

awa life

**Naruto Kintoki
Fries Recipe**

**Japan Overseas
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Introduction**

December 2020

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Thinking IN the Box for
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アップ**

Kakejiku



TOPIA

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

What a year 2020 has been! We are sure nearly everyone has felt some stress throughout the year due to having to adjust to a completely new situation, but we still hope that you can have a quiet year end and that you will be able to take some time for yourself. In Japan, it is common to have some kind of “mind reset” at the end of the year in order to start the new year in a fresh way. This is also why parties at the end of a year are called bounenkai 忘年会 (literally “forget the year gathering”). In this sense, let’s look forward to 2021 and have hope that it turns out to be a more positive one. How about starting the year with hatsumoude 初詣 (first shrine visit of the year) at your local shintou shrine?

Merry Christmas to everyone and see you next 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

Your editors,
Sydney and Nico

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Kakejiku

By: Qing Liu

In Japan, paintings and works of calligraphy that have been drawn on cloth or paper, affixed with *jiku* attachments on both sides, and hung on the wall are known as *kakejiku*. Vertical *kakejiku* are called *tatejiku* or *jofuku*, and horizontal works are known as *yokohaba*. *Kakejiku* that are hung in a reception room often feature images such as 9 koi or a magpie welcoming spring, with these images representing luck and wealth. If there is an elderly person living in the house, then a picture featuring pine trees and cranes is also a good choice as these represent longevity.

When you enter a Japanese tea room, the first thing that will catch your eye is the *kakejiku*. Japanese tea ceremony, or *sadou*, has an inseparable relationship with *kakejiku*, and its roots lie in zen. Often in the middle of the tea room, you can find profound zen-related proverbs written on *kakejiku* such as “一期一会” (once-in-a-lifetime encounter), 和敬静寂 (harmony, respect, purity, and tranquility), or 日々好日 (every day is a good day).

The “magpie welcoming spring” and “pine and crane” *kakejiku* featured in this month’s Awa Life were hand-drawn by Shinobu Watari-san. Watari-san enjoys and excels in ink paintings, and these two paintings truly express his wishes.



Naruto Kintoki Fries Recipe

By: Alessa Peters

One food that has always been used in Japan, but has only recently gained popularity in my home country Germany, is sweet potatoes. While the available varieties differ, I enjoy preparing them as a soup in the winter in Germany and as Daigaku imo, a sweet snack, here in Japan.

In Tokushima, there is a regional variety called Naruto kintoki that I'm sure you have seen at the supermarket or souvenir shops where they feature various sweets made from them. As I mentioned in a previous article, what I like about Tokushima is the ability to buy lots of local produce, and Naruto kintoki is one of them.

Since sweet potato fries are popular and easy to make at home, I decided to try my hand at my own recipe using two local products: Naruto kintoki and sudachi. I hope you enjoy them!



Ingredients

(Makes one large portion):

- 1 medium-sized sweet potato

For the dip:

- 2 tbsp. of peanut butter (crunchy or creamy)
- 2 tbsp. of canola oil

- 1 tbsp. of soy sauce
- ½ tbsp. of maple syrup
- 1-2 sudachi, to taste

Optional:

- Minced garlic and/ or ginger, to taste
- Chopped welsh onion, to taste
- Salt, to taste

Instructions:

• Rinse the sweet potato and dry off with a paper towel. Cut off the end pieces, then cut the potato into sticks without peeling the skin. (Make sure that the inner part does not change color too much. If it gets green spots right after you cut it, it's bad. Use the potatoes as soon as possible after buying).

• Transfer the sweet potato sticks to a bowl and pour a little bit of canola oil over them, then mix well. Put them onto an oven grate, making sure that they do not overlap. Bake in the toaster oven for 10-15 minutes until soft and golden brown. The exact time will vary depending on your type of oven. (You can also prepare them in a frying pan with a little oil if you prefer a crunchier texture).

• In the meantime, prepare the dip. Mix the peanut butter, canola oil, soy sauce, maple syrup, and the juice of the sudachi in a measuring jar until smooth. If using minced garlic and/or ginger, add them too.

