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○ 27th Chiran Neputa festival (25th Jul)

🌙 Coming up in August and September

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OTank you, Kagoshima

Yimin Wong, Singaporean CIR, Kagoshima Prefecture

The past 5 years spent in Kagoshima felt like it passed in the blink of an eye, and before I knew it, I had reached the end of my contract and it is time to go home.

It felt like yesterday where I just arrived in Kagoshima in 2021, fresh out of a 2-week quarantine in Tokyo due to the COVID situation then.

I also remember vividly my first view of Sakurajima after coming in on the highway from Kagoshima Airport.

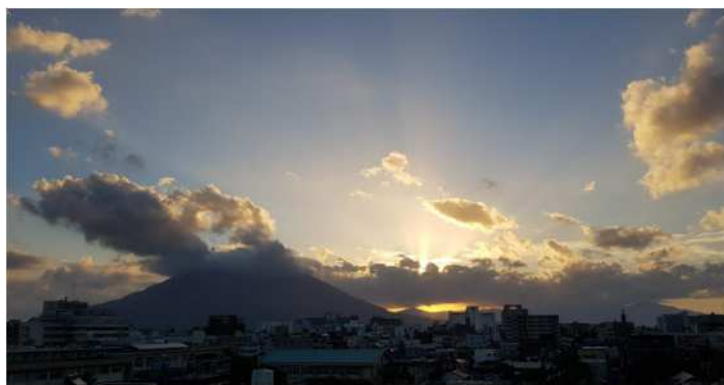


Bang

There was a small plume of white rising from the peak, and I asked my then-supervisor, half in curiosity and half in excitement, whether it was an eruption. He chuckled and assured me it was not (to my disappointment).



First arrival in Kagoshima!



First sunrise viewed from my window

Since then, I have had countless chances to witness Sakurajima's full range of activities, including proper(?) full-scale eruptions which are a sight to behold, to say the least. What is more impressive though, are the amazingly delicious food, the gorgeous nature and above all, the absolute friendliness and warmth of the people here.

Being able to share about my country and culture as part of my work is also immensely rewarding, along

with the satisfaction of being able to contribute to the close ties between Kagoshima and Singapore.

As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words, so I'll let these photos tell the story of my five years in Kagoshima.



Torisashi (chicken sashimi)



Four seasons of Kagoshima



Kagoshima A5 Wagyu



Heart of Kagoshima City, Tenmonkan



Green tea picking



Black pork shabu-shabu



Gorgeous nature



Participating in the 2023 Ohara Matsuri as part of the Prefectural Office group



Kiriko cut-glass experience



Art of Sakurajima made with her ash



With the mascots of Kagoshima Prefecture (Guribu and Sakura-chan)



Mascots of Kagoshima Prefecture with the mascot of Singapore (Merli-chan)



