

Life & Cultural Information Newsletter

KOKOKO

Life In Kyoto

Autumn 2021

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LIFE IN KYOTO

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01 My Favorite Kyoto

Kyoto and me | ZHONG Yutong (China)



Hello, I am ZHONG, an overseas student at Ritsmeikan University. I'm from Guangdong Province in China. I love to travel a lot. For example, I've visited many cities, such as Cairo, Busan, Tokyo, Osaka, Bangkok, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Dubai and so on. I visit these cities often but stay for no longer than a week. But, Kyoto is the city that I have been staying already for four years.

I regard Kyoto as a special city that combines modernity and tradition coexisting naturally. It is not surprising to see *Geiko* (*Geisha* in Kyoto dialect) walking along the streets and ancient temples surrounded by modern shopping malls.

My favorite spot is the Kamogawa River and its park where verdant trees grow on both banks, ducks swim happily and turtle-shaped boulders are placed across the river. By relaxing in this park, you will come to understand the true meaning of the word "calm".

I also recommend two restaurants. One is the Star Street Restaurant near Daimaru, serving Dim sum, my hometown food. The other is the Nettai Restaurant in Kawaramachi Shijo, serving Thai and Indonesia food. Amid the pandemic, I am restricted from making a trip overseas including going back to my home country. Instead, I can enjoy delicious foods of my hometown and other countries here in Kyoto.

Additionally, Kyoto City International Foundation helps many international students. Using the Ryugakusei Okoshiyasu Pass*, I would go to many culture facilities in Kyoto such as the Kyoto Zoo and the Nijyojyo Castle for free. For more details, please visit the links below. Why not enjoy and use this pass?

* International Student Okoshiyasu Pass : Issued annually in January to February and in July to August. This card allows one to enter cultural facilities in Kyoto City for free. This card can be used by international students, foreigners attending Japanese schools and Japanese students providing assistance as guides.

kokoka for international students : https://www.kcif.or.jp/kcif_webservice/pages/
International Student Okoshiyasu Pass : https://app.kcif.or.jp/okoshiyasu_pass_ryu/



02 Autumn Foliages in Kyoto | Jimmy (HUI Chun Wai) / FURUTA Tomiyoshi

There are many autumn foliages to see in Kyoto. What I personally recommend that you see is the ones along the trail to the top of Mount Hiei. When I went up the mountain for the first time, I took the ropeway and cable car to get to the peak. On a later occasion, I challenged the route to the peak from the kirara slope road. While I walked along the road, I often saw Japanese maple trees with their leaves turned beautifully red and found various small totoros placed here and there. The scenery, so combined, made me feel the season that much more impressive. For example, my most favorite photo is the one that shows a totoro holding an umbrella, surrounded by fallen leaves. Although there is no way to know who placed a figure of totoro there, it's certainly a place where totoro is most likely to appear. Actually, since various totoros can be seen here and there, it's a perfect place for a photo shoot. When you go hiking and notice little details, you might even get surprising benefits. When you look at adorable things, your daily weariness might melt away, which is why I introduced you to these autumn foliages.



One more recommendation is to see the trees called metasequoia which grow in the eastern area of the Kyoto Gyoen. I had assumed it was an evergreen, but their needle leaves deciduously turn reddish brown and fall. Although metasequoia became extinct in Japan many years ago, young seedlings and seeds were given and planted at various places in Japan. Since metasequoia is very tall, these trees can only be seen in limited areas. The photo shows the metasequoia in Kyoto Gyoen, leaves of which are turning color. Why not come and see them.

03 kokoka Open Day | KOTANI Hitomi

This year too, "kokoka Open Day" will be held. The event has been held on November 3 every year since 2004 to promote the activities of kokoka.

This day will offer exciting and enjoyable events for all age groups such as world gourmet food stalls, world flea markets, the global stage with music, dance & performance. The volunteers of "Life in Kyoto" will introduce panel exhibitions and videos about the history of "Life in Kyoto" and our activities spanning 30 years. There will also be multi-lingual story-telling of kamishibai performed by volunteers which was well received last year. The event will be held with safety measures for preventing the spread of covid-19. We look forward to having you join us!



04 A Beautiful Torii Gate in a Forest

KOSONO Miki

Recently, I've started to walk little by little the Kyoto Trail course to make up for my lack of exercise. Its Fukakusa route is very calm and less people than the neighboring Fushimi route, so you can enjoy a pleasant hike. On this course, there is a shrine called Oiwa Jinja, but now this large site is desolate and it looks like a ruin due to the damage of a typhoon in 2018. If you go there now, you will see broken torii gates and stone lanterns strewn about here and there. As you walk through the quiet forest, you suddenly come across a beautiful torii gate that looks like a gate to another world we see in science fiction movies. When I imagine of a torii gate, red wooden ones or ones made of simple stones usually come to mind.

However, this torii gate is made of bigger stones than usual, and it's densely covered with engravings of Jizo-sama, birds, rabbits, and some unique patterns and letterings. It was as if I'm seeing a beautiful work of art in a museum! That is as it should be, because this torii gate was dedicated by DOMOTO Insho, a famous artist from Kyoto. I love his artwork, but when I look at it in the quietness of the mountain, I can enjoy it in a mysterious atmosphere different from what I can enjoy in a museum. However, there are many signs warning of Japanese pit vipers, so be careful of snakes. Actually, there is another DOMOTO Insho torii gate in the shrine. It's smaller than the one in my photo. Why don't you go to the forest to find it?



