

Iwate International Association Organ

Iwate International Exchange

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Iwate International Association

Hey, listen! This is what I'm eating

~Dishes around the world/Surprising foods~

There are currently foreign residents from 65 different countries living in Iwate. When one lives away from their home country, one of the things they miss the most is food. Food is also something you look forward to when you go on a trip to another country. We asked people about what kind of food they eat in their countries, what kind of ways they eat certain foods, and what dishes they are proud of.

We will introduce what we have gathered along with information from Japanese people with experience living abroad.



Nithi Charoenmin (Thailand)

Exchange student at Iwate University.
Been in Japan for 1 1/2 years.

- Please tell us about the characteristics and ways to eat Thai food.

When you buy food from a food stand, they give it to you in a plastic bag. For noodle dishes, they put the noodles and soup in separate bags. They even put seasonings like chili pepper flakes and vinegar in a small bag for you. Drinks are put directly in the plastic bag, and you drink from it with a straw.



Drink beverages from a food stand in a vinyl bag with a straw.

- Is there a type of food that surprised people in Japan?

Durian fruit is very famous for its unique smell, and there's a durian *yokan*. The smell is so strong that most Japanese people refuse to eat it. I bought it in Chanthaburi, a town in the east of Thailand. There are also durian chips, but the smell isn't so bad because it's fried before the fruit ripens. I



For people who aren't accustomed to the taste of durian – durian yokan.

to people who

aren't used to the taste of durian yet, as my Japanese friends ate it with no problem and thought it was delicious.

- Are there any Japanese foods that surprised you?

I never thought I would ever eat horse meat. Once, at a restaurant, it said “*sakuraniku*” on the menu, and when I asked what it was, they said it was horse meat and I was so shocked. It's even more surprising that it's eaten raw. I've never tried it.



Karen Seni (Solomon Islands)

Been in Japan for about 2 years.

- Please tell us about food in Solomon Islands.

In the Solomon Islands, we have a type of traditional dish called Motu that we make for Christmas, New Year's, wedding ceremonies, church service, and at big gatherings.

First, you heat up a lot of stones. When the stones become warm enough, you move the stone in the



Motu

middle and put ingredients like cabbage and fish wrapped in a banana leaf inside.

You put the stone back where it was

before and cover the stones with even more banana leaves and wait about an hour. You can use a lot of different ingredients like potatoes, arrowroot, taro, pork, turtle, and chicken, and flavor it all with coconut

cream.

- Is there any type of food or cooking that surprised people in Japan?

On some of the islands in the Solomon Islands, people eat bats. Apparently people eat them on the island that my dad was born in. Bats sleep during the daytime so that's when they are caught. You prepare them in the same way you prepare Motu, or on top of some heated up stones.



Gabriel Mchonde (Tanzania)

Exchange student at Iwate Medical University.
Been in Japan for 2 years.

- Please tell us what the staple food in Tanzania is.

We have two: Ugali, which is made of maize ground up into cornmeal, and rice. In Tanzania we eat long grain rice, which is long and narrow, different from Japanese rice.

How we eat is different starting from even the cooking method of the rice. Normal, white rice is called Wali. Tanzanian rice in general has no flavor.

There's no sweetness like there is in Japanese rice, so we flavor it with some salt. Vitumbua, which is pancakes made of rice flour. We also eat Pilau, which is rice with things like sweet potato and beef added in and seasoned with spices. It's a special meal that we eat during holidays and celebrations.

- Are there any Japanese foods that surprised you?

I was surprised that people eat food raw here. It's the first time I've seen people eat raw fish and raw meat. In Tanzania, we never eat fish raw. We grill it or boil it.

The first time I had something raw was when my friend took me to a conveyor belt sushi restaurant. My friend said, "Come on, just give it a shot!" My initial impression of it was, "Umm...." It was really difficult for me to eat. But now I'm used to it, and I've become an expert.

Masashi Shimizu (The Netherlands)

Currently resides in the Netherlands.

- Please tell us about a type of food that surprised you in the Netherlands.

In the Netherlands, pickled herring, or pickled raw Pacific herring, is traditionally eaten. Herring season is from May to June, and since the backbone is taken out, you eat it by holding it by its tail and starting from its head.

As for sweets, there's oliebollen, which is like a round donut. This is eaten on New Year's Eve, and is like the Netherlands' version of Japan's New Year soba. Usually Dutch households don't eat fried foods, but only on this day, they'll deep fry a lot of oliebollen and eat it while counting down with everyone.