• When the sweet potatoes are done, transfer them to a bowl or a plate and serve warm with the dip. If using, sprinkle the chopped welsh onion and/or salt on top.

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers Introduction: Striving to Share a Better Tomorrow with the People of the World

By: Yukari Nagata, JICA Shikoku, Tokushima Desk



In this world there are many issues such as poverty, discrimination, global warming, etc. that can't be solved if we don't work together. In developing nations, where approximately 80 percent of the world's population lives, these issues are particularly evident. As an implementer of Official Development Assistance (ODA), JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) utilizes Japanese

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers Introduction

experiences, knowledge, technology, and resources to help support developing nations with development. Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers are Japanese citizens between the age of 20 – 69 who wish to make the world a better place, and they apply with the intent to utilize their skills. After being accepted, they study the language and culture of the country they will be dispatched to, as well as the fundamentals of international cooperation, for roughly 70 days in Japan. They are dispatched to a country for roughly 2 years, and they live in the same environment as the local people. They work together with their coworkers (at a government organization, NPO, etc.) to try and find solutions for issues.

The work for Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers is largely broken down into 9 categories such as health preservation/medical care, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries work, etc., with over 190 smaller categories. To date, over 50,000 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers have been dispatched to 98 different countries to assist in a variety of fields.

Introduction of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers from Tokushima



Ayana Oki

Ayana took a break from teaching at a middle school in Tokushima City in order to work as a “science education” volunteer in Ethiopia. She worked to support elementary school teachers in the area by helping them raise their experimental techniques and classroom skills.

(Picture: Together with students from the science club.)



Koshiro Sawaguchi

After working for the Tokushima Prefecture police for 36 years, Koshiro worked as a “traffic safety” volunteer in Nepal. At the Metropolitan Traffic Police Office, he worked on traffic safety measures and proposals. He also gave traffic guidance on the streets and created traffic safety leaflets. Through these activities, he worked to reduce traffic accidents and improve traffic manners.

(Picture: Together with university students working as traffic volunteers.)



Manami Takimoto

After working at a university for 8 years doing work related to study abroad students and PR, Manami worked in Brazil as a “Japanese teacher” volunteer. She conducted classes at a Japanese promotion center in Aracatuba and worked to improve student’s conversational skills.

(Picture: Celebrating Hinamatsuri (Girls’ Day))



Sachiko Miwa

After working for 5 years as a physical therapist at a hospital, Sachiko worked in East Timor as a “physical therapist” volunteer. She worked to improve access to proper physical rehabilitation in the area and to improve the techniques of local workers.

(Photo: Helping a patient with their rehabilitation at their home.)

Japanese Culture and Reading Corner: お正月を迎える準備をしましょう！

By: Shoko Nomizu

日本では、12月のことを「師走」といいます。「師」とは、お坊さんや先生のことです。「12月」は、お坊さんや先生が走りまわるといって「忙しい」という意味です。

12月になると、年賀状を書いたり、大掃除をし始めます。年末の最後の仕事の日を仕事納めと言います。その後、たくさんの人が、遠くにいる家族に会うために、故郷に帰省します。そして、お正月を迎えるために、おせち料理を作ったり、しめ飾りや門松を準備する人もいます。

12月31日の「大晦日」には、年越しそばを食べます。そして、深夜0時をはさんでお寺の鐘が百八つ鳴り始めます。これを除夜の鐘と言います。このように、12月には、お正月を迎えるための慣習がたくさんあります。



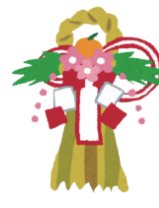
おせち料理



年越しそば



除夜の鐘



しめ飾り



門松

Vocabulary List

年賀状	New Year's Card	故郷	Home Town	意味	Meaning
大掃除	Major Cleaning	帰省	Return Home		
年末	End-of-Year	百八つ	108		
仕事納め	Last Work of the Year	慣習	Custom		

お正月

Gairaigo Galore

アップ (Up)

By: Sydney Bartig

Today we have a very simple yet versatile gairaigo to introduce you to: アップ. In English this is of course the word “up”, and it has a myriad of uses such as describing direction, serving as a noun such as in “the ups and downs of life”, or in slang with “what’s up”, etc. In the same way, アップ has many different uses in Japanese, although these are not always the same as they are in English. Let’s take a look at some examples!

