

2024 July Vol.2

New Open

1. Bask in Cosmopolitan Luxury at Candeo Hotels Osaka The Tower, Opens July 17



©Candeo Hotels Osaka The Tower

The new Candeo Hotels Osaka The Tower is set to open in central Osaka on July 17 with luxurious features that are fabulous accents to any stay. The open-air bath located on the 31st floor of the building boasts uninterrupted panoramic views of the glittering Osaka cityscape, and the elegantly modern rooms also ensure that you wake up and go to bed with prime views. The hotel is only a 5-minute walk from Yodoyabashi Station or a 10-minute drive from Shin-Osaka Station, allowing easy access throughout the city and acting as a convenient base for sightseeing. The Candeo Hotels Osaka Hirakata location also opened in the city in June, offering another fabulous lodging option in Osaka.

[CANDEO HOTELS OSAKA THE TOWER](#)

[CANDEO HOTELS OSAKA HIRAKATA](#)

New Open

2. YAWN YARD, a New Way to Enjoy the Idyllic Nature of Okinawa, Is Opening in Summer 2024



©YAWN YARD

Okinawa's Yambaru region, located in the northern part of the prefecture, is home to verdant forests that have stood for millennia and is surrounded by crystal blue ocean. Traveling over two bridges will bring you to the tiny Kouri Island, which can be circled by car in about 15 minutes.

In summer 2024, the new accommodation facility YAWN YARD will open on the island, allowing guests to completely immerse themselves in Okinawa's gorgeous nature and culture. Aiming to be a “yard where people can stay,” the buildings are designed so visitors can feel the gentle ocean breeze and hear the sound of the rolling waves, which can also be enjoyed while savoring Okinawan cuisine. With the belief that all food acts as medicine and eating together is the best medicine, eating the food that is made with locally sourced ingredients is a rejuvenating experience.

[YAWN YARD](#)

New Open

3. Dogo Onsen, Visited By Legendary Japanese Historical Figures, Fully Resumed Operations on July 11, Ehime



©Matsuyamashi

Dogo Onsen in Ehime Prefecture is considered to be one of the oldest and most famous hot springs in Japan, with a history that is said to date back 3,000 years. It has become a revered part of Japanese culture, being referenced in the 11th-century novel *The Tale of Genji* and also believed to be one of the inspirations for the bathhouse in Studio Ghibli's iconic film. It was the first bathhouse in Japan to be recognized as a National Important Cultural Property, and the solemn structure boasts traditional Japanese architecture with striking details. Dogo Onsen's Honkan building had been operating while undergoing conservation work since 2019, but fully resumed operations from July 11 of this year. For a truly memorable experience, head to Dogo Onsen, where taking a bath is like soaking in ancient Japanese history and culture.

[Dogo Onsen](#)

Festival and Event

4. Find Thousands of Lanterns Creating a Scenery of Crimson Lights at the Yamaguchi Tanabata Lantern Festival, August 6 – 7



The Yamaguchi Tanabata Lantern Festival creates a magical sight for two days in mid-summer, with tens of thousands of red lanterns setting Yamaguchi City aglow. Its origins can be traced back over 500 years ago, when the feudal lord Ouchi Moriharu lit a bamboo lantern to pray for the souls of his departed ancestors. It is now known for its fantastic spectacle of glowing red lanterns that decorate the city, arranged in such ways that they resemble tunnels and even a giant tree. Dance performances and food trucks add to the festival atmosphere, transforming the city of Yamaguchi (which was featured on the New York Times' list of 52 Places to Go in 2024) and creating memorable summertime moments among the soft glimmer of the lanterns.

[Yamaguchi Tanabata Lantern Festival](#)

Festival and Event

5. The Iconic Awa Odori Dance Brings Bursts of Vibrancy to the Streets of Tokushima, August 11 - 15



©Tokushima city

Awa Odori is a folk dance from Tokushima Prefecture that is over 400 years old, and now has become so well-known that the normally quiet Tokushima City is overcome with an energetic atmosphere as over a million spectators flock to witness the exuberant, vibrant dancing during the iconic Awa Odori Festival. The costumes of the dancers dye the streets in vivid colors, their synchronized movements and chants alongside the sounds of traditional instruments completely captivating one's attention. One of the nation's most famous folk dances, experienced groups from all over the country gather for the event, but there are also "Niwakaren" groups that teach beginners the steps day-of. There is nothing like seeing it in all its glory at the iconic annual Awa Odori Festival.

[Tokushima City Official \(Awa Odori Dance\)](#)

Festival and Event

6. Browse a Massive Selection of Doujinshi at Comic Market 104, August 11 - 12, Tokyo



©COMICMARKET

Comic Market (also known as Comiket or Comike), is a large-scale convention focused around "Doujinshi," which are independently published books and comics that can either be based on existing works (especially manga, anime, and video games) or completely original material. Doujinshi is a way for creators to show off their artistic abilities, storytelling, and often love for their favorite characters and series. At Comiket, held in Tokyo Big Sight, you can find tens of thousands of participants, including creators distributing their own works, fans eager to buy doujinshi to add to their collections, and even cosplayers portraying their favorite characters. Advance ticket information can be found on Facebook and X.

