



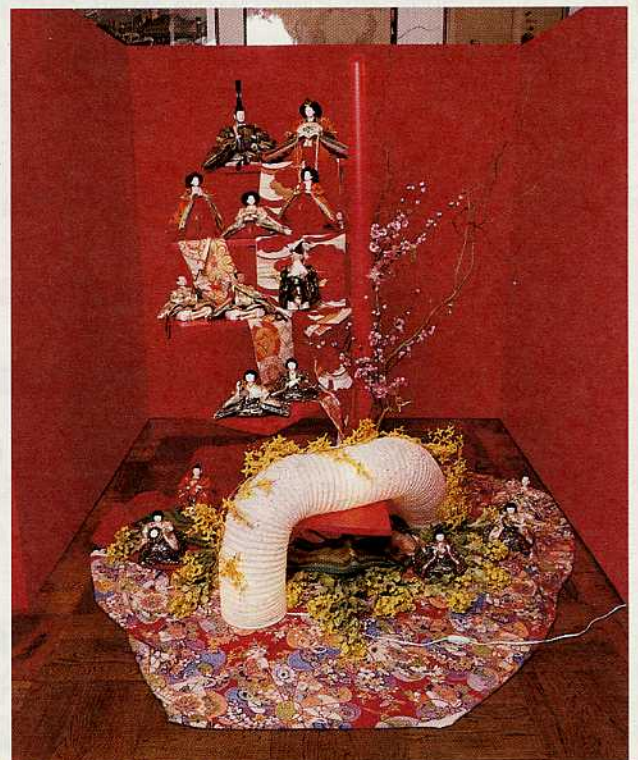
The March 3rd is the day of the hina matsuri, or the Doll' s Festival. March is also the season for peach blossoms, so it is sometimes also called the Peach Blossom Festival. Peach blossoms are said to have the power to chase away evil spirits, and are also a symbol of vitality, longevity, and peace.

Origins of the Hina Matsuri (Dolls' Festival)

The origins of the Hina matsuri (ひな祭り) lie in the ancient Chinese custom of transferring the impurities and misfortunes that have piled up in the body to a doll, and then abandoning it in a river, thereby driving away the evils from yourself.

How do you celebrate the Doll' s Festival?

Most homes with daughters will set up a display of hina dolls (hina ningyo), which symbolizes their desire for their daughters to grow into healthy and beautiful women. These displays are often decorated with peach blossoms, rice cake cubes, and diamond-shaped rice cakes called hishimochi. The main dolls used in the displays are "Odairi-sama," a prince and "Ohina-sama," a princess, who sit at the very top tier, surrounded by their courtiers. In the old days, people used to go peach blossom watching, drink sake with peach blossoms in it, and even take baths in water with peach blossoms.



==*Mojiko Retro Hina Matsuri*==

The Mojiko Retro Hina Matsuri in Mojiko is open. A variety of hina dolls donated by Kitakyushu citizens are on display for the occasion. Some of the places you can view them at include Mojiko Station, Sakaemachi Shopping Street, Mojiko Hotel, and Kaikyo Plaza. Altogether, there are 17 places participating in the festival.

Dates open: Open now, until March 21st (Sunday), every Sunday 9:00 ~ 17:00

Contact: Mojiko Retro Club 093-332-0106

URL: <http://www.qbiz.ne.jp/retro/event2004/hinamatsuri.html> (Japanese only)



What's happening @ KIA

Viva! Mexico!

Mexican Culture and Dance

The KIA held an event called "Viva! Mexico! Mexican Culture and Dance!" on January 25th. Nelly Fujishiro, from Mexico, who also leads the Spanish language table at the KIA, was the instructor for this event. Nearly 50 people attended, including people living in Kitakyushu as well as JICA trainees. Everyone got to know Mexico a little better as Nelly gave a speech, showed a video, and even let everyone try tortillas.

This event was put together by the Cultural Exchange Volunteer Group. They invite foreign instructors to introduce their culture to the people of Kitakyushu. Flyers about their events can be found at the KIA.



Why don't you join our Home Visit program?



Japanese families are waiting for you!

If you are interested in Japanese culture, there is no better way to experience it than to participate in a home-visit.

Families in Kitakyushu have volunteered to take you into their homes and show you around Kitakyushu. These families are eager to meet you and learn about your country, as well as answer any questions you may have about Japan.

