

This issue includes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Local Cuisine around Japan 3 Researching Early Childhood Education and visiting Hutt City in NZ 3 JETRO Sydney – JP food and ingredient supporter 4 Ms Kadoya from Hokkaido University visits CLAIR 4 Supporting Kumamoto Prefecture 5 Tara Guest House 5 Perth Japan Festival JETAA booth 6 International Affairs Office of Ministry of Internal Affairs visits Sydney 7 International Convention Centre | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 2016 Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar 11 2017 Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar 11 JETAA SI and Embassy of Japan in New Zealand 11 UNSW Japanese Class 12 Griffith University and Brisbane City Council 12 Career Fair at The University of Queensland 12 Mr Ryogo Abe from Aichi University of Education visits CLAIR 13 JETAA South Island Activities 14 From the Director |
|---|---|

Local Cuisine around Japan: Vol. 6 Ishikawa

Kaga Cuisine and Traditional Japanese Dining

Ishikawa’s Rich Culinary Culture

During the Edo period (1603~1867), the land currently known as Ishikawa prefecture was called Kaga domain, and was ruled by the Maeda clan, who devoted the use of much of their riches into promoting local production as well as cultural endeavors, resulting in the development of many traditional art crafts and culture. Kaga-style cuisine, one such product of their patronage, utilizes a wide variety of ingredients and the special traditional cooking techniques of master chefs. It is known for its minute attention to detail.

There are many historical ryoteis (luxurious traditional restaurants serving premium Japanese cuisine, often with entertainment provided by geisha) in Ishikawa prefecture which offer travelers a taste of this delicious local cuisine.

In order to better understand and enjoy Ishikawa’s traditional cuisine, we’ll be talking about the history of Kaga cuisine.



Geographic Conditions Unique to Kaga Cuisine

Ishikawa prefecture is blessed with many natural assets; it is surrounded by mountain and sea, allowing for access to many fresh ingredients, and has the fertile Kaga plains, which produce a wealth of rice and vegetables. It is also located in the middle of central Japan, and thus is at the northernmost point where foods from the south can be produced, and vice versa. It is called a “treasure house of ingredients” for its wide range of ingredients available throughout the four seasons.

Kaga cuisine is also known for being very hearty. Ishikawa is located between the Kansai western and Kanto eastern regions, and under the rule of Toshiie Maeda, ancestor of the Maeda clan whose master was Hideyoshi Toyotomi (feudal lord and chief imperial minister who completed the 16th century unification of Japan), Kaga domain was influenced heavily by Kyoto's culture, including its delicate cuisine. However, over the years it also came to be influenced by the richer, heartier samurai cuisine of Edo, the capital of the Shogunate, and the mixing of the two resulted in a new, unique style of cooking.



Furthermore, the ones supporting the development of techniques and the high-quality cooking unique to Kaga cuisine are its chefs. One could say that their ability to use fresh and bountiful ingredients to their fullest potential is an important aspect of Kaga cuisine. The Maeda clan were ardent practitioners of tea ceremonies for many generations, and when they held a tea ceremony for guests, they would prepare the usual tea-making utensils, bowls, and flower arrangements, as well as kaiseki

cooking—light course meals served before a tea ceremony. As such, they hired many chefs to serve their guests, thus preserving and developing the techniques of Kaga cuisine for generations to come.

Traditional Ryoteis Preserving Culture

Along with the food itself, the atmosphere of the ryoteis is something you must experience. The elegant dishes, the calming style of the Japanese-style room, and the elegantly arranged furniture all combine to create a unique restaurant experience that is part of the Kaga cuisine culture. Below we discuss the elements that make these restaurants so special.

The buildings themselves are a part of the overall aesthetic. The vermilion walls, said to be the ideal backdrop for the elegant movements of a geisha, are still preserved to this day, and some ryoteis even have ultramarine walls, unique to Kanazawa, that are said to have been a favorite of the samurai.

