



MIA news

Miyakonojo International Association

Miyakonojo International Association
6-21 Himegi-cho, Miyakonojo-shi,
Miyazaki-ken, Japan 885-8555
TEL 0986-23-2295
FAX 0986-23-3223
http://miyakonojo-mia.com
E-mail mia@btvm.ne.jp

MIA Information

◇World Festa in Miyakonojo

The 11th World Festa in Miyakonojo is about to begin!
We look forward to seeing you all there!

When: January 19th, 2020 (Sunday), 12PM - 5PM

Where: MJ Hall, 2F Multi-gallery & Chū-Hall

How Much: Entrance is free!

What:

International Exchange and games with various people from around the world.

Stage performances showcasing songs and dances from overseas.

Panels & Exhibitions presenting activities organised by International Exchange Associations and Cooperative Groups.

Inquiries: MIA (Miyakonojo International Association)

Phone: 0986-23-2295

E-mail: mia@btvm.ne.jp

◇Miyazaki Support Center for Foreign Residents

On October 26th, the "Miyazaki Support Center for Foreign Residents" was opened next to the Miyazaki International Plaza.

This support center is able to respond to inquiries in multiple languages using an automatic translator and phone services.

Consultations will be available face-to-face, by telephone or e-mail, etc., and appropriate information will be provided.

Anyone can use it as a place for international exchange and information gathering, in addition to the above consulting services.

Please make sure to let everyone around you know!

Open: Tuesday to Saturday, Time: 10:00am—7:00pm

TEL: 0985-41-5901

FAX: 0985-41-5902

E-mail: support@mif.or.jp

World Festa in Miyakonojo 2020



When: **2020.1.19** (Sunday)

12:00~17:00

Where: MJ Hall
(Miyakonojo, Kitahara, No. 1106-100)

*Entrance is Free!

Introduce yourself to a variety of countries, and have a chance to interact with people from many different cultures!

Experience games, dances, songs and instruments from around the world!

Learn about various international exchange groups, and enjoy a series of panel displays!

* Please note that a second event, 'My First Spring', will also be opening at MJ Hall on the same day.

The first 150 people
to complete the walk
rally will win a prize!

Hosted by: MIA (Miyakonojo International Association), Miyakonojo City, Mimata, MJ Hall and the Miyakonojo Stage Association Cooperative

Supported by the Miyazaki Board of Education, Miyakonojo Board of Education, Mimata Board of Education, and JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency)

Inquiries: MIA (Miyakonojo International Association). TEL: 0986-23-2295 E-mail mia@btvm.ne.jp

Illustration By: Jargol (Mongolia)

◇Free Elementary Japanese Classes

A Japanese Language Course for Beginners will be hosted by Miyakonojo City Hall's Internationalisation Promotion Office as of January 7th next year!

Date/Time: January 7th to March 17th 2020, every Tuesday and Friday (20 sessions total), 7PM - 8:30PM

Location: Community Center

Open to all foreigners living in the Miyakonojo area. Limited to the first 25 participants.

*In the event that there are a large number of applicants, participants will be selected by lottery. There is a requirement to supply 1,100 Yen in order to accommodate the purchase of a textbook to be used throughout the course. For all applications and questions, Please ensure that you contact the Internationalisation Promotion Office by Phone, Fax or E-Mail.

Phone: 23-2295. Fax: 23-3223

intl@city.miyakonojo.miyazaki.jp

Making Comparisons — Jennifer Fang, Miyakonojo ALT

When my flight from Haneda first landed at Miyazaki Airport, the first thing I thought when I saw the line of blue ocean in the distance, the swaying palm trees in the parking lot, and the bright sunshine was: oh, I didn't leave Southern California at all.

The humidity told me otherwise, though. Southern California has a Mediterranean climate, which means the heat is dry. In fact, for the past decade or so we've been suffering from a drought, so people there are very dedicated to saving water. Having a green lawn or taking regular baths was considered the height of treason to the community. The first time I'd gone to the East Coast of the United States, I had been amazed at how wet and green the climate was. Here, I was similarly stunned.

It's been about three months since that first impression of Miyazaki. I drive everywhere, and the weather is only just starting to get a little cool. Sometimes the only things that remind me that I'm in Miyakonojo instead of my hometown Irvine are that: 1)

my car here is not a BMW, 2) there are frequent typhoons instead of wildfires, and 3) I can't immediately read the signs. Other than that, Miyakonojo is actually quite similar to Irvine. They're both quiet and safe small cities with a growing expat population, and both seem to focus more on enjoying everyday life instead of catering to tourists. New bakeries and stores seem to be the highlight of life in both places. I don't know if food is what Miyakonojo wants to be known for, but I do know a lot of people who specifically make trips to Irvine just to go eating!

