

# MINNIBARAKI

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## Our Forty-third Year

*Minneapolis Ibaraki Sister City Association*



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### 2024 Haiku Contest - Update

Submissions for this year's Haiku contest are now closed. This year's theme was "tomo (友)" which means "friend".

Unfortunately, due to issues with firewalls in the Minneapolis Public School system - not all teachers received notice of the contest, and students were having difficulty accessing the online form. Therefore, MISCA extended the deadline for submission of entries to January 31, 2024.

MISCA is now in the process of reading and judging the Haiku's submitted to determine which thirty in each category (K-5, 6-8, 9-12 and Adult), will be sent to Ibaraki City for final judging.

Ibaraki City will send MISCA a list of winners (first, second, third place, as well as five honorable mentions) by April 2024. MISCA will then notify the winners or their teachers.

This year's Haiku Award Ceremony will be held during our Cherry Tree Festival. The festival will occur on Sunday May, 12, 2024 from 2 - 4 p.m. The festival will take place on Nicollet Island.

See more about the festival in an article on page two.

Congratulations to all the students and adults who submitted entries!

**Friends of the  
Bell of Two Friends**

Diamond Friends

*Bill Deef  
Michael Rainville  
Karl Reinhard*

Platinum Friends

*Jack Sattel and Karen Sontag Sattel  
Mary Witkus & Werner Kohler*

Gold Friends

*Jessica Manivasager*

Silver Friends

*Richard & Marie-Rose Lundgren  
Dan Rolf*

Bronze Friends

*Carol Austermann  
Sharon Balke  
Carter Clapsadle & Julia Baugnet  
Richard Kathrine Fournier  
Mirja Hanson  
Cynthia & Brian Haskell  
Jim & Reiko Hoffman  
Brenda Langton & Tim Kane  
Helane Monsour  
Doug & Addona Rivord  
James & Norma Solstad  
Claire & Paul Spilseth  
Richard & Carol Stahl  
Vernon Wetternach*

**14<sup>th</sup> Annual Cherry Tree Festival**

MISCA invites you to join us for our fourteenth annual Cherry Tree Festival to be held on Nicollet Island on Sunday, May 12 from 2 - 4 p.m.

Nicollet Island is the location of thirty cherry trees donated by the Ibaraki City to the City of Minneapolis in honor of the thirtieth anniversary of the sister city relationship. The trees were planted over various years, so a few are larger than the others.

Most of the trees are located near another gift - the Bell of Two Friends (pictured on the first page). Hopefully some of them will be in bloom at the time of the festival.

Some activities planned for this year's festival include:

- Haiku Awards Ceremony
- Origami demonstrations and participation
- Japanese games
- Chopstick game

We are still hoping to line up some other activities as well.

Hope to see you there!



Photos from past festivals. L - R, Harisen Daiko performs, Chopstick Contest, Origami demonstration.

## Japanese Food, by IIN working group on cultures

### Food Waste

The latest survey, UNEP Report 2021, shows the ranking of food waste from households by country. China has the largest amount in the world, about 91.65 million tons per year. The U.S. and Japan are at about 19.36 million tons per year and 8.16 million tons per year, respectively.

Checking up on the survey of the amount of food waste from households per capita in each country, the waste in the three countries mentioned above is 59 kilograms (130 pounds) in the U.S. and 64 kilograms (141 pounds) in China and Japan. Japanese waste has been declining since 2000, but still not enough. To reduce food waste, not only advanced technologies for preservation, but also traditional Japanese values such as the "*mottainai*" spirit are important. To put it more simply, we have only to enjoy every last bite of our meals. The Japanese are a people who love food as follows.



### Close Relationship between Rice and the Japanese

Rice is more than just a food for the Japanese. It is a special existence that is deeply involved in daily life, such as various rituals and customs. The *Niiname* Festival is an important harvest ritual that is celebrated by Emperor.



**Spring festival:** Rice planting is the most important part of the growing-rice process. During the rice planting season, traditional events called *Otaue Shinji* are held in various places to pray for the growth of the rice and a bountiful harvest.

**Summer Festival:** At the *Kanto* Festival, the lantern pole is likened to rice stalk, and the row of lanterns are likened to rice ears. The strong carriers of the lanterns place them on their foreheads, waists, and shoulders to pray for a rich harvest.