It is often added after another word to show that something has been increased or improved. For example, you may be familiar with the words レベルアップ (level-up) and パワーアップ (power-up), which can often be found in video games in English. However, if you were to hear words such as イメージアップ (image-up) or ベースアップ (base-up), it might be a little more difficult to imagine the meaning. イメージアップ means to literally raise/improve the image of something. ベースアップ means to raise wages. While based on English words, they aren’t used in quite the same way you would use them in English.



Additionally, it is also sometimes used as an abbreviation. For example, it can be used as an abbreviation of アップロード (to upload something), アップスタイル (upswept hairstyle), or for クローズアップ (close-up). As you can see there are a variety of words related to アップ!

Awa Shoku: Thinking IN the Box for New Year Cooking

By: Lance Kita

There's a flurry of activity in kitchens across Japan at the end of the year as families prepare osechi-ryori お節料理, foods chosen for both preservation and for their symbolism as good luck foods packed into lacquered boxes to be eaten January 1-3. It was believed that no work should be done on the first days of the new year, so cooking was finished in the final days of the old year.

2020 has been dominated by the coronavirus pandemic, and many of you may be avoiding travel over the holidays. This is the perfect chance to have some osechi at home. Full sets can be reserved at supermarkets, convenience stores, or department stores, but many of the dishes can be prepared quite easily. Here are my top 3 recipes if you want to try cooking osechi dishes:



Lucky food in boxes for the new year... try making some of these osechi dishes at home!

1. Kohaku Namasu 紅白なます (Red and White marinated salad)

Red and white are auspicious colors in Japan, especially at the new year. This salad uses kintoki ninjin 金時人参, reddish carrots sold only in late December. Shred or julienne daikon radish and kintoki carrots (8:2 or 9:1 ratio is best). Sprinkle with salt, toss well, and let sit until water starts to come out of the vegetables. Squeeze out lightly and add vegetables to marinade (rice vinegar and sugar, 4:3 ratio). Best the next day.

2. Kuri Kinton 栗金団 (mashed chestnuts and sweet potatoes)

The yellow color of mashed chestnuts and sweet potatoes are symbolic of gold and wealth. This is the perfect locavore dish to use Naruto Kintoki 鳴門金時 sweet potatoes. Peel and cut sweet potatoes into chunks. Simmer until tender. Mash or push through a sieve with a wooden spatula to remove lumps. Add sugar, mirin みりん (sweet

cooking wine), and a pinch of salt. Adjust the texture with a few tablespoons of water. Add chopped kuri kanro-ni 栗の甘露煮 (sweet boiled chestnuts, found bottled in stores) and mix.

3. Chikuzen-ni 筑前煮 (simmered root vegetables and chicken)

One of the classic dishes is nishime 煮しめ, simmered root vegetables and meat in a light soy broth. Many of the ingredients have lucky connotations based on wordplay, and are cut into decorative shapes. Keep it simple with a similar dish called chikuzen-ni. Soak 4 or 5 dried shiitake

mushrooms in 150 ml of warm water for 20 min. Tear a block of konnyaku into bite-sized pieces and blanch in boiling water. Cut half a carrot and 100-200g each of lotus root and gobo root (scrape off skin) into irregular bite-sized pieces. Chop 300g

chicken thighs into bite-sized pieces and season with a 1 Tbsp. soy sauce. Sauté chicken in oil in a medium pot. Add vegetables and konnyaku, cooking for a few minutes. Add mushrooms and soaking water, 5 Tbsp. soy sauce, and 4 Tbsp. each sake and mirin, and simmer with a drop lid for 10 min. on medium heat. Remove drop lid and continue to cook and stir until the liquid almost disappears.

