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a World-Renowned Clean City

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Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation
– newsletter editing volunteers

Aiming for Himeji City to Be a World-Renowned Clean City



The members of the "Himeji Volunteer Cleaning Association" carry out trash-picking around Himeji Station as part of their volunteer work. This activity is held once a month in the morning and lasts about 70 minutes. Volunteers pick up trash thoroughly, one piece at a time. After collecting the trash, they separate it into burnable and non-burnable items. Afterward, participants share their impressions with each other, saying things like, "It feels so good," "It's nice to have a

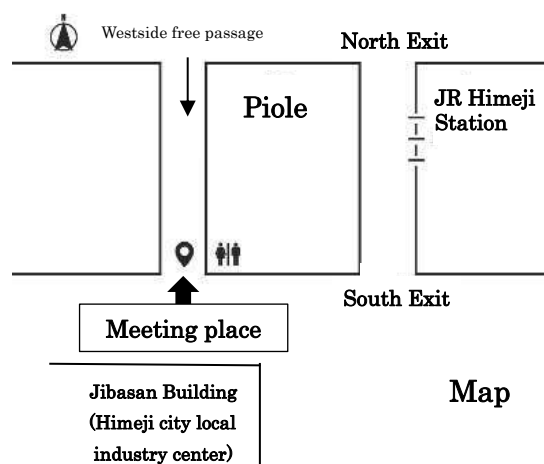
clean environment," "It was tough because there was so much trash," "There's gum stuck on the road – Why would anyone spit gum here?" and "It felt like the road was happy." An interesting aspect is that you can sense the seasons from the types of trash. In summer, many drink containers such as plastic bottles are found, while in winter, there are many disposable heat packs, masks, and disposable containers for *oden*. People of all ages, from children to the elderly, participate with around 20 people in total each time. The activity takes place even if it rains. Tongs and plastic bags are provided. Please join in wearing comfortable clothes you can move in.

Time: 6:30AM, on the third Saturday
of every month

Location: Meet them near the south public restroom
located at the westside passage of Himeji
Station, north of Jibasanbiru
※ Please speak to the staff wearing blue
uniforms.

Participation fee: Free

What to bring: Work gloves, towel, hat, and
enthusiasm for cleaning Himeji!



Map

Let's Go Play in the Park ①

It's a beautiful season for playing outside. There are many well-equipped parks in Himeji. Why not enjoy a park near you?

“Minna no Sakura Hiroba” Park

This is the first barrier-free park in Himeji, opened in April 2024 in Tegarayama Peace Park. It has been certified as a “Hyogo Prefectural Universal Facility”, incorporating feedback from users. The slopes have railings, so they can be used with wheelchairs and strollers. The ground is covered with rubber chips, making it safer and reducing the risk of injury if you



fall. Family restrooms and accessible restrooms with diaper-changing facilities are also available, so parents with small children can use them safely. There are also benches with roofs. You can walk your dog if it's on a leash.

Location: 188-1 Nobusue, Himeji City

6-minute walk from the Sanyo Railway Tegara Station.

Parking: 200 yen per visit (35 spaces), When full, please use the Tegarayama parking lot.

Mitachi Park

You can see a real locomotive and railroad crossing barriers in this park. This spacious park has plenty of playground equipment that can be enjoyed by children from toddlers to upper elementary school students. The playground equipment is shaped like submarines and rockets—just looking at them is exciting! The roller slides, athletic play equipment, and mini zip line (※see photo) are especially popular. There's also a small slide and bucket-shaped swings for infants. The park is divided by age group, so children can play safely while giving parents peace of mind. You can also take walks with strollers or tricycles. You can spread out a picnic blanket on the grass or even set up a small tent. In spring, you can enjoy beautiful cherry blossoms as the park is located near the Yumesaki River.



Location: 1766-1, 4 Chome, Mitachinishi, Himeji City

3-minute walk from the Shinki Bus Taibashi Stop

Parking: Free (32 spaces)

※The mini-zip line

“World Cuisine” Recipe ③

(From the Himeji International Exchange Festival)

Here is the recipe for “Xiaolongbao” to be served at the “World Cuisine” booth at this year’s Himeji International Exchange Festival.