Also, a type of food that is popular with people of all ages, both young and old, is Indonesian food. Indonesia, which was once a Dutch colony, has made a big impact on the Netherlands, as Indonesian food is loved by many people even now and has become a part of Dutch food culture.



Juana Nishida (Paraguay)

Came to Japan upon marrying her Japanese husband.

- Is there any type of food that surprised people in Japan?

There's a type of food that was made from a mistake made while cooking. It's called Sopa Paraguaya and is a Paraguayan-style cake. The origins of this food came from when someone was trying to make corn soup, but they messed up and burn it. The texture is like that of Japanese



Sopa Paraguaya

steamed cakes, but it's salty in flavor. You made it by using a lot of eggs, cornmeal, cheese, salt, and onions. When it's finished and you cut it and put it on a plate, it looks so much like a cake that it's a big surprise to people. It's savory, after all.

- Are there any Japanese foods that surprised you?

I was surprised at how big ramen bowls are. In Paraguay, a bowl of that size would be used to hold soup for the whole family to share. That's why I was surprised when I learned that the ramen bowl holds a

-serving size for one person. “Is it really okay for me to eat this all by myself?” I thought. When I first ate ramen in Japan, the portions were so large that I couldn’t finish it. But not I’m used to it. I love ramen, and I can eat it all by myself.

Reka Fekete (Hungary)

Exchange student at Iwate University.
Been in Japan for 1 year..

■ Please tell us about Hungarian food.

Once I showed someone a picture of langos, and they were shocked. The traditional langos is about the size of a person’s head, and you can buy it at the market. The ones you make at home are about the size of your palm. You fry it with oil so it has some volume. Hungarian people love sour cream, so a lot of people put sour cream on top of it and eat it. It’s delicious and easy to make, so it’s very convenient when you’re busy.

■ Is there any type of food that surprised people in Japan?

When I made a presentation about Hungary at an elementary school, the students were shocked that we eat so much paprika. We use paprika that is ground into powder. It’s used in a variety of different ways,



Paprika from Hungary

like on spicy food, not-so-spicy food, sweet food, and all sorts of different types of cooking and to your own personal preference. There’s completely red paprika that can be spicy, but also ones that aren’t spicy. You can tell if it’s spicy by the smell.

The homemade paprika that you can buy from the old ladies at the market is much more delicious than the ones that are sold at the supermarket. The paprika I use for myself I brought over from Hungary.

You can put it in the traditional dish gulyás leves, stew, and sausage. There are dishes where the word “paprika” is in the name, like paprika chicken or paprika potato. But, we don’t put it on langos.



Junko Kudou (Argentina)

Originally from Argentina.

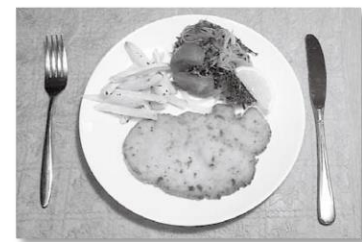
■ What kind of cuisine is in Argentina?

Asado is a grilled meat dish commonly eaten in Argentina. You grill the meat with the bones still on. You gather your family or friends on the weekends and eat it while



Asado

chatting. It’s a lot of work starting the fire and cooking the meat, so it’s standard for the men to prepare everything. It’s a custom that is very important for communication among Argentinian people.



Milanese

Milanese is a dish commonly eaten in

Argentinian households, where you lightly coat beef or chicken in bread crumbs and deep fry them. You pound the meat and spread it out thinly. It’s very similar to cutlets in Japan.

Izumi Matsunaga (Malawi)

Resided in Malawi from 2010-2012 as part of the JICA Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program

■ Please tell us about a type of food that surprised you in Malawi.

When the rainy season starts, a bunch of ngumbi (termites) that are 1-1.5 cm in size come out of holes. I was so startled when people would grab their



Caterpillar

wings and eat them just like that. Children would grab ngumbi and eat them for dinner. People also ate caterpillars as large as your thumb. Besides that, people ate things like mice and small birds as well.

Sometimes you would crack open an egg and there would be a little chick inside. It's surprising, but it's nature.

Rani Krishna (Bangladesh)

Been in Japan for 1 year.



■ Please tell us about Bangladeshi food.

For all three meals we eat rice and curry. Recently, some people eat bread for breakfast, but lunch and dinner is curry. There's meat, fish, dal (bean), and vegetable curry. In meat and fish curry, we put in vegetables along with the main ingredients. The spices you put in change depending on what kind of ingredients you use. You learn from your mother or grandmother about what spices to use and when.



