as one of the most scenic ropeways in Japan. Traveling from the starting point at Shinhotaka Onsen Station to Nishihotakaguchi Station at 2,156 meters above sea level takes about 25 minutes. Visitors must transit from the first ropeway to a second to complete the trip. The first ropeway is completely glass-paneled, and the second is Japan's only double-deck, large-sized gondola, which offers a great chance to "walk in the sky."

From the observation deck, one can enjoy a panoramic view of the Hotaka Mountain Range, which boasts mountains such as Kasagatake (2,897 m above sea level), Yurigatake (3,180 m above sea level), Nishi Hotakadake (2,909m above sea level) and others that include some of the "100 famous mountains in Japan." The range is an ideal picture-taking spot, garnering two stars in the Michelin Green Guide Japan.

The Shinhotaka Ropeway offers year-around service, allowing for the beauty of each season to be enjoyed. In the area around Nishihotakaguchi Station, the main attractions are herbs, flowers, and alpine plants in the spring and summer, followed by colorful autumn leaves in the fall, and a pathway with three-meter-high walls of snow in winter where tourists can take a stroll.

"Yamabiko (echoing) Post," the highest-above-sea-level mailbox in Japan is also a popular draw. Visitors can purchase pens, postcards — including ones made from wood — at the gift shop. The mailbox allows visitors to send messages to loved ones from above the clouds.



- URL: <http://shinhotaka-ropeway.jp/>
- ADDRESS: Shinhotaka, Okuhida onsengo, Takayama-shi, Gifu Pref.
- TEL: 0578-89-2252
- OPEN: all year
- ACCESS: A short walk from Shinhotaka Ropeway (final stop) on the Nohi Bus departing from JR Takayama Station

GIFU

Takayama

City offers excellent festival, open-air hot springs

Takayama, Gifu Prefecture, a city that concluded an Environmental and Economic Agreement with Colmar, France, in 2014, is a three Michelin-starred city along with Kyoto and Nara.

It is a very popular tourist destination with many attractions, and according to statistics, about 400,000 guests stayed in the city of 92,000 in 2014.



The Takayama Matsuri festival is designated as one of Japan's three most beautiful festivals, Hida beef is Japan's leading brand of Japanese black beef and the government officially designated Takayama's traditional Japanese townscape as an important preservation district of historic buildings.

Other attractions include the Hida Takayama hot spring village and the Ichii Itto Carvings, which received special designation as traditional crafts from the Japanese government.

Working under the guiding principle that "a town easy to live in is one easy to visit" since 1996, Takayama is striving to offer a multilingual website and renovate public restrooms and hotels to make them barrier-free. Providing Wi-Fi in the central part of the city and offering multilingual maps and guides are also part of the city's eagerness to make it a town where every visitor, including those from overseas, can comfortably enjoy their stay.

Oku Hida hot spring village, an hour drive from Takayama, is formed from five hot spring areas. The village, which sits 800 meters above sea level, is well-known as an area with the largest number of open-air baths in Japan. Visitors can also enjoy a panoramic view of the Hida Mountain Range — that includes a series of mountains over 3,000 meters high — by driving about an hour toward Nagano Prefecture from central Takayama.



- URL: www.hida.jp/HIDABITO.jp
- ADDRESS: 1-2 Honmachi, Takayama-shi, Gifu Pref.
- TEL: 0577-36-1011

AICHI

Hitsumabushi Nagoya Bincho

Bincho charcoal critical element to cooking perfect *hitsumabushi*

"Hitsumabushi Nagoya Bincho" is a popular Japanese restaurant, known for *hitsumabushi* (grilled eel on rice) with branches across Japan. In addition to the main shop in Aichi Prefecture, there are four more locations in the Nagoya area; the "Esca" shop near Nagoya Station (shinkansen); the "Lachic" branch in the Sakae area; a new branch that opened on March 9; and the "Dai Nagoya Building" shop. There are also outlets in Tokyo, including the Ginza branch and the "Tokyo Sky Tree Town Soramachi" shop, as well as other branches in Osaka and Hakata.

The restaurant prides itself on serving the best quality fatty, soft-skinned eel carefully selected from around Japan. The eel is cooked on premium Bincho charcoal, as the charcoal burns slower than other fuels. The fat and sauce dripping on the burning charcoal during grilling enhances the aroma and flavor.

To make the best tasting *hitsumabushi*, the chefs use the freshest eel, cooked to perfection over Bincho charcoal fires. There are no compromises when it comes to blending the highest-quality soy sauce, select sugar and *mirin* rice wine into a sauce using an in-house recipe. With all this careful preparation and cooking, the meat is succulent and tender meat beneath the crispy skin. Serving guests such genuine and delicious *hitsumabushi* is a point of pride for the restaurant.

