



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: Otsukimi Party on September 29 at Mito International Center



Petit Japanese

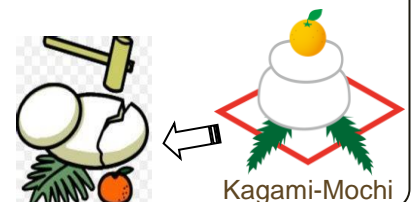


Kagami-Biraki

鏡 開き ⇒ Open(開き) Mirror(鏡)?



For the New Year, a two-layer mochi set “^{Kagami-Mochi}鏡餅” is offered to God/Buddha in Japanese households. Each mochi is round and resembles a Japanese traditional mirror “^{Kagami}鏡”. Depending on the region, in Ibaraki on January 11, we break the mochi into small pieces so that we can eat them in ^{O zoni*}お雑煮 or ^{O shiruko**}お汁粉 to wish for health and safety of the family. This is called “^{Kagami-biraki}鏡開き.” When we cut/smash this special Kagami-Mochi into pieces, we say “open mochi.” Because “cut” and “smash” have ominous meanings, we use instead “open” that has auspicious meanings.



* Japanese traditional soup for New Year's Days

** Sweet porridge of red beans

Events



The streets and buildings will be illuminated in winter.
Here are some Illumination spots in and around Mito.

★ Ibaraki Kenmin Bunka Center ★ (水戸市 千波町 東久保697)

WHEN: Dec. 1st (Sat) – Jan. 14th (Mon)

★ Mito-Geijutsu-kan ★ (水戸市 五軒町1-6-8)

水戸芸術館 **Art Tower Mito** (水戸市 五軒町1-6-8)

WHEN: All year around 5 pm – 10 pm

★ **Around Hitachi Station** ★ (30mins from Mito Station on outbound train)

WHEN: Nov.18th (Sun) – Dec. 26th (Wed)



Who is “いばラッキー”?

I b a r a k k i



The biggest sports event in Japan, the National Athletic Meet,
will be held in Ibaraki in 2019, under the slogan

I k i i k i Ibaraki yume kokutai I k i i k i Ibaraki yume taikai
“いきいき 茨城 ゆめ 国体・いきいき 茨城 ゆめ 大会”

meaning Dream Sports Festival in Exciting Ibaraki.

I b a r a k k i
いばラッキー is our mascot for the event.

Let's support the festival with いばラッキー !



My hands are shaped like a heart.

I'll bring happiness and dream to everyone!

Information



National Health Insurance/Municipal and Prefectural Tax

National Health Insurance:

The 6th, 7th, and 8th phase payments for FY 2018 is due on **Dec. 25, 2018, Jan. 31, 2019, and Feb. 28, 2019**, respectively.

Municipal & Prefectural Tax:

The 4th phase payment is due on **Jan. 31, 2019**.

Payment can be made at any bank or convenience store, using your original payment notice.

※For details, please see Culture Pot online version 2018 Summer Issue!

Mito City Hall is Renewed!!!



◆The new City Hall has been completed.

With construction work since 2016 finally completed, the new City Hall is ready to open. After the great east earthquake hit Mito city 7 years ago, the city services have been provided in several separated locations. Now they will be back all in one building, so it's going to be functional and convenient for people to use. In the new City Hall, there are a convenience store, a restaurant and a bank, as well as a counsel room and a tourist information desk.

◆When will the City Hall open?



The new City Hall will open on January 4th (Fri), 2019. Services will be available from different dates depending on the section. So please check out the schedule before you go.

◆Where is the City Hall?

Address/ 1-4-1 Chuo, Mito city



Section 【2F】	Open date
Personal Income Tax Section	Jan.4 th , 2019.
Life Welfare Section	
Consumer Affairs Center	
Section 【1F】	Open date
Records and Certification Section	Jan.4 th , 2019.
Children's Affairs Section	
Preschool Education Section	
National Health Insurance and Pension Section	
Water and Sewage Payment	
Maternity Health Book Application	Nov.26 th , 2018.
Civic Consultation Office	

It takes 15 mins by walking from Mito station. There are parking spaces available for cars and bicycles as well. Let's go to the new City Hall!

