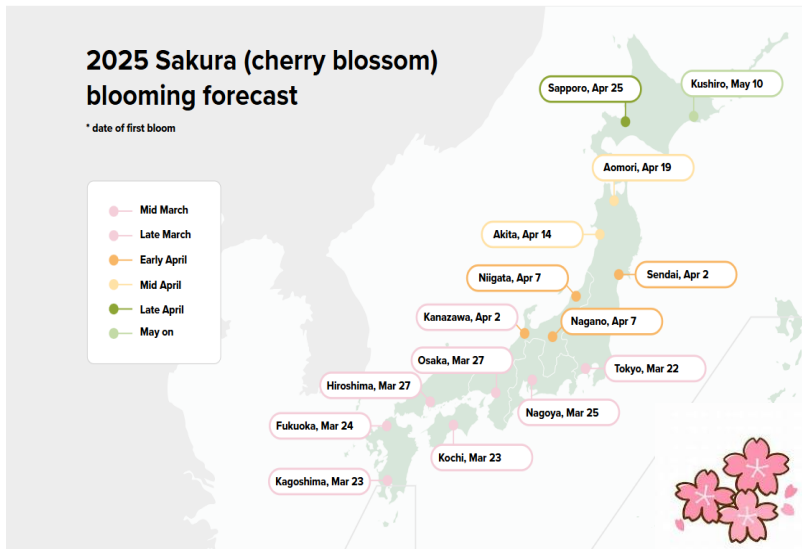


"cherry blossom front" (Sakura-zensen)



Source: Japan Weather Association (<http://tenki.jp>)
Note: The forecast is subject to change due to weather conditions.

Springtime in Japan is a tableau of dreamlike scenes. From the latter half of March to as late as early May, the blossoms of Japan's iconic sakura (cherry blossoms) captivate visitors and locals alike, as they light up the length and breadth of Japan in subtle shades of pink splendor

Sakura season begins on the island of Kyushu, southwestern Japan, in March, when daily updates begin to track the sakura front as it progresses northward.

Somei-Yoshino, with their abundance of pale pink blossoms, are the most common trees in Japan; the elegant shidarezakura, weeping cherry trees, often found in parks and along riverbanks, are another must-see site.



This newsletter is published by SGG, a volunteer group that helps foreigners living in and around Niihama. If you need any advice, information, or support, please contact SGG. SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions, or ideas for monthly articles.

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*The editors for this month are Kazuko Kumata & Taeko Oishi.

ONE POINT JAPANESE

「～たところで」の使い方
(How to use 'Even if')

A : 急ぎましょう。走れば 8時半の 電車に 乗れるかも。

Isogimashō. Hashireba hachiji han no densha ni noreru kamo.

(Let's hurry. If we run, we might catch the 8:30 train.)

B : 無理、無理。走った ところで 間に合いませんよ。

Muri, muri. Hashitta tokorode maniaimasen yo.

(No way! Even if we run, we won't make it.)



A : Cさんって、ヘビースモーカーですよ。

C-san tte, hebī sumōkā desu yo ne.

(C-san is a heavy smoker, right?)

B : 身体に 悪いから、たばこを 減らせば いいのに。

Karada ni waruikara, tabako o heraseba īnoni.

(It's bad for your health, so he should cut down on tobacco.)



B : わたしも 注意したんですが……。

Watashi mo chūi shitan desu ga...

(I cautioned him too, but..)

B : 他人が 言った ところで なかなか やめられませんよ。

Tanin ga itta tokorode nakanaka yameraremasen yo ne.

(Even if others say so, he can't quit so easily.)

A : 最近、Cさんと 話を して いないけど、どうか したんですか。

Saikin, C-san to hanashi o shiteinai kedo, dōka shitan desu ka?

(You haven't talked with C-san recently. What happened?)

B : 実は……、私が 失礼な ことを 言って しまったんです。

Jitsu wa... watashi ga shitsurē na koto o itte shimattan desu.

(Actually, I said something rude to her.)

B : これから 謝りに 行く つもりですが、

Korekara ayamari ni iku tsumori desu ga,

(I'm going to go to apologize to her now.)

B : 謝った ところで 許して もらえないかも しれません。

Ayamatta tokorode yurushite moraenai kamo shiremasen.

(Even if I apologize, she may not forgive me.)



< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

Feel free to contact us at:

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What's New?

Niihama City

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A New Kind of Time

Hana Darling-Wolf

“Fashionably late” is a saying used in North America to describe the common practice of arriving after the scheduled start of an event. As a Canadian living in Japan for the first time, one of the biggest adjustments I had to make was learning to be “fashionably on time.”

Although Canadians think it is important to arrive at work on time, social gatherings with friends are a different story. When joining a party, it is normal to show up between fifteen and thirty minutes after the start of the event. Showing up on time may even be considered rude: the host of the party may still be preparing. Arriving on time could make it difficult for them to finish cooking or cleaning. If you watch them prepare, they may even feel embarrassed. Even when meeting up to go out for dinner, people often show up five to fifteen minutes after the time that was agreed on.

Another reason people will show up late is to avoid awkward conversations. If you are joining a large party, arriving on time means you will probably have time alone with the host and whoever shows up first. If you are close friends with the host, this is okay — they will not mind if you watch while they are preparing, and you can chat comfortably. However, if you do not want to talk to the host for half an hour, and greet every person that comes in, you may want to enter the party when other guests have already arrived. Therefore, the less you know the person holding the party, the later you are likely to show up (and that is okay!).