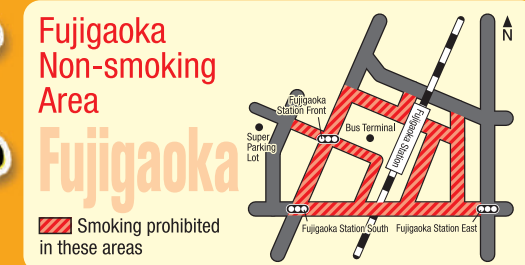
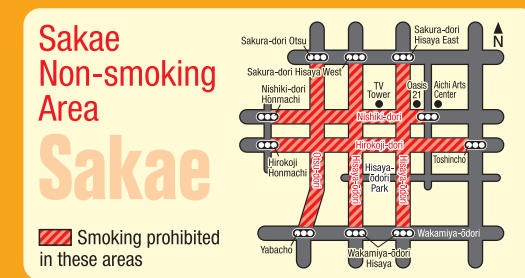
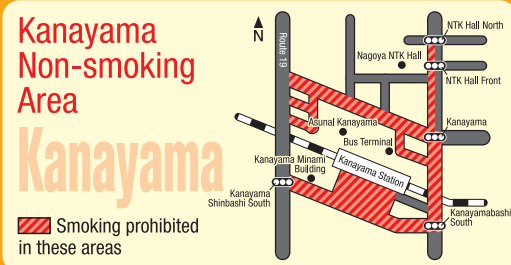
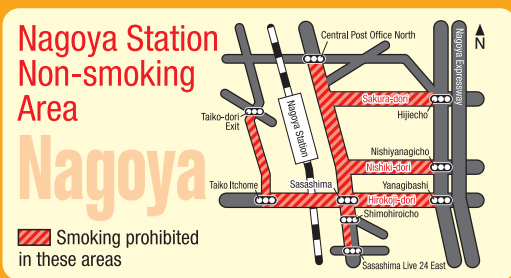
Hitsumabushi is a dish that can be enjoyed three times: The first serving should be eaten as is; wasabi, leeks and seaweed should be placed on top for the second; and dashi can be poured over the top of the third serving. Please enjoy each delicious bowl of this Nagoya delicacy in the nationally well-known stores.



- URL: <http://hitsumabushi.co.jp/>
- NAGOYA
 - Esca - 052-451-5557
 - Esca underground shopping center, 6-9 Tsukaki-cho, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya, Aichi Pref.
 - Dai Nagoya Building - 052-564-5756
 - Dai Nagoya Building 3F, 3-28-12 Meikei, Nakamura-ku, Nagoya, Aichi Pref.
 - Lachic - 052-259-6703
 - Lachic 7F, 3-6-1 Sakae, Nakai-ku, Nagoya, Aichi Pref.
 - Main branch - 0587-96-0141
 - 5-176-1 Shimoguchi, Oguchi-cho, Niwa-gun, Aichi Pref.
- TOKYO
 - Ginza - 03-5159-0231
 - Marronnier Gate 12F, 2-2-14 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo
 - Ikebukuro Parco - 03-5956-5756
 - Ikebukuro Parco Main Building 8F, 1-28-2 Minami-Ikebukuro, Toshima-ku, Tokyo
 - Tokyo Sky Tree Town Soramachi - 03-5619-5757
 - Tokyo Sky Tree Town Soramachi 6F, 1-1-2 Oshiage, Sumida-ku, Tokyo
- OSAKA
 - Grand Front Osaka - 06-6371-5759
 - Grand Front Osaka South Building 7F, 4-20 Otsuka-cho, Kita-ku, Osaka, Osaka Pref.
- FUKUOKA
 - Nakasu Kawabata - 092-409-6522
 - Hakata-za Nishigin Building 1F, 2-1 Nakasu Kawabata, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka, Fukuoka Pref.

Smoking is prohibited in designated areas around Nagoya, Kanayama, Fujigaoka stations and in the Sakae area.

Violators will be fined 2,000yen.



Mind your smoking manners also outside the non-smoking areas.

[Nagoya City] For any inquiries: Nagoya City Environmental Division TEL.052-972-2385 FAX.052-972-4133 e2393@kankyokuyoku.city.nagoya.lg.jp

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Nagoya

(Publicity)

Nagoya Castle's Honmaru Palace set to reopen June 1

Nagoya Castle is undoubtedly the pinnacle of pride for the citizens of the city of Nagoya.

The castle was originally built on the orders of Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first Tokugawa shogun, in the early 17th century. It was to be a critical stronghold for invading Osaka Castle, the opposing Toyotomi clan's final place of resistance.

The actual construction work took place under the rule of Hidetada, the second shogun, who cleverly made the 20 daimyo feudal lords in the region compete against each other in quickly constructing the fine castle.

Consequently, the construction work on the castle tower was completed in 1612, just two years after Hidetada's issuance of the build order, followed by the completion of the Honmaru Palace in 1615.

Architectural significance

The Nagoya Castle tower, built within the central Honmaru compound, was the largest of all castle towers in Japan, even exceeding those of Edo or Osaka castles. Constructed from fine timber logged from the Owari fiefdom, Nagoya Castle's multilayered tower was renowned for its distinctive beauty and sturdiness, adopting a new building style that was quite different from those of the previous Momoyama Period.

The most eye-catching exterior ornament of the tower was its pair of gold *shachihoko* (mythical fish-like animals believed to protect buildings from fire) perched on the two sides of its rooftop. The shachihoko were said to have been made from 270 kilograms

of solid gold. The castle was also known for other detailed and intricate design details such as gable fittings and pendants, as well as the Shogun Crest of Hollyhock made from gold leaf affixed to black lacquer.

