

# aWa life

Fate Took us to  
Tokushima (Part 2)

January 2024

# 398

New Year's Greeting  
from TOPIA



Tokushima Culture  
& Reading Corner:  
徳島県立図書館

Things to do when in Japan  
as a Ryuugakusei



TOPIA

## Awa Life is a Monthly Publication of the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association

明けましておめでとうございます！ Happy New Year!

How did everyone spend their holiday break? Hopefully you were able to get some rest and enjoy yourself before the start of the new year.

In the Chinese zodiac, this is the year of the dragon (辰年 in Japanese). If you went to a temple or shrine for your first visit of the year, you may have noticed dragon-themed items. Many New Years cards (年賀状) also feature them this year!



For all of those who like writing, please feel free to submit an article to us at any point in time about basically anything. There are a few limitations though, such as you can't write about religion, politics, commercial activities or businesses or anything that we deem inappropriate. But, other than that, we would be more than happy to receive articles about anything and everything including but not limited to concerts, lectures, other events, culture, sports, community group information or anything cool that's happening in your local community.

We highly appreciate all of your articles and we love reading them. So if that writing bug of yours is buzzing about, grab a pen or a computer and write and send away! Please send all submissions to our email:

[awalife@gmail.com](mailto:awalife@gmail.com)

Your editors,  
Sydney and Rasmus

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## New Year's Greeting from TOPIA

By: Seiji Miyoshi, Chief Director



**H**appy New Year.

I hope that everyone is in good health as we welcome in the New Year.

In April of last year, the National Institute

of Population and Social Security Research announced their population projection, reporting that, "foreign residents would make up 10% of the population by 2070". In November, a government panel of experts compiled their final report for their "consideration of changes to the foreign technical intern trainee system". Finally, due to the weak yen, inbound tourism saw rapid recovery, making for a year where foreigners were very much in the spotlight.

Additionally, as of the end of June of last year, the number of foreign residents in Japan reached a record high at 3.2 million people. Of this number, 7,343 foreigners reside in Tokushima, making up more than 1% of the population. By nationality, Vietnam has the highest number, followed by China, the Philippines, Indonesia, and South Korea. By residence status, technical intern trainees are the highest number, followed by

permanent residents and then "specified skilled workers" who have obtained some kind of special skill.

In order to build an inclusive society where those from different countries can acknowledge their differences and achieve mutual understanding, TOPIA provides a multilingual consultation service so that foreign residents can live with peace of mind. Additionally, we hold Japanese classes to help support students so they can learn to communicate, hold the "Japanese Speech Contest for Foreign Residents" and the "International Understanding Forum", spread disaster preparation awareness, plan "Arasowaren" which allows for exchange through the Awa Odori, have a system to introduce volunteer interpreters, and many other projects.

Additionally, the "Tokushima International Strategies Center" serves as a base for receiving and providing information to foreigners, as well as providing information services to foreign travelers who visit Tokushima and to those who live in the area.

As we enter the new year, Tokushima will make strides to further present itself as a stage for international exchange and cooperation, where people and goods come and go, in preparation for the Osaka Kansai Expo that will open in April of 2025. TOPIA plans to take this chance to make Tokushima a more comfortable place



for foreigners to live, and to share the wonder of Tokushima to many people around the world. We will work to further increase the significance of our presence as a flag bearer for internationalization in Tokushima, and strive to work hand-in-hand with the prefecture, municipalities, and private organizations.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a prosperous New Year, and I ask for your continued support and understanding for TOPIA this year as well.

Thank you.

## *Fate Took us to Tokushima (Part 2)*

By: Philippe Levy

We enjoyed Matsuyama a lot, visited the castle and the town, bought a few things, but deep down we wanted to get back to that dream of following Kukai's footsteps. So, taking a bus from Matsuyama to Tokushima, the prefecture home to the first pilgrimage temples, made total sense to us.

The next morning, Max first wanted to make another dream come true, that is to buy a traditional Japanese costume. We googled it and were pleasantly surprised to find that the Kinuya store next door was selling the traditional pieces of clothing he was desperately looking for.



