EXPERIENCE NAGASAKI

Tradition and Modernity Meet at Japan’s First Gateway to the West

MIYAVI
The Globetrotting Musician Prepares to Take a New Stage

EDUCATION SPECIAL
Communities of Learning, in the Classroom and beyond

HIDEAKI ANNO
The Director of Evangelion Headlines the Tokyo International Film Festival

ALSO: Getting in Touch with the Natural Beauty of Akita, Yuta Tabuse: the NBA Ambassador, People, Parties, and Places, and Much More
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OCTOBER 2014

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www.tokyoweekender.com OCTOBER 2014
One of the great debates in Japanese society today is about how the country can internationalize and be more of an active player on the global stage. While policy makers appear to be at ends about how to achieve this goal, they would be well served to look back in history and look west, to the prefecture of Nagasaki.

Given its close proximity to mainland Asia, it is no surprise that Nagasaki was one of the first places where the peoples of Korea, China, and Japan first came into contact with each other, and the trade that has flowed between these nations has been a thriving affair for more than a thousand years. Nagasaki was also famously the first place where Europe and Japan met, which eventually wove a variety of Western influences—scientific and religious—into the fabric of Japanese culture.

This month we take a long look at Nagasaki, from its thriving port cities—Nagasaki and Sasebo—to the historical charm and natural beauty of Hirado and Unzen. Our trip through the region brought us a few surprises, and we imagine you'll find a few yourself as you navigate your way through our Nagasaki Special.

Back here in Tokyo, preparations are well under way for the 27th annual Tokyo International Film Festival. TIFF is focusing its attention on one of Japan’s best-known exports—anime—this year, and devoting a program to the work of the celebrated anime director Hideaki Anno. We were able to sit down with Anno as he weighed in on the state of the art today, and on his early work alongside Studio Ghibli’s Hayao Miyazaki. We also talk with the captivating rock star Miyavi, who was recently tapped by Angelina Jolie for a major film project, take a peek at some of the latest art openings, and much, much more.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue even more than we did putting it together. See you next month.
On behalf of the Japanese Sake and Shochu Makers’ Association, you are cordially invited to a guided tour of the sake experience, free of charge.

Take an interactive journey alongside renowned wine and sake consultant Kenichi Ohashi, as he explains the features and flavors that make up some of Japan’s most celebrated sakes. As a part of a brief lecture, you will learn about the sake making process, the different taste profiles of the many different types of nihonshu, and have the opportunity to sample a variety of rare sakes from around Japan.

Seats are limited to the first 100 respondents. To reserve your place, please send an email to James K. Toda at sake@tokyoweekender.com by October 10.

Time: Friday, November 4, 2014, from 19:00 to 21:00

Location: Café Serre, 104-0045 Tōkyō-to, Chuō-ku, Tsukiji 1-13-1, Ginza Shōchiku Square 2F
Spend a few hours on Tokyo’s streets, and it’s not hard to see that Evangelion rules the Japanese anime scene. Whether you see them peering down from billboards and pachinko parlors or staring out from the covers of magazines, the hulking purple EVA robot and pilots Ayanami Rei, Asuka Soryu Langley, and Ikari Shinji seem to be everywhere. The impact of the 1995–96 series on the anime world, and on pop culture itself, makes Evangelion’s creator, Hideaki Anno, one of the most important men in an industry that dominates Japan’s modern cultural landscape.

With this month’s Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) aiming to shine a spotlight on Japanese animation, whom better to focus on than Anno, an animator whose career spans over thirty years and reaches beyond his most famous creation to include award-winning animation, live-action features, and acting roles. Speaking to Weekender from the Khara Inc. offices, the company that he founded and where he sits as president, Anno opened up about a life in animation.

Early in his career the young animator was given a chance to help out on Hayao Miyazaki’s Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind, creating the impressive “God Warrior” in the groundbreaking animated movie. When asked what words of advice he received from the animation master, he recalls words of guidance both practical and profound: “He gave me a lot of technical tips, but he also reminded me that ‘our minds are set to create things.’ He also told me not to worry too much about sleep!”

TIFF’s focus on both Anno and animation in general is timely, coming as it does so soon after Studio Ghibli, for so long a major force in the industry, has announced it no longer has any works planned or in production. But the man who Miyazaki cites as his protégé never had the feeling that he would succeed Miyazaki at the storied studio: “I didn’t have the notion of Ghibli as an independent thing; rather, Studio Ghibli and Miyazaki-san are so closely connected. I always thought that, when Miyazaki stops working, Studio Ghibli will close. There was no notion that it was going to grow by itself.”
“[Miyazaki] gave me a lot of technical tips, but he also reminded me that ‘our minds are set to create things.’ He also told me not to worry too much about sleep!”

The animator’s directorial debut was the extremely popular direct-to-video GunBuster (known in Japanese as Toppu wo Nerai)—also an anime featuring giant robots and a young girl tasked with operating a machine in order to save the human race from a mysterious alien foe. This would be followed by the Animage Anime Grand Prix–winning television series Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water. When asked what he learned from GunBuster, and what aspects of it he wanted to carry over onto subsequent projects, he thought for a while before responding. “That’s a difficult question. When I made GunBuster, I was trying to make it simple and entertaining, but it was an inflation of Gundam [Perhaps the mother of all giant robot anime] in a way and it was complicated but I wanted to make it a little bit simpler. And that’s the intention of Evangelion—somehow it came out a little complicated but that wasn’t my intention. Eventually, as it came out, it become more complicated than I wanted it to be.”

It’s interesting that with Evangelion and a lot of Japanese animation work, much of it is not specifically aimed at children, yet the main protagonists are often kids, particularly young girls, contrasting with western work were the principal characters are often much older, and the heroes are so often male. Anno makes an interesting case fore the use of children in his own work. Anno makes an interesting, and surprisingly practical, case for the use of children in his own work. “I just want to make the anime real. If grown-ups were getting ready to pilot a robot, if you were old enough or wise enough—you wouldn’t do that, you would think better of it! So in order to keep that reality you need the protagonists to not be elementary school age, and not high school age—but junior high school students would be naive enough to climb up on a robot!”

Neon Genesis Evangelion first aired in 1995 and told the story of the pilots and support staff of a facility created to fight mysterious “Angels” that are attacking the earth. The show features religious imagery and complex themes from the start, culminating with the final two episodes being completely abstract in form and taking place inside the head of lead character Shinji. Although Gainax, a company that Anno cofounded, made the series, I wonder if there was anyone above him at the time who panicked at the thought of ending the series this way. Again Anno is quick to answer but includes a caveat in his response: “No, there was not that reaction. The production team was working and communicating closely; therefore there was no friction whatsoever. They were saying ‘come on, let’s go for it!’ That was the reaction, apart from the producer of the TV station.”

Anno was aware that he was doing something quite daring and bold with the series and goes on to reveal a surprising plan of action he had to deal with its difficult finale. “Actually I pitched an even bolder idea—we thought we would not be able to produce and fill that 30 minute time slot, so we—myself and the producer—were going to apologize for 30 minutes on live TV, but then even our ‘apologizing plan’ was turned down.” After the airing of these two episodes there was quite the backlash and Anno himself received abuse and death threats from certain quarters. He didn’t seem fazed by the anger, though: “I was expecting stronger negative feelings!”

Famously he included some of the death threats on screen in 1997’s The End of Evangelion, a film that attempted to clarify the story’s ending, if only slightly: “As the series goes on I simplify things more and more; probably in terms of story it gets messy but actually the theme is delivered to the audience by simplifying things extremely. Those who were looking for a story were upset, but those who were searching for a theme were content, I guess.”

This seems fitting, as one of Evangelion’s qualities has always been its unanswered questions. So how does the man in charge decide which questions
to answer and which not and are audiences expectations ever taken into consideration?

“I don’t make it by myself. Often things are tweaked through discussions with the production team. We don’t dare to listen to the audience but we share their feelings, so in that sense the production will change slightly.” Another key feature of the series is its use of occidental religious imagery—Christianity and Judaism, for example—that far overwhelms any symbolism drawn from Japan’s native religions. It turns out that this has more to do with the visual impact than any spiritual significance: “From the Japanese personal point of view, western religious imagery is more mysterious than Buddhist or Shinto which is a part of our daily life: that’s why I chose the western elements.”

Along with his animated hits Anno has made several live-action features, including the excellent drama Ritual, which chronicles the relationship of a disillusioned film director and a mysterious young woman. While the film feels like a very intense, personal work, Anno insists it wasn’t based on his own experience but “more on the feelings that I had that I hoped would be reflected.” The director character in the film—whom Anno admits to identifying with—at one point delivers a cutting monologue: “In Japan today all forms of expression beginning with images serve only as either time killing entertainment for those without occupation or a momentary respite for those who are afraid of pain.” Anno confirms these words as his own belief: “That is exactly what I thought. That’s the words from the heart and so I couldn’t lie.”

While being an accomplished director, Anno has also managed to get a good deal of acting experience under his belt, the most high profile role being the lead in his mentor Hayao Miyazaki’s final film, last year’s The Wind Rises. Despite the weight of the role he is pragmatic about the work: “I was just trying to satisfy Miyazaki-san as that’s what he asked me to do. I wasn’t following any kind of acting plan, I just wanted to help him.” As for Miyazaki’s choice of final film he says, “I was happy with it; I thought it was good, but I’d like to see one more from him.”

Given Anno’s links to Studio Ghibli, he appeared on stage with head honcho Toshio Suzuki at a recent TIFF press conference and it was Suzuki who encouraged him to work with the festival. Is there any chance he might step in and make a film under the Ghibli banner? “No, Thank you!” comes his definitive answer, and he also swiftly dispatches any rumors of a sequel to Nausicaä being made.

With the fourth, and final, film in the Evangelion film series scheduled for release next year, along with the 20th anniversary of the release of the original series there should be some major celebrations in the works, but if there is, its creator isn’t giving anything away.

Do you have any plans for the 20th anniversary of Evangelion?
“That’s not my job!”
What’s the plan after Evangelion is over?
“I’m thinking now!”
A return to TV, a film?
“Haha, no comment!”

While the director is keeping his cards close to his chest, when it comes to future projects he ends with some wise words for any animators hoping to make their own impact in the competitive world of anime: “An animator is a photographer, animator, actor, everything is in one person. In order to widen your world you need to experience more and force yourself to experience new things; otherwise your creation will only get smaller and smaller.”
BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY
TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL RETURNS FOR ITS 27TH INSTALLMENT

It’s that time of year again when the Tokyo International Film Festival (TIFF) takes over local cinema screens to bring a huge selection of films to movie-loving audiences. From homegrown fare to foreign hits, independent works to blockbusters of the future, everything is covered and with this year’s special focus on animation there’s no better way to catch up with what’s going on in the Japanese film scene. The event kicks off October 23 with its annual Opening Carpet ceremony where a parade of Japan’s biggest stars, and some major Hollywood special guests, head down to Roppongi Hills for the opening screening. Last year’s glitzy event included appearances from Tom Hanks, Paul Greengrass, Sofia Coppola and Kill Bill star Chiaki Kuriyama, and an equally impressive lineup is expected this year. Here’s a look at some of the highlights announced so far.

THE WORLD OF HIDEAKI ANNO
The celebrated animator [see page] may be most famous for his hugely successful television anime series Neon Genesis Evangelion and its subsequent big-screen reimaginings, but the talented director is no one-trick-pony as this retrospective of more than 40 of his works can attest. The surprisingly dark and complex tale of Evangelion is one of the most celebrated works in anime history; check it out before the fourth and final entry in the series drops next year. For something a little lighter than the apocalyptic Evangelion, Gunbuster is a hugely enjoyable anime series, and the first that saw Anno take over as director. With its beach training montages and sunglassed military men, it’s a fist-pumping 80s delight, telling the story of a young girl chosen to pilot a robot and blast into space to defeat the Earth’s enemies.

While most famous for his anime work, Anno has also been at the helm of several live-action features, including LOVE & POP, an adaptation of a Ryu Murakami novel and Cutie Honey, based on the classic manga and anime character. The most accomplished of these features has to be the dream-like Ritual which charts the relationship between a disillusioned director and a strange young woman he finds lying on railroad tracks who claims everyday that “tomorrow is my birthday.” Tickets for “The World of Hideaki Anno” go on sale 12:00 on October 11 at www.tiff-jp.net

OPENING FILM
TIFF kicks off this year with the world premiere of Disney’s latest, the Japanese anime-influenced Big Hero 6. Taking place in the futuristic city of San Fransokyo, young robotics whiz kid Takashi fights crime with the help of big, cuddly robot Baymax.