Ingredients (for 30 pieces)

Xiaolongbao wrapper : 300g of flour (all-purpose flour), 150ml lukewarm water

Meat filling : 300g of minced pork,

A (100g of minced onion, 3 Japanese leeks finely chopped, and
1 tablespoon finely minced ginger)

Seasoning : 1 tablespoon cooking sake, 1 tablespoon soy sauce,

1 teaspoon salt and pepper, 1 tablespoon oyster sauce,

1 tablespoon sesame oil, 1 teaspoon chicken stock powder,

1 teaspoon Chinese 13-spice powder (or Japanese pepper powder)



Preparation

1. Put the flour in a bowl and mix with chopsticks while adding lukewarm water little by little.
Knead it by hand into a dough.
2. Fold and stretch the dough with your hands. Repeat this action 90 times to smooth the dough.
3. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and allow the dough to rest for 30 minutes.
4. In a separate bowl, combine the minced pork, A, and the seasonings; mix well until sticky.
5. Divide the dough into 30 equal portions and roll them out.
(Check it out on YouTube.)
6. Press the rolled dough with your palm to flatten it, then roll it out thinly into a circle using a rolling pin (The edges should be thinner than the center).
7. Place the meat filling in the center of the circular dough and wrap it with the folded edges as shown in the photo. Finally, pinch the top of the dumpling to make sure it is completely closed.
8. When steam rises from the steamer, steam the xiaolongbao for 8 minutes.



YouTube

The 27th Himeji International Exchange Festival

Date and Time : Sunday, October 26th 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (rain or shine)

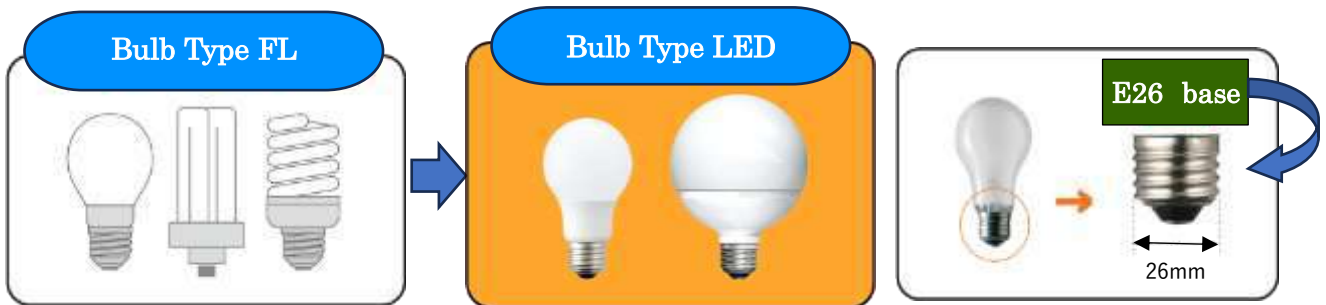
Location : Otemae Park

Ban on the manufacture of Fluorescent Light Bulbs

In accordance with the Act on Preventing Mercury Pollution of the Environment, the manufacture and import/export of fluorescent light bulbs (FL) will be gradually phased out, and a full ban will be in place by 2027. You may continue to use fluorescent bulbs that are already in use; however, it is recommended to plan to replace them with LED alternatives.

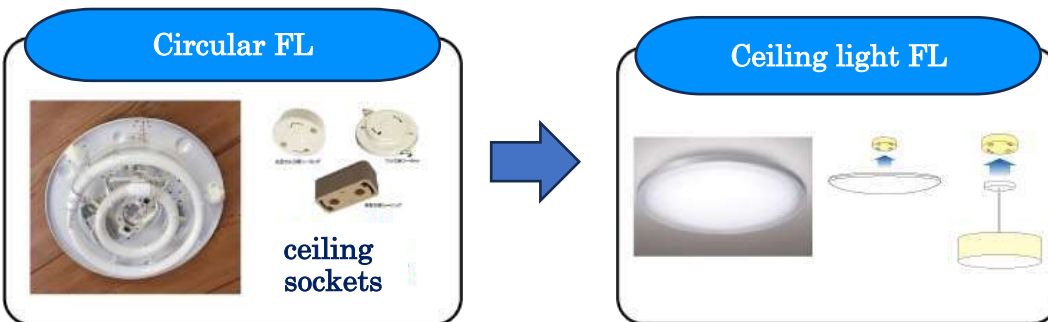
Fluorescent Lamps you can replace by yourself with LED

- Please choose the right size and socket type that matches your fluorescent bulb (FL).



