



### News from JNTO Toronto Office

On March 12, 2007, the JNTO Toronto office has moved to:

**481 University Avenue, Suite 306  
Toronto, Ontario M5G 2E9  
Canada**

(North-east corner of University and Dundas)

### Features

News from JNTO Toronto Office.....	1
Calendar of Events & Festivals.....	2
Visit Japan Organizer for Teachers.....	2
Tobu Railway - New Discount Tickets.....	3
Robot Museum in Nagoya.....	3
Marriott.....	4

For celebrating the 2007 Canada-Japan Tourism Exchange Year, please join us at the “Yokoso! Japan Day” on April 18, 2007 at Rogers Centre. \*Ticket contest ended on March 25, 2007.



Visit our new local website: [www.jnto.go.jp/canada](http://www.jnto.go.jp/canada)

### Japan National Tourist Organization

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

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

It's the season for viewing the Cherry Blossoms, for blooming forecast in major cities please visit:  
<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/seasonal/sakura2007/>

We would like to share with you a sakura picture that was taken recently by Mr. Yasumasa Shimizu, our colleague in Tokyo.



### April

#### 1st - 30th Miyako Odori Dance, KYOTO

Since 1872, this event has been held to retain the tradition of performances by geigi (artisans), and maiko, the young geisha apprentice. An excellent opportunity to see a performance of the cherry blossom dance in the Gion district.

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/spn/kyoto/entertainment/index.html>

#### 14th & 15th Spring Takayama Festival, TAKAYAMA, GIFU

In honour of the deities of the Hie Shrine, 12 lavishly decorated, high-wheeled floats parade through the streets of Takayama to the accompaniment of music and song.

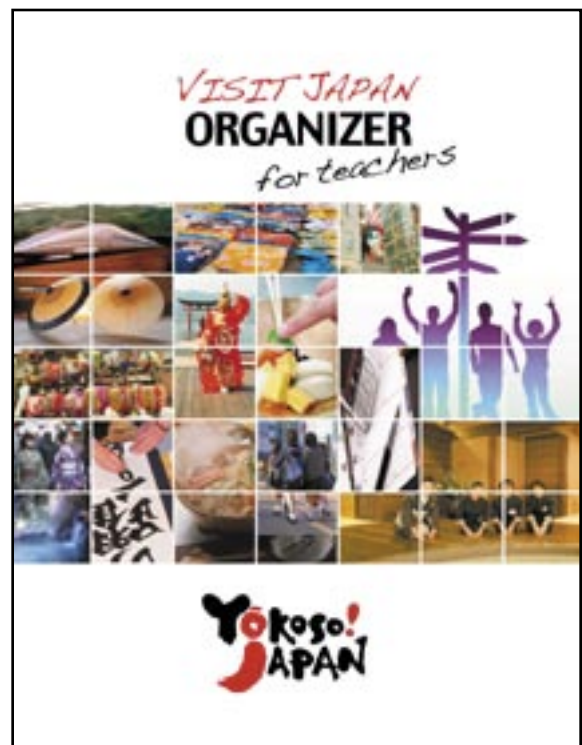
<http://www.hida.jp/english/>

For more events, visit:

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/index.html>

### Visit Japan Organizer for Teachers

For organizing school trips to Japan, our office has published a handbook of 'Visit Japan Organizer for Teachers'.



## ***New Discount Tickets and Accommodation Reservations for Overseas Visitors to Japan***

**T**obu Railway and Tobu Travel have started a new online payment service for limited express “Spacia” tickets and accommodation reservation on January 28, 2007. This is intended to attract more foreign tourists to Nikko and Kinugawa.

When purchasing a limited express “Spacia” ticket together with the discount pass, a 20% discount on limited express fares and special hotel accommodation discounts services are offered. In order to receive a ticket purchased via the Internet, [www.tobuland.com/foreign/](http://www.tobuland.com/foreign/), please follow these procedures:

-Print the web page of “Settlement of account (with the reservation number on)” shown at the completion of online payment procedures.



-Bring the page to “TOBU SIGHTSEEING SERVICE CENTER” in Asakusa Station in order to exchange for a ticket.

“TOBU SIGHTSEEING SERVICE CENTER” is designated as an “i” Tourist Information Office by the Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO). The information bureau has regularly assigned staff to provide information of sightseeing spots such as Nikko and Kinugawa.

