

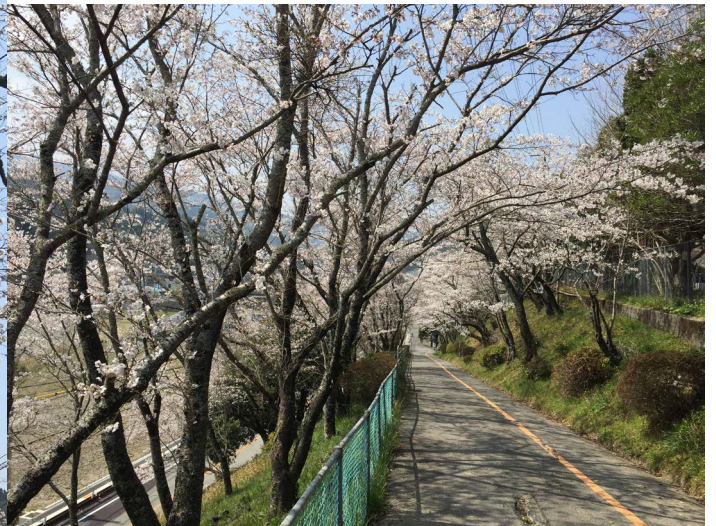
# awa life

**TOPIA Hina  
Matsuri**

**Tokushima's  
Mountainous Village,  
Sanagouchi**

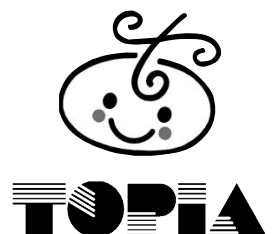
March 2019

# 342



**Awa Shoku:**  
Yusanbako, the  
Magic Children's  
Picnic Box

**International  
Understanding  
Forum**



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

Birds start to sing, flowers start to bloom and temperatures are getting milder: Spring spreads across Japan. March is a great season for the first jaunts into nature after the start of the new year, for relaxing river-side walks and of course for *hanami* (cherry blossom viewing). In Tokushima, cherry blossoms typically bloom from the end of March until the middle of April, depending on the location. How about having a hanami picnic under the cherry blossom trees with your friends at one of the numerous *hanami* spots in Tokushima? For some of you it might be your first spring in Japan, so this is something you definitely should not miss! The beauty, the scents, the sounds: it all creates a special atmosphere filled with a pleasant anticipation for what the warm season will bring.

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,  
Daralyn and Nico

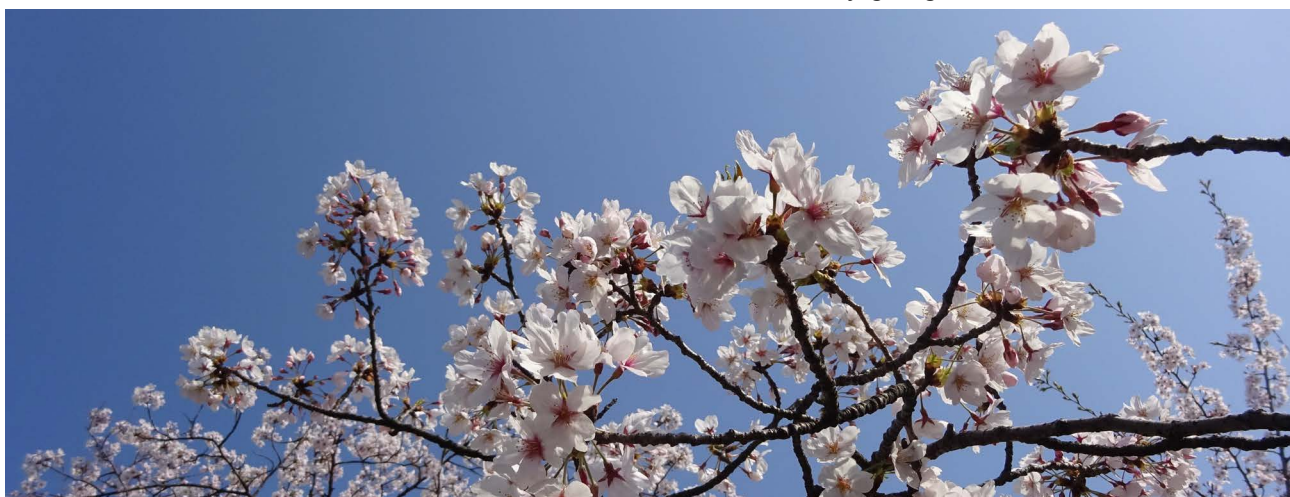
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*Download a PDF file of awa life or view the online version by going to TOPIA's website!*



