



6.15

.....inside.....

Hitchhiking in Japan  
JET Life: Until It's Experienced  
Travel: Naoshima



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All JETs in Hyogo are encouraged to send in articles, musings, poetry, prose, and any ideas to improve the Hyogo Times for the betterment of the Hyogo JET community. Submit by the 15th of each month to [hyogotimespublications@gmail.com](mailto:hyogotimespublications@gmail.com)

# Message from the Editor: hello!

From the start of June it's 58 days, 1392 hours, 83520 minutes, or 5011200 seconds until my contract officially ends with JET and though I might paint myself as someone anxiously counting down the days by knowing that, the truth is I'm nervously watching those number like an hour glass worried that I'm running out of time. If you're leaving at the end of July or earlier, now is the time to start planning your departure. If you're staying, enjoy watching the rest of us panic.

I'll repeat that sage advice you've heard throughout your years, "Do not save it until the last minute, if you do, it won't get done." Thank you Ms. Powers, my fifth grade teacher. Seriously though, start to let all those places you visit often know it'll be you last month in July. Whether it's the gym, your barber, downstairs neighbor, or the cute girl behind the Lawson's counter, tell them so they aren't left thinking you died in a dark dank gaijin trap all by yourself. Who knows you may even get gifts or discounts in return. For those who took the time to make your stay here as comfortable as possible go the extra step and give them a Thank You card and small treat. Surprisingly, those can take a lot longer to write than expected, so again, start now!

Did you somehow acquire way more things than you brought with you and now you're wondering where that blender come from?

Give it away, sell it, or mail it ahead of you. No one wants to frantically run out the night before the flight home searching for another suitcase to accommodate all those random piece of junk... sorry - I mean sentimental and valuable items that should never, never be thrown away.

If everything is done or you need a break open this month's issue of Hyogo Times and enjoy an [interview](#) with Simon Darveniza, an Australian whose found a great way to explore Japan on a budget, or skim through what JET's have been saying about their time here in our new section "[Until It's Experienced](#)." Once you're done with those take a look at our regular sections and see what you missed at A-JET Block 6's [Biwa Boat Cruise](#), find the [5 movies](#) you should see this month, a [new recipe](#), and more. Simply put, check off the essential things from your list now that way you can spend the final weeks visiting any final places

you've been meaning to or seeing the friends you'll miss when you're gone. As a friend once said, "I never meant to leave, but girl I gotta go. Selfish it may be, but know my heart ain't cold. I got some things to see, but tonight get on the floor. Better yet, jump on the board, surf's up this wave gon' take us all."

Sean Mulvihill





hello!

# Message from the Prefectural Representative

Surely it cannot be summer again! Where did the past year go?

The last time I sat down to write a PR piece for the Hyogo Times I had just officially begun my duties as a member of the AJET National Council. As many of you know I have held the positions of Block 6 Representative and the Director of Alumni Relations since June last year. As of June 1 this year I have handed over the reigns to Tyler Bissonette another Hyogo JET who will represent our prefecture as well as Kyoto and Shiga on a national scale.

I wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to each and every person that volunteered or participated in any way with a Hyogo AJET or Block 6 event this year. I hope that you all had as much fun being involved as I did representing you. I look forward to continuing on as a Hyogo AJET PR rep next year and also as the Director of Alumni Relations on the National Council this coming year as well.



Okay, enough of that! Coming up this month for Hyogo AJET is another Book Club event. If you like reading and would like to spend an afternoon in a comfortable cafe, chatting about this month's book (*From the Fatherland with Love* by Ryo Murakami) then please join us. The event will be held on June 14, so mark the day in your diary.

Of course it is getting to that time of the year again when we begin to farewell the leaving JETs and in typical HA-JET fashion we will be sending off our dear friends and colleagues on July 11 with a night at the Heineken Beer Garden in Sannomiya. We will be meeting at 6:30 at tits park one final time and heading over to share our first (and last) kanpai as a group. If you are interested in this event please

head over to the Hyogo AJET Facebook page or send us an email to [hyogo.pr@hyogo.ajet.net](mailto:hyogo.pr@hyogo.ajet.net) and RSVP.

That's all from me for now. Stay cool in summer and see you all soon!

Ash

## Ume Juice

hicchiri  
kitchen



### Ingredients

- >> 1 kg large ume
- >> 1 kg rock sugar
- >> 100ml white vinegar (I used rice vinegar)
- >> Glass jars that are large enough to hold the ume and sugar

You're probably familiar with the wonderful beverage that is umeshu, but have you heard of ume juice before? It's basically a less sweet, non-alcoholic version of umeshu and makes for a super refreshing drink, especially in the sweltering summer heat.

Like umeshu, it is very simple to make and the homemade version is a lot more delicious than the shop-bought stuff. However, while you have to wait a few months to taste the fruits of your labour with umeshu, ume juice is ready to drink in a week or so.

TIME: Preparation and actually making the ume juice takes less than an hour but it takes 1-2 weeks to complete.

Helen Yuan

### Method

**One** Sterilise the glass containers with boiling water or a tasteless spirit. Leave to completely dry.

**Two** Using a toothpick, remove the little stub near the stem of the ume. Wash and leave to completely dry (leave overnight if you have time).

