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Articles in this issue will also appear on qazjapan.com
Gamers to the Rescue

A shrine on Tsushima island whose torii gate was wiped out by a typhoon in September got some unexpected help from “Ghost of Tsushima” players when the Shinto priest launched a crowdfunding campaign to repair the gate. The shrine hoped to raise 5 million yen (about $47,000), but ended up with more than five times that! The campaign brought in 27 million yen, and the shrine’s priest, Yuichi Hirayama, said that it “received a great deal of support from the players of the ‘Ghost of Tsushima’ game,” according to a report in gamesradar. The popular PS4 game was launched last year by Bellevue-based Sucker Punch.

Eco-friendly Satellites

Kyoto University and Sumitomo Forestry are partnering to develop what may become the world’s first eco-friendly satellite made mostly out of wood. They will research the use of wood in space, with plans to launch the satellite in 2023. In an interview with BBC, Kyoto University Professor and astronaut Takao Doi said, “We are very concerned with the fact that all satellites that re-enter the Earth’s atmosphere burn and create tiny alumina particles, which will float in the upper atmosphere for many years. Eventually it will affect the environment of the Earth.” A wooden satellite would burn off completely and not leave behind any debris during its re-entry back to Earth.

I 🍫 Slurp 🍩 You

What better way to say “I love you” on Valentine’s Day than sharing a steaming bowl of Chocolate Ramen with your better half? Korakuen, a well-known Japanese ramen chain, brought back its popular Devil’s Chocolate Ramen and Angel’s White Chocolate Ramen again, but this time partnering with South Korea-based Lotte Confectionery to up its chocolate game. (Warning: Don’t be tempted to just melt an entire Hershey’s bar into your next bowl of ramen. The cocoa used for the noodles is most likely unsweetened.) Taste testers on the Internet say the chocolate is not overpowering, but rather lends the steam a whiff of cacao that’s pleasantly aromatic.
Japanese Restaurant Day

In a bid to boost consumption of Japanese food and help struggling local restaurants, the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle kicked off a campaign to make the 11th of every month — chosen because the 11 looks like a pair of chopsticks — “Japanese Restaurant Day.” The campaign includes giveaways, photo contests, and a webinar with Sushi Kappo Tamura Chef Taichi Kitamura. For more, go to japneserestaurantday.com.

King Kong vs Godzilla

Some pundits say science fiction performs better in a nation during distress. It should then come as no surprise that the trailer for a rematch of the epic battle between Godzilla and King Kong is breaking the Internet. The first match in 1962, when special effects looked like child’s play, went to Kong. But Godzilla will get a second chance in this new remake by Warner Bros. when it’s released in theaters in March. Fifty-plus years after their first battle, the two behemoths look amazing thanks to better sound and graphics.

Check out the new trailer: (youtu.be/9TxSXabRS5M).

While you’re at it, check out this side-by-side comparison of trailers from 1962 and 2021, created by Long Live the King’s YouTube channel (youtu.be/5sRghtHVk6E).

Moflin Wins Virtual CES

Many pet owners struggling with isolation caused by the pandemic say they would be at a loss without their furry partners. If you’re a lonely heart without a pet, you just might fall for Moflin, a furry AI robot with emotional capabilities developed by Japanese tech firm Vanguard Industries. Moflin nabbed the grand prize for this year’s Consumer Electronics Show (CES), which went virtual for the first time in its 53-year history. A ball of soft grey fur, Moflin can make all kinds of sounds, cuddles and will eventually develop a personality based on how it’s treated. “We were able to make Moflin closer to a living animal by allowing it to develop and express its own emotions through its internal emotion map, and by creating an algorithm that analyzes changes in their environment through sensors,” said a Kickstarter site for the creature. Watch out, real pets, you might get replaced by Moflin.
A New Sairen Song in the ID
What are the odds for a Kaitlin from Hawaii to meet another Kaitlin from Hawaii on the big University of Washington campus as freshmen? Then become roommates, pursue degrees in health, and also develop a passion for sewing? Pretty good, it turns out.

But their story begins to take on a sitcom-like turn: the two twentysomethings land careers in healthcare, and after a few years of serendipitous encounters, they end up with an opportunity to open their own boutique in early 2020. They draw up a business plan and consult with other retailers. Then the catch: a few months in, and a pandemic hits; small businesses are getting hammered or shuttering. What to do?

