Latest Kagoshima News

Satsumayaki Festa and Authentic Oshima Tsumugi Silk Fabric Festival a Grand Success

For 5 days between 28 November and 2 December, the 29th Satsumayaki Festa and the 2018 Authentic Oshima Tsumugi Silk Fabric Festival were held at Kagoshima Prefectural Citizens Exchange Center.

31 kilns around the prefecture exhibited and sold their wares at the Satsumayaki Festa. There was also a special exhibition on the theme of “Segodon (Saigo Takamori)’s dining table”, and visitors browsed the varied vessels for a favourite to take home.

At the Authentic Oshima Tsumugi Silk Fabric Festival, visitors enjoyed the displays of numerous exquisite fabrics woven using traditional techniques and contemporary fashion ensembles that showcased the new charms of Oshima Tsumugi silk.

Moreover, at the Authentic Oshima Tsumugi Queen Contest, the governor of Kagoshima Prefecture shared with attendees the marvels of Oshima Tsumugi silk fabric.

These wonderful events allow people the chance to see up close and touch the traditional crafts that are the pride of Kagoshima.

We will continue to work together with the people in these industries to promote Kagoshima’s traditional craft products.
A Once-in-a-lifetime Experience in Kagoshima by Huang Bo (CIR from China)

How time flies. In the blink of an eye, 7 months has passed since I first came to Kagoshima. I still have a third of my contract left, one way of looking at it, but recently the feeling that my time here is coming to an end is growing stronger.

In these 7 months, the best thing I think I have ever done was to get my driving licence.

As China is not party to the Geneva Convention, I could not apply for an international driving permit; to drive in Japan I therefore needed a Japanese driving licence.

Luckily, as I am registered as a resident of Kagoshima I was able to convert my Chinese licence to a Japanese one as long as I pass the tests. That was much easier than going to a driving school to obtain one.

Even so, I had much difficulty passing the tests. I stayed up the night before to study for the written part, and I had to practise driving a few times at a driving school before I finally passed the practical segment on my third try. As both the driving school and the test centre are in Chosa, it was inconvenient commuting from where I live in Shimoarata. It’s not as if I could drive there to get my licence.

But I was truly glad to receive my licence. Being able to drive allowed me to go on a jaunt to Miyazaki, Oita and Kumamoto for my birthday. I would also often rent a car to go around Sakurajima, Kirishima or Ibusuki on the weekends. I even visited a geothermal power plant. Furthermore, a car enabled me to venture to places that are otherwise really difficult to access. Thanks to it I was able to reach Lake Onami and Mt Karakuni, as well as take satisfying photos at observatories and viewpoints around the prefecture.

To be honest, I did consider throwing in the towel after failing on my second try as I only had half a year left by then. However, my friend ceaselessly encouraged me to not give up and to give it my best shot as it’s now or never.

Of course, even if I don’t obtain a licence this year, the chance to drive in Japan may come again in the future. Even after returning home I might have another opportunity to live in Japan, and I can always try again then. Or someday I may be able to apply for an international driving permit. But as Heraclitus says, “you cannot step into the same river twice”. The me in the future might not be the same as who I am now. I may not be able to come back to Kagoshima. Even if I grow rich and drive a fabulous car, my feelings would have changed. Each moment has its own joys, and the joys of the future would never satisfy the present me.

The same thing can be said for photographs. There are times that I would think of a better way of taking a picture after leaving the spot. Occasionally I would leave it for another day as it is a bother to retrace my steps. There are also days when I would choose to laze around at home rather than go out despite the sunny weather. Looking back at those times I would be filled with a sense of regret that I was never able to return to that same place, or that the next weekend that I had
postponed my outing till it was rainy. There are many times when I wasn’t able to take the perfect photo, that opportunities were lost because I had put it off.

Sen no Rikyū (a tea master who had a profound influence on the Japanese “Way of Tea”) uses the phrase 一期一会 (ichi-go ichi-e, lit. one time, one meeting) to describe the mindset for giving and receiving hospitality, but the term is not just restricted to tea ceremonies. There exist an infinite number of once-in-a-lifetimes in the span of our lives. Talking with someone over a meal, or seeing the view from a certain place, or quietly reading the newspaper while waiting for the train on the way to work... Those might be the last time I would ever experience them. Even if something similar were to happen again my emotions might have changed, and I would not live the moment in the same way. Of course, it is simply impossible for me to capture all these countless once-in-a-lifetimes, but it is a terrible pity if the people or things or opportunities that are important to me slipped away because of trivial reasons or lazy procrastination. My experience in Kagoshima has taught me that rather than “another time”, I should live instead with a “now or never” attitude and cherish and enjoy each and every passing moment.

I have only about 4 and a half months left of my term, but it is a time that will never come again. Even though I may not accomplish much, I intend to live the remainder of my stint in Kagoshima to the fullest.

Kagoshima International Exchange A-Z
Director of Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Fukuoka visited Kagoshima

Mr Chen Zhong-zheng, Director of the Fukuoka Branch, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Osaka paid a courtesy visit to Governor Mitazono at the Kagoshima Prefectural Government office building on the 12th of December.

As it was his first visit to Kagoshima, Mr Chen was greatly interested in the prefecture, and said, “Taiwan and Kagoshima have conducted exchanges from a long time ago, and I believe that our friendly relations will continue to develop in the future.”

Governor Mitazono presented Mr Chen with Kagoshima Wagyu beef, and promoted the prefecture’s appeal such as its food products and hot springs.
Toshidon is a traditional New Year’s Eve event held around villages in Shimo-koshikishima Island. Young men dress up as Toshidon (a Shinto deity of the coming year) by donning masks and capes made of hemp palm, Japanese sago palm or paper. The Toshidon visits houses with children to scold them for any mischief of the past year and impel them to make their resolutions for the new year.

It is believed that one will be able to grow a year older in peace if one eats the ‘toshi-mochi (New Year rice cake) given by the Toshidon, a god of blessings.

- 1977 Registered as an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Japan
- 2009 Registered on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Date
Every 31st of December (New Year’s Eve)

Venue
Teuchi, Katanoura, Aose, and Sesenoura in Shimokoshiki-cho, Satsumasendai City

Access
- By jetfoil ferry Koshikishima from Sendai Port:
  From Sendai Station, board the Sendai Port shuttle bus (electric bus) for Sendai Port Ferry Terminal (100 yen one way). Purchase tickets at the ferry terminal, and ride the ferry to Nagahama Port, Koshikishima Islands.
- By Ferry New Koshiki from Kushikino New Port:
  Take the bus, taxi or drive to Kushikino New Port. Purchase tickets at the ferry terminal, and ride the ferry to Nagahama Port, Koshikishima Islands.
A Note from the Editors (Kagoshima Prefecture International Affairs Division)

What did you think of this month’s “Kagoshima Southern Wind Tidings”? The editors will continue to strive to make this prefectural foreign language newsletter a source of information and a bridge to connect all of you to Kagoshima. We’d like to ask our readers to provide their opinions, suggestions, article contributions and Kagoshima-related news.

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