**Three** Layer the sugar and the ume in the jar. Add the vinegar towards the end. Close the jar and refrigerate for 1-2 weeks or until most of the sugar has dissolved. To speed up the process, gently turn the jar every couple of days.

**Four** Serve over ice with water or soda water to taste. Store in the fridge.



### Tips & Tricks

>> The addition of vinegar makes the ume juice slightly tangy. If you prefer a sweeter cordial, omit the vinegar, but after washing and drying the ume, freeze them for at least 24 hours before continuing from step 3, otherwise it takes really long for the sugar to dissolve.

>> Discard any ume that are rotten or badly bruised. If they are only slightly bruised or the damaged section can be easily cut off, you can still use them but place them in a separate jar just in case they go mouldy.

>> If you're short on fridge space like me, once the sugar has dissolved, take out the ume and discard them. Otherwise it's fine to just leave them as is.





# Not for the Galaxy, But Still Useful: Hitchhiking in Japan

During my latest travels in Fukuoka and Nagasaki, I met a fellow traveler from Australia. A few minutes into our conversation I realized the two of us had arrived at our destination by very different means. After listening to him talk about his travels in Japan, I thought his experience was both unique and potentially useful to other foreigners.

## Introduce yourself! Why are you in Japan?

My name is Simon Darveniza and I'm a 22 year old Australian who just finished college. Before getting my first "real" job I figured I needed a brief break to decide what I really wanted with my life and what kind of lifestyle I wanted to lead from here on out. So after saving a little cash from a part-time job at a hotel in Melbourne I decided to embark on a short trip around Indonesia and Japan before heading to Taiwan for 6 months to a year on a working holiday visa. With limited funds and wanting to experience travel in a different way I decided to traverse across Japan by hitchhiking, relying on the kindness of strangers to get me from point A to point B.

## Can you talk about your first time trying to get a lift?

My first time trying to get a lift was from Ashigara Service Area in Shizuoka, attempting to get as far as Nagoya that night. After consulting with a Japanese friend who regularly hitchhikes in Japan during his free time, I was told that the easiest way to flag down a car was to wait at said parking or service areas on the highway and try and get a lift from there. That day I had been hanging out with a friend in Shizuoka until quite late into the night so by the time I arrived at the service area, after taking the last train halfway there and walking the remaining 5km, it was around 1:30am - not a great time to start. Not many cars were passing by, the few truck drivers I asked told me that they couldn't take me due to company policy, the few individual drivers I asked seemed to think I was a little sketchy asking for a

ride at such an odd time and turned me down. Finally a Japanese-Brazilian picked me up. He couldn't speak Japanese so well but we still exchanged small chat for a few hours. His destination was Anjo in the east of Aichi prefecture but he actually drove me all the way to my friend's house in Handa, a good fifty minutes out of his way. Can't really think of a much better first hitchhiking experience.

## Can you go through a step by step process about what you do when asking for a ride?

As mentioned earlier, if there is a parking area or service area in the general vicinity of where I end up staying for the night, I walk there and approach individual car drivers, asking them directly for a lift. In this way, to a certain extent it is not the drivers choosing to pick me up but rather myself choosing the driver and if I'm lucky catching a lift with them. Waiting on the shoulder of the highway with a sign to your desired destination does also inevitably work, however in these cases it is ultimately the driver choosing you and the success rate is much less, maybe 1 in 300 cars will pick you up, compared to 1 in 5 if you ask drivers directly. After a while you begin to realise what kind of people are more likely to give you a lift. In general, men aged around 25-50 driving alone was my easiest demographic. They're generally bored and just wanting someone to talk to in order to kill the time and prevent drowsiness.

Curiosity to chat with a foreigner is also likely a considerable factor.

## What was the most awkward moment you faced while hitching a ride?

I didn't really have many awkward moments, I mean I met lots of different people of different ages and from different backgrounds, some people were very talkative, others barely talked at all. During these times I just kind of dozed off. I guess

the most "awkward" moments were when the driver's had a really strong local dialect which I couldn't understand fully, however this didn't really pose any major communication problems.

## What's been the most memorable moment?

Every ride was memorable and I'm thankful to every single person who picked me up no matter how short or long the distance. If I was to just choose one experience however, there was one night when I couldn't find accommodation and slept on the roadside in the mountains of Eya, Shikoku and after waking up early in the morning with nothing to do, a local woodcutter passing by in his car at around 6am just stopped and actually asked me without any precedent whether I wanted to go for a ride with him. Although I speak quite fluent Japanese he insisted on practising his English with me, which by Japanese standards was quite fluent. Kind of a funny experience. We drove up to a village full of really old traditional style housing on the top of a mountain which was on his way to work, he asked one of his friends in the village to give me a lift back to town, he happily obliged. Was quite a brief encounter but just kind of epitomised the funny kind of experiences you can gain as a hitchhiker in Japan.

## What are some benefits, obvious and not so obvious, about hitchhiking?

Obvious benefits: cheap and can meet many different people. Not so obvious benefits are that often drivers feeling some pity for you will actually buy you a meal, or give you bread or fruit or something on saying goodbye. This makes traveling cheaper again.

