



# 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](mailto:mia@btvm.ne.jp)

## Memories of International Marathons - Miura Takamichi (MIA Member)

Amidst the confusion caused by the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, we saw the opening of the very-nearly-cancelled "Tokyo 2020 Olympics", which safely concluded just recently. When one mentions the Olympics, the mind travels to the final day of competition (for the women's event, the penultimate day), and "The Best of the Olympics", the marathon, does it not?

It was decided that the marathon was to be held in Sapporo, a decision made with the athletes' health in mind as Sapporo is generally cooler than Tokyo. Even so, this year's temperature and humidity were high, causing around 30 of the male runners (roughly 30 percent of the participants) to withdraw during the race. While athletes hailing from countries of a normally lower humidity had come prepared for these conditions, the withdrawal rate stemming from the high humidity might have you think otherwise.

As someone who has run the "Hokkaido marathon" three times, which is held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of August every year, I have experience with Sapporo's August heat, and well understand the difficulties these athletes have gone through. The three times I ran the marathon myself, the city reached temperatures of 30, 27 and 28 degrees Celsius, and owing to the high humidity, on the third occasion at the 40km mark, I suffered from heatstroke and was forced to experience my own mid-way withdrawal (even though there was only a little over 2km to the goal...).

"Why would professional athletes and runners, let alone those who simply run as a hobby, ever enter into such a difficult marathon?" is a question that I have been asked a number of times, and one for which I have a definitive answer. The feeling of going to the extreme limits of your physical endurance and managing to complete such a long course (42.195km) is just the best! It's also fun to get to know all the other runners who completed the marathon alongside you! The view as you run along the course opened just for that tournament, the cheering from the locals, the food, the ceremonies before and after the race, the gatherings for runners who completed the race; there are a great number of things to be enjoyed. Especially for marathons held overseas, in addition to all of these things, touring around or experiencing things you can only do in another country is a lot of fun! Today, I want to share with you all to some of the things I've experienced at these overseas marathons.

The very first international marathon that I participated in was the "Melbourne Marathon". Not only was this the first time I participated in a marathon overseas, the words of support I received along the course left an impression on me.

In Japan, the words of support you often hear such as

"Ganbare!" or "Fight!" are akin to a loud pep talk, whereas Melbourne's "Good job!", "Keep it up!" or "You can do it!" are words that praise the runner for their efforts, something I had not experienced before. Thanks to that support, I ran my first ever sub-three hour marathon.

At the "London Marathon", the competition was held along a truly incredible course. Beginning on a slope near the Greenwich Observatory, we saw the Cutty Sark as we crossed the Tower Bridge, as well as London Tower, Big Ben and Parliament House than stand along the riverside where we ran, before finishing in front of Buckingham Palace; from start to finish, with so much to look at, you never had a spare moment to feel the exhaustion from the marathon! This one is a very popular event, with around 35,000 participants coming from all across the globe!



The "Paris Marathon" is just as popular as the London Marathon.

The course begins along The Avenue des Champs Elysees, passing through the Wood of Vincennes, the Louvre, viewing the Eiffel tower as we ran along the Seine, entering the Bois de Boulogne after 35km, before passing through the Arc de Triomphe at the goal; another truly scenic course. With over 30,000 competitors coming from 50 different countries around the world, the Paris Marathon is truly just as popular as the London Marathon!

Along the way, they were passing out wine at one of the end stations in the Bois de Boulogne; as I'm not one to pass up the chance to enjoy some alcohol, I partook of a glass of white wine. Feeling satisfied, I decided to walk the remaining 5 kilometers!

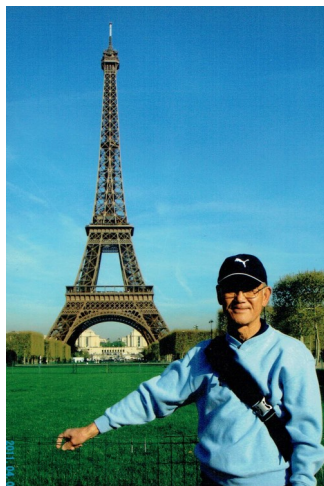
There was also a large number of runners who decided to dress up in costumes for the event, and I happened to run in to a runner dressed up as a flamenco dancer;

they even invited me to dance with them, which troubled me a little. I myself was wearing a festival Happi and bandana for some fighting spirit, which might have made me stand out a little. In the end, we took a photo together and left it at that. Even so, it was a fun and memorable experience.

For Canada's "Niagara Marathon", running alongside the waterfall and being covered in the spray gave it a whole lot of ambience! Enjoying some delicious yellow watermelon after the "Vancouver Marathon", or the "Calgary Marathon" where I enjoyed some delicious cherries I bought at the market on Granville Island on my way back to Japan; there are a good number of food-related memories, not to mention that the price was a tenth of that in Japan!

At China's "Beijing Marathon", your starting point is Tiananmen Square, and the first time I ran this marathon 22 years ago, the yellow roof tiles of the Forbidden City were contrasted by the blue sky, making for the perfect image of a "Beijing Autumn Sky" under which we competed. Five years later, on my third run of this marathon, the surrounding environment began to deteriorate, causing the air to be filled with smog. As the town rapidly modernized, the blue sky disappeared, which I felt was unfortunate. I wonder, has the blue sky returned?