"Kinu" is the nickname given to me by my relatives. It was certainly another sign! And we were so right to follow this divine message, because Max found the kimono of his dreams, and all the staff were at our beck and call to make us happy. That day, we lived Tokushima's version of excellent service for the first time. That was outstanding!

Then we decided to start the pilgrimage. Our timing was tight, and of course it was impossible to do the whole thing. But in a Shikoku guidebook, we read that doing the first 10 temples was a pilgrimage in itself already. That is what we decided to do: walking from the first to the tenth temple.

So, we booked a hotel at Tokushima's station, and from there it was easy to take the train or bus

to the first temple, then walk from there. In Bandō we entered a new world. Time seemed to have stopped. Max

bought his pilgrim outfit as a first step forward. Then we set off on our walk through these wonderful landscapes, with the mountains in the background, under rain and sun.

With a few unexpected surprises though! At first, I must admit we were very scared of the spiders, which seemed gigantic to us, as compared to those we have here! What's more, they were just everywhere, and you could not walk 10 meters without seeing tens of them. But by the second day, we had forgotten all about them. They had become part of our journey. After all, if local people left them all around, what harm would they do to us?

The second surprise was to come across these armies of monkeys. I was terrified! Max was not. I knew that monkeys could be potentially dangerous. What is more, I had read a sign the day before, advising people not to look them in the eye, not to feed them, etc... So, I nearly fainted when I saw an enormous one just to my left in a sudachi tree. I screamed, "Don't look left max, don't look!". So, we changed our way of travelling a bit and walked along the road instead of taking shortcuts through woods and fields.

As for the temples, I knew a little about the rituals, but not being Buddhists, we made ritual mistakes. Very kindly, the staff at the 4th temple explained



## Fate Took us to Tokushima (Part 2)



what we had to do, and we did not make any more mistakes after that, apart from mispronouncing the Heart Sutra's words, trying to decode furigana. But trust me, we tried our best and will do better next time.

Every day brought its share of adventures and encounters. Often, we were offered fresh drinks, which was a blessing under this burning September sun! Japan being Japan, fresh drinks machines were just everywhere, even in the middle of nowhere. What an amazing place to travel!

When the adventure started, basically we had no idea we would be going on this pilgrimage, and we certainly did not have the proper shoes. After 20 kilometers, our feet were bleeding, covered with blisters, but we had our hearts set on visiting and honoring the first 10 temples, and despite the pain, we persevered, buoyed by the beauty of nature and that strange feeling of freedom and peace you get in Tokushima, more than anywhere else in Japan.



Every evening, we would return to the station. We had our habits there: devouring macha tea churros, enjoying delicious sushi, discovering restaurants under the station, where dishes flavored with sudachi fruits awaited us, as well as ramen soups, etc. And why not konbini food after all? (Dare I say it, we even enjoyed our dinners at Mc Donalds.)

There was a Tokushima soccer team T-shirt displayed at the station, and Max wanted it. Not knowing where to buy it, we entered the building and by chance - or destiny - pushed open the doors of TOPIA. We shamefully asked the people there to help us find the T-shirt, as well as a

store that could sell us Jizo San statues. What a surprise to see that all the staff stopped what they were doing to try and find the answers to our questions. I knew from experience that service is always excellent in Japan, but here we felt that these ladies were genuinely happy to help us, which really moved us.

Kobayashi San and her colleagues found us the address of a store that could sell the T-shirt, and offered to get back to us by e-mail about the Jizo statues. The very next day, we received an e-mail from Kobayashi



San informing us that unfortunately they had not found a store for the Jizo, but she wanted to offer us three wonderful little statues that we could pick up the following morning. What exceptional kindness! We accepted the gift wholeheartedly, and believe me, we will treasure these three lovely statuettes forever.

After the 10th temple, it was time to go home. We had reached our budget limit and time was running out, I had to go back to work. We were heartbroken. We took a bus to Kobe, then the Shinkansen to Tokyo, then the subway to Ueno, and finally a train to Narita. We arrived exhausted at the airport. Above all, we clearly felt the change in energy between Tokushima and the rest of the country.

