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Local Cuisine around Japan: Vol.26

Written by Fukushima Prefecture

Ramen Capital Kitakata City



What flavours come to your mind when you hear the words 'Japanese Ramen'? In Japan, there are 3 main types of ramen: Miso Ramen, Tonkotsu Ramen, and Shoyu (Soy Sauce) Ramen. Japanese people often argue about their own taste preferences, for example: "I prefer Miso Ramen over Tonkotsu".

I'd like to introduce you to Kitakata City, a city that is famous for Shoyu Ramen- and is often called the "Ramen Capital". Kitakata City is in Aizu, an area increasingly popular amongst Australian skiers. Aizu is not only a favourite destination for

winter sports enthusiasts, but also for Shoyu Ramen lovers from all over Japan.

The beauty of the clear soy sauce-based broth, and the flavour combination of the broth with the roasted 'chashu' pork toppings draw in customers. One of the most famous ramen restaurants from Kitakata City has opened a branch in the USA, and is receiving excellent online reviews.

Of course it's one thing to dine at internationally famous restaurants, but another great way of enjoying ramen in Kitakata City is to find your own favourite ramen shop, out of the 120 restaurants in the city.

Here are some specific tips on how to enjoy Kitakata Ramen when you visit Kitakata City:

1) From Kitakata Station, go to the 'Ramen Shrine'* where a Ramen God is thought to be enshrined! If you like, put your hands together and make a wish to eat delicious Kitakata Ramen.

2) Make sure to pick up a discount coupon at the Ramen Shrine. Also, ask the staff there for their ramen restaurant recommendations!

3) When you arrive at the restaurant of your choice, enjoy a bowl of delicious Kitakata Ramen.

4) If you still have room for more ramen, visit another restaurant and compare the taste differences between the restaurants.

5) After the ramen, visit a sake brewery. Kitakata City is well-known for its sake. If sake isn't your thing, how about picking up some ice cream?



I'm sure your trip to Kitakata City will be very satisfactory if you follow the steps above!

It takes 15 minutes between Kitakata Station and the main station in Aizu (Aizuwakamatsu Station) by train.

Please visit Ramen Capital, Kitakata City, during your winter ski trips to the Aizu ski area!

[\(https://jnto.tohokumoment.com/en/fukushima/t2-kitakata_ramen/\)](https://jnto.tohokumoment.com/en/fukushima/t2-kitakata_ramen/)

National Symposium on Japanese Language Education 2018

The National Symposium on Japanese Language Education was held at the University of Technology, Sydney, on 2 and 3 Nov. The symposium is a biennial event held alternatively in Melbourne and Sydney, which makes this year's event the first one in Sydney in four years. This symposium targets Japanese language educators of all educational stages across the entire country, and is the only symposium of its kind in Australia for Japanese language educators to come together.

The theme of this year's event is "Bigger, Broader, Better!", as the symposium hopes to contribute towards the increase of Japanese learners (Bigger), the provision of diverse and innovative programs for students (Broader), and the improvement of the Japanese language educational system in addition to the further development of the skills of educators who support Japanese learners (Better).

It was very remarkable that more than 40 sessions on different topics were held over the two days, topics such as schools that conduct Japanese language classes through Japanese poetry. CLAIR Sydney staff who attended the symposium was impressed by how the symposium participants were proactively asking questions, and was able to witness the intense enthusiasm in Japanese language education in Australia.

World Masters Games 2021 Kansai!

From late October to early November, a delegation from the Organising Committee of the World Masters Games 2021 Kansai was in Australia to promote the World Masters Games 2021 Kansai at the Pan Pacific Masters Games 2018 in Gold Coast. The delegation showed not only what the Kansai Games would be like, but also the appeal of the Kansai region and encouraged people to join the Games.

The committee strives to get more and more people from all over the world involved and to make the Games inclusive.

The World Masters Games 2021 Kansai will be held from Friday, 14 May through to Sunday, 30 May 2021.

For more details, please see the following link.

