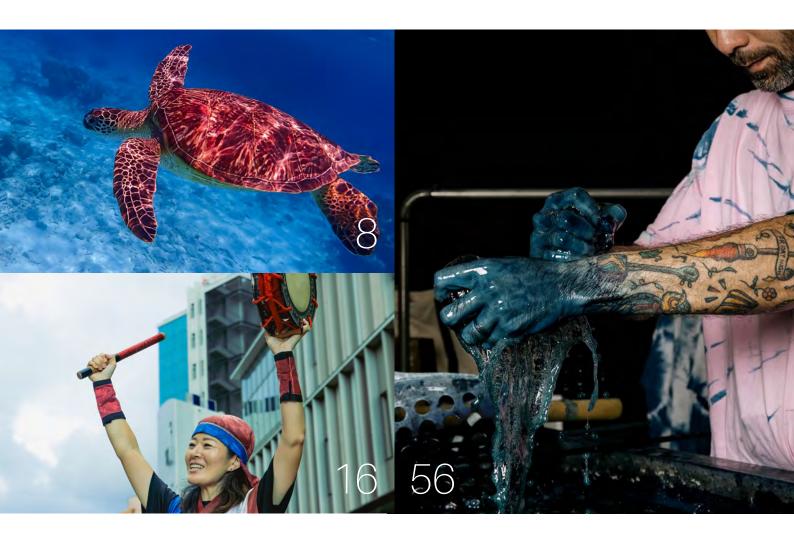






CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MIKE DALEY, MIA COX & DANIELLE BEDARD

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On the cover

Many versions of modern Okinawan arts and crafts still embody the heart and soul of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

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Summer on Okinawa means heat nearing the 90s, trips to enjoy the beach along with underwater adventures and maybe a habu snake or two. And for those living off base, many are drawn outside during the sultry summertime evenings by the joyous shouts and distant thunder of drums as local residents practice *eisa* dancing in preparation for the *Obon* holiday.

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Island Grindz

Okinawa, being an island paradise like Hawaii, has a lot in common with the 50th state. Fortunately for us, one of these shared traits is a love for delicious, filling and inexpensive meals—including the "plate lunch."



KEN ARASHIRO, M.D., PH.D. **AESTHETIC & PLASTIC SURGEON**

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fitness + fun

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Experience Seoul and the DMZ On Tours+ South Korea Tour

Just a two-hour plane ride away from Naha Airport lies an exquisite travel destination filled with intriguing food, intricate architecture and charming natural beauty surrounded by serene mountains and diverse landscapes.

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A Volunteer Management Workshop

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Building Resilience...

...and "Blooming Where You are Planted"

Military families are taught to be resilient and make the best of every situation—be it moving to a strange land, having a vacation cancelled at the last minute, or even having a parent deploy and being away for months at a time. Yet taking all these stressors in stride is not always the easiest thing to do, and that is why resilience is so important.

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Father's Day Brunches Happy Dad Day!

What can you do for the dude who always shows up for you? Our recommendation—feed him! Whether a gamer, an adventurer, a book worm or just a laidback kind of guy, the dad in your life will surely find joy in one of the many feasts MCCS Clubs are offering up for Father's Day on Sunday, June 15.

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Fuel Your Body, Nourish Your Soul LifeJuice Café Smoothies & Healthy Bites

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mensôre

"Welcome" to Okinawa Living

Okinawan Memorial Day

Eighty years ago on June 23, 1945, the war on Okinawa came to an end. To say that the Battle of Okinawa, which began on April 1-Easter Sunday that year—claimed a great number of lives would be a gross understatement. It is estimated that 28,000+ Okinawan soldiers and affiliated personnel, 65,000+ mainland Japanese soldiers and 94,000 civilians (according to the Okinawa Prefectural Government National Health Insurance and Relief Division) as well as 12,281 American service members (according to war history published by the U.S. Government) lost their lives in what was some of the bloodiest combat in the Pacific during WWII. Many citizens from neigh-



boring nations such as Taiwan and Korea also made the ultimate sacrifice. Astonishingly, these numbers continue to grow to this day, as previously unidentified remains are identified, and new remains are unearthed during construction.

Every year, on June 23, Okinawans observe *Irei-no-Hi*, or Memorial Day. A public holiday for the prefecture, this day is set aside to honor and remember all who died during the Battle of Okinawa as well as in other areas of the Pacific—regardless of which side they fought on. Thousands gather at memorial services each year at various war sites throughout the island such as Peace Memorial Park in Chinen Village—one of the most visited venues during Okinawa's Memorial Day.

Regardless of location, many Okinawans will also observe a moment of silence at noon on Irei-no-Hi to pay their respect to those that gave or lost their lives during the Battle of Okinawa. IoL

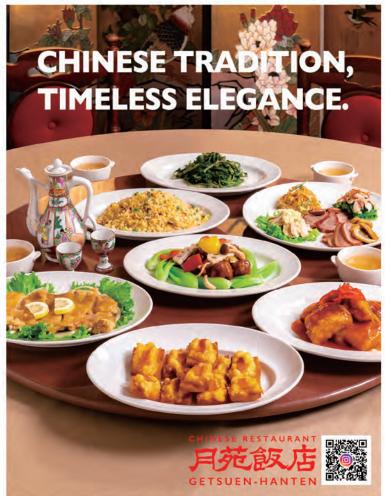




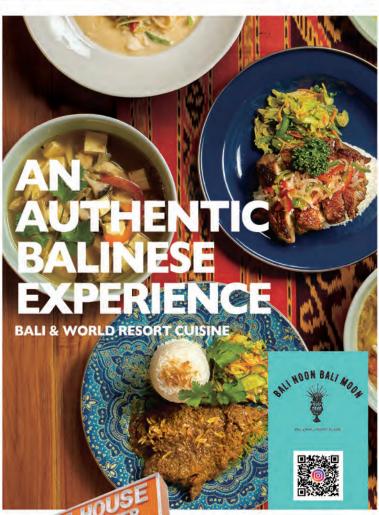
Take us on the road

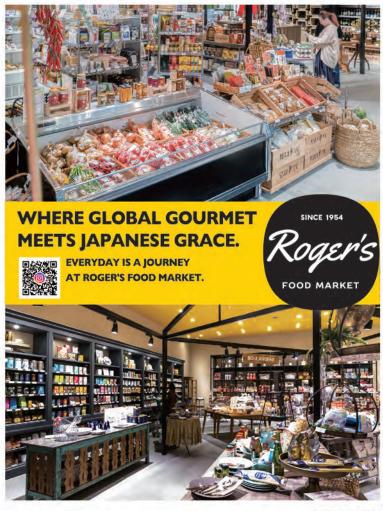
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PLAZA HOUSE SHOPPING CENTER



feedback from the ICE Program and Facebook

A big thank you to Foster Bulldog Burgers for catering our youth center event! From start to finish, the staff was incredibly helpful and responsive. Brandon [Stovall] personally called to confirm the order and was very considerate of our kids' allergies and preferences, which we truly appreciated. The food was packaged neatly and in a way that made it easy for our team to serve the youth. Their cooperation made a big difference in both our kids' experience and our staff's workload. Thank you for helping make the day a success!

-via ICE

The team at Hansen Typhoon Motors is amazing. I came in asking for assistance for what I thought was going to be a major issue. They asked a few questions, gave an immediate diagnostic and even had the part needed for repairs in stock. The staff assisted me in every way possible—excellent service all around. This program and the staff are remarkable. Please pass along a "thank you" to all at the facility for supporting all of us in MCB Butler in so many ways.

-via ICE

We went to the underwater egg hunt
[Eggstravaganza on April 19] at the Hansen
Aquatic Center and was so pleased and
impressed with the way the event was executed!
Candace [Porter], Olivia [Burdick] and Ashley
[Waldon] were so kind and patient and ran the
event so smoothly. So fun, thank you MCCS.
—via ICF

I want to take a moment to recognize the outstanding job being done at the Camp Kinser Gym. The facility is consistently clean, wellorganized and fully operational—even during peak hours. Equipment is well-maintained, and the overall environment is welcoming and motivating. Special thanks to Mike [Boughton] for his visible leadership and commitment to excellence. His professionalism and hands-on approach clearly reflect in how smoothly the gym operates. Mike and his team create a positive atmosphere that supports both fitness goals and overall morale. Keep up the excellent work!

-via ICE

Matt [Manning] and Justin [Gable] at the Transition Readiness Program office on Camp Foster are awesome, providing great ideas and even stressing the importance of VA claims in the best interest of Marines who are close to their end of service.

-via ICE

Give MCCS Feedback—ICE Program & Facebook

Let us know how we can better serve you or thank us for a job well-done. Go to www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org and find the ICE link in the "MORE" section of the homepage or find us on Facebook to share feedback. Comments on this page may be edited for clarity or length.

@okilivingmag

Show us your island adventures and favorite food finds!