When I came to Japan, I learned the hard way that the rules are not the same. One time, I was invited to a potluck with


members of my Japanese class. I arrived about ten minutes after the start of the event, thinking that people would still be arriving, organizing the food, and introducing themselves to each other. When I arrived, I was shocked to see that everyone had already been doing ice breaker activities for ten minutes! I quickly sat down and didn't have time to take off my coat before I was handed a paper and pencil and instructed to go around the room to note everyone's hobbies and countries of origin. The rules about timing that felt so natural to me were suddenly very wrong. It felt like a nightmare where you are in a room full of people but you forgot to put on pants. I was embarrassed — I had assumed that being “fashionably late” to social gatherings was common everywhere.

After this experience, I was more careful with my timing. When I was invited to get dinner with colleagues, I planned to arrive exactly at the time we agreed on. However, my tram was late, and so I sent a message to let my colleagues know. I arrived about one minute after the scheduled time. I didn't see anyone in front of the restaurant, and let out a sigh of relief: “Good, they must not be here yet!” But once again I was wrong. My colleagues were already inside waiting for me to start!

I spoke to my friend from Argentina about this. She said that in her home country, it is best to arrive not just fifteen minutes late, but at least half an hour after the meeting time. The time they eat dinner is also much later: it is normal for Argentinians to eat after 9 o'clock at night. In Canada, like Japan, we usually eat between 6 and 8 p.m.

I think these cultural differences are a fascinating example of how even time can change depending on the social rules you grew up with. What it means to be “on time,” why you should arrive at a certain time for an event, what a “good” time to eat is — these are all things we learn from our cultural environment. Learning to adapt to new rules takes time. It can be difficult to remember that what is natural to you might not be natural to others when you arrive in a new place. I often struggle to question my own ideas about how things should work, leading me to embarrassing situations. But I think there is also something really beautiful about learning to see the world in new ways, even time itself!

Hana started as an ALT in Kochi city in September 2024. Before coming to Japan, she was completing a master's in Computer Science and Education at the University of Toronto. She is looking forward to learning more about culture on Shikoku and making connections with people across the island. You can reach out to her at the following

email: hanadarlingwolf@outlook.com 



The Treasure of Sekigawa, Doi
(Ehime Shimbun: April 19, 2024)

I heard about some special cherry trees in Shikokuchuo-shi. I got to know the man growing them and finally went to see the cherry blossoms.

As soon as I got out of my car, I was welcomed by a subtle fragrance. Before even looking at them, I felt that it must be the exquisite cherry blossoms. The “Iyo-kumagai” were blooming with pretty single and double-petaled flowers.

It is said that local residents have taken care of the trees for more than 700 years over many generations. The trees were on the verge of extinction in the 2000s but to the residents' enthusiasm, the trees have recovered. I could tell how much the man loves the trees when I heard the name of his dog, “Sakura-hime (Princess Cherry Blossom).”

A cherry tree specialist said that they are vulnerable to insects and disease, and they cannot live without their guardians. It is a miracle that the trees could have survived so long with their original shape. They truly are the treasure of the area.

“May the area be filled with the fragrance of Iyo-kumagai cherry blossoms”, I entrusted my hopes to the young trees swaying in the spring breeze. (By Mitsuda)



How to Cope with Hay Fever
(Ehime Shimbun: February 17, 2025)

With the arrival of spring also comes pollen season. I would like to tell you some things you can do to prevent pollen from getting into your house and to keep your room comfortable.

First, be careful about what clothing you put on before going out. Clothes made of polyester fiber or nylon are good. Wool or fleece are not suitable as pollen will likely stick to them. Make it a habit to dust pollen off your clothes outside your front door before you go inside. You should brush it from top to bottom from your head, then shoulders, arms, body and finally your legs.

During the hay fever season, hang your clothes inside to dry. If you dry them outside, do so early in the morning. If you use a humidifier and keep the humidity in your room from 50% to 60%, pollen will absorb moisture and become heavier,

becoming unable to float around the room. You can get rid of pollen on the floor by wiping it with a damp cloth. By using an air purifier, you can remove pollen from your room very efficiently.







Takahashi Yuki from “How to live Comfortably in Japan”

April Events

- ☆ **Spring Concert**
Community Wind Orchestra
Date: April 20th (Sun) 2:00pm ~ 4:00pm
Venue: Niihama Cultural Center
(Admission ticket required)
TEL: 0897-65-1554
- ☆ **Sansan Market**
Date: April 27th (Sun) 9:00am ~ 12:00am
Venue: Noborimichi Arcade
A variety of local fresh vegetables, fruits, meat, fish, and processed foods on sale.



Online Information in English from Niihama City

- ☆ **A Guide for Living in Niihama** 
- ☆ **The Niihama Medical Institution Map** 
- ☆ **How to Sort Your Trash and Garbage** 
- ☆ **What's New? in English** 
- ☆ **Niihama Tourist Information**
<https://niihama.info/> 
- ☆ **Help with legal matters, discrimination, insurance, etc**
Japan Life Guide
(Nationwide service) multilingual 
- ☆ **Yoriso Helpline for foreigners**
[TEL:0120-279-338](tel:0120-279-338) 10:00 a.m.~10:00 p.m.
Multilingual Your privacy will be protected.