CLOSING FILM
Based on Hitoshi Iwaaki’s popular 90s manga, Parasyte tells the story of invading aliens, known as Parasites, which take over the brains of their human hosts. When high-school student Shinichi, played by Himizu’s Shota Sometani, is attacked, the parasite fails to reach his brain, instead burrowing into his arm. Shinichi and the bizarre creature form a special bond and work together to fight off the alien invaders.

SPECIAL SCREENINGS
The Special Screenings section of the festival is host to major films, both from Japan and abroad. This year will include a special screening of footage from Tim Burton’s latest, Big Eyes, the Japan Premiere of Jon Favreau comedy-drama Chef, and The Raid 2: Berandal, sequel to the incredible, hard-hitting original. Also on offer are a couple of world premieres from fan-favorite Ghost in the Shell director Mamoru Oshii.

SPECIAL SCREENING AT KABUKIZA THEATRE—CHAPLIN’S CITY LIGHTS
The legendary Charlie Chaplin visited Japan in the 30s, and the star of stage and silent screen was greatly enamored by the theatricality of kabuki. The Kabukiza theatre in Ginza, which opened to the public for the first time in 1889—the year of Chaplin’s birth—will be holding a kabuki performance, which will be followed by a special screening of the Little Tramp’s classic comedy City Lights.
Michel Gondry’s innovative films and iconic music videos—such as “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind” and Bjork’s “Human Behavior”—invite us into a curious, dream-like world. Yet despite fantastical scenery and far-fetched ideas, Gondry’s imaginary landscape is familiar, woven from the same threads that run through all our lives: love, loss, and escape.

This exhibition celebrates both the genius and the germane, and is divided into two parts: one celebrating the acclaimed artist (as we see him), the other recognizing the amateur film lover (as Gondry sees himself). These two aspects overlap, in the exhibition’s execution as well as the audiences experience. “They are two sides of the same coin,” said MOT curator Hikari Odaka. “They basically stem from the same root—his aspirations for surprising and entertaining himself.”

Surprises and entertainment await museum-goers, as well, no matter what your previous experience with Gondry’s work. For newcomers, Odaka recommends beginning with “Home Movie Factory,” an interactive exhibition allowing audiences to use Gondry’s own method to write, cast, produce and film their own movie within a 3-hour window, utilizing 12 different film sets, special effects and props unique to Gondry’s world.
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Willem de Kooning is a major figure in Abstract Expressionism, a contemporary of Jackson Pollock, whose works are known for their vigorous, forceful brushstrokes. His paintings mark a meeting ground for allegory and abstraction. This exhibition centers on a series of paintings of women from the 1960s, originally from the collection of John Powers and his wife Kimiko, who enjoyed a close, personal relationship with the artist. As such, their contribution represents a rarely-exhibited and largely unknown portion of the artist's oeuvre. Combined with de Kooning's oil paintings, water colors and sketches culled from various Japanese museums' collections, this exhibition represents an unprecedented look at the artist's life and work, never before seen in Japan.

There is a reason why we call certain works "masterpieces," and the National Art Center in Tokyo is currently home to the first large-scale introduction of 74 such masterworks, from one of Switzerland's finest art museums, the Kunsthaus Zürich. A clear and brilliant draw is Monet's "The Water Lily Pond in the Evening," a six-meter wide canvas unrivaled in beauty and breadth. Yet contenders abound, with numerous works by Marc Chagall, as well as pieces from household names Picasso, Dalí, Matisse, Miró, Cézanne, Rousseau, Klee and Munch, alongside Swiss treasures Ferdinand Hodler, Alberto Giacometti and Oskar Kokoschka. A truly stunning line-up, and an eye-opening exhibition.

Tsubota Masahiko (b. 1947)

Preliminary prints and paintings by Tsubota Masahiko is known as the artist who removes everything but the necessary. His son has followed in his footsteps.

Tsubota Masayuki (b. 1976)

Woodblocks and sculpture

Why not treat yourself to the best in Opera, Ballet, Dance & Drama.

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**2014/2015 Season Opera Lineup**

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you wend your way past plains and mountains, and by streams and forests. And wherever your adventures take you, you can be sure that one of the region’s many onsen—natural hot springs—will be waiting for you at the end of the day, to soothe tired muscles and sore feet.

**SHOWER CLIMBING—GOING AGAINST THE FLOW**

If you’ve ever watched a salmon flinging itself up against the current of a swiftly moving river and said to yourself, “That’s something that I’d like to try,” then the daredevil activity known as shower climbing might just be the sport for you.

Shower climbing is also known as sawanobori, or “river climbing,” and simply explained, it involves everything that you would imagine “climbing” a river might: ascending waterfalls, swimming through river gorges, hiking, practitioners use climbing harnesses, helmets, and neoprene suits, making the experience far safer overall. One place where you can try your hands and feet at this adventure sport is in the area near Tazawako, in the south of Akita. And while sawanobori taken to its extreme has a high element of danger, the introduction to shower climbing that is run through Tazawako Outdoor Tour is as much about cooling down and going along with the current as it is about pitting yourself against the forces of gravity and your own sense of fear.

**CANOERING ON COBALT BLUE**

If you’re in the mood for a slightly slower-paced opportunity to commune with the elements, we recommend a canoe tour on Lake Tazawa. With a depth of 423 meters (1,388 feet), Tazawako is the deepest lake in the country, and it is known for the striking color of its cobalt blue waters, as well as the legends that its great depths have inspired. The same group that offers the sawanobori experience on the nearby mountain streams also runs a series of canoe (and kayak) excursions on the lake.

From the eastern shore of Tazawako you can take a half-day tour or an evening “sunset tour” across the lake’s limpid waters. Even people who have never taken oar in hand should quickly find themselves at ease as they learn how to control their crafts, either by themselves or as part of a two-person team.

Spending a half day on the water truly puts you in touch with the rhythms of placid Tazawako, and at times you’ll feel as if you were not only hundreds of miles away from Tokyo, but at least a hundred years back in time. But on a clear evening, the sunset canoe tour is a magical experience, and one that you won’t quickly forget. As the sun lowers over the opposite shore of Tazawako, the darkening waters of the lake contrast brilliantly with the reds of the end of the day, fading to grey as you make your way back to dry land. But you shouldn’t be forced to choose between one of the two tours: If you’re in the area for more than a day—and we recommend it, as the area also offers plenty of hiking and trekking courses—you should try both the half-day and the sunset tour.

“Wherever your adventures take you, you can be sure that one of the region’s many onsen will be waiting for you at the end of the day, to soothe tired muscles and sore feet.”

and whatever else you’d need to do in order to reach a stream’s source.

Japan’s combination of rocky terrain and agreeable climate were part of the reason that shower climbing developed in the country, and has grown in popularity over the years. Still, it must have taken an individual with a penchant for thinking differently—or paying very close attention to salmon.

The first river climbers took a minimalist approach to their gear, choosing to perform their ascents with nothing but a pair of straw sandals, but current

**MORE INFORMATION**

For more information about trekking courses around Akita:


The Tazawako Shizen Taiken Center offers a sawanobori course (June 28 to September 15), as well as canoe/kayak tours of Tazawa-ko. Half-day tours are available from April 26 to November 3, and the sunset tours are led from June 28 to September 14. For more information, visit:

- [www.tazawako.net/tour/shower.html](http://www.tazawako.net/tour/shower.html) (sawanobori)
- [www.tazawako.net/tour/pg265.html](http://www.tazawako.net/tour/pg265.html) (canoe/kayak)

Akita’s official Facebook page:

- [www.facebook.com/discover.akita](http://www.facebook.com/discover.akita)
It only lasted ten minutes, yet for the large number of Japanese reporters in the stands the long journey had definitely been worthwhile. On November 3, 2004 the country’s new sporting hope had delivered. Yuta Tabuse, the first – and still only – Japanese player to appear in the NBA, came off the bench to score seven points, including a three pointer, in his debut game for the Phoenix Suns against the Atlanta Hawks.

The 34-year-old, who is currently preparing for the new Japan Basketball League season with his team, Link Tochigi Brex, went on to play just three more games in America’s top league, but that brief stint amongst the world’s elite was an experience he’ll never forget.

“It was a crazy time,” he tells us. “When I was little my dad used to tape NBA games for me, now here I was playing in it.” Everything about it was just amazing, the five star hotels, cars, eating octopus with Shawn Marion, banter with teammates, it was great. They used to call me the Michael Jordan of Japan. Of course I didn’t take it seriously—the only thing they knew about Japan was sushi—but I was still happy to hear it. I also heard my page had more views than Kobe Bryant, it was just unbelievable.”

With nearly 40,000 hits in one day, Tabuse set what was then a preseason record for daily views to a player page, more than doubling the previous record held by Bryant. A marketer’s dream, he remained in the public eye, even after being released by the Suns, appearing on the 2005 Japanese limited edition cover of the NBA live video game, despite not playing a single NBA game that season.

Cynics would argue he was more effective off the court in America than he was on it, and they’d probably be right; however, that doesn’t mean we should underplay his achievements. A 5’9” basketball player from Japan, he knew the odds would be stacked against him, yet nothing would deter him from pursuing his dream. Following in the footsteps of players like Muggsy Bogues and Earl Boykins, he showed you didn’t necessarily have to be six foot plus to play in the NBA.

“I don’t feel short, apart from when I look at photos of myself with other players; then I look tiny,” he says laughing. “Growing up I always wanted to beat the bigger guys, but I never felt my height was a major issue.”
“Everything about the NBA was just amazing, the five star hotels, cars, eating octopus with Shawn Marion, banter with teammates, it was great.”

“In America being smaller actually proved to be an advantage in some ways. It helps get you noticed. I remember one game against the Pacers, Ron Artest—now known as Metta World Peace—talking to me when I was on the bench, ‘hey, can you play? I want to watch you.’ All my teammates were laughing, but it shows that people are keen to see what shorter players can do. It was a similar situation with [Yuki] Togashi this summer, there was real anticipation every time he came on and lots of excitement whenever he scored.”

The 5’7” Togashi quickly became a fan favorite after appearing for the Dallas Mavericks in the NBA Summer League. Whether he has what it takes to make the step up to the NBA proper remains to be seen, though Tabuse believes he has a chance. Another fellow countryman he’s been impressed by is Yuta Watanabe. A foot taller than Togashi, the 19-year-old committed to George Washington this year, becoming the only student-athlete from Japan to secure an NCAA Division I basketball scholarship.

“Togashi and Watanabe are very good prospects: both of them have what it takes to go far in the game,” Tabuse says. “I’d like to see more players from Japan follow in their footsteps and try to make it in the States or Europe. Basketball in this country needs more role-models, trying to raise the profile of the game. The sport is not given enough publicity here, so after I retire my plan is to promote basketball in Japan.”

Brex fans needn’t fret, Tabuse has no plans to call time on his career just yet, in fact he plans to play on until he’s in his forties. Readying himself for season number seven with Tochigi, he has been working on new moves such as the floater during the summer break. No doubt he’ll be looking to execute some of them during the Tochigi Brex’s opening game of the season against the Toshiba Brave Thunders on October 10.

TABUSE ON...

Magic Johnson He was my hero growing up. I would always watch the Lakers games then try to recreate his moves.

Michael Cooper It was amazing being coached by someone I idolized. One of my earliest memories was watching him in the 1988 Finals vs. the Pistons.

Steve Nash The best player I played with and a fantastic person. He took care of me even though it was unclear whether I’d make the roster or not.

Chris Paul He’s the player I enjoy watching the most at the moment. A real leader for the Clippers, there’s an intensity to his game that is great to watch.
Sitting at the far westernmost edge of Japan’s westernmost island, Nagasaki boasts some of Japan’s most unique scenery, history, and culture. This long strip of land, with its twisting coast and hundreds of islands, is home to a range of outdoor activities and breathtaking views both day and night. Thanks to a long history of cultural exchange, Nagasaki developed a unique culture—still distinctly Japanese, but with strong influences from China, Korea, and the West. Even when Japan closed its doors to the West, here in Nagasaki the flow of people and ideas never stopped. Since the first Japanese mission to China in 607 AD, and likely before it, Nagasaki has been Japan’s gate to the world. Whether exploring the countryside, or wandering its cities, the remarkable variety of Nagasaki’s culture, cuisine, people, and scenery offers surprises around every corner.

LAND OF A THOUSAND VIEWS
With everything from rolling hills and pastures, lush forested mountains, steep seaside cliffs, and tiny islands and beaches, Nagasaki offers an abundance of scenery and outdoor activities. Home to Japan’s first national park and westernmost marine park, Nagasaki has a long history of valuing and protecting its natural heritage. Unzen-Amakusa National Park on Nagasaki’s southern Shimabara Peninsula has for years been a haven of hikers, birdwatchers, and naturalists. With its unique plant and wildlife, fresh mountain air and impressive views over the hills and sea, not to mention a historic onsen town, it is the perfect place for hiking and relaxing. To the north, the Saikai Marine National Park encompasses more than 400 islands. Here visitors can take a boat through the coves and inlets of the Kujuku Islands, see dolphins and some of the park’s...
Thanks to a long history of cultural exchange, Nagasaki developed a unique culture—still distinctly Japanese, but with strong influences from China, Korea, and the West.

