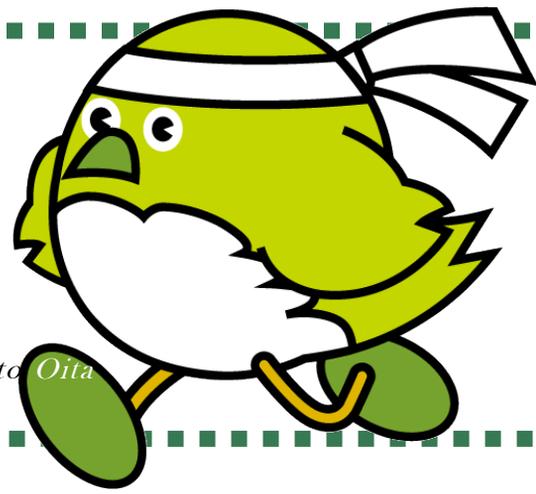


# What's up,

# OITA! 2019 December No. 43

Bringing the latest from Oita, Japan to all those connected to Oita thriving all across the globe.



## Oita Prefecture Thai Promotion



Between 7~10 November, a delegation from the Oita Prefecture comprised of Vice Governor Ono, members of local businesses and other affiliated bodies made a visit to Thailand where they promoted Oita's products, tourism and manufacturing.

Tourism promotions were conducted at the Visit Japan FIT Fair 2019. Around a hundred organizations across Japan and 56,000 participants appeared in the exhibition.

Approximately 1,130,000 visitors from Thailand travelled to Japan last year, equaling to a 72% percent increase from the figure of 660,000 five years ago. Aside from Tokyo and Osaka, other destinations around Japan also attracted plenty of attention.

Seeing that there were visitors who planned on visiting Kyushu in the upcoming future, the delegation used the occasion to promote Oita's onsen and culinary specialties.



In other news, the official function *A Delightful Evening with Oita* received guests from the Government of Thailand, embassies, travel agencies, local buyers and members of the mass media. Local specialties such as evenly marbled Oita Wagyu, farmed Japanese amberjack and tuna, and dried shiitake were featured in the evening's menu, and presentations outlining Oita's tourism resources were conducted. The delegation spent the evening by facilitating booths that promoted Oita's produces, tourism and manufacturing, and used the event to network with business associates. *(Continued on following page)*

*(Continued from previous page)* As the Oita Prefecture is proactive in the field of medical and nursing care, the visit proved to be an excellent opportunity to communicate with the Thai Ministry of Industry. During the courtesy visit, the delegation exchanged opinions with the Ministry and consulted the possibility of future joint-efforts; in exchange, the Ministry expressed its interest in working with the Oita Prefecture concerning the cultivation of skills and talents, as well as efforts related to the development of the Thai economy.



Through continuous efforts with various bodies, the Oita Prefecture is striving to use the promotion as a catalyst for paving the path for Oita's future industries and boosting inbound tourism.

## Ms. Li Ting has been Appointed Mejiron Overseas Supporter

Ms. Li Ting, traineeship programme cadet from Huangshi, Hubei Province, has returned home to China on 20 November after completing 6 months of traineeship.

During her term, Ms. Li interned at the Oita Prefecture, Tourism Oita, local travel agencies and other affiliated bodies. While learning about Oita's policies and tourism, Ms. Li also put her excellent Japanese to good practice in her free time, travelling and exploring not only within Oita but also around Japan.

Ms. Li has contributed several reports on her experiences in Oita, and has been appointed a Mejiron Overseas Supporter for her efforts. We greatly look forward to seeing more of Ms. Li in future correspondences between the Hubei Province and the Oita Prefecture.