In these traditional ryoteis, the dishes and utensils are of course products of local traditional crafts, such as Kutaniyaki porcelains, Wajima lacquerware, Kanazawa lacquerware, and Yamanaka lacquerware. At ryoteis with a long history, many now-valuable pieces, gathered and preserved over many generations, are still used to serve food. Being able to touch such first-class items as this is one of the appeals of such traditional restaurants.

For information about Ishikawa, please visit the official Ishikawa travel guide website (English) and Facebook Discover Ishikawa.

<https://www.hot-ishikawa.jp/english/index.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/Discover-Ishikawa-Japan-1707686196110375/>

visiting Hutt City in New Zealand

On 6-10 March, we visited New Zealand to research the national early childhood education system. At the Ministry of Education, we interviewed policy advisors about the “Te Whāriki”, which is the early childhood curriculum of New Zealand and also asked questions about the early childhood education (ECE) services. We also visited the Education Review Office, where we discussed the evaluation of early childhood services and



the training of evaluation officers.

During our visit to New Zealand we also met with Mr Ray Wallace JP, the Mayor of Hutt City and Vice President of Sister Cities New Zealand and his lovely wife, Mayoress Linda Goss-Wallace. Hutt city and Minoh City in Osaka, Japan have been sister cities for 22 years. They actively hold exchange programs and also conduct Skype sessions between schools in both cities where they discuss topics in English and Japanese. We were very happy to see such strong engagement between Japan and New Zealand at the local level.

JETRO Sydney – Japanese food and ingredient supporter

On 6 March, members of CLAIR Sydney went to JETRO Sydney to attend the explanatory meeting for the certification of Japanese food and ingredient supporter stores outside of Japan. Around 50 people from various restaurants and food distributors in Sydney attended.

This Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF) system certifies restaurants and retailers outside of Japan that actively use Japanese-sourced ingredients as Japanese Food and Ingredient Supporter Stores and was launched last year in April. This certification aims to promote the sale and use of safe, high-quality Japanese-sourced ingredients and help people make informed decisions when looking to secure high-quality ingredients through their distribution networks. MAFF also plans to launch a website (tentatively called the Taste of Japan Market) so people can have direct access to Japan’s fresh produce and meet the demands of small business.



We expect this system will give an added boost to the ever-increasing popularity of Japanese food here in Sydney.

Ms Kadoya from Hokkaido University visits CLAIR

On 7 March, Ms Kadoya, a staff member of the International Collaboration Institute of Hokkaido University visited CLAIR Sydney to talk about effective promotional activities to increase the number of exchange students to Hokkaido as Australian exchange students to the region are quite low.

Hokkaido University is affiliated with six universities in Australia;

- The Australian National University
- The University of Sydney
- The University of New South Wales
- The University of the Sunshine Coast
- Murdoch University
- University of Tasmania

Hokkaido University is currently looking at ways to promote the region and make its presence known to attract more exchange students.

Supporting Kumamoto Prefecture

On March 8-9, delegates from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Kumamoto Prefecture and the Kumamoto Representative Office in Singapore visited Sydney to conduct market research in Australia. CLAIR Sydney briefed the delegation on market trends relating to Japanese food in Australia and more specifically Sydney as they plan to export rice and green tea produced in Kumamoto.



We told the delegates that although

the demand for rice grown in Japan is increasing, its market share is still quite small. Cost sensitivities limit its use in restaurants to high-end sushi establishments and Japanese expats make up the bulk of retail sales. We also mentioned that although green tea (or matcha) flavoured sweets are very popular in Sydney the number of Australians who regularly drink Japanese green tea is not particularly high.

We also accompanied them to Woolworths, Coles, Sydney Fish Market, Tokyo Mart and many other stores. The inspections were informative and meaningful as the delegates were able to learn more about local distribution channels and price.

Tara Guest House



CLAIR Sydney visited the beautiful Tara Guest House to interview the owners, Brom and Julian Rapley, for an upcoming article for the CLAIR Magazine. As the NSW Government plans to revise laws on short-term rental accommodation this coming April, Brom and Julian were concerned about its potential impact on traditional forms of accommodation, cleanliness standards, and above all, reduced housing affordability caused by increasing numbers of overseas investors, as noted in a recent parliament report last October.