<https://www.wmg2021.jp/en/>



Representatives from the Saitama Prefectural Government Visited our Office

On 8 Nov, a delegation from the International Division of the Saitama Prefectural Government visited our office. The Saitama Prefectural Government is currently promoting Kumagaya City internationally. Located in the northern area of Saitama Prefecture, the Kumagaya Rugby Stadium in Kumagaya City is one of the venues of the Rugby World Cup 2019. During the meeting with the delegation, CLAIR Sydney staff explained that interests in the Rugby World Cup 2019 in Australia is very high, and recommended promoting Kumagaya City at the Matsuri Japan Festival on 8 Dec in Sydney, as it will be an excellent opportunity to promote Japanese local government areas.

Next year is the 35th anniversary of the Sister City relationship between Queensland and Saitama Prefecture. CLAIR Sydney will continue to support Saitama Prefecture's activities in Australia.

Study Tour at the City of Wollongong

From 12 to 16 Nov, Mr Toru Sugawara, Assistant Director at CLAIR Sydney interned at the City of Wollongong, NSW.

Through his internship in Wollongong, Mr Sugawara was able to acquire an overview of the City's and local governments' roles and responsibilities. He also learned about the City's services and policies, particularly multicultural services and tourism policies.

CLAIR Sydney would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Lord Mayor Bradbery, and the Public Relations Manager, Susan, who kindly accommodated Mr Sugawara request to intern at the city as a part of his study tour. He was deeply moved by their warm hospitality and highly values the opportunity provided to him by all of the staff involved during his internship.

Special thanks to the people of Kawasaki City who have a great relationship with the City of Wollongong.



Study Tour at Surf Coast Shire Council

From 14 to 19 Nov, Mr Yuta Watanabe, Assistant Director at CLAIR Sydney, visited Surf Coast Shire Council in Victoria for his study tour on local governments' regional promotion policies.

Surf Coast Shire Council has a population of approximately 30,000 people, and is located 20 kilometres south of Geelong, the second largest city in Victoria. The area is lined with beautiful beaches and boasts large stretches of natural areas. In addition, as the council name implies, the area is a famous surfing spot where two of the biggest surf brands, Rip Curl and Quiksilver, were founded in the council area. Various water sport championship competitions are held in the area. Torquay, the main town in the council area, is the starting point of Australia's National Heritage, the Great Ocean Road.





During his visit, Mr Watanabe had meetings with Mr Keith Baillie, Chief Executive Officer; and the three General Managers of the council, Ms Anne Howard, General Manager of Governance and Infrastructure; Mr Ransce Salan, General Manager of Environment and Development; and Mr Chris Pike, General Manager of Culture and Community. Mr Watanabe also met with Mr Matt Taylor, Manager of Economic Development & Tourism, to talk about the council's policies and initiatives regarding regional revitalisation. Furthermore, he was also able to talk with Ms Liz Price, Chair of the Great Ocean Road Regional Tourism, to discuss the present state of tourism promotion of the Great Ocean Road regions and its prospects in the future.

Mr David Bell, who is a Councillor and a former Mayor of the council, graciously accepted Mr Watanabe's study tour request when he was the Mayor, and drove around to different districts in the council area to show Mr Watanabe all the wonderful spots in each district. Additionally, Ms Lisa Thomason, Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors, kindly assisted Mr Watanabe with his itinerary and arranged all the meetings with staff members of the council.

CLAIR Sydney would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone at Surf Coast Shire Council who kindly accommodated Mr Watanabe during his study tour.

Wakayama Persimmons: Available for the First Time Ever in Sydney!

The Wakayama Prefectural Government promoted persimmons produced in Wakayama, Japan, in Sydney from 21 to 26 Nov. Wakayama is located south of Osaka in the Kansai region. Persimmon is one of Wakayama's specialties and the prefecture is the top producer of persimmons in Japan. This is the first time that Japanese persimmons have been imported to Australia. A representative from Wakayama promoted Wakayama



persimmons through a seminar to stakeholders from the fresh produce industry. They also promoted the persimmons at local Asian supermarkets directly to customers. Sydneysiders indulged in this sweet, juicy and exotic fruit!



This first-ever persimmon import was made possible through the collaboration of the following three organisations: the Japan Agricultural Cooperatives Group (JA-Group) Wakayama, JETRO and the Wakayama Prefectural Government. CLAIR Sydney mainly assisted with in-store promotions this time and will continue to assist with their future promotions.

CLAIR Sydney attended the Japan Festival Wellington!

Kia ora and konnichiwa! On 24 Nov, Assistant Directors Watanabe and Tanimoto were honoured to attend the Japan Festival Wellington in New Zealand.