Japanese capital. Meant in part to show off the country’s wealth and culture, these delegations were elaborate affairs, with diplomats, merchants, scholars and servants bearing goods and ideas from the mainland. At the same time, while Japan was beginning to close its doors on the Western world, Nagasaki Port opened its gates to trade from China. During Japan’s so-called two centuries of isolation, trade with its Asian neighbors flourished and the city was home to some 10,000 Chinese residents.

This long exchange of culture, goods, and ideas with Asia is evident in Nagasaki today, with Nagasaki City’s Shinichi Chinatown standing as its most obvious example. Visitors are welcomed by its vermilion-lacquered Chinese gates, leading to a world of narrow streets, with restaurants and shops selling everything from Chinese medicine to toys to traditional fireworks. In February, Shinichi Chinatown holds the lantern festival, bathing the town in the mysterious glow of more than 15,000 paper lanterns to celebrate the lunar new year. Nagasaki’s ties with Asia, though, are not limited to one neighborhood. Chinese-style architecture is spread throughout the area, seen in temples and bridges, and in the spread of Nagasaki’s unique blend of Chinese and Japanese cuisine.

Though more recent, Nagasaki’s ties to the West date back more than 450 years. In 1550 the first Portuguese ships landed at Hirado, heralding the beginning of Nagasaki’s role as a center
of new ideas and technology. With the Portuguese ships came not only new and exotic goods, but new beliefs: missionaries accompanied the merchants. Christianity never became widespread in Japan, but here in Nagasaki, and especially Hirado, belief was strong. After the religion was outlawed in 1612, Nagasaki’s Christians worshipped in secret, passing down beliefs in the form of oratio—religious songs—for more than 250 years. It was not until Japan once again opened to the West and two French priests built what is now Oura Catholic Church that these hidden Christians revealed themselves. Their legacy is visible in the number of churches throughout Nagasaki. But not all new ideas were unwelcome, and when Japan closed its doors to the Western world, it left open a window. For more than 200 years Dejima, an artificial island in Nagasaki Harbor, became Japan’s one port of trade with Europe. Through this trading enclave came new technologies, goods, and knowledge.

After Commodore Perry’s Black Ships forced Japan to open its ports, Nagasaki, poised to become one of the nation’s centers of trade and industry, spearheaded Japan’s industrialization. Thanks in part to merchants and industrialists, Nagasaki became home to Japan’s first modern coal mine, first giant electric crane, and the center of Japan’s shipbuilding industry. Thomas Glover, one of the leading traders of the time, offered arms and support to the Choshu and Satsuma clans who would eventually usher in Japan’s Meiji Restoration, becoming leaders of a new, more open, Japan.

Nagasaki was not only a center of trade. Thanks to this long history of international exchange, Nagasaki has a very welcoming and open atmosphere. In fact, it is a point of pride in Nagasaki, this willingness to accept people and ideas from all over the world.

FUSION CUISINE AHEAD OF ITS TIME

With its abundant nature and long history of interaction with different cultures, it is no wonder that Nagasaki has such a varied and unique cuisine. With its long shoreline and innumerable inlets, coves, and islands, Nagasaki is home to Japan’s second largest catch and a stunning array of seafood. On land, born of Nagasaki’s soil and rich pastures come a range of vegetables—it is Japan’s second largest producer of potatoes—and the newly famous Nagasaki wagyu beef. Virtually unknown until winning top prize at the 2012 “Wagyu Olympics,” Nagasaki beef has become one of the most sought-after varieties of wagyu. The mineral-rich pastureland of Nagasaki gives this perfectly marbled beef a softly savory taste.

Nagasaki is best known, however, for its unique cuisine, which mixes influences from Japan, China, and the West. Nagasaki champon—a thick and filling ramen-like noodle soup heaped with seafood, meat, and vegetables—and the Sasebo burger are excellent, and hearty, fare. For a more cultured fusion cuisine dating back to the Edo period, Nagasaki offers up its famed shippoku cuisine. Originating as a type of home cooking in Nagasaki’s Chinese quarter, as the style spread it evolved into a lavish banquet. Shippoku is served in a family-style setting, with diners sitting around a special round table to help foster a sense of sharing and closeness among the diners. Now incorporating Japanese, Chinese, and Western influences, shippoku symbolizes Nagasaki’s mix of cultures more than any other cuisine does.

With such a variety and depth of history and culture, such an abundance of beauty and nature, Nagasaki takes hold of the heart and imagination. To visit Nagasaki is to experience not only the essence of Japanese culture, but to see a place where it has coexisted and mixed with others from around the globe. It is amazing to think that this strip of land on the westernmost edge of Kyushu is one of the most truly international places in Japan. And what once took merchants, missionaries, and scholars weeks and months of travels is now just a short flight away.
EvolvEVOLUTIOONARY Vision

Nagasaki Governor Houdou Nakamura looks to the prefecture’s future while maintaining a strong sense of the region’s past

“"This is a wonderful prefecture with a rich history and culture, one that has always embraced the West.""

The world’s Top Three night Views. [The other two are said to be in Monaco and Hong Kong]. In April 2015 Sasebo will also open an international terminal.

We heard that you are working on a World Heritage project. Can you tell us what exactly that is?
Towards 2015 and 2016, Nagasaki has two candidates that are being considered for World Heritage status. They are “The Sites of Japan’s Meiji Industrial Revolution” and “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki." Our team is working on both projects.

As you may know, Japan effectively imported the “Industrial Revolution” from the end of the Edo period. Over the 50 years between 1860 to 1910, we became a modernized nation—the speed at which this happened was extraordinary and has rarely been seen before.

Tell us more about “Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki?”
Nagasaki became an important center for Japanese missionary work after Christianity was introduced to the country in the mid-16th century and was even known as "Little Rome" during that period.

Despite fierce government oppression, the Christians of Nagasaki continued to practice their faith in secret for 250 years. The villages, where believers worshipped in secret, continue to tell their unique story. Their story is remarkable and I believe it deserves to be told.

These World Heritage contenders that I spoke about earlier are just two examples of how Nagasaki opened up to the rest of the world. This is a wonderful prefecture with a rich history and culture, one that has always embraced the West. We also have some delightful islands such as Iki, Tsushima, Goto and Hirado.

We’d like even more people to find out about the history and the present of Nagasaki, and we invite English-language speakers to find out more about the prefecture on the official “Visit Nagasaki” website: www.visit-nagasaki.com
Traces of Time Past in Nagasaki

One of the first ports to open to the West, Nagasaki was one of Japan's centers of both industry and Christianity—a legacy that can still be seen in its houses, harbor, and churches today.

GLOVER HOUSE & GARDENS
In 1859, the year that Japan opened Nagasaki to western trade, a 21-year-old Scottish merchant arrived from Shanghai, little knowing the role he was to play in shaping the future of Japan. With a keen eye for opportunity, Thomas Blake Glover started business exporting green tea to the US, but seeing Japan's need for modern technology, he quickly expanded to more industrial pursuits. During the years leading up to the Meiji Restoration, he secretly supplied the Satsuma and Choshu clans—later to become important powers in the new Meiji government—with arms and assistance, going so far as to have a hidden room in his home where revolutionaries could hide out. He was a man of firsts, bringing Japan its first steam locomotive and first modern dry dock for shipbuilding, as well as opening its first modern coal mine. He helped found the shipbuilding company that became Mitsubishi as well as the Japan Brewery Company that we know today as the maker of Kirin Beer. With all these firsts, it's little surprise that he lived in Japan's first Western-style wood frame house, beautifully preserved as the centerpiece of Nagasaki's Glover Gardens. Located on the Minamiyamate hillside in what was once Nagasaki's designated European settlement, the gardens are a collection of nine of Nagasaki's earliest Western style houses. Linked by winding stone paths cut through green lawns and flower gardens, the houses are as unique as their former owners. Although Western in style, many of the houses incorporate Japanese touches like the Glover House's Japanese kawara tiled roof or the local pottery stone used in the Alt Residence's grand pillars. The houses' interiors are part history lesson and part recreation—in one room old records lie on a stool as if the owner is about to choose the next selection for the gramophone in the corner. Looking out over the harbor below, a visitor can easily imagine Glover himself looking out over the ships docked below, admiring the world he helped bring to life.

OURA CATHOLIC CHURCH
Established in 1865, Oura Catholic Church has become one of Nagasaki's most symbolic structures. From afar, the church's white walls and gothic-style pointed steeple stretch up from the hillside to the skies above. The closer you get, the more impressive it becomes—from the bottom of the stone stairs leading up to the entrance, the church towers above you, the trees on either side blocking out everything else. Japan's oldest existing wooden church, Oura became the first Western-style building to be designated a national treasure in 1933. It is here, on March 17, 1865, that Nagasaki's “hidden followers”—Japanese Christians whose families had secretly practiced what was for over 250 years a forbidden faith—revealed themselves. Though religious services have moved to a nearby building, entering the church gives a feeling of peace: maybe it is the respect shown by other tourists, or the remnants of 150 years of prayer. Inside, long isles of pews, an ornately carved altar, and stained glass windows transport one to another time and place—not Europe, but something European. The original French stained glass, shattered by the atomic bomb in 1945, has been carefully replaced. Inside and out, Oura Church is as welcoming as it is picturesque. As with the harbor and shipyards, it is a symbol not just of Nagasaki, but of the beginnings of a new Japan opening itself to the world.
still be seen in its houses, harbor, and churches today. Japan’s centers of both industry and Christianity—a legacy that can
be traced back to the late 1850s. It was at this time that Thomas Blake Glover, a British merchant, arrived in Nagasaki.

Glover was one of the first Westerners to reside in Nagasaki. He quickly expanded his business and helped found the shipbuilding company Mitsubishi as well as opening its first modern coal mine. He
also established Japan’s first modern dry dock for shipbuilding, as well as providing assistance in the construction of Japan's first steam locomotive and first

In 1859, the year that Japan opened Nagasaki to the West, Glover was one of the first British merchants to arrive from Shanghai. Little did he know the role he was to play in shaping the future of Japan. With a keen eye for invention, he brought the world to Japan.

Glover Gardens. Located on the Minamiyamate hillside in what was once Nagasaki’s settlement, the gardens are a collection of nine Western-style wood frame houses, beautifully preserved as the centerpiece of Nagasaki’s old housing complex. They are unique in their own right.

Established in 1865, Oura Catholic Church is Japan’s oldest existing wooden church, and out of all of Nagasaki’s structures, it is a symbol not just of Nagasaki, but of the beginnings of a new Japan opening its doors to the world. From afar, the church’s white walls and gothic-style pointed steeple stretch out into the sky, creating a beautiful image that is as picturesque as the harbor and out. Oura Church is as welcoming as everyone who has moved to a nearby building, entering the church gives a feeling of peace: maybe something European. The original French stained glass, shattered by the atomic bomb in 1945, has been carefully replaced. Inside the church, you can look forward to the delectable creations of the restaurant’s renowned pastry chefs.

The gardens are a collection of nine Western-style houses. Linked by winding stone paths cut through green lawns and flower gardens, the houses are as unique as the trees on either side blocking the view. As you walk up the stone stairs leading up to the entrance, the church towers become—from the bottom of the stone stairs above you, the trees on either side blocking the view. The closer you get, the more impressive it becomes—from the bottom of the stone stairs above you, the trees on either side blocking the view. Thus, it is the respect shown by other tourists, or you long after you’ve returned home.

With all these

Dining on French-inspired cuisine in the grand setting of the main dining room, or delighting your palate at the Japanese restaurant, Youtei, you can expect a seasonal menu made from the rich bounty of Nagasaki’s local ingredients, drawn from the hotel’s own farm and the waters of the nearby seas. Diners at the main dining room can also look forward to the delectable creations of the restaurant’s renowned pastry chefs.

A full array of onsen, both indoor and outdoor, will help you relax after a day of adventures—whether you’ve been exploring the Unzen National Park, driving amidst the spectacular scenery of the Nita Pass, or sampling the delicacies of the spa town of Obama—or just strolling around the town of Unzen.

The Satsuma and Choshu clans—later to become Mitsubishi as well as the Japan Brewery Company, the maker of Kirin Beer. Diners at the main dining room can also look forward to the delectable creations of the restaurant’s renowned pastry chefs.