The Honmaru Palace, the residence of the lord, came after the construction of the Castle Tower. Together with the Ninomaru Palace of Kyoto's Nijo Castle, this palace was recognized as a masterpiece of samurai-style Shoinzuri architecture, and was designated as a National Treasure in 1930.

It was comprised of a centrally located reception and ceremonial hall with a decorated alcove section displaying imported Chinese ceramics and hanging scrolls, a secondary display area featuring split-level shelves for ornamental items, a recessed writing stall for the record-keepers, and the dignified *Jodan-no-ma* raised room for the exclusive use of the lord.

The Honmaru Palace walls and sliding *fusuma* doors were decorated with the dynamic motifs of tigers, leopards, flowers, birds and landscapes awash in a flood of colors.

Those bold paintings were born from the paintbrushes of Kano Sadanobu, Kano Tanyu, as well as other Kano school master painters. The *fusuma* door fittings also incorporated intricate decorative designs, while the delicately carved out wooden transoms above adopted motifs of flowers and reeds.

Restoration

Unfortunately, major parts of the castle were burned during the World War II bombings, though some of the

removable partitions and panels were saved. Today, 1,047 such paintings have been designated as Important Cultural Assets.

Since the 1950s, experts in various fields have come together to restore Nagoya Castle to its original beauty and form. Early Showa Period architectural research, measurements and drawings, as well as pre-war photographic evidence has allowed the restoration to take place.

Thanks to such diligent efforts, the Nagoya Castle Tower was reconstructed by 1959. A three-stage restoration project for Honmaru Palace began in 2009. Of special note is that the Honmaru Palace project employs the same materials and techniques used by the original builders centuries ago.

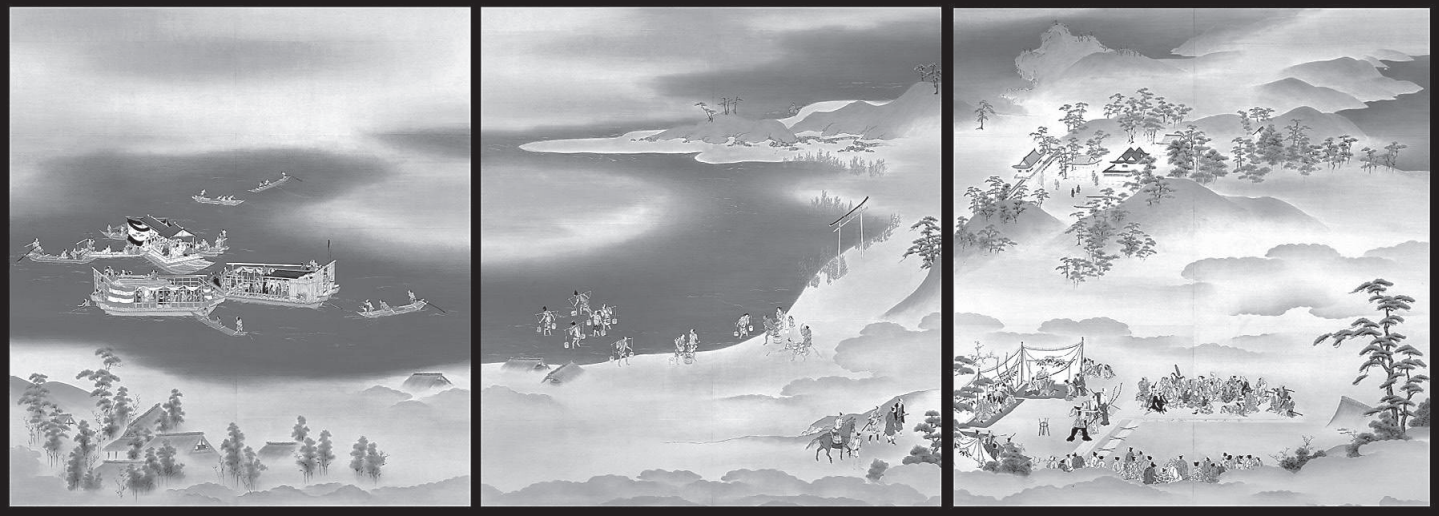
Hence, modern painters involved in the project are trying to replicate the Kano masterpiece paintings down to the tiniest details by using microscopes and computers, as well as referencing historical materials.

As a result of such tireless efforts, the *genkan* entrance hall and the Omote Shoin main hall of the palace were restored by 2013, ready to be opened to the public. This was followed this year by the completion of the Taimenjo reception hall, which is scheduled to be open to the public from June 1.

Nagoya Castle is open daily from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (entrance admitted until 4:00 p.m.). Admission is ¥500 for adults, ¥100 for those aged 65 and over and free for children through junior high school.



Nagoya Castle is a point of pride for Nagoya residents. The Honmaru Palace area of the castle will be open to the public from June 1 after undergoing restoration. CITY OF NAGOYA



Clockwise from top right: The castle and the outer moat; Paintings with black lacquered edges and gold foil depicting seasons and landscapes on the walls of the Taimenjo reception hall; A carpenter works on the restoration of Nagoya Castle's Honmaru Palace. NAGOYA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU/CITY OF NAGOYA

Nagoya Castle Hommaru Palace Taimenjo reception hall opens to the public on June 1 following a second-stage restoration.