Luckily for us, Kaitlin Uemura and Kaitlin Madriaga, both 29, decided to go for this opportunity of a lifetime, but not without some deep reservations in the beginning. “It was a roller coaster,” said Uemura, a fourth generation Japanese American, describing their decision-making. “Our mood changed as the world news changed.”

With the support of other retailers who become mentors to them, Uemura and Madriaga ultimately felt good about their decision to open Sairen, their little store on the corner of 6th and Jackson, where until early 2020, boutique Momo reigned supreme for more than a decade. Their mindset was, “if we’re going to try it, let’s try it now,” said Madriaga. “When would this opportunity come again?”

While Madriaga and Uemura were new to running a business, neither were design or retail novices. Madriaga learned patterning and sewing in middle school, and as an adult, dove into more complicated projects while working her 9 – 5 job. After college, Uemura picked up sewing as a creative outlet, and began wearing her own creations to her part-time job at a hair salon, where a client eventually connected her to Lei Ann Shiramizu, the owner of Momo. During its final years, Momo showcased clothes designed by Morning Siren — Madriaga and Uemura’s new clothing brand.

When Shiramizu announced early last year that she was closing Momo, she told Uemura that the space could be theirs — if they wanted it. Uemura and Madriaga initially brushed it off, but the idea blossomed as they began to see its potential as a vehicle for their creativity. Plus, Madriaga, a third-generation Philippine American, already had work experience in “the operation side of things” during her stint in the corporate world, and Uemura knew merchandising.

While Covid-19 threw some serious doubts their way, they went ahead anyway, materializing their vision for the store, which incorporates a sewing studio on the top floor where they plan to bring their own designs to life once time allows.

Their mission is to continue where Momo left off and feature local designers, while also showcasing the work of Asian Americans and other POC. “We wanted to honor the Momo customers who were here, loved the space ... and have that connection here,” said Uemura. “We wanted to create something new but familiar.”

Sairen draws its inspiration from their shared Hawaii background, a laid-backness mixed with light playfulness they hope will be a refreshing escape for their customers from the day-to-day grind. The boutique still has the feel and spaciousness of a new shop, but it already features more than 30 artists, many of them up-and-coming. “Finding new artists is one of the most exciting parts of our work,” said Madriaga.

Most days, customers may be greeted by the two store mascots, Nala and Kimiko. The carefully curated space has stationery, ceramics and artwork in addition to locally designed clothes, and soon they will become available on their online shop.

You can follow them on Instagram @shopsiren.
FISH STORIES
FISH STORIES

SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SUSHI & SEAFOOD

TORIES
“Local” and “fresh” have been touchstones among foodies for so long that it seems sacrilegious to suggest that the seafood we eat should be anything else. But sometimes the sashimi we slice and the fillets we grill taste better when the fish is aged and imported. How could a fish caught halfway around the world end up tasting better than one pulled from local waters? We spoke to some of the top chefs in the US to find out.

“The difference between fish caught in the US and fish caught in Japan comes mainly from how they are handled once they are caught,” Chef Daisuke Nakazawa tells us over a recent Zoom call. “By ‘handled,’ I mean how the fish is prepared and delivered to the table. The process is much more detailed in Japan. I don’t think the quality of the fish in the ocean changes that much.”

Nakazawa is head chef and co-owner at Sushi Nakazawa in New York, Washington DC, and most recently, Aspen, Colorado. He also worked under perhaps the world’s most famous sushi chef, Jiro Ono, for more than 11 years at Sukiyabashi Jiro. Nakazawa has an intimate understanding of the marketplaces on both sides of the Pacific.

A big obstacle for US-based sushi chefs, he says, is an outdated American distribution system. “In Japan, when a fish is brought into port, sales are organized by that afternoon and the fish can be consumed that day. That doesn’t happen here! To keep expenses down, the fish is mostly transported by truck, not airplane. When we buy fish locally and age them, the flesh isn’t full of life. They lose their firmness. The fish gets over-extended.”