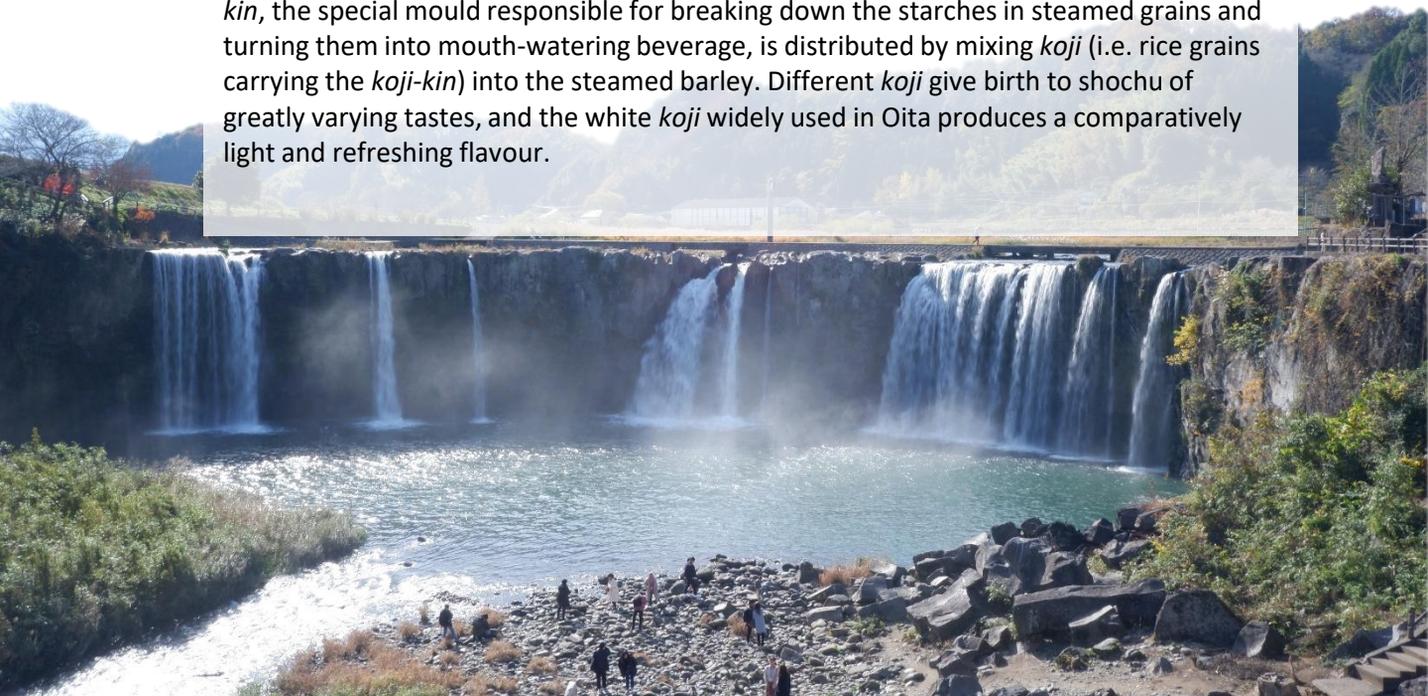


# A Touch of Warmth in the Colder Seasons

## Taking a Few Sips in Bungo-ono

Mention Bungo-ono, and one of the first things that comes to mind would be the Harajiri Falls, lovingly nicknamed the 'Oriental Niagara' because of its pleasantly arched horseshoe shape. Perhaps little less visited are the small facilities in the proximity of the waterfall, though they are no less pleasing to explore.

Approximately a 30-minute drive away from the waterfall is the Fujii Distillery. The Fujii Distillery is a small establishment that specialises in shochu, a distilled liquor made mainly from barley, sweet potatoes or rice, though barley is considered mainstream in Oita. *Koji-kin*, the special mould responsible for breaking down the starches in steamed grains and turning them into mouth-watering beverage, is distributed by mixing *koji* (i.e. rice grains carrying the *koji-kin*) into the steamed barley. Different *koji* give birth to shochu of greatly varying tastes, and the white *koji* widely used in Oita produces a comparatively light and refreshing flavour.





Closer to the Harajiri Falls sits the Takakiya Brewery, a small sake brewery that is around a 5-minute drive away from the waterfall. While also a product of *koji*, unlike the distilled shochu, sake is a fermented liquor that is lower in alcohol content with a completely different taste that is gentler on the palate. As *koji* withstands heat poorly, shochu distilleries and sake breweries alike tend to use the winter period to produce new drinks, and the Takakiya Brewery is no different



As a cold breeze chilled the sunny landscape, a *sugidama* hung on top of the entrance. A *sugidama*, also known as a *sakabayashi*, is a ball made from cedar branches. Every spring, sake breweries display a *sugidama* made of freshly clipped green boughs at the shopfronts to signal that new batches of sake are on their way. When the *sugidama* turns brown, sake connoisseurs know that the drinks have matured nicely and are ready to drink.

If you enjoy drinking or learning about alcoholic beverages, you may be interested in joining the local cellar-hopping tour on 15 March next year. The event will be run by four local breweries and provides opportunities for sampling shochu, sake, umeshu, as well as other local alcoholic drinks and related products. For more details on the two aforementioned breweries and the tour event, please refer to the information below.

Xin Lan Xie, CIR from Australia



## Bungo-ono Meguru Kura Bus Tour

**Date:** Sun, 15 Mar 2020

**Cost:** 5,500 yen / 4,000 yen (for participants who have already purchased the tour goodie pack)

**Pamphlet:** <http://toyotabi.net/img/tour200315.pdf>

### Fujii Distillery

150-1 Chitosemachi Niidono, Bungo-ono,  
Oita 879-7401  
<https://www.taimei-fujii.co.jp/>

### Takakiya Brewery

381 Ogamamachi Shimojizai, Bungo-ono,  
Oita 879-6643  
<http://www.takakiya.co.jp/sake.html>