

What's New in Yokosuka

<http://www.city.yokosuka.kanagawa.jp/0140/english/welcome/documents/cultureinfo.pdf>

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 * All information may be subject to change

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EVENT CALENDAR

MARCH

- 20 - U.S. Japan Spring Festival
- 20 - Vernal Equinox Day
- 21 - Vernal Equinox Holiday
- 25 - Cherry Blossom season

APRIL

- 2-3 - Kitakurihama Cherry Blossom Festival
- 23 - Opening of "World of Momoko Sakura" Exhibit
- 29 - Showa Day
- 30 - Kanrin-maru Festival

MAY

- 3 - Constitution Day
- 4 - Greenery Day
- 5 - Children's Day
- 3-5 - Mt. Takeyama Azalea Festival
- 14-15 - Yokosuka Curry Festival

For English info about events in Yokosuka call the **Yokosuka Call Center 046-822-2500**. Operators may need time to search for info. **8am-8pm daily**.

NEW ENGLISH TO JAPANESE TRANSLATOR APP!

In-Development Translator App Hands-on Test Begins

For purposes of creating a more welcoming environment for tourists and foreigners living in Japan, the City of Yokosuka is collaborating with NTT Docomo, and is performing the first open-test of a new translator app in five popular shopping districts.

The intent will be to create more interaction between Japanese and non-Japanese in Japan, forming easier communication, while using data to improve machine translation accuracy.



NTT Docomo is working together with Yokosuka Research Park (YRP), to bring kiosks with the translator app pre-installed on tablets, to participating areas. Please try visiting these popular districts next time you go shopping, and test out the app while you're there!

Period: Mar. 1 (Tue.) - May 8 (Sun.)

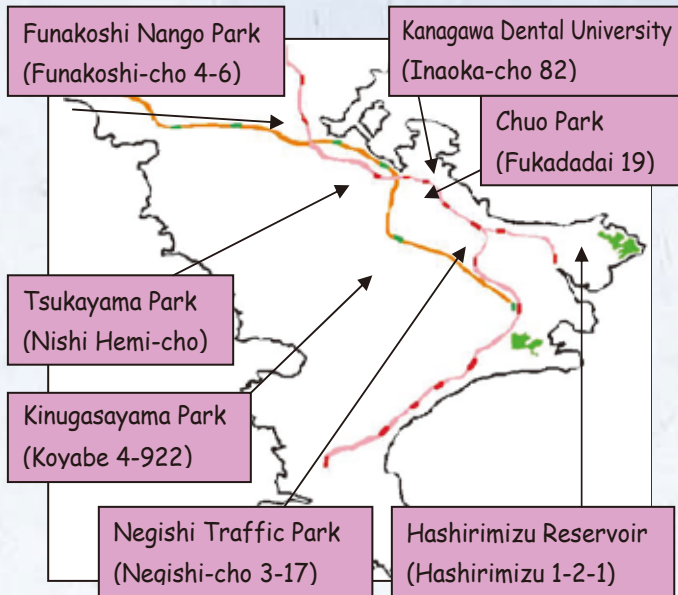
The testing periods will be split into 3 groups, with each group holding the test for approximately 21 days each.

Participating Areas

Group	Shopping District	Dates
Group A	Sennichi Dori (next to Blue Street)	Mar. 1 (Tue.)
	Uwamachi Ginza (south of Yokosuka-Chuo Station)	- Mar. 21 (Mon.)
Group B	Mikasa Building (Blue Street)	Mar. 23 (Wed.)
	Hemi Miwakai (north of Hemi Station)	- Apr. 12 (Tue.)
Group C	Dobuita Street (The Honch)	Apr. 14 (Thu.) - May 8 (Sun.)

UPCOMING EVENTS

ALL EVENTS FREE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED



Cherry Blossom Season

The exact dates change each year, but you can usually expect Japanese cherry trees in Yokosuka to burst to life between Mar. 25 and Apr. 5 each year.

There are a lot of great places to enjoy cherry blossoms in Yokosuka. Some of the best spots for seeing cherry blossoms are listed to the left. Some will have events going on and others will be more subdued.

U.S. Japan Spring Festival

When: Mar. 20 (Sun.) 9:00-16:00

Where: U.S. Naval Base, Yokosuka via Mikasa Park

What: Every year for this event, the U.S. base opens its doors to the public. It is a great chance to get a feel for America without leaving Yokosuka. On top of the amazing food, the cherry blossoms along Tokyo Bay will be in full bloom for some hanami, American style. Bring photo I.D.