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Located at the edge of town, Azuma-en is an ideal place to relax after a hike into the mountains or exploring the town. All the hotel’s Western and Japanese-style rooms are carefully designed and offer beautiful views of the surrounding countryside. After checking in, take a break in the lobby to enjoy the soothing view out over the hotel’s lakeside garden. The lobby itself, with its flowing lines, a small pavilion for music performances, and view of the gardens outside feels a bit like its own small, whimsical village. Azuma-en’s indoor and outdoor onsen offer panoramic views of the lake and mountains beyond.

Watching the sun glisten over the water and slowly sink behind the mountains is a magical experience rivaled only by the feast that follows. Dinner at Azuma-en is a multi-course kaiseki affair. In autumn matsutake mushrooms are artfully arranged with Nagasaki beef and fresh sushi from the local waters is lightly seasoned by the head chef’s expert touch. Each dish highlights and draws out the unique flavors of the local ingredients and is arranged with such artistry it is as much a feast for the eyes as the palate. With such a perfect combination of scenery, onsen waters, cuisine, and the hotel’s excellent service, Azuma-en is a delightful and memorable retreat.
Unzen: Paradise Rediscovered

A cosmopolitan enclave since the 19th century, this Nagasaki getaway is rich in charm and natural beauty

Home to Japan’s first national park, oldest public golf course, and first UNESCO Geopark, it is surprising that the onsen resort of Unzen has managed to quietly slip under the tourist radar for so long. But this gem was not always so hidden. In the 1870s, soon after Japan opened its doors to the world, Unzen became a popular summer resort for the wealthy Europeans and Americans of Shanghai. After taking the boat to Nagasaki, travelers would make the half-day trek (now a one-hour drive) to Unzen Onsen. For two months every summer, Unzen was home to dances, swimming, horseback riding, and tennis and golf tournaments. Pictures from the era show people from all around the world. A scene of an old dance hall decked with flags from Europe, the Americas, Asia. Japanese in suits and Europeans in kimono. At a time when most of Japan was struggling to figure out how to deal with the world outside, Unzen was already international.

Unzen has quieted down since its heady resort days, and likely changed for the better. In 1934 the area around Unzen Onsen became Japan’s first national park, and later Japan’s first UNESCO Global Geopark. It is easy to see why. Home to a myriad of bird and plant species, stunning mountain formations that seem to drop directly into the sea, and hillsides covered in the bright pink of Unzen Azaleas in spring and the deep reds of autumn leaves, it is a nature-lover’s paradise. With average summer temperatures similar to those in Sapporo, Hokkaido, it is a perfect escape from the heat and humidity.

Thanks to the national park’s strict building guidelines, Unzen Onsen escaped the bubble-era development that scarred the scenery of so many onsen resorts. Here there are no tall buildings, no concrete boxes of hotels, no flashy advertising. The angled brown-tiled roofs on nearly all the buildings give a feeling of a quiet European mountain resort, and the architecture on the ground is a charming mix of Western lodge-style buildings and traditional Japanese houses. The main street is lined with small shops, restaurants, and—for those willing to ask around—a ryokan turned bakery with a private onsen for rent by the hour. And throughout the town, feeding and heating the onsen, are the jigoku—the hells. These otherworldly gray rock beds spouting sulfurous gas stand in sharp contrast to the idyllic townscape and forested mountains. Following the winding path through the area makes for a leisurely hour’s walk, offering a chance to see this unique landscape up close, take in views over the town, and even stop for a local Unzen Cider and onsen tamago—an egg hard boiled in the jigoku’s sulfurous waters.

From the town center there is no shortage of trails into the surrounding mountains. A 20-minute shared taxi and short ropeway ride will take you to Mt. Myoken. The observatory at the top of this 1333-meter peak offers stunning views of the mountains sloping down to the sea in one direction and Unzen Onsen, like a distant scale model, in the other. And not far away, the lava dome of Mt. Heisei Shinzan, which erupted in 1990, the gash cut in the mountainside by the lava still visible. For hikers, birdwatchers, and other nature enthusiasts, there are enough trails and sights to explore for days.

“Home to a myriad of bird and plant species, stunning mountain formations that seem to drop directly into the sea, Unzen is a nature-lover’s paradise.”
Driving across a long red bridge, leaving Kyushu’s mainland behind, we found ourselves on the way to Hirado. The Hirado O-Hashi, finished in 1977, looks a lot like San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge. It might be obvious where the architects got their inspiration, but it is still an impressive drive over the waters. While the bridge is a recent addition, the island’s history dates back centuries. Long before the age of great bridges, in 1550, a while before the Tokugawa Shogunate closed Japan’s doors to the West, Hirado became the nation’s first port of trade with Europe. Nagasaki’s Dejima is best known for becoming Shogunate Japan’s one port of trade with the West, but it all started here, in Hirado.

Arriving on the other side of the bridge we are greeted by the pointed spires of a tall green church: the St. Francis Xavier Memorial Church, named after the first Jesuit missionary to come to Japan. Hirado, along with smaller surrounding islands, was home to Japan’s largest number of hidden Christians. Seen as a politically destabilizing force, for roughly 250 years Christianity was outlawed and practitioners were put to death. Despite this, Hirado’s hidden Christians passed down the stories and songs of their faith from one generation to the next. Today though, Christianity and Japanese Buddhism and Shinto coexist on the island. Walking past Shouji, Komyoji and Zuiunji Temples, we take in a view that symbolizes Hirado—St. Francis Xavier Memorial Church’s spires and cross as backdrop to the temple’s tiled roofs.

Driving north through the Kawachi Pass, we find an overlook and stop to stretch our legs in the nearby hills. Within minutes of walking it felt like being transported to the grassy hills of Switzerland. While the elderly hiker we met on the trail had nicknamed the hilltop view “little Aso” after the mountain in central Kyushu, we decided to think of it as “little Appenzell.” Refreshed from our stroll through the hills of Kawachi Pass, we continued to the northernmost end of Hirado. It is here that, a millennium before trade with the Dutch, Japanese emissaries left for the Chinese court in 600 AD. A nearby statue commemorates the famous monk Kukai who, two hundred years later, stayed here on his way to China.

To the west of Hirado is the smaller Ikitsuki Island. This mountainous island’s rocky cliffs offer stunning views of the sea below. The highlight of these is the Shiodawara Cliffs. Stretching for 500 meters along the coast, with rock columns and
Walking past Shoji, Komyoji and Zuiunji Temples, we take in a view that symbolizes Hirado—St. Francis Xavier Memorial Church’s spires and cross as an entrance to the temple’s tiled roofs.”

formations reaching up to 20 meters high. It reminds us of Hawai‘i’s Little South Point, but the drive, the history, the isolation of it makes the Shiodawara Cliffs something altogether different—the kind of view that needs to be felt as well as seen.

While our travels have given us a glimpse of Hirado, we barely covered a third of the island. There is so much more here to do, to see, to learn—Hirado Castle, the Dutch Trading Post, Ikitsuki’s churches. But now, stomachs empty from a day of travel, we get back in the car to drive to our hotel, wondering what local delicacies they have in store for us. Will it be the area’s top-grade flounder? Marbled Hirado beef? Fresh lobster? We look forward to finding out, secure that anything drawn from these local waters or fed by the island’s grasses will be a delicacy worth waiting for.

REBUILT FROM HISTORY
The Dutch Trading Post in Hirado was once a bustling hub of East Asian trade. In 1609, the Tokugawa shogunate permitted the VOC (Dutch East India Company) to trade with Japan, and the Dutch Trading Post was constructed under the guidance of Matsura Takanobu, lord of Hirado. According to descriptions from the diaries of trading post captains, the VOC started out renting one building, but as trade grew they gradually expanded their facilities during the first half of the 17th century. The especially large warehouses built in 1637 and 1639 stood as symbols of the VOC’s booming trade.

It may have been that the trade was a little too successful, because on November 9, 1640, by order of Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu, all Dutch buildings in Hirado, including the gigantic warehouse, were destroyed. The buildings remained lost to history for more than three centuries.

The first steps toward reconstruction were made in 1922, when the site—which included the original Dutch Wall, Well, and Wharf—was recognized as a National Historical Site. But it was not until some 50 years later, in 1978, when full-scale excavations finally started, and a collaborative effort between the government and the private sector was launched to rebuild the trading post. But with no blueprints or designs to be found, the reconstruction team faced a huge hurdle.

But thanks to the Dutch East India Company’s detailed records keeping, as Yoshihara Okayama, Director of The Dutch Trading Post in Hirado, explained, some aspects of the construction process were made clearer: “The Dutch accounting and audit system of 17th century was incredible. Detailed records and figures are written and kept in the Netherlands. The sizes of wood building materials, and their number, notes on bricks (their size, and number), and steel frames, were all written in those accounting books and it was so amazingly accurate.”

With the help of these accounting figures and records, as well as the drawings of the trading post that appeared in the Atlas Japannenis, published by the Dutch missionary Montanus in 1669, the building was erected. The Dutch Trading Post is now a historical fact, rather than something obscurely featured in historical records. You can feel—even practically breathe—the history that comes through the monuments and articles on display inside the building.

Okayama is also director of The Matsura Historical Museum. The building and gardens, now a Prefectural Cultural Property, were constructed in 1893 by the 37th Lord of Hirado as a private residence called the Tsurugamine Villa. The general area, including the museum compound, has belonged to the Matsura clan since the Kamakura period (1192 to 1333), and Okayama explains that this part of Hirado was frequented by many European traders including the famous William Adams, known in Japan as Miura Anjin. One of the museum’s highlights in Kan-un-tei, a small tea house where the Chinsin-ryu tea ceremony has been practiced since the 17th century. For a small fee, you can sample a cup of matcha made in the traditional way as you gaze out on the grounds.

MORE INFO
Hirado Dutch Trading Post:
Address: 2477 Okubocho, Hirado, Nagasaki Prefecture 859-5102, Japan
Web: hirado-shoukan.jp/english
Hours: 8:30-17:30 (Closed on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday on the third week of June every year)
Matsura Historical Museum:
12, Kagawa-cho, Hirado-shi, Nagasaki 859-5152
Tel: 0950-22-2326
Bathing in a therapeutic hot spring tub is the perfect way to relax after a day of sightseeing in Nagasaki; when that tub happens to be in your room it makes the experience that much more heavenly. At Hirado Saigetsuan you don’t have to pay any extra for the privilege—every room is equipped with a semi-open air stone bath. Large, comfortable, and exquisitely designed, the maisonette style rooms are hard to leave once you get settled. No wonder guests, particularly couples, choose to return here time and time again.

Serenely situated high up in the Saikai National park, the hotel offers delightful panoramic views overlooking the town of Hirado and its iconic red bridge. Surrounded by nature, it is a pleasant area to take a stroll in, with the popular hiking destination, Kawachi-Toge Pass, nearby. From there you can see the Ninety-Nine Islands, the beginning of the Genkai Sea, the islands of Tsushima and Iki.

Aside from the surrounding area and the hot spring baths, the main appeal of Hirado Saigetsuan is the food. The fresh vegetables and local Hirado fish, creatively arranged by the hotel’s chef, look and taste divine. There are some terrific restaurants serving Hirado beef nearby, but we definitely recommend having dinner in the hotel at least once.

All in all, Hirado Saigetsuan is a fantastic place to stay, thanks to its enchanting location, appetizing dishes, modern rooms, excellent and attentive service—and of course, those hot spring baths in every room.

For More Information about Hirado Saigetsuan please visit the official website:
859-5153 Nagasaki-ken, Hirado-shi, 178-1 Toishigawa-cho
Tel: 0950-21-8811 Fax: 0950-21-8800
Web: www.saigetsuan.jp

As well as the nine-hole golf course, there are horse riding facilities and tennis courts to keep the more active guests entertained during their stay. For those looking for something slightly more relaxing, there is a private beach, a sauna and some excellent spa facilities, including 14 therapeutic hot spring baths. The hotel also features a fantastic restaurant serving a mixture of Japanese and Italian cuisine, various shows that are all free for guests, and on top of all that, there is even a nightclub on site.

With Sakai National Park to the rear of the hotel and Senrigahama beach at the front, the hotel is set in an idyllic location. All of the hotel’s rooms face out to the ocean, making for some breathtaking views. Guests can take in the beautiful surroundings while eating breakfast on their balcony or having a few drinks there before going to bed. Is there a better way to start or finish the day?

Every room is spacious, clean and comfortable, as well as being fully air conditioned. Amenities include tea and coffee-making facilities, complimentary toiletries and bathrobes. Each room also has a TV, refrigerator and a hair dryer. A shuttle service for Hirado tourism transport terminal is available to and from the hotel.

