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Local Cuisine around Japan: Vol. 4 Hokkaido

Genghis Khan from Hokkaido



An island on its own, Hokkaido takes up nearly a quarter of the entire country. With its vast land and nature, Hokkaido is known to many tourists as a treasure trove of food, including seafood, agriculture, dairy products, wine, and sake.

Of all the edible wonders this prefecture offers, there is one unique item that is not only popular among tourists, but is also a staple for locals: Genghis Khan. Genghis Khan is a lamb/mutton barbeque that uses uniquely-shaped skillets.

One of the most common skillet shapes is that of a soldier's helmet. The meat is grilled in the centre of the skillet, which rises in the middle like a mountain, and fresh local vegetables—common choices are bean sprouts, cabbage, onions, and pumpkin slices—are steamed on the rims with the juice that flows from the meat on top.

Genghis Khan is often prepared in a cook-your-own style: diners grill the meat and vegetables by themselves, whether they are at home or in a restaurant. This makes Genghis Khan a great social opportunity as well, and even locals often go out to enjoy grilling up some Genghis Khan with glasses of local beer in hand.

Come to Hokkaido and enjoy its beauty with your own eyes, and don't forget to enjoy traditional dishes like Genghis Khan!



To learn more about Hokkaido please visit <http://www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/foreign/english.htm>.

2017 CLAIR Forum

Some of our staff members will give presentations at the CLAIR Forum on 22 February at Junee Shire. They are currently honing their presentations with useful input from other staff members.

We are still looking for participants to join us at the Forum. After each presentation at the CLAIR Forum, each speaker will head small roundtable discussions with participants.

To register, please click this link:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/2017-clair-forum-tickets-30315280821>

The Kyushu Big Four at Matsuri Japan Festival



On Saturday 10 December 2016 at the Matsuri Japan Festival in Tumbalong Park, the four largest cities in Kyushu (Kitakyushu, Fukuoka, Kumamoto and Kagoshima; aka The Kyushu Big Four) partnered to promote Kyushu as a new tourist destination for the increasing number of Australian tourists travelling to Japan in recent years.

These four cities are the most populous in Kyushu and act as regional hubs thanks to their accessibility via both Shinkansen (bullet) trains and expressways. These four cities promoted the island

of Kyushu as a whole with pamphlets detailing the best tourist spots in each city and how to get there.

On the day, the beautiful weather helped bring many a Sydneysider to our booth and we were genuinely surprised to meet so many people keen to learn more about travelling to Kyushu. In addition, we met with tourist agencies promoting travel to Japan to provide new tourist information for the Kyushu region.

Kyushu is well known for its onsen (hot-spring) baths and its breathtakingly beautiful natural landscapes, particularly in the Kyushu Mountains. Kyushu is also blessed with high quality seafood and other water resources, meaning you can always find something delicious to eat anywhere on the island.

Prior to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics, Kyushu will host matches for the 2019 Rugby World Cup and the 2019 World Women's Handball Championship. We hope to attract more visitors from Australia to Kyushu through these exciting sporting events.

We will continue to actively promote Kyushu and its attractions so more people can get to know how great this place really is.



Japan-Australia Tourism Seminar by JNTO

On 14 January, CLAIR Sydney took part in the Japan-Australia Tourism Seminar held by the Japan National Tourism Organization's (JNTO) Sydney office.

Japanese Prime Minister Mr Shinzo Abe opened the seminar with a welcoming address, followed by the exchange of a memorandum of cooperation between JNTO President Mr Ryoichi Matsuyama, and the Managing Director of Tourism Australia Mr John O'Sullivan.

After speeches were given by both Mr Matsuyama and Mr O'Sullivan, we heard from Mr Hiromi Tagawa, Chairman of the Japan Association of Travel Agents, as well as from Mr Anthony Dennis, National Travel Editor for traveller.com.au (Fairfax Media). Various representatives were also present to give addresses on behalf of companies and universities in both Australia and Japan.

To close proceedings, a presentation was given by Mr Toshiaki Miyachi, Vice-Governor of Okayama Prefecture, and the Hon. Martin Hamilton-Smith, South Australian Minister for Investment and Trade, whose respective governments maintain a sister state and prefecture relationship.

The Japan-Australia Tourism Seminar has provided all of us here at CLAIR Sydney with new experiences and knowledge which will allow us to better perform public relations activities for local governments in Japan.



CLAIR Forum Magazine Interviews

On 19-20 January, we secured interviews on Melbourne's liveability with Ms Melanie Lowe and Mr Iain Butterworth from the Place, Health and Liveability Research Program. Melbourne is famous for securing the top position in the global liveability rankings by the Economist Intelligence Unit for six years running. One of the aims of the Research Program is to make Melbourne a healthier and more liveable city for all its residents by developing their own original indicators. Our report on determinants of liveability in Melbourne will be published in our monthly magazine, CLAIR Forum, this April.

Vice Governor of Okayama visited Sydney



On 13 January, Mr Miyachi, the Vice Governor of Okayama Prefecture visited Sydney to talk with Mr Martin Hamilton-Smith MP, the Minister of Investment and Trade from South Australia. Before the meeting, Mr Miyachi dropped by our office. We presented him with an outline of the Australian political and economic environment. Okayama and SA will celebrate their 25th anniversary as sister states next year and they plan to hold a number of events as part of the celebration, which will help strengthen the ties between them.

