

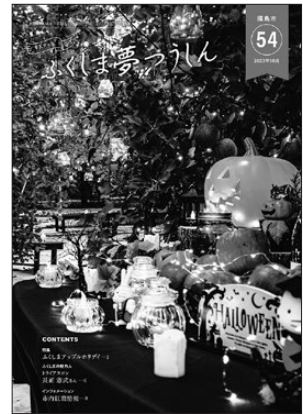
Fukushima Dreams – a quarterly publication of Fukushima City — OCTOBER 2023

Thank you for picking up this quarters' "Fukushima Dreams – a quarterly publication of Fukushima City".

In this issue, we hope that you will learn more about, and be moved by the various charms that Fukushima City has to offer.

With a population of around 280,000 people, Fukushima is surrounded by the beauty of nature. Due to its location, the city has a characteristic basin climate, and is a famous fruit production area: producing many varieties through the seasons, including cherries, peaches, Asian pears, grapes and apples.

We hope that through this edition, you'll come to appreciate even a little of what Fukushima City has to offer.



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① Fukushima Apple Holiday 2023

② Period October 27, 2023 (Friday) – January 31, 2024 (Wednesday)

③ The Season of Delicious Apples Is Here!

At long last, Fukushima Apple Holiday 2023 will begin on Friday, October 27.

During the Apple Holiday period, out-of-spec apples that are usually sold at low prices or else discarded because they are misshaped, too small, or damaged are sent directly from orchards to restaurants and lodging facilities in Fukushima City, where they are arranged and incorporated into delicious menus. Fashionable apple sweets that have been created or revived by restaurants and other establishments as well as other food and non-food items can be found in locations throughout the city. Moreover, by answering a questionnaire using a 2D code available at participating restaurants, bathing facilities and other establishments during the period, you can enter a campaign that gives you a chance to win specialties from Fukushima and more.

Everybody, let's go all out to enjoy apples in Fukushima City this fall!

④ And There's More!

Apple Holiday Activities

Using "Thinned" Apples in Spa Facilities

In order to grow delicious apples, fruit farmers carry out apple thinning to ensure that only the most carefully selected fruit ripens to full maturity. However, the thinned apples are not thrown away but are used to prepare "apple baths" at hot spring facilities. The sweet and sour scent of these apples is very soothing to the senses.

Providing Farming Experience for People Who Are Contemplating Moving into Fukushima

In an effort to increase Fukushima's farming population, we are providing opportunities for prospective immigrants and visitors alike to gain hands-on farming and growing experience in the hope that they will become familiar with actual field conditions. As a part of our effort to circulate resources from the field to the community, after completing their farm work, the participants can bring pruned branches and leaves to the hot spring facility of their choice and get a discount on one-day bathing fees.



⑤ Fukushima Peach Holiday 2023

During the two peak months of the peach season from July to September, visitors enjoyed peach confections, peach cuisine, and even peach accommodation plans throughout Fukushima City.

Period: July 14 (Friday) – September 10 (Sunday), 2023

Number of participating establishments: 67

Number of campaign participants: 2,112 (as of September 7)

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① Introduction of Products from Participating Stores

② This year's Apple Holiday has received a flood of applications from restaurants and other establishments that share our commitment, and each will be offering an inventive apple menu with its own unique twist. Why don't you visit a variety of places and discover your favorite menu?

③ PEACHMAN CAFE

Shuichi Kato

④ Fukushima Apple Holiday 2023 is an event in which the entire city is decked out in apple colors. Throughout the holiday period, a variety of apple dishes will be available to allow everybody to fully enjoy apples at the height of the season. We visited PEACHMAN CAFE, which has been participating in Fukushima Apple Holiday ever since the first year and has attracted a favorable response for its stylish menu, and asked about their recommendations for this year. Please enjoy the Fukushima Apple Holiday to the fullest by visiting as many establishments as you can.