@depth_of_rfield Sunset from Sunabe





Domo arigatou gozaimashita and thank you for your posts!
We can't wait to see what else you love about Okinawa!
—The Okinawa Living Staff



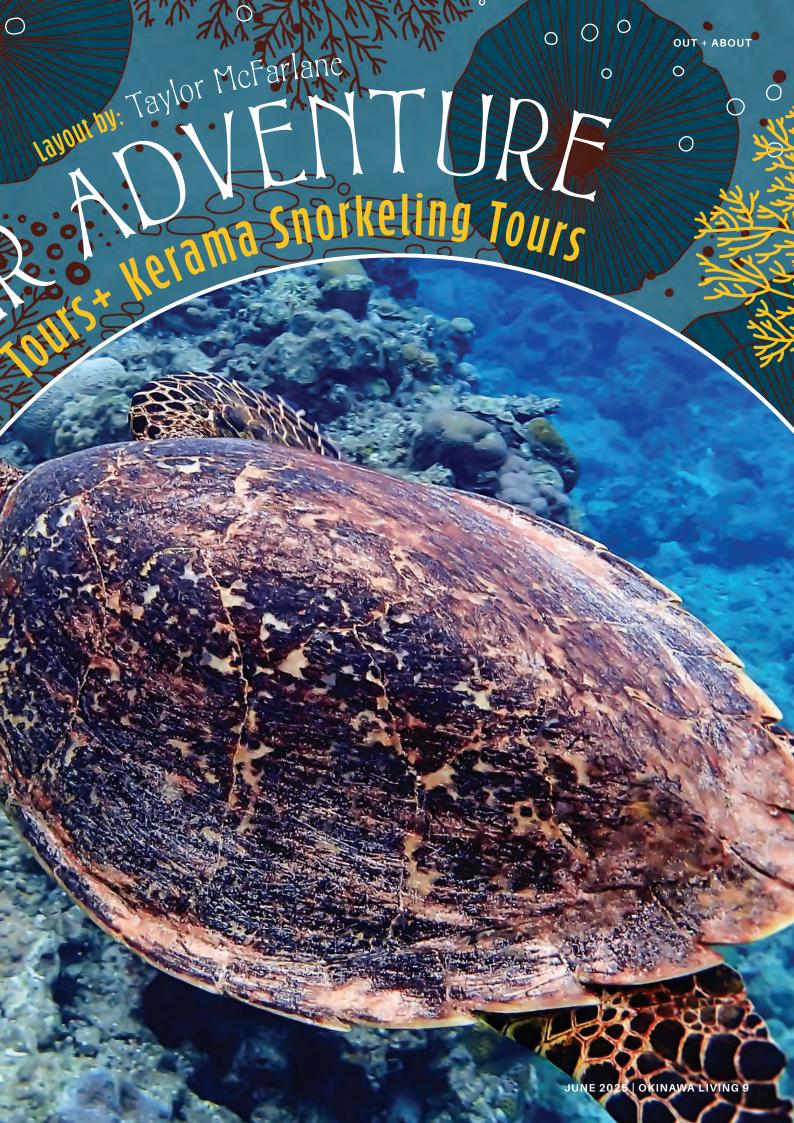






















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\$24.95 · Ages 13 & over

\$12.95 · Ages 5-12

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9-11:30 a.m.

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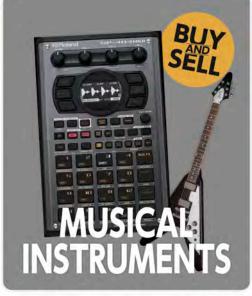
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ANNEX OPEN 9 A.M. - 9 P.M. [Open all year round]



2689-1 Gusukuma, Urasoe City, Okinawa Pref. OPEN 9 A.M. - midnight [Open all year round]





3-13-1 Yogi, Okinawa City, Okinawa Pref. OPEN 9 A.M. - midnight [Open all year round]

2024.2 OPEN! MANGA SOUKO NAGO

479-5 Biimata, Nago City, Okinawa Pref. OPEN 9 A.M. - 10 P.M [Open all year round]











At first glance, many of the locals here may seem a bit indifferent to many forms of organized religion. However, many doctrines, including Shintoism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity and the practice of revering and venerating one's ancestors, have played a part in the lives of the Okinawan people throughout the long history of the Ryukyu Islands.

It is said that the practice of ancestor worship was brought to Okinawa from China in the 14th century along with Buddhism. And while in the beginning it was only practiced by royalty, the belief soon spread throughout the populace. The veneration of the deceased by their living kin also exists in about 60 percent of the world's cultures.

On Okinawa, Buddhist altars called *butsudan* are displayed prominently inside many homes. These altars are passed down from generation to generation—with the responsibility for their upkeep usually falling on the first-born son and sometimes on the husband of the first-born daughter. Although the butsudan is primarily a Buddhist tradition, it also plays a large part in Okinawan ancestor worship and the holiday called Obon.

Inside the butsudan, small polished wooden plaques called $t\bar{o}t\bar{o}me$ can be found sitting on the butsudan's step-like shelves. These plaques are adorned with the names of the family ancestors and during Obon, living family members (including all immediate relatives) congregate at the home housing the butsudan to "catch up" with their deceased ancestors—eating, drinking and dancing with them once a year. They also usually "speak" with them, offer them their favorite foods and gifts, burn incense (a Taoist practice believed to summon spirits) and generally hold a sort of family reunion. Similar practices are followed at the family grave during Seimeisai (also known by Okinawans as $Sh\bar{\imath}m\bar{\imath}$), which is another time set aside during the year to honor deceased relatives.









\$450 per team

Format will be single round robin followed by a double-elimination tournament. Team and individual trophies will be given to first, second and third place winners in both male and female divisions. All-tournament players, skills competition winners, male and female MVPs and all-tournament coaches will also receive awards.

Register via Eventbrite by 11:30 p.m. on June 29.









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Northern Okinawa Discovery Tour

Journey through Time, History and Flavors

Although small in size, Okinawa has a lot to offer—whether it's visiting different ancient sites of the Ryukyu Kingdom, relaxing at one of the many beachside hotels or trekking up mountains in the northern region. Speaking of the northern region, have you taken the time to get to know the largest city up north, Nago? Known for its rich history, beautiful scenery and bursts of pink *sakura* (cherry blossoms) throughout the winter months, exploring Nago is a must while on Okinawa.

Let MCCS make your next excursion on island easier by joining Tours+ for the Northern Okinawa Discovery Tour on June 22 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.! Experience major attractions without worrying about driving, parking and planning as the tour will take partici-

pants to three major attractions. The day will be filled with adventures ranging from exploring the culture and history of the Ryukyu archipelago at the Nago Museum to engaging the tastebuds at Nago Agri Park, which features local produce and treats that showcase the rich natural bounty of Yanbaru. Tour participants will also visit Tsukayama Brewery to taste their unique *awamori*, which is a clear, distilled rice spirit.

What are you waiting for? Enjoy a journey through time and savor the unique flavors of Okinawa on this fulfilling and jam-packed tour. To sign up, call 646-3502, email tours@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/tours or stop by a Tours+ office! Cancellations are accepted three days prior to the tour date. Io.



Experience Seoul and the DMZ

On the Tours+ South Korea Tour

Just a two-hour plane ride away from Naha Airport lies an exquisite travel destination filled with intriguing food, intricate architecture and charming natural beauty surrounded by serene mountains and diverse landscapes. South Korea, known for its global hits from popular K-pop groups such as BTS and BLACKPINK, advanced technology and towering skyscrapers, offers a unique travel experience.

Although a modern country, the outcome of the Korean War still divides North and South Korea to this day with the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), a 4-kilometer-wide buffer zone that runs 250 kilometers across the Korean Peninsula separating the two countries. Interested in visiting South

Korea and learning about the DMZ?

Join MCCS Tours+ for the South Korea Tour on September 18–22 as they venture into the capital city of Seoul and all that it has to offer including culture, food and heritage. After the city tour, participants will head on up to the DMZ for an insightful and educational visit to learn more about the country's past and present. This combined tour provides an efficient, historical and powerful experience showcasing both South Korea's modern capital and the peninsula's poignant past.

To sign up for this tour, call 646-3502, email tours@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/tours or stop by a Tours+ office to schedule your next exciting adventure! IoL





lerrace seating available

OPEN DAILY 11:30~15:00 (L.O. 14:30) 17:00~23:00 (L.O. 22:00)



Namaste By the Sea

International Day of Yoga

Yoga is a physical, mental and spiritual practice that can be traced back 5,000 years to ancient India. In recent years, it has grown increasingly in popularity, and it is now practiced around the world in various forms thanks to its numerous physical and mental benefits.

In 2014, the United Nations declared June 21—summer solstice and the longest day of the year—as International Day of Yoga, following the suggestion of Narendra Modi, India's prime minister.

Stretch into the sunrise, breathe in the sea breeze and celebrate the International Day of Yoga with a rejuvenating beach yoga session on Saturday, June 21 from 6:15 to 7:15 a.m. at the Camp Courtney Beach. Participants must bring their own yoga mat or towel. Namaste By the Sea is a FREE event and open to all with base access 18 years of age or older. Spots are limited! Register via Eventbrite. For more information, contact MCCS Health Promotion at 645-3910 or visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/healthpromotion.lol



Batter Up!

Firecracker Softball Classic

It's almost time for the softball tournament of all tournaments—the 2025 Firecracker Classic! Now celebrating its 30th birthday, the Firecracker has attracted the best of the best from throughout the Pacific theater for over a quarter of a century, giving the winner some serious bragging rights!

Whether you are a fan or a player, this is an action-packed Fourth of July weekend event that cannot be missed. Semper Fit will be hosting the tournament at the Camp Foster softball fields from July 3 through July 8. The toughest teams in the Pacific will once again gather on the island to test their skills and endurance at this non-stop, seven-day event to prove who will reign supreme on the diamond.

This tournament will be a single round robin, followed by a double elimination. Team and individual awards will be given to the top three teams in both male and female divisions. All-tournament players and coaches, skills-competition winners as well as male and female MVPs will also receive awards.