↔↔Here is the map!

If you have any questions about the new City Hall, please ask the temporary section, "New City Hall Building & Facilities Management."

TEL: 029-224-1112



INCOME TAX

Around this time of the year, you may often encounter the word “^{shotoku}所得” or “^{shotoku-zei}所得税”.

^{shotoku}所得 = income

The profit or gain which you got. (For example, money that you earn from your regular or side job, or unearned from other sources such as prizes, refunds, investments, etc.)



^{shotoku-zei}所得税 = income tax

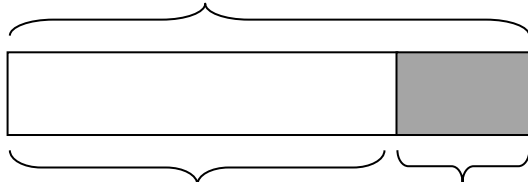
Tax paid on the money that you earn (from Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English)

▼Who needs to pay income tax?

Those who live in Japan and have income.

▼How is the income tax calculated?

A : Your amount of income earned in 1 year (Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2018)



Taxable portion

B : Untaxable portion (= ^{Shotoku Kojo gaku}所得控除額)

Income Tax = (A - B) × tax rate
 rate : 5%~45%, depending on the amount of income

※ See the back of this page for an explanation of ^{Shotoku Kojo gaku}所得控除額 ⇒ ⇒ ⇒

※ A tax called ^{Fukko Tokubetsu Shotoku-zei}復興特別所得税 to help the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake is also imposed. Please note that 2.1% of the amount of your income tax will be deducted together with the income tax.

▼How do you pay income tax?

In most cases, your employer deducts (= ^{Gensen Choshu}“源泉徴収”) from your monthly wage in accordance with Japanese law, and pays tax to the Japanese government.

However, the actual amount of your income tax cannot be determined until the amount of B (untaxable portion) becomes clear at the end of the year. This is why, at the year-end, your actual amount of income tax needs to be calculated to make adjustments if necessary.

→ deducted amount > actual amount of income tax … you will receive a tax refund

→ deducted amount < actual amount of income tax … you will need to pay the shortfall

▼ **How to adjust tax** (Those living in Japan or planning to stay in Japan continuously for 1 year or more are eligible to adjust tax.)

If you have worked for **only one** employer in the year 2018,

Nenmatsu Chosei
年末調整



(Year-end Adjustment)

can be made through your employer.

When: December 2018

How: Fill in the form that is handed out by your employer.



If you have worked for **two or more** employers in the year 2018, (including overseas income as a Permanent Resident in Japan)

Kakutei Shinkoku
確定申告

(Final Income Tax Return)

must be filed by yourself.

When: February~March 2019

How: Go to the tax office and follow necessary procedures.

Consult below for details.



Mito Zeimu-sho
MITO TAX OFFICE (水戸税務署)

Mito-shi Kitami-cho
Address: 水戸市 北見町 1-17 (near Ibaraki Prefectural Library at San-no-maru 三の丸)

Inquiry: automated voice service 029-231-4211

→select 1 (call center)→select 1 (income tax)

or National Tax Agency telephone support: 03-3821-9070

(Available in English on weekdays 9am-12pm, 1pm-5pm only)

Shotoku Kojo gaku
▼ **所得控除額 ~ UNTAXABLE PORTION ~**

In the following cases, for example, your “untaxable portion” will increase.

This means that the **amount of income tax you pay will be REDUCED.**

1. You have paid premiums of life insurance, earthquake insurance and such
2. You have paid premiums of social insurance (health, nursing care, pension)
3. Your spouse has an yearly income of ¥380,000 or less
4. You have a dependent family member(s) other than your spouse
5. You have paid a lot of medical fees

Certificates called Kojo Shomei-sho 控除証明書 (in case of 1&2) or receipts (in case of 5) will be necessary for Year-end Tax Adjustment or Filing of Final Income Tax Return.