05 The Tap Water in Kyoto City

SUZUKI Hidetoshi

What kind of water do you drink regularly? Is it tap water? Or, is it bottled water commercially sold? The tap water in Japan is famous for its drinkability as it is, but it is said the tap water in Kyoto City has especially good taste within Japan. For example, when an experiment to compare the taste of tap water in Kyoto City to the taste of mineral water of Japan and other foreign countries commercially available was carried out in an event in 2017, among 9,683 participants, it seems 3,941 said the tap water had good taste, which was the highest.



By the way, how is the tap water in Kyoto City supplied to your place? The source of most of the tap water for Kyoto City comes from Lake Biwa. The water from Lake Biwa flows through Lake Biwa Canal and is carried to three purification plants in Kyoto City. For the quality of tap water in Japan, standards for 51 criteria such as the content of bacteria and chemical substances, color, and smell are set. At the purification plants, fine dust, mud, microorganisms, etc. are removed from the water which is carried, disinfected, and many other treatments are done to make the tap water that meets these standards. Then, the tap water is supplied to each home from the purification plants through the waterworks.

The tap water in Kyoto City has various good points such as good taste, safe and secure, eco friendly, and cheap. Additionally, October 17 is "The Day of Waterworks" to commemorate the day when the modern water supply system started in Japan. Even if you don't regularly drink tap water, why not try drinking the tap water in Kyoto City?

06 Impound fee increased for bicycles

MURAYAMA Masanao

The heat of summer has eased and the trees are colored. It is the most pleasant time of the year for cycling. Do you know the rules for cyclists in Kyoto City?

The Japanese islands are mountainous, thus lacking flatlands for use. Kyoto, which was the capital of Japan for more than 1000 years, has stricter ordinances on the use of land compared to other cities to protect historical landscapes. For example, bicycle parking is prohibited on almost all the streets in Kyoto City. Imagine that you just had a great time going out and came back to your bike only to find that the bike was gone, and what waits you ahead is a waste of one day to go to the storage and be charged a removal storage fee. Even just thinking about it makes people feel frustrated, isn't it. The impound fee for bicycles has been increased to 3500 yen since October 1, 2021.

In Kyoto City, we operate the "Kyoto City Cycle Site" to prevent foreigners from getting into such troubles. The



site introduces biking rules such as bicycle parking in English, Chinese and Korean and provides information to you about the nearby bicycle parking lots, so please make use of it and have a fun bicycle life.



Kyoto City Cycle Site

https://kyoto-bicycle.com/en/rental_search

* Kyoto City obliges all cyclists to enroll in bicycle insurance.

07 kokoPlaza Letter

"Ukraine Fanbook / the fount of East Slav, the little-known hot country in Central and Eastern Europe"

Author : HIRANO Takashi Publisher : Publib, 2020

Last year, a sister city relationship was established between Kyoto City and Kiev City, Ukraine celebrates its 50th anniversary which was extremely joyful. Check out this guidebook for more fascinating stuff about Ukraine. By the way, kokoka feels like traveling to Ukraine. When can kokoka go?

These items are also available at kokoPlaza.

Books for foreigners

Japanese Language, Japanese law, visas, Japanese culture, sightseeing in Kyoto, newspapers and magazines

Books for Japanese

Overseas travel, extended stays, studying abroad, working holidays and volunteering

[Hours] 9:30~17:00

Closed on Mondays
& last day of every month

[TEL] 075-752-1187

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*Books are not available
for check-out.



08 Multicultural Child-Raising Support Start-up Project | NISHIKI Mie (Editor)

In order to provide culturally-diverse families with a place to meet each other and exchange information, "TABUNKO" group and other members of the Kyoto Multi-culture Support Network will hold events at kokoka Kids Space, kokoPlaza, etc.

1. Provide a space for parents and children (5 times a year)

- ① June 27, 2021 (Sun) 10: 30 - 11: 30
Picture book reading, Fingerplay songs
- ② July 18, 2021 (Sun) 10: 30 - 11: 30
Coffee Talk, chatting with kids.
- ③ October 17, 2021 (Sun) 10: 30 - 11: 30
Picture book reading, Fingerplay songs
- ④ December 19, 2021(Sun) 10: 30 - 11: 30
Celebrating Holidays Event
- ⑤ February 20, 2022(Sun) 10: 30 - 11: 30
Picture book reading, Fingerplay songs

2. Create a network among parents (3 times a year)

- ① October 2021 : A round-table discussion
(Meet, Greet & Share)
- ② October 2021 : Seminar about nursery school
- ③ January 2022 : A lecture about family
language policy and multilingual education

For Application : <https://www.kcif.or.jp/web/en/news/>



* TABUNKO is a group for culturally-diverse ethnic groups, as well as families with multicultural background living in Japan. This group aims at providing support and information for multicultural families and creating a space for information exchange which everyone can easily enjoy.

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/800216074242548/>

* The "Kyoto Multi-culture Support Network" is a network of support groups for foreign people and individuals who conduct activities in the Kyoto and Shiga areas. Its purpose is to build relationships among those groups based on cooperation, work together on site and create a networked environment.

<https://www.kcif.or.jp/web/jp/support/network/>

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Kyoto City International Foundation

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(Open Monday if Monday is a National Holiday)



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Back numers are also available.

<https://www.kcif.or.jp/web/en/publications/#lifeinkyoto>

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