

PLAZA NEWSLETTER(November 2026)

September 25th marked the "Harvest Moon" (the fifteenth night of the lunar month). Many people in Kumamoto City were likely able to catch a glimpse of the beautiful moon through breaks in the clouds. While autumn is a pleasant season perfect for enjoying various events, it has also brought disasters caused by heavy rain and typhoons to many areas this year. As you enjoy your autumn outings, it is a good idea to take this opportunity to review the hazard map for your local area and confirm the locations of designated evacuation sites—doing so will provide you with greater peace of mind.

Let us partially introduce the consultation details found in our plaza. We received 61 consultations in September and have shared below examples of questions and answers. Some content has been edited for privacy concerns.

Q : I hold a "Specified Skilled Worker (i)" status. If my child is born in Japan, what will be the child's residence status?

A : For children born in Japan to parents who both hold "Specified Skilled Worker (i)" status, a residence status of "Designated Activities" may be granted, based on the need for special humanitarian consideration. In principle, the "Specified Skilled Worker (i)" residence status does not allow for family members to accompany the visa holder. For further details, please contact your nearest Immigration Services Agency office.

Q : I have an elderly relative who lived abroad for many years before returning to Japan a few years ago; she currently lives alone in Kumamoto City. While she understands Japanese to some extent, she is not fully familiar with the rules and systems necessary for daily life in Japan. Are there any support organizations or consultation services available that could assist her – for example, by accompanying her to government offices for administrative procedures or providing guidance on matters of daily living?

A : In Kumamoto City, there are 27 "Senior Support Centers (SASAERIA)" that serve as consultation hubs for elderly welfare. Each center is staffed by professionals—such as public health nurses and social workers—as well as life-support coordinators, who are available to assist elderly residents in the community. Since each Senior Support Center is assigned to a specific elementary school district, please verify which elementary school district her residence falls under before reaching out for assistance.



Senior Support Centers (SASAERIA)
in Kumamoto city

Q : I would like to learn about volunteering opportunities at the Kumamoto City International Center, as well as information regarding disaster volunteering in Kumamoto.

A :



← Volunteer Information at the Kumamoto City

Information on disaster volunteers in Kumamoto Prefecture →



※Regarding disaster volunteer information, please note that some organizations may have already concluded their volunteer recruitment or activities. Therefore, please be sure to check the relevant websites or other sources for details, and contact the Council of Social Welfare in the respective municipality.

We would like to introduce Liang Jun, a Coordinator for International Relations from China who arrived in September.

Birthplace (city): Deyang City, Sichuan Province, China

What kind of place is Deyang?:

Deyang is an emerging industrial city that has developed around heavy industries—including those run by major Chinese state-owned enterprises—and through reconstruction efforts following the Great Sichuan Earthquake. While it is not a massive metropolis, the city has possessed a modern atmosphere since I was a child, and I have always found its residents to be open and approachable. Furthermore, from my elementary school days onward, there were frequent opportunities for international exchange, and it was not uncommon to encounter exchange students. Growing up in such an environment, I was naturally blessed with many chances to engage with foreign countries and different cultures. On the other hand, while I sometimes feel that Deyang has an "artificially constructed" quality to it, the city is also home to sites steeped in history—such as the Sanxingdui Ruins, which date back some 5,000 years and are famous for their bronze masks that resemble the faces of extraterrestrials, as well as the Zhuge Shuangzhong Shrine, which is linked to the era of the Three Kingdoms.

What sparked your interest in Japan?:

It began when I read a novel by Haruki Murakami in my first year of junior high school. Afterward, I started reading modern and contemporary Japanese literature, and I found myself deeply drawn to the delicate portrayals of the human inner world.

What is your favorite Japanese phrase?:

"It was a good experience." Both good and bad experiences are unique, one-time, and significant moments in life. I quite like this way of viewing the world.

Something that surprised me upon arriving in Kumamoto:

I was struck by how the townscape in Chuo Ward bears a certain resemblance to that of my hometown, Deyang. Even though it is my first time here, it feels strangely familiar.

Places I'd like to visit in Kumamoto (Japan):

I'd like to take the "A-Train" (A-Ressha de Ikō) and see dolphins in Amakusa. I'm also interested in visiting Shimane Prefecture.

