

# RISE

MONTHLY JOURNAL FROM JAPAN



## LETTER FROM EDITORS DESK

Dear Reader,

Ohayo Gozaimasu!!

Autumn season has arrived in Japan and most parts have started to witness the change in colours of leaves. Symbolizing that change is inevitable and it is a continuous process for the betterment.

Some changes also happened on tourism front, Conde-Nast released its Readers choice awards for 2021 and Japan has amazingly done well in most of the categories.

It secured all three top in Big Cities Category, #1 Tokyo, #2 Osaka #3 Kyoto; In the Top 20 countries in the world Japan got #3 position; In the Top Train category, Japan's Seven Star Luxury Train in Kyushu ranked #1; In Asia, top 10 hotels of Japan

are #1 Suiran, A Luxury Collection hotel, Kyoto, #2 The Okura Tokyo, #3 Park Hyatt Tokyo, #4 Shangri-La Hotel, Tokyo, #5 Conrad, Tokyo, #6 Tokyo Station Hotel, #7 Iraph Sui, Miyako Okinawa, #8 Mandarin Oriental, Tokyo, #9 Aman Tokyo, #10 Hoshinoya Tokyo.

Out of these top 10 hotels selected by the readers, RISE has featured Conrad Tokyo and Hoshinoya Hotels. One thing is clear that world travellers are in love with Japan and its offerings, but what is alarming is that only the big cities and their product offering is in the traveller's thoughts. But Japan is beyond Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto, it is actually in the smaller cities and villages, where one can experience authentic Japanese culture.

RISE will continue to strive to bring the best of Japan to its readers.

Stay Safe. Arigato Gozaimasu.





## KOYASAN – UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE, WAKAYAMA

BY SONIA SINGH

In the year 816 AD, a Shingon Buddhist priest by the name of Kukai (774 ~ 835 AD), posthumously named Kobo Daishi, founded the monastery complex known as Koyasan. Located in the lush Koya-Ryuujin Quasi-National Park, it is an auspicious location marked by eight surrounding peaks and a basin resembling lotus. Koyasan is one of Japan's most sacred sites. For over 1,200 years it has flourished as an active monastic center and a pilgrimage destination.

Located in the north-east of Wakayama Prefecture, Koyasan, which reaches an altitude of 1,000 meters, is a temple complex, where over 100 temples with gardens are scattered across in the area of 6Kms from east to west, and 3Kms from

north to south. One of the most sacred places in Koyasan is Okuno-in Cemetery that has the 2Kms cedar-lined path to Kobo Daishi's mausoleum.

Koyasan was registered as a UNESCO's World Heritage site in 2004. In 2009, it was rated 3 stars in the Michelin Green Guide Japan. Visitors who wish to experience monk's life, can stay at one of 51 Shukubo, or temple lodgings. Experience beautiful gardens, shojin-ryori (vegetarian Buddhist cuisine), and morning Buddhist services.

Sutra copying, Buddhist image copying, and a type of meditation called "ajikan" are available at some temples as per one's request.

Koyasan, looks magnificent during autumn season from the end of October to the beginning of November, when the entire mountain is painted with red and yellow leaves, with breath-taking views of temple buildings. One can also take a stroll along the Jabara Road from Komgobuji Temple to the Danjo-garan, which is covered by tunnel-like canopies of stunning red leaves!

Koyasan has a statue of Dr. Ambedkar, donated by Maharashtra state of India as a symbol of friendship to Wakayama Prefecture. He is known for "The Father of Indian constitution". Successive Indian Ambassadors to Japan have participated in the celebrations of birth anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar





## NORTHERN CULTURE MUSEUM – NIIGATA

BY SHARAD SHARMA

Located to the west of the Agano River in Niigata, the Northern Culture Museum, or Hoppo Bunka Hakubutsukan in Niigata, is the former residence of the Ito family, and was built between 1882 and 1889. In 1946, after World War II, the seventh head of the household, Mr. Bunkichi Ito decided to create a museum and to donate to it his entire fortune.

The Northern Culture Museum got its name from the Nordiska Museet, located within the Skansen Open-air Museum, a world-famous ethnographic museum in Sweden.

The museum's area covers 29,000 square-

meters of ground, having the main building a grand hall, a tearoom, a warehouse and an accommodation facility. In addition, some paintings, sculptures, calligraphy, and various treasures from Japan, China, and Korea, which were collected on the occasion of becoming the first private museum after World War II, are on display and can be viewed.