Article from Toowoomba:

Toowoomba Takatsuki Celebrating 25 years

The year 2016 marked the 25th anniversary of the Sister City Friendship Agreement between Toowoomba and Takatsuki with celebrations held over a number of days in Toowoomba.

Residents of Toowoomba Region and Takatsuki City were invited to participate in a Sister City Photographic Competition and Art Competition. The winning entries were combined with the Takatsuki Koeisha and the Toowoomba Photographic Society Sister City Photographic Exchange 'Living in Harmony' exhibition.

Thirty delegates, including Deputy Mayor Inui, the Takatsuki Taiko Drum Group, traditional performers and a friendship group, visited Toowoomba 10–13 November to celebrate this milestone.



The official anniversary dinner was held in the magnificent setting of the Cobb and Co Museum. The 80 guests received a traditional indigenous welcome, followed by a whip cracking display and the Takatsuki Taiko Drummers performance under the stars in the courtyard. They then had dinner in the National Carriage Factory, featuring local produce, wine and beer.

A major part of the celebrations was the Nihon Matsuri (Japan Festival), a community event featuring elements of Japanese culture

such as origami, bonsai, ikebana, Taiko drumming, martial arts and Japanese food. The event was a great success with approximately 2000 members of the public enjoying the activities.

An excited audience of over 500 Toowoomba students enjoyed a dynamic performance by the Takatsuki Taiko Drummers, a national award winning Shamisen (traditional Japanese guitar) player and a renowned Noh performer (traditional Japanese theatre).



Celebrations concluded with a tree planting ceremony and unveiling of a plaque at the Japanese Gardens to mark the 25th anniversary.

Toowoomba and Takatsuki have mutually benefitted and enjoyed immensely this strong and active relationship with many exchanges over the past 25 years. Toowoomba Region looks forward to further building on the warmth and strength of our international friendship.



JETAA International Meeting in Tokyo

~ Article & photos from Ms Ashlie O'Neill, JETAA-I Vice Chair ~

The International JET Alumni Association (JETAA-I) and its members represent 52 chapters from 17 countries across the globe. Last year, on 6 November after many months of online collaboration, the newly reformed JETAA-I met for the first time in Tokyo. Also present were members of National AJET, representatives of the three Japanese Ministries that support the JET Programme (MIC, MOFA and MEXT) and CLAIR for the JETAA International Meeting and the JET Global Forum.

The first order of business for the JETAA International meeting was holding a vote on Trinidad and Tobago's membership application. Their application passed with no opposition and we happily welcomed the 17th country to join JETAA-I. Discussion topics included promotion of diversity on the JET Programme, JETAA-I's online presence and accessibility, and the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships after

JET. The JETAA-I Country Representatives and Executive concluded the meeting with a 'Mug and Omiyage Exchange'. We were each asked to bring a mug and unique snacks from our home country. These were then swapped as a symbol of friendship. All who attended left with full stomachs, new ideas and a mug to serve as a reminder of the relationships formed.

The Global Forum was an open exchange between MIC, MOFA, MEXT and the members of the morning's JETAA International Meeting. It facilitated discussions on projects such as the Satogaeri Project, JETAA-I's future and a JET alumni's link to their placement. We were appreciative of how open and free participants were with their opinions and felt a great mutual respect.

Next, JETAA-I, AJET and members of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic committee conversed about how the JET community can aid a successful 2020 Olympics. Lastly, Ryan Hata (National AJET Director of Alumni Relations) and I presented on past, present and future collaboration between current/incoming JETs and JET Alumni. As well as strengthening the JET experience and the transition between finishing JET and joining JETAA.



The following day on 7 November, JETAA-I attend the JET 30th Anniversary Ceremony as representatives of the Alumni community. Present at the celebrations were JETs from 1987 to the present, people from many countries and industries, friends and family of the JET programme participants, government officials and Crown Prince Naruhito and Princess Masako of the Japanese Imperial Family. Additionally, members of JETAA-I received the great honour of meeting the Crowned Prince and Princess at a private reception.

As a member of the JET community present at the JETAA International Meeting, JET Global Forum and 30th anniversary ceremony I realized something. We may vary in many ways such as age, nationality, beliefs or placement but the JET community is bound by something more powerful. We are bound by our experiences on JET. For many, JET was so much more than a job, it was a life changing experience that linked us to another country, another home forever. JETAA-I seeks to aid this community. With the continued support of CLAIR, MIC, MOFA and MEXT, JETAA-I will remain strong and continue to work to enhance and promote the JET experience as well as represent and support the 65,000+ alumni, 4,600+ current JETs and global JET community.

From the Director

16 – Vaccination against disease - A Year of Local Governments in Japan

In Japan, February is the peak of the cold and flu season. Infants, school children and elders are often inoculated against the flu because they are especially vulnerable to the disease and sometimes infection could lead to more serious conditions.

Japanese local governments do their part to support people during flu season by administering flu shots since one of the most important roles of local government is to promote public health and protect residents from diseases. This is one of the vital reasons for the longevity of Japanese people.

Every prefecture or large city has its own public health centre, which has doctors and nurses specializing in public health. The public health centre is responsible for not only inoculation but also consultation for its residents' health and checking of food hygiene of restaurants and stalls, which must get licenses to operate from the public health centre.

As you can see, public health centres play a huge role in local governments. As such, whenever decentralisation reform is debated, the size of a city that warrants its own public health centre often becomes a point of contention. Right now, designated cities with populations over 200 thousand operate public health centres and in other regions with lower population numbers, the centres are run by prefectural governments.

Katsunori Kamibo
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