For More Information about Hirado Saigetsuan please visit the official website:
859-5132 Nagasaki-ken, Hirado-shi, Kawachicho 55
Phone: 0950-23-2111 Fax: 0950-24-2114
Web: www.hotelranpu.com

Why not enjoy a round of golf in the morning, take a stroll on the beach in the afternoon, unwind in an onsen in the evening, take a few drinks and maybe some dancing thrown in? At Hirado Hotel Ranpu you can experience all of that and much more.
A Feast for All the Senses

For centuries, Japanese ryotei restaurants were the height of luxury dining throughout the country. Every aspect of ryotei dining is awash in artistry. It is not enough for food to be delectable, it needs to be a feast for the eyes as well. Every plate, cup and decoration is chosen with care. Even the act of greeting guests, serving and conversing with them is a work of delicate choreography. In times past, the inner rooms and gardens, hidden from the world outside, were the reserve of political and business elites, impenetrable to those without an invitation. Today though, ryotei are opening their doors to new guests. Some, like Nagasaki Ryoutei Hashimoto, are going the extra step—reaching out to share and spread this dining tradition.

From the simplicity of Nagasaki Ryoutei Hashimoto’s traditional exterior, you would never know that you are about to experience one of the most elegant dining experiences Nagasaki has to offer. Pulling up to the entrance we are greeted by the kimono-clad proprietress herself, Ms. Yumi Hashimoto. Ms. Hashimoto is the ryotei’s third okami, or proprietress, but that the building and grounds date back much further. Famous for its gardens and springtime cherry blossoms, the area became known as Karurusu Nagasaki.

Ki. Doctor Erwin Bälz, then one of the most famous doctors and foreigners in Japan, compared it to idyllic scenery of Carlsbad. The name remained for many years, even after the park area was changed into a ryokan—the foundation Ryotei Hashimoto today. History aside, simply traversing the ryotei’s meandering halls, feeling a cool breeze from the lovely garden outside, seeing the artfully designed play of light and shadow, is a treat for the senses.

And yet all this is just the setting. The food is the real highlight. Making use of the freshest seasonal local ingredients, Nagasaki Ryotei Hashimoto serves both traditional Japanese kaiseki courses and Nagasaki’s original shippoku cuisine—a unique blend of Japanese and Chinese flavors. Opting for the kaiseki, we sit down for a lavish twelve-course meal. Every dish is a visual delight that bursts life on the tongue. While the ise-ebi lobster, matsutake mushrooms, and award-winning Nagasaki beef were delightful, the biggest surprises came from the chef’s expert preparation of much simpler foods. An appetizer that looked to be a perfectly formed, tiny persimmon turned out to be smoked salmon carefully wrapped around a salmon pate. What appeared to be a glistening white biwa fruit was in fact a savory dish made from a mashed lily root and filled with tender minced chicken.

Throughout the meal, Ms. Hashimoto and her staff personify the idea of omotenashi—a kind of cross between hospitality and mind reading, the ability to intuit your guest’s needs. Timing of the food and drinks is perfect, and each course acts as the perfect in-between to the one before and after. Having such a stunning meal and service, while looking out over the pond and trees of the garden is enough to make you forget everything beyond this table, these friends, this lush garden. For a short time, all these elements combine to make Ryotei Hashimoto our own private world—one that we will most definitely be coming back to.

Nagasaki Ryotei Hashimoto
Tel: 095-825-2001
Address: 1-4-5, Nakagawa, Nagasaki-shi
Hours: 12:00 to 15:00, 17:00 to 22:00 (reservation required)
SASEBO
City of the Sea

Settle into a relaxed frame of mind as you sample the delights of this marine getaway

What was once a small fishing village located on the northwestern edge of Kyushu’s westernmost prefecture, Sasebo has grown to become Nagasaki’s second largest city. This city of the sea is now home to Japan’s westernmost marine national park, fisheries supplying the freshest seafood, and stunning views of the isles and waters beyond. Thanks to the Japanese SDF and US Navy bases, the town has also grown into a quiet commercial center with a range of cuisines, shopping, and nightlife.

ISLANDS BEYOND NUMBER

Off the coast of Sasebo, at the westernmost tip of mainland Japan, is the Kujukushima archipelago. What were mountains many millennia ago are now tiny islands beyond islands, as far as the eye can see, a collection of brown-gray sandstone cliffs topped with lush groves of Japanese pines. The result is a seemingly infinite collection of uniquely shaped sandstone isles, hidden coves, and an artist’s palette of blues and greens.

Kujukushima, which translates to “ninety-nine islands,” refers not to the number (there are actually 208), but to the fact that in times past there were simply too many to count. Of these, only four are inhabited. The rest are home to a range of wildlife, while the sea and inlets host a beautiful variety of aquatic life as well as oyster and clam beds for local pearl cultivation. While the vista from any of the area’s four observation towers is impressive, the best way to experience the archipelago is from the water. From the Kujukushima Pearl Sea Resort, visitors can step onto the decks of the Pearl Queen for about an hour-long cruise around the isles. Standing at the bow, feeling the ocean breeze as the captain slowly weaves between islands, it is easy to forget the roads, buildings, and bustle of civilization. Even Sasebo seems worlds away, and Tokyo nothing but a distant memory. In the waters below translucent jellyfish—different colors and kinds depending on the season—flow with the current, unperturbed by the rise and fall of the ship’s wake. The ship passes by an island that looks like a sleeping lion, navigates the maze of coves, and slips between a pair of islands so close it feels like if you stretched out—just a little more—you could brush the edge with your fingers. Returning to port, what felt like a timeless journey is over in the blink of an eye.

Before venturing back into the city, though, visit the Umikirara Aquarium to get up close and personal with dolphins, jellyfish, and other creatures of the sea. Highlights include an impressive dolphin show, an aquarium that simulates a walk under the sea, a variety of beautiful rare jellyfish, and a number of hands-on “experience” areas popular with children.

JAPAN’S FIRST BURGER

According to local lore, thanks to the nearby US Navy base Sasebo was home to the first real American-style hamburgers in Japan. As with many Nagasaki area foods though, it was quickly transformed into something unique—the now famous Sasebo burger. There are a number of requirements to qualify as a real Sasebo burger—it needs to have quality beef, thick cut bacon, a special 9-spice mayonnaise, and a special bun, among others. While there is now a range of shops specializing in Sasebo burgers, for over 40 years, LOG KIT has been one of the premier shops to try this hearty local fare. The interior of this multi-generation, family run shop, with its dark wood tables and energetic staff, feels like a museum of classic Americana collected over time.

And the burgers more than live up to their reputation. The bun, made at a local Sasebo bakery, is tender and chewy, a perfect frame for the rich, flavorful burger inside. Between the homemade sauces, egg, and juicy beef patty, eating a Sasebo burger is far from tidy. Putting one down halfway through without it collapsing seems dubious. In short, it’s exactly what a burger should be. After all, with something this good, why would you stop eating long enough to put it down anyway?
NAGASAKI’S PORTS OF CALL

With its rich culture and history, tourist attractions, and proximity to destinations in Korea, Taiwan, and China, Nagasaki Prefecture is a prime location for international cruise ships. Located right in downtown Nagasaki City, the Nagasaki International Cruise Ship Terminal offers immediate access to the heart of the city’s cultural, historic, and shopping districts. To the north, the Port of Sasebo gives easy access to some of the area’s most impressive natural scenery and attractions. With such a variety of sights, experiences, and attractions, all available so close to the port, a stop over in Nagasaki is certain to leave voyagers with memories of their cruise that will last long after the vacation has ended.

NAGASAKI PORT
Famed for its stunning night view over the city and harbor, its history as one of Japan’s first international ports, and a unique local culture that blends Japanese, Chinese, and Western influences, Nagasaki is one of the premier destinations of western Japan. While many ports are on the outskirts of towns, even the largest cruise ships that ever come to Japan can pass under the towering Megami Bridge, docking immediately next to downtown Nagasaki. The city’s historic Glover Gardens, Oura Catholic Church, and Dejima, as well as the Nagasaki Prefectural Art Museum are just a short stroll from the port, while the shops of Nagasaki’s Chinatown as well as its Hamano-machi shopping district are just 5 minutes by streetcar. Nagasaki’s Peace Park and Atomic Bomb Museum are a 20-minute streetcar ride away. For those wishing to go farther afield, there are a variety of bus tours departing directly from the port.

Nagasaki Port’s state-of-the-art facilities and welcoming atmosphere will impress guests as soon as they step off the ship. Opened in March 2010, the Nagasaki International Cruise Ship Terminal offers express immigration, free Wi-Fi, and a multimedia welcome gallery introducing visitors to Nagasaki. The main building’s spacious interior hosts local markets and music, while performance and other events are held on the grassy hill-like rooftop. In addition to organized events, thanks to the port’s proximity to central Nagasaki, local residents often gather to give ships an enthusiastic welcome and send off.

SASEBO PORT
Opening in April 2015, Sasebo’s brand new international terminal will be the perfect stop to get a glimpse of Kyushu’s natural beauty. In addition to the shops and restaurants of Sasebo’s New Port Town, Sasebo Port is located under an hour from a variety of unique attractions and locations. Visitors can take a slow boat ride through Saikai National Park’s Kujukushima Islands or see a dolphin show up close at the Umikirara Aquarium. The nearby Yumiharidake Observatory offers spectacular views of the sunset over the sea and islands to the west. Nagasaki’s most popular theme park, Huis Ten Bosch, is a meticulous and impressively accurate recreation of a Dutch village complete with museums, dining, and gardens. The hills and churches of Hirado, once home to Nagasaki’s hidden Christians, is just over an hour away. To get a feel for the city itself, visitors can head to the Saruku City 403 Arcade or Tonoo Market in Downtown Sasebo. Whether visitors are looking for shopping and dining, nature, or cultural sights, Sasebo Port offers a little something for everyone’s taste.

“The variety of sights, experiences, and attractions, is certain to leave voyagers with memories of their cruise that will last long after the vacation has ended.”
MICE
NAGASAKI
MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONFERENCE, AND EXHIBITIONS IN HISTORICAL NAGASAKI PREFECTURE

If you’re looking for a perfect destination for your next MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conference, and Exhibitions) tourism package, set your course towards Nagasaki. This historic gateway between Japan and the Asian mainland combines great value, easy access to major international travel hubs, fascinating local culture, and unique and delicious culinary traditions.

The Nagasaki Prefecture Convention and Tourism Association is a non-profit organization that works closely with the prefecture’s city and town halls, and convention bureaus to help assure that your event will run as smoothly as possible. So, whether you’re looking to reward a group of high achievers in your company, hold a conference, or put on a trade show, you can be certain that every member of your group will come away with the experience of a lifetime.

For more details please contact:
nagasaki@ngs-kenkanren.com
visit-nagasaki.com

These are just a few of the reasons why Nagasaki should be on top of your list for your next MICE project:

- Easy access to Nagasaki Airport, Fukuoka International Airport, and international cruise lines from Nagasaki City's port.
- A variety of locations to meet any group’s needs: cities such as Nagasaki and Sasebo offer easy walking distance to hotels, convention facilities, and major tourist attractions, while resort locations such as Huis Ten Bosch, in Sasebo, and the Unzen Hot Springs make excellent spots for incentive tours and corporate meetings.
- A chance to experience the unforgettable flavors of Nagasaki’s renowned cuisine, which grew out of the region’s history as a cultural crossroads.
- The impeccable service you expect in Japan at a price that might surprise you. Nagasaki Prefecture cities offer event facilities at a fraction of the cost that you would pay in Japan’s largest cities.
- Subsidies and financial support are sometimes available for non-profit MICE events.
MICE
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As the cold begins to settle
in and the leaves gradually
change their shades, we can't
help but think how quickly
time passes. For those parents out there,
it's already time to begin thinking about
the school year to come! Whether your
child is just ready to begin his or her first
nursery school classes, preparing to take
those crucial first steps towards moving
on to university, or somewhere in be-
tween, you should be able to find them
an excellent academic environment.

The following are just a few of the
highlights from our autumn education
special:

We step back in time, looking at the
history of the Nakasendo Way, one of the
routes that Edo Period daimyo used to
close Kyoto and what was then
Edo. And in the present day, we join the
students and staff of the British School in
Tokyo, as they learn about the teamwork
and determination needed to run the
300-mile-plus length of the Nakasendo
Way as a team.

We look at Aoba-Japan's revolutionary
approach of preparing students to be-
come global citizens and reaching out to
the communities the campus boundaries.

We talk with Kats Watanabe, princi-
pal of Inter-High School, where students
work with learning coaches to develop
learning plans that fit their needs and
help them prepare for their futures.
Travelers during the Edo Period may not have consulted timetables or bought eki bento for their train rides, but they would have found that getting around the country could be just as pleasant and convenient as it is now, thanks to a historical system of roads called the Gokaido, or Five Routes, that were established during the Edo Period.