Taimenjo is a reception hall where the feudal lords had private banquets with families and servants. Paintings depicting the seasons adorn the walls, while the unique ceilings with black lacquered edges and gold leaf enthrall visitors. The profound, magnificent design is not to be missed.

1-1, Hommaru, Naka-ku, Nagoya
Tel: 052-231-1700 Fax: 052-201-3646
Hours: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Days closed: Dec. 29 to Jan. 1
Admission: Adults ¥500; Free for junior high students and under

City of Nagoya

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Hilton
NAGOYA

Nagoya

(Publicity)

City’s attractions lure recreational and business travelers

Nagoya is home to many attractions, including the Higashiyama Zoo and Botanical Gardens and many parks. With Legoland set to open next year and the Linear Central Shinkansen planned for operation in fiscal 2027, Nagoya is expected to grow further as a hub for both tourists and businesspeople.

Higashiyama Zoo

Covering a vast area of approximately 60 hectares, the Higashiyama Zoo and Botanical Gardens is holding various events and exhibitions to commemorate its 80th anniversary. Some highlights include areas offering a close look at such rare animals as the Sumatran Tiger and snow leopards, as well as chances for visitors to explore and learn about the ecology and lives of various plants and animals. There will also be panel displays outlining the history of this well-kept facility that has been undergoing renovations over the past decade.

Living inside this verdant zoo are about 500 different animals, including such popular creatures ranging from koala bears to giraffes, and from large

animals such as elephants down to small fish such as the killifish.

Inside the botanical gardens are about 7,000 different plants, the most well known of which is the cherry tree corridor, which boasts 1,000 cherry trees of 100 different breeds. Also worth noting is the elegant classical greenhouse that was designated as an important cultural asset in 2006. The gardens are carefully landscaped to show the plants in a natural forest environment, allowing visitors to enjoy a stroll along the Path of Manyou-shu (Anthology of 10,000 leaves), the Passage of Medicinal Herbs and so on.

Open from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (gates close at 4:50 p.m.), the Higashiyama Zoo and Botanical Gardens is closed on Mondays (closed the following day if Monday is a national holiday). Admission is ¥500 for adults, and free of charge for children through junior high school.

Legoland Japan

After beginning construction in 2015, Legoland Japan will open in spring next year on Kinjo Pier in the city of Nagoya.

Being the second Legoland in Asia, this facility is being built and will be operated by Merlin Entertainments, a global amusement company that boasts the world’s second-highest attendance figures at its attractions. Legoland Japan will feature the best attractions from the six Legoland parks already successfully operated by Merlin around the world.

Specifically, this fun-filled theme park will have over 40 rides and unique attractions for families with children from two to 12 years old. Exciting photo opportunities are available at this facility as there are reproductions of several iconic buildings and vistas of Japan and Nagoya, made with a staggering 25 million LEGO blocks.

Linear Central Shinkansen

The start of operations of the Linear Central Shinkansen in fiscal 2027 will greatly reduce the travel time between Nagoya and Tokyo, from the current 100 minutes down to a mere 40 minutes. Taking such conditions into account, the city of Nagoya is renovating the entire station and surrounding area, with the goal of transforming it into a

globally renowned super terminal.

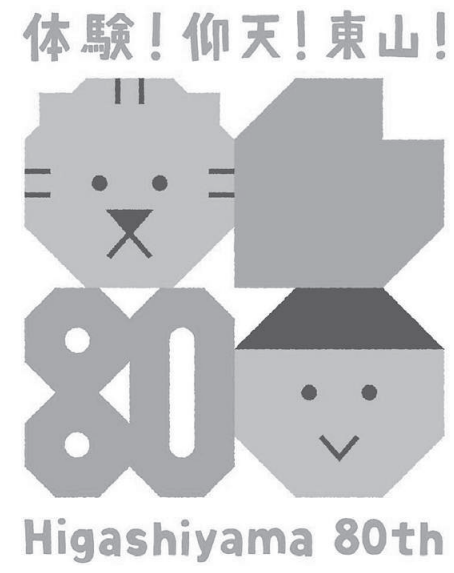
To become a highly functional city capable of attracting many people from around the world, the administration is currently promoting the rebuilding of Nagoya under four basic guidelines. These include becoming a broad, inter-

national foothold for businesses and cultural exchange that is also attractive and eco-friendly; transforming Nagoya Station into a convenient, international, easy-to-use station for all, including foreign visitors; creating a city environment with a variety of attractive fea-

tures that are a fusion of a castle town, as well as an ultra-modern business, tourist and living environment; and unifying the efforts of the administration and the private sector in time for the start of Linear Central Shinkansen operations.