Teams interested in taking part in the biggest softball competition around must register by June 29 via Eventbrite for \$450 per team. So, oil up your glove, grab your Big League Chew and get ready for your chance at softball glory. This year's Firecracker Softball Classic is sponsored in part by BSN Sports. For more details and any questions you may have, call 645-3521 or visit www. okinawa.usmc-mccs.org /adultsports.lol

Tsunami Scuba July Sales

Shop and Save!

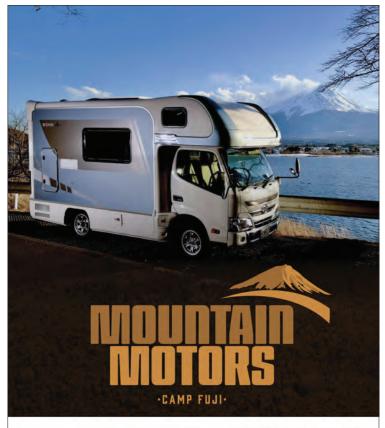
With sweltering temperatures, there's nothing quite like being in the ocean to cool off. Been eyeing some new and updated gear for your underwater diving expeditions, but haven't found the right time to splurge? Well, July is your lucky month! Head on down to any Tsunami Scuba around the island and save 10% OFF your purchase (excluding DPV, dive boots and educational materials/tuition) during their Fourth of July weekend sale from July 4 to 6!

And, throughout this entire month, all Tsunami Scuba locations will be offering PADI Club specials! Purchase PADI Club or a PADI Club bundle and receive one FREE scuba kit rental, which includes a BCD, regulator, dive computer and two air cylinders (scuba kit rental must be redeemed during the month of July).

For more information on Tsunami Scuba, including specific locations, hours of operation, offerings and more, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/tsunamiscuba, call 645-4206 or email mccstsunamifoster@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org. IoL







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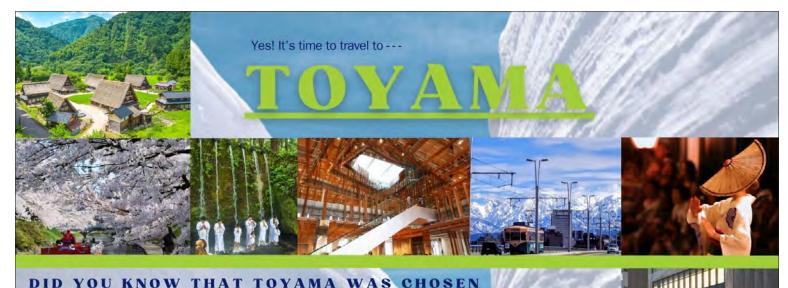
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AS ONE OF THE PLACES WORTH VISITING IN THE "NEW YORK TIMES" 52 PLACES TO GO IN 2025?

Toyama is about two hours from Tokyo Station by bullet train or an hour flight from Haneda Airport. Surrounded by a 3,000m-high mountain range that is clearly visible from Toyama City in good weather, Toyama offers many mountain activities such as skiing, snowboarding, trekking and hiking. It's the perfect place to get in touch with beautiful nature.

The Gokayama area, with its nostalgic Japanese architecture, has been recognized as a World Heritage Site, and Zuiryu-ji and Shoko-ji temples have been designated as Japanese National Treasures. Many retro townscapes remain, creating an atmosphere similar to a smaller version of Kyoto, where you can travel back in time and relive Japanese history.

Also famed as a rice-producing area, Toyama is renowned for its Japanese sake. And as it's surrounded by both the sea and mountains, Toyama is also blessed with an abundance of seafood, which is said to be some of the best in Japan—especially its fresh and delicious sushi. With so many activities, traditional Japanese charm and delicious cuisine, you will never get tired of Toyama!

Military Discount Available

Checkthe Military Rates

For more details







Move your body at...

...Summer Bash Aerobathon

Get ready to kickstart your summer fitness goals with MCCS Health Promotion at their Summer Bash Aerobathon! Whether you're looking to punch it out, dance your heart out or stretch into serenity, there will be something for everyone.

Join us for a fitness party on Saturday, June 14 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Camp Foster Community Center. This high-energy event will feature back-to-back sessions of kickboxing (9 a.m.), Zumba (10 a.m.) and yoga (11 a.m.), catering to all fitness levels.

This event is open to all with base access 18 years of age or older. Individuals 12-17 may attend with a parent/legal guardian present with Youth Gym Authorization. No registration is required. We encourage and support the participation of individuals of all abilities. For more information on the Summer Bash Aerobathon, or to request assistance with accommodations, contact MCCS Health Promotion at 645-3910 or mccshealthpromotions@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org. 10L





Run, Swim, Run

Triple the Fun!

This month, Semper Fit will be hosting three Aquathlon events, with two races each day at the McTureous Aquatic Center. Whether you're a seasoned competitor or a first-time racer, these non-competitive run-swim-run training events promise to test your endurance.

On the days of the events, warm-ups will begin at 4:30 p.m. and sign-ups will close at 5 p.m. The first race will begin at 5:10 p.m. and will feature a 390-meter run, a 100-meter swim and another 390-meter run. The second race will

begin at around 5:40 p.m. and will feature a four-lap run (1.05km), a 200-meter swim and another four-lap run. Participants are welcome to sign up for one or both races.

Aquathlons will be held June 11, June 18 and June 25 on Camp McTureous, and registration is not required. These events are open to all with base access. For more information on this and other MCCS Aquatics offerings call 645-3180, email mccsaquatics@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org or visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/aquatics. 101

Camp Kinser Open Flag Football Tournament

Snatch Flags and Spin Like Saquon!

Get ready to showcase your flag-grabbing skills because the Camp Kinser Open Flag Football Tournament is rumbling over the horizon like a pack of linebackers! Dust off your playbook and get ready to draft your top players who will bring their speed, agility and A-game. The tournament kicks off on Saturday and Sunday, June 28 and 29, at the Camp Kinser athletic field.

Each tournament game will consist of two 20-minute halves, with a maximum of eight players allowed on the field. Teams can bring up to 20 players, plus a coach who will not be playing on the field. The games will be played fairly; every team is mandated to wear shorts without pockets, keep their shirts tucked in at all times and metal cleats are prohibited. Teams must arrive 30 minutes before the

scheduled start of their game to check in and warm up. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place teams will be given awards, so sharpen those spin moves and prepare to twirl like Saquon Barkley evading that pack of linebackers!

This tournament is open to teams island wide, and players must be 16 years or older to participate. For those interested, register before June 23 at 1 p.m. via Eventbrite for \$175. For more information, head to www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/adultsports or follow MCCS Semper Fit Facebook for updates and events. For additional questions, please email adultsports@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org or call 637-1869.

Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to show off your talent and compete against the best flag football players on Okinawa! IOL

JUNE IS...

DEPLOYMENT READINESS & RESILIENCY MONTH

Deployments can be challenging and stressful for the whole family. However, they can also be opportunities for growth and fostering resiliency.

Contact MCCS Health Promotion for resources to help you and your family during the next deployment or separation.

MC CS SEMPER FIT 645-3910 | facebook.com/mccsokinawa.semperfit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/healthpromotion



We encourage and support the participation of individuals of all abilities. Please contact us if reasonable accommodations are necessary. Call 645-3910/098-970-3910 or email mccshealthpromotions@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org.

AQUATHLON (Run-Swim-Run) SERIES 2025 Camp McTureous June 11, 18 & 25 | 4:30-6:30 p-mi





Practical Tools for Military Life

Basic Stress Management

Military life presents unique challenges that can negatively contribute to stress. With service members often facing demanding physical and mental conditions due to deployments and TDY's, time away from loved ones and the pressure of high-stakes responsibilities. While military spouses face stress due to frequent relocations, extended separations, solo parenting, career disruptions and the uncertainty that comes with the lifestyle. The unpredictability of military life can lead to chronic stress, affecting both personal well-being and professional performance. Additionally, the periods of transition—such as deployment, reintegration or separation from service—can further add to the strain.

Recognizing and managing stress is essential for maintaining resilience, readiness and overall mental health. Marine Corps Family Team Building (MCFTB) will be hosting an exclusive event on Tuesday, June 17 at the Camp Schwab Education Center. The team will share practical strategies for managing stress and achieving a healthier work-life balance. Participants will learn helpful techniques for prioritizing tasks, setting boundaries and incorporating mindfulness into daily routines as well as valuable insights that will improve both personal well-being and professional productivity.

Access to support systems, training and coping tools is crucial to help service members navigate the complexities of military life. So don't miss out on this opportunity to learn how to create a more balanced and fulfilling lifestyle! Registration via Eventbrite is required. For any questions on Basic Stress Management workshop or to request special accommodations, contact MCFTB at 645-3689 or MCFTBOkinawa@okinawa.usmc-mccs. org. For more information on other MCFTB courses and seminars, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/mcftb.lol



Volunteer Ready

A Volunteer Management Workshop

Looking for a powerful way to give back to the community and make a positive impact on the lives of others? Try volunteering! The act of volunteering fosters empathy, strengthens social bonds and helps build stronger, more resilient communities. Volunteers contribute their time, skills and energy to causes they care about while simultaneously gaining valuable experience, personal growth, professional skills, broadened networks and a sense of purpose. MCCS can connect you with all sorts of meaningful volunteering opportunities to strengthen our community.