## You've seen a different side of Japan from those taking the Shinkansen or flying, what's surprised you the most?

I suppose the passenger seat of a car really is the best spot to see the surrounding scenery, Japan's countryside really is absolutely beautiful and often very

diverse and it would be difficult to see such scenery from a train or plane. The Shinkansen only really passes through major cities so it's quite hard to really break away and see the breathtaking views of the country.

## What advice would you give to someone who wants to hitch hike for their first time?

It's not so much advice however I think if you are thinking of hitchhiking you need to be prepared to fail because some days really are better than others and you end up nowhere near your desired location. If you can't practice patience and be content with waiting around outside with often nothing at all to do then I guess hitchhiking probably just isn't for you. It's only really suitable if you have a pretty loose schedule and don't mind things not going to plan. Otherwise frustration will probably overcome you at some point and you'll just end up giving it all up and taking a train or bus.

## Anything else you want to add?

During my hitchhiking I actually got sick twice, once with a common cold and once with pneumonia, so I think you really need to look after your health if you want to hitchhike. Some days I probably pushed myself too hard and didn't rest enough when I needed it and this can really drain your energy. Especially during this season Japan can be really hot some days and really cold some nights. When you're waiting outside all day in the sun and then not sleeping in a warm place at night it can be easy to be overcome by exhaustion and just collapse for a few days. I guess if you want to hitchhike you really need to be careful, not only to avoid riding with dangerous individuals, but to look after your own well-being as well.

Interview by Sean Mulvihill



## Until It's Experienced

"Oh I almost forgot to tell you, today..." Who hasn't started a sentence using these exact words during their time on the JET program? Facing situations that most of our friends and family back home would simply find odd or unbelievable has in many ways become routine for us here in Japan. However, there are still those moments that give us pause and force us to remember where we are and what we are doing. Romantic poet John Keats may have put it best when he said, "Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced," and during our JET experiences many unlikely things have indeed become a reality.

### Tis' the season

Thought I went to work without an umbrella... find one in my bag just as I venture into a typhoon; typhoon destroys umbrella. Well played. - Louie B.

I despise nature. It's mosquito season. When I'm in charge, I'm going to concrete over everything. - Scott P.

My Wednesday ES has air con installed in the English room... but it can't be used until September. - Rachel S

87% humidity.... No. - Maia M.

Yesterday I went tea leaf picking. There were mosquitoes. Today I can read braille off my arms... - Anonymous

JTE: Just like I cannot control my wife, you cannot control the weather. -SP



Just because it's cloudy outside doesn't mean you don't need air conditioning in the bus/train. - RS

My school has taco rice for lunch during the summer. Life made. - Brittany T.

### Welcome to the Monkey House

Teacher: Do you know Imaneru Kanto?

Me: ...Immanuel Kant? A little bit.

Teacher: You are my Immanuel Kant.

Me: Oh?

Teacher: Every day, people saw him walking at 5:00, so they all said, "Oh, it's 5:00!" Everyday, when you stand up, I know, "Oh, it is 3:55." You are Immanuel Kant.

- Ronaldo Ginsberg

Today, a kid had a tooth fall out during class, and asked me if I wanted it as a present.

- Natalie B.

Please take a moment of your time to complete this short ESL questionnaire I found on the internet:

- Would you ever pretend to be someone (like a policeman, or a teacher, or a survey taker) just to get something that you wanted?

- Would you ever drink your own urine?
- Would you ever cheat on your husband/wife?
- Would you ever consider being a criminal?
- Would you ever adopt a child? Would you ever give your child up for adoption?
- Would you ever eat rat meat?

- SP

Two ducks have started hanging out at my school's pool in the mornings (maybe staying there at night?). This is the best thing to happen since the vending machine

people switched from only having one row of the good coffee milks to two rows (maybe even better).

- Zadi O

Making my 2年生 try Vegemite as a batsu game. A few guys actually scrubbed their mouths out afterwards.

- Caitlin C.

6th grader: Rachel-Sensei, your eyes are blue. Does that mean you see blue all the time? - RS

Me: Umm, sensei, there's a dead bat in our English classroom.

Teacher: I know! You can use it to teach the students!

Me: ...bats can have rabies and other diseases.

Teacher: ...

Me: ...

Teacher: ...but many students have never seen a bat!

- Erika H

Three new student teachers doing teaching training for the next few weeks, and they're all major eye candy... Jesus take the wheel... - MM.



There was a kid wearing a Blink 182 shirt in class today. I asked him "Where did you get that shirt?" and he literally replied "My homies" - NB

### Idyllic Mayhem

The best part of Hiroshima style Okonomiyaki is that it looks like the unwanted child of a mop and a soiled dish sponge and is delicious. - RG

Adult life is when you spend \$20.00 on cheese. - NB

A small part of me dies each time I check the Yen to Dollar exchange rate. - Erik J.

The shelf life of care package Reese's is measured in hours not days. - Josh P.

Spent 15,000円 at 100円 stores in 3 days... So. Many. Cute. Post-its.

- NB

I spend 10 minutes looking longingly at \$7 strawberries and \$3 apples debating if they're worth the purchase.

- MM

### Compiled by Sean Mulvihill

>> If you have any quotes, comments, or situations you think best represent JET life, please feel free to send them into [hyogotimespublications@gmail.com](mailto:hyogotimespublications@gmail.com) and share them with us all.