Hisaya Odori Park runs through Nagoya’s Naka Ward. CITY OF NAGOYA



Clockwise from top right: Aerial view of Nagoya Station and surrounding area; Higashiyama Zoo and Botanical Gardens; a poster for the zoo CITY OF NAGOYA

A relaxing space formed by history and tradition



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Nagoya Kanko Hotel

19-30, Nishiki 1-chome, Naka-ku, Nagoya 460-8608, Japan
Tel: 052-231-7711 Fax: 052-231-7719
<http://www.nagoyakankohotel.co.jp/>





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TEL +81.52.521.2121
www.castle.co.jp/wnc/





A selection of “Nagoya-meshi” (Nagoya cuisine) that delights both the eyes and the palate includes, clockwise from top right: *tenmusu* small rice balls with a piece of shrimp tempura; adzuki bean toast, a popular cafe item; miso *katsu* deep-fried pork cutlet with a thick, sweet miso sauce; *hitsumabushi*, grilled eel on rice NAGOYA CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

Hari-kyu, the art of acupuncture and moxibustion

(Publicity)

Modern take on traditional medicine

“The practice of medicine is an art, based on science.”

William Osler, considered “the father of modern medicine,” proclaimed these famous words. His philosophy serves as a standard of excellence and a model for the evolution of all practitioners, not simply those of Western medicine. Indeed, the ancient art of acupuncture and moxibustion (burning of dried mugwort) in Japan, called *hari-kyu*, dates back more than 1,500 years and continues to be practiced today by licensed practitioners whose skills involve a balance of logic, deductive reasoning, perception and intuition.

This November, Japan will be hosting, for the first time in 23 years, the International Conference of the World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Societies (WFAS), whose theme is the art of acupuncture and moxibustion. The conference aims to address issues such as standardization in the practice, its strength as a sustainable form of treatment and developments in innovation.

“Medicine should target a human being not only as a science but also as an art. True medicine should target the overall health of each individual,” said Shuji Goto, president of this year’s WFAS conference. A prominent figure who has made great strides in the practice, Goto also serves as president of The Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (JSAM) and chairman of the Goto College of Medical Arts and Sciences in Tokyo.

Hari-kyu provides a holistic approach to treating disease and illness, the body, mind and spirit. The practice focuses on all of the patient’s bodily systems as a whole, to restore homeostasis, or the body’s natural balance. It thus emphasizes the body’s



Left: Modern moxibustion (burning dried mugwort); Right: An early 19th-century ukiyo-e shows a woman holding her son's hand to perform moxibustion on him. SIMONE CHEN/HARIKYU MUSEUM-MUSEUM OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE



natural healing. Knowing that the body is capable of regaining its own natural balance with consistent, appropriate stimulation is a pillar of hari-kyu philosophy.

Derived from ancient China some 1,500 years ago, traditional Japanese medicine evolved throughout history into a uniquely distinct form. Insiders will note the uniqueness of Japanese practice lies in palpation, a touch technique essential to diagnosis and treatment. While examining a patient, the practitioner touches the skin, connective tissues, muscles and organs to gather sensory information used for diagnosis. Palpation continues throughout the session to ascertain changes and responses in the body, allowing for the practitioner to adjust the treatment and making the approach highly individualized.

As much as palpation is necessary for the practitioner, the act of gentle touching by itself soothes the patient, aiding in healing.

Another characteristic of Japanese

acupuncture is the shallow insertion of very fine needles using a guide tube to reduce pain. The importance of detecting excess and deficiency in the skin and connective tissue is essential to treatment, thus the development of various techniques to stimulate the surface of the body. The subtle, fine needling approach tends to be favored in Western cultures by patients wary of long and thick needles.

Hari-kyu is as much unique as it is effective in treating a wide array of ailments. From musculoskeletal complaints — lower back pain and shoulder stiffness being the most common — to headaches and fertility issues, the practice has gained a foothold in less oft-used areas such as sports medicine, mental health and in terminal illnesses such as cancer.

Even the world of professional sports has begun to recognize the benefit of a holistic approach to athletes’ health.

Just take a look at Haro Ogawa, the team trainer and acupuncturist to the San Francisco Giants. It is no coinci-

dence that since he joined the team in 2008, the team has won the World Series a record three times. Ogawa keeps the players at the top of their game throughout the year and as he was educated in Japan first, he stresses the importance of palpation. “You have to feel imbalances with your hands and fingers to get a good diagnosis” he said in an interview. Needless to say, both acupuncture and moxibustion are drug-free treatments, and thus ideal for professional athletes who are subject to doping tests.

Some skeptics may doubt traditional medicine, with the recent trend in medicine focusing on efficacy in clinical trials first, followed by debate over the scientific mechanisms to endorse its effectiveness.

But researchers across the world are collecting scientific backing on the efficacy of traditional medicine. They use randomized controlled trials and meta-analysis results to assess the effectiveness of hari-kyu. Studies to clarify the efficacy of hari-kyu are being conducted on chronic pain, chemotherapy-induced nausea, migraines, fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis, alleviating labor pain, correcting fetal breech among others.

Following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, medicine, doctors, water and power were limited. Many afflicted by the disaster were forced to sleep on hard gymnasium floors or in their cars, suffering from insomnia and post-traumatic stress disorder, turned to hari-kyu treatments at evacuation shelters throughout the Tohoku region.

