



### News from JNTO Toronto Office

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

# 12

For more events and info, please access  
<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/index.html>

### December

#### 17th-19th

#### Hagoita-Ichi (Battledore Fair)

A lively fair full of Edo sentiments, brightly coloring downtown Tokyo at the year-end. The Hagoita-Ichi (Battledore Fair) is an annual fair held in its precincts at the end of the year. The hagoita sold at Hagoita-ichi, however, are not for practical use; they are, in fact, good-luck charms for ornamental purposes, for they are decorated with gorgeous pictures and accessories.

#### 15th-18th

#### Kasuga Wakamiya On-Matsuri

An elegant festival of traditional performing arts continuously passed down since the 12th Century. The On-Matsuri is a festival held at Wakamiya-jinja Shrine which stands in the precincts of the Kasuga Taisha Grand Shrine. This historic festival continues to be one of the largest annual events of Nara Prefecture, attracting a great many tourists.

#### 31st

#### Oga no Namahage (Oga Namahage Festival)

On New Year's Eve, strange deities holding cooking knives go around visiting homes in Oga. This is an event passed down from ancient times around Oga City, Akita Prefecture. Namahage is the name of the strange deity resembling a demon, known as oni. The Namahage event is derived from the belief that a deity bringing good fortune makes a visit to the village from elsewhere in the New Year.

### Features

Calendar of Events & Festivals.....	1
Discover Okinawa.....	2~3
New Immigration Procedures.....	3
Yokoso! Japan: 2007 Canadian Teacher Study Tour.....	4

### WISHING YOU A WONDERFUL FESTIVE SEASON!



*Warmest regards from the Toronto office of  
Japan National Tourist Organization*

**DISCOVER OKINAWA** – Japan’s southernmost subtropical paradise, awaits you with its balmy weather, proud history, dazzling nature, warm hospitality and much more...

The ‘Discover Okinawa’ event was organized by the Okinawa Convention & Visitors Bureau in Vancouver on Oct 11. Along with their amazing Eisa, Ryukyu and Lion dances, a group of young dancers has brought the sunshine and energy from Okinawa.

## **Menso-re: WELCOME TO OKINAWA**

Okinawa consists of 161 islands and is located between Tokyo and Southeast Asia. It is conveniently accessed by both domestic and international flights. From Tokyo alone, there are about 20 daily flights and flight time is only 2 hours and 30 minutes.

**Why is Okinawa a tropical paradise?** Okinawa is situated in the subtropical climate zone and has comfortable weather for vacationers throughout the year. It is in the same latitude zone as the other famous beach resorts such as Hawaii, the Florida Peninsula, and the Bahamas. With the highest average temperature of 33.4 °C, the average temperature for the year is 22.4 °C, while the winter average is 16 °C and very seldom drops below 10 °C. That makes for nearly perfect weather the whole year!



Cherry trees (sakura) blossom as early as January, and various marine activities are available all year round. Besides the clear blue sky, white sand beaches, emerald seas and beautiful coral reefs, Okinawa has its own serene and exquisite setting in the tropical ocean.

**Why is the history of Okinawa unique?** Okinawa was an independent kingdom called the Ryukyus. Through trade of goods with China, Korea, mainland Japan and Southeast Asia, the region became prosperous. With the influence of traders and travelers from many countries and cultures in the early days, Okinawa has developed its own unique heritage, culture and history. Moreover, the idea of “islands open to the world” still lives on among the Okinawans.

## **Longevity in “Okinawa Program”**

By Dr. Makoto Suzuki, Dr. Bradley Willcox and Dr. Craig Willcox

In Okinawa, the occurrence of heart disease is only one fifth that of American levels. The rate of breast, ovarian and prostate cancers is less than a quarter of American levels. The number of centenarians per hundred thousand is six times that of the United States. Most importantly, Okinawans have the world’s longest disability-free life expectancy.

## **Why do Okinawans live so long?**

The Okinawans elders have found a way to age more slowly and markedly delay or escape the chronic diseases of aging. More of them die a natural death at older ages rather than spend their “golden” years burdened with chronic diseases. For any one individual, life expectancy is ultimately a complex interplay of genetics and lifestyle but it can be roughly categorized as one-third genetics and two-thirds lifestyle. Most of us have genes that will carry us to at





least 85 years and whether we live longer than that depends on our diets, exercise habits, psycho-spiritual practices and access to good health care and social support. The Okinawans have found a way to combine these elements in a healthy way that enables them to outlive those in other countries.

The New York Times bestseller “Okinawa Program” is published by Clarkson Potter, New York. For more information on the Okinawan Centenarian Study, please visit [www.okicent.org](http://www.okicent.org)

## ***Outline of New Immigration Procedures: Requirements for the Provision of Personal Information***

October 2007

Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice

### **1. General Outline**

On 24th May 2006, a new law amending parts of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act was promulgated and is due to enter into force as of November 20, 2007.

The revised law contains new provisions for the establishment of a framework for preventative measures against acts of terrorism. As part of this framework, a new anti-terrorism measure is to be implemented, which requires the submission of personal identification information at immigration control.

Under the new immigration procedures, when foreign nationals are applying for landing, fingerprints and a facial photograph will be taken after which an immigration control officer shall conduct an examination for landing.

In the event of any foreign national, who is required by the new law to be fingerprinted and photographed, refusing to submit to these new provisions, that person will not be permitted to enter Japan, and will be required to leave the country.

