

PLAZA NEWSLETTER(December 2024)

It is now November and there is only a little over a month left in this year. How was 2024 for you? This year has seen many events, starting with the heart-wrenching Noto Peninsula Earthquake, followed by the issuance of new banknotes, postal rate increases, and the inauguration of a new prime minister. Penalties for bicycles have also been tightened this month. Bicyclists will be subject to new penalties for “talking on the phone” (e.g., talking or looking at a smartphone screen while riding), “driving under the influence of alcohol,” and will be subject to fines or even imprisonment. There are many of you who ride bicycles to work or school, so please be sure to ride safely!

Now then, allow us to partially introduce the consultation details found in our plaza. We received 66 consultations in October and have shared below examples of questions and answers. Some content has been edited for privacy concerns.

- Q : I have decided to leave Kumamoto and would like to dispose of my refrigerator. Please tell me how to dispose of it.
- A : In Kumamoto City, refrigerators are classified as items that are not collected by the city, so you must either ask the Home Appliance Waste Collection Center to collect it for you or take it yourself to a designated pickup location.
- If you would like to have them collected, please contact the following Home Appliance Waste Collection Centers.
 - Home Appliance Disposal Center / Phone: 096-389-7711
 - Kumamoto City Recycle Business Center / Phone: 096-357-0070
 - Kumamoto City General Waste Disposal Cooperative Association - Phone: 096-285-8882
 - If you wish to bring in your items, two designated pick-up locations have been set up in the Kumamoto City area. Please call in advance to confirm payment methods, etc. before bringing your items in.
 - Kumamoto Shinmei Sangyo
3-3-53 Minamitakae, Minami-ku, Kumamoto City / Phone: 096-357-1773
 - Kyushu Sanko Unyu
2526 Hirata, Makishi-machi, Kamimashiki-gun / Phone: 096-388-2731
- Q : I am staying in Japan on a working holiday. I was told that I need a guarantor to rent a house, but I do not have one. I tried to use a guarantee company, but I also need a guarantor to sign up for a guarantee company.
- A : After introducing the GNT (Global Trust Networks) rent guarantee service for foreigners and consulting with the person in charge, we were able to find an accepting property.
- Q : I am coming to Japan on a short stay (tourist visa). Are there any daycare centers or kindergartens where I can leave my 3-year-old child?
- A : The Kumamoto City Association of Private Kindergartens and Certified Nursery Schools answered that it is possible if there is a school that has vacancies and is also willing to accept your child at the requested time. If your child does not speak Japanese, they may not be accepted. However, in Kita-ku, where there are many TSMC-related residents, an increasing number of kindergartens are using translation apps and other means to accommodate them.
- If you have any problems, please contact the Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

New Year's Eve (*Omisoka*)

In this issue, we introduce to you a December seasonal tradition. December is a month of many seasonal traditions, from which we present New Year's Eve.

New Year's Eve is the last day of the year when we give thanks for a successful year and prepare to welcome the new year. The last day of each month is called “*misoka*” and the last day of the year is called “*omisoka*.” The history of New Year's Eve is that it was a day of preparation to worship the Shinto god, Toshigami, who brought upon a bountiful rice harvest. While New Year's Eve in other countries is often thought of as a festive night with countdown parties and fireworks, in Japan, families traditionally gather to spend the evening in a relaxed atmosphere. Although recently, countdowns and parties have been increasing. Many families spend New Year's Eve cleaning the house, watching TV, feasting, relaxing, and also eating “*toshikoshi soba*” (buckwheat noodles eaten on New Year's Eve). It's a tradition in which people eat the noodles to ward off bad luck for the year ahead. There is also the Japanese Buddhist ritual of ringing the temple bell on New Year's Eve, during which the bell is usually rung 108 times.

There are many ways to enjoy and spend New Year's Eve. How about spending a Japanese-style New Year's Eve this year?



Introducing the newly appointed, Ms. Tran Thi Bao Tram, who will be providing Vietnamese consultations twice a month starting in November at the Plaza!

Birthplace: Hue, Vietnam

What is Hue like?

→A historical imperial city known for its rich heritage, ancient architecture, and cultural importance. Hue, a city in central Vietnam, was home to the last dynasty of Vietnam and offers a wide variety of glamorous, visually appealing, and attractive cuisine.



What do you like about Kumamoto?

The water is delicious. Kumamoto is blessed with abundant water resources. Vegetables and food grown with the water in Kumamoto taste better than in other places.

What surprised you when you came to Kumamoto (Japan)?

I was surprised that there are almost no car horns in town. It's interesting to see that car horns are used to say "thank you" when someone gives you the right of way in dangerous situations, as that's not the case in Vietnam.

What I would like to do in Kumamoto (Japan):

I would like to camp in Aso where the snow piles up. I like camping, road biking, and am hooked on Kumamoto, where there are many places with beautiful scenery.

What is your favorite Japanese word or phrase?

"Fall down seven times, get up eight times." No matter how many times you fail, don't give in and get back up.

A message to foreign residents in Kumamoto:

When you live in a foreign country, you may sometimes experience culture shock or homesickness. When that happens, don't worry about it alone and talk to us. Let's have fun in a multicultural Kumamoto.

★Vietnamese Consultation: 1st and 3rd Sun & Wed, 13:00-17:00

Information on Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

The Plaza offers professional consultations including legal affairs, residence status issues, job, housing and life affairs support in multiple languages. Consultants who speak English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Spanish, Nepali and Taiwanese are available at the Plaza as the schedule below.

December Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
25	26	27	28	29	30	01 •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese
02	03 •Chinese Consultation	04 •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	05 •Korean Consultation	06 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Spanish Consultation •English Consultation	07	08 •Immigrational Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation
09 closed	10 •Chinese Consultation	11 •Job Consultation •Mental Health Counseling •Tagalog Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	12 •Korean Consultation	13 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	14	15 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Nepal Consultation
16	17 •Chinese Consultation	18 •Housing Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •Life Consultation in Taiwanese	19 •Korean Consultation	20 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	21 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Free Legal Consultation	22 •Educational Consultation •Life Consultation in Taiwanese
23 closed	24 •Chinese Consultation	25 •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students •Job Consultation	26 •Korean Consultation	27 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	28	29 closed
30 closed	31 closed	Note: Consultations 1:00pm~5:00pm (apart from the ones below) •Life Consultation in Chinese 1:00pm ~ 6:00pm •Immigrational Consultation 1:00pm~4:00pm •Free Legal Consultation 2:00pm~4:00pm (Reservation required) •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students 1:00pm~4:00pm •Job Consultation 10:00am~6:00pm •Mental Health Counseling 3:30pm~5:30pm •Educational Consultation 10:00am~3:00pm				

※Consultation service could be cancelled due to consultant's personal reasons.
Please e-mail or call us beforehand to check if the consultant is available.

Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents' Facebook

We regularly update information useful to you.

Follow us and be one of the first one to be informed!



Plaza's FB

We are offering variety of information useful to your life. Please check us!



Our website



Our Life affairs guidance

Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

Location: 2nd floor of Kumamoto City International Center

Address: 4-18 Hanabata-Cho, Chuo-Ku, Kumamoto City, 860-0806

Tel: 096-359-4995

E-mail: soudan@kumamoto-if.or.jp

Opening hours: Between 10 am and 6 pm

Closed on second and fourth Mondays and between December 29 and January 3

★If second or fourth Monday is a national holiday, the plaza will be closed the following day instead.