A recent pilot study conducted in sub-Saharan Africa investigated the efficacy of treating drug-resistant strains of tuberculosis (TB) with Japanese direct moxibustion. Rooted in the



There are 361 basic acupuncture points to memorize. *Shonishin*, Japanese non-invasive acupuncture for newborns and children is effective for various issues such as bed-wetting. IDO NO NIPPON/ETSUKO INOUE/YOSHIKI MIURA



work of Shimetaro Hara who used moxa (dried mugwort) to treat TB in 1930’s Japan, the African study reported reduction of pain, improvement in energy and overall immunity in patients, as well as a reduced rate of infection. Importantly, patients learned to perform treatment on themselves and others in the community, providing a sustainable and affordable care model.

History is evident. The healing art of hari-kyu has worked for more than 1,500 years and continues to evolve to show its potential as a sustainable form of health care. Understanding that the only constant is change, Japanese modern practitioners continue to adapt to changes in medicine and social development, drawing on the value of hari-kyu in positive ways without letting go of traditional theories.

Acupuncture treatment dates back centuries

Amid Ise-Shima’s ancient groves of cypress giants lies the most revered Shinto shrine in Japan, the Ise Jingu shrine. With over 2,000 years of history, it is dedicated to a goddess considered the predecessor of the Imperial family and the supreme deity among the countless deities of the Shinto faith.

About 450 kilometers away, on a quiet street in Tokyo’s Sumida Ward, the lesser-known Ejima Sugiyama Shrine sits, dedicated to a man known as the god of acupuncture. In Shintoism, gods are believed to reside in objects of the natural world — rivers, mountains, and animals — even in ordinary human beings, whose spirits are enshrined in some of the 80,000 shrines in Japan.

One such ordinary man, Waichi Sugiyama, made extraordinary contributions to the field of acupuncture. Born in 1610, he went blind at an early age after contracting smallpox. For the blind in Japan at the time, the primary jobs available were acupuncturist or traditional massage therapist. At 18, he traveled to Edo (now Tokyo) to apprentice for a famed blind acupuncturist.

As the story goes, while out, Sugiyama tripped on a rock and fell to the ground. What happened next gave way to an idea that would change the practice of acupuncture. As he fell, a pine needle, sheathed in a bamboo reed, pierced the skin of his leg. Literally struck by inspiration he realized the bamboo had helped guide the pine needle deep into the skin.

He later devised a needle insertion technique using a small pipe to help guide the acupuncture needle vertically into patient’s skin. Guide tubes enabled acupuncturists, blind and sighted both, to insert needles with stability and ease. Sugiyama’s guide tube invention revolutionized the practice and continues to be used today. It was as much a benefit for practitioners as it was for patients, as guide tubes lessened the pain of needle

insertion.

After Sugiyama successfully treated Shogun Tsunayoshi Tokugawa for a chronic illness, he served as court physician until his death. Today, the Ejima Sugiyama Shrine honors its namesake, whom locals consider the god of acupuncture, and whom the rest of the world considers the father of Japanese acupuncture. He is attributed with establishing the first acupuncture, moxibustion (burning of dried mugwort) and massage school for the visually impaired.

Sugiyama’s contributions paved the way for the practice of blind acupuncture to present day. Currently, 19 percent of the roughly 90,000 licensed acupuncturists in Japan are visually impaired. They are subject to the same licensure and rights and regulations as sighted practitioners.

Japanese clinicians use more palpation during treatment than those trained outside Japan. Feeling toughness, tenderness, warmth, moisture and so on is important before, during and after treatment to assess patients’ health and efficacy of treatment. This Japanese style developed thanks to the historical background that the occupation was equivalent to social security for the visually impaired to be financially independent.

The long history of visually impaired acupuncturists brought emphasis to Japanese acupuncture. Their success can be attributed to the development of certain senses — touch and smell — in ways that sighted people rarely appreciate. In a hands-on profession like acupuncture, fingers are deemed the second eyes. With a heightened sense of touch, blind acupuncturists pick up on minute sensory stimuli that sighted practitioners may overlook, including sensations of firmness and softness, hot and cold, thickness, sharpness and resistance of a patient’s body.

Passing on the art

Every twenty years, the Ise Grand Shrine is ceremonially dismantled and entirely rebuilt. The practice, representative of Shintoism core ideals, is a symbol of renewal and continuity. Rebuilding every twenty years allows the time-honored skills in carpentry, and metalwork to be passed on from one generation to the next. Similarly, practitioners of acupuncture and moxibustion, called *hari-kyu*, pass on their skills to young practitioners to keep this ancient art form alive.

At a college in central Tokyo, a group of about 30 students, dressed in identical white lab coats, partner up and practice with acupuncture needles on each other. Another group in the corner practices moxibustion by timing the burning of fine cones of moxa (dried mugwort) on a paper grid. It’s the afternoon, and having completed a day in classes, the students remain voluntarily to practice on each other even though it is not counted as academic credit. Their instructor attentively watches over the group, showing proper needle insertion, stance and posture.

Like other certified hari-kyu institutes across Japan, the school prepares its students for the national acupuncturist and moxibustionist exams. Examinees are required to not only memorize 361 basic acupuncture points, but also have a firm grasp on both Eastern and Western medicine, anatomy and physiology, sanitation, and clinical and rehabilitation practice.