One way Japan-sourced fish doesn’t get over-extended when shipped overseas is a unique killing method known as Goto-jime or ike-jime. The technique, widely used by fishermen in the waters around Goto Island off the coast of Kyushu, is both more humane to the fish and more apt to pack in the fish’s inherent freshness. The Goto-jime method is a series of steps aimed at controlling the biochemical reaction to the fish. According to the Michelin Guide, a fisherman using the Goto-jime process will do the following in a matter of seconds after hauling in a fresh catch:

1. **FIRST, SPIKE THE FISH’S BRAIN** (located above its eyes) in a process called “closing the fish.” If done right, the fish doesn’t have time to send stress signals to the rest of its body.

2. **NEXT, CUT THE GILLS AND TAIL.** The gills are where a fish’s major blood vessels are.

3. **THEN, RUN A WIRE** along the upper side of the fish’s spinal cord. This destroys the fish’s nervous system and keeps it from sending out stress signals.

4. **FINALLY, LET THE FISH BLEED OUT.** If this process is done quickly and correctly, the umami of the fish is maintained while the fishiness that turns off some consumers is eliminated. Plus, the fish is killed quickly, minimizing the trauma.
On a recent visit to Sushi Kashiba in downtown Seattle, Chef Shiro Kashiba was cleaning and preparing some amberjack flown in from the Goto region. “It’s too fresh,” he said with surprise. “It’s full of life. So healthy!” He predicted the fish would reach maximum flavor in three or four days. “We can keep this fish in the restaurant longer,” he added.

Joseph Geiskopf, a Los Angeles-based chef who once worked at Noma and has spent extensive time in Japan, says a prevalent myth among sushi fans is that fresh is always best. “Most fish is either aged in some sort of way or is handled in some sort of way to process it properly,” he says. “You have squid, octopus, certain things that undergo a process. The general Western mentality is you shouldn’t freeze something, but octopus frozen at a certain time undergoes a tenderness.”

Kenji Yamamoto has been making sushi at his Seattle restaurant Shiki for the last 20 years. He’s seen a huge change in American taste for seafood, but there are still lots of misconceptions. “A customer will ask me if we have fresh salmon,” he says. “I’ll tell them that our salmon is frozen, and they won’t order it. But salmon carry a bacteria, and you need to freeze them for three days. People think as long as it’s fresh, it’s good. That’s not true.”

Shawn Applin, executive chef at Italian restaurant 84 Yesler in Seattle’s Pioneer Square neighborhood, sampled some kanpachi (amberjack) from Goto Island. “The kanpachi is one of the best flavorful fish I have ever eaten. Ever,” he says with emphasis. The Goto-jime process “produces really clean fish. The flavor comes through in the meat.”

If you live in the Seattle area, you may have a chance to try some of the fish imported from Goto Island because several restaurants were getting large samples from Japan in the middle of February. As of this printing, those restaurants included 84 Yesler, Ascend, Kiku Sushi, Seattle Fish Guys, Shiro’s Sushi, Sushi Kappo Tamura, Sushi Kashiba, and W’az.

FACING PAGE: Chef Shiro Kashiba of Sushi Kashiba with amberjack from the Goto region. ABOVE: Shawn Applin outside 84 Yesler in Seattle’s Pioneer Square.
One recent weekday morning, Kenji Yamamoto of Shiki let us know that a big bluefin tuna would be arriving at TH-Seafoods, a fish wholesaler in Seattle’s South Park neighborhood. We tagged along to watch the fishmongers at work.

After a lot of effort, the big fish was broken down into cuts of premium-grade toro and otoro, which then were delivered to local sushi shops, including Shiki, Sushi Kashiba, Sushi Kappo Tamura, and many others. What struck us was the sheer physical effort that goes into every piece on your sushi plate. Plenty to be grateful for!
Sashimi Tasting Notes

**MAGURO (BLUEFIN TUNA)**

*Akami*—This flesh is found on the dorsal side of the tuna. It’s known for being low in fat and having firm flesh. It’s easy to eat because it’s low in calories and high in protein. You’ll find a hint of acidity and plenty of umami. Akami is typically bright red.

*Chutoro*—Located on the belly and back of the tuna. It has a moderate fat content, and is different from akami, ootoro, and the dark red flesh found in tuna.

*Ootoro*—The fattiest part of the tuna’s belly. Tender with lots of umami and a sweetness that melts in your mouth. It has a rich combination of sweetness and depth.