Relevant Kojo Shomei-sho 控除証明書 will be sent to your home by the end of the year, so be careful not to lose any of them. And... **DO NOT THROW THEM AWAY!**

※**In January 2016, My Number system started in Japan. Please keep in mind that your documents to be submitted to your employer or tax office will need to contain your “My Number” (Individual Number).**

File Your Income Tax Return between Feb 18– Mar 15



Filing an income tax return is important for calculating your last year's total income, a step necessary for finalizing the amount of income tax you must pay.

Q. Who needs to file income tax return?

- Those who received employment income from **2 or more sources** during January-December 2018, including foreign income as Permanent Resident
- Those who had an **income of ¥200,000 or more in 2018, aside from employment / retirement income.**
- Those whose total **employment income exceeded ¥20,000,000 in 2018.**
- Those whose **income tax is not withheld at source.**
- Those whose **workplace did not conduct an year-end adjustment for 2018.**
- Those who **would like to file an income deduction.**

By **filing an income deduction**, the “untaxable portion” will increase, meaning that the amount of income tax you pay will be **REDUCED**.

You are eligible for income deduction if during Jan. – Dec. 2018 :

- you paid life insurance or earthquake insurance premiums
- you paid social insurance (health/nursing/pension) premiums
- your spouse's annual income is ¥380,000 or less
- you have a dependent family member(s)* other than your spouse
- you paid a lot of medical fee

Q. What do I need to do?

1. Gather necessary documents

Documents to submit vary depending on person, so you should confirm with Mito Tax Office for details. Below are examples of documents you may need.

- Certificate of income and withholding tax (Gensen cho-shu-hyo (源泉徴収票))
- Receipts of medical payments
- Certificates of insurance premium payments
- My Number Card or document containing your individual number.

2. Fill in the form (Kakutei shinkoku-sho (確定申告書)) available at Mito Tax Office or Consultation

【Consultation/Document Submission】

9am - 4pm, Feb 18 – Mar 15 (Weekdays)

9am - 4pm, Feb 24 (Sun) & Mar 3 (Sun)

PLACE: “^{Chu-oh Biru}中央ビル” building 4F

(near Keisei Department Store)

【Inquiries】 - in Japanese only

Mito Tax Office 029-231-4211

(automated voice service)

press① [call center]

press① again [income tax]

*Documents to be submitted by those with dependent family members **abroad** are now changed. For details, please consult at consultation or visit National Tax Agency website (http://www.nta.ggo.jp/foreign_language/index.htm).

Japanese Class

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

Day	Name of Group	Class Levels	Last Class	First Class
Tue	Orbis	Beginners, Intermediate	Dec.18	Jan.22
Wed	Friendly Neighborhood	Beginners, Upper Intermediate	Dec.19	Jan.9
	MESA Friendship	Kanji, Daily conversation	Dec.19	Jan.9
Thu	Sophia	Beginners	Dec.20	Jan.10
Fri	MESA Friendship	Beginners, Intermediate	Dec.14	Jan.11
Sat	L'avenir	Beginners, Intermediate, Advanced	Dec.22	Jan.12

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

- No reservation necessary. But please inform us of your first visit in advance.
- Classes are held in Japanese based on nationally accredited teaching method.
- There are several volunteer teachers each day (1 to 3 students per teacher).
- 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' voice●

“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 and National Holidays when the center is closed

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



しんしゅん 新春パーティー Early Spring Party

ぜひ！民族衣装で
参加してください！
Why not come in your
national costume?



み と し こくさいこうりゅうきょうかい にほんご
水戸市国際交流協会と 日本語ボランティアグルー
プの “ラブニール” が 新春パーティーを 開きます。
ビンゴゲームを したり、外国出身の方々との 交流で、
楽しい時間を 過ごしましょう。

Mito City International Association (MCIA) and
the Japanese language class, “L’avenir”, will host
an Early Spring Party. Playing Bingo Game,
talking with people from various places in the
world, and more. It will be fun! Please join us!

