

PLAZA NEWSLETTER (February 2025)

The year 2025 has begun. This year is the year of the Snake in the Chinese zodiac. The year of the snake is associated with positive meanings such as “growth,” “change,” and “rebirth”. Since snakes regularly shed their skins, they symbolize rebirth into a new self and moving on to the next stage of life. I would like to make this year a year of trying new things and being flexible to new changes. In honor of the Year of the Snake, let's make it “the year of shedding yourself”.

Now then, allow us to partially introduce the consultation details found in our plaza. We received 42 consultations in December and have shared below examples of questions and answers. Some content has been edited for privacy concerns.

- Q : Recently, we have received inquiries from overseas (Korea, Taiwan & China) about restaurant reservations. We use interpretation apps but would like to translate the menu, etc., in advance. I would appreciate any advice you can give us.
- A : It would be good to translate menus, etc. in advance and introduce them on the website, etc., or to introduce the translated menu list as a QR code. Native checking after automatic translation can be handled by the multilingual consultants at the Plaza. We do not provide a translation service. We will refer you to a paid translator. Other correspondence and services can also be discussed directly with the consultant when he or she is available.
- Q : Is there a place where my 0 year old baby to have her ear pierced?
- A : We checked with several medical institutions and beauty clinics in Kumamoto City, but none of them could help us. We asked some international students and they all said they do it when they return to their home countries.
- Q : I am an international student who do not live in Kumamoto prefecture. I am planning to visit Kumamoto for New Year's holiday to enjoy the Kumamoto Castle area, Kumamoto culture and international exchange. I am looking for someone who can guide me around Kumamoto for a day.
- A : The Plaza does not provide tourist guides, but there are volunteer groups that provide tourist information. Below is a website that introduces volunteer groups. However, we are not sure if this service is available during the year-end and New Year's holidays or on New Year's Day, so please check directly. Also, please contact them as early as possible for application, as some places require one or two weeks in advance.

- [Kumamoto City Official Guide](#)
- [The Official Kumamoto Prefecture Website: More, More, Kuma-Motto!](#)

If you have any problems, please contact the Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents.

Day of XX

In Japan, February 22 is designated as Cat Day because of the cat's meow “nyan, nyan, nyan”. Note that Cat Day is observed in many countries around the world, with February 17 as World Cat Day in many European countries, March 1 in Russia, and October 29 in the United States. In Japan, there are many days that have been designated as special commemorative days by using the number of the date to create a word. In this issue, we will introduce famous ones by month.



- Jan 3 Day of pupil Jan 5 Day of strawberry
- Feb 9 Day of meat Feb 22 Day of cat
- Mar 3 Day of ear Mar 12 Day of wallet
- Apr 4 Day of yo-yo Apr 18 Day of good tooth
- May 23 Day of love letter May 30 Day of No trash
- Jun 4 Day of insect Jun 9 Day of lock/rock
- Jul 4 Day of pear Jul 10 Day of NATTO
- Aug 6 Day of ham Aug 31 Day of vegetable
- Sep 2 Day of shoe Sep 6 Day of black
- Oct 2 Day of TOFU Oct 10 Day of public bath
- Nov 1 Day of dog Nov 22 Day of good spouses
- Dec 3 Day of magic Dec 12 Day of KANJI



The common way of counting is “ICHI(one), NI(two), SAN(three), SHI(four)...” or “HITOTU, FUTATSU, MITTSU, YOTTSU...”, but “HI, FU, MI, YO-...” using only the first letters of “HITOTU, FUTATSU, MITTSU, YOTTSU...” is also used.



Therefore, Japan may have an overwhelmingly large number of memorial days that are based on a combination of words compared to other countries.

On food-related days, discounts are sometimes offered on products at supermarkets. It is an attempt to set up various memorial days and make those things more exciting.

We think this is a very good initiative, so when you see the date on the calendar, pay attention to it. Although some of them are a bit aggressive, there are many other word combinations in addition to the ones we have introduced here.

If you are interested in them, check them out. You may find a word that makes your daily life more enjoyable.



Report on the 3rd free professional consultation for foreign residents

On Sunday, November 17, 2024, in the lounge on the 2nd floor of Kumamoto City International Center, The 3rd Free Professional Consultation for Foreign Residents was held.

On the day of the event, 22 consultations were received from 12 participants from 8 countries. Most consulted in more than one area. Among them, immigration consultation was the most common, followed by job, housing, and children's education.

Consultations were also received from people living outside Kumamoto City, and consultations were provided in Japanese and through interpreters in English, Chinese, and Vietnamese. In a survey of those who came for consultation, the overall satisfaction level was high, with comments such as “I feel lighter after consulting with you,” “I am glad I came,” “You always help me with accurate advice,” and “As a foreigner, you are very helpful.

The 4th will be held at the similar time in 2025. We will announce the dates in the Plaza newsletter, on the Plaza website, and on our Facebook page, so please be sure to make an appointment!



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.

February Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
27	28	29	30	31	01	02 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese
03	04 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Chinese Consultation 	05 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation 	06 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Korean Consultation 	07 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation •Spanish Consultation 	08	09 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Immigrational Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation
10 closed	11 National Day	12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Job Consultation •Mental Health Counseling •Tagalog Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation 	13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Korean Consultation 	14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation 	15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Free Legal Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese 	16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Nepal Consultation
17	18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Chinese Consultation 	19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Housing Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •Life Consultation in Taiwanese 	20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Korean Consultation 	21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation 	22	23 The Emperor's Birthday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation •Life Consultation in Taiwanese
24 substitute holiday	25 closed	26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students •Job Consultation 	27 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Korean Consultation 	28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation 	01	02
04	05	note: Consultations 1:00p.m~5:00p.m (apart from the ones below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •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.