Things I'd like to do while based in Kumamoto (Japan):

I want to use Kumamoto as a base for solo trips to various destinations—including other parts of Kyushu, as well as Taiwan, Southeast Asia, South Korea, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Uzbekistan.

What I like about Kumamoto:

I lived in Tokyo for three and a half years while studying, but this is my first time living in Kyushu. I love the cheerfulness and warmth of the people here in Kumamoto, as well as the relaxed, free-spirited atmosphere.

A message to foreign residents in Kumamoto:

Living abroad can certainly have its challenges, but it also opens up infinite possibilities. If you run into difficulties, please don't try to face them all on your own—reach out and connect with others; things will surely work out.

I am available to assist you at the Chinese consultation desk at the Kumamoto City International Center.

Please feel free to stop by—I'm here to help!



【Chinese Consultation: Tuesdays 13:00-17:00】

Enjoy Kumamoto in autumn and winter!

This summer was exceptionally hot—in Kumamoto City, for instance, temperatures even soared past 40° C. Lately, the mornings and evenings have become quite cool—at times even chilly—and it seems autumn has arrived before we knew it. In this issue, we share information to help you enjoy the deepening autumn and the approaching winter season.

1. Kumamoto Castle Yabusame (Mounted Archery)

Date and time : November 3rd (Tuesday/holiday) 14:00-15:30

Venue : Kumamoto Castle Ninomaru Park

Admission : Free

Yabusame is a traditional Japanese martial art and Shinto ritual in which an archer, mounted on a galloping horse, shoots arrows at three successive targets.

Seeing an archer—dressed in traditional *kariginu* (hunting attire)—release arrows while racing at full speed against the backdrop of Kumamoto Castle is a rare experience; we highly encourage you to take this opportunity to see it for yourself.



2. Castle Light

Date and time : Fri, Oct 2 – Sun, Nov 1, 18:00-21:00 (last admission 20:00)

Venue : Kumamoto Castle Main keep area and the surrounding the Castle

Admission: 800 yen for high school students and older, 300 yen for elementary and junior high school students (free for elementary and junior high school students residing in Kumamoto City, and for individuals aged 65 and older).

The entire grounds of Kumamoto Castle will serve as the venue for a light display featuring projection mapping, lasers, searchlights, and bamboo lanterns. Experience a magical, ethereal side of Kumamoto Castle that differs from its daytime appearance.



3. Christmas Market Kumamoto 2026

Venue and Date/Time:

① JR Kumamoto Sta : Fri, Nov 20 – Fri, Dec 25, 16:00-21:00 (11:00-21:00 on weekends)

② Hanabatake Hiroba : Wed, Dec 2 – Fri, Dec 25, 16:00-22:00 (11:00/22:00 on weekends)

Admission : Free 入場は無料 (Food, drinks, merchandise, etc., are available for purchase.)

This is the annual Christmas market. You'll find a large Christmas tree, along with wooden stalls—known as *hütten*—offering traditional sweets, delicious hot food, mulled wine, hot chocolate, and festive items like candles and wreaths. Regardless of your religious background, why not come and enjoy the excitement of a sparkling winter evening?

Information on Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

The Plaza offers professional consultations including legal affairs, residence status issues, 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.

November Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
01 •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese	02	03 Culture Day	04 •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese	05 •Korean Consultation	06 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation •Spanish Consultation	07
08 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation •Orugatta-Kids	09 closed	10 •Chinese Consultation	11 •Mental Health Counseling •Tagalog Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	12 •Korean Consultation	13 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	14
15 •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Nepal Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •Orugatta-Kids	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 •Orugatta Kids •Life Consultation in Taiwanese	23 Labour Thanksgiving Day	24 closed	25 •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students	26 •Korean Consultation	27 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	28
29 •Life Consultation in Chinese	30					

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

•Mental Health Counseling 3:30pm~5:30pm

•Free Legal Consultation 2:00pm~4:00pm (Reservation required)

•Educational Consultation 10:00am~3:00pm

•One-stop Consultation Service for International Students 1:00pm~4:00pm

※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 ones to be informed!



Plaza's FB

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



Our website



Life orientation videos by Immigration Services Agency

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.

