



Culture Pot MITO

In the title “Culture Pot MITO,” Mito city is likened to a pot stuffed with various cultures which resembles a multicultural city loved by every citizen. We are hoping that this newsletter will be useful in your daily life and that you will feel more attached to Mito City in the near future.

▼ Photo: Early Spring Party, Jan 27, 2018 at Mito International



Petit Japanese



Japanese words to depict spring



There are some expressions that we use during the spring season.

^{Urarakā}
 「うららか」 is the word that describes a sunny, warm and comfy spring day.

It is said that ^{yurayura} 「ゆるゆる」 describing slow and relaxing movement

turned into ^{uraura} 「うらうら」 and ^{urara} 「うらら」. We say ^{urarakana haru} 「うららかな春」

and ^{haruurara} 「春うらら」 both of which mean a fine, clear and mild spring.

^{Ranman}
 「爛漫」 means blooming flowers and in all glory.

^{Haruranman} 春爛漫 : Spring in full bloom. ^{Tenshinranman} 天真爛漫 : People who are just being yourself.



Events



MITO PLUM BLOSSOM FESTIVAL



Mito's plum blossom festival attracts many tourists every year when the blossoms bloom beautifully at the end of winter.

WHEN February 17th (Sat) ~ March 31st (Sat)

WHERE Kodo-kan Kairaku-en
弘道館・偕楽園



Kasama no to en
笠間の桃宴

Kasama ware hina dolls and good-old hina dolls are being displayed.

WHEN ~ March 4th (Sun)

WHERE You can see ceramic Hina Ningyo 雛人形 at Kasama ware stores in Kasama city.

TRANSP Take the Mito Line. Get off at Kasama Station 笠間駅. → walk (10 minutes)

Trivia



【Japanese Road Signs】



Tsukodome
通行止め

It means "Road closed to all." When you see this sign, you can't pass the road by walking, car or bicycle.



Sharyotsukodome
車両通行止め

It means "Road closed to vehicles and bicycles." Vehicles and bicycles are not allowed pass the road but you can pass the road only by walking.

Recommendation from Mito International Library



We recommend you one of the books in Mito International Library.



にほんひゃくめいざん

日本百名山 **100 Famous Mountains in Japan** (English version)

This book, published in 1964, was written by a mountaineer and author Kyuya Fukuda. It is a collection of essays detailing top 100 mountains in Japan, where he talks about their charms and histories.

Pollen Allergy / Hay Fever

This year again, the season of pollen allergy is here. There are many kinds of plants that release pollen. In Japan, the leading cause of pollen allergy is attributed to cedar. An enormous amount of cedar pollen starts to float in the air from early February. This is because many cedar trees were planted after 1945 due to nation's policy, and left unattended afterwards. With the change in people's life style and eating habits, as well as the environment, more than 15 million Japanese are said to be suffering from cedar pollen now.



Symptoms include sneezing, a runny or clogged nose, watery or itchy eyes, etc. Once developed, pollen allergy appears every year. The best allergy prevention tip to receive appropriate treatment by a doctor about 2 weeks before the cedar pollen season starts. Pollen allergy cannot be cured with the present medicine. However, taking medications prescribed by the doctor relieves the symptoms.



Here are simple measures you can take to cut pollen allergy.

- ☆When going out, wear a hat, glasses or goggles, a mask, and a jacket, specially designed for pollen-resistant.
- ☆When entering the house, rid your body of pollen, wash your face and hands, and gargle.
- ☆Avoid drying your laundry and bedding outdoors.
- ☆Keep inside the house clean as well as indoor air, free from pollen/dust.



Important: Never let pollen enter your body ! !

Cedar pollen flies around across Japan starting from the end of January for about 5 months. Check the pollen season through newspaper or TV. This year, the peak in Ibaraki will be throughout March and early April as usual, and the count will go up from last year. Below is the pollen forecast website for Mito: <https://kafun.yahoo.co.jp/weather/8/8201/>

Topics on Japan



Noshi-bukuro

のし袋

In Japan, when celebration or funeral ceremonies are held, people present money enclosed in a special envelope. There are many kinds of them.

Shugi-bukuro

【祝儀袋】 Used for celebrations: wedding, birth, school entrance, employment, etc.

The envelope is basically white with a red line.



