

Kaleidoscope MEGURO

Vol.011 March 2019

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Beautiful cherry blossom spots in Meguro

Walking along the Meguro River during the cherry blossom season is quite popular and attract more and more crowd each year. However, it is not the only beautiful cherry blossom spot in Meguro. How about taking a walk along the Meguro Ryokudo (Green Trail), which is well marked and lined up with cherry trees in a quiet residential area that only the locals know of. You can enjoy beautiful cherry blossoms along the Ryokudo in a serene and calm mood. During the cherry blossom season, *Sakura Matsuri* (Cherry Blossom Festival) is held near Jiyugaoka Station and illuminations near Toritsudaigaku Station are planned.

Recommended Course:

Combination of Kuhonbutsu Ryokudo (about 1.4km from Jiyugaoka 1-chome to Midorigaoka 1-chome), Nomigawa Honryu Ryokudo (about 2.4km from Midorigaoka 3-chome to Yakumo 3-chome) and Komazawa Branch Ryokudo, leading to Komazawa Olympic Park. The entire course is about 4.6km.

Start from Jiyugaoka Station South Exit of Oimachi line and Toyoko Line. You can find Kuhonbutsu Ryokudo with cherry trees lined up along the shopping mall just behind the building, in front of the station's south exit. You can enjoy shopping and eating on the benches under the cherry trees. Walk to the left from the station toward Midorigaoka Station for about 1 km, going through the railway crossing. When you arrive at Midorigaoka Station, take the path with yellow line next to the station to the gate of Tokyo Tech (Tokyo Institute of Technology) and to the starting point of Nomigawa Honryu Ryokudo. You can enter the campus of Tokyo Tech and enjoy a splendid view of cherry blossoms.



Nomigawa Honryu Ryokudo starts from Midorigaoka Station to Toritsudaigaku Station, in a quiet residential area with cherry trees lined up. After you see Toritsudaigaku Station on your right and cross the Meguro dori (street), walk on for about half a km, and once you reach the division, take the Komazawa Shiryu Ryokudo (Komazawa Branch Trail) to the end and walk on towards Komazawa Olympic Park, where again, you can enjoy cherry blossoms.

Nomigawa River used to run from Setagaya-ku to Omori in Ota-ku through Meguro-ku, pouring into the Tokyo Bay. In the upper areas of the river, it was used for irrigation. In 1995, Tokyo Metropolitan Government planned a project to revive the dirty polluted water. Now they have made the river a part of the Green Trail with clean water running underneath.

* **Notice:** While walking along, please refrain from talking loudly and littering.

Interview of Ms. Priya Mu on Japanese language learning



We invited Ms. Priya Mu, an Architecture student at The University of Tokyo from India to share her experiences on learning Japanese, excerpt from the interview below.

Q. How was your experience living in Japan? When did you start learning Japanese and what is your current level?

A. I moved to Japan over a year ago but I have been learning Japanese for a year before coming here. But learning the language while living in Japan has been a very fruitful experience. Getting to speak to the locals and trying to read the signs and advertisements on the trains helps improving my Japanese. My current Japanese proficiency level is N2 (JLPT).

Q. What motivated you to learn Japanese even though you were not in Japan?

A. I love Japanese literature and also a few Japanese movies including animations. Natsume Soseki is my favorite novelist and my all time favorite novel is "Botchan". I am not a big fan of reading but I can read this novel over and over again. I also like movies by Kurosawa and Koreeda and I absolutely love Studio Ghibli movies. Rather than the stories themselves, there is something unique about how these stories are told and I find the Japanese way of story-telling very inspiring. This drove me to liking the culture first and eventually inspired me to start learning the language so that I can imbibe the culture with more authenticity.

Q. Did you take Japanese language classes or did you learn it on your own?

A. I did take a few informal Japanese lessons online, but mostly I learnt it on my own.

Q. Could you share the innovative methods you came up with that aided in the process of learning Japanese?

A. I was able to speak the language quite easily as the grammar and sentence structure of Japanese is strikingly similar to my native language which is Tamil. I picked up the vocabulary from the movies I watched and I had few close friends who were Japanese with whom I practiced my Japanese. This helped me pick up the language faster. Speaking Japanese was easy, but learning how to read the *kanji* was quite daunting at first. But I think the best way to learn *kanji* is to find your own way. I have a strong visual memory, so I organized all the *kanji* and grouped them together based on the similarity in shapes and learnt them in groups forming stories with the shapes (Similar to the Heisig's Method). I also like organizing stuff so I enjoy sorting the *kanji*. I believe this is the best way for me because I remember them much better while having fun at the same time.

Q. How did learning Japanese make you feel closer to Japan and broaden your understanding of the culture?

A. The more I read *kanji*, and the formation of words, the more I understand the basis of Japanese culture. For example, the Japanese word for teacher is *Sensei*. In the other languages that I am aware of, the word "Teacher" is synonymous to the words "Master" or "Expert". Whereas in Japanese "*Sensei*" is formed by the *kanji* *sen* (先-previously) and *Sei* (生-Student) which can infer that a *Sensei* is just someone who was previously a student. Learning words like this and how they are formed makes me understand the roots of the simplicity and humbleness of Japanese people. Most words are formed like this and this gives me a new understanding of the word itself. I feel like learning philosophy when I learn Japanese *kanji* and I believe, this is one of the reasons why many people around the world are drawn to this beautiful language and culture.