The event was packed with lots of visitors, and was a fantastic way to experience Japanese culture, with displays and performances of Japanese drums, Kendo, Japanese calligraphy and more.

Sakai City, a sister city of Wellington, ran a booth at the event as well as JETAA Wellington. At the CLAIR Sydney booth, Ms Yumi Morris, President of Sister Cities New Zealand assisted us with brochure distribution. There are 43 sister cities' relationship between Japan and New Zealand, and visitors were interested in seeing the brochures of sister cities at our booth, and learning more about exchanges among local governments. We appreciate everyone who visited our booth, as well as the people of Wellington for giving us the precious opportunity to join this wonderful event!



Representatives from Kohoku in Saga Prefecture Visited Australia

A delegation from Kohoku in Saga Prefecture, including the Mayor and students from the town, was in Australia between 23 and 29 Nov to visit Encounter Lutheran College in Victor Harbor, South Australia for a school exchange program. This visit was actualised after the Kohoku Town Government expressed its sincere hope of initiating school exchange with schools in Australia, and CLAIR Sydney supported the Government's search for Australian schools. Various exchange activities such as art and cooking classes were held while the delegation was at the school, and the students from Kohoku also experienced homestay. The delegation also visited Sydney after their visit to South Australia.

Kohoku will be the host of the upcoming Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar organised by CLAIR, and the participants of the seminar from Australia and New Zealand will leave for Japan in February next year. We are expecting more people exchanges in the town in the close future.

Reception Celebrating the Birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan

On 30 Nov, a reception celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan was held at the official residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney. This year's reception saw attendance of more than 200 guests, along with various NSW government related individuals, Japanese company affiliates, and representatives from Japanese organisations. CLAIR Sydney ran a booth at the reception to promote CLAIR and Japanese tourist destinations. This time, we had brochures from different destinations across Japan, including Tokyo and Yokohama, where the Rugby World Cup 2019 will be held, Aomori and Miyagi Prefectures, as well as Sydney's Japanese sister city Nagoya. Many of the guests who visited our booth were interested in Japan and read through the different brochures. This reception was a great opportunity to promote Japanese tourism to people in NSW who are involved in the further development of the Japan-Australia relationship.



JETAA VIC/TAS/SA

JETAA Vic/Tas/SA finished off 2018 with one of our most important events of the year, our annual Bonenkai. As the name implies, the purpose of bonenkai is to forget the troubles of the past year and look forward to success in the next.

On 1 Dec, 2018 JETAA Vic/Tas/SA celebrated our end of year party by hosting a barbeque picnic at Fleming Park in Brunswick, VIC. We encouraged JETAA members to bring their families and friends and share the picnic with us.





Despite Melbourne’s weather being so unpredictable, we lucked out with beautiful weather.

