



MIA news

Miyakonojo International Association

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Bringing a Piece of Home to a New Home - Liliana Rosario (Miyakonojo City Middle School ALT)

Hi! My name is Liliana and I have been living in Miyakonojo for two months as a Junior High School JET ALT (Assistant Language Teacher). I came to Japan from the United States, specifically from a city called Silver Spring in the state of Maryland. Maryland is right next to the U.S. capital of Washington D.C., where I was born and where I spent most of my time since Silver Spring shares a border with D.C.. Coming from the D.C. metropolitan area means that I have grown up in one of America's largest melting pots, which probably explains my mixed cultural background.

My father was born on a small island in the Caribbean called Puerto Rico, while my mother was born in a country in Central America called El Salvador. Both parents ended up moving to the U.S. in search of a better life. They met in Washington, D.C. and were connected by the shared experience of displacement and the Spanish language. The language was then passed down to me, becoming a huge part of my identity. Despite not being able to visit El Salvador much in my lifetime, I do visit Puerto Rico almost biannually. It's a tropical island with blue waters, fresh fruit, kind people, and delicious food. I claim the island as my second home and embrace the culture as much as I can while

I'm not there physically. Especially now, being an ocean away from my home and family, I have been making an extra effort to remember my background through cooking and music! Before I started living by myself in Japan, I hated cooking and swore up and down that I would never learn. But something about feeling homesick and the need to survive has made me change my opinion. So now, I cook almost daily and often make a common Latin American street food called empanadas. These are a kind of turnover with many different types of fillings, and every Latin American country has their own version! With music, I listen to genres that are important to the culture a little more than usual. Mainly reggaeton and salsa have been on repeat in my Spotify playlists with many artists from Puerto Rico and all of Latin America. I've also been trying my best to speak Spanish every time I Facetime my parents so as not to forget the language.

At this point you may be wondering what I'm doing teaching English in Japan if I love Spanish and Puerto



Liliana at Toi Misaki

Rico so much. Now, I do love where I come from, but that has never stopped me from appreciating Japanese culture and all Japan has to offer. Since I was a child, I would often watch anime and read manga on the internet, which pushed me to take Japanese classes in high school. I continued my Japanese studies by pursuing a bachelor's degree in the language. Through my undergraduate studies, I had the opportunity to be an ALT intern at two private academies in Kanagawa prefecture for eighteen days in 2018. During this internship, I shadowed the English teachers at both schools and participated in a homestay with one family from each school for two separate weeks. The opportunity to connect with students and families from a different culture brought me a sense of fulfillment I had never felt before. While I taught them English, my students showed me kindness and acceptance at a time when I was completely out of my comfort zone. Thanks to this experience, I thought to myself, "I could do this for a living." So I did just that, and applied to the JET Programme after graduation. Hence me being here in Miyakonojo!

I am grateful to be placed in this beautiful city and prefecture. My students make everyday fun, and my colleagues provide me with exceptional care and guidance. On top of that, the surrounding mountains, summer humidity, and relaxed lifestyle remind me of Puerto Rico, making it easier to adjust to life in Japan. Overall, I look forward to building more connections with people in Miyakonojo, and exploring the ins and outs of Miyazaki prefecture.



Homemade Empanadas



Puerto Rico

Liliana at the Daibutsu in Kamakura, 2018





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Aussie Bites! (The Indian Pacific (Part 2), MIA Office Head Fujimoto Koichiro)

Dinner, held in the restaurant car, was conducted in separate groups, each called at slightly offset times. All of the meals were authentic-style, and of course, plenty of beer and wine was provided. I myself only stayed for a single night, but for those passengers who were staying on until Perth, these meals must have been the greatest of pleasures. After finishing my meal, I returned to my room, and had a shower whilst occasionally being rocked about by the movement of the train. I had to support myself with both hands against the walls to keep my footing as I showered. Following the shower, there was truly nothing left to do. I slipped into bed, without even a TV to watch.

As dawn broke, the train continued to run across a desolate countryside. At around 7AM, with what looked to be a quarry nearby, our train stopped at a station called Broken Hill. Located roughly 1160 kilometres from Sydney, I was informed that the town once flourished due as a mining town. From near the station, there were no residential houses to be seen. There was a bus waiting at the train station when we arrived. Hopping off our train and onto the bus, we travelled on the road through the desert for around 30 minutes, heading to a small hill before alighting. Scaling the hill, we found tens of pieces on display that had once been carved into the surrounding rock. As there was nothing else around, all there was to do was gaze into the dis-

tant horizon. After about an hour, we once more returned to the station, and boarded the Indian Pacific. After departing Broken Hill Station and heading to the restaurant car to have breakfast, I continued my journey in the lounge car, again enjoying some beer as we went. The landscape stretched into endless farmland. As morning turned to afternoon, the train began to run alongside the road. There was a sign on the road that said "No gas past this point. No signal past this point. This is the last store", and many more similar messages. You would never see such a sign in Japan. I felt I understood, at that point, just how expansive Australia is. From Sydney Station, after being aboard the Indian Pacific for some 24 hours, at 3PM, we arrived at our platform at South Australia's Adelaide Station.



Information & Notices

Thank you to everyone that joined us for this year's Bonchi Matsuri dance! Whether you were a part of the dance line or watched from the street side, it was fantastic to have you all for the first time in 3 years!



◇ CPR & AED Course for International Residents

Open to all international residents who wish to learn about CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) and using AED (Automated External Defibrillator). This course will be held in Easy Japanese, but can also support English.

When: January 21st (Sat), 2023, 10AM - 12PM

Where: Komatsubara Chiku Kominkan
 Miyakonojo-shi Daio-cho 29-6

Cost: Free

Apply online: <https://forms.gle/jdP5YKMLQcJXhgAg7>
 Apply by January 10th (Tue)

Capacity: 20 people (first come first served)

Inquiries: shinguty@gmail.com



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

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



- Bosei (Japanese)
- One Piece Film - Red (Japanese)
- Strange World (Japanese Sub)
- Suzume (Japanese)
- Sadako DX (Japanese)

- Karada Sagashi (Japanese)
- Mimi wo Sumaseba (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/>