- Circular FL (with a ceiling socket)

You can replace it with a circular LED. Please read the product's manual carefully.



Fluorescent Lamps you CANNOT replace by yourself with LED

- Circular FL (without a ceiling socket)

Professional installation may be required. Please do not attempt to replace it by yourself.

- Linear FL

Replacing the light fixture will require electrical installation work. In some cases, even replacing the bulb may also require electrical work. If the lamp is over 10 years old, it is recommended to replace both the fixture and bulb. Please contact a local electrical shop.

There have been some serious cases of fire and smoke caused by incorrect product selection or improper installation when replacing FL with LED by yourself. Please do not attempt to do this on your own.

People -Interview-

Yosuke (Japan)



Yosuke, who hails from Wakayama Prefecture, is a performing artist active as a *wadaiko* drummer, composer, and director. He currently lives in Himeji. He performs not only in Japan but also internationally, having visited around 37 countries. When performing overseas, he uses different *taiko* depending on the climate. Some of the *taiko* he uses are made with leather from Himeji.

Q When did you start playing *wadaiko* drums, and what inspired you?

A I started when I was a 17-year-old high school student. Among the clubs in school, there was a *wadaiko* drums club, which I joined. Before graduating, I went with my teacher to a performance by Kodo, a *wadaiko* performing arts group. I was deeply moved by the performance and thought to myself, "I want to be a part of that." I joined Kodo after graduating.

Q Why did you choose to live in Himeji?

A I used to live on Sado Island (in Niigata Prefecture), where Kodo's training center is located. After getting married, I moved to Himeji. Since I often travel for work to Izumo Taisha Shrine (in Shimane Prefecture) and Ise Jingu Shrine (in Mie Prefecture), I chose Himeji because it's located roughly halfway between them. Himeji is convenient and easy to live in, and I also enjoy its delicious water and *sake*.

Q Is there a country that you like or one that has left a mark on you?

A Israel, which I visited over 10 years ago, left a mark. Back then, the country was at war, and high alert had gone out for the area just 20 kilometers away from the concert venue. Yet, despite that, the venue was packed. As for countries that I like, I like Portugal. When I was 24, I traveled solo by bus for about a month. I love the nostalgic vibes of Southern Europe.

Q You have a performance scheduled at Shoshazan Engyoji Temple this autumn. What should we look forward to?

A This year, I'll be performing at the *daikodo* (Main Lecture Hall). There will also be a joint performance with the local group Mikotonokai. I hope that everyone will come and enjoy our powerful performance.

For those who would like to learn more about Yosuke, please check out the homepage.



Let's tweet with “#スキヒメ”!

As a result of the citizen vote conducted from January to February this year, the brand message and logo were officially chosen as: “住むほどに 好きが深まる 姫のまち” (The more you live here, the more you'll love it—Himeji).

Both the brand message and logo are available for use when expressing the charm of Himeji City or showing your love for it. Let's make it even more exciting with our creativity, using them for various purposes. Don't forget to use the hashtag “#スキヒメ”!



住むほどに
好きが深まる
姫のまち



This summer, which began with an intense heat wave in June, is now coming to an end. I spent the season away from Himeji, visiting the mountains of Shinshu and relaxing by the beautiful sea on a southern island.

How did you spend your summer? How did it make you feel? Let's reflect on the joyful moments and start planning for autumn. I hope your plans include fun activities— like enjoying delicious seasonal food or taking in the beautiful views.

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These names are used with the contributors' permission. Their assistance is much appreciated.

You can read previous issues of “VIVA! ひめじ” on the website on the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation International Exchange Section. The next issue will be available in December, 2025.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. We are also looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions. If you are interested, please contact us at the address listed to the right.



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