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Bethany Johnson, Uka Teki, Nan Zhang, Kazue Inoue, Lance Kita, and Fusa Tamaki



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## *Tokushima's Mountainous Village, Sanagouchi*

By: Bethany Johnson

**D**id you know there is only one village in Tokushima? There are many small settlements in the prefecture that have been absorbed into towns over the years, but only one official "village" remains, and that is my home, Sanagouchi (佐那河内村). Just over 2,000 people live here, and despite being classified as a village, Sanagouchi actually covers quite a large area. In Canada, I lived in the city all my life, so when I got my placement, I was picturing a little hamlet with a circle of homes that would be a five minute walk across in any direction. Not quite! Rather,

I was dropped in the heart of nature--deep, lush green scenery, mountains scattered with an array of flowers that bloom even through the torrid summer heat, glassy rivers fed by numerous waterfalls, and rocky cliffs that my students love to leap from during river play. I've lived here for a year and a half now, and still I can't get used to the countryside's scenery and the gorgeous views I'm able to see. There's not many people living here, and my school is a joint ES and JHS that

numbers about 130 students, but I'm really glad there's an ALT position here! Although there's nothing of urban convenience here (apart from a single conbini), the city became easily accessible

once I got a car, so I feel like I got pretty lucky in my placement. I get to experience life in the countryside without being too cut-off from shops and city life.



Sanagouchi is best known for Sakura Momo Strawberries (literally "cherry blossom peach strawberries")-the super delicious yet very expensive ones you may see in

the supermarket. Every year, the villagers make strawberry daifuku out of them, too, which is my favourite Japanese sweet. If you want to try them, I recommend buying them in the village, though, because they're super pricey elsewhere!

I love nature, so my favourite spot in the village is a place called Okawara Heights. High up in the mountains, the hills bloom with blue and purple hydrangeas during the rainy season, and the

## Tokushima's Mountainous Village, Sanagouchi



views rival those seen from an airplane. On clear days, you can see Ishii, Tokushima city and Naruto in the distance, and then beyond, to the sea. It's pitch black at night, so you can see an expanse of bright stars, and the cities glowing from afar. Needless to say, it's a pretty nice hidden spot for views! You can also get up close to the wind turbines (they look like they're going to fall on you when you stare at them from below...) and walk around some lovely trails, or even visit a quaint little farm with cows (who sometimes try to escape their pens...).

Anyway, from the valley, it takes about 30 minutes to drive up to the top of the mountains, and in the

warmer months, you can visit a little shop and buy ice cream. It's much cooler up there, so I like going in the summer to escape the heat! Although there are several events held there throughout the year, like stargazing activities and festivals, the best known event is probably the hydrangea festival in July. If you like hydrangeas, or even flowers, Okawara is the best spot in Tokushima to see them.



If you're interested in seeing more of

Tokushima's countryside and enjoying its wild and beautiful nature, I hope you'll come visit Sanagouchi! From Tokushima station, you can get here by bus, and it's only a 20 minute drive from the city. Actually much closer than you'd expect!

## TOPIA Hina Matsuri

By: Uka Teki

On March 3rd, the traditional Japanese festival "Hina Matsuri" is celebrated throughout Japan. Families with daughters line up Hina dolls and make offerings such as **Amazake** (sweet

sake), **Hishimochi** (multicolored rice cakes) and peach blossoms while praying for health and growth of girls. Katsuura Town in Tokushima Prefecture hosts the Big Hina Matsuri every year. People can enjoy tens of thousands of Hina dolls, which is the largest number of Hina dolls gathered



in one single location in Japan. That is why it is also called the "Pioneer of all Hina Matsuris".