**SALMON**

Fatty and sweet with lots of collagen and astaxanthin, a member of the carotenoid family that provides salmon with its pink hue. Salmon is said to be good for your skin due to its anti-oxidant effects. Salmon doesn’t have a fishy odor, and when it is fresh, it will appeal to people who tend to prefer beef or pork. Salmon sashimi is appealing to the eye, has a chewy texture and is rich in umami.

*Chinook*—Very fatty, it melts in your mouth like butter when eaten as sashimi. It has a mild fish flavor and a rich, smooth taste.

*Sockeye*—This red salmon has a firmer texture and less fat.

**SHIROMI (SEA BREAM, FLOUNDER, OTHER WHITE FISH)**

Compared with the red-fleshed fish, shiromi, or white fish, have less fat and fewer calories. These fish don’t move around much, living quietly along the coast or on the deep sea floor. They also don’t live in schools. Because they need instantaneous power, they develop muscles, but they do not migrate, so they don’t develop muscles for long-distance voyages nor do they require a large amount of oxygen. Shiromi are white because they don’t have the chromoproteins of red fish.

For sea bream and flounder, the fresher the fish is, the crispier the texture. The firm texture, chewiness, and juiciness are their outstanding characteristics.

ARE YOU A SASHIMI NOVICE? NOT TO WORRY. WE’VE CREATED SOME TASTING NOTES TO HELP YOU BETTER APPRECIATE THE SUBTLE DIFFERENCES IN THOSE MOUTHWATERING SLICES OF FISH.
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Yuji Haraguchi has learned some simple but powerful lessons working in the fish business in Japan and on both coasts of the United States. Most recently, he has put those lessons to work in his very popular Osakana fish market and his OKONOMI//Yuji Ramen restaurant in Brooklyn, NY. He’s like the Kon Mari of fish, sparking joy in kitchens across the Big Apple by introducing New Yorkers to the concepts of mottainai and teaching them how important it is to handle your fish with respect.
Yuji is also the founder of Okozushi in New York City, Yuji Ramen Tokyo in Tokyo’s Koto ward, and Lorimer Kyoto, which specializes in traditional Japanese breakfasts. His strategy of adapting the best Japanese practices to the American culinary world resonates with New Yorkers — so much so that his Osakana fish shop expanded its selections like never before in 2020 because of demand from stuck-at-home consumers for the very best fish from Japan.

*Origami* caught up with Yuji on a recent Zoom call to talk about his thriving business. Excerpts from the conversation follow.

**The concept of “Honor Your Fish” (Sakana o taisetsu ni)**

My inspiration came when I was working in Boston. I should say that Boston and Seattle are two of the few cities in America where you can see the live fish come in on the fishing boats. I work in New York, but there’s no such pier where the boats come in and unload the fish. My mission at this fish company was to bring sushi-grade fish to restaurants. Sushi-grade fish often comes from Japan. I often got asked by other chefs how come we can’t get local fish of sushi-grade quality. I was caught between trying to import excellent fish from Japan to high-end sushi restaurants and French restaurants, and trying to fill demand from other chefs for local fish for sushi and sashimi.

Since I was in Boston, I would often go to the pier and purchase from the fishermen. I also had the opportunity to go to Tsukiji (the former wholesale market in downtown Tokyo) and work with the people we imported fish from. I saw how they took care of their fish in those two different cultures. What I realized is that the quality of fish was the same before they were handled by people. The quality changes after people start touching the fish. “Osakana wo taisetsu ni” has to do with how you handle the fish and how that changes the fish’s quality.

The fishermen, and the logistics, and the people at the markets (in Japan) handle the fish so much better than the people in the American seafood industry. That’s why the quality of the seafood (in Japan) remains much higher than the quality of the local fish even though the fish from Japan comes from far away.

The mission that I have at Osakana was to import the way of handling and taking care of the fish from Japan and apply it to local fish in America so that the quality of local fish will be as high as the quality of the fish from Japan. That was my inspiration for the philosophy behind Osakana when I started five years ago.

**What I realized is that the quality of fish was the same before they were handled by people. The quality changes after people start touching the fish.**

At that time, I was 25, 26 years old and thinking about new business opportunities.

The other way mottainai applies to me is about not wasting an opportunity. There is amazing seafood here in America, but people don’t know much about it. They are wasting an opportunity because they just don’t know. Mottainai works in those two directions.