There are a number of massive structures you can observe as you run China's marathon courses. In addition to the Forbidden City in Beijing, there are the various high-rise towers in the Pudong district that can be seen from The Bund in Shanghai, and the New Century Global Centre, one of the largest buildings in the world (Width: 400m, Depth: 500m, Height: 100m) that can be seen nearby the park at the end of the "Chengdu Marathon" course, was truly astounding. The inside consists of retail stores, university complexes, hotels, banks, a pool, and even an artificial beach! It's like a town all of its own!



The most popular international marathon for Japan, no matter how you spin it, has to be the "Honolulu Marathon".

With around 50 years of history, this marathon in Hawaii began almost as soon as open travel around the world began and tour services commenced. Amongst the 30,000 runners that participate, around half of them are Japanese! A large number of participants in this marathon join for the fun of it, and the lack of a time limit is another reason for its popularity. There are some people that take a little over 10 hours to reach the goal. There will occasionally be a squall that blows through during the race, leaving a "Hawaiian Rainbow" behind afterwards; everyone who sees this rainbow is said to find happiness. I've managed to see these rainbows both amongst the mountains and across the sea!



There are still many more international marathons I have memories of, as well as marathons I want to challenge once more, but as the novel coronavirus continues to spread around the world, competitions are cancelled and international travel becomes difficult, the unfortunate truth is that these goals may not be realized. Even so, I am continuing to train, so that when the day comes that the coronavirus comes to an end and competitions begin once more, I'll be ready.

#### ◇ Articles For MIA News

Are you interested in writing a short article about international exchange or cooperation for MIA News? Some possible topics include travel journals, introductions to your home country, experiences staying with a host family, and activities with an international exchange or cooperation group. Articles should be about a page long and include a couple of relevant pictures. If you'd like to write more than that, please consult with MIA. If you'd like to write anonymously, that can be taken into consideration.

We are also looking for people interested in sharing their Australian experiences. Whether it's a rare location you found or some fascinating people you interacted with, we want to share your story with all of our MIA members!

Please contact us if you are interested!



## General Information

### ◇ It's Time For A Cooking Adventure!

MIA will be holding cooking classes held by each of the three city CIRs. We hope that you can join us for some delicious food and fun time together! Please note that each of these sessions will be held in Japanese only.

① **Mongolia** Date: December 11th (Sat)

"Tsuivan" (Similar to Japanese Yakisoba!)

② **China** Date: December 12th (Sun)

"Sweet & Sour Boiled Pork Bone-on Spare Ribs + Japanese Yam & Cloud Ear Mushroom Stir-fry"

③ **Australia** Date: December 18th (Sat)

"Lamingtons + ANZAC Biscuits"

Doors open at 9:20AM for a 9:30~11:30 class. This will be followed by an exchange session before cleanup.

**Location:** Machinaka Kitchen near Marumaru Library, along the No. 10 road.

For inquiries or to sign up, please call MIA directly. Limited spaces available. Please bring a pen and apron. We look forward to seeing you there!



### ◇ Recruitment of Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) for the 2022/23FY

The following is a recruitment notice from the Miyakonojo City Hall Schools & Education Division:

We are recruiting people to assist with the Foreign Language curriculum and English lessons in Miyakonojo's elementary and junior high schools.

**Place of employment:** Elementary/Junior High Schools within Miyakonojo (1-4 Schools)

**Work hours:** 8.30am to 12.30pm (four hours per day from Mon-Fri, totaling up to 20h)

**Candidates:** should be non-Japanese citizens living within or around the city, who either: use English as their native language, use English as their primary communication language, or have an advanced level of English language ability with a knowledge of contemporary standard pronunciation, rhythm and intonation.

**Salary:** 2,630 Yen per hour (provisional) plus travel expenses for distances over 2km and bonuses (paid June & December)

**Examination:** There will be an interview and candidates

will be required to give a mock lesson. The details of the interview and mock lesson will be communicated at a later date.

**Applications:** Open until Friday, November 26th. Please bring your CV and a copy of your residence (zairyū) card to the Schools and Education Division (Miyakonojo City Hall South Wing 2F)

**Positions available:** Few

**Inquiries:** Schools and Education Division. Phone: 0986-23-9544

### ◇ Miyakonojo City Museum of Art 40th Anniversary: The Origin of Japanese Art

In celebration of the Miyakonojo City Museum of Art's 40th Anniversary, a special art exhibition is being held, showcasing the history and evolution of Japanese Art from Miyakonojo and Southern Kyushu's viewpoint.

**Date & Time:** Oct. 30th ~ Dec. 5th. Closed Mondays 9AM ~ 5:00PM (Last entry: 4:30PM)

**Location:** Miyakonojo City Museum of Art

**Cost:**

General Admission: 1000 Yen

High School/University Student: 600 Yen

Middle School or younger: Free

Free Pass (Unlimited Entries): 1300 Yen

For groups of 20 or greater, general admissions are 800 Yen, and Students are 400 Yen. General admissions are 800 Yen for those aged 65 years or older.

\* On National Culture Day (November 3rd), all admissions are free. On Family Day (November 27th), all families with high school or younger students are free.

Further details can be found on the City's

Home Page (Japanese Only):

<https://www.city.miyakonojo.miyazaki.jp/site/artmuseum/34189.html>



### Movies info

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

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



- Reminiscence (Japanese Sub)
- 007: No Time To Die (Japanese Sub)
- Uchuu no Ho—Erohim hen— (Japanese)
- Dune 2021 (Japanese Sub)
- Daughter of Lupin (Japanese)

- Ryū to Sobakasu no Hime (Belle) (Japanese)
- \*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)