Tokushima is unique, and the sense of peace this prefecture brings was a first for both of us, and a feeling we shall never forget. We have brought some of that peace



home, along with lots of photos to remind us of the breathtaking sceneries and incredible people we met. Every weekend, I take a brush to try and write the kanjis of the Heart Sutra. This brings me

back to Tokushima, in heart. I hope Max will try as well.

We have a few regrets, of course. And that is a good thing, because it allows us to set new goals for the future: we haven't tasted Shikoku's mikan juice yet, and there are still plenty of restaurants and places yet to discover in Tokushima. It is now decided that one day we will finish our pilgrimage and visit the rest of this beautiful island. We will start again in Tokushima, of course. Back to our roots.

Thanks to Topia for its exceptional welcome and the limitless kindness of its staff, from the bottom of our heart. And thanks a lot to Max, who sponsored the whole trip and allowed me to discover a Japan I had never visited! Please forgive any mistake I must have made in English, as this is not my native language.

羯諦 羯諦 波羅羯諦 波羅僧羯諦 菩提 薩婆訶 般  
若 心經

With love,

Max and his uncle Kinu (Philippe).”

## *Things to do when in Japan as a Ryugakusei (Foreign Student)*

By: *Claide Kinneith A. Saludar/ Naruto University of Education*

As Japan opens its country to the world as it embraces internationalization of higher education where international, intercultural, and global dimensions are integrated into the thrusts of a university, a lot of scholarship grants and opportunities for study in Japan are up for grabs. And if you make it to the cut of this much-coveted chance, there is more to life in Japan than just your academic pursuits. Here are some things you can do besides working on your research, completing the course, and/or earning that degree.

### 1. Attend FREE Japanese classes

To live in Japan for more than a year means having to live like a Japanese. This includes conversing with the locals in your daily activities such as grocery shopping, asking for directions, making friends, and filing government paperwork, among other things. This means that speaking the Japanese language is inevitable. As such, it is essential to learn the language and improve its use through time. Your university might be offering Japanese courses that you can take or organizations might be arranging free classes that you can attend. Grab these opportunities. Who knows, at the end of your studies, you might also earn a Japanese-Language Proficiency Test (JLPT) Certification alongside your diploma.

### 2. Make friends, and build and expand your network

Since a lot of foreign students now attend university for post-graduate studies, it is an opportune time to establish connections around the world. Your classmates might be working for institutions in their countries that might be aligned with your interests or professional aspirations. The networks you can create might come in handy for your future pursuits.

### 3. Take part in cultural events

Japan and its people can be very generous in providing cultural immersion to its vast list of cultures and traditions. While others may offer it for a fee, the experience is all worthwhile. These cultural experiences can help you understand better how the past can influence the present and define a nation's future.



### 4. Volunteer in English conversation activities with elementary and high school students

The university where you are in may be attached to an elementary or a high school in providing technical assistance. Among these needs are giving opportunities to Japanese learners to converse with other people in English. As a scholar who passed the rigorous and tedious screening process for a scholarship, including



## Things to do when in Japan as a *Ryuugakusei* (Foreign Student)



proficiency in the English Language, you can be of big help in improving Japanese learners' ability to

speak the language. Apportion some of your time to these English conversation activities. You will surely enjoy the company of these learners while feeling the fulfillment the experience can give you.

### 5. Enjoy local activities/festivities

As vast as Japan's geography is its vast array of local festivities. Each prefecture or city might have its local activities or festivities at a certain of the year. Take this chance to witness and even participate in these merriments that are surely for the books.

### 6. Travel to other cities in Japan

As previously mentioned, Japan is a country with many prefectures. From the county's northern hemisphere to its southern hemisphere, different experiences await you on your visit. But for a start, a visit to the common and more popular places can be a priority. Your visit to bustling Tokyo and Osaka might offer a different experience when visiting the more laid-back area of Tokushima or a more culturally immersive Kyoto or nature-friendly Nara. But other areas of Japan will absolutely provide you with unique experiences.

### 7. Travel to nearby countries and regions

Japan's proximity to other countries and regions can also provide you with an opportunity to travel to South Korea, China, Taiwan, etc. But for more budget-friendly travel, Japan's close distance to Southeast Asia makes it convenient to travel to countries like the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, or Singapore. A trip to these nearby countries can be a good way to spend your long season breaks, especially in the summer. Just remember to ask permission from your supervisor and your university.