Kitakurihama

Cherry Blossom Festival

When: Mar. 26(Sat.) - Apr. 3 (Sun.) (Festival on final days of Apr. 2-3, 10:00-17:00)

Where: Negishi Traffic Park and Negishi Park No.3

What: Come and enjoy the cherry blossoms of Negishi Park. On the final days of April 2-3, a festival will be had, including music, dance performances, food stalls, and more!

Kanrin-maru Festival

When: Apr. 30 (Sat.) 10:00-16:00

Where: Sumitomo Heavy Industries LTD., Uruga Factory (Uruga 4-chome) and the surrounding area, a five-minute walk from Uruga Station.

What: A celebration of Uruga as the departure point of the first Japanese ship to cross the Pacific. In addition to the educational and historical exhibits about the Kanrin-maru, the Sumitomo factory will also be bustling with kids' play areas, live music, water bucket races, yacht rides, a flea market, and so much more. Head to Uruga for food, fun, and sun!



Mt. Takeyama Azalea Festival

When: May 3 (Tue.) - May 5 (Thu.) 9:00-15:00 (until 13:00 on May 5)

Where: Mt. Takeyama Summit

What: From the middle of April until early May, there will be over 1,200 blooming azalea trees on top of Mt. Takeyama. This festival, taking place over the Golden Week holidays, will be sending off the flowers in grand fashion!



Yokosuka Curry Festival

When: May 14 (Sat.) - May 15 (Sun.)

9:00-16:00

Where: Mikasa Park

What: This annual, two-day festival takes over the entire Mikasa Park. The focus of the event is a most definitely curry, with a special area where you can get a tasting plate of different curry options. There will also be live music, dance performances, and a wide variety of different booths.

YOKOSUKA MUSEUM OF ART

(Kamoi 4-1. Pay parking available. Open 10:00-18:00)

Exhibit:

"World of Momoko Sakura"

Apr. 23 (Sat.) - Jun. 19 (Sun.)

Exhibit of famous manga artist, Momoko Sakura, well-known for her long-running shojo manga series, Chibi Maruko-chan. Chibi Maruko-chan was also adapted into movies, games, and a TV anime series, which still has new episodes airing every week! Come see collections of early drafts of Momoko Sakura's work and more!

General admission: ¥900

High school, College, 65 and over: ¥700

Jr. High and under: FREE



Earlier this year, the Yokosuka Museum of Art welcomed its 1,000,000th visitor! Quite an impressive number when you consider that it has only been open since April 2007!

Experience for yourself, the museum which offers not only rotating exhibits, but is itself a work of art, with fantastic architecture and beautiful views of Tokyo Bay.



Congratulations!

YOKOSUKA LIVING

Prior to when I took over this column in summer 2013, it was titled "Japanese Survival Tips" and covered general Japan information. After a title change, this column transformed to focus on more Yokosuka-specific topics. Over the past two years, we've run articles about city museums, Yokosuka history, special foods, and more. I hope that it has proved interesting. However, starting in May, What's New in Yokosuka will be half the length and focus on event information. As a final installment, this column will include my personal advice on how to fully enjoy Yokosuka.

Kurihama Flower World - Of course, special events at Flower World have been featured regularly, but the park is worthy of a visit at any time, regardless of season or what event is going on. The Adventure Land at the top of the park is a great place for kids. And nothing is better than a relaxing hike among the beautiful flowers. It's one of my favorite places in the whole city.



Fresh seafood - The Miura Peninsula is famous for its seafood, particularly its tuna and shirasu. There are so many restaurants throughout the city that offer amazing, fresh fish. Especially for me, coming from the middle of the U.S. where seafood is passable at best, it has really been a treat to try all sorts of new dishes. I also highly recommend the annual Yokosuka Fish Festival in October.



Spend time outside of your normal places - It's easy to stick to the places you know, but there is a lot waiting off the beaten path. Try a new restaurant, or take a train to a station you've never been to before and just start walking. How can you find a view like the one above if you're not out looking?

Education centers: There are a lot of great educational facilities throughout Yokosuka - from the City Museum to the Perry and Verny Commemorative Museums. I also recommend Aicle Recycling Center, where you can learn about all the work put into recycling in Yokosuka, and Anshinkan, the disaster prevention center. There are also multiple libraries around the city, which often hold fun events.

Getting involved locally - It takes a bit of courage, but there really are many ways to get involved locally. Most areas have a neighborhood association that plans events. There is also the Yokosuka Volunteer Support Center that can help you find a volunteer group suited for you. Or you could start taking Japanese classes or get involved with the Yokosuka International Association. Just becoming a regular at your favorite restaurant is a great way to meet people. There is so much to gain from getting involved.

Marshall Smith, a native of Illinois, U.S.A., was Yokosuka's coordinator for international relations.

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