



# What's up, OITA!

Bringing the latest from Oita, Japan to people around the globe!

## The First Inukai-machi Wakaayu Exchange Forum Hosting of a Web Exchange Forum with The Chinese University of Hong Kong



The Inukai-machi Wakaayu Exchange Forum has been hosting a homestay programme with The Chinese University of Hong Kong since 1997. Whilst the homestay programme has not taken place for the past two years due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the first web exchange forum took place on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July in order to maintain connection with The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Students and past students of The Chinese University of Hong Kong who have come to stay in Inukai-machi as part of the homestay programme up until now participated in the exchange alongside elderly residents of Inukai-machi.



Through grassroots exchange, Inukai-machi and Hong Kong have established a strong bond!

## Japanese Partners Dispatch Project Those to be Dispatched to Indonesia Chosen



**Ms. Kyoko Itai**  
The Japanese Partners  
Dispatch Project  
17<sup>th</sup> Dispatch to Indonesia  
Oita Prefecture Dispatch  
Endorsement Programme

The Japanese Partners Dispatch Project administered by Independent Administrative Institution Japan Foundation is dispatching talented individuals of all ages to Asian middle and high-school institutions. With the goal of supporting Japanese language learning in Asian countries, these individuals will work as partners with local Japanese language instructors, carrying out the role of classroom assistants and conversation partners, alongside organising and participating in activities that introduce Japanese language and culture both within and outwith the classroom.

Following the result of the 2021 selection process, Ms. Kyoko Itai's dispatch as the representative for Oita Prefecture for this year was confirmed. Ms Itai will travel to Surabaya, Indonesia, from September this year. Alongside supporting Japanese language learning in Surabaya, she will organise and participate in events and activities introducing both Japan and Oita Prefecture!

✓ A grand return after 3 years! ✓

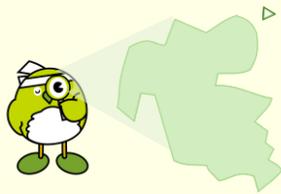
# The Brazilian-Japanese Prefectural Federation's 23<sup>rd</sup> Japanese Festival



The Brazilian-Japanese Prefectural Federation's '23<sup>rd</sup> Japanese Festival' was hosted in San Paolo, Brazil, from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> July.

Vendors at each prefectural booth in the food corner sold local handmade dishes. Oita Prefecture's booth offered local specialties such as chicken fried rice, chicken tempura, dango soup, and both beef and mushroom croquettes.

The festival was held for the first time in 3 years, having been postponed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, with many people flocking to enjoy the event.



## News from Around Oita

### Headlines for August

- Beppu Sea of Fire Festival Fireworks. 5,000 Fireworks Set Off Hoping for the End of COVID-19
- Memories Connected by a Thread. Spatial Art Exhibition in Beppu from the Mind of Chiharu Shiota
- Oita's First Coming-of-Age Ceremony for 19-year-olds Held in Kunisaki. 159 Attend an Early Milestone
- "Funai Pacchin" Floats Await Battle. Six Total, Participants Wish to "Truly Move Those Who Watch"
- A "Sea of Smiles" in the Hot Spring Capital. Beppu Sea of Fire Returns for the First Time in Three Years
- Oita's Number of International Students per 10,000 People is No. 2 in the Nation. 3260 People Total for Fiscal Year 2021
- Celebrating 50 years of Mongolian-Japanese Relations. Wishes to "Deepen Relations in Both the Public and Private Sectors"
- Sanwa Shurui's Ajimu Wine Takes Platinum in Decanter World Wine Awards
- Old Ogata Village Hall Returned to Former Glory After 90 Years. Wishes to Make it "a Symbol of the Region"



*Funai Pacchin*



*Beppu*



*Ajimu Wine*



# News from Usa

## 宇佐市からのお知らせ



Usa City Community-Reactivating Cooperator Squad Chang Chun-Sheng

Hello everyone, my name is Chang Chun-Sheng and I work for Usa City's Tourism and Branding Division.

I'm originally from Taiwan, but I've been living in Usa for the past two years. You know, Usa's appeal doesn't end with its agriculture, it also has many absolutely stunning views and buildings with rich, deep histories.

Fall is fast approaching, and it's getting cooler outside. Speaking of, fall is said to be the best season for exercise in Japan! Usa City has E-bikes available with batteries that last for 100 km and displays that show your current speed and how many calories you've burned. They might serve as the perfect thing to keep up your motivation to exercise!

In November, two E-bike tours, the "Ajimu and Innai Countryside Ride" and the "Ride Around Ajimu Basin," are going to be held in Usa. Professional guides will be tagging along for both tours, so I'm positive you'll be able to discover new beautiful sights that you normally wouldn't notice otherwise. Both courses are around 10 to 30 km in length and have plenty of rest stops, so even newcomers to cycling have nothing to worry about!