### Comics:

>> Groupies by Mary Cagle

>> Comic by Dave Gutteridge

with coloring from Eddie Jensen

>> Life After the B.O.E. by David Namisato



# Naoshima: the Art Island

Looking for a weekend getaway, art and culture, or just a last minute trip within Japan? Look no further: Naoshima has you covered. Located in the Seto inland sea, Naoshima island combines natural beauty with modern art. Visitors can choose from several renowned art museums, relax on the beach, and enjoy the laid back island culture.

## Get In

Naoshima can be accessed by ferry from two ports: Uno on the mainland and Takamatsu in Shikoku. I found [this timetable](#) very useful. My friend and I took the bus from Osaka to Takamatsu (3.5 hours; 4,000¥) and the ferry from Takamatsu to Miyanoura (50 minutes; 510¥). On the return journey, we took the ferry to Uno (20 minutes; 280¥), a 50 minute train to Okayama, and then caught the shinkansen. The buses from Okayama to Kobe/Osaka were significantly cheaper, but take longer.

## Get Around

Naoshima is a small island with three main areas of interest: Miyanoura Port, Honmura Port, and the art complexes. A city bus connects the three, but you can also rent bicycles to travel in between. Walking around each area is easy, and you could even walk the whole island if you have the time. If you use the bus, be wary of the timetables. City buses are infrequent and could throw off a carefully planned schedule. A free private bus connects the Lee Ufan Museum, the Benesse House, and the Chichu Art Museum - in general, they line up with the city bus, but my friend and I were confused by pick up/drop off locations and missed the last bus. The walk back only took us half an hour along a straight road, so those without a tight schedule will be fine.

## Where to Stay

For once, Hostelworld couldn't help me. Instead, I used [this website](#) to find accommodation. I stayed one night at the Dormitory in Kowloon and one night at QULUMU. The Dormitory was right in the middle of the Miyanoura Port area.

It was cheap and convenient, and my only complaint was the lack of a hand towel in the bathroom area. The Dormitory was unavailable for a second night, so my friend and I switched to QULUMU. The owner was lovely, but I wouldn't recommend staying here: the bunks, kitchen, and lounge area are all in the same room, so your beauty rest is at the mercy of your fellow travelers.

## What to Do

Naoshima is known as an "Art Island" for a reason: the biggest attractions are all art museums and exhibitions.



>> Tadao Ando Museum - Naoshima could also easily be called "Ando Island," as the famous architect designed the museum complexes. To learn more about the man behind the buildings, visit the Tadao Ando Museum. A small exhibition space converted from a traditional Japanese home, the building is easy to miss because the outside remains unchanged and it is located in a residential area. It was interesting to see, but I wouldn't recommend visiting unless you are already interested in Ando's work.

>> Benesse House - This contemporary art museum displays the work of many artists, including Andy Warhol, Bruce Nauman, and Richard Long. Tadao Ando's building design superbly

contrasts the natural scenery with the harsh lines of the building, utilizing both indoor and outdoor exhibition spaces. Because of this, the Benesse House is an excellent place from which to admire the views of Naoshima and the Seto inland sea. 1,000¥

>> Benesse Art House Project - These 6 village home have been converted into modern galleries and exhibition spaces, each by a different artist. Ranging from quirky to thought-provoking, my favorite was "Appropriate Proportion" by Hiroshi Sugimoto,



as both the play on traditional Japanese shrines and the scenery were amazing. Be aware that James Turrell's "Backside of the Moon" requires a reservation, so I'd recommend going there first to reserve a time slot, and then visiting the other projects. Combo ticket: 1,000¥

>> Chichu Art Museum - The Chichu Art Museum is probably the most famous of the museums on Naoshima, having gained both national and international press due to the exhibition space dedicated to 5 of Claude Monet's paintings from the Water Lilies series.

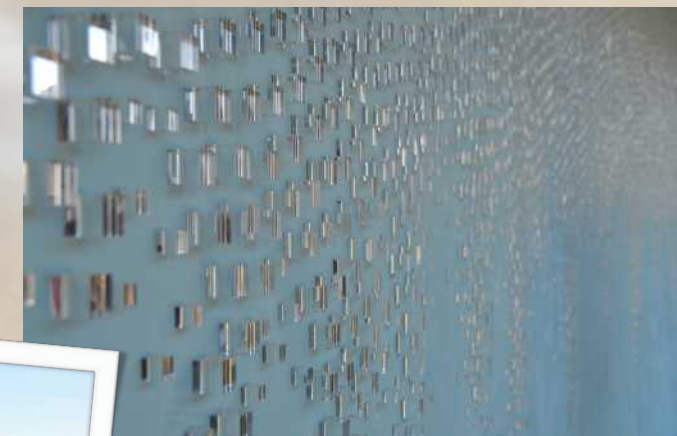
Visitors can also enjoy modern works by James Turrell and Walter De Maria. Having been to many internationally renowned art museums in Europe and America, I appreciated that the Chichu Art Museum limits entry to each exhibition space. Sure, this means waiting in lines, but it also means appreciating spectacular art on your own time without hordes of other tourists jostling you, breathing down your neck, or obstructing your view. 2,000¥

>> Lee Ufan Museum - Also designed by Tadao Ando, this museum displays the works of artist Lee Ufan. This was the only museum that I didn't visit.