にちじ がつ にち どうようび
日時：1月26日（土）12:15～2:30pm
ばしょ み と し こくさいこうりゅう
場所：水戸市国際交流センター
りょうきん どうじつはら
料金：¥500（当日払ってください）
ないよう けいしょく ビュッフェ、各国紹介、ビンゴなど
内容：軽食ビュッフェ、各国紹介、ビンゴなど

DATE : January 26th (Sat), 12:15pm～2:30pm
PLACE : Mito International Center
FEE : ¥500 (collected on the party day)
EVENTS : Buffet style light meal, Introduction
of various countries, Bingo game, etc.

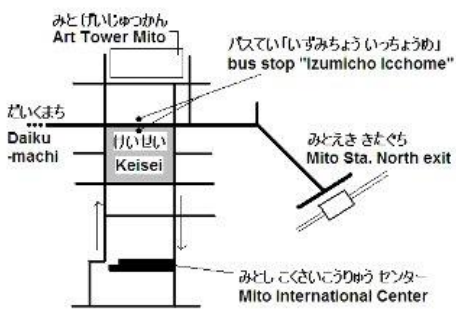
もうしこ
【申込み】

がいこく かた
外国の方
がつはつか にちようび でんわ
1月20日（日）までに、電話/Emailで
なまえ ぜんいん でんわばんごう れんらく
①名前（全員）②電話番号を連絡。
にほん かた ちゅうせん
日本の方<抽選>
がつむいか にちようび ひつちやく
1月6日（日）までに（必着）
おうふく
往復ハガキ/Email/FAXで
なまえ どうはんしやめい
①名前（同伴者名も）
でんわばんごう じゅうしょ れんらく おうほ
②電話番号③住所を連絡。1応募につき2名まで。

【Signing Up】

FOREIGN RESIDENTS
Inform us of ①your name and those of your
company, if any, and ②your contact number, by
January 20th (Sun), via TELEPHONE or EMAIL
JAPANESE RESIDENTS <selected by drawing>
Inform us of ①your name and your spouse’s or
friend’s, ②your contact number, and ③your
address, by no later than January 6th (Sun), via
EMAIL, FAX or
REPLY-PAID POSTCARD.
(One application up to 2 persons)

といあわ
【問合せ/INQUIRIES】
み と し こくさいこうりゅうきょうかい
水戸市国際交流協会/Mito City International Assoc.
み と し びぜんまち
(水戸市備前町6-59)/(6-59 Bizen-machi, Mito City)
TEL: 029-221-1800, FAX: 029-221-5793
EMAIL: mcia@mito.ne.jp



きゆうかんび げつようび がつ にち にち がつ にち がつみつ か にち
休館日：月曜日&12月23日， 25日， 12月29日－1月3日， 15日

Hospital during Year end and New Year Holidays

Hospitals are closed during Year end and New Year holidays (Dec.31st~Jan.3rd) as well as in the evening. If you get sick, please go to the designated hospitals/clinics which are open in the evening and on the holidays. In Mito, Community Health Center (2F) is open.

Hospital	Open	Reception Time	Pediatrics	Internal Medicine	Surgical	Dental
Mito City Community Health Center Mito city, Kasahara-cho 993-13 ☎029-243-8825 ☎029-243-8840(Dental) ※in Japanese only	Holiday (Sun, National Holiday, Dec.30-Jan.3) ※1/1 only afternoon	9:00am-11:45am 1:00pm-3:15pm	○	○	○	○
	Every evening	7:30pm-10:15pm	○	○	—	—
Hitachinaka City Holiday Night Clinic Hitachinaka city, Ishikawa-cho20-32 ☎029-274-3240 ※in Japanese only	Holiday (Sun, National Holiday, Dec.31-Jan.3)	9:00am-5:00pm	○	○	○	—
	Evening (Sun, National Holiday, Dec.31-Jan.3)	7:00pm-9:00pm	○	○	○	—

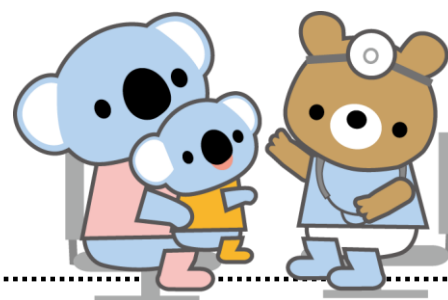
●When conditions are not serious or outside of the reception time