The large garden with a central pond is one of the highlights at the Northern Culture Museum. It has been created by Mr. Taiami Tanaka, a famous gardener originally from Kashiwazaki city in Niigata prefecture. He has close ties to Kyoto's Ginkaku-ji Temple

and spent years achieving its perfection.

Different seasons offer different beauty in this garden: cherry blossoms, Japanese wisteria, a 150-year-old tree, ancient lotus flowers, and the unique colours of autumn foliage. During illumination, the view is magnificent.

At the Northern Culture Museum, several programs allow visitors to experience Japanese traditional culture, like pounding sticky rice, Furumachi geigi (geisha) and experiencing the tea ceremony. Also you can use this as a unique venue. Come and enjoy the local history, aesthetics and culture of this region.





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## KOCHI'S DARUMA SUNSET

BY DEEPAK SINGH

A peculiar sunset where the sun creates a head as it dips under the horizon, resembling a head above a rounded body. The mirage occurs when sunlight is refracted by the warm air above the ocean surface interacting with cold air higher above. This phenomenon is called "Daruma Asahi (Rising Sun)" or "Daruma Yuuhi (Setting Sun)", as it resembles the bright red "daruma doll" – a protective charm in Japan. It seems as if Daruma Doll is floating in the ocean.

Daruma sunsets usually occur between late autumn to early spring. Depending on

atmospheric conditions and location, the timing of sunset varies. The doll is associated with good luck and victory, so witnessing the daruma-shaped sun is also considered to bring good luck.

Kochi Prefecture has a 700km long coastline facing the Pacific Ocean. One can witness this Omega Sun as many as 20 times a year at many locations. Early risers can also witness the daruma sunrises too.

Cape Muroto is a triangular section of coast that juts out into the Pacific Ocean. One can capture an image of the mirage, as it is

possible to see both daruma sunset views from its western side, and daruma sunrises from its eastern coastline.

Shirahama Beach, part of Toyo Town, is shaped like an archer's bow. The shallow white sand beach stretches out into the ocean for 50 meters, making it one of the most prominent shallow beaches in Shikoku.

Kanyo Island and the Michi-no-eki part of Sukumo Bay are also popular spots.

Seeing the Daruma sunrise or sunset is definitely a breath-taking experience.





## NANTEN-EN, OSAKA'S HOT SPRING ONSEN

BY EMI ITO

Amami Onsen Nanten-en is a traditional ryokan with natural hot springs tucked away in the countryside of southern Osaka Prefecture. Yet despite its rural surroundings, it is only 40 minutes by train from the bustle of downtown Namba and only 90 minutes from Kansai Airport.

The main building of Nanten-en is over 100 years old and hosts 13 traditional Japanese style guest rooms featuring tatami floors and sliding doors. The rooms come in a variety of sizes and come equipped with

yukata (casual Japanese style robes) to use during your stay.

All rooms have free access to our public onsen which is open almost 24 hours and is separate for men and women. The water is rich in natural radium which promotes a number of health benefits including relieving muscle and nerve pain.

Within our large gardens is our Seiryutei annex, our largest guest room which includes a private, outdoor onsen and a

veranda overlooking the Amami River. Our garden is a place for all seasons with soft pink cherry blossoms in the spring and fiery red and gold maples in the autumn.

For reservations which include meals, a traditional Kaiseki course dinner is served in the comfort of your own room while a Japanese style breakfast is served in our banquet hall. For guests who require vegetarian or vegan kaiseki, we encourage them to let us know their dietary requirements in advance by email.



# IN CONVERSATION WITH NUPUR TEWARI

BY SHARAD SHARMA

Nupur Tewari is the founder of HealTokyo and HealIndia Movement. Known internationally for award winning transformation and mindfulness coaching. Nupur works as a public motivational speaker, and spiritual healer through activities like yoga consultation. She brings unique insight on Japanese culture and global outreach.

Nupur has received recognitions from organizations such as The Nargis Dutt foundation, Dr. Sarojini Naidu International Award, PhD chamber of commerce, SBI foundation, Global Mice. And was even chosen for the UP Book of world Records for being "the most fabulous woman leader" in spiritual healing yoga, motivational speaking, and transformational-mindfulness coaching. She's the first Indian to pay tribute to three Indian heroes Rash Bihari Bose, Subhash Chandra Bose and Justice Radha Binod Pal, on 75th Independence Day who have direct connection with Japan and on 26 Jan'21, she was handed over the Indian flag by the Indian ambassador and she marched to the Japanese Parliament, promoting "Swachh Bharat Mission". Another first by her was to feed homeless people in Japan.