Already a volunteer? If you're interested in taking the next step... why not learn how to manage other volunteers within an organization? Join our Volunteer Management workshop and develop key skills necessary to effectively manage volunteer services, including best practices for recruiting, retaining and recognizing volunteers. The course will also highlight techniques for encouraging the professional development of volunteers and ensuring they feel valued in their roles.

Whether you are an experienced volunteer coordinator or new to the role, this workshop will provide the tools needed to strengthen your volunteer programs and make the most of the talent available in your community. Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of how to create an engaging and rewarding volunteer experience for both the individuals and the organization.

For more information, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/volunteer and for scheduling requests contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteernow@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org.lo.



YOUR NEXT JAPAN STORY BEGINS HERE

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- Service Station Food, Snacks, and Drinks
- · Airport transportation:
 - Haneda Airport: \$90
 - Narita Airport: \$120
 - Guests must request transportation at least 5 business days in advance, and availability is limited.





Contact us: DSN: (315) 224-8500 www.campfuji.usmc-mccs.org/lodging

Targeting Careers & Education

Mil-Spouse Event

Camp Foster | Gunners Fitness Center 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

JUNE 25 JUNE 24 Camp Kinser | Kinser Fitness Center 11:30 a.m.—1 p.m.

JUNE 26

Camp Courtney | Ironworks Fitness Center 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.



We encourage and support the participation of individuals of all abilities. Please contact 645-7160 if accommodations are required.

MARINE & Family



Building Resilience...

...and "Blooming Where You are Planted"

There's a saying in the military community: "Bloom where you are planted." Military families are taught to be resilient and make the best of every situation—be it moving to a strange land, having a vacation cancelled at the last minute, or even having a parent deploy and being away for months at a time. Yet taking all these stressors in stride is not always the easiest thing to do, and that is why resilience is so important.

Resiliency is the ability to withstand, recover and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands. While it's easy to just call military families resilient, it's also important to acknowledge that resilience is a learned skillset that must be nurtured. June is Deployment Readiness and Resiliency Month, and to help you develop the skills you need, the MCCS Health Promotion team will be pushing out information via their Facebook page and at all

staffed Semper Fit facilities. You can also find information on their website at www.okinawa. usmc-mccs.org/healthpromotion.

Families looking for more ways to help build resiliency might consider checking out some of the classes offered by Marine Corps Family Team Building. Their training programs focus on topics and concerns related to overall family functioning, relocation, deployment, military separation, life skills and establishing appropriate connections within the military and civilian community. The Readiness and Deployment class prepares families for deployment, while FOCUS is a course for families with children and couples facing adversity and traumatic stress. For more information, check out www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/mcftb.lol

Learn Nihongo!

Japanese on the Go

Is this your first time on Okinawa? You may be a bit unsure (and possibly apprehensive) about what's in store outside the gates. Maybe this is your second or third time on Okinawa and you want to learn more about the Okinawan and Japanese cultures. Whether you're an island-neophyte or weathered veteran, it is important to educate yourself about Okinawa and Japan to better understand the local etiquette, culture and traditions to be better ambassadors and guests on this tropical paradise. And, there's no better place to start than learning how to speak to our hosts in their own language!

Well you're in luck; the Camp Hansen Library will be offering Japanese on the Go! This FREE offering will provide opportunities to

learn basic Japanese words and phrases as well as an introduction to Mango Languages—a FREE app that will not only help you along on your journey to Japanese proficiency, but also open doors to learning other languages! While you are in the library, take advantage of their vast resources and tools to educate and entertain yourself!

Japanese on the Go is offered every Monday at 5 p.m. at the Hansen Library—registration isn't necessary so all you have to do is show up! For more information on Japanese on the Go, and other Hansen Library offerings, contact your friendly neighborhood librarian. Visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/libraries for hours, location and contact information. Iol

Family Member Employment Assistance Program

Enrich Your Post-Military Life

Are you a spouse with an active-duty service member looking to separate from the military in 36 months? Then join the Family Member Employment Assistance Program at Camp Foster (Bldg. 445) as they present the Spouse Transition and Readiness Seminar to provide relevant resources for spouses in post-military life. This course is recommended for spouses at any point in their service members' career looking to understand the benefits they are eventually eligible for and assist in decision-making.

At the seminar, learn about employment opportunities, education benefits and opportunities, self-care and resilience, as well as a brief from representatives of the Veterans Affairs office educating spouses on benefits and the importance of strategic decision-making in the time leading up to transitioning out of the military community. Register via Eventbrite or email <code>mcbb_fmeap@usmc.mil</code>. For more information including dates and times, visit <code>www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/fmeap</code> or call 645-5074 / 098-970-5074.



JUNE 2025 | OKINAWA LIVING 35

Kids the MONE

Energized & Ready to Exercise!

June 24 Camp Foster

June 26 Camp Courtney

8:30-10:30 a.m. | Ages 8-12







Register for FREE via Eventbrite by scanning the QR. Limited to 30 children per session.

We encourage and support the participation of individuals of all abilities. Please call MCCS Health Promotion 645-3910 or email merchantly promotion seeking way us memory or a fix you need any assistance or require an accommodation.

645-3910 | 098-970-3910 www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/healthpromotion



2025 SUMMER LEAGUE SING CAMP

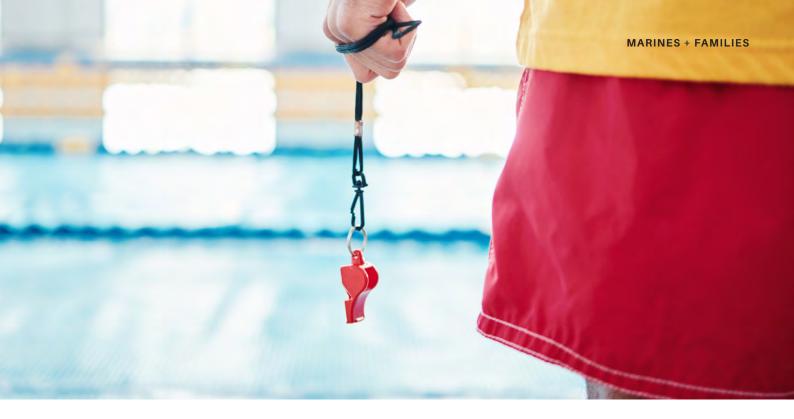
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Register by June 7 for \$75

MC CS SEMPER FIT



Become a Lifeguard

Have Fun, Stay in Shape and Maybe Even Save a Life!

Ensuring the safety of others is a noble job, but if you're looking to become a lifeguard, you'll need some certifications first—all of which MCCS Aquatics is offering in monthly courses at the MCAS Futenma Aquatic Center.

The Lifeguarding Full Course will teach SOFA-status participants older than 15 the skills to handle aquatic emergencies as well as how to provide care for breathing and cardiac-related emergencies while waiting for medical services to arrive.

Upon completion of the course, participants will receive American Red Cross certificates—valid for two years—for Lifeguarding, First Aid, CPR, AED and Administering Emergency Oxygen. Moreover, participants will receive a Bloodborne Pathogens Training certification, which is valid for one year.

While successful completion of the course does not guarantee a job with MCCS, those who complete the course may apply for a

lifeguarding position online at www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/jobs.

The first day of the course takes place at the pool and will include a skills evaluation in which participants must swim 150m continuously and tread water for two minutes using only their legs. Once this is completed, participants must swim another 50m and complete a timed 10-pound object retrieval.

The upcoming session will run July 8–11 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the MCAS Futenma Aquatic Center with classwork taking place at the Aquatics Classroom in Bldg. 5677 on Camp Foster. Please bring a swimsuit and a towel for every session, including the skills evaluation. To register, head to www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/lifeguard and sign up by June 23 (11:30 p.m.).

For more information, including any questions, email *mccsaquatics@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org* or call 645-3180. Follow *facebook.com/mccsokinawa.aquatics* for up-to-date information. **Io.**

Dive-In Movies...

...at Hansen and McTureous Aquatic Centers

Summer on Okinawa is filled with humid days, beach outings and spending time with the family. After all, trying to stay cool in the intense heat of summer can be tricky when spending time with members of your household—A/C on full blast and all. But there's nothing that quite spells out family time like movie night—the gathering of beloved family members with one getting the optimal seat for perfect viewing. Claiming the best spot in the house can quickly become a screaming battle so why not take the whole family out to watch flicks in the pool?

Yes, that's right, everyone can have the best seats at Dive-In Movies! Bring the whole family to the Hansen Aquatic Center on

on June 20 and McTureous Aquatic Center on June 27 to float under the stars and watch your favorite family-friendly films. Movies will begin playing at 7:30 p.m. with FREE popcorn and beverages provided (while supplies last). All ages are welcome to chill poolside and have a good time. Make core memories this summer to include floating while watching a flick, one that you'd want to share after experiencing this unique occasion!

For more information about this event, call 623-4708. For more on other MCCS Aquatics offerings, as well as Aquatic Center locations, hours of operation and more, call 645-3180, email mccsaquatics@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org, or visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/aquatics.lol







Father's Day Brunches

Happy Dad Day!

Father's Day is our opportunity to celebrate the men in our lives who show up for us. Be they bio, step, adoptive or grand, dedicated dads deserve to be recognized. But what can you do for the dude in your life who does so much? Our recommendation—feed him! Whether a gamer, an adventurer, a bookworm or just a laid-back kind of guy, the dad in your life will surely find joy in one of the many feasts MCCS Clubs are offering up for Father's Day on Sunday, June 15.