[Comic Market 104 \(C104\)](#)

Festival and Event

7. Jump Into the Colorful World of Murakami Takashi in Kyoto - Until September 1



Takashi Murakami,
Summer Flower Field under the Golden Sky
©2023-2024 Takashi Murakami/
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Takashi Murakami,
Dragon in Clouds - Red Mutation:
The version I painted myself in annoyance after Professor
Nobuo Tsuji told me,
"Why don't you paint something yourself for once?"
©2010 Takashi Murakami/Kaikai Kiki Co., Ltd. All Rights

Murakami Takashi is a world-renowned contemporary artist who is especially known for his smiling flowers with colorful petals. He blends traditional Japanese art with pop culture such as anime and manga to create eye-catching pieces that also act as commentaries on modern society. As the Kyoto City KYOCERA Museum of Art celebrates its 90th anniversary, it is holding the Takashi Murakami Mononoke Kyoto solo exhibition that features a range of his works. The exhibition is made up of around 170 pieces, including ones that portray both classic and modern interpretations of "Mononoke" spirits from Japanese folklore, beckoning you into the new world of Murakami Takashi.

[Kyoto City Museum of Art 90th Anniversary Exhibition Takashi Murakami Mononoke Kyoto](#)

Special Experience

8. The Dramatic Tradition of Cormorant Fishing with Over 1000 Years of History, Until October 15, Gifu



©Seki City

Cormorant fishing, or "Ukai" in Japanese, is an ancient fishing technique that has been practiced for over 1,000 years in the Oze area in Seki City. Fishermen called "Usho" partner with their cormorant companions to catch fish aided by the light of a torch against the darkness of night. The birds dive into the water and resurface to deliver fish to their masters. This theatrical tradition has been enjoyed by spectators for hundreds of years. Cormorants are a protected species and are therefore carefully tended to by their masters, building strong bonds of trust between them. Cormorant fishing on the Nagara River in Seki City, known as the City of Sword, has remained faithful to its long-standing roots, offering a glimpse into ancient Japanese scenery and culture. Visitors can even ride sightseeing boats that get close to the Usho and cormorants at work and witness their expertise first-hand.

[Oze cormorant fishing](#)

Adventure Travel

9. Reflect on the Meaning of "Peace" By Interacting with the Locals and Nature of Hiroshima



©Hiroshima Adventure Travel

After suffering from the devastating effects of World War II, Hiroshima has become one of the world's largest advocates for peace. Standing among the beautiful landscape of the Setouchi region, which includes everything from the ocean to mountains, are solemn reminders of the horrors of war and calls to remember the importance of peace. There is a 5-day-long tour that takes you through a wide variety of scenery, helping visitors become in touch with oneself and

the moment and showcasing the wonders of a world at peace and in harmony. The war memorials and monuments in Hiroshima City vividly illustrate the atrocities of war and the real effects they have, while the calm surrounding natural environment creates a perfect example of the beauty of the world we have been gifted. Interacting with the local people and culture creates unforgettable bonds to the area, cementing the importance of connections and understanding.

[HIROSHIMA Adventure Travel](#)

Special Experience

10. Cycle Through a Charming Orchard and Marvel at the Bounteous Harvest of Fruit, Nagano



©Minami Shinshu Matsukawa Tourism Center

Matsukawa is a village in Nagano Prefecture that is known for providing high yields of delicious fruits for over 100 years. Many flock to Matsukawa to revel in its orchards and their bounties, which can now be explored during a relaxing bike tour that runs through a belt of fruit orchards that is located along the foot of the idyllic Japanese Alps mountain range. Participants are sandwiched by fruit trees on all sides, with the mountains towering in the background. Several stops are made during the tour, allowing for samplings of local fruit-related products, interactions with the locals, and even fruit-picking experiences during select seasons such as apples and pears from August to September. The tour finishes off with a scrumptious picnic, which is enjoyed under the soothing canopy of rustling fruit trees. For those who would like to spend more time relishing the natural wonders of Matsukawa, there is also an overnight gastronomic tour available that visits several local breweries and includes an outdoor dinner served among the fruit trees of an orchard.

[Orchard Cycling Tour](#)

Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai

Do You Know the Signature Project?



©steAm Inc. & Tetsuo Kobori Architects



©EARTH MART / EXPO2025

The project will be held from pavilions located in the center of the Expo venue that are led by the eight producers. These pavilions are called Signature Pavilions. The Signature Pavilions and Signature Events will offer a variety of experiences combining the real and virtual worlds, encouraging all visitors to explore life and update their idea of life.

Through the project, all visitors can reflect on and update their concept of “all things” through a variety of experiences that are both real and virtual. The eight producers will work on eight themes, which include “Resonance of Lives,” “Amplification of Lives,” “Invigorating Lives,” “Forgiving Lives,” “Quest of Life,” “Totality of Life,” “Cycle of Lives,” and “Embracing Lives”.

These kinds of unique exhibitions are only available at the EXPO2025! Make plans to go to the Expo now! The super early bird ticket is now on sale - the price is 6,000 yen, which is not only cheaper than the regular price of 7,500 yen, but also offers three chances to win the lottery for admission to the popular pavilion, which is one more chance than other tickets.

[EXPO 2025](#)

Notes:

- The above details are correct as of the time of publication, and are subject to change.

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