Please call Medical Information Control Center (except for Dental). They will find which hospitals are open (for adults/children). [Tel : 029-241-4199 *In Japanese only]

●When children are sick

Call Ibaraki Prefectural Children Hospital. (Tel: 029-254-1151) Doctors will see sick children. ※Please make sure to call before you go to hospital. (In Japanese only)

- Reception Time : 10:00pm~2:00am
- Consultation Time : 11:00pm~3:00am





Garbage Collection during Holidays

From January 1st to 3rd, garbage collection service will not be available. So, you are not supposed to leave your garbage at any collection spot during that period. If you wish to welcome a clean new year, make sure to put out your garbage on the last designated day in your area.



Mito 水戸	December											January					
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	
	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
Mon Thu				○			○				○	No Collection Service					
Tue Fri					○		○				○						
Mon Wed Fri				○		○	○			○	○						

Tsunezumi 常澄	December											January				
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Mon Thu				○			○				○	No Collection Service				
Tue Fri	○				○		○				○					

Uchihara 内原	December											January				
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Mon Thu				○			○				○	No Collection Service				
Tue Fri	○				○		○				○					

Shop Operation during Holidays

On year end and new year's days, many shops are closed. But, Shopping Mall, Super markets and Convenience stores are most likely to be open. During the holidays operation hours or days will vary depending on shops, so it is better to check them in advance.

Topics on Japan – How to spend the Winter Solstice



The winter solstice marks the day when the daytime is shortest in the year and the temperature is most likely very low. But, after that day, the sun starts to shine for longer hours, bringing a warmer season. This “new beginning of the sun” is celebrated in many cultures around the world as a special moment of the year. Here in Japan, we observe some unique practices during the winter solstice.

✚ Eat pumpkins!

Nowadays there is plenty of food available all the year around. But that was not the case in the past; the harvest was low in winter. Pumpkins are harvested in summer and can be preserved for a long time. So, people stored them to eat in winter. In addition, pumpkins are known to accumulate in themselves more nutrients while being stored.



✚ Take a citron bath!

Put citrons in your bathtub. Soaked in warm water with citron essence, you can increase blood flow and warm your body. The aroma of citron is said to be effective in relaxing and work against colds and poor circulation.



We have been observing these practices since old times. How clever our ancestors were! The day of winter solstice this year in Japan is December 22nd. Let's eat nutritious pumpkins and immerse yourself in a citron bath on that day, and beat a cold!

Mito City International Association

Tuesday-Sunday, 9am-9pm

Closed: Mondays, **National Holidays**
(12/23, 25, 29 – 1/3, 15, 2/12)

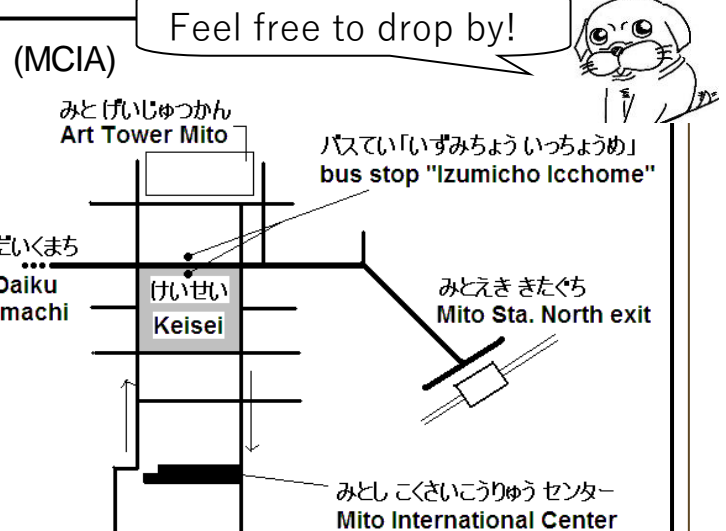
Add 〒310-0024 Mito-shi Bizen-machi 水戸市 備前町6-59
Mito International Center

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!



Take a bus from Mito station North exit, bus terminal #4~7 ⇒ 5mins ⇒ “Izumicho Icchome,”
“泉町一丁目”