Some people might think making comparisons between where we come from and where we are now is a symptom of homesickness, of culture shock. And there are absolutely times when I miss Irvine a little (which overlaps neatly with the times that I miss proper Chinese food). But for me, these comparisons help me feel at home. They help me keep the culture shock contained, as I go through familiar movements in a different setting.

(I would never dream of driving up to Los Angeles as many times as I drive to Miyazaki City, though. The highways to Los Angeles are far too congested!)



Miyazaki Airport

Still, maybe it'll take me until I properly experience a year in Japan for me to know if this line of thinking is foolish or not. I've lived in China before when I was very young, and I still go back there once in a while, but I know there's a world of difference between Chinese and Japanese culture, like there is between our languages. That being said, knowing Chinese has helped me understand kanji quite effectively, though I admit when kana comes into play I end up reading sentences in a mix of Chinese and Japanese sounds. Still, knowing how to read kanji has helped me surprise many a friend and co-worker, especially since my spoken Japanese is mostly greetings, thank-yous, and an endless string of "daijobu"!

Nevertheless, despite the language barrier, I think my transition from Irvine to Miyakonojo has been quite smooth so far. Of course, I would always welcome the chance to meet even more members of the community here, but what little I have has already been a great help.

This is the first time I've been to Japan, the first time I've worked abroad, and the first time I've lived in Asia since I was very young. It's a lot of firsts, but as of writing, I'm pretty optimistic about what the future holds.



The Orange County 'Surf & Farm' aesthetic, which bears similarities to Miyazaki prefecture.

3 Months in Miyakonojo — Li Peiqin, Mother of Miyakonojo CIR Qian Huiwen

It's already been 3 months since I first arrived here in Miyazaki Prefecture's Miyakonojo City. It's truly amazing how quickly the time has passed. Upon returning to Shanghai this time, I've been followed by a reluctance to part, and the sorrow of having done so.

My daughter, Qian Huiwen, is working in Miyakonojo as a Coordinator of International Relations. This trip was the first time in a while that I spent my days living with her, and I went to a number of events with her friends and co-workers (Bonchi Matsuri, Trivia Night, and the Chinese Language Course), which made for some truly enjoyable and precious occasions. When I think back on 3 months ago, there were still quite a number of things that I was concerned about. Would I really be okay coming to a completely unknown town and staying for 3 months? How can I overcome the differences in our words and our customs? Would I be able to get used to living here as well as I had gotten used to living in Shanghai? All of these concerns simply disappeared as soon as I set foot in Miyakonojo. The entire town is quiet, the people are friendly, and life is easy.

I also had the opportunity to participate in Bonchi Matsuri back in August. On this occasion, for the first time in my life, I got to try on a yukata. As a part of the 'Samba Yassa' dance group consisting of people from many countries alongside the Internationalisation Promotion Office, we had fun dancing along to the rhythm, I saw for myself a wonderful Japanese-style parade, and I managed to take a good number of photos. Throughout the night, my daughter and I ate a variety of delicious foods whilst wandering around the various lively stalls, and finished the evening by enjoying the fireworks. I haven't been



moved like this in quite a while.

During this visit, I also had the opportunity to experience a tea ceremony at a small tea school. Japanese tea ceremonies stem from China, but have peculiarities all of their own. I learnt from the school all about the etiquette behind the ceremony, allowed my inner self to relax, and opened myself to another wonderful state of mind. As someone new to tea ceremonies, and as someone who has not even sat in seiza before (kneeling with the tops of the feet flat on the floor, and sitting on the soles), after but a short time my knees and back began to ache, and I couldn't bear it. All of the member who attended the ceremony, including the teacher, sat from beginning to end in that pose as practice, which I admired. I imagine that this requires a significant amount of fortitude, as well as a long period of adjusting to it.

When I look back on these 3 months in Japan, the one thing that has truly left an impression is the sincerity I've felt throughout Japan from its people, no matter where you go. I look forward to being able to tell all my friends and family back home about the wonderful things I experienced while I was here.



Qian Huiwen (Left) with Li Peiqin (Right), learning the basics of a Japanese Tea Ceremony



Movies info

C-Plaza Cine-port (Tel: 0986-24-2571)

17-9 Nakamachi, Miyakonojo, Miyazaki Map-Code (GPS): 117 488 540*55



- Jumanji: The Next Level (Japanese Dub)
- Katsuben! (Japanese)
- Frozen 2 (Japanese Dub)
- Terminator: New Fate (Japanese Sub)
- It: Chapter Two (Japanese Dub)

- *The 1st of every month is ¥1,100 for everyone.
- *Every Wednesday is 'Ladies' Day', all ladies ¥1,100.
- *The cinema is closed every Tuesday.
- *For session times visit: <http://movie.walkerplus.com/th286/schedule.html> (Japanese)