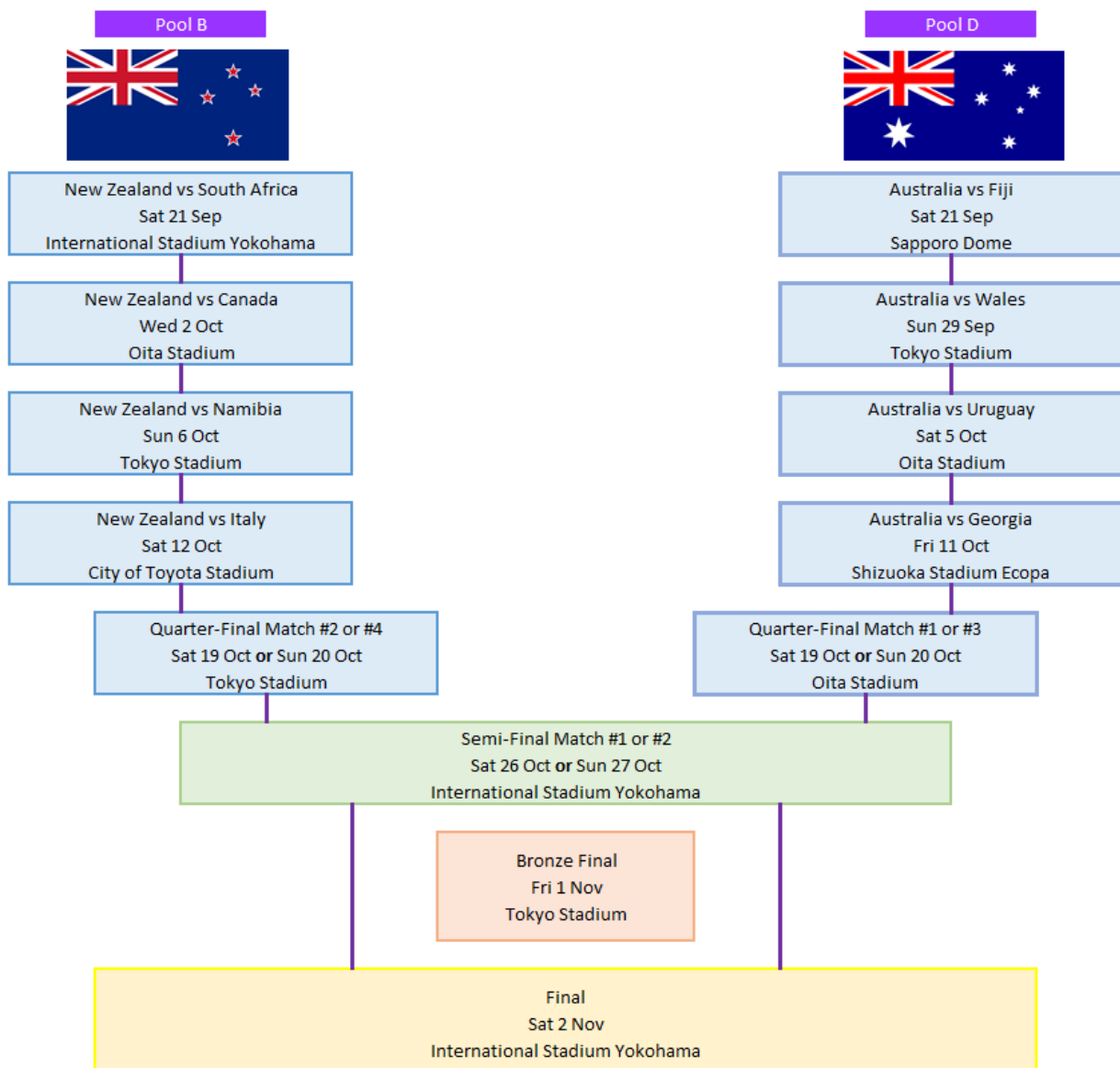
15 JET alumni from all over Victoria attended the event. We enjoyed spending the afternoon enjoying the beautiful weather, eating delicious food, playing games and sharing stories from our time in Japan.

From the Director

- Rugby World Cup 2019 in Japan -

As you may know, the Rugby World Cup 2019 will be held in 12 cities across Japan between 20 Sep and 2 Nov next year. The Japanese people are proud to be hosting this pinnacle event for rugby players around the world. We are also looking forward to welcoming people from all over the world and together with the visitors, enjoy the third largest sporting event in the world after the Summer Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup.

The match schedules for the All Blacks and the Wallabies are shown below.



The All Blacks and the Wallabies will be playing in a maximum of seven matches spread across 43 days during the competition. As you can see from the above, there is a total of 36 days between the matches, making these days ideal for travelling around Japan as you wait for your team's next match.

If you have already travelled in Japan several times before, you may be comfortable to travel around on your own while you are in Japan for the Rugby World Cup, and purchase the tickets for the games. For those who prefer this option, the second round of public ticket sales start from 19 January 2019 on the official ticketing website: (<https://tickets.rugbyworldcup.com/>). You can also get useful information on the host cities and touring destinations around the venues on the official website: (<https://www.rugbyworldcup.com/cities>).

If you are not familiar with travelling in Japan, it may be a good idea to join one of the official supporter tours which include tickets for the games. You can find links to the official supporter tour websites by visiting the official Rugby World Cup website (<https://www.rugbyworldcup.com/buy-official>). You may be able to find the most suitable tour for your schedule, and information on other activities and attractions among a wide variety of tour options.

If your city or organisation has any connections with the host cities of the Rugby World Cup 2019, it may be an excellent opportunity to further develop these existing ties.

The Japanese people know very well that the Rugby World Cup is a very special event for Australians and New Zealanders, and we wholeheartedly welcome your visit to all areas of Japan in the exciting weeks of the Rugby World Cup.