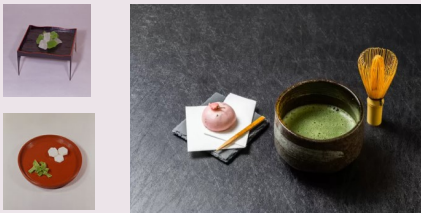
**Autumn Festival:** *Kaze no Bon* is a festival to pray for the rice plants to be safe from damage caused by typhoons and winds before the rice harvest.

**Sumo:** The *shiko* has a religious significance. It means to stomp down evil spirits of the earth, to awaken the earth in early spring and to promise a good harvest.





The roots of *Wagashi* date back two-thousand years ago



**Hanabira-mochi**

for the first tea ceremony of the New Year

**Why Japanese people like Hatsumono?**

*Hatsumono* is the first product that tells the season’s arrival. Bamboo shoots, rice, *matsutake*, pacific saury, crab, tuna, etc. are very popular *Hatsumono*. Every New Year’s Day, the first tuna auction is held at *Toyosu* market in *Tokyo*. This year, the highest price went to the 212kg tuna unloaded at *Oma*, *Aomori* Prefecture. Many people enjoyed the first tuna.

In *Edo* period, there was a proverb if we eat *Hatsumono*, we can live longer.

*Edo* people loved the first bonito very much.

First bonitos caught early in the morning were transported to *Edo* on the day for *Shogun*. People began to buy them to show their wealth and spirit. Japanese people enjoy *Hatsumono* to feel the season and wish for long lives.

**Event Meals**

The event meals mean the special dishes which we eat on the day of each seasonal event and celebration. Many of them include ingredients in season and are part of the seasonal traditions. Event meals are filled with the meaning of wishing for the happiness and health of the family, and there are also cases where regional differences appear, such as in the case of *Osechi-ryori*, New Year’s dishes.

The origin of event meals is the annual events of the four seasons. Besides, people tend to get sick easily during the turn of seasons and so the days have been set to provide nourishment and rest for the body.

**Wagashi: Japanese traditional sweets**

*Wagashi* is an aspect of traditional culture in Japan. *Wagashi* reflects festivity and four beautiful seasons in Japan. *Wagashi* is typically made of rice, wheat, red bean paste and sugar etc. It is usually served with green tea, which includes *Matcha* tea. We enjoy the combination of sweetness and bitterness.

The roots of *Wagashi* date back two thousand years ago. It evolved with the passage of time, becoming shaped by interaction on with China, the development of the Japanese tea ceremony and the arrival of Western confection.



## Popular Daily Menus

Japanese meals feature well-balanced diet and enjoyment of each of the four seasons. Traditional *Ichijyu Sansai* represents it.



**In spring**, bamboo-shoot rice is like a taste of the start of spring.



**In the hot summer**, chilled *somen* noodles, like a thinner *udon*, are often eaten to feel cool. *Unagi*, or eel, is good for relieving summer fatigue and building stamina.



**In fall**, chestnuts and Pacific saury are autumnal delicacies. The fish's name is spelled with three kanjis, 秋刀魚 (秋=fall, 刀=sword, 魚=fish).



**In winter**, hot pot dishes are frequently enjoyed. Various ingredients are boiled in a pot on a dining table. Eating together from one hot pot makes us warm and happy.

## Meals originally from overseas



There are some popular meals imported from overseas which have been developed uniquely in Japan to fit our tastes. Curry and rice and ramen have become worldwide favorites today.

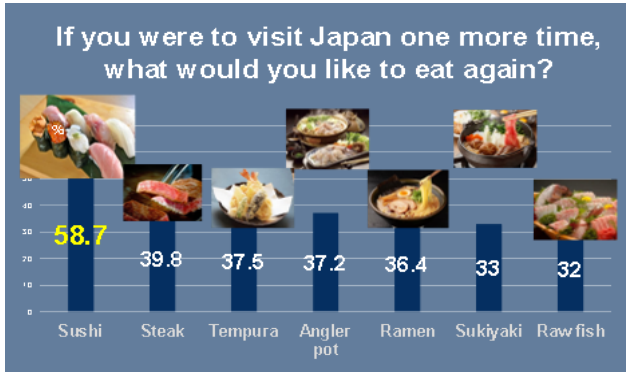
## Survey on Japanese Foods of Foreign Tourists

In 2013, the Registration of *Washoku* as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage brought about a *Washoku* boom overseas. Covid 19 was downgraded and the number of people visiting Japan is now increasing and they are open to trying Japanese food in Japan. The *Norinchukin* Bank surveyed this field, with 1200 visitors: the U.S., UK, France, China, and South Korea, in May 2023.