We put side dishes on top of panta and eat it

You also learn from your neighbors or sisters. As a

different base from Japanese curry, it's spicy. It's similar to Indian curry.

■ What else is there besides curry?

On Bengali New Year (April 14), we eat something called panta ilish. "Panta" is rice soaked in water overnight. "Ilish" is the national fish of Bangladesh, and is a pricy fish that can be caught in the ocean and in rivers. It tastes really good when you put deep-fried ilish into panta. You also put in things like aloo bharta (potato salad) and onions.

Panta is traditional breakfast in farming villages. Since people have to start work early in the morning, there's no time to prepare a meal. This is why, the night before, you make a lot of rice and let it soak in water overnight, then the next morning you eat it with raw onions, chili pepper flakes, salt...

In Bangladesh, we really value our farmers, which is why on New Year's we eat the traditional breakfast of the farming villages.

* This article is an extract from the 2014 Autumn Edition (Vol. 77) Special Feature.

We're doing our best!

People Iwate Can Rely on

~Reports from the ground by people engaged in assistance for foreign residents~

Japanese Language Supporters

We interrupted Japanese Language Supporter Barae Miyanishi and asked her a bit about what she does.

Miyanishi is working with two Vietnamese people who came to Japan in June 2014 – Minh, who is a great cook, and Bac, who likes sports. They say that no one in their companies will teach them Japanese, and so they turned to the International Association for a Japanese Language Supporter.

Miyanishi decided to become a Supporter because she herself had problems when she

lived abroad. "I hope I can transmit even just a bit of the communication skills I acquired while living abroad, and what you need to get along in life while living in a foreign country," she told us.

"I want them to think, 'I want to be able to speak Japanese,'" she said, smiling, when asked what kind of things she looks out for while teaching Japanese. "It's important to appeal to the students, and to teach them



The three of them working on Japanese together

conversational Japanese and vocabulary appropriate to their age and way of speaking. In other words, their personality.”

Japanese Language Supporters

For people who want individual lessons, or to teach Japanese, please contact the International Association

Multilingual Supporters ~Medical Interpreting~

What is a Multilingual Supporter?

Well, they help foreign residents out with important issues in their daily lives, such as natural disaster measures, medical affairs, education, and various administrative issues. They also volunteer at international events, etc. by interpreting and translating.

So just what kind of stuff do they do, specifically? We sat down with Ami Yoshida and had a chat with her about her Multilingual Support activities. She interprets for Ms. Jiang and her husband Mr. Peng, both from China.

The interpreting assignment in question was for a “one-month medical checkup” for Ms. Jiang’s one-month old baby, who was getting its first medical checkup.

Jiang has been in Japan for two years. When asked about her life in Japan, she had this to say: “When I’m out shopping, I can get some sense of what each item is by looking at it, but I don’t understand the full explanation, and so I have trouble distinguishing between two products that look the same.” She still has a lot of concerns in her daily life and with the language barrier, and her main cause for believing she will need continued support going forward is her newborn child. “But with Yoshida-san here, I can ask her whatever I want and I feel more



at ease.”

This is the second time for Yoshida to work with Jiang. The first time she reported that she had experienced a few roadblocks. But not this time. “It was easy. Not only was it my second time working as a Multilingual Supporter, but I also have a child, so I had a pretty good idea going in what kind of stuff I would be interpreting for,” she said with a smile of satisfaction.

She was deeply impressed on seeing the relieved look on Jiang’s face after the checkup finished smoothly.

The Iwate International Association will continue to work to support foreign residents through the Multilingual Supporter system!

We would like to thank the Morioka Red Cross Hospital for their cooperation in research for this article.

Multilingual Supporters

Those having problems with their daily lives can contact us about the Multilingual Supporter system any time they wish.

Consultations for Foreigners

The International Exchange Center (Aiina, 5F) has counselling specialists to talk to people from China, South Korea and the Philippines.

Consultations for Foreigners

- China (Counsellor Wu/Chinese or Japanese)
Tuesday–Friday, 12:30~18:00
- South Korea (Counsellor Choe/Korean or Japanese)
Wednesday, 15:00~17:00
- Philippines (Counsellor Yagi/English or Japanese)
Thursday, 15:00~17:00
- ※Japanese consultations on various issues are available every day from 09:00 to 20:00 at the International Exchange Center.

~ Administrative Consultant Free Regular Consultation Day for Foreigners ~

For issues with residency status or daily life troubles, the Administrative Consultant is here to help. He can take consultations from foreigners, from their families or friends. Prior booking is required.