### 8. Do a Part-time Job

When you have a student visa that allows you to

work part-time jobs, grab this chance to engage in work not just to earn extra money but also to enjoy connecting with others in the workplace. This can also be an avenue for you to hone your Japanese speaking skills and your interpersonal skills in general. Part-time jobs may also be a great way to veer away from the stressful academic rigors.

### 9. Find a community

As a foreigner, being away from your family from back home can have its own ramifications. But finding a second family away from home can be of great help as you go through life in a foreign country.



Oftentimes, these groups can be found in churches. People from other nations also tend to seek solace in these places. Find some time to search for these communities. It just takes one simple "hello" for these communities to welcome you with open arms.

### 10. Provide emotional support to other *ryuugakusei*

Like the previous item, other foreign students are also in need of emotional support. Who is the best person to understand other *ryuugakusei* but a fellow foreign student? As such, your being a support system will be greatly appreciated. Who knows, this might just be the start of a deep and profound friendship that may last even after your studies in Japan.

Studying in Japan is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. As such, it is but essential to make the most out of your stay in this beautiful country.

*Claide Kinneth A. Saludar is a Senior High School teacher from the Philippines who is a teacher training scholar of MEXT Japan and who is currently completing his training for Global Education Course (English Education) at Naruto University of Education under the supervision of Prof. Suzanne Kamata.*

## 「～てしまいます/ました」

There are three ways to use 「～てしまいます/ました」. First, is a feeling of relief after completing something one had to do. (完了/Completion) (完了「～てしまいました」)

The second is having a strong desire to finish something that is not yet finished. (未来完了/Future Completion) (未来完了「～てしまいます」)

The last expresses feelings of failure or difficulty. (残念/Unfortunate) (残念「～てしまいました」). It is formed like so: 「動詞のて形+てしまいます/ました」

Let's take a look at this conversation.

A: 明日の会議で使う資料は、もうできましたか。

B: すみませんまだです。

今日中にパソコンで作ってしまいますから、大丈夫です。

次の日

A: 資料はできましたか。

B: はい、昨日全部作ってしまいました。

A: そうですか。会議までに印刷しておいて下さい。

B: 今、印刷します。

あ、すみません！間違って消してしまいました。



It looks like B-san is in trouble. His first 「作ってしまいます」 is 未来完了/Future Completion, and the next day's 「作ってしまいました」 is 完了/Completion. Finally, his 「消してしまいました」 expresses his unfortunate circumstances. Although both unfortunate events and completion use the same 「てしまいました」 structure, it is important to look at the context.

## Practice Problems

Decide whether the following 「～てしまいます/ました」 represents 完了/Completion, 未来完了/Future Completion, or 残念/Unfortunate.

(例) 新しい服にコーヒーをこぼしてしまいました。 (残念)

① 電車で居眠りをしていて、鞆を忘れてしまいました。 ( )

② 明日、出さなければいけない宿題は全部やってしまいました。 ( )

③ Aさん：もう遅いですから帰りませんか。

Bさん：会議の資料を作ってしまいますから先に帰ってください。 ( )

Answers: ① (残念) ② (完了) ③ (未来完了)



# Tokushima Culture and Reading Corner: 徳島県立図書館

By: Mako Kobayashi

みなさんは、本を <sup>ほん</sup>読むことが <sup>す</sup>好きですか。本が <sup>ほん</sup>好きな人は、もしかしたら <sup>す</sup>知っている場所 <sup>ぼしよ</sup>かもしれません。徳島県立図書館は、<sup>とくしまけんりつ としよかん</sup>「徳島県文化の森 <sup>とくしまけんぶん か もり</sup>総合公園」の中にあり、<sup>そうごうこうえん なか</sup>徳島駅からバスなどで <sup>とくしまえき</sup>行くことができます。総合公園の <sup>い</sup>中には、<sup>そうごうこうえん</sup>図書館だけではなく、<sup>なか</sup>美術館や <sup>びじゅつかん</sup>博物館も <sup>はくぶつかん</sup>あり、<sup>しぜん</sup>自然 <sup>かこ</sup>に <sup>ひとひと</sup>囲まれた <sup>いこ</sup>人々の <sup>ぼしよ</sup>憩いの場所 <sup>した</sup>として <sup>した</sup>親しまれています。