One of these five is the Nakasendo Way. Like the four other Routes that make their way through the central part of Honshu, the path of the Nakasendo itself dates back to well before the beginnings of the Edo Period in the 17th century. However, it was the Edo Period practice of sankin-kotai that transformed the roads into the well-walked travel arteries that they became during this historical period. Sankin-kotai was a political institution that required the daimyo (the local lords) of Japan to spend one year in their homeland and one year in Edo. Given that there were hundreds of daimyo traveling to and from the capital throughout the year, the safe and easy passage of these large groups was a top priority.

Tokugawa Ieyasu ordered the beginning of the work on the roads, but it was finally his great-grandson, Ietsuna, the 4th Tokugawa shogun, who oversaw the formal establishment of the Gokaido. The work on the roads was extensive, and the end results were even more impressive. Where pre-existing roads had already been in place, they were improved and made easier for travel by foot, horse, or cart: they measured 11 meters (36 feet) wide, and covered by a layer of sand and gravel (or in some cases, paved with stone). Finally, given the long tradition of the Japanese attention to comfort, tall trees were planted alongside the roads, giving travelers natural shade.

Initially used by couriers as they delivered messages across Japan, the post stations along the routes of the Gokaido grew into larger stopping points, and in some cases, eventually flourishing into post towns that offered all manner of refreshment and entertainment. In the second half of the Edo Period, religious pilgrims became a common sight on the roads. While many were most likely quite devout—the shrine at Ise was a popular location for pilgrims—the fact that religious travelers were given permission to travel freely may have swelled the ranks of pilgrims with more casual believers. Artists and writers also took their own journeys on the Five Routes, and shared their experiences in words and images—many of these accounts remain famous today, such as the 53 Stations of the Tokaido by Hiroshige and the poetry and recollections of famed haiku poet Basho in his The Records of a Travel-Worn Satchel and A Visit to Sarashina Village.

The Nakasendo Way is the longest of the Five Routes, stretching 530 km (329 miles) and passing by 69 post stations on its way from Edo to Kyoto. If you were to traverse its length now, you would be going through the present-day prefectures of Saitama, Gunma, Nagano, Gifu, and Shiga on this “central mountain route,” as Nakasendo can be translated.

Along the way, there are many stops that can make the travel experience all the more pleasant: hot springs, spectacular views of the mountainous areas of the Japan Alps region, and small ryokan along the way, serving a variety of local dishes. Many widely used roads and highways run along the same historic route as the Nakasendo, and sections of the route still possess much of the same scenic charm that they did centuries ago. Walks along stretches of the Nakasendo are a popular travel experience, but as you can find out on the next page, it is a rare thing indeed to try and run the length of this historic route.

The Nakasendo itself dates back to well before the beginnings of the Edo Period in the 17th century.

By Alec Jordan
RUNNING THROUGH HISTORY

by Brian Christian, Principal of The British School in Tokyo

It is dark. It is raining. The occasional vehicle sweeps past, splashing up rainbows of spray beneath the streetlights. It is four o’clock in the morning and a motley crew of slightly dazed students and teachers from the British School in Tokyo are huddled together at one end of an ancient bridge in Kyoto. They are about to find out if a crazy idea can possibly be made to work. They are preparing to run the Nakasendo Way.

It had all started months earlier with one of those what-if conversations. I had just met Paul Christie of Walk Japan and we were throwing around some thoughts about ways in which we could work together to do something special for BST’s 25th Anniversary: something that would involve students of different ages and open their eyes to the beauty and fascinating history of a Japan beyond the urban sprawl of Tokyo. Paul waxed lyrical about the Nakasendo Way, the ancient route from Kyoto to Tokyo through the Kiso Valley and over the Japanese Alps. It is a 360-mile journey from post town to post town that had reached the peak of its popularity in the Edo period and which probably hadn’t been covered in its entirety for a century or more. We couldn’t possibly take on something like that, could we? Could we?

A few months later, at the beginning of July, we were about to find out. Just like the Emperor’s elite messengers and countless merchants and pilgrims all those years ago, we were going to journey from Sanjo Ohashi in Kyoto to Tokyo’s Nihonbashi—and we were going to do it as an ekiden (a relay) in a little over five days.

What followed exceeded all of our expectations. The 16 students taking part, boys and girls, ranged in age from 12 through to 18 while the teachers and parents included the young and fit as well as the rather worn and decrepit—me! At times it was tough, but there were so many highlights: getting up before dawn and reaching a mountain pass by sunrise or jogging along quiet country roads through immaculate rice fields; an early morning run down a deserted post town street; or watching fireflies by the river after a traditional Japanese supper. And, of course, there was the finish: the welcome on Nihonbashi, the whole school lined up to cheer us home on our return to Showa, filled with the glow of accomplishment.

We did it—but it would never have happened without Paul, Mario, Mayumi and Yohei from Walk Japan. From start to finish it was a massively complicated logistical and physical challenge, and without their know-how, their limitless enthusiasm, determination and good humor we would never have carried it off. The last word must go to Paul Christie who was the architect of what will undoubtedly prove to be an unforgettable experience for all of us:

What an adventure! Let me offer a heartfelt thank you to all in the BST/WJ team. This is how the world should work: productive and inspirational—and so much fun!

Brian Christian is the Principal of The British School in Tokyo.
Creating Global Leaders
How Aoba-Japan International School is Redefining International Education

Although founded nearly 40 years ago, it is Aoba-Japan International School’s recent partnership with BBT that has allowed the school to further define and shape its core values as a community that inspires global leaders.

Often when we think of international schools, we imagine a western education transplanted into a foreign country, as Ken Sell, the new Head of School explains. But as times change and cultures mix in an increasingly international age, Aoba-Japan aims to redefine what it means to be an international school.

“I think a truly international education is one that engages the local community with the expat community to understand the world within the context of their local, host country,” Sell explains. “Internationalism is having an understanding of where you sit in the world, in relation to the world.”

Aoba also believes the best international education creates and encourages students to become global leaders. While one might think of a figure like Barack Obama when they hear the word “global leader,” Sell says, the school is not set on necessarily producing superstars of diplomacy; rather, they aim to produce peaceful people with the characteristics of tolerance, understanding, diversity, problem solving and empathy.

Aoba-Japan International School implements what's known as a conceptual curriculum, communicated through inquiry-based teaching, and carried out through the IB, or International Baccalaureate program. Within two years, this program, an internationally recognized system that encourages intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world, will be fully integrated into the school.

Within this program, there is flexibility for teachers to design their curriculum around the students themselves. This doesn’t make things as easy as it could be for teachers who are following set lesson plans, as Sell mentions, but Aoba’s teachers are a different breed: “We have a very dedicated staff, willing to learn and willing to participate, while offering multiple forms of activities and opportunities both inside and outside of the school.”

Greg Culos, Director of Development, explains that this inquiry-based concept is not limited to the students, and that collaboration among staff members is key. Teachers engage in a circle of action research: “When you finish a unit of work, you have to reflect on it, record the notes of how you would change it, so whether it is you or the next person, they have that body of knowledge there that will allow them to look at the curriculum and redesign it in relation to the students. We have to adopt a curriculum across the board that’s meaningful and achieves these goals of becoming internationally minded.”

The final two years of the IB program is also when the students learn to do what, in most educational systems, is taught in the first year of university. Students learn to conduct independent research, and truly experience and understand that studying is based on inquiry. Particularly in a place like Japan, where educational methods are tightly structured, Aoba puts an emphasis on not just searching for the “correct” answer, but asking useful questions and coming up with ways to answer those questions, while gaining the confidence to speak up about their process of inquiry.

Aoba’s core values also stress the importance of encouraging parents to participate in their children’s education through workshops that demonstrate how Aoba’s curriculum works, and also engaging with the wider community through after-school programs and summer camps that connect with members of the local neighborhood. These activities not only build a true hub of a community filled with both Aoba students and locals, they also feed back to Aoba’s core value of creating global leaders.

From international students coming from abroad, to domestic, Japanese students looking for an international environment, Aoba truly aims to embody what it is to be an international community involved in education.

For more information about Aoba-Japan International School please visit the official website: [www.aobajapan.jp](http://www.aobajapan.jp)
LEARNING, YOUR WAY

Students at Tokyo Inter-High find out how to take charge of their futures and build their own educations

Expecting everyone to learn the same way is as unrealistic and uninteresting as expecting everyone to dress the same way. Yet, many students, particularly those with unique learning styles, find themselves being pigeonholed socially and academically in traditional school environments. The Japanese school system does a particularly poor job of supporting these students, and as Kats Watanabe, principal of Tokyo Inter-High School (TIHS) explained, the figures body this out: of the 5 million high school students in Japan, nearly 200,000 are not going to regular Japanese schools. Many of them have chosen alternative schooling options because they have been placed in a learning or social environment that does not help them achieve their best.

TIHS first began with an aim of supporting these learners, providing them with a flexible learning environment that allows students to collaborate with learning coaches. Together, they develop courses of study and learning plans that fulfill academic requirements, while at the same time letting the students follow their interests. This learning partnership empowers students to take an active role in their own education.

As Watanabe explained, at the beginning, almost all of the students who attended TIHS were students who didn’t want to go to regular Japanese schools. As more parents started hearing about the institution, they began to realize that the innovative approach and flexibility of the TIHS model was a perfect match for their children’s needs. The school believes in “Open Education,” and it encourages independent learners to study in English or Japanese—or even both. So as the school grew over the years, the student body has expanded to English/Japanese bilinguals and numerous athletes, artists, and musicians. Since its foundation in 2000 TIHS has produced several hundred graduates and many of them entered prestigious universities or pursued successful professional careers.

These students can use the activities related to their fields of specialty as the raw material for their education. For example, a ballet dancer student could use her ballet lessons to earn a PE credit, or as she attended Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow, her local Russian classes could fulfill her foreign language requirement and costume design projects for a Fine Arts credit.

And for students who are more interested in following more of a standard, university-preparatory approach, they can work with their personal learning coaches to develop study plans based on the material that will appear on TOEFL, SAT and other requirements for university entrance.

Tokyo Inter-High School is an online school that does not require class attendance. Online students and learning coaches are connected through school web services and open resources such as Google and Skype. Students based in the Tokyo area, however, can come to the TIHS’s Shibuya campus, where they can attend group class study in Math, Science, and other subjects. Students practice “Project Based Learning” and work on collaborative projects. After they have completed their course of study, they will receive a US high school diploma from the Washington State-based Independence High School. But beyond the diploma itself, Watanabe has seen the difference that it makes for students to be able to take charge of their own education, and notes with pride the number of students who have changed remarkably over the course of their work at Tokyo Inter-High School.

To be able to play an active role in the rapidly changing society of today, your child needs an education that gives him or her the tools to succeed and thrive.

For more information about Tokyo Inter-High please visit the official website: www.inter-highschool.jp
POPPINS ACTIVE LEARNING INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Poppins Active Learning International School (PALIS) is an international preschool and kindergarten for children, ages 11 months to 5 years. PALIS offers top-quality education that develops social skills, creativity, and critical thinking.

Some highlights of the PALIS educational experience:
• A standards-based British curriculum
• Bright and spacious facilities at Yebisu Garden Place
• English immersion with native English-speaking teachers
• Diverse classes taught by specialists
• After-school and seasonal programs
• Extended childcare and flexible schedules

Open Houses will be held on October 11 and 18.

NISHIMACHI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Nishimachi is...
• Academically rigorous.
• A Pioneer... in English and Japanese language education in Japan.
• Multicultural... with a student body of some 400 children representing some thirty countries.
• Small and intimate... which enables us to promote the optimal well-being and growth of each individual.
• Co-educational and non-sectarian... Kindergarten through Grade 9.
• Accredited... by WASC & CIS.
• Conveniently located... in a residential area of central Tokyo favored by the diplomatic and expatriate communities.

Visit our campus and experience the warm atmosphere of Nishimachi!
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Growing young minds around the world.

“It’s so wonderful to watch my child experience the thrill of discovery - climbing, singing, playing and learning, plus he’s making new friends!”
-Kaito’s Mom, Tokyo, Japan

Play — It Shapes Our Every Day
Play is our first language—it helps children express who they are and forms the foundation for many of their first relationships. Through play, children develop skills that strengthen their mind, body and emotions.

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http://www.aiinternationalschool.com
Our editor Alec Jordan is traveling back home to California with his family (Japanese wife Kayo & daughter Aya) on a much deserved vacation. Consequently I'm working even further ahead on the column than usual. I don't mind as it's good to get ahead of the magazine's deadlines once in a while, and happy the Jordans are able to take a break. I'm sure his family will have a great time with Kayo, Aya, and, of course, Alec.