On February 2nd I took part in one of TOPIA's events and helped to prepare a Hina Matsuri

display together with 23 people from twelve different countries and locals in Fureai no Sato Sakamoto in Katsuura. Everybody chose their favorite dolls, lined them up from the highest step down to the lowest and decorated everything with origami cranes and paper cuttings. Moreover,



## TOPIA Hina Matsuri



each person wrote an individual message expressing their feelings. Through our collective efforts, we managed to build up TOPIA's display. It was such a pleasant experience!

with players of Tokushima's baseball team Indigo Socks who were very bright and cheerful and came to help. I heard that their opening game will be held on March 31st, and decided to attend their match to cheer for their success. Good luck to the team!

Through participating in the event, I was able to deepen my understanding about Hina Matsuri. Having the opportunity to meet fellow participants and locals made for one fulfilling day. I would also like to express my thanks to the people of Katsuura.

I hope that everybody takes the opportunity to visit the Big Hina Matsuri between February 23rd and March 31st.

I also had the chance to have fun conversations

## International Understanding Forum

By: Nan Zhang

In recent years, there has been a large emphasis placed on facing new challenges such as immigration reform, decreasing birth rate, aging population, lack of laborers, and the ever growing inbound tourism. Currently with an overseas resident population of 5,600, our home of Tokushima is urgently increasing local recognition and public awareness of our international community. Recently, six of TOPIA's registered International Understanding Lecturers from five different countries were invited



to share a presentation on their home country, and about their honest opinions as a resident of Tokushima. 100 people of eight nationalities gathered as one for this event. This event provided a time of open discussion and the opportunity for deeper mutual understanding.

First, Ms. Mayila Yiliyasi from Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region introduced the natural

scenery, Uygur lifestyle, food culture, and Muslim culture, then talked about her experience during the Hokkaido Earthquake as a foreigner. She then performed a traditional Uygur dance with

Maruhaba Aruken. Following this, Mylac Lai (Vietnam), Gantulga Uuganbaatar (Mongolia), and Ms. Elizabeth Ugochi (Nigeria) shared pictures of nature and culture of their respective countries, played games, demonstrated children's toys, and also performed their

country's traditional dance. Lastly, Daralyn Yee and Nan Zhang presented under the title of "Our Awa Life and Awa Seikatsu". Both expressed their deep devotion to Awa Odori, and how they have been able to use the knowledge that they have gained thus far in their current positions. They have also played a key role in Arasowaren's numerous performances. Through their work they have been able to build international ties with

local residents and the opportunity to play an active role in their local community.

Following the presentations, there was an open discussion and an exchange party. The lecturers, participants, and staff joined in and had numerous conversations under a friendly atmosphere, and had deep discussions about multicultural understanding and international exchange.

And finally, a group of Japanese and overseas residents who are passionate about international exchange and Tokushima danced as a part of



Arasowaren's Special Dance Team. They gave an amazing performance, arranged and musically accompanied by Nonki-ren.

All of the participants were able to directly hear about the experiences of TOPIA's registered lecturers, and were able to deepen their thoughts about a society where both Japanese and Overseas residents can live together. In all, it became an opportunity to further

emphasize the importance and significance of international understanding education, and create one-on-one interaction and exchange.

## Letter from SUKETO NAKAYOSHI

By Kazue Inoue (Center for Early Childhood Education and Care SUKETO NAKAYOSHI)

The warm spring has finally arrived. The spring waiting upon us becomes a great time to embrace the outdoors with the sound of small birds chirping, and the fragrance of spring flowers lingering in the air. Why not take your child to the park? I recommend using the playground equipment at the park, which can be used to develop the athletic abilities of your child.

**Pull-up Bar - Grasping, hanging, spinning around**  
(Develops a sense of balance and muscles in the arms and abdomen)

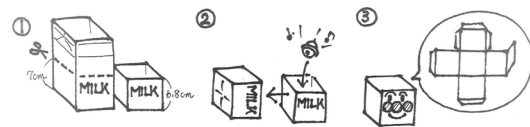
**Monkey Bars and Jungle Gym-** Playing using hands and feet (Strengthening the leg muscles and connected to developing physical strength to protect one's body when falling down)

\*Hide and seek, and tag are also some games that families can enjoy together.

When people increase their muscle strength by exercising their body, their body temperature will increase. As body temperature rises, immunity increases, lessening the chances of becoming ill. Let's enjoy some exercise, and enter into the new school year with confidence.

\* \* \*

### Milk Carton Maracas



1. Prepare two 500ml Milk Cartons. Cut one carton at the 7cm mark in the shape of a square. Cut the remaining carton 2mm shorter than the first carton that was cut.