Noshi

熨斗: a decoration placed on the upper right front. In the past, it was called "Noshi-Awabi" and Awabi* was the symbol of lucky charm. It was dried and used for decoration. Nowadays, folded color paper sheets are used instead.

* A large spiral shell whose inner gastropod is edible, usually very expensive.

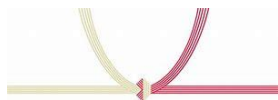
Mizuhiki

水引: a string decoration around the envelope. "Red & white," "gold & silver" and "red & gold" color combinations are used for celebrations. There are several ways of traditional tying, as well as various string craft designs today.



Cho-musubi
蝶結び
Hana-musubi
花結び

Strings can be tied and untied repeatedly. So it is used for happy occasions which we hope to have many times.



Musubi-kiri
結び切り
Shin-musubi
真結び

Strings are tied tight and hard to be undone. So it is used for occasions which we hope to have only once in a life time. (wedding, hospital visit, etc.)



A w a j i - m u s u b i
あわじ結び

It is a variation of Musubi-kiri (真結び) and is used for both celebrations and funerals.



Koden- bukuro

【香典袋】

Used for wakes or funerals. The envelope is basically white with a black or dark green line. ^{Mizuhiki}水引 strings are always in black & white, white & yellow, or black & silver combinations.

※Today, gorgeous ^{Shugi-bukuro}祝儀袋 for wedding or birth celebrations are sold at book stores and stationery stores, and simple ^{Shugi-bukuro}祝儀袋 and ^{Koden-bukuro}香典袋 at supermarkets as well.

Mito City International Association (MCIA)

Tuesday-Sunday, 9am-9pm

(Closed: Mondays, National Holidays)

Add 〒310-0024 水戸市 備前町6-59

Mito International Center

Tel 029-221-1800 Fax 029-221-5793

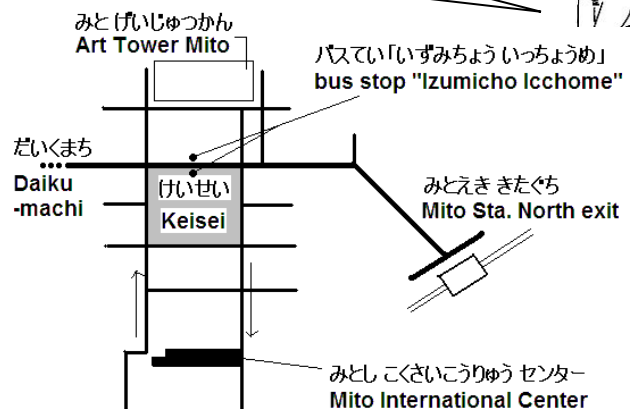
Mail mcia@mito.ne.jp

HP <http://www.mitoic.or.jp>

Please forward us any opinions or suggestions you may have!



Feel free to drop by!



Take a bus from Mito station North exit, bus terminal #4~7 ⇒ 5mins ⇒ ♀ "泉町一丁目"

Japanese Class

The Japanese classes that are held by volunteer groups at Mito International Center, will be closed during the following dates.

Day	Name of Group	Class Levels	Last Class	First Class
Tue	Orbis	Hiragana, Kanji, Beginners, Intermediate	Mar. 20	Apr. 10
Wed	Friendly Neighborhood	Beginners, Upper Intermediate	Mar. 14	Apr. 11
	MESA Friendship	Daily Conversation, Kanji	Mar. 14	Apr. 4
Thu	Sophia	Beginners	Mar. 15	Apr. 12
Fri	MESA Friendship	Beginners, Intermediate	Mar. 16	Apr. 6
Sat	L'avenir	Beginners, Intermediate, Advanced	Mar. 17	Apr. 7

TIME: 10am – 12pm (2 hours) FEE per class: ¥300~¥500

- No reservation necessary. But please inform us of your visit in advance.
- Classes are held in Japanese based on nationally accredited teaching method.
- There are several volunteer teachers each day (1 teacher per 1 to 3 students).
- You can join the class whenever you wish, and as many classes as you wish.
For example, just one particular day of the week, or even every day!