**How American attitudes toward seafood have changed in the last decade**

In the past 10 years, I think attitudes have changed significantly. I learned this during the Covid lockdown. We got slammed by so many customers asking for quality fish because not so many people could go out to eat at sushi restaurants. Because of all these crazy demands from customers, we expanded our offerings so much. I was always amused and surprised about how much customers know about fish — in New York, especially.

Our toro is about $75 a pound. We introduced this new fish called *kinmedai*, which is called alfonsino and also golden eye snapper. It is much more expensive than tuna. We sell it at $95 per pound. We always sell out. That’s something I really didn’t realize — how much knowledge there is right now about fish in America. The interest level and knowledge among American consumers in the last 10 years has skyrocketed.
American hunger to learn traditional concepts from Asia

I was invited by the Ramen Museum in Shin-Yokohama to do a two-year residency with Yuji Ramen focusing on my tuna-bone-based ramen, called tuna-kotsu ramen, like tonkotsu but with tuna. They came to me because no one was doing this and they liked the mottainai concept. But since the mottainai concept is so natural in Japan, the customers didn’t react as strongly as the customers from here. American customers are more inspired by this whole concept because they didn’t know. The percentage of wasted fish versus the part that we eat is something like 40 or 50 percent, but people have no idea. When I tell customers the soup is made with scraps, they love it even more because they are enjoying the taste but also the concept.

Local versus imported fish

We have sort of changed our direction. I tried for the past four years to focus on local fish and make them available for consumers. But a lot of times, those fish are shiromi, or white fish. It is difficult to attract customers with white fish. To bring customers in you need toro, uni, and fatty fish in general. There isn’t that much fatty fish in America with the exception of the wild bluefin in the Atlantic. So I changed a lot of our selections. Most of our fish come from Japan now. That’s actually what brings in the business. It actually encourages people to look into white fish too. There is much more Japanese fish than local fish right now at my store, but I sell more of the local fish than I did before. That’s something I never expected.

When I tell customers the soup is made with scraps, they love it even more because they are enjoying the taste but also the concept.
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Off the coast of Nagasaki Prefecture in Kyushu, Japan’s southernmost major island, a series of islands are set in sparkling blue water. The beauty of the area takes your breath away. This is where Tsushima and Goto islands are located.

Coto and Tsushima are blessed with one of the world’s best fishing spots. It is here — in the waters surrounding these remote islands — that Japan’s fishing industry often gets its biggest haul of various types of fish. The fish caught in this region have a reputation in Japan for being the most delicious.

The secret to the superior taste of the fish caught here has to do in part with the region’s special terrain and its ocean currents.

In the waters surrounding Japan, for the most part, warm currents come from the south, and cold currents from the north. The rich ocean currents are a blessing to Japan’s fishing industry.

Among these currents is the Kuroshio, the world’s largest warm current. Around Goto and Tsushima, the Kuroshio Current crosses the cold Liman Current, spurring a lot of plankton growth.

But that’s not all. The seabed here is one of the world’s leading continental shelves and is a shallow 200m deep. The sunlight hitting the shallow waters brings a rich bounty of plankton. Plus, the rivers that run off from the mountainous islands into the ocean bring humus from the deciduous forests, which feeds the plankton. The pristine forests from these unpolluted islands flow bit by bit into the ocean, creating a body of water rich in nutrients.

This is why the area is so rich in plankton. Many fish ride the ocean currents to this region so that they can feast on the region’s bounty.

One more aspect of the region adds to the superior taste of its fish: the currents in the waters between the islands are very fast. The fish that can handle the speed of these currents tend to be muscular and fleshy, which translates to a more delicious taste. This is one of the reasons the seafood from Goto and Tsushima are so sought after by Japanese chefs.