月曜日は <sup>げつようび</sup>休館で、<sup>きゆうかん</sup>火曜日～<sup>かようび</sup>金曜日は <sup>きんようび</sup>9:30～<sup>きんようび</sup>19:00、<sup>どようび</sup>土曜日・<sup>にちようび</sup>日曜日・<sup>しゆくじつ</sup>祝日は、<sup>しゆくじつ</sup>9:30～<sup>しゆくじつ</sup>17:00は <sup>ひら</sup>開 <sup>ひら</sup>いています。図書館の中には、<sup>とくしまけん</sup>本 <sup>な</sup>以外にも、<sup>ほん</sup>徳島県に <sup>い</sup>関する <sup>い</sup>あらゆる資料、<sup>とくしまけん</sup>徳島県に <sup>しりよう</sup>ゆかり <sup>とくしまけん</sup>のある人たちの <sup>ちよさくぶつ</sup>著作物が <sup>た</sup>たくさん <sup>そ</sup>そろっています。

もちろん <sup>とくしまけんない</sup>徳島県内に <sup>す</sup>住んでいたら、<sup>だれ</sup>誰でも <sup>ほん</sup>本は <sup>むりよう</sup>無料で <sup>か</sup>借 <sup>か</sup>りることが <sup>か</sup>できます。<sup>ひとり</sup>1人につき <sup>ごうけい</sup>合計 <sup>じゆっさつ</sup>10冊まで <sup>か</sup>借 <sup>か</sup>りることが <sup>か</sup>できます。<sup>ほん</sup>本を返す <sup>かえ</sup>期間を <sup>きかん</sup>守って、<sup>まも</sup>たくさんの本を <sup>ほん</sup>読 <sup>よ</sup>んでみましょう。そして <sup>とくしまけん</sup>徳島県について、<sup>しら</sup>調べたいことがあれば、<sup>とくしまけんりつとしよかん</sup>ぜひ <sup>い</sup>徳島県立図書館に <sup>くだ</sup>行って <sup>くだ</sup>みて <sup>くだ</sup>下さいね。



## Vocabulary List

<sup>とくしまけん</sup> 図書館	Library	<sup>した</sup> 親しまれる	Known/Enjoyed As	<sup>ちよさくぶつ</sup> 著作物	Works
<sup>びじゅつかん</sup> 美術館	Art Museum	<sup>きゆうかん</sup> 休館	Closed	<sup>むりよう</sup> 無料	Free
<sup>はくぶつかん</sup> 博物館	Museum	<sup>い</sup> 以外	Other Than	<sup>か</sup> 借りる	Borrow
<sup>しぜん</sup> 自然	Nature	<sup>い</sup> ゆかりのある	Connection To	<sup>ごうけい</sup> 合計	Total
<sup>かこ</sup> 囲まれる	Surrounded By	<sup>かん</sup> 関する	Related To	<sup>きかん</sup> 期間	Due-Date
<sup>いこ</sup> 憩いの場所	Relaxing Place	<sup>そ</sup> そろっている	Gathered	<sup>まも</sup> 守る	Abide By/Follow

# Events & Memoranda



## Performing Arts Festival 芸能祭

Member groups of the Tokushima City Cultural Association will perform ningyo joruri puppet theater, nagauta, ballet, folk dances, and more.

徳島市文化協会加盟団体による人形浄瑠璃・長唄・バレエ・民踊などの発表を行います。

When: February 4th (Sun.)