This is an excellent opportunity to see for yourself what a real Japanese family is like, and to learn about many things associated with Japanese culture. In fact, this home-stay could become one of your best memories of Japan. We welcome foreign guests who belong to any school, public agency, or private company in and around Kitakyushu.

Contact: Kitakyushu International Association,
Mr. Wakayama or Ms. Yamamoto ,093-662-0055
E-mail: kia-jigyo@jnb.odn.ne.jp



Leaving Japan or moving away

Contact the landlord or real estate agent before moving to discuss the moving date and reimbursement of the deposit according to the contract. Contact a moving company when it is difficult to move your belongings by yourself. Some moving companies handle all kinds of moves, even those within a certain area, within Japan or overseas.

Start preparing early

Once you've decided to move, it's best to start preparing as soon as you can.

It's helpful to have a plan of your new house to figure out the layout of your furniture.

Get an estimate!

You can leave the packing of small articles to the moving company if you want. The cost depends on the company and the work involved. Most companies will give you a free estimate. Be sure to decide ahead of time which articles you want to pack yourself, and which ones you want to leave to the moving company.

Check out other options

Please be sure to check out your other options thoroughly, before making a commitment, such as when having your car sent ahead, disposal of unnecessary furniture, shipping costs, cleaning costs, etc.

☆ Moving checklist ☆

Electricity: Be sure to notify the electric power company in your area no later than four or five days before moving out to cancel service and arrange for payment.

Gas: Please notify the gas company or distributor no later than two or three days before moving out to terminate service and arrange for payment.

Telephone: Call 116 one week in advance of your move if you plan to relocate and continue service. Installation charges will be required at the new address when relocating.

Mail: Notify the post office using the appropriate notification postcard when leaving Japan or moving away. These postcards are available at the post office. Mail will be forwarded within Japan free of charge for one year if the proper notification is submitted.



As a last step, clean your apartment well, and be sure to pay a farewell visit to neighbors and people who helped you during your stay.

Kitakyushu's Treasure

Kitakyushu's Kitchen: The Tanga Market



“Abura ga notta buri wa iran ne?” calls out the street vendor at the Tanga Market in her rich Kitakyushu dialect. “How about some rich and tender yellowtail?” she says. The Tanga Market occupies a space of about 180 m, with over 140 shops crowded in side by side. With its convenient location in Kokura, the wide variety of fresh fish and newly picked vegetables, the Tanga Market is the place for professional chefs and those wanting the best for their dinner table alike. Each day nearly 7000 people

visit the market, so lively that it was even featured on a nationally broadcast beer commercial! The warm and inviting atmosphere has made the market popular with young people as well.

The name ‘Tanga’ goes back to the Edo Era, when Tadazane Ogasawara moved into Kokura Castle, and took his family temple, Sougenji (宗玄寺) with him. It comes from the dormitory that was built next to Sougenji to house temple monks and visitors, Tanga Hall.

The origins of the market itself, however, go back more recently to the Taisho period. Fish from the Sea of Genkai were brought in by ships on the Kantake River, and unloaded where the market is now located. This along with vegetables and fruits brought in from the suburbs, led to the development of the Tanga Market you see today.

Even though times change, the Tanga Market continues to faithfully serve the culinary needs of area citizens, making it a worthy Kitakyushu treasure!

Free consultation services for foreign residents

All of the following consultations will take place in the International Village Center, 2nd Floor Meeting Room.

Consultation on Immigration Procedures

March 21st, 13:00 ~ 16:00

Legal and Psychological Counseling

(Appointment needed)

March 27th, 13:30 ~ 16:30

To make an appointment, please call

093-662-0055 @Kitakyushu Int'l Association

为外国人举办的免费咨询会

行政书士咨询会

3月21日(星期日) 13:00~16:00

法律咨询、烦恼商量咨询会

3月27日(星期六) 13:30~16:30

地点:国际村交流中心2楼 会议室

免费法律咨询、烦恼商量咨询会需要事先预约,3月4日开始接受预约。

请打电话或直接到北九州国际交流协会办理预约。电话:093-662-0055

외국인을 위한 무료상담회

외국인을 위한 무료상담회는 국제교류센터 2층 미팅 룸에서 행합니다.

입국, 재류, 국적수속상담회

일시:3월21일(일) 13:00~16:00

법률, 고민채 상담회

일시:3월27일(토) 13:30~16:30

법률, 고민채 상담회의 예약이 필요합니다.

(재)기타큐슈국제교류협회

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