2. Place a bell into the shorter carton. Turn the longer carton on its side and insert the shorter carton in the opening.

3. Decorate the cube as you wish by gluing colored paper on each side and drawing pictures on it.

With the bell, this can be played as an instrument. Due to its rectangular shape, it can also be utilized as building blocks.

(The toy will last longer if you cover the surface with clear tape)

## Awa Shoku: Yusanbako, the Magic Children's Picnic Box

By Lance Kita

One day in the far past, I was walking through the Shinmachi Shopping Arcade and peered into the shop window of a lacquerware shop, my eye was drawn to a petite box with a metal handle attached to the top. Its pasty pink exterior told me this was in a different league from the elegant black, vermillion, and gold leaf masterpieces surrounding it. However, this box was open on the side, and three boxlike drawers were spread out in front of it, one of each primary color. There was a wooden lid that slides down in front of the opening. As I entered the shop and approached the box, a kindly older lady came out from behind a split curtain and said, "Have you ever seen a **Yusanbako** 遊山箱 before?"



*What hidden treats lie in the drawers of a yusanbako? Find out about this distinctly Tokushima spring tradition for kids in this article.*

She explained that she had owned one when she was a young girl, and she painted her favorite designs on the outside. All of her friends had one as well, and they took it out as the weather warmed into spring and the cherry blossoms were bursting into pink clouds. Kids used this **yusanbako** as a picnic **bento** 弁当 box, filled with savory and sweet snacks for excursions to the mountains, riverside, and beach. Indeed, the name of this box is 遊 "play," 山 "mountains," and 箱 "box."

Some people say it was for cherry blossom season, others say it was a tradition for **Hinamatsuri** 雛祭り, the Doll Festival on March 3rd. Since the lunar calendar puts the 3rd day of the 3rd month around late March to mid-April, these memories could be one and the same. With this timing, many people say that this was for girls, but all children seemed to own them, and the shop had a powder blue box next to the pink one.

So what goes into a Showa Era kiddie picnic? Top drawer had **makizushi** 巻寿司, rice and filling rolled into a cylinder with **nori** 海苔 seaweed on

the outside, sliced to showcase the middle. The middle drawer usually held **nishime** 煮染め, a medley of fried tofu patties, vegetables, shiitake mushrooms, fishcake, and chicken simmered in dashi stock and flavored with soy sauce, sake, and **mirin** みりん (sweet cooking sake). The bottom drawer was dessert, often **uirou** 外郎 (see Sept. 2016 Awa Shoku article) or a gelatin like **kanten** 寒天. Truly a three course feast for little mouths.

The shop lady shared a wonderful memory: she said that kids would share each other's food and taste each household's flavors. When the drawers were empty, they would run back to the neighborhood and knock on doors, and mothers would add more food. Then the outdoor romp would continue.

What I love about the **yusanbako** is how it harkens back to a simpler time, when it took a village to raise a child, when they could play freely anywhere in the town, and go to any house knowing the adults would know their name and share their snacks. It is a celebration of the changing of the seasons, which instills the enjoyment of nature and home cooked food at a young age.

Though the **yusanbako** fell out of popularity by the end of the 20th century, there has been a recent movement to reimagine the **yusanbako** for contemporary tastes. The paintjob is becoming more stylish than primary colors. Cafes now offer **yusanbako** lunches worthy of a social media shot, integrating locally-grown ingredients and cuisine. JR Shikoku's tourist train is even using the **yusanbako** for its lunch service. So keep an eye out for this clever box with nostalgic memories for most older Tokushima residents, and maybe start this spring custom with your own children.

(Thanks to Ms. Yoko Shimauchi of the Yusanbako Project for allowing use of her photo for this article.)



## Color Words

You have most likely learned Japanese words for colors. For example, words such as 「青い」 in 「青い傘を買いました」. There are plenty of words such as 「赤い」 and 「白い」 which are 「～い」-adjectives. You will also encounter words like 「黄色い」 in 「あの黄色いカバンをください」 which end with 「色い」. But what about 「緑」?

It must be 「これは緑い? 緑色い? シャツです」, right? Actually in the case of 「緑」 we say 「その緑の / 緑色の シャツをください」. The word does not become an adjective, but a noun. There are many names and words for colors but which rules apply for these?