Perth Japan Festival JETAA booth

On 25 March, CLAIR Sydney visited the Perth Japan Festival and helped man the festival's JETAA booth. Mr Will Perera, the President of JETAA WA, hosted the festival and various Japanese traditional martial arts and music performances were held on the main stage. From 3:30 pm onwards, we took over the booth of the Consulate General of Japan to promote Japanese tourism destinations. Pamphlets featuring Japanese ski resorts were popular amongst the visitors. After that, we exchanged opinions with the board members of JETAA WA. JETAA WA was recently commended for their contribution in improving the relations between Australia and Japan by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan.



International Affairs Office of Ministry of Internal Affairs visits Sydney

On March 14-16, delegates from the International Affairs Office of the Local Administration Bureau (Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications {MIC}) visited Sydney. CLAIR Sydney supported their visits to government agencies and local governments in NSW to learn more about their emergency services.

The International Affairs Office is considering a new policy where a key person, tentatively called an 'Information Coordinator', helps manage the support of foreigners at evacuation centres during disasters. As Australia is a diverse and multicultural society, the delegates visited some Australian organizations to get information and advice about possible direction and implementation strategies. They went to NSW State Emergency Service, NSW Fire and Rescue, NSW Rural Fire Service and NSW Police Force in addition to Multicultural NSW and Cumberland Council, which is home to many residents born outside of Australia.



Each institution once had very clear and separate roles, but recently it is more important for these institutions to cooperate with each other. NSW Police Force's Emergency Management Officers play an important and central role in connecting these institutions. The delegates appreciated our support and considered this trip to be a success as they were able to speak with a lot of experts in this field.

On 16 March, CLAIR visited the new International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney to learn more about the building and its purpose.

ICC Sydney opened in December 2016 and consists of three buildings: convention area, exhibition halls and theatres. It is a large-scale complex that boasts Australia's largest ballroom and exhibition halls.



These three buildings are interconnected for easy access. Each building has its own unique interior, designed to complement and mimic its surroundings.

As it is conveniently located in Darling Harbour we expect it to host many different conferences, events, shows, and exhibitions for years to come (including the next Snow Expo).

2016 Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar 12th – 22nd February 2017

~ Article and photos from Cr Jenny McKay, Councillor Division 5, Community and Environment Portfolio and Councillor Assisting the Mayor on International Relations. Sunshine Coast, Australia ~

The 2016 Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar participants travelled to Japan in February to Tokyo and Masuda City.

The themes of the 2016 exchange were:

- Attracting international tourists to small provincial towns
- Fostering wide-range cooperation with adjacent cities for tourism



The team

The 2016 participants included – Team Leader Councillor Jenny McKay, Community and Environment Portfolio and Councillor Assisting the Mayor on International Relations - Sunshine Coast Council Queensland. John Sommerlad, Director, Business & Community - Tamworth Regional Council NSW. Yvette Selim, Lecturer & Senior Public Policy & Governance. Lynden Mullen, Senior Policy Advisor, Department of Premier and Cabinet - State Government Victoria. Elizabeth Robertson, Policy Advisor – Local Government NSW, Australia.

What we experienced

A broad itinerary was prepared by CLAIR Tokyo office staff which included inspections and seminars in both

Tokyo and Masuda. Participants were able to experience traditional and local Japanese culture unique to the region. Some of those inspections included:

- Nihonbashi Information Centre
- Advertising Museum Tokyo
- Meiji Jingu
- Mori-Teien and Roppongi Hills
- Courtesy call to the Mayor of Masuda City
- Official visits in Masuda City - Matsunaga Bokujo, Migita-Honten (medieval food sampling at Manpukuji temple), Iwamikagura (a traditional local performing arts group), Masuda String Puppets in the Grand Toit Theatre
- Official visits in Tsuwano Town - Japanese Legacy Centre, Honmachi 'Tonomachi', praying in Taikodani Inari-Jinja shrine
- Official visits in Hagi City – The Hagi Museum, Meirinkan, Youbika, Syoka sonjunku, Reverberatory furnace
- Farewell Dinner hosted by CLAIR at “Miyoshiya”

As well as a visit to the Cells Alive Systems Centre and meeting with the Mayor of Masuda City, we attended a wonderful welcome dinner hosted by the city that night. The team also had courtesy visits with the Mayor of Tsuwano Town and meetings with Iwaki City officials and enjoyed a weekend home stay with a host family.