## How has been your journey in Japan?

My journey in Japan has been amazing, the first place I landed was Matsuyama, Shikoku Island, 2003 March, 06. It was the start of a lovely journey going from airport to my apartment, the street was lined up with Oranges trees. Being a spiritual person, the silence just welcomed me, the apartment was located at the 11th floor and view of the ocean was just breath taking. First, I started to explore local area by cycle, loved riding along the rice fields, passing by the local shops in the neighbourhood. From the very beginning, I have been spreading word about Indian culture to locals, be it food or talking about festivals. By this way I have also learned the Japanese culture, be it Tea ceremony or cooking traditional food or wearing yukata. In a big way Yoga is a part of my life since the very start and I have been spreading culture of Yoga in Japan. As I lived away from Tokyo or any big city, so there was hardly any Indian community to interact and that's when I developed strong local bonding. It was a great start and since then it has been an incredible journey.

## What is HealTokyo?

HealTokyo is a movement of spreading love, positivity, brotherhood (Vasudev Kutumbakam). It is all about being there when people need us the most. Underprivileged is not just about being economically weak, but it could be low on emotion, support or not being able to express

oneself. So, we started this movement, to support such people. At HealTokyo we teach Yoga not only for outer beauty also for inner happiness. If someone joins for the cause, then they learn Yoga for free and they can donate for that particular cause, be it helping needy by giving food or working to restore the damages caused by natural calamity. HealTokyo has helped many people in Japan, Sri Lanka, Africa, during Mumbai floods and in Delhi giving food packets to refugees from Afghanistan.



## Is Yoga liked by Japanese and how it has helped local community?

It has been helping local community from Matsuyama to Tokyo. In Tokyo it is more about reliving stress and helping local community to manage themselves. We also do counselling for better management of one own self. We are happy that Yoga has brought in positive change in the society.

## Share your Japanese Omotenashi experience during your stay in Japan?

There are thousands of experiences I can share, that I have gathered during my 19Years of stay in Japan. One of the experiences I would like to talk about, it happened in Ichiba (Small local shop), I met a Japanese lady and it was my initial days and I was still learning how to speak to Japanese and this lady was not able to communicate with

me and she understood my struggle. In evening she made me contact someone who could speak English and this really helped me. These are the real experiences and Japanese are really nice & humble people.

## Which all places in Japan, you shall recommend to a first time Indian Traveller?

Unfortunately, most of the Indian travellers visit Tokyo or Osaka and these cities are just like any big cities most of the places are manmade and these experiences are not what real Japan is all about. But heart of Japan lies in countryside and small cities. One must visit, Izu, Fukuoka, Kyushu, Miyazaki, stay in Hiroshima, interact with locals and I strongly recommend visiting Shikoku Island. All this will make you understand what Japan is.

## Your recommended restaurant in Japan for Indian Tourist?

There are many Indian restaurant in Japan and my personal favorite is Andhra Dining, they have branches in Shibuya and Ginza. They serve amazing South Indian and North Indian cuisine. For Japanese cuisine, I would recommend Gonpachi Nori-Temaki Harajuku, Shibuya.

## What special Indian Tourist could experience in Japan?

Indian tourist could experience traditional Japanese mock wedding and dress in traditional wedding attire.







## ROKU KYOTO, LXR HOTELS & RESORTS

BY ICHIRO HATTA

LXR Hotels & Resorts are comprised of unique properties with unprecedented services and unrivaled experiences designed for luxury travellers with a taste for adventure. Each location is a one-of-a-kind destination with a character of its own.

ROKU Kyoto, LXR Hotels & Resorts opened on September 16, 2021, it is the first hotel & resort by LXR in Asia. The hotel represents, Hilton's presence in Kyoto and is operated by Tokyu Resorts & Stays Co., Ltd., a fully-owned subsidiary of Tokyu Land Corporation.

The origin of the name, "ROKU", is derived from the traditional craft of handmade

Japanese paper and evocative of the natural beauty of the hotel's surroundings. During the Heian Period, the Kamiya River ("Kami" translates to "paper") flowing through the area was the source of water for papermaking, enhancing the symbolism of the name. Situated in a tranquil area along the foothills of the Takagamine Sanzan ("Three Mountains of Takagamine") within northern Kyoto, the 114 room resort is part of the 28.6-acre Shozan Resort Kyoto, a luxury enclave currently home to some of Kyoto's most notable and idyllic Japanese gardens, historic architecture and authentic tea houses.