You can buy other lucky foods like red and white kamaboko 蒲鉾 (fishcake), tazukuri 田作り (glazed dried sardines), konbu-maki 昆布巻き (rolled kelp), shrimp (their bent backs suggest long life), and kuromame 黒豆 (sweet black beans) at the supermarket or department store to round out your assortment. I hope these foods will usher in a luckier 2021 for all of you. Yoi otoshi o! 良いお年を!



Year-end Phrases



2020 is nearly at its end. When finishing up your final work of the year (仕事納め), you should convey your appreciation to your teachers, colleagues, etc. who have helped you throughout the year.

「今年も大変お世話になりました。来年もどうぞよろしくお願いします。」

At the end of December, make sure to also speak with the people you won't meet until the new year. You can express hope that the other party has a good start to the new year by saying:

「良いお年をお迎えください。」
「よいお年を。」

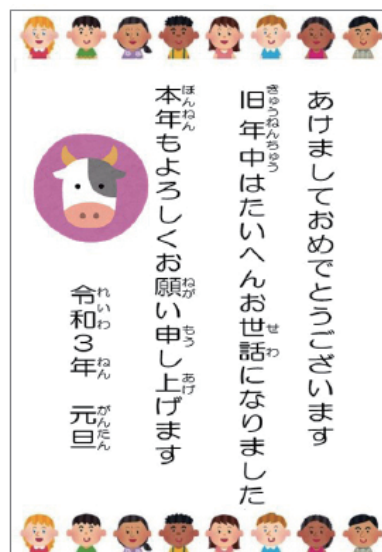
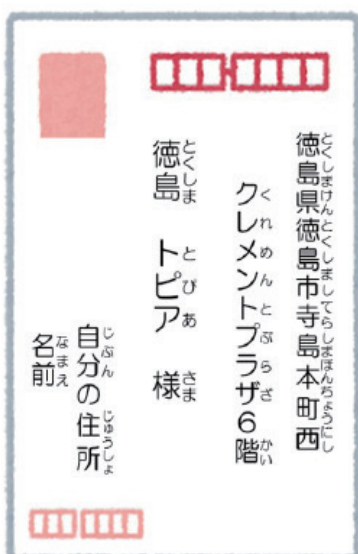
When someone says these things to you, you can respond with 「本年はたいへんお世話になりました。来年もどうぞよろしくお願いいたします。」 and then add 「どうぞよい年をお迎えください」.



Words for Greeting the New Year



During the New Year's holiday, you will begin to hear the song 「もう～いーくつ寝ると～お正月♪」. For New Year's, children look forward to receiving お年玉 (New Year's gift), and adults look forward to receiving 年賀状 (New Year's cards). At the year's end, why don't you try sending a 年賀状 to the people who have supported you, expressing your appreciation and greetings for the new year? When writing, it's important to be humble and show respect to the person you're writing to.



Events & Memoranda

Kamiyama Onsen Candle Night & Shishi Yuzu Bath 神山温泉キャンドルナイト&ししゆず湯

Kamiyama Onsen has once again prepared a "Shishi yuzu bath", a symbol of the winter season. The lights will be dimmed, and a "candle night" will be prepared as well. Take this chance to enjoy a wonderful onsen bath. ♪

About Yuzu Baths...

In addition to enjoying the colour of the yuzus floating in the bath, the fragrance is said to help people relax and stimulate the skin to improve blood circulation. Entering a yuzu bath is also a way to pray for good health.

About Shishi Yuzu...

Shishi yuzu are a jumbo type of yuzu that are a size smaller than a volleyball. They are also a specialty of Kamiyama. Due to their size and interesting shape, they are used as decorations. You can also make candy from the cooked peel.

When: December 19 (Sat.) - 20 (Sun.)