### **2. Affected persons**

All foreign nationals entering Japan will be subject to the new provisions, apart from the following:

- (1) Special permanent residents
- (2) Persons under 16 years of age
- (3) Those persons performing activities which fall under the status of residence for ‘Diplomat’ or ‘Official’
- (4) Those persons who have been invited by the head of any national administrative organization
- (5) Those persons who are prescribed by the Ministry of Justice ordinance as equivalent to either (3) or (4)

For more information, please access

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/featuredarticles/JN/immigration/>

Any other enquiry, please contact:  
General Affairs Division, Immigration Bureau  
Ministry of Justice  
1-1-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8977  
Tel: +81 (0) 3-3580-4111

## **Yokoso! Japan: 2007 Canadian Teacher Study Tour**

by Ken Noma, Educational Advisor

Under the leadership of JNTO Toronto office, a total of 8 educators, 5 high school teachers, 2 principals and 1 educational tour organizer/advisor participated in the pilot project sponsored by the Visit Japan Campaign and JNTO. The objective of the tour was to acquaint teachers to the culture, history, geography, education, technology and transportation systems of Japan in order to give them the experience and confidence necessary to organize their own student/teacher tours to Japan in the immediate future. The cities visited were Tokyo, Kyoto and Hiroshima in a whirlwind 8 days and 6 nights. Candidates for the pilot project were selected from among educators who attended the Visit Japan Seminar held in February 2007 at the Toronto Sheraton Centre Hotel.

Sites of particular interest to the educators were: Miyajima Island, Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, [http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/index\\_e2.html](http://www.pcf.city.hiroshima.jp/index_e2.html)

Kyoto Museum for World Peace at Ritsumeikan University, <http://www.ritsumei.ac.jp/eng/profile/peacemuseum/index.shtml>), Sanjusangendo, Sengakuji Temple (grave of the 47 samurai of Ako) and Mount Fuji.

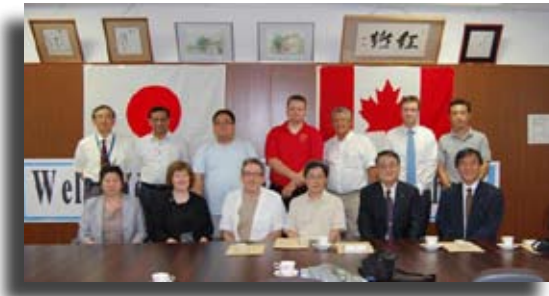
Both major hotels, the New Miyako in Kyoto and the New Takanawa Prince Hotel in Shinagawa received very high reviews for their service and the quality of the meals and their convenient proximity to the rail stations.

Here are some of the teacher comments:

“What an amazing time I had! It was my first time in Japan although I had visited Korea, China and Hong Kong prior to this visit. I was impressed by the cleanliness of Japan, the numbers of people in the train stations and in the city shopping areas, the beauty of the temples and the balance between the past and the present...The Japan Rail Pass was a great travel aide that allowed us to see the country while moving quickly between locations.” Judy Whitfield, Principal, Continuing Education Department, TDSB

“This tour will help me immensely in planning my school trip to Japan. The experiences I have gained will be invaluable for any future trips.” – Mike Stevens, History Teacher, West Hill Collegiate Institute

“This program provides the information and exposure we need to tell students and parents about the activities that would be included in their study tour. It does highlight the important places to go, cultural, historical and social.” – Bev Ohashi, Principal, Earl Haig Secondary School



“I was enthusiastic before the trip but seeing a small taste of Japan and its wonderful culture have whetted my appetite. Gaining practical experience of some (of) the logistics has given me more confidence about taking students to a city of 12 million people. I have so many ideas now for lessons...The trip was an

invaluable resource.” – Fraser Landry, Business Teacher, Bishop Strachan School

“I am going to incorporate most of the places we have visited and my personal experiences in so doing into a curriculum based field trip. I can see great potential in planning around some major concepts in geography and history. I also wish to work on world peace initiative – the two peace museums we visited will come in handy here.” –Omadat Persaud, Curriculum Leader Social Sciences, Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute

All tour members have begun preparations for organizing student and teacher tours to Japan within the next three years and look forward to working closely with the JNTO office here in Toronto. Congratulations to JNTO and Yokoso! Japan Campaign for implementing a bold and successful initiative.

Photo: At Yamashiro High School in Kyoto. Front (L-R): Bev Ohashi (Principal, Earl Haig SS), Judy Whitfield (Principal, TDSB ConEd Dept), Fraser Landry (Bishop Strachan), Ken Noma (Tour Leader/Educational Advisor), Tanino Jiro (Principal, Yamashiro HS), Yamagishi Tadashi (VP, Yamashiro HS). Back (L-R): Dr. Wataru Ozawa (Ritsumeikan University), Omadat Persaud (Marc Garneau CI), Terry Watada (Professor, Seneca College), Mike Stevens (West Hill CI), Unidentified (New Zealand Teacher, Yamahiro HS), Rick Wingfield (AY Jackson SS), Watanabe Ichiro (Yamashiro HS).

**Japan National Tourist Organization**  
481 University Avenue, Suite 306, Toronto, Ontario M5G 2E9

Tel: 416-366-7140, Fax: 416-366-4530

Email: [info@jntoxyz.com](mailto:info@jntoxyz.com)

Website: [www.jnto.go.jp/canada/](http://www.jnto.go.jp/canada/)

For comments & suggestions, please submit to the Editor, Athena Ho at [athena@jntoxyz.com](mailto:athena@jntoxyz.com)