I have to admit envy then, as 2014 was not a good year as far as travels for me. But I can't really complain too much, as I pretty much have seen much of this world of ours, and much of my traveling has really been adventure oriented. Hopefully things have cooled down by the time you read this: with all the weather changes, one never knows. The party scene has really picked up and from the looks of things our great city will really be busy the rest of the year. As always there are some changes at parties, and the most obvious this season is the absence of the most widely known party crushers. These include a heavy-set woman probably in her 50s who really had her act together; she apparently had a calendar of National Days and always seemed to find out where and when the receptions were. Many are at the Imperial and she would go to the Embassy staff’s reception desk and tell the ladies working there that she just needed to use the rest room which was near the party venue’s entrance. Once she got into the rest room, she’d watch the invited guests at the entrance until she had the opportunity to get in line and go in. She always carried a big purse and a plastic bag and ended up asking the sandwich chefs to make her four or five “take outs.” A couple of Ambassadors’ wives caught her doing this and from the looks of things made her stop and I haven’t seen her recently.

Then there was the tall Japanese guy—probably in his 40s—who not only crashed party after party, he usually brought as many as five uninvited people along with him. Once he got his group in, he worked hard trying to get his friends’ photos with Ambassadors or other VIPs. He would even take them up on the stage after the dignitaries made their congratulatory speeches. He always came late so he could grab a sayonara souvenir bag as soon as the Embassy staff set them up for guests, and I’ve even heard that he would actually charge the people he brought to the parties for the privilege of crashing the party along with him. I heard that a couple of diplomats, who prefer to remain anonymous, called hotel security. Also, an important guest from the Foreign Ministry really laid into him and had him thrown out after complaints about his behavior.

I realize how fortunate I am working for the Weekender and being invited to so many special events. A big thank you for that. Just be careful who you give your card to or have your photo taken with. Over the years, several Japanese VIPs told me there are people who try and use them to get to people they want to meet and even to try and use for unsavory business practices. As the old saying goes: “Sometimes it’s a jungle out there.”

The Massets’ National Day and Sayonara Reception
The rain held off for the reception hosted by popular diplomatic couple, French Ambassador Christian Masset and his wife Hélène, and it was a beautiful evening in every way. The occasion was La Fête Nationale, and the party was also celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the Franco-Japanese Cultural Partnership. At the same time Christian and Hélène were bidding adieu to the many friends they made here. The popular couple were only here about two years, but they will surely be missed by all of us who had the privilege of getting to know them.

The Massets’ spacious home and their beautiful garden were packed with the French community, many Japanese friends, and other guests from all over the world.

The program included speeches by the Ambassador, President de la Maison Franco-Japonaise Koichiro Matsuura, and a toast by former Prime
The Massets' National Day and Sayonara Grand Reception

1. Koichiro Matsuura, French Ambassador Christian Masset, his wife Hélène, Former Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, Yumimoni Shimbaru's Masago Minami, Hélène Masset, Elle International Co. President/CEO Reiko Lyster 2. Short Shorts Film Festival Founder/President Tetsuya Besho, his wife Mina

The Escalas' Fantastic Peruvian Food Festival


Laurie Peters Sayonara for Richard Mei

Junko Koshino’s Summer Party

Wine Night at Tokyo Midtown’s Oakwood
8. Chopard Japan’s Mg. Director/CEO Japan Stephan Ritzmann Swiss Tourism Dir. Japan

In & Around
11. French Tourism Director Fredric Meyer, his wife, Laurence, their children Elena, Mathis and Quentin at the huge Japanese dance contest in Yoyogi Park 12. Actor Hide Kusakake meets Godzilla at Tokyo Midtown
Minister Yoshiro Mori. He’s super busy now as President of the National Olympic Committee. A choir from L’Ecole Honnura sang the Japanese and French National Anthems. This was followed by a short concert by a trio from the visiting Orchestre National de Lyon.

I’m well aware that I talk a lot about food, but find it difficult to describe the truly magnificent variety of French specialties served that day. The quality and variety of meats, cheeses, mountains of bread, so many great desserts, and France’s famous wines had to be seen and tasted to be believed. A big congratulations to Christian, Hélène, their staff and the many French companies and individuals who made the reception a beautiful and special event in every way. The only downer was knowing the Massets would be leaving. Christian, who’s a very highly-regarded man here, in France, and on the international scene, will go back to a very high position in the French government. Our sincerest congratulations,

PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT FOOD AND NATIONAL DAY GALA

Peruvian Ambassador and Sehora Elard Escala celebrated the 193rd anniversary of their country with a “Pisco of Honor and Peruvian Food Festival” at their beautiful home in Shibuya. This was the first time I had the opportunity to visit the embassy/residence since it was rebuilt. The contemporary design as really great, and quite spacious. After the Ambassador’s welcome speech and the singing of Japan and Peru’s national anthems, the many guests kept busy enjoying the Peruvian art on display, chatting and trying all the delicious Peruvian foods that had been prepared by the embassy staff and the chefs of Peruvian restaurants here in Japan. Peruvian food has really become popular over the last few years, and judging from the specialties available that evening, it’s easy to see why. Guests that evening included Japanese government officials, Ambassadors and their wives, and familiar faces from the arts, fashion and entertainment worlds. There were two very special guests from Peru as well. I forgot their names, but haven’t forgot how friendly and gentle they were. You can tell by the photo they took with Dwei Sukarno. The mother and child from the alpaca farm not only posed for photos with people, they cuddled up to many of the guests there. The Escalas’ evening in their home, like the Escalas themselves, was very special in every way.

U.S. CULTURAL ATTACHE RICHARD MEI’S SAYONARA AT THE CANADIAN EMBASSY

As it was with Christian and Hélène Masset, it’s never easy saying goodbye to good friends. I certainly felt that way with US Cultural Attaché Richard Mei. He did so much to help me while he was here, and I know that he helped a lot of other people whenever he could. Prior to his return to the US, his dear friend Laurie Peters, who’s counselor of public affairs at the Canadian Embassy, hosted a sayonara party in his honor. It was an interesting gathering, with VIP guests mostly from the arts and show business worlds. As always, I enjoyed talking with entertainment tycoon Tom Yoda, who heads Gaga Communications and has a building on Aoyama Dori. He was also head of the Tokyo International Film Festival for three years. A big thanks to Tom for the nice gift he sent after my illness. I also appreciated Norman Tolman introducing me to architect/real estate dealer/famous house of antiques owner, Yoshihiro Takishita. Other interesting people there included Ona Kawaguchi, from top foreign talent agency Creativeman, Dave and Kyoko Spector, Yuri Sasamoto and Iori Ono from the Blue Note Jazz Club, and Swiss head of Culture Miguel Perez-La Plante. There were two well known figures—actually life size—of US President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle, as well as a Canadian Mountie. They posed a lot but didn’t have much to say. One of the highlights of the evening was a great performance by the great Japanese jazz artist Yoshio Toyama. Boy, can that man play. Richard and his family are back in Washington DC now. Thanks my friend, all the best back home and in your new ventures. You’ll be much missed here.

WINE NIGHT AT TOKYO MIDTOWN’S OAKWOOD

The weekly wine night at Oakwood Premiere in Tokyo Midtown mall is always an enjoyable relaxing event—lots of interesting people, good food (and wines) in a friendly fun relaxing atmosphere. Konishiki and his lovely wife Chie are often there, and at a recent party I enjoyed meeting Chopard Watch Japan’s Mg. Dir./CEO Stephan Ritzmann as well as Swiss Tourism’s Dominic Junghaenel. I also learned Oakwood’s top man here Martin Fluck is President of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce. He’s a busy man.

JUNKO KOSHINO’S SUMMER PARTY

Whenever I get invited to anything by super busy fashion designer Junko Koshino and her husband photographer Hiroyuki Suzuki, I’m sure it’s going to be very special. It was that and more at her summer party, which was held at her beautiful building on Koto Dori.

It was pretty much a Japanese fashion crowd: the women in beautiful kimonos and the kids in some great hako diapers. There were all very stylish. I especially liked the area where a couple a dozen Kewpie dolls had been set up, and kids who could throw a ring over the dolls won a prize. Beautiful people, colorful Japanese fashion, fun and Junko’s original ideas all added up to a great evening. That lady really knows what she’s doing.

The food, I might add, was very Japanese healthy and served on Junko’s beautiful lacquerware. There were also two chefs outside making vegetables, and pizzas that they were baking in a very primitive looking oven. It was all excellent.

UPCOMING PARTY FOR THE F1 DRIVERS

The world famous F1 drivers will be here for the race on October 5. For the 5th year in a row, Ceremony President Tsukasa Shiga will host an after party for them and their friends. This year’s part will be at the Red Carpet, in the basement of Roppongi’s Roi Building. It will be a good chance to meet some interesting people. For info, call me at 090-3200-6767.
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A far cry from the standard sci-fi blockbuster fare, *Under the Skin* is a dark and intense thriller that has been causing a stir ever since its debut, going on to do surprisingly well at the foreign box office and earning rave reviews from critics. Scarlett Johansson plays an alien that takes on a human form and proceeds to drive around the streets of Scotland seducing men into her van. What happens to her victims is open for interpretation in a film that sacrifices traditional narrative for thought-provoking imagery and atmosphere. Alongside Johansson, many non-professional actors play the unfortunate victims of the star’s advances, and the conversations between them and Johansson’s mysterious female are unscripted, lending the film a touch of gritty reality. Many critics have praised the stunning visuals and the haunting, atmospheric nature of *Sexy Beast* director Jonathan Glazer’s first film since 2004. It may leave many scratching their heads, but the provocative film takes the age-old sci-fi question of what it means to be human into darkly original territory.

First appearing in 20s German silent cinema before a classic portrayal by Bela Lugosi in the 30s, Dracula has come to be reimagined and reinterpreted time and again. Despite the horrifying Count being one of cinema’s most notorious villains, the nearest we’ve ever come to an origin story was the opening sequence to Francis Ford Coppola’s 1992 effort, *Bram Stoker’s Dracula*, which gave us a look at the man before he became the monster. *Dracula Untold* chronicles the transformation of Vlad Tepes, a man trying to protect his family and kingdom from foreign invaders, into the legendary bloodsucker. Luke Evans, better known as Bard the Bowman in *The Hobbit*, stars as Vlad, who squares off against Mehmed (Dominic Cooper) and his Ottoman army in a bold fantasy retelling of a great man’s descent into darkness.

Follow the sad passing of critically lauded actor Philip Seymour Hoffman back in February of this year comes the release of *A Most Wanted Man*, in which he plays his final starring role. This political espionage thriller from the pen of John le Carre, the celebrated author behind last year’s hit adaptation *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. Translated to a contemporary setting, the film sees a half-Chechen, half-Russian immigrant turn up in Hamburg’s Islamic community after a brutal beating. Is the man a dangerous terrorist or an innocent victim caught up in the politics of a war on terror? German espionage agent Gunther Bachmann (Hoffman) seeks to find out, while Russian and American agents—including Willem Dafoe, Robin Wright and Daniel Brühl—also take an interest in the case.

While some comedies don’t necessarily translate, *Ted*, the story of a lewd, crude-talking teddy bear was a surprising hit here. Seth MacFarlane, that film’s creator, is now back with a second go-round: *A Million Ways to Die in the West*. This is the first time the comedian and *Family Guy* creator has stepped in front of the camera, directing himself in the lead role of Albert, a cowardly sheep farmer who loses his girl as a result of backing out of a gunfight. When the mysterious and beautiful Anna (Charlize Theron) rides into town, it looks like Albert has a second shot at love—that is, until her gun-slinging outlaw husband (Liam Neeson) rides into town. Amanda Seyfried, Giovanni Ribisi, Sarah Silverman and Neil Patrick Harris fill out the cast.
The first beauty event organized by La YAMANO Beauty Salon, in partnership with Tokyo Weekender magazine, took place on September 19. Ten Tokyo Weekender readers from more than five different countries were invited to attend to this night of beauty and pampering.

They all enjoyed a luxurious evening, starting with a live make-up show conducted by AKIRA, La YAMANO’s official hair & make-up stylist.

Guests also learned about PHYTO products, a full range of botanical hair care cosmetics directly imported from Paris and exclusively available at La YAMANO’s Ginza Salon. They also had the chance to experience a “Facial Beauty Push” as well as a relaxing head massage session, both performed by La YAMANO’s attentive staff.

Last but not least, all guests enjoyed a few drinks and a delicious buffet, while receiving professional tips on make-up and hair care, including advice about choosing the most appropriate make-up color palette to use, according to their skin and eye types.

A great time was had by all, and guests returned home with PHYTO samples. From what we heard, most of them were eager to come back for a haircut or treatment.

If you’d like to receive some customized beauty advice and treatments from bilingual beauty professionals in Tokyo, La YAMANO Beauty Salon in Ginza is pleased to welcome you for a wellness break!