The 21st Singapore-Kagoshima Conference held in Kagoshima



Singapore booth at Kagoshima Airport



The 22nd Singapore-Kagoshima Conference held in Singapore



Being the co-MC at the Conference Reception in Singapore



Singapore booth at the National Sports Festival of Japan held in Kagoshima



Hosting a cooking class featuring Singapore's Hainanese Chicken Rice



Wearing the sarong kebaya based off the iconic Singapore Airlines uniform



Surprise find of a Merlion at KAPIC



My final English
conversational class



My final event in Kagoshima

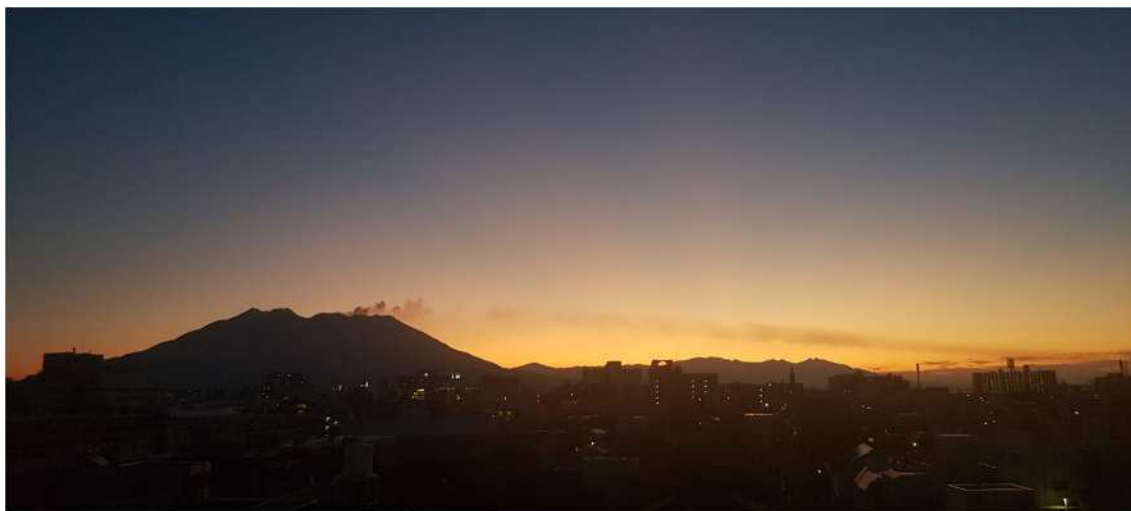
The summer of 2026 marks my final summer in Kagoshima. While I will be returning to my home country of Singapore, Kagoshima will always hold a special place in my heart as my second home.

I am deeply grateful for my time here and will always cherish the friendships I have made, and the many precious memories shared.

Thank you for making these the best five years of my life.



Summer fireworks in Kagoshima City



Introducing Singaporean Hainanese Chicken Rice

Yimin Wong, Singaporean CIR, Kagoshima Prefecture

Origin

Hainanese Chicken Rice is one of Singapore's most iconic national dishes. It was originally introduced by immigrants from Hainan, a province in southern China, and has become one of Singapore's signature foods alongside Chili Crab.

One of Singapore's national dishes, Hainanese Chicken Rice is widely enjoyed at specialty restaurants and hawker stalls throughout the country.

Across Southeast Asia, each nation has developed its own unique version of chicken rice, making it a beloved everyday dish enjoyed by local people.

The Dish

It consists of rice, called Jiyóufàn, which is cooked in a broth made by boiling chicken, and is served with chopped pieces of boiled chicken.

In most cases, it is also accompanied by the broth mentioned above.

The flavor of the chicken is infused into the rice, giving the dish a light and refined umami taste.

Since this dish is enjoyed for the texture of the chicken fat, which solidifies into a jelly-like consistency, the boiled chicken is cooled after cooking before being served.

The recipe introduced here is a simplified version of the original, adapted so that it can be easily prepared at home using ingredients from Kagoshima.

Ingredients (for 6 people)

Flavoured Oil

- Vegetable oil 120ml
- Garlic 7 cloves
- Ginger 10cm
- Spring onion (white parts) 12 stalks

Chicken

- Chicken thighs 6 pcs
- Water 5l
- Sesame oil 2 tbsp
- Ice water

Rice

- Rice 500g/4 cups
- Water (according to rice cooker)
- Chicken stock 4cubes/2tbsp
- Pinch of salt
- Flavoured oil from ③

--(A)--

- Star anise 2 pcs
- Black peppercorns 10 pcs
- Salt 1 tbsp
- Garlic 4 cloves
- Ginger 15 cm
- Spring onion (green parts) 12 stalks

Chicken Soy Sauce --(B)--

- Light soy sauce 3 tbsp
- Sesame oil 1 tbsp
- Chicken broth from ⑥ 4 tbs

Chilli Dipping Sauce

- Dried chilli 6 pcs
- Garlic 2 cloves
- Ginger 2.5cm

Dipping Sauce

- Dark soy sauce 4 tbsp (~60ml)

--(C)--

- Sugar 2 tsp
- Salt 1/2 tsp
- Rice vinegar 1 tsp
- Chicken broth from ⑥ 1 tbsp
- Flavoured oil from ③ 1 tbsp

Garnish

- Cucumber 2 pcs
- Pinch of white pepper
- Coriander

Instructions (Serves 6 | Approx. 2 hours)

- Let chicken come to room temperature in advance (at least 1 hour)(If in summer, let rest for a shorter duration)
- Boil water and soak dried chillis to rehydrate (about 15min)

① Preparation for Flavoured Oil - Finely chop the below:

- Garlic 7 cloves
- Ginger 10cm
- Spring onion (white) 12 stalks

② Preparation for Chilli Dipping Sauce - Finely chop the below

- Rehydrated chillis 6 pcs
- Garlic 2 cloves
- Ginger 2.5cm

③ Flavoured Oil

- Add vegetable oil and ① to pan and fry until



golden

- Save 1 tbsp for chilli dipping sauce in ⑧

④ Rice

- Rinse rice and put in rice cooker
- Add water until the mark '4'
- Dissolve chicken stock cubes in water to make chicken stock
- Add flavoured oil and fried aromatics from ③ and salt
- Cook rice



⑤ Cooking Chicken

- Boil water in a large pot
- Cut ginger, garlic, spring onion in half
- Add (A) to boiling water
- Add chicken and reduce heat to low
- Poach chicken for 20min and remove
- Put into ice water for 10min and remove
- Put skin side up on rack, rub sesame oil over and leave to dry



⑥ Chicken Soup

- Continue to boil the broth in ⑤, uncovered
- Skim the surface when necessary

⑦ Chicken Soy Sauce

- Mix (B) together

⑧ Chilli Dipping Sauce

- Mix (C) and ② together



⑨ To Serve

- Scoop rice into a round bowl and turn over onto plate
- Thinly slice cucumber
- Slice chicken
- Arrange cucumber and chicken around rice
- Drizzle chicken soy sauce from ⑦ over chicken
- Ladle soup from ⑥ into a small bowl and add white pepper to taste
- Place chilli dipping sauce from ⑧ and dark soy sauce into separate small dishes
- Garnish chicken and soup with coriander



OChina's designer toy culture

Xu Kui, Chinese CIR, Kagoshima Prefecture

For several years now, the designer toy boom has been felt not just in China but around the world. International attention has been drawn to this Chinese original that soothes children's minds and provides a source of energy in the everyday. China is a huge market for and the world's largest producer of toys. Today, Chinese designer toys are taking the world by storm, so let's get to know them.

Pop Mart series



Labubu in the World Cup

The word Pop Mart may not ring any bells but you may well have heard of the Labubu. Labubu is Pop Mart's most popular character and is finding itself featured not just on celebrities' social media accounts but also in the most recent world cup ceremony, further boosting its popularity in an official FIFA collaboration.

Founded by a 39 year old in 2010, Pop Mart opened its first flagship store in Beijing to little attention. Many years passed and with Pop Mart's patents nearing a hundred, the company found itself listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange with a very high capitalisation. For young people stuck in the monotonous everyday, Labubus are not just a toy but bring a variety into the day with surprise, hope and anticipation.



Labubu family

52TOYS series



胖达呦 (Panda Roll) 旗舰店

Taking inspiration from traditional Chinese culture, 52TOYS was established in 2015 to make often dry and complex history more accessible. It's toys have included Panda Roll, a figurine based in the image of a baby panda and a line of toys reimagining historical figures in the present day. They also have long-running deals with popular international characters such as Tom and Jerry, Shin-chan and Doraemon, covering a wide range of ages.

Alongside the brands I have introduced, other popular designer toy companies include tnt, TOYZEROPLUS, ROLIFE and more. As young people seek to find more ways to satisfy their tastes, designer toys are sure to continue to grow in popularity. Do you have any designer toys you're interested in?

02 The Governor's activities

○ Partnership signed between MOLCAREER Inc. and Mitsui Co Ltd. (2nd Jun)

Mitsui Co Ltd and MOLCAREER Inc have signed a third party agreement to revitalise regional industry through the employment of foreign nationals.

With over 140 years of maritime operation, Mitsui has long-established foreign national employment, training and management practices. MOLCAREER has a wide network, access to foreign talent, provides support for the immigration process and life abroad as well as comprehensive training. Under this agreement, both companies will jointly utilise their domestic and international networking power and specialist knowledge and work together on foreign talent development and retention.



▲Agreement reached



▲Opinion exchange

○ Japan-Taiwan Chambers of Commerce, 14th board meeting reception (21st Jun)

The Governor attended as a guest of the reception of the 14th board members meeting of the Japan-Taiwan Chambers of Commerce conference. In his speech, the Governor expressed his respect to the companies working in cultural and economic cooperation between Japan and Taiwan. He also expressed his desire for continued exchange across a wide range of areas including youth, cultural and economic exchange.



