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Himeji Cultural and International Exchange
Foundation newsletter editing volunteers
URL <http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp>

<People> Mrs. Sayibbaywa Muazzam

Mrs. Muazzam is from Uzbekistan. Her husband's job brought her to Tokyo in 2009. Then, she moved to Takasago because of her husband's job transfer in 2011. She has lived there with her husband and three children since then.



Q: Could you tell us about your home country?

A: Uzbekistan, also called “an oasis in the Silk Road”, is located on the European side of Central Asia and has lots of historic sites. The average temperature in summer reaches around 40°C, but unlike Japan, the air is dry so you can beat the heat indoors during the daytime. It even gets cool at night. Among its specialties are fruits like: peach, melon, and watermelon. When fully ripen, they are large, sweet, and available at a low cost as well. I would like Japanese people to try them.

Q: How do you find life in Japan?

A: When I arrived in Tokyo, it surprised me to see young girls wearing short skirts because I had never seen such a style of dress in my home country before. Afterward, I moved to Takasago and was very glad that people were kind to me. There was once a time when we were first moving in, I was pregnant and walking with some heavy baggage. My neighbor noticed and gave me a ride home. In my home country, there are strong ties, and people are kind as well, but Japan is also a very comfortable place to live. I have had a good time here.

Q: How do you usually spend your days off?

A: I often go for a drive with my family. We took a drive in Kagawa prefecture the other day and went to a popular Udon noodle shop that I had found online. We, especially the children, enjoyed the boiled noodles. Next time, we drive to a camp site in Yamanashi prefecture.

Q: Could you tell us your plans from now on?

A: Since I have registered as lecturer of cultural courses offered by the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation, I would like many people to know about Uzbekistan through my lectures and would also like to give back to those who have helped me.

Let's Go to Hot Springs

In the cold winter season, it is common for people to take trips to hot springs. In addition to warming up, hot springs have been known to have healing properties for sickness and injuries. For hot springs, it is typical to spend the night, but there are many places where you can go within a day.

We would like to introduce hot springs available for day-trips around Himeji. At hot spring facilities you can also enjoy different restaurants and souvenir shops.

🌀 Himeji municipal Hayashida Interactive Center --- Yutarin 🌀 <http://yutarin.net/>

Entrance fee: ¥600 – adult ¥300 – elementary school student

Open: 10:00~ 22:00 (reception closes at 21:30)

Closed: Second Monday (in case Monday is holiday, closed on next day) , December 31st

Access: by Shinki Bus No.31, 32. Get off at “Hayashida-bashi” bus station, walk 10 minutes.



🌀 New Sunpia Himeji Yumesaki 🌀 <http://www.ns-yumesaki.jp/>

Entrance fee: ¥700 – adult ¥500 – child from age 4 to elementary school student

Open: 10:00~20:00 (reception closes at 19:30)

Closed: Open everyday

Access: by Shinki Bus No.51, 52, 53. Get off at “Shimizu-bashi” bus station, walk 20 minutes.
※Shinki Bus (No.53) makes a stop at “Sunpia Himeji Yumesaki” 2 times a day.

🌀 Seppiko Hot Spring 🌀 <http://www.e-yamasa.com/seppiko/>

Entrance fee: ¥800 –adult ¥400 – child from age 1 to elementary school student

Open: 10:00~19:00 (reception closes at 18:30)

Closed: December 30th to January 1st

Access: Shinki bus No.51. Get off “Koura-guchi” and walk 2 minutes

🌀 Peiron Onsen in Aioi city 🌀 <http://peironjo.jp/>

Entrance fee: ¥750 – adult ¥400 – elementary school student

¥100 – below elementary school age

Open: 10:30~22:00 (reception closes at 21:30)

Closed: Every Tuesday (In case Tuesday is holiday, closed on next day)

Access: From JR Aioi station, take Shinki bus, and get off at “Peiron-jo”.