What we shared:

Challenges and opportunities for regional and rural communities

Whilst there are some differences between the Japanese and Australian local council structure, we found common ground in the challenges that councils of small regional communities face such as declining populations, an increase in younger people moving to the cities and a shift in farmers leaving the rural areas.

The delegation shared some of our experiences in facing those challenges in Australia, such as investing in and leveraging off event-based tourism opportunities to encourage people to visit regional centres. Our hosts identified a number of



opportunities to promote and support regional events and were particularly interested in hearing how the Tamworth local authority support and sponsor **The Tamworth Country Music Festival**, which is an annual music festival held in NSW that celebrates country music culture and heritage and holds numerous concerts and live performances at various venues over a two week period.

John Summerlad, Director of Business and Community - Tamworth Regional Council took them through the journey of this internationally renowned music festival, which started very small but has now grown into a multi-million dollar event for the town.

The Australian delegation were touched by the willingness and openness of our Japanese hosts in seeking our views on their initiatives. They were equally receptive to both praise and constructive criticism to assist

them achieve their respective goals.

Another strong topic for discussion was the growing opportunities within the Asian market which embraces China, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Whilst the Australian market represents a very small portion of visitors to Japan, our hosts were keen to use this opportunity to seek feedback on Australian travellers consumer habits and to gauge the value-potential that Australian tourists might place on various experiences such as medieval food sampling at Manpukuji Temple.

Transport

We experienced different forms of travel from the highly efficient regular underground metro rail-systems in Tokyo, to Hagi, where the train comes through as seldom as once a day. We shared the same concerns around public transport and how it can impact on a region's ability to attract and gain a share of the domestic and international markets.

Environmental protections

We spoke about the importance of our mutual challenge in protecting our natural environment now and into the future and how we manage our waste, protect our pristine waterways, reduce gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

What we learnt:

From our visits to the magnificent Shimane Arts Centre, to inspecting indoor dairies and snap freezing facilities in the watershed of the Takatsu River, the delegation quickly discovered that there is another side to Japan outside Tokyo.

Japan, the economic giant which has provided the world with so much – including cars, electronic equipment, machine tools and innovation, has at its heart and soul a number of more valuable commodities.

Having had the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the real Japan, beyond the bright lights of Tokyo and the hustle and bustle of its massive economy thanks to the CLAIR's Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar Japan Study Tour, I can report it is Japan's people and its culture which are its greatest treasures.

Because of my strong background in rural industries, I was particularly interested in learning how Tokyo city residents are supporting the rural farmers and industries. During a visit to the Nihonbashi Information Centre and surrounding areas we toured some of the innovative stores that supplied products from across regional Japan, creating a direct link to the province where the products originated. This effectively gives the rural farmers direct supply, promotion and marketing support in Tokyo.

Wonderful, welcoming hospitality of the Japanese people

Another highlight was the hospitality of the Japanese people which would have to be among some of the best in the world. We were allocated to a home stay experience and whilst they were all unique experiences, we all agreed that it was a wonderful opportunity and hoped that we could return some of the hospitality in our respective areas.

At Masuda City, council officials and the many individuals we made contact with were so generous with their time and commitment as we traversed its beautiful and industrious landscape.

These people, along with the dedicated and kind staff of the CLAIR office, provided a memorable journey



which now resides at the top of my list.

Culture and heritage in Japan

Professor Kimura gave a very interesting presentation on the Japanese Local Government system. Whilst it was very brief it gave us a quick overview of how government works in Japan. Incidentally, I found it interesting that the CEO position is publicly elected rather than appointed, which is the case in Australia.