Currently in Japan, there are about 4,000 students learning acupuncture at college, of whom 300 are visually handicapped. They are in three-to-four-year programs in preparation for the national exams. In the past decade alone, huge steps have been made to develop educational guidelines, revise textbooks and curriculum, and increase the level of clinical training at these institutions. The continuous renewal is needed to match the needs of 21st century medicine for sustainable social and health care structure. Meetings to revise curricula are held at the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare every few months.

As with any field of medicine, professionals learn invaluable skills through clinical practice that a textbook cannot teach. Students are trained to have a profound understanding of the art of hari-kyu. This is evidenced as students’ fingers deftly glide over each others’ skin, determining point location with anatomical landmarks and measuring with their hands. For these young practitioners, this is just the beginning of mastering the age-old art of hari-kyu and its rich diversity of methodology.



Left: Home-use moxibustion (burning dried mugwort) plasters are available at the Sennenkyu showroom in Ginza, Tokyo; Right: Different sizes of needles with guide tubes made by Seirin Corp. are identified by color. SIMONE CHEN/SEIRIN CORP.

Today’s treatment methods easier, less painful

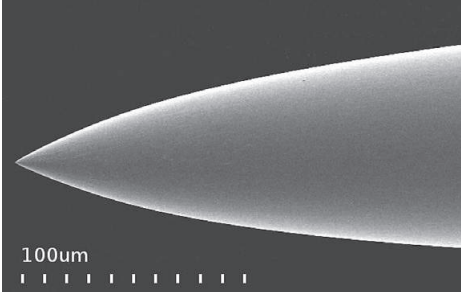
As anyone versed in acupuncture knows, the most effective tools are human hands. Throughout the 1,500 years history of the practice in Japan, the therapist’s hands have served as a sentient bridge connecting patient to therapist. Since the post-war era, major advances in treatment techniques have evolved. Today, what tools are available to the modern practitioner?

In 1980, the Japanese needle manufacturer Seirin Corp. developed sterilized disposable acupuncture needles, a major innovation, as well as a necessity in the face of the HIV epidemic. Seirin was also the first to introduce the guide tube kit at the time, which has since become a global standard. Guide tubes not only make inserting the fine needles used in Japanese acupuncture easier, for both sighted and visually impaired practitioners, they also reduce the patient’s pain from needle insertion. Currently, disposable needles with guide tubes are the preferred choice, used in schools for training and at clinics and hospitals around the world.

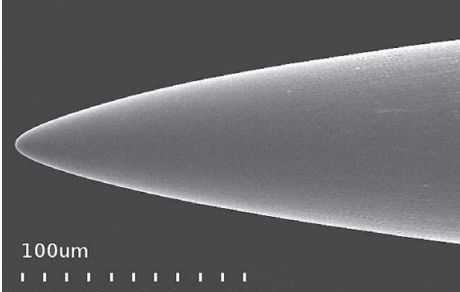
Until the 1990’s, the angle of conventional needles was relatively wider, which easily caused pain upon penetrating the skin. Seirin developed new guiding technology to make the tip’s angle more acute, producing a more streamlined tip that eliminated pain and discomfort, even for thick needles. Recently Seirin has developed rounder-edged, acute-angle needles to further minimize pain.

In current practice, needle size can be distinguished by sight, but more easily by a color-coded grip, also developed by Seirin.

Even though the main choice of needles today are disposable stainless steel, some practitioners use precious metals such as gold and silver. Many schools use silver needles for students as they are more soft and flexible, thus requiring more skill to insert.



A round-edged needle (right) allows for painless acupuncture. SEIRIN CORP.



Moxibustion (or *okyu*), a form of heat therapy in which moxa (dried mugwort) is burned near the skin surface, is often used in conjunction with acupuncture to stimulate the flow of energy in the body. Various forms of moxa therapy are practiced. Commonly, the Japanese practitioner burns a cone-shaped moxa as small as half a grain of rice applied on an acupuncture point without letting it burn the skin.

Gentle yet effective forms of moxibustion are gaining traction with the mainstream consumer nowadays. At the stylish Sennenkyu showroom in Ginza, customers can get a demonstration from a licensed practitioner on how to apply small moxa plasters to the skin, while browsing through the shop’s extensive selection of plasters for home use. Sweet smelling scents — apple with citrus to green tea — and even smoke-free versions are available to try.

A plaster, about the diameter of a yen coin, includes an inner chamber filled with moxa, offset from the skin. After the moxa is lit, heat radiates through an aeration pore contacting the skin, warming the desired point, with no risk of burning the skin. A sticky film helps the plaster stay on the skin through the five to ten minutes of heat, reaching about 40 to 50 Celsius.

“The combination of heat and fragrance is comforting and healing. It gives people the feeling they are doing some-

thing good for their body,” said the store manager. On a recent visit to Sennenkyu’s showroom and clinic, where patients can be treated with moxa, I was able to experience okyu firsthand.