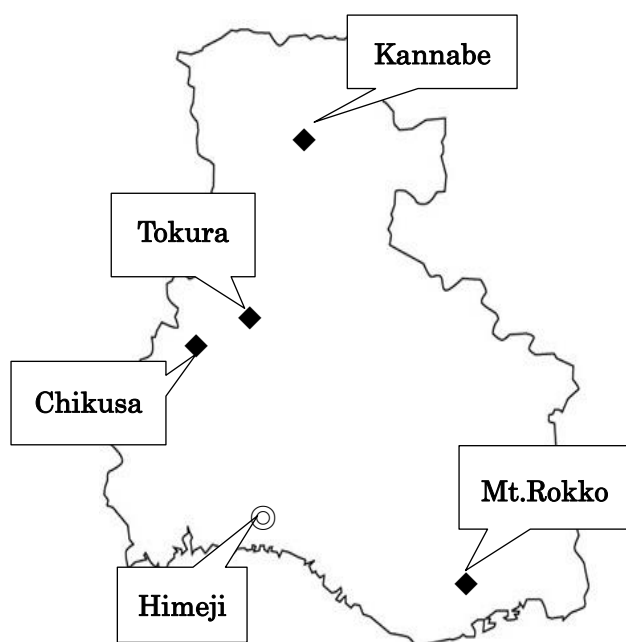
Manners you should keep at Hot Springs

1. Do not bathe wearing a swim suit.
2. Cleanse your body before getting into the water.
3. Do not put towel into the water.
4. Do not swim in the water.
5. Wipe off excess water, before returning to the locker room.



Hot springs facilities sometimes close without notice, due to maintenance. Be sure to check if it is open, before you go. Items like towels, shampoo, and soap may need to be purchased.

Information about Skiing and Playing in the Snow



How about a skiing or playing in the snow for winter entertainment? There are quite a few skiing areas in Hyogo. Rental skiwear and ski sets are available in most skiing areas. There are also skiing classes available for beginners.

In addition, they have spaces exclusively to play in the snow and to sled, for children and people who do not ski or snowboard.

It is best to take a knit hat and goggles because they cannot be rented in most places. Also, be sure to take change of clothes; you will sweat even in winter.



※Please refer to skiing areas directly for rentals, lift tickets, snow and weather information.

◆Chikusa Kogen Skiing Ground

1047-218 Nishigouchi, Chikusa-cho, Shiso-shi

TEL: 0790-76-3555

<http://www.chikusakogen.com/>

It takes an hour and 40 minutes from Himeji city center. They support various levels from beginner to advance.

◆Banshu Tokura Snow Park

207 Tokura, Haga-cho, Shiso-shi

TEL: 0790-73-0324

<http://www.bansyu-tokura.com/>

Gentle slope for beginners and slope exclusively for playing in snow and sledding is available. In addition, there are round trip buses from Himeji and Kakogawa.

◆Up Kannabe in Kannabe Kogen

739-1 Kurisuno, Hidaka-cho, Toyooka-shi

TEL: 0796-45-1545

<http://www.kannabe.co.jp/>

80% of slopes are for beginner and intermediate skiers. You can go by Bantan-railway or bus from Himeji.

◆Mt. Rokko Snow Park

4512-98 Kitarokko, Rokkosan-cho, Nada-ku, Kobe-shi

TEL: 078-891-0366

<http://www.rokkosan.com/ski>

It is located near the Rokko mountaintop. You can go by public transport.

Event Information: Winter 2015-2016

As the year 2015 comes to a close, each day in December becomes busier. It is getting colder outside, but please enjoy getting out to these events.

January 1 (Fri./ Holiday)-3 (Sun.): **First Shrine Visit of the New Year**

During this time, people visit shrines and pray for happiness of the New Year. Try your luck at paper fortune, called “*Omikuji*”.

- Harima no kuni Sohsha and Himeji Gokoku Jinja Shrine (both near Otemae Park)

- Anji Kamo Shrine: 407 Anji, Yasutomi-cho, Himeji-city,

This shrine is famous for large Chinese Zodiac animals made of straw. 2016 is the year of monkey.

- Kashima Shrine: 279 Jitoku, Amida-cho, Takasago-city



Jan. 6 (Wed.)-Feb. 28 (Sun.): **“The pass to Angkor Wat: Sculptures of Divinities”** at the Art and Craft Museum of Shosha no Sato

Admission fee: ¥300 – adult, ¥200 – university and high-school student, ¥50 – elementary and junior high-school student

Feb. 20 (Sat.)-Mar. 9 (Wed.): **Japanese Plum Blossoms Exhibition** at Koko-en

Admission fee: ¥300 – adult, ¥150 – elementary, junior high and high school student

*Exchange Students are free of charge if you show “Hyogo Culture Pass” and your ID card with your photo

Feb. 21 (Sun.): **Japanese Speech Competition** (Egret Himeji 3F I-messae Hall)

Japanese speech competition for international participants

Feb. 28 (Sun.)

World Heritage Himeji Castle Marathon 2016; Come and cheer for the runners from the sidelines!!

◆ Wiping Out Ogres (*Oni*)

An event to ward off evil spirits, pray for health and a plentiful harvest. Usually there are two ogres, red and blue, who dance together in dedication to the god of the shrine.