>> I ♥ Yu - Since everything closes early, why not check out this combination art installation and onsen after dinner? This seemed to be a more practical onsen rather than a relaxing one - the other patrons only spent a short amount of time soaking.



>> James Bond "Museum" - I say "museum" in quotations because though it is titled museum, it is really just a giant collection of Bond promotional material and goods. A recent Bond novel, "The Man with the Red



Tattoo," is set in Naoshima, and the museum was created to generate interest in Naoshima as a Bond attraction and turning the novel into a film. If you're a Bond fan it is definitely worth a look, but most should skip it.

## Last Minute Tips

>> Everything on the island shuts down early. Get restaurant recommendations from your hostel to ensure you'll eat, or just eat early (before 7).

>> If you time everything correctly, Naoshima would be a great weekend trip. For those looking for more wiggle room, save the island for a long weekend or using summer leave. Take the extra time to relax on the beach or to see other nearby attractions (I recommend Ritsurin Gardens in Takamatsu or Okayama Castle in Okayama).

>> The ferry ticket offices offer a comprehensive English guide to the island with area maps, food recommendations, and accommodation information. I was given one upon purchasing my ferry ticket, but make sure to ask for one if it isn't offered!

>> While the museums are indoors, the island's natural beauty and many outdoor exhibitions pieces and spaces make Naoshima a trip for fair weather. Perhaps a trip for after the rainy season...

Erika Horwege



# Five Things to Watch this Month

Get lost this month in a number of imaginary worlds. Whether it's the Marvel or Disney Universe, a post-apocalyptic Australia, a fantastical Shibuya or the hilarious town of Pawnee you'll find something to enjoy.

*Avengers: Age of Ultron directed by Joss Whedon, release: 4 July 2015*

In a world where our lives are defined by the unknown, it appears that we can be comforted with the certainty that every year we'll have a new superhero movie, or three, to look forward to. Since 2002, starting largely from the success of *X-men* in 2000 (though an argument might be made by fans of *Blade* released in 1998), there has not been a year where less than two Marvel heroes appear on the big screen and there's even more if you include the DC Universe. The creation of the Marvel Cinematic Universe after *Ironman*'s release in 2008 continued to spur the climb of world guardians and it's why we now find ourselves with the second installment of *The Avengers*.

Joss Whedon, best known for his work on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *The Avengers*, returns as director along with all our favorite characters, as well as the obvious new heroes and villains with their own spectacular computer-generated imagery. Although not exactly sure about the story or if it connects

to plots found in the comic books, if the fourteen years of training I've had since watching *X-men* have taught me anything, it's what Medium writer, Sady Doyle says perfectly, "There's a thing and a bad guy and the bad guy steals the thing, so they fight. They lose one fight and then they lose another fight and then they win the last fight. The end." However, even this probably won't stop me – or you for that matter – from killing a random weekend numb in front of the screen while I stuff my face with Mint Kobe's half & half popcorn.

*The Boy and the Beast (Bakemono no ko) directed by Mamoru Hosoda, release: 11 July 2015*

Although I think back to most of the mentors in my life with gratitude, there's still a gnawing annoyance that not one of them was a katana-wielding mythical beast. Unfortunate as it is, there is some solace in the fact that I may live vicariously through Kyuuta, a lonely boy from crowded Shibuya who one day stumbles into an imaginary realm and meets Kumatetsu. From then on Kumatetsu takes Kyuuta under his wing and becomes his spiritual guide. With much for Kyuuta to learn and overcome, the viewer can be guaranteed to witness a "traditional yet novel story."

*Mad Max: Fury Road directed by George Miller, release: 20 June 2015*

It always feels a little bit like Christmas morning when I can write about Tom Hardy for two months in a row. Though last month, I was simply suggesting the reader pick up *Child 44* before Hardy stars in the movie, this month no prior reading is necessary for his newest film *Mad Max: Fury Road* (though reviewing the first three movies might give you an appreciation for the series). Set in a future where civilization has collapsed due to water and oil scarcity, Imperator Furiosa, played by Charlize Theron!, plans an escape from the cult leader Immortan Joe and his army, the War Boys. During the ensuing chase, "Mad" Max Rockatansky (Hardy) and a prisoner at the time, finds himself working with Furiosa as both try to outrun and outride their captors.

*Parks & Recreation: Season 7, release: 2 June 2015*

Too be completely honest, I have not seen a single episode of *Parks & Recreation*, though it sits on top of my list for shows to follow once I find the time. It's up there with *Broad City*, *House of Cards*, and *True Detective*. Although I missed all the episodes, it was extremely hard

to miss the outpouring of positive reviews when this season and series ended and it's not hard to understand when you look at the tremendously strong cast led by Amy Poehler and Nick Offerman. Obviously not a season to miss if you're a fan of the series, though if you're like me it may be better to start at the beginning and all the heartwarming and hilarious ways these Indiana public officials tried to make their town a better place.