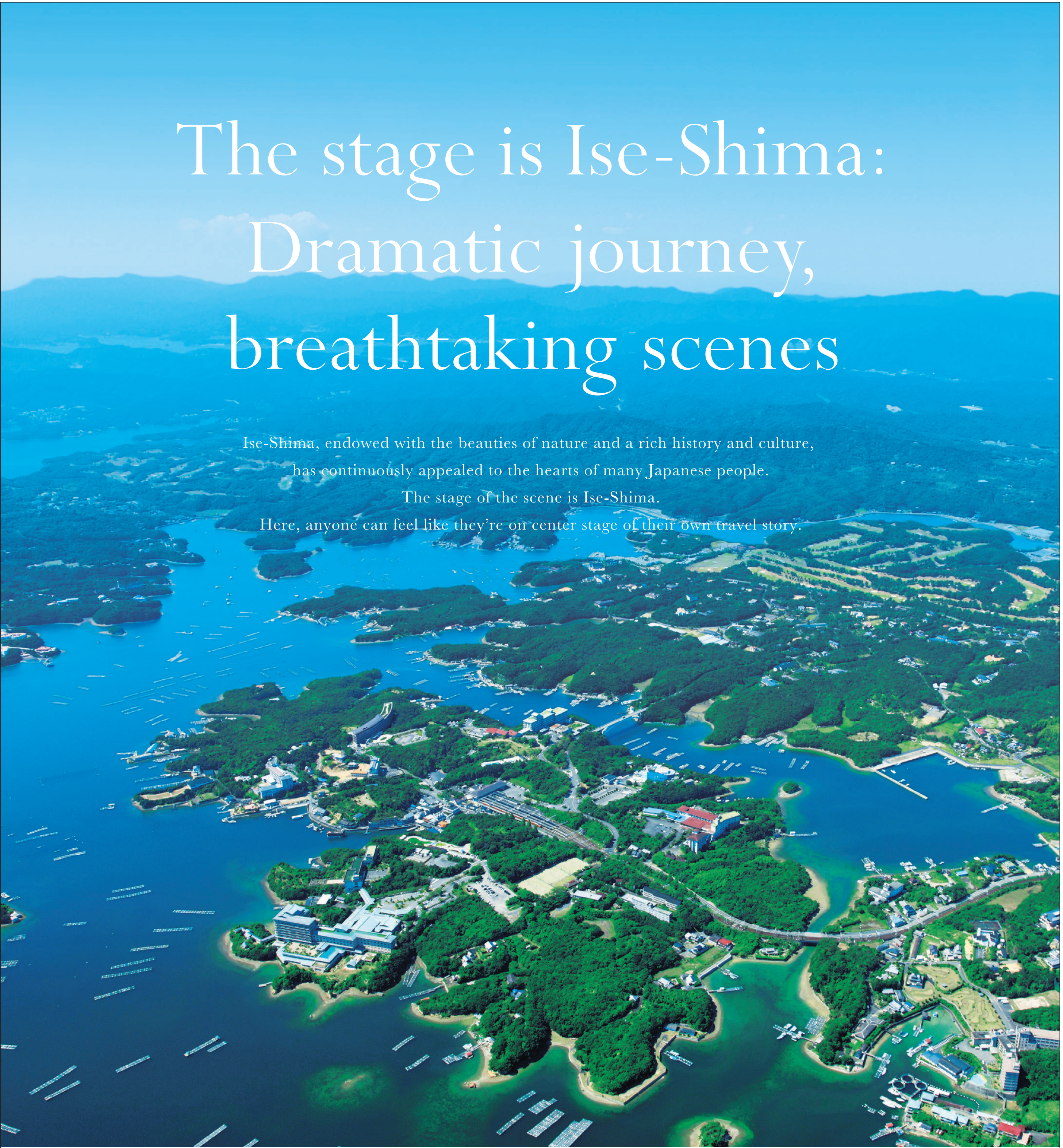
After palpating my back, forearms and calves with a light touch, the practitioner applied a couple of plasters to my legs and feet to help release lower back tension. Indeed, within minutes, I felt a pleasant heat radiating from these spots, while the room filled with an intoxicating aroma, similar to burning incense. These portable, disposable plasters, sold in packs of 50 to 80 units, are perfect for home use, and have become especially popular with office workers suffering from chronic back and shoulder pain.

Sennenkyu is as much about making moxa treatments more simple to use and accessible as it is about changing the image of moxibustion. Once regarded as simply a folk remedy, moxibustion has made a breakthrough as a safe and effective form of holistic therapy. The company believes in transparency in showing and teaching customers moxibustion’s effectiveness and benefits. In line with this principle, the bright and modern shop features large wraparound windows that showcase the demonstrations and products within, truly a one-of-a-kind store.

All text by Simone Chen

The stage is Ise-Shima: Dramatic journey, breathtaking scenes

Ise-Shima, endowed with the beauties of nature and a rich history and culture,
has continuously appealed to the hearts of many Japanese people.
The stage of the scene is Ise-Shima.
Here, anyone can feel like they're on center stage of their own travel story.



Welcome to our resorts. Ise-Shima Kintetsu Resort



Shima Kanko Hotel



Prime Resort Kashikojima



Hotel Kintetsu Aquavilla Ise-Shima



Kashikojima Hojoen



Hotel Shima Spain Mura



Shima Spain Village
PARQUE ESPAÑA



Shima Marineland



Kashikojima España Cruise

The Kintetsu Limited Express trains offer a comfortable ride
departing from Osaka, Kyoto and Nagoya.



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