For enquiries and information, please contact:

### **TOBU SIGHTSEEING SERVICE CENTER**

Phone: 03-3847-2871

<http://www.tobuland.com/foreign/>

## ***Japan’s First ROBOT MUSEUM Opens in Nagoya***

Nagoya, Japan, October 12, 2006 - Japan’s first ever museum dedicated exclusively to robots, opened in Nagoya, the largest city in Aichi Prefecture (central Honshu), where the 2005 World Exposition, “Aichi Expo” was held. Aichi Expo was the place where many of the Robot Museum’s super-star robots made their international debuts. There are approximately 300 robots at the museum, and a number of them interact with humans by nodding, answering questions, playing games, and provoking the humanoid guests with riddles

At the Robot Museum, visitors are actually involved in making the ‘exhibits’ (robots) work. For example, in the area called Robothink, which charts the history of robotics and the interaction between humans and automatons, visitors use remote controls and the museum’s mobile phones to command robots. You can have a conversation (basic question and answers) with the two legged human-like Nuvo or let the seal-shaped Paro “make you feel better” as it rubs its comforting snout

against you. In fact, you’ll find Paro in the Guinness Book of World Records for being “the most effective robot for healing people.”

An iPod-instructed second floor audio-tour, allows you to connect with an array of futuristic Robosapiens and Mindstorms, and gives you face time with all the main characters. These include: heavy-duty industrial robots; global icons like Robby-the-Robot; and celebrity robots, such as Honda’s ASIMO -- the world’s most advanced humanoid robot; Sony’s AIBO -- the most advanced robot dog.

The museum complex also includes “Famires”(pronounced Fami-res), a family restaurant “of the next century,” and the Robot Mirai Department Store, the world’s largest robot superstore with 2:more than 2,000 items for sale. Yes, here you can even buy your very own Nuvo robot companion!

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Admission: You can enter the Robot Mirai Department store and Famires restaurant free of charge; however, Robothink, the Museum itself costs ¥1,300 (adults); ¥1,000 (junior/senior high school, and 65 and older); ¥700 (children). It's open Monday through Friday 11am-7pm; Saturday, Sunday and National Holidays 10am-8pm, and is located in front of the Nagoya Subway, Sakae Station's Exit #9 (tel. 0120-156-610)

Right now, the plan is for the Robot Museum to be open for three years only. So, get over there while

you can! And, when you do, you'll also enjoy another trio of technology attractions in and around Japan's fourth largest city: the Toyota Museum of Industry and Technology, the Nagoya City Science Museum, and the Toyota Automobile Museum (less than 20 miles east of Nagoya in Toyota City), home to Japan's largest corporation, Toyota. For more information on Nagoya attractions or on other regions of Japan where you can explore cutting-edge science and technology, please visit [www.jnto.go.jp/eng/map/049\\_Nagoya.html](http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/map/049_Nagoya.html) or search at [www.jnto.go.jp](http://www.jnto.go.jp)

## **MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL TO INTRODUCE ITS COURTYARD BRAND FOR UPPER MODERATE TIER TRAVELERS IN JAPAN**

Washington, D.C., January 23, 2007 - Marriott International will introduce its award-winning Courtyard by Marriott hotel brand to the Japanese travel market in April, 2007 under a franchise agreement reached with Tobu Hotel Management Company, Ltd., announced Ed Fuller, president & managing director-international lodging for Marriott International.

Under the agreement, the existing 206-room Renaissance Tokyo Hotel Ginza Tobu will be converted to the Courtyard by Marriott Tokyo Ginza Hotel in connection with an extensive renovation program.

Marriott's Courtyard brand is the company's moderately-priced, limited-service brand that has long been referred to as "the hotel designed for business travelers by business travelers." Courtyard hotels are aimed primarily at business travelers who seek moderately-priced, high-quality accommodations that offer consistent quality.

"We are excited to introduce Courtyard in Japan," Mr. Fuller said. "Because of the changing requirements of the Japanese and international business traveler, we are confident that this Courtyard will be enormously successful."

The hotel, which originally opened in 1987, is located on Tokyo's premier Showa-Dori Avenue in Tokyo's world-renowned Ginza district. It is surrounded by local office buildings, shops and restaurants and easy transportation access to Shimbashi.

Introduced in 1983, Marriott's Courtyard brand now boasts more than 700 hotels in more than 25 countries and has grown into the world's 13th largest lodging brand.

### **Former Renaissance Tokyo Hotel Ginza Tobu to Be Rebranded In Connection with Extensive Renovation Program**

In addition to the Ginza hotel, the Marriott International portfolio in Japan is represented by seven properties. These include the 208-room Renaissance Naruto resort; the 392-room Renaissance

Okinawa Resort; the 323-room Renaissance Sapporo Hotel; the 781-room Nagoya Marriott Hotel; the 361-room Okinawa Marriott Resort & Spa; the 292-room The Ritz-Carlton, Osaka; and the 99-unit Atago Forest Tower Marriott Executive Apartments for extended stay travelers. In addition, the 247-room The Ritz-Carlton, Tokyo and the 244-unit The Park Residences at The Ritz-Carlton, Tokyo are both scheduled to open in April 2007.

For more information or reservations, please visit Marriott web site at [www.marriott.com](http://www.marriott.com)