For a brunch buffet that will satisfy the hungriest of dads, families can visit the Butler Officers' Club on Plaza Housing from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Tengan Castle on Camp Courtney from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. or Surfside on Camp Kinser from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

All buffets require reservations via Eventbrite and are \$21.95 for adults, \$10.95 for children (5-11) and FREE for children under 5.

For dads looking for an à la carte menu, Taiyo Steakhouse at Taiyo Golf Club will be open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. To up the ante on the experience, brunch can be enjoyed on the beautiful balcony (weather permitting). Reservations for Taiyo are highly recommended and can be made by calling 622-2020 or 098-954-2020. For more information on Father's Day brunch offerings at MCCS Clubs and Restaurants, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/clubs.

Those of us at MCCS would like to wish a Happy Father's Day to all the men who show up for the children in our community, every day and in every way. **IOL**







MIA CO

Fuel Your Body, Nourish Your Soul

LifeJuice Café Smoothies & Healthy Bites

Looking for a pre/post-workout smoothie, a mid-afternoon boost or a healthy pre-packaged meal? Look no further than LifeJuice Café locations at your closest MCCS Fitness Center.

Pick a yogurt smoothie from their set menu, with your choice of low fat, almond or soy milk for \$4.50. Can't decide between the 13 options? Why not build your own for \$4! Choose between one fruit and protein or double fruit...with selections including banana, blueberries, strawberries, pineapple, peaches, mango, raspberries and green grapes. You can also power up your smoothie with branched-chain amino acid (BCAA) powder or more whey protein for just \$1, making it a perfect post-workout treat.

Don't miss out on trying the newest LifeJuice limited time offer, the Green Smoothies, before they're gone! Choose between Avocado or Spinach Avocado, made with banana, pineapple and sweetened with honey.

The Boost Juice menu includes cucumber, apple, orange, carrots and pineapple options that target specific things like hydration, digestion, inflammation, hunger, as well as skin and hair boost. Best part? All smoothies and juices are gluten free.

For those on a healthy eating journey LifeJuice Café also offers pre-packaged Meals Fit4Life for \$9, perfect for anyone needing healthy lunch alternatives on-base. The meals include Citrus-Miso Glazed Salmon, Marinated Grilled Chicken and Glazed Shrimp. They all include steamed broccoli, grilled eggplant and bell peppers on a bed of brown rice and quinoa, with a side of citrus-miso glaze. Just heat, eat and enjoy! Keto options are also available.

For more information on LifeJuice Cafés, including locations and hours of operation, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/lifejuice.lol



Tastes of Home...

...at La Cocina

Craving tacos and tired of having to track down our food truck? You're in luck. La Cocina has a brick-and-mortar location at Surfside on Camp Kinser, featuring an expanded menu of authentic Mexican street food you know and love, including delicious tacos, burritos, quesa-dillas, nachos and salads!

Choose from succulent Braised Pork Carnitas, lean Grilled Chicken or juicy Char-grilled Steak. Street tacos are topped with onions, fresh cilantro and your choice of salsa verde or roja. Burritos are topped with cilantro rice, *borracho* beans (tender and creamy pinto beans simmered along with bacon, spices and beer), pico de gallo, cheese, fresh cilantro and your choice of salsa verde or roja. Extra toppings like jalapeños, salsa, guacamole and sour cream are available. Sides like chips & salsa, and rice & beans also available à la carte. Have a big appetite? Make your meal a combo with your choice of sides, plus a drink to help you wash it all down.

Not on Camp Kinser? Don't worry! La Cocina's food truck is always on the move and rolling up to Marine Corps installations island wide. For more information about La Cocina on Camp Kinser, including hours of operation and menu as well as the food truck schedule, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/lacocina.lou











Island Grindz

Wholesome Hawaiian Goodness at a Marine Corps Camp Near You!

Text by: Mike Daley | Photography by: Mia Cox

Okinawa, being an island paradise like Hawaii, has a lot in common with the 50th state. Fortunately for us, one of these shared traits is a love for delicious, filling and inexpensive meals—including the "plate lunch."

Although no one knows who's responsible for the inaugural serving, plate lunches are thought to have originated in Hawaii's pineapple and sugarcane plantations during the late 18th century. Workers would bring bento boxes for lunch, oftentimes consisting of the previous day's leftovers, usually fish or meat. The protein would be supplemented with rice to make the meals more filling as work in the fields took plenty of energy and was a real grind.

Enterprising entrepreneurs soon started bringing food carts (and later trucks) to the fields every day, allowing workers without bento lunches to buy an inexpensive plate of food—hence the name "plate lunch." It is believed that the iconic mac salad associated with plate lunches—a simple recipe made with mayonnaise, salt and pepper—was added around this time.

Though Hawaii's plantation era ended in the 50s, the popularity of plate lunches didn't end with it, it actually exploded. Today, diners and drive-ins around the island state such as L&L Drive-In (a.k.a L&L Hawaiian Barbecue), Rainbow Drive-In in Honolulu and more serve up delicious, filling and inexpensive meals daily, many still on a plate covered in wax paper held together with a rubber band. Popular proteins include kalua pig, garlic shrimp, kalbi ribs, pork lau lau, the ever-popular loco moco and, of course, the Spam musubi. Spam is another common denominator between Hawaii and Okinawa and is so popular in Hawaii that August 8 is celebrated as "National Spam Musubi Day."

The next time you're out and about on a Marine Corps camp and looking for a delicious, filling and inexpensive meal, be on the lookout for the Island Grindz food truck rolling over the horizon. Prepare for that rumbling sound in your stomach to intensify as the aroma of freshly prepared classic Hawaiian plate lunches begin emanating from within this fourwheeled deliverer of goodness.

Island Grindz features all of the plate lunch allstars, including Huli Huli Chicken, Teriyaki Beef, North Shore Garlic Shrimp, Loco Moco, Kalua Pork & Cabbage, Spam Plates and Spam Musubi.

The Huli Huli Plate Lunch features classic Hawaiian-style BBQ chicken for \$8. The star of the Teriyaki Beef Plate Lunch is the tender, sliced beef grilled to perfection and topped with Island Grindzown teriyaki sauce for \$9. The North Shore Garlic Shrimp Plate Lunch, available regular or spicy, is a garlic lover's dream—garlic shrimp sautéed with garlic butter for \$13. Another classic, the Loco Moco Plate Lunch, features an all-beef patty grilled to perfection, served with Grindz' house gravy and topped with a fried egg for \$9. The Kalua Pork & Cabbage Plate Lunch offers a heaping serving of Kalua Pork with sautéed cabbage for \$8. Finally, Island Grindz offers those two true Hawaiian/Okinawan favorites—the Spam Plate Lunch (available plain or teriyaki) for \$8 and Spam Musubi for \$2.50.

All Island Grindz plate lunches come served with steamed white rice and mac salad, as all Hawaiian plate lunches should! Beverages, including everyone's favorite juice drinks from Hawaiian Sun, are also available to wash your meal down.

For more information about Island Grindz, including its availability to support command, unit or other special events on Marine Corps installations island-wide, send an email to <code>mccsfoodtrucks@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org</code>. To see where you can pick up a plate lunch from Island Grindz next, visit <code>www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/islandgrindz</code> to view their full menu and schedule. <code>Iou</code>



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Infant Massage Class

Bond With Your Baby Through Nurturing Touch

Looking for a great way to bond with your little bundle of joy? Then join New Parent Support Program (NPSP) as they host Infant Massage Class! Offered in a four-part monthly series, classes take place once a week on Thursdays at the WestPac Inn (Bldg. 14) on Camp Foster for parents who have a child under the age of 1. During the class, home visitors will teach massage techniques to parents that can have many benefits such as relief from gas or colic symptoms, reduction in postpartum

depression, promotion of brain development, communication, reduction in stress and improved sleep.

Connect and strengthen your bond as a parent to your child through infant massages. Registration is required to attend via email or phone. For more information about Infant Massage Class and more NPSP offerings, call 645-0396, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/npsp or email npspokinawa@usmc.mil.lol

Kids on the Move

Fun & Engaged Structured Play

Are your children always running on a full tank of energy that never seems to deplete? We have good news for you! The MCCS Health Promotion team has put together the perfect event for your mini-me to blaze through that energy.

Join us at Kids on the Move June 24 at Gunners Fitness Center on Camp Foster and June 26 at Ironworks Fitness Center on Camp Courtney, from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., both days. Kids ages 8–12 will have a blast with other children to engage in fun, structured physical activities.

Registration is open until June 13 via Eventbrite; don't wait because slots are limited to 30 kids per session. This event is FREE and open to SOFA status personnel.

MCCS Health Promotion encourages and supports the participation of individuals of all abilities. Please call 645-3910 or email mccshealthpromotions@okinawa.usmc-mccs. org if you need any assistance or require an accommodation. For more information, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/healthpromotion or call 645-3910. Iol

Summer League Swim Camp...

...at Hansen Aquatic Center

Does your little one practically live underwater? Encourage their love of swimming by signing them up for the Summer League Swim Camp at the Hansen Aquatic Center. Sessions will take place June 11 to 14, Wednesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Summer League Swim Camp is aimed at elementary and middle school-aged swimmers at least 7 years old (as of the first day of camp) who have not been on a swim team. Participants must pass the official MCCS Swim Test on the first day of camp. Register your child for \$75 via Eventbrite by June 8 (11:59 p.m.); no walk-in registration or payment is available. For more information, call 645-3180, email mccsaquatics@okina-wa.usmc-mccs.org or visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/aquatics.lol



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Reservations ↑

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Reservations ↑







Strike Out Stress!