- ① 赤いリンゴを食べました。I ate a red apple.
- ② 黒い猫が歩いています。A black cat is walking on the road.
- ③ 黄色い風船をもらいました。I received a yellow balloon.
- ④ 茶色い帽子があります。I have a brown hat.
- ⑤ 紫色のスカートが素敵です。The purple skirt looks wonderful.
- ⑥ ピンクのハートがかわいいです。The pink heart is cute.



For ① and ②, you can make use of the rule 「色の名前+い」, so that it becomes 「赤い」 and 「黒い」. 「青い」 and 「白い」 can also be used in the same way. You might think there are many color words that utilize this pattern but actually only four of these exist.

In the case of ③ and ④, you can make use of the rule 「色の名前+色い」, so that it becomes 「黄色い」 and 「茶色い」. The colors that utilize this pattern are limited to 「黄色い」 and 「茶色い」.

In examples ⑤ and ⑥, you can make use of the rule 「色の名前(色)+の」, so that it becomes 「紫色の」 or 「ピンクの」. This wording can be used with any color. ①, ②, ③ and ④ can be changed into 「赤の箱」 「黄色のリボン」 and so on.

In conclusion, many color words exist in the Japanese language, but an 「～い」 can only be added after “red”, “black”, “blue” and “white”, and an 「～色い」 can be only be added after “yellow” and “brown”.

## 【問題】

次の文に ( ) の中の色を正しい形に直してください。正しい答えは一つとは限りません。

- 1) 春休みに ( ) 傘を買いました。(水色) I bought a light blue umbrella during spring vacation.
- 2) 子どもたちは ( ) Tシャツを着ていた。(黒) The children wore black T-shirts.
- 3) ( ) 鳥がきれいな声で鳴いている。(青) The blue bird is singing with a beautiful voice.
- 4) 庭に ( ) 花が咲いている。(黄) Yellow flowers are blooming in the garden.
- 5) 近くに ( ) ビルが建った。(灰色) Grey buildings were built nearby.
- 6) ( ) 猫がソファで寝ている。(茶) The brown cat is sleeping on the sofa.
- 7) レポートは必ず ( ) 用紙に書いてください。(白) Please always write your report on white paper.
- 8) ( ) 夕日がとてもきれいです。(オレンジ) The orange evening sunset is very beautiful.

答え 1) 水色の 2) 黒い/黒の 3) 青い/青の/青色の 4) 黄色い/黄色の 5) 灰色の 6) 茶色い/茶色の 7) 白い/白の/白色 8) オレンジの/オレンジ色の



# Events & Memoranda

## Japanese Classes 2019 Term 1 Schedule

Hour: 10:30-12:00

Location: Meeting rooms at TOPIA

Textbook: We will be using the "Minna no Nihongo I" or the "Minna no Nihongo II" (2nd edition) textbooks (2,700 yen for the book and audio CD). Please prepare the textbooks on your own. As well, there will be themed lessons on various topics such as seasons and life in Tokushima.

Fee: Free.

DAY	TEACHER	LEVEL	CLASS DESCRIPTION	
TUE	Ms. Tamaki	Beginner	We will take the first step towards learning basic expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo I – from Chapter 1~13	From April 2 (20 times)
WED	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up in different levels. *For parents of young children, a childcare worker will be on hand to look after your child during the lesson (please inquire in advance). Due to unforeseen circumstances, the rooms may change.	From April 3 (20 times)
THU	Ms. Yamada	Elementary 1	We will study various verb forms and sentence patterns using those verb forms. Text: Minna no Nihongo I – from Chapter 14~25	From April 4 (20 times)
FRI	Ms. Aoki	Elementary 2, 3	We will study various forms and expressions such as potential, volitional, imperative, prohibitive, conditional, reasoning, passive, causative, and honorific expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo II – from Chapter 26~50	From April 5 (20 times)
SUN	JTM	Elementary 1	We will study various verb forms and sentence patterns using those verb forms. Text: Minna no Nihongo I – from Chapter 14~25	From April 7 (20 times)
	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up in different levels.	

TUE	Ms. Kimura Other	Special Beginners Class	A class for those who cannot read or write hiragana or katakana. We will study the basics such as, the Japanese alphabet, greetings, numbers, and items. We will also be learning about Tokushima.	You may join at anytime
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For more information see TOPIA's homepage: <https://www.topia.ne.jp>

(この日本語教室は文化庁事業です)

## 25th AJET Tokushima English Musical

Be sure to enjoy "Aladdin: A Whole New World", at a venue near you!