Two ocean currents come together to create an environment rich in nutrients. The waters around Goto and Tsushima are the result of a series of happy coincidences that add up to create one of the world’s best fishing spots. That’s why many chefs at Michelin-starred restaurants around the world source some of their fish from these waters.
**DOWNTOWN**

**84 YESLER**
Owner Sam Takahashi’s latest venture: A seafood-centric Italian restaurant. Pictured: squid ink pasta. [84-yesler.com](http://84-yesler.com)

**SUSHI KASHIBA**
Shiro Kashiba, the godfather of Seattle sushi, presides over this elegant restaurant in Pike Place Market. Offering sumptuous Omakase bentos for takeout. [sushikashiba.com](http://sushikashiba.com)

**CENTRAL: CAPITOL HILL / CD**

**KIZUKI RAMEN & IZAKAYA**
Ramen just like you get in Japan. Kizuki now has seven locations in western Washington, including its latest addition in Renton. [kizuki.com/online-order](http://kizuki.com/online-order)

**SEATTLE FISH GUYS**
This market and restaurant in the Central District has mouthwatering poke, sashimi, uni, oysters, and bentos to choose from. A fun and friendly atmosphere. See ad on page 13. [seattlefishguys.com](http://seattlefishguys.com)

**NORTH: QUEEN ANNE / EASTLAKE**

**SHIKI**
Chef Kenji Yamamoto opened this high-end and well-priced sushi bar twenty years ago. MLB players from Japan often stop by for a meal when they visit Seattle. [shikijapaneserestaurant.com](http://shikijapaneserestaurant.com)

**SUSHI KAPPO TAMURA**
Chef Taichi Kitamura uses local and seasonal ingredients to maximum effect in this open-kitchen restaurant just across the bridge from the University of Washington. [sushikappotamura.com](http://sushikappotamura.com)

**TEN SUSHI**
Famous for serving sushi for delivery until 3am, this sushi bar provides excellent value. Choose from traditional fare or some out-of-this-world original rolls. See ad on page 17. [tensushiseattle.com](http://tensushiseattle.com)

**SOUTH: RAINIER BEACH**

**UMAMI KUSHI**
Chef Harold Fields and crew bake fresh every morning Japan-inspired okazu pan, grab-and-go bread treats with mostly savory fillings. The staple Curry Pan is joined by an assortment of inspired creations. [umamikushi.com](http://umamikushi.com)

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**Takeout Meals Have Never Been As Important As They Have During The Pandemic.**

They are a lifeline for restaurants struggling through this crisis and a needed break from cooking at home for everyone who is trying to limit their travel to keep Covid-19 under control. Many restaurants started takeout last year, and others have refined their delivery systems, keeping soups hot, French fries crisp, and other heretofore-hard-to-deliver foods fresh and tasty. Please support your local restaurants so that they will be with us for a long, long time. Here are a few of our favorites sorted by neighborhood.
Enfu has brought color to the Puget Sound for years through his eye-popping art found on signage in the International District, shopping bags at Uwajimaya, stickers at Kinokuniya bookstore, artwork at the Wing Luke Museum, and his pink-edged book, *Cute Grit*. In March, Enfu has a new book out with Chin Music Press called *Enfu Inks* — it’s a monochrome masterpiece from Seattle’s doodle king. We’ve excerpted a few of his fish-related pages for this issue to give you a taste.
Choppy waters.
Judgement fish is judging you.
— BAIT FISH —
Self-propelled.

— SHARK DOG —
Misunderstood.

— TOUCHY —
Fish of a feather.

— FSH —
Fsh has trouble focusing but is still hungry.
The tenacious chef Sammy and apprentices Loafa & Pisuke run the island’s only 3 starfish joint.
CHIN MUSIC PRESS IS AN independent book publisher based in Seattle that has been telling stories about Asia and the Pacific Northwest for the last 16 years. We also operate a showroom in Pike Place Market where you can browse all our books and view artwork by the many talented illustrators and artists we work with. We are open from Thursday to Monday, 11 am to 5 pm. Come see us.

During the pandemic, we also added Origami magazine to our family. Origami is distributed as a free publication in the Pacific Northwest. Find us at Uwajimaya grocery stores, Kinokuniya bookstores, major shopping areas, and in many fine Asian restaurants. If you'd like to have Origami mailed to you, please contact us at info@origamimagazine.world or (206) 380-1947. An annual subscription (6 issues) is just $40, which includes shipping in the US. International subscriptions are also available. Thank you for reading!
Washin Kai is hosting another fascinating deep dive into aspects of Japanese literary culture this March 3 with Paul Atkins, University of Washington professor of Japanese. Professor Atkins will be talking about *Hyakunin isshu* (One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets), an anthology that was popularized as a card game where players listen to a reader recite verses in random order and compete to be the first to grab the card bearing text of the corresponding poem. That version of Hyakunin isshu has been played ever since the Edo Period (1603 – 1868).