Bowling Workshop for Youths and Teens

Today, the younger generation is facing a number of challenges that are contributing to higher levels of stress and mental health issues. Military youths also have the added stress that comes with being a dependent of a service member, including constant moves that force them to start over every couple of years and dealing with their parent(s) hectic work schedules that include times of separation due to TDY's and deployments.

Think your teen could use some help? Marine Corps Family Team Building (MCFTB) is offering Strike Out Stress Workshops, aimed at enhancing the well-being of military youths and teens. Participants will learn stress management techniques, conflict resolution skills, how to improve communication, build emotional resilience and foster teamwork.

The workshops are open to children ages 12 to 18 (with separate classes for youths and teens), registration via Eventbrite is required. The next session will be on Friday, June 13 at the Foster Bowling Center. For more information, call MCFTB at 645-3689 or email mcftbokinawa@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org.lou

Crafts, Films & Fun...

...at Camps Foster and McTureous

Marine Corps Family Team Building is proud to present Crafts, Films & Fun, a supportive and fun-filled event designed to help kids and parents navigate life during deployment. Come on out for a great opportunity to connect, network and build lasting bonds with others who understand the unique experiences that come along with being a military child and spouse. Don't miss out on this chance to create meaningful connections while having fun!

This event is geared towards kids ages 5–13 (parents/guardians must accompany them at all times). Enjoy a Disney movie screening with crafts related to the film. Showings will alternate between the Foster Library and McTureous Community Center. Show dates are slotted for June 11 and 25, July 9 and 23 as well as August 6 and 20, from 9 a.m. to noon. Registration is required via Eventbrite.

For any questions, additional information or if special accommodations are required, reach out to *mcftbokinawa@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org* or call 098-970-3689.

Youth Swim Team Tryouts

Fuel a Lifelong Passion

Have a little one that seems to be part fish? Why not help turn their love for swimming into a lifelong passion with the help of the Okinawa Dolphins Swim Team (ODST)? Who knows, they may be a budding Olympic medalist!

Tryouts are open for swimmers ages seven or older who have not been part of previous ODST seasons. Participants will be expected to swim a 50m freestyle (front crawl), a 25m breaststroke and a 25m backstroke. A brief rest between the 25m swims is permitted (must be less than 20 seconds).

Besides the short rest, each swim must be non-stop with swimmers displaying proper breathing and stroke techniques. Tryouts take approximately 5–10 minutes, and parental interaction is discouraged.

Interested? To schedule a tryout for the upcoming ODST season, email mccsaquatics@okinawa.usmc-mccs.org. Tryouts this year will be at the Hansen Aquatic Center. For more information on other MCCS Aquatics offerings, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/aquatics.lol



SUSUES FAMILY FUN NIGHT

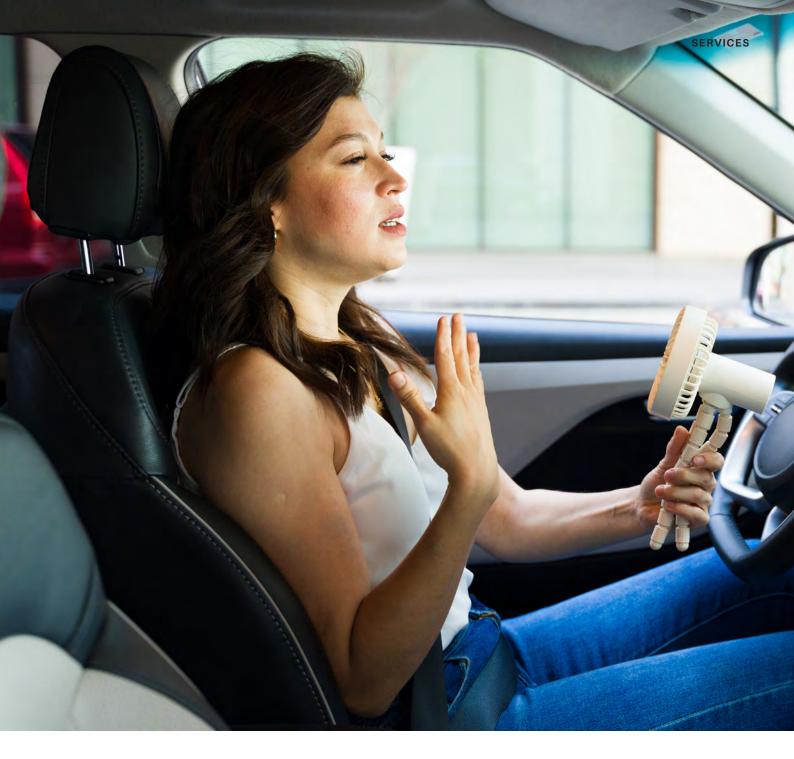


Dress like a superhero and join us for an action-packed event with a design-your-own mask activity!









Typhoon Motors Sales

Keep your Vehicle Running Cool in the Summer Heat

It's summertime, and you know what that means—fun in the sun, day trips to the beach, outdoor adventures and time in your car driving to where you want to go. All that time behind the wheel means you need to make sure that your engine is running cool, so you don't end up hot and stranded on the side of the road. Fortunately, Typhoon Motors is always here for all your car maintenance (and upgrade) needs.

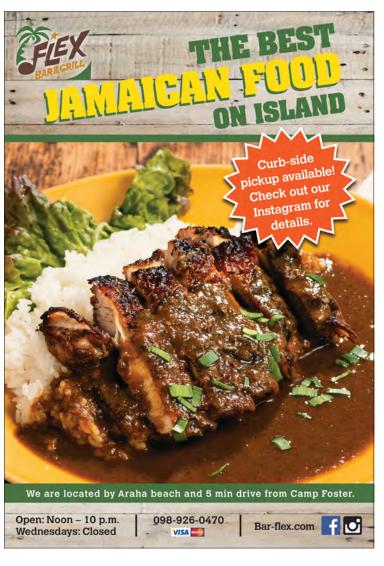
For the entire month of June, Typhoon Motors will be offering 20% OFF on all complete oil changes. Oil changes are an important part of the regular upkeep of your vehicle as they help maintain engine lubrication, cool the engine components, remove engine wear particles and sludge, improve gas mileage and just generally keep your vehicle running longer.

Along with their oil change special, Typhoon Motors will also help you take care of that paternal figure in your life who's ready for an audio upgrade. From June 13 to 23, they will be offering a Father's Day Special of 15% OFF all audio speakers (excluding subwoofers) at the Foster and Kinser locations, which could come in handy if dad needs to drown out the

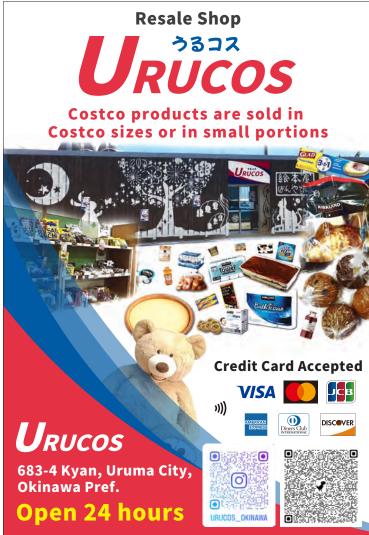
sound of bickering children in the backseat on those summer vacation drives.

Typhoon Motors will also be offering \$1 Summer Lift and Stall rentals June 18–20 for those into automotive DIY. And, to round out this special month at Typhoon Motors, check out their Summer Days Special June 23–30 at all locations to save some cash on select automotive goods.

For more information on these sales, Typhoon Motors hours of operations, locations and more, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/typhoonmotors.lol









The Okinawa Guide

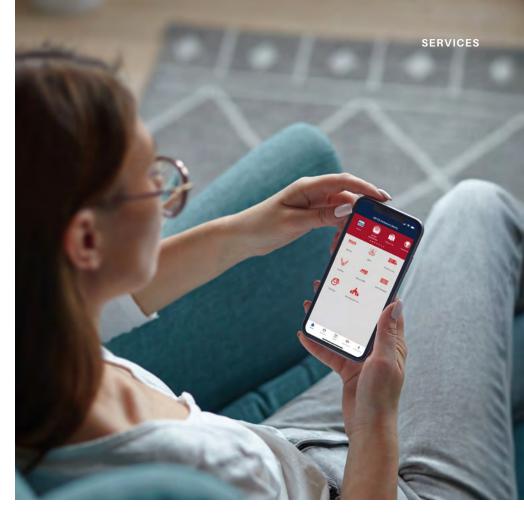
YOUR Guide to the Island!

Want to learn more about PCSing with a pet? How about learning karate? Maybe you're wondering what goes into a perfect bowl of Okinawa soba? All of this and more—including information on all the largest shopping malls on island—can be found in the pages of the 2025–2026 Okinawa Guide.

The Okinawa Guide is an annual publication produced by the staff of Okinawa Living Magazine for newcomers and veteran island dwellers alike. Filled with comprehensive information on everything from Japanese language and culture, holidays, places to visit and offerings on all Marine Corps camps to an overview of all programs and offerings provided by MCCS to make your tour easier and more enjoyable—the Okinawa Guide is the perfect handbook for your stay on the island.

The best thing? It's absolutely FREE! Pick up your copy at the end of this month at an MCCS facility near you! For more about the Okinawa Guide, visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs.org/og.lol





The MCCS Liberty App

Okinawa At Your Fingertips

New to island and still trying to get the hang of things? We've got good news! The MCCS Okinawa Liberty App is like having a whole platoon of information about being stationed on Okinawa—and right at your fingertips no less. We're talking access to command information (including PCS details and base policies), liberty tools (including important phone numbers), transportation options and much more.

