



Japanese Language Center
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Japanese Language Center (つうしん)
Newsletter February 2012

Lots of chocolate, but little love on Valentine's Day in Japan

Valentine's Day is the most romantic of times..... That means roses and chocolates, right?

Wrong. Guys, take note. If you get chocolates from women in your office on Valentine's Day, don't get the wrong idea. They don't all love you. They might not even like you. It's probably "Giri-choco" (obligation chocolate), a custom that bemuses foreigners each year. Love has very little to do with Valentine's Day in Japan, and it's been that way for a long time. Giri-choco is given by women to their superiors at work as well as to other male co-workers.



Morozoff reportedly introduced Valentine's Day to Japan in 1936 and again in 1952, but Mary Chocolate claims to have got the ball rolling in 1958, which is the first time, according to the company, chocolate was sold in Japan for Valentine's Day. The gifts were promoted as "lover's day" treats at department stores. But marketers quickly realized that Japanese men did not have a tradition of giving chocolates to their sweethearts, so they hit upon the idea of promoting the day as an occasion when women could give chocolates to the men in their life. But then they took it a step further. Since each customer buying chocolates for one boyfriend or husband wouldn't result in many sales, they packaged Valentine's Day as a way to show appreciation for all the men in a girl's life, including male coworkers. The two most common reasons for continuing the custom of Giri-choco were: "It contributes to smooth communication in the workplace" and "It will get me a better evaluation at the company." Nowadays, it is not unusual for a woman to buy 50 boxes of this type of chocolate.

However, love hasn't been completely abandoned on Valentine's Day. Besides Giri-choco, there is "Honmei-choco" for the real thing. Of the 515 responses from Japanese women aged 20-39, 78% said they buy chocolates for Valentine's Day. Of them, 71% buy Honei-choco, 48% to their bosses, 44% to male family members and 37% to coworkers. Department stores also report that in recent years, there have been an increasing number of women who buy expensive chocolates for themselves, rather than for men.

Valentine's Day is big business in Japan. According to the Chocolate & Cocoa Association of Japan, of the 406 billion in annual sales of chocolate in 2010, approximately 53% came during the month leading up to Feb 14. It is not unusual for confectionery companies to spend the bulk of their yearly marketing budget on Valentine's Day.



Now, lest you think all this is unfair for women, the marketing gurus, in all their wisdom, then came up with White Day on March 14 — meant to be an occasion when men reciprocate with something sweet. The origins of White Day are also open to debate, but the custom can be traced back to 1965, when it was introduced by a marshmallow manufacturing company to drive up sales of its sugary product. By the 1980s, white chocolates replaced marshmallows as the preferred gift, but since then, candy, flowers—even underwear—have become popular presents. Whatever the item, it is known in Japanese as "Sanbai-gaeshi" (triple value) because it is supposed to be three times greater than the value of the chocolates the guy got on Valentine's Day. The stores provide plenty of reminders of the approach of this day so that even the most forgetful man cannot say that it slipped his mind. The gifts of chocolate that men buy are in white boxes (after all, it is "White Day").

歌舞伎 (かぶき) Shiranami Gonin Otoko (The Shiranami Five)



A notorious gang of bandits pull off their greatest scam... In the old city of Edo, danger lurks in the most surprising places! (The word Shiranami means 'white waves' and is an old synonym for thief)

A beautiful and wealthy girl with her samurai servant arrives at an expensive kimono shop to buy material for her wedding trousseau. While looking at different textiles, the shop assistants think they see the girl steal a piece of crêpe, and immediately accuse the pair of theft. There is a scuffle and one of the shop

staff injures the girl on the forehead with an abacus. This is a serious offense against a customer and when the samurai servant proves that they actually bought the crêpe somewhere else the shop is in big trouble!

Appalled by the mistake, the master of the shop must hand over money in compensation, but just then, another samurai appears from inside. This impressive man sees through the trick and quickly exposes the girl and her servant as the notorious thieves Benten Kozō and his accomplice. The beautiful young girl is actually a man in disguise! Lowering his sleeve to reveal a brightly tattooed arm, he proudly declares his real identity in an exciting and rhythmical speech of self-introduction.



But that is not all. This is only the beginning of an ingenious master plan to get even more money out of the rich shop owner. In reality, both Benten Kozō and his accomplice are members of a gang of five bandits whose leader is the infamous Nippon Daemon, a genius of the underworld. As the play continues, we will find out exactly who this other samurai is, and eventually the five thieves will reveal themselves in their entire colorful splendor.

(From Shochiku Kabuki)



俳句 (はいく) Haiku by Matsuo Basho

On the polished surface
Of the divine glass,
Chaste with flowers of snow.

What luck!
The southern valley
Make snow fragrant

Polished and polished
clean, in the holy mirror
snow flowers bloom

The usually hateful crow:
he, too -- this morning,
on the snow!

コーススケジュール Course Schedule

JLC announced the Course Schedule of Spring 2012 and the registration has already begun.

Lesson Fees for a group course are \$230 (110 minutes lessons and 8 sessions) and Private lessons are \$450 (110 minutes lessons and 5 sessions). Registration & Lesson fees are due 72 hours prior the first lesson.

Our schedule is getting tight quickly. So please sign up early before it become s booked up.

The schedule may change without notice, so please visit the website for the updated schedule, <http://www.japanese-language.net/schedule.htm>.