ROKU KYOTO, LXR Hotels & Resorts offers

its guests with bespoke experience of the area and enable them to immerse themselves in the deep charms of a Kyoto that still holds mystery for those visiting, with countless stories of history and culture steeped in an unconventional aesthetic. ROKU Kyoto offers a soothing and refreshing stay, complete with fine cuisine that can only be experienced in Kyoto, various experiences and activities, spa treatments paired with natural hot springs, pool and fitness center facilities, and more.

ROKU Kyoto, LXR Hotels & Resorts is part of Hilton Honors, the award-winning guest-loyalty program for Hilton's 18 distinct hotel brands.





## KAYANOYA RESTAURANT, HISAYAMA TOWN, FUKUOKA

BY KARL BAHCECI

In the hilly woodlands of Fukuoka prefecture there lies a clear stream, home to dancing fireflies. Here we find 'Kayanoya', a fine restaurant that prides itself on cuisine defined by the seasonality of its ingredients and finding ways to bring out their flavors. From blooming Sakura to new verdure, autumn foliage, and snow-covered landscapes, one can feel the breath of nature no matter the season. From Fukuoka city, it takes but 40 minutes by car to reach this establishment.

The rustic kayabuki thatched roof 'Kayanoya' restaurant was opened in 2005 by the Kubara Honke group with an eye

towards providing toothsome and authentic Japanese cuisine. As it turned out, there were many patrons who wished to take the flavor of this restaurant home with them. To make the flavor of their food accessible Kayanoya decided to do just that- they began packing their 'dashi, or fish and konbu kelp stock essential to the Japanese flavor profile, now in powdered form,

In this authentically Japanese setting one can enjoy a multi-course menu that is prepared without additives and seasonal ingredients that undergo rigorous selection before they reach your plate. From the Lunch and Dinner menu is the notable

'10 Grain Hotpot'. Prepared with the renowned dashi it is a popular and nutritious main course sure to impress. The rich umami of the dashi and seasonality of the ingredients however make all dishes come with highest recommendations.

The restaurant is located in Hisayama Town of Fukuoka and we recommend guest to make prior reservation.

Website:

[www.kayanoya.com/en/shop/restaurant/](http://www.kayanoya.com/en/shop/restaurant/)

Address:

395-1 Kushiya, Oaza Ino Aza, Hisayama town, Fukuoka, JAPAN 811-2503





## TOURISM FOR ALL – JAPAN

BY SONIA SINGH

Landscape of travel is ever evolving and it is for greater good. The concept of accessible tourism was farfetched thought, but authorities in Japan started to take note for growing demand to make monuments, natural sites, hotels, public transport etc. more accessible for all. Not just for people on wheel-chair but also for visually impaired or people using sign language to convey their message.

There are quite a few social activists in Japan those have collaborated with local authorities and vice-versa for changes that have happened in making most of the popular landmarks accessible. Japan government has set newer target to make at least 1% of the hotel rooms, differently abled friendly.

But Ryokans and smaller hotels do not have to follow the suggested government guidelines due to their nature of building.

Japan has taken a lead in developing facilities for visually impaired people, most of the cans would have writings in Braille, toilets, elevators, entry to a building or monuments would have a signage in Braille for ease of accessibility. One thing that would surprise is that Japan is the originator of tactile paving (Tenji Blocks), and walking on road for visually impaired is easy with help of the blocks.

The infrastructure is evolving for wheel chair accessibility and Gunkanjima in Nagasaki is now wheelchair accessible

through a unique sling system. Fushimi Inari in Kyoto has installed an unobtrusive elevator leading to paved pathways flowing directly to the start of the famous torii gate tunnel. Sensoji or Meiji Jingu have also been renovated and are equipped with lift that takes wheel chairs. Restaurants and malls have also started to adapt or modify their entrances to meet accessibility requirements. One of the biggest changes achieved in public transport space was through the modification of Bullet Train, now few lines have got space for wheel chair accessibility and Japan will continue to make improvements in this space to make public transport accessible to all.

Most of the Golden Route in Japan, are now fully accessible for all and Japan is ready to welcome all with ease.





Useful words  
in Japanese

Let us  
learn



**Wheelchair – Kuruma-isu**

**Electric Wheelchair – Dendō kuruma-isu**

**Accessible – Baria furii**

**Accessible Toilet – Dare-demo toire**

**Elevator – Erebētā**

**Ramp – Surōpu**

**Shower chair – Shawā che-a**

**Hand rail – Te-suri**

**Wheelchair space – Kuruma-isu supēsu**

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