So please, anyone with an interest in sports, cycling, and new experiences, come visit us in Usa!

## Introducing **The USA Box**

The "USA Box" and the "USA Box Deluxe" are currently on sale! They're packed full of all sorts of delicious food that screams "Usa," but also has a somewhat familiar flavor. Perfect as a souvenir or as a gift for everyone back home. You can buy them from the city's official website, so take the chance to try out some of Usa's great gourmet food! We've also started an Instagram!

Please give us a follow at "tabisuru\_usa"!

See more by scanning our QR code to the right.





# An Itogahama-summer!



As this has been my first summer in Oita, I wanted to try out everything it has to offer in terms of summer activities. Being British, we have been conditioned from a young age to savour every ounce of sunlight we can soak up, since the 'seasons' we have in the UK are, save from summer, all rainy and gloomy. So although summer in Japan brings its own kind of suffering perhaps equal to

the British rain, I have been determined to get outside as much as possible. Living in Australia and Hong-Kong has prepared me a little for the humidity of Japan, but I cannot say I deal with it all that well - I prefer a dry but hot climate. What better way to compromise then, than by trying out paddle boarding, or 'supp/サップ' in Japanese, and cooling off whilst trying something new and fun!

Making the most of the dying days of summer, I headed down to Itogahama Supp Terrace in Hiji for my first paddle boarding experience. A thick layer of clouds hung low in the sky, protecting me from the harsh rays; I was thankful for that at least. I was greeted by the owner of the business, Mr Tsuno, who was rather jolly for a 9am start - I must say I was still rather bleary-eyed, having gotten up at 5:30am to get to Hiji in time. I was whisked through the process: first fitted with a lifejacket and shoes as was included in my package, and then given a height-appropriate oar to paddle with. Down at the beach, paddle boards were lined up along the shore for the school participants. I had chosen a two hour course: one hour of being taught the techniques, safety, and tips for paddle boarding, and an hour of free time to glide around as I pleased.

Mr. Tsuno was very upbeat, cracking jokes along the way as he taught us how to hold the oar, use the safety strap, hold the board, and get on the board safely. One engaging 15 minute spiel later and he led us into the water, beginning the second part of the lesson: how to kneel and stand; how to paddle effectively; stopping and starting; turning around; and my favourite, how to go fast! I didn't

## Swara Fife

Coordinator for  
International  
Relations



fall once - not bad for a beginner! Although I had a good teacher and a beginners board..! The second hour was all about trying things out and experimenting -I had a lot of fun doing this!

There was little breeze and the sea was fairly still, which helped me experiment with some interesting moves. I had always wanted to try out 'Supp Yoga' - my yoga instructor spends all her free time in the summer at Itogahama Supp Terrace, which is how I first found out about it. I will definitely be back to try out Supp Yoga next time - for my first experience, however, I thought it best to stick with the basics. I did try out some yoga poses in the free time though. Balancing was quite tricky, even with a flat sea and a beginner's board. I can't imagine the strength and expertise it would take to complete a whole Supp Yoga class. I held some twisting poses whilst sitting down as well as pigeon pose, lizard, and, rather fittingly, mermaid. These were all rather simple as I could already hold those poses properly, and they all involve stretching out various muscles whilst sitting down. The challenge was the standing poses. I managed a warrior one and a warrior two for a few seconds each, as well as pyramid pose and a wide-legged forward fold. Rather than flowing at this stage, I simply took some poses one after the other in no particular order, whilst trying not to fall into the water. Listening to my body, I cycled through a few poses, broken up by some paddle practice here and there, before it was time to pack up.

Sweaty, salty, and sucked of energy, I trudged back up the beach, thoroughly spent but refreshed, having made the most of the good weather as the summer sun begins to wane.



## Itogahama Supp Terrace



Price:  
¥4,830/adult  
¥4,330/middle  
school and  
below

\*see QR code for all  
available courses  
\*no English website  
available

School + I  
Course  
(60 minute  
lesson + 60  
minute free  
time!)