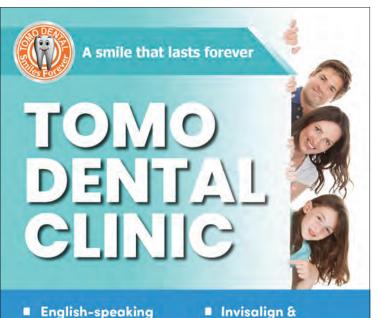
Want to be in the loop about events going on across the island? There are multiple MCCS program calendars included under the "Events" icon, and, additionally, you can find more information on where to shop, eat, visit and stay—both on and off base—by tapping the "Things to Do" icon.

If you need a ride back home after a fun outing, the app has you covered! There's an expansive list of on-base and off-base taxi and daiko services to make sure you have a safe way of getting home. Remember...Not One Drop! The app even includes a yen rate calculator; the Automated Heat Stress System (AHSS) which is currently active and updates in real time (a must-use feature given Okinawa's seriously hot weather conditions); current sea conditions/water safety status indicating whether ocean activities are permitted; typhoon readiness information (TCCOR) with critical updates during typhoon season (June 1 to November 30, so check the app regularly during this period); and English-to-Japanese translations of some common phrases to help you navigate while off base.

Need to know what's on the menu before heading to chow? The app provides convenient access to the official MCIPAC 28 Day Master Menu for all mess halls, letting you plan your meals there with ease.

Last, but not least, there is a total fitness tool included to help you find wellness resources and track your health when it comes to four fitness factors: mind, body, spirit and social.

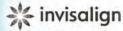
Best of all? The MCCS Okinawa Liberty App is FREE! Visit www.okinawa.usmc-mccs. org/liberty for details or download yours from either the App Store or Google Play. Io.



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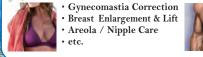








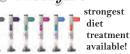




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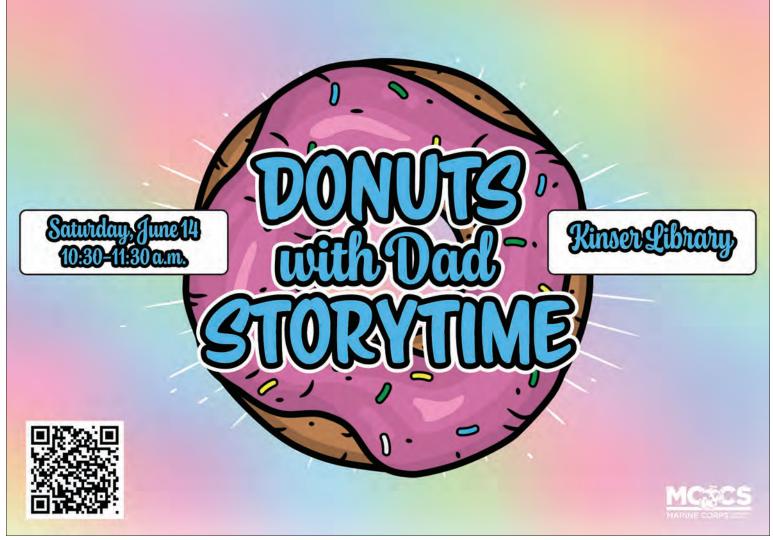
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TRADITIONAL RYUKYU ARTS REIMAGINED

TEXT BY: LAURA C. PITA PHOTOGRAPHY BY: MIA COX LAYOUT BY: AIRI IGARASHI TRANSLATION BY: WATARU YAMANOHA

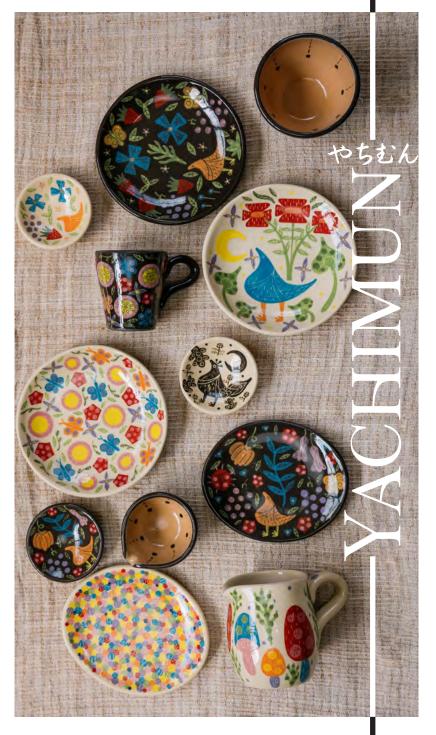
T's hard to miss the echoes of the past while on Okinawa. Whether it's seeing houses with akakawara (red ceramic roof tiles) and their guardian shīsā (lion-dog statues), eating out of yachimun (pottery) at your favorite café or speaking to an employee wearing a colorful kariyushi (dress shirt). Okinawan people have persisted at keeping their traditions and customs alive—which includes their centuries-old artforms—despite the overpowering presence of Japan and the United States.

In its prime, the Ryukyu Kingdom may have been small, but this nation played a central role in maritime trade networks during the Middle Ages. As intermediary traders between Japan, China and various Southeast Asian countries, local merchants exchanged goods for silk, ceramics, ironware and silver, among other prod-

ucts. This exposure to other cultures resulted in a melding or a *champuru* (harmonious mixture) of traditions that is reflected throughout Okinawa's various timehonored arts and crafts.

According to the Smithsonian Institution, "Craft traditions handed down from generation to generation bind people to their past and connect them to their future."

Artisans around the island have been working tirelessly to keep these traditions alive, and while most tend to stick to the set standards of the folk art they practice, some have dared to be different by giving a modern twist to their work. This mixture of old and new allows them to simultaneously preserve and honor the ancestral craft while also expressing their creative freedom.



he *Uchinâguchi* (Okinawan language) term, yachimun, refers to Okinawa's traditional pottery, a product of influences and techniques gathered during times of trade with China, mainland Japan and Korea. These ceramics, used daily in many Okinawan households, stand out from other styles of pottery thanks to their rustic, warm and colorful designs—with blues, greens and browns being the most prominent glazes used, reminiscent of the island's vibrant landscapes. Okinawa pottery hubs can be found around Naha's Tsuboya Pottery Street and Yomitan's Pottery Village.

An influx of young potters have joined the ceramic scene introducing their distinctive designs, that while not traditional, still manage to embody the spirit of Okinawa and this renowned craft. In Yomitan Village, tucked away in a former military housing neighborhood, lies a small-scale pottery studio called Futagodou—which translates to "twin workshop"—run by twin sisters Aya Orio and Iku Kikui.

Born in Osaka to an Okinawan mother, the duo studied ceramics and Japanese painting at Aichi University Technical College of Ceramics and Kyoto City University of Arts, respectively—where they honed the traditional skills of each craft—before moving to Okinawa and developing their signature style of pottery. Orio-san masterfully shapes and carves the clay pieces while Kikui-san artfully paints both colorful and monochromatic designs inspired by the island's flora and fauna. Their pieces give a sense that you are eating and drinking straight from a work of art.

Find their pottery at Gala Aoiumi and Maranata in Yomitan Village, Hotel Moon Beach and ANA InterContinental Manza Beach Resort in Onna Village as well as pottery festivals throughout the year. Follow *@futagodou* on Instagram for more information on upcoming events.









peaking of tableware, Okinawans have also greatly excelled in the glassware industry. Around the turn of the 20th century, glass craftsmen from various trade cities around mainland Japan brought their expertise to the island and began creating everyday items. Decades later, the Battle of Okinawa destroyed the island's glass workshops, but two years after the war ended, surviving artisans began producing glass once again. With newly stationed military personnel and their families requesting souvenirs as well as practical glassware, glass workers had to get creative due to post-war shortages. The solution? They recycled the large quantity of beer and soda bottles discarded by American troops.

Ryukyu Glass stands out from other styles of glass thanks to its vibrant colors (inspired by the island's rich nature), unique bubble texture (a product of impurities from the recycled glass) and thick handcrafted appearance (which adds to its charm). To this day it is one of Okinawa's most popular souvenirs, produced at 30 glass shops around the island.

In the middle of a tranquil neighborhood of Yomitan Village lies Sizuku Glass, owned by husband-and-wife duo Naoki and Takae Kaneshi. Naoki-san was first introduced to the craft at 11 years old when he began helping out at his uncle's glass shop. Deciding to follow his passion for Ryukyu Glass in adulthood and with Takae-san's encouragement, he opened his own shop. To prepare, he visited 15 glass shops around the island to learn from other artisans and later traveled to Toyama Prefecture (a major hub for blown glass art in Japan) as well as Venice, Italy (a center of glassmaking for over 1,000 years), all of which helped him develop his own style. He has been a glassmaker for 40 years now.

Sizuku Glass pieces are known for their color variations and vivid, almost holographic designs as well as their quirky seasonal items which include gourds, yuki daruma (snowmen), Christmas trees, kagami mochi (New Year's decoration) and more. Find their glass at their workshop in Yomitan Village and online at sizukuglass.stores.jp. Follow @sizuku_glass on Instagram for more information.