Special weekend service hours for move-in / move-out registration

Date: Mar. 24 (Sun), Mar. 30 (Sat), Mar. 31 (Sun), Apr. 7 (Sun)

Time: 10:00 ~ 16:30

Place: 1st floor, Main Building of Meguro City Office Complex

Services available: Move-in / Move-out registration, change of address within Meguro City, and application for seal registration certificate

Remarks:

1. In case of move-in from foreign countries, or in case where inquiry to other city, town or village is necessary, registration is not accepted.
2. Bring My Number Card (Individual Number Card) or Notification Card for My Number. Some necessary information may be printed on the back of these cards.
3. National Health Insurance Card may not be issued on the day of registration.
4. Proof of identity is required. Please bring photo identification, such as Residence Card, Special

Permanent Resident Certificate or My Number Card; however, Notification Card for My Number is inadequate.

For more information, please call the Family and Residents Registration Section: 03-5722-9884 (Japanese only)



Special sale for the next chapter of your life

In Japan, people join schools or companies in April because the fiscal year starts in April and ends in March. This coincides with the cherry blossom season, so the idea of starting a new life along with the blooming cherry blossoms is well established in Japan. Besides new students and employees, many people move to new places in this season for job transfers or other reasons. For them, department stores, electronics stores and household goods stores have big discount sales, called "Special sale for your new life", from around February to April. They sell items which are necessary for new life, such as home electronics, furniture and bedding, in sets at discount prices. Other customer-friendly benefits like free delivery may also be



offered. For those planning to buy new furniture, these discount sales are too good to miss. Why don't you check them out?



We are looking for editorial volunteers!!

We are looking for volunteers who are willing to join us creating Kaleidoscope MEGURO together!



Volunteering tasks include:

- Write articles in Japanese / English
- Translate articles into English
- Proofread articles
- Provide photos or illustrations for articles
- Interview

* Editorial meeting will be held once a month.

For more information, please contact MIFA (See p.4)

Free medical checkup for breast cancer

Period: May 1 (Wed), 2019 to Feb. 29 (Sat), 2020

Place: Any of the medical institutions designated by Meguro City

Examination: By mammography, visual inspection and palpation

Fee: Free

Eligibility: Female residents of Meguro City born before Mar. 31, 1980 except for those who

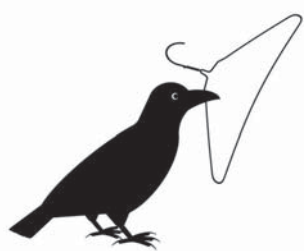
- took a medical examination equivalent to the above at work or elsewhere
- took a medical examination of Meguro City between

May 2018 and Feb. 2019

- had a breast-enlargement surgery
- are pregnant or breast-feeding, or were breast-feeding until three months ago
- have a cardiac pacemaker (except leadless one) or ICD (Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator) implanted
- have a CV (Central Venous) port inserted
- have a Ventriculoperitoneal shunt for hydrocephalus

Application period: Apr. 1 (Mon) to Dec. 28 (Sat)
For details, please contact Health Promotion Section at 03-5722-9423 (Japanese only)

Special measure during crow's breeding season



Measures to prevent crows from nesting on trees

Crow's nests for breeding are made of tree branches and wire hangers. To prevent crows from nesting, 1) do not leave wire hangers outside, 2) cut off

tree branches, and 3) use crow-repelling nets to cover outside garbage dumps.

Measures to cope with crow's aggressive behaviors

Parent crows are extra nervous during breeding season. To defend their eggs and baby crows, they often get aggressive towards people. Please do not get close to the nest as much as possible. When you have to pass by, please try to protect the entire back of your head with an umbrella or a hat.

For details, please contact the Sanitation Section, Meguro City Office at 03-5722-9505 (Japanese only).

Safety tips app - Disaster Information in international languages

Japan is an extremely safe country but, like anywhere else the unexpected can happen. Thus, the Japan tourism agency launched the "Safety tips App" in October 2014 which aims at providing disaster information to travelers from overseas. It is available in five languages: English, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean and Japanese. It provides push notification of Earthquake early warning, Tsunami warning, Weather warning and Volcanic eruption notices issued in Japan. It also provides civil protection information such as ballistic missile launches. Additionally, there is also a flowchart which shows the

evacuation procedures to be taken at the time of a disaster.

This app is available free of charge on both Android and iOS devices.

Download links

- Android:
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=jp.co.rcsc.safetytips.android>
- iPhone:
<https://itunes.apple.com/jp/app/safety-tips/id858357174?mt=8>

For Android



For iOS



Meguro City Newsletter

5 languages are now supported on an e-book version! Read in your own language! Supports Text-to-Speech!

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Access from QR code, and you can easily read Meguro City Newsletter anytime you want.

Foreign Residents Information Desk Tel: 03-5722-9187 (English)

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Meguro City Office Complex
2-19-15, Kamimeguro, Meguro-ku, Tokyo
<http://www.city.meguro.tokyo.jp/multi/index.html>

Life in Tokyo

Site for Foreign Residents of Tokyo
<https://www.lifein.tokyo.jp/en/>



Published by Culture & Exchange Promotion Section, Meguro City Office

Edited by Meguro International Friendship Association Volunteer (MIFA)

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MIFA



ONLINE VER.



The bimonthly newsletter Kaleidoscope MEGURO is intended to make a multi-cultural society embracing and diversity.