Shishi Yuzu Bath: All Day

Candle Night: 17:00 - 20:00 (Planned)

Where: Kamiyama Onsen

Tel: 088-676-1117

URL: <http://kamiyama-spa.com/>

今年も神山温泉の冬の風物詩、ししゆずを湯船に浮かべた『ししゆず湯』をご用意！浴室の照明を落とした『キャンドルナイト』温泉も実施されます。幻想的な入浴をお楽しみください♪

ゆず湯について・・・

柚子の実を浮かべることで、その色を楽しむほか、その香りによるリラックスや皮膚が刺激されて血行がよくなるといわれ、無病息災を願います。

ししゆずとは・・・

バレーボールをひとまわり小さくしたくらいのジャンボゆずで、神山町の特産です。大きさ、形の珍しさから装飾に用いられますが、皮を炊いて砂糖菓子にもできます。

日時：12月19日（土）～20日（日）

ししゆず湯 終日

キャンドルナイト 17:00～20:00（予定）

場所：神山温泉

Tel: 088-676-1117

URL: <http://kamiyama-spa.com/>



Shinmachi Countdown 2021 新町カウントダウン 2021

It's time again for the Shinmachi 2021 Countdown! Let's enjoy the countdown to 2021 together with family, friends, or our significant others! ♪

※ You can find more information about this event on the official Twitter page.

When: December 31st (Thur.) – January 1st (Fri.)

Where: Tokushima City, Around Shinmachibashi East Park

Fee: Free

Info: Shinmachi Countdown Executive Committee

URL: https://twitter.com/shinmachi_cd?lang=ja

「今年もやります！新町カウントダウン 2021！！」

家族やカップル、友人と一緒に2021年のカウントダウンを楽しみましょう♪

※イベント情報は公式 Twitter にて順次公開していきます

日時：12月31日（木）～1月1日（金）

場所：徳島市新町橋東公園周辺

料金：無料

お問い合わせ：新町カウントダウン実行委員会

URL: https://twitter.com/shinmachi_cd?lang=ja

Events & Memoranda



Christmas at the Zoo どうぶつえんのクリスマス



If you come dressed as Santa, you get free admission to the zoo! Children who arrive early will also receive a present.

When: December 20th (Sun.) 9:30-16:30

Where: Tokushima Zoo

Fee: Adults: 600 Yen

Middle School Students & Younger: Free

Tel: 088-636-3215

URL: <http://www.city.tokushima.tokushima.jp/zoo/event/top.html>

サンタクロースの姿で来園すると、入園料が無料になります！

先着で子どもたちにプレゼントの配布もあります。

日時：12月20日（日）9:30～16:30

場所：とくしま動物園

料金：大人 600 円、中学生以下は無料

Tel: 088-636-3215

URL: <http://www.city.tokushima.tokushima.jp/zoo/event/top.html>

Solving Worldwide Issues Together

By: Atsushi Abe

The other day, for the first time in a while, I went to a concert and listened to Beethoven's symphony. This year is the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth. During a normal year, there would have been so many concerts featuring Beethoven's music that you would get sick of hearing it, but due to the novel coronavirus, being able to attend a concert has become a precious experience.

The lives of people around the world have changed in ways that no one could have imagined at the end of last year. There was a sharp decrease in foreign visitors, people were unable to gather and meet, and everyone had to hole themselves up at home. It was almost like we had made a wrong turn somewhere and wandered into a different world. Now the novel coronavirus is spreading all around the world.

In order to stop the spread of this virus, are the various countries of the world working together? Borders have been closed, everyone has been scrambling to secure medical equipment, and it seems each country is only thinking about itself. However, on the other hand, there has been cooperation. China sent many masks to Japan, Germany took in critically ill patients from surrounding countries, and the EU created a COVID-19 recovery fund for its members. Joint development of a vaccine has also been progressing.

Once the coronavirus situation in your own country is under control, you shouldn't think that it doesn't matter what is happening in other countries. I think we should all work together so that the situation can be under control world-wide. If we do, I think the situation will be under control by next year.

****TOPIA will be closed from December 29, 2020 (Tue.) - January 3, 2021 (Sun.)**

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.

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

Tel: 088-656-3312 or 088-656-3313 (allows for three-way conversations with an interpreter)