We learnt how important cultural heritage and the preservation of the past is to the Japanese community and identified the challenge of balancing the preservation of cultural heritage sites while allowing for access and meeting tourism market expectations.

Having breathed in the immense history of Hagi and Tsuru, admired the natural beauty of Shimane Prefecture, and tasted the vibrant and ancient culture, this visit has left a lasting impression.

Last, but not least, we learnt there is more than one way to take a bath and we were taught the correct way to wear our Japanese bathrobe.

High standards of health care

Whilst not intentionally planned, a visit to the hospital in Masuda reflected the high standard of health care available in a regional area, complete with bilingual speaking doctors. I was also impressed to learn that the Japanese Red Cross Association had contributed significantly to the upgrade of the facility.

I would like to congratulate CLAIR on their attention to detail, the quality of accommodation, the balance of tourism opportunities and the choice of food. We experienced traditional foods as well as French cuisine on the seashore in Masuda. The seminar provided a beautifully balanced array of experiences showcasing Japanese heritage, culture, food and environment. Lastly, I would also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to CLAIR for providing me with a day's leave from the seminar so that I could travel to Tatebayashi to farewell Mayor Kazuo Yasuraoka who held office since 2007 and is a man I hold in great respect.



2017 Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar

The 2017 Seminar will be held from 12 – 21 February, 2018. Participants will arrive in Tokyo, and travel to Higashine City (Yamaguchi Prefecture), the host local government.

We will inform you later with the details in our Newsletter.

JETAA SI and Embassy of Japan in NZ

On March 16-19, CLAIR Sydney staff visited New Zealand to exchange opinions with JETAA SI members in Dunedin and attend the Annual General Meeting of JETAA SI. On 17 March, we visited the Embassy of Japan in New Zealand and talked about the JET Programme and the current state of the TPP. After that, we moved to Dunedin and exchanged opinions with the local JETAA SI members. On 18 March, we met Ms Haruko Stuart, lecturer at the University of Otago, to talk about the Japanese language education in Dunedin. On 19 March, we attended the Annual General Meeting of JETAA SI and some new committee members were elected after the meeting. It was a great opportunity for us to learn more about JETAA activities in New Zealand and strengthen our relations with them. We will continue to support JETAA's activities in this region.

UNSW Japanese Class

On 20 March, Mr Toshiya Komatsu, an Assistant Director at CLAIR Sydney, made a presentation in front of a Japanese class at the University of New South Wales. He talked about the history and culture of Tokyo and later answered questions and exchanged opinions with students. We hope the session helped to deepen the student's interest in Japan.



Griffith University and Brisbane City Council

March 21-22, CLAIR Sydney visited Griffith University and Brisbane City Council to talk about the JET Programme and other related activities.

According to Dr Imura, Japanese Language Program Coordinator at Griffith University, Japanese enterprises often require their staff to possess advanced Japanese language skills. This makes it quite difficult for most former JET participants to work for Japanese companies in Brisbane as they do not have such high Japanese

proficiency.

However, many former JET participants work in the public sector, in all levels of government (local, state and federal) in Australia.

Career Fair at The University of Queensland

On 21 March, CLAIR Sydney attended a Career Fair at The University of Queensland to promote the JET Programme along with members of JETAAQLD. The JET Programme offers university graduates the opportunity to live and work in Japan for up to five years. After going through the selection process, JETs are able to work in Japanese schools to assist language teachers (mainly English), or in Japanese local governments becoming part of in their international relations department.

Many students who are interested in Japan came and asked JETAA members about the JET Programme. Not only students who had known about the JET Programme but also students who had never heard about the programme before. We hope that more and more people apply for the programme and do great work in Japan as JETs. For more



information about the JET Programme, visit <http://www.jetprogramme.org>

Mr Ryogo Abe from Aichi University of Education visits CLAIR

On 29 March, Mr Ryogo Abe, an Associate Professor of Aichi University of Education, who studies regional social systems visited CLAIR Sydney. He participated in our Multicultural Study Tour in Sydney in 2015 and he is in Sydney again to do more research.