# African Safari



## Going on Safari

When I first came to Japan, the last thing I expected to be doing was going on safari. Japan isn't exactly known for its lions and tigers and... Well, it does have bears (oh my), but that's besides the point. Near the border of Beppu and Usa is the Kyushu Natural Animal Park African Safari, the largest safari park in all of Japan. As a kid, I remember playing around a lot in the "safari zones" that were in all the Pokémon games; they were actually one of my favorite parts. But to be honest, even though Pokémon's regions were based on Japan, I didn't think they actually existed. Obviously, you can't just walk around throwing rocks and bait and capturing the animals in little balls. Although, thinking about it, that's only a half (quarter?)-truth. There are two options for going through the safari—either going in your own car or in the "Jungle Bus." And thanks to the Jungle Bus, you can indeed give food to the animals: pellets for the herbivores, chicken for the carnivores, and carrots for the elephants (they get special treatment). Don't try feeding the animals from your own car though, you'll probably die. One of the most interesting parts of the safari to me was the absolute variety in animals. Goats, camels, zebras, tigers, lions, bears, bison, antelopes... They may all be completely foreign to Japan, but a few of them (specifically the last three) I could've found right in my own backyard in Utah. Okay, that may be an exaggeration for bison and antelopes, but there is actually an island in the middle of the Great Salt Lake called "Antelope Island" which has both antelope (different species though) and one of the few remaining bison colonies in the United States, so it really surprised me to see both of those animals in an African Safari all the way in Japan, albeit separated into different areas, unlike Antelope Island. It's too bad the gift shop didn't carry bison jerky either, but eating the rare safari animals really probably isn't the best idea. Instead it's probably best just to gaze at their beauty in the most natural place possible without going to Africa (or America).

Admission:  
Child (4 to Junior High) ¥1,500  
Adult (High School or above) ¥2,600  
Jungle Bus: Website (JP)  
Child ¥900  
Adult ¥1,100  
Cat/Dog Salon:  
Child ¥200 (per salon)  
Adult ¥300 (per salon)



# African Safari



## Raining Cats and Dogs

But this “look, don’t touch” style of safari isn’t the only thing to do at the African Safari. There’s also a much more fluffy “hands-on” adventure to be had in the *Fureai Zone*. There’s plenty of animals to see and interact with, like kangaroos, monkeys, ponies, and guinea pigs. But my favorite part had to be the Cat and Dog Salons (which have a small additional fee).

I have a cat and a dog back home in America, and I haven’t been able to see them for quite a while. So a couple hundred yen each for all the cats and dogs in the world to pet and give love to was a pretty good deal for me. Going to be honest though, I’m not sure if the cats specifically will return that love. It probably depends on the time of day you go, but the cats at the cat salon really seem to work at their own tempo. When we first went in, only a single cat was awake, and all we could really do was watch all the other cats lord over their kingdom. Still adorable, but if you dare to enter their domain, it’s probably best to be prepared to encounter a bunch of sleeping cats. Don’t be afraid to pet them even if they are sleeping though, most probably won’t mind. Just make sure you read the signs for each cat to make *sure* they won’t.

The dogs, on the other hand, were all over the place—both physically and personality-wise. Some ran around the entire time playing with the other dogs, others tried to stay out of the way entirely and didn’t want anything to do with anyone, and then there were quite a few who would just jump up to you for a snuggle. I think in the end, we got around five or six dogs gathered around us. Four of them were just in a huge pile of fluffy doggy goodness. One dog in particular really reminded me of my old dog, Lucky, who passed away about six years ago. It was an older dog, a toy poodle wearing a little shirt, just like Lucky always used to wear. It didn’t jump up to me like the other dogs, and stayed on the floor while I pet it from the bench. But honestly, I almost teared up just from that. It made me really want to go and see my other (well, my grandparents’, really) pets back home. If you need some animal healing, you should definitely take the chance to go on this furry safari.



# from our Reporters 国際交流員だより



## Swara Fife

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## Matama Coast: A Burning Ocean

Matama Coast, ranked time after time in the top 10 sunsets in the whole of Japan, did not disappoint, offering a burning inferno of colour and otherworldly wonder with each passing phase of its sunset. Although it started raining on the way to Usa, where Matama Coast is located, almost as soon as we arrived the skies cleared up. Perhaps it was the rain dance we had jokingly performed before hopping into the car in Oita City. The sun, a burning ball in the twilight sky, reflected a kaleidoscope of reds, yellows, and blues onto the clouds, whilst gentle waves glittered in its dying rays. Twilight brought with it a rapid tide that threatened to take us with it in the midst of our wonder. Almost as soon as we retreated from the beach, it had disappeared; Matama Coast is a dangerous beauty indeed.

## Pikachu, I Choose You!

The other day, I managed to get something that I've wanted ever since I was three years old. I actually wanted to buy it when I first got to Japan, but it felt like if I just bought it from Yahoo Auctions or somewhere like that, it just wouldn't be that special. So, I avoided buying it online. It's a bit on the rare side, so I didn't ever think I'd find it just wandering around from store to store, but it looks like I was wrong. I went to a small video game shop recently and wouldn't you know it, there it was, right there on the shelf. It was even cheaper than it would be on the internet, so I honestly think I was pretty lucky. Wait, I still haven't said what I bought yet, have I? Sorry about that. You've probably already noticed from the photo, but it was a Pikachu Nintendo 64. This will make three total that I own. Pikachu's cheeks glow though, so I'm sure all will be forgiven. (By who, I'm not sure.)

## Austin Vaughn

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