●Students' voices●

"The class is convenient, and very friendly." (male, UK)

"The teachers are very nice. And I have many chances to use the Japanese I learned." (female, India)



HIRAGANA

KANJI

●Annual Holiday Schedule●

Mondays, National Holidays

Spring recess

(mid March – early April)

Summer recess

(late July – early September)

Winter recess

(mid December – early January)

Holiday schedules can be found in Culture Pot Mito, or on the website of Mito City International Association.

http://www.mitoic.or.jp/jp/ass/ent/j_school/index.php

Resident Card

Issued to Foreign Nationals residing in Japan who have been granted a status of residence with a period of stay of more than three months, referred to as “mid- to long-term residents”

Any **mid- to long-term resident** who has a resident card issued will need to go to Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau Mito Branch Office and follow the necessary procedures in such cases as listed below:

1. There is a change in: your name, date of birth, gender, nationality/region.

※ ex.) when you change your name or your nationality/region as a result of marriage

2. The expiration date of your resident card is approaching.

※ Applies to those who have a resident status of Permanent Resident, or foreign resident in Japan younger than 16 years old whose resident card's validity expires on his/her 16th birthday.

→ Please be sure to go **BEFORE** your resident card expires.



3. The organization that you belong to have changed its name or location. Your contract with an organization came to an end / you have transferred to a different organization.

You have renewed your contract with an organization.

※ Applies to those who have the employment status.

ex.) Engineer, Specialist in Humanities/International Services, Skilled Labor, Researcher, Instructor, etc.

※ Applies to those who have the learning status.

ex.) College student, Trainee

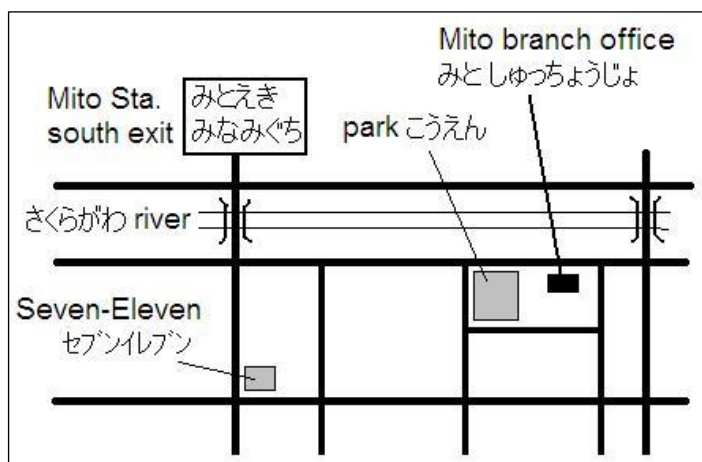
4. You have lost your spouse due to divorce or his/her death.

※ Applies to those who have a resident status of Dependent, Designated Activities, Spouse or Child of Japanese National, Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident.

5. Your resident card is lost, stolen, severely damaged or defaced.

In case of 1, 2 and 5, take your **resident card** (if not lost) **passport** and **photo**.

In case of 1, 3, 4 and 5, you must go within **14 days** from the specific day.



Address Mito-shi Jonan 水戸市 城南 2-9-12, **TEL** 029-300-3601

Monday to Friday (except holidays), 9am-12pm & 1pm-4pm

For details, please visit:

http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/index.html (multi-lingual info available)

Vehicle Tax / Light Vehicle Tax

Are you either the OWNER (所有者) or USER (使用者) of the vehicle that you are using? You can check this by taking a look at Vehicle Inspection Certificate. In Japan, the person registered as owner/user as of April 1st will receive a tax note (納税通知書) urging the payment of vehicle tax or light vehicle tax. If you receive a tax note, please take it to a nearby financial institution or convenience store and pay the tax. It is usually due by **the end of May**.

owner / 所有者 <small>shoyu-sha</small>	user / 使用者 <small>shiyō-sha</small>	tax note receiver
you	unprinted	you
loan agency	you	you
person A	you	person A
person A	unprinted	person A



NOTE Missing the deadline will lead to paying overdue charges!

Vehicle tax (自動車税) jidōsha-zei

Applies to cars with white license plate, trucks.

TEL 029-221-6768 / Prefectural Tax office 県税事務所 ken-zei-jimu-sho (In Japanese only)

Light vehicle tax (軽自動車税) kei-jidōsha-zei

Applies to cars with yellow license plate, bikes, motor scooters.

TEL 029-232-9138 / City hall 市民税課 shimin-zei-ka (In Japanese only)