

GIFU BULLETIN

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Featuring News, Events, and Updates from Around the Geefs

July-August 2016



UPCOMING EVENTS

<p>Gujo Odori Gujo Hachiman May 21st – July 10th Event Link</p>	<p>Nagara River Fireworks Gifu City June 30th Event Link</p>	<p>Night Market Gujo City June 23rd, 30th August 4th, 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th</p>	<p>Okuhida Onsen Fireworks Takayama City June 30th Event Link</p>
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Reminders – Pensions and Residency Taxes

For those preparing to go home in the next couple of months, there are a million and one things which you need to keep in mind. Not least among them are the areas of pensions and residency taxes.

The process for filing for your pension refund and subsequent tax refund is laid out in detail in the GIH which you should have with you here in Japan. If you no longer have it with you, please download it for free from <http://jetprogramme.org/en/gih/>.

Remember that if your country has a social security agreement with Japan you may be able to transfer your benefits over to the pension plan in your home country.

One aspect of the going home process often forgotten by returning JETs is that of residency taxes. Some of you will have residency taxes taken out of your last pay check (this will be a large sum of money). However, for those of you who receive a residency tax bill in June, you will need to go to your local tax office to pay this year's taxes. This is because the bill you received in June is for the previous year's taxes.

Please ask your supervisor about the residency tax process in your area and remember that if you need to pay outstanding residency taxes before leaving, it will be expensive.

Japanese Phrase of the Month

For the leavers who are looking towards their next step

Taiki bansei

大器晩成

Genius matures late

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As early summer rains continue to fall, nature blossoms and flourishes. The forests that cover the roaming mountains strengthen, and show their brilliant deep green. They fade into the horizon and turn from green to blue to match the sky. Carved out of the valleys are small pockets of civilization where we live, surrounded by this awesome, beautiful nature.

A strong part of the traditions of our area are onsen. Onsen are facilities and hotels centered on a hot spring bath. A hot bath is the perfect cool down after exercise. Intense physicality met with passive recovery. The therapeutic effects of an onsen come from the temperature of the water, and its chemical make-up. Though, I think the main reason people come to the onsen of Hida is the beautiful serene nature that surrounds you as you bath and relax.

You can receive the temperature benefits from any public bath in Japan. Water temperature tends to be around 40°C. The hot water expands the muscles in your body, and improves blood circulation. The body works hard to cool itself, which increases your metabolism. An onsen might also have a cold bath around 20° or below. Lying in this pool is massively chilling, and forces your muscles to tighten and contract.

The idea of contrast therapy is to hop back into a 40° bath, and alternate back and forth. This soothes and heals muscle soreness, facilitates recovery, and conditions the body and skin against temperature change. It feels fantastic, but be careful. The rapid changes can cause dizziness and even fainting.

The Hida area has more than 250 onsen. Many onsen in Hida have additional therapeutic effects from the unique chemicals in the water. Many of these places are outside of cities, set in forests near some beautiful hiking trails. These are some of my favorites.

Far east in Takayama, is Hirayu no Mori ひらゆの森. This is a sulfur (*yon*) 硫黄 containing sodium bicarbonate saline hot spring (*tansan suisō shio izumi*) 炭酸水素塩泉. It contains other minerals, too, such as calcium カルシウム, sodium ナトリウム, magnesium マグネシウム, and chloride (*enka butsu*) 塩化物. Sulfur, bicarbonate, and chloride hot springs are all known for their healing effect on cuts and bruises.



Regional Spotlight — (Cont.)

Sulfur springs also helps lower high blood pressure. Bicarbonate springs are known to wash fat from the skin leaving it young and beautiful looking. Chloride springs connect with proteins on the skin to strengthen it.

The indoor baths are gorgeous, and have the feeling of a Japanese castle. Outside baths are carved out of the rock, and allow you to lavish in the surrounding the nature. It's the most beautiful onsen I've been to yet. And entrance is only 500 円!

It does get quite busy, though. If you travel a little north, near the Fukuji 福地 area is the Okuhida Green hotel, Yakedake 焼岳. It's a bicarbonate spring, and has a beautiful emerald green bath outside to match the towering forested mountains. Entrance is 750 円.



Further south in eastern Osaka are a few onsen towns. There's Yuya 湯屋 and Shitajima 下島. In Shitajima, there's Himeshaga no yu ひめしゃがの湯, another bicarbonate spring facility that also contains sodium and chloride. Outside, hot and cool baths allow you to bask in the sun. Perfect for contrasting while listening to the flow of the nearby river and waterfall. Entrance is 650 円.

Though, my personal favorite is Ebisu no yu 恵比須之湯 in northeast Takayama. This is primarily a carbon dioxide spring (*nisanکتanso*) 二酸化炭素, which lowers blood pressure by expanding blood vessels. It also has bicarbonate, sodium, and calcium. I love this place because it's small and out of the way. There are no frills. Just 3 baths set at 42°, 40° and 21°, perfect temperatures for moving back and forth. After leaving the bath, my skin instantly dries, and feels so smooth. I feel great every time I go there. Entrance is only 550 円.



Check out any of these places if you're in the area, and check out our Hida welcome guide for more recommendations for onsen in our beautiful home.

As a last recommendation, after any bath in Hida, the absolute best treat is a bottle of orange or pineapple Hida milk.

Shane

Hey Peeps!

It has been an interesting and unforgettable 3 years getting to know all of you but it is time for me to return home to literally greener pastures full of farm animals, potatoes and leprechauns.

When I came here first, I struggled to find a place for myself as lots of JETs do. I learned a lot about big personalities and bigger egos (not least among which my own). However, as the months turned into years, I managed to carve out my own style and way of doing things that has matured as indeed I believe I have personally also.

My PA role has been a big part of my time on JET and having the opportunity to work with all of you has been a terrific learning experience that has taught me so much about the English speaking world in broad strokes and even the depth of the human experience, as evidenced by the diversity of the JET population.

I hope that you have found some of our contributions helpful over the past three year and I hope that you will all give a hearty welcome to Peter when he arrives here in Gifu in early August.

GEEFS 4 LYFE!

Shane

What did you think?

What would you like to see in future issues?
Send us an email at gifupas@gmail.com



See you next time !

Adam

Hey everyone,

These past five years on JET have definitely been some of the best and most transformative in my life. It almost goes without saying that the challenges of living and working in Japan have really shaped me over the years, but I also owe a lot of who I am today to the people I've met, the friends I've made, the teachers I've worked with, and the students I've had the pleasure of teaching. When I think about all of the amazing people I wouldn't have met if it weren't for the JET Programme, I feel truly blessed and grateful to have had this opportunity.

For those of you who have decided to extend your stay on the JET Programme, I implore you all to make the best of this crazy and unique ride while it lasts, because believe me it goes by in a flash. I have had my fair share of ups and downs these past 5 years as I am sure all of you have had so far. When you find yourself in that dark place, my best advice would be to take a step back and reframe the situation. Look for the positive in things and focus on that. Whatever you do, try not to let yourself get stuck in a negative loop for too long. The more time you spend there, the less time you'll have to explore, experience, and enjoy yourself in Japan.

As for me, this is the end of the JET Chapter of my life, but I have every intention of continuing my journey in Japan. I will still be around so feel free to hit me up whenever. I will definitely be taking the liberty to do the same. I know you'll be in great hands with your new KEN PA Meryl. Please give her all your support. I have nothing but love for the JET Programme and all of the amazing people I have met while on it.

Stay awesome Gifu.

Adam