*Tomorrowland directed by Brad Bird, release: 6 June 2015*

Brad Bird's name isn't one that many people probably recall without the help of the internet or a smartphone. Though I might guess Bird is happy enough to have his movies remembered even if his name slips from memory. The man behind *The Iron Giant*, *The Incredibles* (not only the director, but voice of costume creator Edna Mode), *Ratatouille*, and *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol* sets his sights on Walt Disney's utopian vision for the future in his newest movie *Tomorrowland*. The movie stars George Clooney as a previous inventor turned bitter old man and a young idealistic Britt Robertson who together try to discover the secrets behind Tomorrowland.

Sean Mulvihill





## The Durants

Miss Something? This is the 11th installment of The Durants. Catch up on [part 10](#) or start from the beginning on the [Hyogo Times website](#).

### XI.

Brion's strong arms embraced her and she felt warm for the first time in ages. She nuzzled into his shoulder. "I miss you," she whispered against his burning skin. His thumb brushed away the tear that had escaped from her downcast eyes and tilted her head up. Flames danced out from his blue eyes. His chest expanded as he breathed in, on the edge of saying something, but the vision faded as Gaia awoke from her sleep. "Two years...."

The Orsins' household had remained nostalgic yet disconcerting the entirety of her stay. The past few months had been lonelier as Mina, the Sullivans, and Edzard had gone to infiltrate the Taeshan guilds. They were preparing the city for the imminent coup. She couldn't be sure of the opinions of the urbanites, but those in the countryside were enraged by the Volarchy's seizure of their foods and working-age residents. The world was slowly dying around them.

"Oh good, you're awake." Lynn's wrinkle-scarred face peeked out from the frame of the door. The time apart from her son and wife had taken its toll on her. "Did you want to help me make a job-well-done meal for my Sam and our Queen Bee?"

"Sure," Gaia croaked out. Apparently the day for revolution had at last come. If all went according to plan, the Volarchy would be no more than a horrific memory by the end of the week. The guilds would be abolished. People could live freely. Dread filled her and she willed herself to believe that everyone would return unscathed.

Lynn chattered happily away at Gaia, who nodded periodically. The tangents the woman jumped off into were often startling and no amount of time spent together could acclimate Gaia to them. Always a favorite topic for her, Lynn lamented yet again her subpar Hyran cooking, especially in comparison to Sam.

Once finished, the pair packed up and left the house. Outside, they could hear a distant rumbling approaching. Panic filled the air as the Vaslerans fled back into their homes, trying to become scarce before whatever was nearing arrived. Lynn led them down a darkened alleyway. They peered into the street and saw a tall, lanky figure emerge from a mechanized carriage. It shambled toward the Orsin residence.

Beside her, Gaia could hear Lynn suck in violently. "He's come for Katie...." she exhaled, nearly silently. "It's her father, Dr. Paget." Gaia's stomach churned uncomfortably. "He's a brilliant, though quite unethical, physician. I learned everything from him before he left after his wife died. She was a lovely, lovely woman. Poor Katie. On three counts, really. One--"

"Should we let him get what he wants?" Gaia whispered savagely, cutting off her companion. They considered each other measuredly. "That bastard hurt me while I was being held in the guilds. I can't just let him waltz in here and...." She gulped.

Lynn nodded. "Let's be careful. He's probably also here to round up more villagers. I think the others are all but deserted."

As quietly as possible, they fell into the doctor's shadow and slipped into the house behind him. Gaia could see that he was familiar with the building, though time had

worn his memories. Unknown to him, he was not the only one to enter Katie's old room.

Her body was still being desiccated. The stone slab upon which she lay had several candles that had nearly burned out. The doctor sighed, pinching his nose. After a deep inhale, he turned around slowly in the dimly lit room.

"Here we have Lynn Orsin and...oh, I haven't seen you in some years, my dear." His nostrils flared as he breathed in once more.. "That sweet, earthy creature, Gaia Durant. How kind of you two to lay my offspring to rest."

"You were never a father to her, James." Lynn's voice had taken on an edge Gaia had never heard before. "Even before Lydia got sick. Why are you here?"

The doctor snorted. "Always the sentimental type. The Volarch requires more stock for the guilds, dear. Vaslera is one of the few bastions harboring usable bodies. Thought I would stop in and say hello." He stood between the women and the door. "It was not for naught, however." A sickening, crooked grin marred his face.

"Gaia, follow me!" Lynn grabbed her upper arm and pulled her toward an inconspicuous ladder in the corner. The Vasleran scrambled up to the roof before looking down at her partner, who had turned to take a swing at the doctor. He caught her wrist, a manic glint gleaming in his widened eyes. "No!"

"Go! Get to Bionca and Sam. Warn them that Vaslera has been--!" Gaia's jaw was held shut by her captor. His large foot weighed down the first rung. The last thing Lynn heard before departing on a long-distance glider was Gaia throwing herself into the ladder to knock it down.

A click reverberated in the room as the recording finished. Bionca felt Sam's strong grip on her shoulder. "We'll play that after it's done," she growled in a near whisper. "The people need t'know why we're destroyin'

the city."

The mottled woman nodded solemnly in reply. She stood from her throne. "It's time. Start the explosions. She should blow any minute now." Sam saluted before relaying the orders to the bomb team.

"Drake should have things all ready t'go on the Taeshan front," Sam reported upon her return. She was accompanied by the beginnings of the tremors. They both looked out the window in the direction of the city. The air above the volcano warped in heat. A distant object drew over the horizon, approaching their command center.