Jan. 7 (Thu.) **Hattoku-san Hachiyoji-temple**; 1066 Aisaka, Kodera-cho, Himeji-city
Children disguised as ogres carry a *mikoshi* portable shrine and parade down the street.

Jan. 18 (Mon.) **Shosha-zan Engyoji-temple**; 2968 Shosha, Himeji-city

This temple is famous for their powerful Ogre dance. During the service, “Ogre Chopsticks” are thrown. It is said those who gets these chopsticks will live longer.

Feb. 11 (Thu. Holiday) **Masui-zan Zuiganji-temple**; Shirakuni, Himeji-city

At this temple, three large ogres and children ogres, boys and girls, dance to a conch shell and a bell. Scattering rice cakes (*mochi-maki*).

End of March (Bushin-sai) **Usuki-hachiman-shrine**; 193 Miyauchi, Aboshi-ku, Himeji-city,

A long time ago, when foreign enemies tried to invade Japan, people prayed to the shrine for victory. It is said five ogres appeared and sunk enemy ships as a result. “*Oni no mai*”, The Ogres dance, describes this incident.



Health Care in Wintertime

The coldest season of the year has come. We would like to talk about illnesses that occur more at this time of year and methods of prevention.

1. Influenza

The peak of influenza season is the same as the peak of coldness in Japan. We especially need to be careful of influenza from the end of the year until around February. It is highly contagious, and the mortality rate of infants and elderly people are high. The virus can be transmitted by an infected person coughing or sneezing. The main symptoms include high fever over 38°C, joint pain, and headache. Please be careful not to catch the flu or not to transmit it to others.



It is important to take antiviral drugs in the first 48 hours, so it is best to be seen in a clinic or a hospital right away. In order to prevent influenza and avoid serious symptoms, vaccination is effective. Vaccination is not free. But for the senior citizens over 65, there is a system to reduce out-of-pocket costs. Please ask further details at the prevention division of Himeji Health Care. (079-289-1635)

2. Norovirus

If you eat undercooked clams contaminated with norovirus, you will be infected. The main symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, stomachache and fever. You can get norovirus at any time throughout the year, but it is more prevalent during winter months. It is extremely contagious and can be spread to others easily. It is important to be very careful, as there is no effective antiviral drug.

Generally, the virus is weak against heat, so it is best to cook foods that may contain the virus well enough to be heated in center. Norovirus can even be transmitted through the smallest amount feces or vomit. Please use disposable gloves and masks when you clean up, and if you use paper towels to wipe it up, put them in the plastic bags before throwing them away.



※Hand-washing and gargling are effective to prevent influenza and norovirus. For further details, please check our website and see the back issues of “VIVA! ひめじ” vol. 30, 35, 43.

3. “Heat-Shock”

The term “heat-shock” here describes a condition that occurs as a result of a sudden temperature change in Japanese houses in winter time. This can cause sudden changes in blood pressure and pulse. It likely occurs when you take a bath or when you come out from a heated room. Such sudden temperature changes may cause hemorrhage, stroke and heart attack, which can put your life in danger. Please place a small heater in your bathroom or warm it up before you use it.

☆Information about the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation☆

■We are looking for speakers for the Japanese Speech Contest!

A Japanese Speech Contest will be held on 21st February, 2016 at “I-messae Hall” in Egret Himeji. International friends, would you like to try making a speech in Japanese? The 14 participants who joined this contest last year had a wonderful time. If you are interested in this contest, please contact the office below (contact person: Goto). Also, please come to the contest to cheer for the contestants even if you would not make a speech.



■Now accepting Japanese language class students for the 2015 school year third term

The third term of Japanese language class will start in January. For those who would like to register for the class, please come to the office on the third floor in Egret Himeji. (Egret Himeji will be closed from December 28th to January 4th.)

◇◆◇Editor's Postscript◆◇◆

How has the year 2015 been for you? In Himeji, Himeji Castle, world heritage site has been reopened after completion of renewal work. Since then, it has been crowded with many visitors. There was also more good news. A new movie theater (Cinema Complex), installed with multi screens and latest facilities, has been opened east side of Himeji station.

There are only few remaining days this year. Please take care of your health so that you can have a happy new year. We hope happiness will come to you in 2016 too!

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Their assistance is much appreciated.

You can read back numbers of “VIVA! ひめじ” at the website of the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation (International Exchange Section)(<http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp/>).

The next issue of “VIVA! ひめじ” will be available in March. Don't miss it! We invite your comments and suggestions.

We are always looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions of “VIVA! ひめじ”. If you are interested, please contact us at the following address.

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