We are currently preparing for this year's Multicultural study tour, which will be held in Melbourne for the very first time. Mr Abe mentioned that he was also interested in attending. He said that he hopes to be able to participate again as it is difficult for individual researchers to secure meetings with government bodies and because he really benefitted from attending the 2015 tour.

In fact, Mr Abe flew in from Melbourne as he was doing some research there, too. CLAIR told Mr Abe about our plans for this year's tour and the types of organisations we intend to visit. He came forward with useful information on the distribution of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in Melbourne and advice on how we should conduct the tour.

Page 12

JETAA South Island Activities ~Article and photos from JETAA South Island~

J-Kaiwa

Last year, we decided to revamp our J-Kaiwa sessions in the hopes that providing more structure to the evening would help a wider range of people meet their goals for coming along. We split the evening into two slots - one where everyone speaks in English and the other in Japanese. This allows a space for both languages: pushing those who are a little shy to give their second language a go, and not allowing dominant personalities to simply choose what language the conversation will be in.

In between the two slots, we hosted a short 'X-O-Y' style quiz with a small prize from our wonderful hosts, Space Academy on St Asaph St (run by former JETs!). Our quizzes have surprised and delighted, teaching us that polar bears are left handed, athletes competed naked at the ancient Olympics and Coca-Cola is green before having food colouring added! We have been really happy with the number of participants, averaging 30-40 people each time. This is in part, thanks to committee member Chiaki Bolam-Smith and her drive in getting the local polytech students along.

Japan Day and Culture Galore

JETAA South Island volunteers at two local cultural events here in Christchurch every March. The first, Japan Day, is a day-long festival, attracting 20,000 people, showcasing a wide range of Japanese culture - food, art, music, and sports. This year we found ourselves helping out at the Japanese consulate's stand. One side featured tastings of a range of delicious sake. The other end of the table featured a display of 'sompuru' - or samples: the plastic food displays you see in front of Japanese restaurants. This delighted many passers-by, particularly small children, and we never tired of joking with people to 'try something!'

Next up was the Culture Galore event held in Ray Blank Park the following weekend. Hosting stalls from a range of different cultural and social groups, Culture Galore celebrates the increasing cultural diversity that is a part of what makes Christchurch such a great place to live! JETAA South Island hosted a Japanese calligraphy stand that proved very popular. Many people, young and old, came by and tried their hand at kanji such as 'music, autumn, water, and friend.' Everyone had a lot of fun and a chance to enjoy a beautiful, quintessentially Japanese art.



From the Director

18 – Cherry blossoms and Parks - A Year of Local Governments in Japan

In April, parks in Japan are covered with the light pink colour of cherry blossoms. Many Japanese go to parks to see the flowers in bloom and enjoy eating and drinking under the trees. This is called *hanami* (looking at flowers), which is one of the most enjoyable events in Japanese spring. I'm sure many Australians and New Zealanders have experienced *hanami* in Japan.

Yoshino-yama (Mt Yoshino), near my hometown, Yoshino, Nara is very famous for wild cherry blossoms covering the mountain in spring. Yoshino-yama is located in Yoshino-Kumano National Park, which is one of many Japanese national parks which are places of scenic beauty designated for protection and sustainable usage by the central government. Prefectures also have their natural park and reserve areas, such as beautiful mountains, rivers and sea sides.

Ueno-koen (Ueno park) in Tokyo is also a very famous *hanami* place. *Somei-Yoshino*, a hybrid cherry species, covers the entire park in spring. The park is administrated by the Tokyo metropolitan government and has a metropolitan zoo, art museum and a national science and art museum in it. Smaller parks which are operated by municipalities have cherry trees as well.

Although temples and shrines are also famous for cherry blossoms, most *hanami* places are located in public spaces and looked after by respective local governments. Due to each municipalities' effort in maintaining and administrating these precious parklands, we, Japanese, can continue to enjoy *hanami* in spring.

Katsunori Kamibo
Director