Performance Schedule:

**March 3 (Sun) 15:00-17:00**

Ishii Chuo Kominkan

**March 9 (Sat) 14:00-16:00**

Yoshinogawa-shi Kamojima Community Center

**March 10 (Sun) 17:00-19:00**

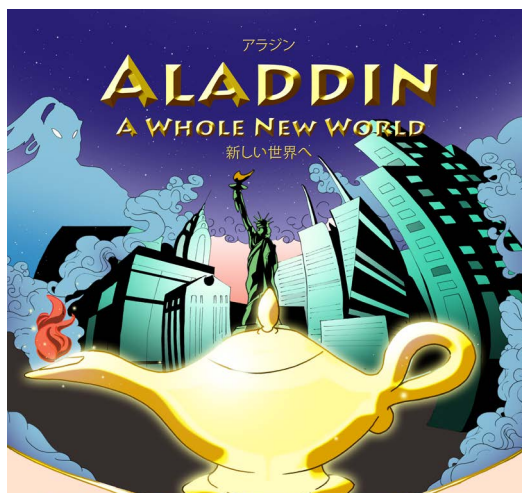
Matsushige Sougou Kaikan/ Multipurpose Hall

**March 16 (Sat) 16:00-18:00**

Katsuura Nouseon Kankyou Kaizen Center

**March 23 (Sat) 17:00-19:00**

Wakimachi Theater Odeon-za



# Events & Memoranda

## Tokushima International Film Festival 徳島国際映画祭 2019

The "Tokushima International Short Film Festival" which started in 2016 as the largest short film festival in West Japan was reborn as the "Tokushima International Film Festival" in 2018.

This year's movie program and other information will be announced soon.

2016年にスタートした西日本最大規模の短編映画祭「徳島国際短編映画祭」が、2018年から「徳島国際映画祭」として生まれ変わりました。2019年の上映作品のプログラム等は、徳島国際映画祭 HP をご覧ください。

When: March 8 (Fri) – 10 (Sun)

Where: Awagin Hall

Info: Tokushima Prefecture

Regional Revitalization Division

TEL: 088-621-2130

URL: <https://tiff.theater/>

日時：3月8日（金）～ 10日（日）

場所：あわぎんホール

問い合わせ：徳島県地方創生局地方創生推進課

TEL: 088-621-2130

URL: <https://tiff.theater/>

## Past and Present of the Dreamy Yusanbako Lunch Box 美馬市 幻の弁当箱「遊山箱」のいま・むかし

Guests will be able to enjoy a special exhibition of about 100 Yusanbako lunch boxes, which have existed since the Edo Period until the present day, coordinated with a landscape arrangement. Come to enjoy Ikebana, Tokushima's traditional indigo dyeing, and cute Yusanbako lunch boxes.

江戸時代から現在に至るまでの遊山箱約 100 点を特別展示し遊山の風景をコーディネートします。草月流出村丹雅草グループによるいけばな、徳島伝統の藍染め、そして可愛い遊山箱の共演をお楽しみください。

When: March 30th (Sat) – April 7th (Sun)

9:00-17:00

Where: "Aisho Sanao Yoshidake Jutaku" inside of Udatsu Townscape (Mima-shi Wakimachi Oaza Wakimachi 53)

Fee: 510 Yen (adults), 250 Yen (children)

Info: Mima Tourism Bureau

TEL: 0883-53-8599

日時：3月30日（土）～ 4月7日（日）

09:00～17:00

場所：美馬市脇町大字脇町 53 うだつの町並み内 藍商佐直 吉田家住宅

料金：大人 510 円、小人 250 円

問い合わせ：美馬観光ビューロー

TEL: 0883-53-8599



**Reminder:** The 2019 Tokushima Marathon will take place on Sunday, March 17th! The application period is already over but be sure to go out and cheer on the runners!



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

TOPIA offers a counselling and advisory service to all foreign residents to help with issues involving accidents, working conditions, housing, visas, international marriage, and more. Counselling is available in English and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

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

Tel: 088-656-3303 or 088-656-3320 (allows three-way conversations with an interpreter)