日時： 2月4日（日）

Doors Open: 11:00 Starts: 11:30

開場：11:00 開演：11:30

First Part: Chorus, Ballet, Folk Dance, Ningyo Joruri, Awa Hula

[1部] 合唱、バレエ、民踊、人形浄瑠璃、阿波フラ

Second Part: Nagauta, Ginei, Biwa, Yokyoku, Minyo Folk Songs, Joruri, Folk Songs, Hauta, Japanese Dance

[2部] 長唄、吟詠、琵琶、謡曲、民謡、浄瑠璃、俗曲・端唄、日本舞踊

Where: Awagin Hall (Aibahama-cho 2 Chome 14, Tokushima City)

場所： あわぎんホール  
(徳島市藍場町2丁目14)

Fee: 800 Yen

料金：800円

Inquiries: Tokushima City Cultural Association Secretariat

お問い合わせ：徳島市文化協会事務局

TEL: 088-626-0408

TEL: 088-626-0408

URL: [https://www.civic-center.jp/bunka\\_kyokai/](https://www.civic-center.jp/bunka_kyokai/)

URL: [https://www.civic-center.jp/bunka\\_kyokai/](https://www.civic-center.jp/bunka_kyokai/)

# Events & Memoranda

## 16th Shogo Kariyazaki Flower Arrangement Exhibition in Udatsu ~Towards the Future Together with Tradition~ 第16回 華道家 假屋崎省吾 うだつをいける ~伝統と共に未来へ~

The “Flower Arrangement Exhibition in Udatsu” will be held for the 16th time. This beautiful and colorful exhibit spun by Shogo Kariyazaki will feature the historical scenery of the Udatsu Townscape as its backdrop. Enjoy a battle of beauty between cymbidiums, otaniyaki pottery, and other prized Tokushima elements.

When: January 21st (Sun.) – March 3rd (Sun.)  
9:00 - 17:00 (Last Entrance: 16:30)

Where: Udatsu Townscape, Mima City -  
Yoshida House, Anmitsukan, Odeonza

Inquiries: Mima Tourism Bureau  
TEL: 0883-53-8599  
Mima City Tourism & Exchange Division  
TEL: 0883-52-5610

URL: <https://www.awanavi.jp/archives/event/1550>

「うだつをいける」は、今回で16回目の開催。歴史ある景観が残るうだつの町並みを舞台に、華道家・假屋崎省吾が美を紡ぐ美しく華やかな華道展「うだつをいける」。シンビジウムや大谷焼など、徳島が誇る美の競演をご堪能ください。

日時：1月21日（日）～3月3日（日）  
9：00～17：00（最終入館16：30）

場所：美馬市 脇町うだつの町並み  
吉田家住宅・あんみつ館・オデオン座

お問い合わせ：美馬観光ビューロー  
TEL：0883-53-8599  
美馬市観光交流課  
TEL: 0883-52-5610

URL: <https://www.awanavi.jp/archives/event/1550>

## Nishi Awa Experience Program Event: Awa Koi にし阿波体験プログラムイベント あわこい

“Awa Koi” is an event designed to allow visitors to experience the local wonders of Nishi Awa’s nature, history, culture, traditional arts, and food. Experience the season of Nishi Awa through a variety of programs, and enjoy a fruitful time in Nishi Awa. Please refer to the official website for more information about specific programs. ♪

When: January 20th (Sat.) – March 17th (Sun.)

Where: Mima City, Miyoshi City, Tsurugi Town,  
Higashi Miyoshi Town

Inquiries: Awa Koi Secretariat  
(Within Sora no Sato)

TEL: 0883-87-8988

URL: <https://nishi-awa.jp/awakoi/>

「あわこい」とは、にし阿波が持つ自然、歴史、文化、伝統芸能や食といった地域の魅力に触れる体験イベントです。旬のにし阿波を体感する多彩なプログラムを体験し、にし阿波での濃い時間をご堪能ください。公式ホームページをチェックしてプログラムの詳細をご確認ください♪

日時：1月20日（土）～3月17日（日）

場所：美馬市 三好市 つるぎ町 東みよし町

お問い合わせ：あわこい事務局（そらの郷内）

TEL: 0883-87-8988

URL: <https://nishi-awa.jp/awakoi/>

## Counselling Service at TOPIA・トピアの相談窓口

TOPIA provides consultation on everyday life, education, labor, medical institutions, and disaster prevention; and information on sightseeing spots to overseas residents and visitors. When necessary, we will refer you to the appropriate organization that can assist with your needs. Counselling is available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

**Japanese, English, Chinese:** Everyday, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)

**Vietnamese:** Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 10:00 - 14:00

Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)