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(Araha Beach)

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nother Ryukyu legacy craft developed through a mix of influences from around Asia is bingata. This art of textile dyeing, dating back to the 15th century, incorporates Chinese pattern stencil dyeing, cotton printing techniques from Java and India as well as Kyoto yuzen silk dyeing—all of which use a method of resist dyeing where certain areas of the fabric are protected from dye penetration to allow for the creation of patterns. Vibrant pigments and plant-based dyes in colors like vermillion, purple, indigo, yellow and green are painted onto cotton or linen fabric over intricate stencils depicting Okinawa flora and fauna motifs.

In Yomitan Village, award-winning bingata artist Yuuka Arakaki has managed to bring the rich nature of the island inside her cheerful home and art studio. As a young budding painter, she entered the Dyeing and Weaving Design Department while attending the Okinawa Prefectural Shuri High School, acquiring her skills in the traditional art of bingata dyeing.

Arakaki-san's work is known for showcasing not only typical bingata motifs (flowers, birds, butterflies and classic patterns) but for incorporating a variety of sea creatures who call the island's waters home. Her unique style, which also includes the use of gold glitter, evolved organically over time, following her move from the city to the countryside, where she felt closer than ever to Okinawa's nature.

Yuuka Arakaki's bingata art can be found at Ryusion souvenir shop in American Village and online at arakakiyuuka.stores.jp. Don't miss her exhibition at Moon Beach Hotel in Onna Village from July 26 through October 5. Follow @arakakiyuuka on Instagram for more information on upcoming events.



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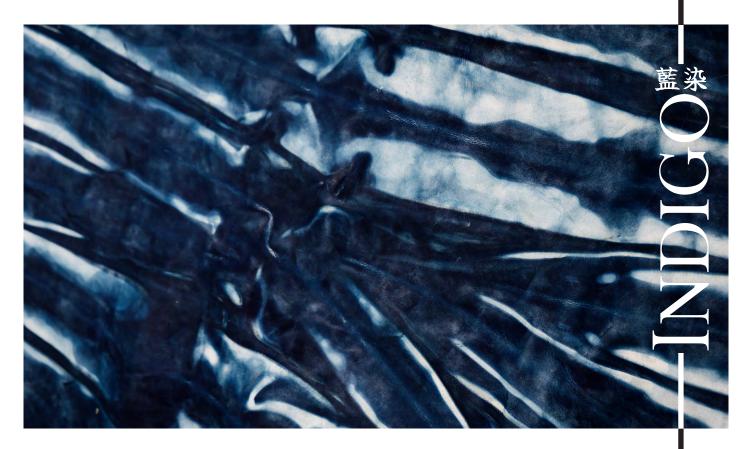


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ne of the aforementioned plant-dyes, ai (indigo) is extracted from the lepidoptera plant. Commonly known as Ryukyu Indigo, it produces a rich blue pigment that has been used on Okinawa since ancient times. The labor-intensive process involves cultivating fields, nurturing plants, harvesting leaves and stems, soaking them in water, extracting pigments and removing impurities until achieving the final product, a thick blue paste. But the process doesn't stop there, as the paste must be fermented into dye and monitored closely before dyeing can begin. Artisans throughout the Ryukyu Kingdom used various dyeing techniques to create intricate patterns on bingata as well as woven textiles like kasuri, minsā, bashōfu and jōfu. With the introduction of chemical dyes shortening the dyeing process extensively, the art of producing natural indigo dye dwindled.

From their farm stretching from Motobu to Higashi Village and their workshop at the Okinawa Craft Industry Promotion Center in Tomigusuku, Yoshinari Kakazu and his team at Ryukyu Indigo Labo have been working tirelessly for 10 years to revive the island's indigo dyeing tradition, in order to preserve the knowledge of the craft for future generations. Their work can be found in a mix of high-end apparel as well as secondhand clothing—for those looking for sustainable pieces—in addition to bags, wallets and even shoes. But where they stand out from the crowd is through their dying of unexpected items like animal skulls, wood statues and frames for home décor in addition to experimental pieces made with wood and resin.

Ryukyu Indigo Labo products can be found at LEQUIO in Ginowan and online at *ryukyu-indigo-labo*. *jp/en* where customers can also put in requests to have clothing dyed to their preferred shade of indigo. Follow @ryukyu_indigo_labo on Instagram for more information.







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ast on our list is hajichi, a lesser-known tradition of the Ryukyu Kingdom. Hajichi, which translates to "needle thrusting," also uses deep blue patterns. This form of body art was done by women for women on the backs of hands and fingers using a bamboo needle and ink, made from a mixture of awamori and squid ink. The practice was first recorded in the 16th century, but it is believed to date farther back. Hajichi tattoos were a rite of passage, marking a woman's coming-of-age, with designs depicting their region of origin, lineage, social and marital status.

At the time of Japan's incorporation of the Ryukyu Kingdom, the Meiji Government began forcefully assimilating its people into Japanese society by changing its name to Okinawa Prefecture as well as suppressing its unique culture and language. Consequently, the practice of hajichi was banned in 1899 and the ubiquitous hand markings slowly disappeared...until now.

From a cozy studio amidst the bustling streets of Naha City, tattoo artist mim offers both permanent and temporary hajichi tattoos—for those looking to connect with their roots and experience having the traditional tattoos but may find it difficult to get a permanent one. Using *jagua*, a natural blue-black paste extracted from the *Genipa americana* tree, that is then meticulously applied to the skin like *henna* and lasts from 10 to 14 days.

Young *Uchinânchu* (Okinawans) both on the island and abroad, are working passionately to revive this long-forgotten tradition while simultaneously researching, documenting and educating their community. To learn about mim's work, as well as to book an appointment, visit *mimdrawing.com*. Follow *@mimdrawing.jagua* on Instagram for more information.







Okinawa's cultural heritage is brimming with even more time-honored practices and talented artisans, both young and old, working diligently to connect the island's past, present and future for the generations to come. Iol

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Gōyā Champuru

Serves four

Ingredients

1 tsp. extra virgin olive oil

1 large gōyā (bitter melon) cut to 1/16" slices (see below)

2 garlic cloves, minced

1/2 onion, minced

3/4 cup Okinawan Shima Tofu

1/2 block of Spam, cut to 1/16" slices

3 medium eggs, beaten

Dash of soy sauce

Dash of black pepper

Dash of Tabasco sauce

1 Tbsp. salt

Method of Preparation

- 1. Slice gōyā lengthwise and remove seeds, gently scraping the inside with a spoon to remove all of the core.
- 2. Cut gōyā into 1/16" slices and place into a bowl. Add salt to the chopped goya and gently massage until thoroughly coated (this will temper the bitterness). Add cold water and let sit for 15–30 minutes. After soaking, rinse completely and set aside.
- 3. Using high heat, sauté oil, garlic, onions and Spam, cook until garlic and onions become semi-translucent, then add gōyā.



- 4. When the gōyā is tender, crumble tofu into the mix and season with soy sauce, pepper and Tabasco until it reaches the desired flavor.
- 5. Add eggs and toss mixture until thoroughly coated—remembering not to overcook.
- 6. Serve with steamed white rice.

Habu Time

Okinawa is home to a vast variety of reptiles from the tiny gecko to venomous pit vipers such as the Okinawan habu, the hime habu, the Sakishima habu, and the non-venomous, but sometimes aggressive, akamata. Most habu that inhabit the Ryukyu Archipelago have triangularly shaped heads, narrow necks that broaden into a thick muscular body and long hypodermic needle-like fangs. The Okinawan habu, or Trimeresurus flavoviridis, can be distinguished by its yellowish-green color, which alternates with dark brown splotches on its back. The hime habu's back is dark brown with gray or darker brown splotches, and the Sakishima habu has a dark gray back with yellow and orange markings. Akamata aren't venomous so they don't have fangs (but they definitely have teeth) and while their heads don't have the distinct triangular viper shape, they have yellow,

orange and reddish bands alternating with dark brown patches on their backs. The differences between species may be distinctive, but let's be honest, you probably won't want to hang around for a closer look. The best strategy is to leave a snake alone. *Period*.

Habu are among many creatures that receive undue bad publicity, and although considering them "cute and cuddly" may be a stretch, they are definitely deserving of respect. The next time you're taking your daily summer evening walk along the narrow-overgrown trail that passes under the ancient banyan tree in your neighbor's yard, if you hear a rustling sound and look up to find yourself face to face with a six-foot long *Trimeresurus flavoviridis*, remember to say hello (after you've moved far away), then call the local authorities. **Jou**



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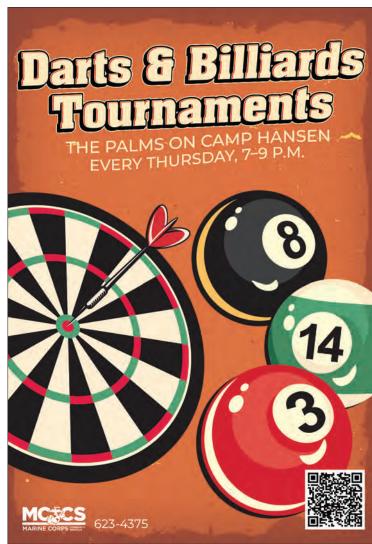


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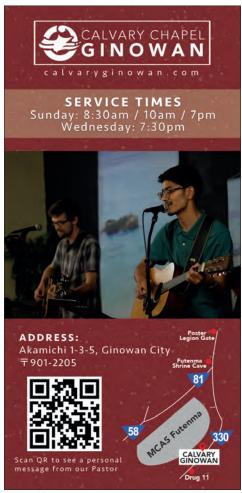
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