The pair went out to greet Lynn. She was drenched in sweat and panting, her glider still attached to her frame. "Paget...took...Gaia...probably gonna...be in the city center."

Bionca's stomach dropped. "I have to go. I can't lose my mom too. I need to save her." Her voice cracked.

The wives looked at her pitifully. Lynn handed her glider over. "Be safe."

Their queen nodded, her eyes glistening, and then took off toward the setting sun.

Brittany Teodorski



# prefecture spotlight

## Aichi-ken

What's up Hyogo people, my name is Elliot Seeto. I'm from the city of San Francisco, California but I lived in San Diego for several years prior to joining JET. I'm a 2nd year JET ALT, and the current president of Aichi AJET. I reside in Tsushima, which is a small city about half an hour west of Nagoya by train. I teach English at two elementary schools, alternating every week.

*Why did you apply for the JET Program or come to teach in Japan?*

My decision to come to Japan on JET was a confluence of different reasons:

1) I've held an interest in Japan since childhood, beginning with my introduction to anime, manga, and video games at a young age. As I got older, my interest gradually expanded to include Japanese cuisine, language, and culture.

2) I've always wanted to try living long-term in a foreign country, because the home-stay and study abroad programs that I've done in the past never lasted for more than a few months. I especially wanted to



live in a place where the culture is quite different from Western societies so that I can get exposure to vastly different ways of thinking and doing things. Additionally, I wanted to go to a place that doesn't have English as the main language, and yet still be a place where I could get by on my own—to that end, Japan was the only choice because Japanese is the only other language I am proficient in besides English.

3) For several years I'd heard nothing but great things about the JET Program from friends and acquaintances who did it. Everyone I met who talked about it always said that JET was an amazing and unique life-changing experience. The more I heard about it, the more I wanted to try it out. I finally decided to go for JET following my graduation from college, when I was having a tough time finding a decent job back home in California.

*How did you end up in your prefecture? Was it a preference of yours?*

My top preferences were actually the Kanto and Kansai regions, since I wanted to be in or at least close to major cities like Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, or Kobe. Like most non-Japanese people, I had actually never heard of Nagoya or Aichi prior to receiving my placement. Although initially quite disappointed that I didn't get any of my preferences, I'm now glad that I ended up by Nagoya because it's right in the middle of Japan. Nagoya's

central location facilitates my love of travel—I can take trains or buses to either Tokyo or Osaka, and still have plenty of time left that day upon arrival to get things done.

*What has been your favorite memory in your prefecture so far?*

One of my favorite memories is from a weekend Aichi AJET event in Nagoya this past March. A Japanese friend of mine who works with Nagoya's City Hall helped me to organize the event, which was a walking tour of the city for JETs. The tour started off like any other tour, with a guide leading us through the castle, downtown, and shopping areas while explaining the histories. However, the afternoon brought an unexpected surprise—Oda Nobunaga joined us as an additional tour guide! (Wikipedia/Google him if you have no idea who he is.)

One of Nagoya's major attractions for Japanese people is the Nagoya Omotenashi Bushotai, which is a group of performers who dress and act as several of the key historical figures from the Sengoku Jidai (Warring States Period). Aichi is rich in history of that era, so they regularly appear at Nagoya Castle (and sometimes TV as well) to give performances. Oda Nobunaga, the lead historical figure of that group, joined our tour as an additional guide.

Nobunaga showed up in full costume, and was in-character the entire time he was with us. This made for some interesting side conversations aside from the tour.

And thanks to him, we got to enjoy free samples of



tea and snacks from various shops as we walked through the Osu shopping arcade. At one point all eight of us, including Nobunaga, crammed into a Purikura booth like a clown car. The resulting enhanced pictures of a girly, red-lipped, big sparkly-eyed samurai general with an army of gaijin beside him still make me laugh whenever I look at them.

*Is there a "best" time to visit your prefecture?*

There isn't really a "best" time to visit—Aichi doesn't get much snow during winter, and it is hotter than other prefectures during summer. There are plenty of nice spots for spring

hanami and fall kyouyuu, but nothing particularly outstanding compared to the rest of Japan. There are also scores of interesting festivals all over the prefecture during the summer; but again, not so different from the rest of the country. So pretty much anytime is a good time to come visit!

*What are your "Must Do's" for visiting JETs?*

1) Nagoya: Eat the culinary meibutsu (famous foods)—especially the tebasaki (peppery chicken wings) from Yamachan, a famous Nagoya izakaya chain. Other foods of note are miso katsu (red miso sauce katsu) and hitsumabushi (a special unagi don eaten in three different phases).

2) Inuyama: See Inuyama-jo, a beautiful mountain castle with a great view of both Aichi and Gifu. It's also classified as a National Treasure mainly because it's the oldest original wooden castle in Japan—it has never been destroyed, moved, or rebuilt, making it almost entirely unchanged from its original state. The town at the base of the castle is also worth a look for its many traditional shops that have been in business since old times.