Atkins will discuss the virtual world created by this anthology; generations of readers memorized these poems that spanned from the 9th to the 12th centuries and could take comfort in them as they lived through times of warfare, epidemics, and famine. Atkins will explain the history of the anthology, paying special attention to its mysterious origins in medieval Japan. He promises several revelations that will surprise even those quite familiar with classical Japanese literature.

Hyakunin isshu is an ideal introduction into the world of *waka*, classical Japanese poetry.

Washin Kai, also known as Friends of Classical Japanese at UW, was formed in spring 2018 to preserve and strengthen classical Japanese studies at the University of Washington. To find out more about this group, visit washinkai.info.

This online event, scheduled for March 3 at 7pm, is free and open to the public, but attendees need to register ahead of time at events.uw.edu/WashinKai2021.

*Waka Poet Sarumaku Dayu*

The poem on his card reads:

*Okuyama ni momiji fumiwake naku shika no koe kiku toki zo aki wa kanashiki.*

A loose translation:

Deep in the mountains, autumn leaves rustle underfoot and a deer cries out. Autumn is steeped in sadness.
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“Fish” Radical

When it comes to most aspects of the “fish” radical 魚, things are straightforward. This radical is on duty in only three Joyo kanji, including the autonomous 魚 kanji itself.

To understand the radical, we should start by looking at that character:

魚 (SAKANA)

This 11-stroke shape is a pictograph of a “whole fish,” according to Henshall in his newer edition. So even though the four dots at the bottom look exactly like ♂, a variant of the “fire” radical, they instead represent a tail. That’s a relief; I would hate to think this fish was grilled from the get-go.

WHAT IS THE JAPANESE NAME FOR THE “FISH” RADICAL?

The 魚 kanji carries three Joyo readings: うお (uo), さかな (sakana), and ギョ (gyo).

The first two matter here, as they pop up in the radical names.

That is, we can refer to the 魚 radical of the 魚 character as うお or as さかな. (Well, Nelson includes the さかな reading, but Kanjigen does not.)

When the radical shifts to the left side of a kanji—the へん (へん) side—the names うお へん and さかなへん become appropriate, as with these two kanji:

鰤 (すし: sushi)

I often exercise with these fish. That is, they appear on a T-shirt that I wear for workouts. All 13 of these kanji feature the left-side 魚 radical, and all are regrettably non-Joyo, including the important character at the center:

鰤 (すし: sushi)

WHY IS THIS CRUCIAL KANJI NON-JOYO?!

People more often render すし as 寿司, but neither character features a “fish” radical, so how satisfying is that? 🤔
In a Pickle

You may know 漬 from the following word:

漬け物 or 漬物 (つけもの: Japanese pickled vegetable)
pickled + thing

Associating 漬 with pickles is a great way of remembering this kanji, but it has a broader set of meanings. One suffix captures the range of what 漬 can represent:

-漬け or -漬

1. (-づけ: (1) pickled (something); (2) being badly influenced by; being addicted to)

The following term reflects the first definition:

ア ルコール漬 or ア ルコール漬け (ア ルコールづけ: (1) preserving in alcohol; (2) pickling one's liver; drinking incessantly; being a souse)

And the next two sentences incorporate the second meaning:

娘さんは麻薬漬けです。
Your daughter is on drugs.

娘さん (むすめさん: daughter); 麻薬 (まやく: drugs)

Character Profile

漬


Read All About It!

Halpern
Henshall
Kanshudo
Denshi Jisho

Pickled cherry blossoms, known as 桜花漬け (おうかづけ). People also call this delicacy 桜漬け (さくらづけ), omitting 花 (flower) and changing the yomi considerably.

Each package contains cherry blossoms, as well as Japanese plum vinegar, and salt. According to NIHON ICHIBAN, which offers this product, the Japanese particularly love eating cherry blossoms in April. The site further says that the Japanese have pickled cherry blossoms for centuries, which enables them to enjoy this treat anytime.

A pickled cherry blossom is pink, just as a fresh blossom is, and gives off a flowery scent. People use pickled cherry blossoms in tea (served at weddings), in rice dishes, and in desserts.

Photo Credit: NIHON ICHIBAN
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