▲The Governor delivering his speech

○ Visit from the Singaporean Ambassador (29th Jun)

Mr Ong Eng Chuan, the Singaporean Ambassador to Japan, paid a visit to the Prefectural Office.

The Ambassador and the Governor discussed a number of points including, the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Singapore and Japan, the Singapore-Kagoshima Conference, the only organised exchange programme between Singapore and a Japanese prefecture and the Ambassador's desire to see the exchange deepen between Singapore and Kagoshima.

Governor Shiota said that Singapore is one of Kagoshima's most important connections and that he hopes to see the relationship between Kagoshima and Singapore deepen as Kagoshima continues to work on prioritising exchange with Singaporeans.



▲The Ambassador and the Governor



▲In conversation with the Ambassador

03 Kagoshima event information

○ *Rokugatsudo* Summer Lantern Festivals (early-Jul to mid-Aug) (Terukuni Shrine Rokugatsudo: 15th and 16th Jul)

Rokugatsudo is a summer festival held in shrines and temples across the prefecture on various days in July (June in the old lunisolar calendar).

Known locally as *roggadoh*, the festival is cherished by citizens of the prefecture and can be seen almost every day in various places across Kagoshima City until the end of the month.

Shrine parishioners save up wooden frames in their homes, write messages and draw images on them and take them to the temple as an offering. These are then hung up in netting in the temples and lit. It is a lively festival with night stalls and religious performances.

There are various theories around the origin of *rokugatsudo*. It is said that during the Edo period, Shimazu Mitsuhsa lit garden lanterns in the grounds of a Kagoshima temple and that local people continued the custom by donating lanterns to temples.

The lanterns in the temples create a delicate, soft light. Many people in Kagoshima celebrate this distinctive summer festival.



▲Terukuni Shrine 「©kagoshimayokamon」



▲Terukuni Shrine「© K. P. V. B」

O27th Chiran Neputa festival (25th Jul)

The Chiran Neputa festival is a major summer festival in Minamikyushu City. Adjacent to the samurai's residence, a large semicircular fan measuring five by four metres with depictions of heroic samurai on are paraded through the shopping district and lights up the summer evening. This is accompanied by traditional performances and dancing.

Do you know why the Neputa festival is held in Kagoshima Prefecture's Chiran? The story comes from present day Hirakawa City in Aomori Prefecture. Chiran and Hiraka Town, the former town where Hirakawa is today, had a mutual homestay programme; the delights of Hirakawa's Neputa festival drew the attention of Kagoshimans during their homestay. The young people who wanted to bring Neputa to Chiran lobbied hard and the first Hiraka Town Neputa Festival in Chiran was held on 25th August 1996. The

festival has been held in Chiran to great popularity every year since.

The procession of the Neputa and their enchanting glow is a feature of the area's deep historical and cultural heritage. This summer, why not pay a visit to the Chiran Neputa festival? You'll never forget it!



▲Chiran Neputa festival 「© K. P. V. B」

📍 Coming up in August and September

◇ August

1st 2026 Kanoya Summer Festival (Kanoya City)

11th Kaimon Summer Festival (Ibusuki City)

16th Sendai Fireworks Festival (Satsumasendai City)

29th Kagoshima Kinko Bay Summer Night Fireworks Festival
(Kagoshima City)

◇ September

6th 2026 12th Isa Half Relay Marathon

12th 2026 Shibushi Minato Festival

22nd 2026 Sendai Great Tug-of-War

Why not pay a visit? ♪



Editor's note (International Strategy Division, Policy Planning and Coordination Department, Kagoshima Prefectural Government)

Hello everyone!

As this hot weather continues, I hope you're all doing well. We had a lot of festivals during July; did you enjoy yourselves? Did you go to any of the festivals we featured in this issue?

For those who couldn't attend this month, please do try to go in August or September.

If you do go out, enjoy the summer and be careful not to get heatstroke!

Looking forward to our next issue!

The Kagoshima Southern Wind Tidings is accepting submissions on the following topics:

☆**Kagoshima photo gallery**

We are looking for photos that have a Kagoshima feel to them, or photos of Kagoshima that you have found overseas. Please send them with a brief description of the photo (e.g. mountain of volcano ash collection bags).

We are also accepting any other information or stories you would like to share with our readers.

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