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La YAMANO X TOKYO WEEKENDER MAGAZINE BEAUTY NIGHT EVENT

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www.tokyoweekender.com OCTOBER 2014
He’s known as the samurai guitarist, a natural-born performer with an unconventional style and a huge on-stage presence. Playing in front of adoring fans around the globe, Miyavi looks like he was born to be a rock star; yet, if it hadn’t been for an unfortunate football injury suffered during his early teens the Osaka native’s career may have taken a very different path.

“Kicking the ball was everything to me when I was younger,” he tells Weekender. “I played for a professional youth team and I was serious about making it as a pro, but I got a bad injury when I was 14 and wasn’t mentally strong enough to come back. It felt like I’d lost everything. When you are pursuing a dream you feel alive: with that gone it just seemed so dark.

“The guitar was my light. To this day I still don’t know why I picked it up. I didn’t have any role models, or any particular goal: it just filled a void I guess. I found the creative process similar to playing football; it gave me a freedom to express myself.”

While many aspiring musicians set out to be like their heroes, Miyavi was determined to carve out his own identity. As the words inscribed on his upper right arm—“Tenjou tenga yuiga dokuson,” (throughout heaven and earth, there is only one me)—suggest, he is very much his own man, an individual who doesn’t like to be labeled or pigeonholed—and the same goes for his music. The self-taught guitarist developed his own style from a young age, a distinctive slapping technique without a pick that is usually adopted by shamisen players.

“I guess my music doesn’t have what you’d call traditional roots,” he says. “I wouldn’t want to categorize it, saying it was rock or pop. It’s more instinctive than that. It’s not my aim to be some legendary artist; I’m just trying to produce songs that are both spiritual and heartfelt.

“For me music is like a language; it’s a form of communication with a beat. The guitar is then the bridge that helps me get my message across to the fans. Of course I want to spread that message to as many people...
Miyavi says, “When I am on stage everything is white: it is an indescribable feeling. On top of that I get to visit all these amazing places. I particularly love going to South America. The passion the audiences show there: it really pumps you up as an artist. They are so rhythmical—it’s like I’m playing in front of lots of musicians! Then I will look down at the floor and see them singing my songs back to me in Japanese: it gives me goose-bumps.”

These days a large number of Miyavi’s songs are written in English including his latest release, “Real.” A rocking, upbeat track that urges listeners to step away from their virtual world, get on the dance floor and “feel the moment,” the single was co-produced by five time Grammy award winners Jam & Lewis. The pair, who have created chart-topping hits for the likes of Michael Jackson, Beyoncé and Sting, released a statement revealing their admiration for the Japanese guitarist, though they believe he has even more to offer.

“We’ve had the opportunity to work with some of the world’s most talented and influential musicians and artists. [What] they all have in common is a desire to not settle for normal but to push the boundaries of excellence in unusual and provocative ways. Add Miyavi to our list of artists truly pushing the envelope. Mixing virtuoso guitar skills with a totally unorthodox technique of applying them he is truly one of a kind. The truly exciting part is we feel we’re only scratching the surface of his incredible potential as an artist.”

A huge character, Miyavi seems to leave time I am doing something I love, something people would give anything to be able to do,” Miyavi says. “I had to do it. She explained to me that her goal wasn’t to glorify America and vilify Japan, but to try and make a bridge between the two countries. Ultimately it’s a global story about honor, forgiveness and the unbroken spirit of Lou Zamperini; it’s not a typical war movie.

“Being my first time in film I found it tough. Angie [Jolie] helped a lot though, as did the rest of the cast. It was great to work with them all including Jack [O’Connell] who was amazing as Lou; that said, I couldn’t understand his accent at all! I actually had a jam with him and some of the other members at the wrap-up-party: we played a few songs, including ‘Angie’ by the Rolling Stones. It was nice to be able to unwind after weeks of hard work.”

Jolie, who is said to be a big fan of Miyavi’s music, has been to see him perform since: she went to his LA show with husband Brad Pitt earlier this year. Having such influential followers will no doubt help boost the singer’s growing international profile. Constantly looking to evolve and improve, the 33-year-old has already made quite a name for himself around the world; yet something tells us Miyavi’s best years are still ahead of him.

Miyavi will be at Zepp DiverCity on his “Get Real” tour on October 9. Doors open at 18:00, and the show starts at 19:00.
AGENDA: THE WEEKENDER ROUNDPUP OF WHAT’S HAPPENING IN OCTOBER

1 OCT 11-12
Asagiri Jam 2014
Fuji Rock’s more laid-back, lower-key cousin is back with headliners G. Love & Special Sauce, Skinny Lister and Tha Blue Herb amongst others.
Where: Asagiri Arena, Fujinomiya
How Much: ¥15,000 (2-day pass)
More info: www.smash-jpn.com/asagiri

2 OCT 17-19
CWJ Print Show
Japan’s largest print exhibition and sale. All proceeds from sales will go towards the CWJ’s Scholarships and Fukushima relief projects.
Where: Tokyo American Club, Minato-ku
How Much: Free
More info: www.cwj.org

3 OCT 13
Setagaya Bread Festival
A festival of bread brings all things yeasty together for a celebration. Call it what you will—la Fête du Pain, pan matsuri or just plain old bread festival.
Where: Various venues, Setagaya-ku
How Much: Free
More info: www.setagaya-panmatsuri.com

4 OCT 11
Shibuya Sake Festival
The entrance fee gives you access to an all-you-can-handle sake sampling exhibition, from 24 breweries presenting a total of 100 varieties.
Where: Yamashita Park, Shibuya-ku
How Much: ¥3,000 (adv.) / ¥3,500 (on the day)
More info: www.tokyoweekender.com

5 OCT 5
International School Fair
Learn everything you need to know about international schools in Japan, from pre-school to graduate programs.
Where: Tokyo American Club, Minato-ku
How Much: Free, reservations required
More info: www.tokyoamericanclub.org

6 OCT 24-29
Tokyo Ramen Show
Ramen aficionados, this is the time of the year when you can sample all kinds of noodles from all over Japan, at one single venue.
Where: Komazawa Olympic Park
How Much: Free entrance, ¥800 per bowl
More info: www.ramenshow.com

7 OCT 25
Whistlebump
Prep yourself for what is promised to be a night of decadence, complete with live shows, DJs and pole dancers.
Where: XEX Nihonbashi, Chuo-ku
How Much: ¥3,000 (pre-sale) / ¥4,500 (door)
More info: www.tokyoweekender.com

8 OCT 24
Bonjour Tokyo Warm Up Halloween Party
Warm things up before Halloween with some belly dancers, body painters and DJs. Don’t forget to dress up!
Where: Ginza Roots, Chuo-ku
How Much: ¥2,000 (includes one drink)
More info: www.bonjourtokyo.com
**AGENDA**

**THE WEEKENDER ROUNDUP OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OCTOBER**

1. **Setagaya Bread Festival**
   - A festival of bread brings all things yeasty together for a celebration. Call it what you will—la Fête du Pain, pan matsuri or just plain old bread festival.
   - **Where:** Various venues, Setagaya-ku
   - **How much:** Free
   - **More info:** www.setagaya-panmatsuri.com

2. **Tokyo Ramen Show**
   - Ramen aficionados, this is the time of the year when you can sample all kinds of noodles from all over Japan, at one single venue.
   - **Where:** Komazawa Olympic Park
   - **How Much:** Free entrance, ¥800 per bowl
   - **More info:** www.ramenshow.com

3. **International School Fair**
   - Learn everything you need to know about international schools in Japan, from pre-school to graduate programs.
   - **Where:** Tokyo American Club, Minato-ku
   - **How Much:** Free, reservations required
   - **More info:** www.tokyoamericanclub.org

4. **Shibuya Sake Festival**
   - The entrance fee gives you access to an all-you-can-handle sake sampling exhibition, from 24 breweries presenting a total of 100 varieties.
   - **Where:** Yamashita Park, Shibuya-ku
   - **How Much:** ¥3,000 (adv.)/ 3,500 (on the day)
   - **More info:** www.tokyoweekender.com

5. **Bonjour Tokyo Warm Up Halloween Party**
   - Warm things up before Halloween with some belly dancers, body painters and DJs. Don’t forget to dress up!
   - **Where:** Ginza Roots, Chuo-ku
   - **How Much:** ¥2,000 (includes one drink)
   - **More info:** www.bonjourtokyo.com

6. **CWAJ Print Show**
   - Japan’s largest print exhibition and sale. All proceeds from sales will go towards the CWAJ’s Scholarships and Fukushima relief projects.
   - **Where:** Tokyo American Club, Minato-ku
   - **How Much:** Free
   - **More info:** www.cwaj.org

7. **Whistlebump Halloween Adventure**
   - Prepare yourself for what is promised to be a night of decadence, complete with live shows, DJs and pole dancers.
   - **Where:** XEX Nihonbashi, Chuo-ku
   - **How Much:** ¥3,000 (pre-sale)/ 4,500 (door)
   - **More info:** www.tokyoweekender.com

8. **Asagiri Jam 2014**
   - Fuji Rock’s more laid-back, lower-key cousin is back with headliners G. Love & Special Sauce, Skinny Lister and Tha Blue Herb amongst others.
   - **Where:** Asagiri Arena, Fujinomiya
   - **How Much:** ¥15,000 (2-day pass)
   - **More info:** www.smash-jpn.com/asagiri

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**OCTOBER 2014**

1. **Hokkaido Fair**
   - Crab, scallops, sea urchin, salmon, ramen, ishikare-nabe, Genghis Khan, dairy goodness and homegrown beer at one of Yoyogi’s favorite festivals.
   - **Where:** Yoyogi Park
   - **How Much:** Free
   - **More info:** www.tokyoweekender.com

2. **EMAF Tokyo**
   - The Red Bull Music Academy is partnering up with this newcomer to the festival circuit, with DJ/producer James Holden behind the decks.
   - **Where:** Liquiroom Ebisu, Shibuya-ku
   - **How much:** ¥5,000 -¥9,000
   - **More info:** www.redbullmusicacademy.com

3. **Loud Park 2014**
   - The ear-splitting affair brings back old school sensation Manowar, Arch Enemy, Dragonforce, Rage, Dream Theater and many others.
   - **Where:** Saitama Super Arena, Saitama
   - **How Much:** ¥14,500–¥29,000
   - **More info:** www.loudpark.com/14
For most any red-blooded American male-type person—and beyond a doubt, all of those from Texas and the Southwest Conference and Dallas Cowboy country—the waning of the warmth and the autumnal changing of the leaves from saged green to burnished gold signals one force-fed into the livingrooms over the United States is sadly missed in Japan by the faithful.

The demand for more and yet more football on the TV screens now includes—at least in gridiron-insane Texas—pictures of the top area high school game on Friday night, usually a double-header on Saturday when the top universities clash, Sunday with the regular NFL game of the week and now the Monday Night pro special. That's not to mention, of course, the relatively new World Football League, now in its sophomore year, which frequently hogs the

(Continued on Pages 6 & 7)

**By CORKY ALEXANDER**
Weekender Editor
PRIME RIB SET
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Once you’ve decided what size Prime Rib you’re ready for, you’re ready to choose one of three mouthwatering cooking styles: Original, for people who want to enjoy the pure flavor of juicy roast beef, Seared, which quickly seals in the flavor of the tender cut, or for a smoky, bold flavor, the hearty texture of our Flame Grilled style.

Whichever size you choose, all of our Prime Rib meals come with traditional au jus sauce, your choice of two freshly made sides, and a salad or a cup of our soup of the day.
Perched on the side of Mt. Inasa, high over Nagasaki Bay, the Garden Terrace Nagasaki offers unmatched style, luxury, and one of the city's best night views—without even leaving your room.

Designed by internationally renowned architect Kengo Kuma, the sharp angles and lines of the Garden Terrace stand in striking contrast to the lush green mountainside. Yet with the soft, warm tones of its paneled pine exterior interspersed with windows that seem to have grown into place organically, the hotel feels perfectly at home amongst the natural surroundings.

The tastefully understated luxury extends to the hotel's spacious guest rooms, each of which has a balcony looking out over the hills and bay below. All rooms come with a range of amenities, including a 46-inch TV, Blu-ray DVD player, and Wi-Fi, but guests are more likely to spend their time taking in the stunning views from their balconies than sitting in front of a screen.

The Garden Terrace's restaurants all make use of the best local, seasonal ingredients to give a modern twist to traditional cuisine. The Forest restaurant offers excellent French inspired European fare, and Wine Bar's classy atmosphere is perfect for an aperitif or nightcap. For Japanese cuisine, there are three options: Akizuki offers diners a creative take on traditional favorites, while Tenku specializes in sushi and the freshest Nagasaki seafood. The hotel's newest restaurant, Chikusai, offers the most impressive dining experience. Sitting at the long counter of this teppanyaki restaurant, diners can see the creativity and care the chef puts into each dish while enjoying the panoramic view of Nagasaki Bay and the city below.

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