Course	Day	Start	End
JPN 101	Thu	6:00 PM	7:50 PM
JPN 102	Sun	12:10 PM	2:00 PM
JPN 104	Fri	7:10 PM	9:00 PM
JPN 201	Sun	8:10 AM	10:00 AM
JPN 203	Sun	10:10 AM	12:00 PM
JPN 301	Wed	7:10 PM	9:00 PM
Advanced	Mon	7:10 PM	9:00 PM
Teens 100	Fri	5:10 PM	7:00 PM
Teens 200	Sun	10:10 PM	12:00 PM
Teens 300	Wed	7:10PM	9:00 PM

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作文 (さくぶん) Essay

北海道、東北、北陸地方の大雪がテレビで報じられていますが、ここシアトルでも広域にわたり、1週間ほど雪でした。Cavalria の45頭の馬はマリモアパークで一体どうしているのかと心配しました。しっかり停電にやられましたよ。一晩電気なしで、ベルビューに住んでいた時とは違う切なさを味わいました。

停電のおかげでコンピュータも電話もストップしてしまいました。まあ電気はありませんでしたが、ガスがあるのでファイヤープレイスを全開して暖を取り、カレーライスなんかじっくり煮込んで、ワイン、キャン

ドル付のディナーを済ませ、ゆっくりお風呂に入って、早くにベッドに入りました。久々にぐっすり眠って起きて時計を見たらなんと九時半でした。何とまだ9:30PMなのです。でも電気がないので暗くて本も読めず、長い夜には閉口しました。

これも広域にわたったの事なら我慢もしますが、このへっころ谷界隈だけが停電だったと聞き、ベルビューからレッドモンドなんぞに移らなければよかったと口惜しいこと…。今思えば、ここに引っ越してきた時、ムンクの名画「叫び」を思わせるようなレッドモンドの電信柱の傾きとたるんだ電線を見たとき、雪が降ったらこうなることをすでに予想できたはずでした。



ご存知の通りベルビューでは急坂の上に住んでいましたが、4輪駆動で馬力のあるエンジンの私のトラックは、デッジにはまっている何台もの車をよそに平気で走っていましたが、レッドモンドのこの小路は、お上の除雪車にも見捨てられ、雪の吹き溜まりとなり、私のトラックをもってしても車輪が空

回りシアヒルみたいにぶるるんとお尻を振ってようやく曲がれたという次第です。お金があったら、ペントハウスにでも移りたいものです。

こんな鬱陶しい天気では、それだけでなくシアトルは日光が少なく鬱になりがちなのにこれではシアトル全市民がPROZACを飲まなくてはならなくなります。こんな時にCavalriaの公演はしばし心が洗われるようでまさに心のオアシスでした。地元のイベントだから一応覗いておこうという程度で気合も入っていませんでしたが、これほどまでに美しいショーとは思っていませんでした。こんなところがあったなんて…。(J)



生徒紹介 (せいとしょうかい) Students of JLC



おしらせ Remarks

- Lesson fees for Group Lessons are \$230, however an early registration with payment by check/cash before your present course ends can get \$6 gift card.
- Please bring your friends to JLC. Any referrals signing up for a class results in a \$23 gift card for you and your friend.

Free materials are available. Please check the Course Descriptions page of website, http://www.japanese-language.net/course_descriptions.htm. If you can't find any sub material what you need, please request it your instructor. We are more than happy to help you. We may create a new free material for you.

ミーティング Japanese Language MeetUp

JLC supports a Japanese Language conversation group in the community and JLC's instructor Junko is the organizer of **Japanese Language MeetUp**. The regular meeting is usually on the second Tuesday at the region Library. The field trip is on the fourth Tuesday.

From website: Of course, we enjoy free conversation in English also, but we'd like to speak/listen more Japanese and have a little more focus. Self-introductions are not enough by themselves and we'd like something more than just chatting. However, it's open to anyone who like Japanese language regardless the skill levels. Please join us even if you don't know any Japanese words. Event fee is \$1.00 (your guest for first visit is free).

Next Meeting

We have a presentation by Cody-san. He is a friend of Samuel-san and will speak about his hometown, Redmond for 15-30 minutes. We often have meeting at Redmond library, but don't know much about this city. Cody-san was born and grown up in Redmond. It's wonderful opportunity for us to learn history, culture, secret story, and etc, about this city.

When: 6:30PM-8:30PM on Tue 14 February.

Where: Meeting Room of Redmond Library



Next Field Trip

We have a field trip to Genki Sushi in the Factoria Mall on Tue 28 February. Please note: there are four locations of Genki Sushi in the great Seattle area, and we will go to the one in Bellevue. We will meet at Genki-Sushi 6:30-8:00PM.

I am very picky and usually spend \$70-\$150 for two people meal. I don't eat sushi at any belt conveyor sushi restaurant normally. However, I was so shocked with Genki Sushi's menu. It's so inexpensive and seems yummy. Genki Sushi is the biggest belt conveyor sushi chain in the world. They serve Ramen also in addition to sushi. I would like to check out. You can check their menu on line, <http://www.of.com/docs/Genki%20Menu%20Washington%201.pdf>

When: 6:30PM-8:30PM on Tue 28 February.

Where: Genki sushi 4055 Factoria Blvd SE, Bellevue, WA



Please visit the website, <http://japanese.meetup.com/17> for more information.

あいうえおかきくけこさしすせそたちつとねのほひふへほまみむめもやゆよりるれろわんあいうえおかきくけこさしすせそたちつとねのほひふへほまみむめもやゆよりるれろわんあいうえおかきくけこ



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Japanese Language Instruction

and Translation Services