Q.1 Which tastes better, Japanese food served in your country or in Japan?

Answer is ...Almost 90% of respondents answered that food in Japan was tastier than in their countries.





Q.2 Did the Japanese food in your country differ from the Japanese food you ate in Japan?

A. Approximately 90% said it was different.

Q.3 What Japanese food did you eat while in Japan?

A. 1. *Sushi* (68.3%), 2. *Tempura* (47.2%), 3. *Steak/Yakiniku* (46.9%).

Q.4. What was the uniquely Japanese food you ate for the first time?

A. 1. *Matsutake* mushrooms (19.0%), 2. *Raw fish* (18.9%), 3. *Wasabi* (17.7%).

Q5. If you were to visit Japan one more time, what would you like to eat again?

A. 1. *Sushi* (58.7%), 2. *Steak/Yakiniku* (39.8%), 3. *Tempura* (37.5%).

This year marks the 10th anniversary of *Washoku* being registered as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.

We hope to preserve the local cuisine and traditional food culture of Japan that has developed over the centuries of change, and steadily pass them on to the next generation.

### 「日本の食べ物」(要約) IIN 国際交流分科会

1. 国連環境計画 (UNEP) レポート2021の「各国の一人当たりの家庭から出る食品廃棄物の量」において、日本は削減が必要。そのためには最後の一口まで食事を楽しもう。以下のように「食」を大切にしてきた日本人なのだから。
2. 日本人にとって米は単なる食べ物ではない。様々な儀式や風習など、日常生活に深く関わる特別な存在である。相撲の四股にも、大地の邪気を踏みつけ、早春の大地を目覚めさせ、豊作を約束する意味がある。
3. 行事食とは、季節の行事やお祝いの日に食べる特別な料理のこと。旬の食材を使ったものが多く、季節の風物詩である上に、家族の幸せや健康を願う意味も込められている。
4. 和菓子は日本の伝統文化のひとつで、日本のお祭りや美しい季節を反映している。そのルーツは2000年前にさかのぼる。中国との交流、茶道の発展、洋菓子の伝来など、時代の流れとともに和菓子は進化してきた。
5. 季節の訪れを告げる初物。タケノコ、米、マツタケ、サンマ、カニ、マグロなどが人気の初物だ。江戸時代、初物を食べると長生きできるという諺があった。日本人は季節を感じ、長寿を願い、初物を楽しんできた。
6. 日本の食事は、四季折々の旬を楽しみながら、バランスの取れている事が特徴。伝統的な一汁三菜はそれを象徴。海外からの料理(カレーライスやラーメン等)も、独自の工夫と味付けで、世界的な人気メニューになった。
7. 外国人観光客の和食に関するアンケート調査(農協中央金庫2023)

「和食」がユネスコ無形文化遺産に登録されて今年で 10 周年。

私たちは、何世紀にもわたる変化の中で育まれてきた日本の郷土料理と伝統的な食文化を守り、次の世代に

しっかりと伝えていきたいと願っている。

*The MINNIBARAKI newsletter is published quarterly (February, May, August and November) by the Minneapolis-Ibaraki Sister City Association.*

# MINNEAPOLIS IBARAKI SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION

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## MINNIBARAKI - Past Issues

Looking for some information from a past issue of MINNIBARAKI?

All past and current issues of MINNIBARAKI can be found at the following link (copy and paste into your browser):

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16FIWH9sgFta1MN8wHIQ1eCFand3iAON8?usp=sharing>

# MINNEAPOLIS- IBARAKI SISTER CITY ASSOCIATION



## Board Meetings:

Board meetings are usually held at 6:30 pm via Zoom

If you would like to participate, please email Karl Reinhard at:

[misca.info@gmail.com](mailto:misca.info@gmail.com)

## Upcoming Events

Cherry Tree Festival  
Sunday, May 12, 2024  
2 - 4 pm  
Nicollet Island

Please check out or Facebook page for additional information