Date/Time: 3rd Wednesday of every month,
15:00~18:00

Venue: International Exchange Center
(Aiina, 5F)

To apply for or to request further information on any of the above, please contact:

The Iwate International Association

〒020-0045

Aiina 5F

Morioka-shi, Moriokaeki Nishi-dori 1-7-1

• TEL 019-654-8900 FAX 019-654-8922

• Website: <http://iwate-ia.or.jp/>

• E-Mail Address:

Japanese Language Supporters: nihongo@iwate-ia.or.jp

Multilingual Supporters: tagengo@iwate-ia.or.jp

Consultations for Foreigners: consult@iwate-ia.or.jp

This article is an extract from the 2014 Autumn Edition.



Iwate International Association Activities in Fiscal 2015

In fiscal 2015, the Iwate International Association will introduce many new activities while continuing to work on promoting international exchange, cooperation and a multicultural society.

Increase aid to municipal international exchange organizations

We will split Iwate into four regions, each with its own officer, and support municipal international associations around Iwate so that they can more effectively promote the region's internationalization.

Train human resources who can contribute to Iwate and the world

We will establish a "Bridge to the World Club" (preliminary name) for youths with an interest in the outside world, and work to create human resources that can bring new value to Iwate and the world.

The International Association Main Operations for Fiscal 2015

- Provision of Information and an Activity Venue
- Organizing Events and Seminars
- Supporting Foreign Residents and People Interested in International Exchange
- Provision of the Latest Information from Within and Outside Iwate
- Support for the Tsunami-Affected Coastal Region
- Aid for Municipal International Exchange Associations and International Organizations in Iwate



※The agenda and income and expenditure budget for fiscal 2015 is available on our website.

※Event schedules will be posted on our website and in our newsletter once they have been decided.

We do lots more apart from what's listed above. Please get in touch if you are interested in knowing more.

This article was adapted from an article in the Spring 2015 edition (Volume 78) of Iwate International Exchange.

Special offer when signing up for a trip when you show your Support Member membership!

If you show your Supporting Member membership at the JTB Tohoku Morioka Branch, you'll get a discount on your travel fees.

In February 2014, the JTB Tohoku Morioka Branch newly merged with and transferred to the JTB TRAVELAND Morioka Odori Branch.

When members show their membership when signing up for a trip, they will get 3% off on their overseas and domestic travel plans (LOOK JTB, ACE JTB). However, please be aware that this excludes bargain trips. Products provided by other companies (JAL pack, ANA Hello Tour, etc.) will also receive a 2% discount. In a domestic trip, you'll receive enough for a cup of coffee, and for international flights, you'll receive enough for a dinner meal.

JTB Tohoku Inc. Morioka Branch

<http://www.jtb.co.jp/shop/morioka/>

Iwate-ken Morioka-shi Odori 2-2-13 Tsumurai Building 1st floor
TEL 019-651-3333

Business hours: 10AM-7PM (Sunday and holidays 10AM-6:30PM)

Days Closed New Year's Holiday (December 31-January 3)

Please sign up directly in person. Payment can be in cash, JTB travel coupons (Nice Trip), JTB credit card, and JTB debit card.

This discount cannot be combined with any other discount.

Check !

• Please sign up directly in person. Payment can be in cash, JTB travel coupons (Nice Trip), JTB credit card, and JTB debit card.

• This discount cannot be combined with any other discount.



Information regarding becoming a Supporting Member of the International Association

The Iwate International Association registers "Supporting Members" who endorse our goals and support our activities. We hope we can look forward to our readers' continued support in the future.

Supporting Members' membership fees are used to fund international exchange, international cooperation, and multicultural living in Iwate.

Annual Membership Fee (per person/organization)

- ① Individual 3,000 yen
- ② Organization 10,000 yen
- ③ Student (incl. junior high and high school) 1,000 yen

Membership Benefits

Immediate delivery of:

- Information on events, etc.
- International Association publications

You can also take advantage of the following services!

• Special low admission fee for International Association events

• Access to various services at participating shops and restaurants

E.g.: "Total cost of certain travel goods cut by 3%", etc.

You can get preferential treatment under the taxation system, too!

Because Supporting Members' membership fees are a donation to a special public-funded organization, they are tax deductible from income tax and corporate tax.



- International Exchange Center
(5F Aina Citizen's Cultural Center)
- Days of operation: Every day that the Aina is open
- Hours: 9:00-20:00

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