3) Morikoro Park, home of the World's Fair Expo in 2005, contains a full scale exact replica of the family house



Miso Katsu



Miso Udon



from the Studio Ghibli film *My Neighbor Totoro*. Every single little detail and feature of the home from the movie has been painstakingly recreated—from marks on the walls to items stored inside drawers. Visitors are allowed to explore the interior and touch most objects, so this is a must for Totoro fans.

4) Car enthusiasts need to visit Toyota because is the home of the Toyota Motor Corporation. Besides the car manufacturing plants, there is also the Toyota automobile museum.

*What do you feel is unique to your prefecture, something JETs can't find anywhere else?*

In terms of both population and area, Nagoya is not nearly as huge as the metropolises of Tokyo and Osaka; however, that is a benefit. Nagoya still has all of the benefits and amenities of a major city, but without nearly as much of the dense congestion that Tokyo and Osaka have. You can still go to the big city for sports games, clubbing, festivals, serious shopping, and good eating without being compacted into subway trains like sardines. The shopping arcades are also easily navigable and not overwhelming labyrinths.

Also for those who enjoy strong miso, Aichi is the right place because there is red miso on EVERYTHING. Red miso has a more potent and tangy flavor compared to the yellow and white miso used in the rest of Japan. Many of the region's *meibutsu* are covered in or stewed in red miso sauce: *miso katsu*, *doteni* (guts stew), and *dengaku* (grill tofu). *Oden* in Aichi is also often served in a red miso-based broth, instead of the dashi-based broth served in the rest of the country.



Ankake

Dengaku



*Anything else you want to add?*

1) Aichi has a reputation for having the worst drivers in all of Japan—even worse than Osaka! So if you visit, don't assume everyone will obey traffic safety laws. Please watch out and walk/bike/drive defensively.

2) In Kansai, proper escalator etiquette deems that people stand on the right side; whereas in Kanto, everyone on escalators stands on the left side. In Nagoya, nobody knows where to stand on the escalators. It's quite a mess.

3) Those of you on the far eastern or far western sides of Japan that are traveling to the opposite end by car or train should take an extra day to stop off and explore Aichi. Break up that long journey; eat the food, see the sights, and enjoy!

Elliot Seeto

background image courtesy of  
Al Case via Flickr Commons

## Block 6 Biwa Boat Ball review

Saturday the 23rd of May marked this year's annual Biwa boat cruise and what a delight it was. We set sail at dusk in the balmy evening aboard the Michigan paddle steamer on Lake Biwa. Truly picturesque.

First: a group picture at the port that your author only just managed to arrive in time for due to scheduling conflicts (truly, the tourists of Gion move at a relaxed pace) before we lined up in a mostly orderly fashion and boarded our glittering vessel. From this point we scattered, finding different places to spend our three hours: some to the top deck to experience the breeze and view and others to the gallery where the live band would eventually play. More still found the cocktail lounge - throwing back to the 1960s with its plush green interior - and the rest securing various seats and leaning spaces to watch the coast roll past. Rarely did we stay still for long. The Michigan is as much fun to explore as it is to party on.



Two bars, one for basic drinks and various items of a fried nature and the other for cocktails and aged spirits, were there to nourish us and keep us well and truly marinated. The band that played for us were both skilled and energetic with the kind of look that one of your more embarrassing aunts might call "dashing". The staff were helpful and friendly; for example, they understood exactly what your author meant when she couldn't remember the word *muscat* and resorted to calling her drink "the pink one." Finally, the weather was spectacular: clear skies, a gentle breeze, and mild temperatures, meaning that none of us saw our poised and polished looks ruined by awkward sweat patches and over-zealous gusts of wind.

All dressed to impress and we certainly did scrub up well. Ladies flitting across the decks, dresses and jewels fluttering in the breeze, and gents striding about in suits

with swagger. Something about boats brings out the pirate lords in all of us, perhaps? Compliments and well-wishes washed around us on our well-chosen finery while old friends caught up on fresh gossip. Maybe it was the weather or drinks but there was very little negativity on that lake adventure.



When we docked en mass we made our way to the delights of Kyoto's nightlife: we found bars, clubs, and restaurants to encourage our nocturnal escapades. When we finally retired in the wee hours of the morn I believe few of us were left unsatisfied.

We danced, we laughed, we talked and, we drank and were merry. There is no other way to describe the night other than an enjoyment. Not spectacular or life-changing, sure, but sometimes a night well spent with friends is worth more than any kind of "journey." For those on board, hopefully it was be a JET experience to treasure.

Rackle Beaman

photos by Sandy Cheng





calendar

# June+July

Outside Hyogo

Awaji

Hanshin

Kobe

AJET Events

Tajima

Tamba

Harima

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday	sunday
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Ako Antique Market				Kyoto Antique Fair		To-ji Temple Market (Kyoto) Tamba Firefly Walking Tour
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Himeji Yukata Festival					Himeji Trivia Night Minatogawa Craft Market Tamba Firefly Walking Tour (book in advance)	
29	30	1	2	3	4 Independence Day (USA)	5
	Aizen Festival Festival 2015 (Osaka)				Kobe 2015 SCUNT	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
					HAJET Farewell Party	
					Tamba Firefly Walking Tour (book in advance)	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		Ako Antique Market Sentosai (Wishing Health)			Umeda Yukata Festival 2015 (Osaka) Taikodai Festival (Osaka)	





what lies ahead...