⑤ A Stylish Café Space that is Picturesque no Matter Where You Take Photographs.

The café area is located in a corner of a warehouse whose interior reflects the spirit of Portland, Oregon, USA, a city renowned as a city of freedom and diversity. We hoped to create a space where customers from all over the world would come to enjoy our sweets made with our own brand of jinjo kudamono (fruits from the finest soil), a name we took from the Chinese characters for "soil." There are several reasons why we started the café. Among them, the fact that my wife and I both love food and often eat out, my acquaintance with Chef Masayuki Okuda of the restaurant Al Quicciano in Tsuruoka City, Yamagata Prefecture, whom I met after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and the advice I took from a designer who recommended me to visit Portland.

As for the division of labor between us, I came up with the concept, and my wife came up with the menu. For our sweets, we emphasize the quality of the ingredients, and keep the menu simple, with jinjo kudamono at the forefront. We also add a variety of surprises, such as meticulous preparation and concealed flavors, which are appreciated by our customers.

Attracting Customers from Inside and Outside the Prefecture, and Recently from Overseas Including Taiwan and the U.S.

This year will be the second time for us to participate in Fukushima Peach Holiday and Fukushima Apple Holiday. Fruit from Fukushima City is a specialty that we can be proud to share with the rest of the country. In addition to eating fruits fresh, you can enjoy them in a wide variety of sweets, which will broaden your enjoyment even further. Our participation in these two holidays is also motivated by our desire to let the rest of the country know more about our ingenious menu.

Thanks to the campaign to support local producers and stores, many people come to our restaurant from outside the prefecture. Recently, we have also seen an increase in customers from Taiwan, the United States and other places abroad. Peach Holiday's Peachman Special, a shaved ice dessert made from natural Nikko ice, was again our most popular item this summer. It is made using one whole peach, and the shaved ice dome is filled with milky honey and melted peach sauce, with lots of pieces of fresh peach inside. Also, the yogurt cream that comes with it is refreshing and easy to eat.

Enjoy Seasonal Apple Menus by Hopping from One Restaurant or Café to Another!

The upcoming Apple Holiday will feature eight different menus. All of these are confections that you will want to take pictures of and share with others before you eat them.



Baked apple brûlée is a baked dish made with Kogyoku apples, a variety that are absolutely perfect for this dish. (It's no exaggeration to say that they grow this variety especially for this menu). It consists of hot, melted baked apples topped with cold vanilla ice cream, and you can add cinnamon to taste. Candy apples are made from fresh apples coated with crispy candy. The apple varieties change according to the season, so be sure to compare the differences. Candy apples are also available as a take-away confection. In addition to apples, you can also enjoy shaved ice made from natural ice and other seasonal fruit, including Shine Muscat grapes, which are purchased from contract farmers. As the season progresses and the temperature declines, you can savor the bliss of eating cold shaved ice while warming yourself in front of a wood stove. A variety of other sweets will also be available, including crispy apple pot pie, Kogyoku madeleines baked in a cute apple shape, baked apple cream cheese muffins, and happy apple Mont Blancs. Some visitors say, "I've had hot baked apples before, so today I'll try cold baked apples." Then they order Otona no Baked Apple Alaska to eat here and buy apple madeleines as souvenirs to take away. There are endless ways to enjoy the Apple Holiday by visiting the participating establishments. Please visit Fukushima City, which will be dyed in apple colors, as many times as you like during the period.

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① Noritake Nagasho was born into a sporting family. His mother and sister were swimmers, and his father was a track and field athlete. His first encounter with triathlon, a sport that involves competing in three consecutive activities—swimming, bicycling, and long-distance running—was at a local competition that his parents encouraged him to participate in. He was totally captivated by the sport in the first grade of elementary school and now participates in overseas competitions as a professional athlete. Here we introduce Nagasho, who has set his sights on competing in the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics and is working hard toward his goal.

② Japan Triathlon Union Elite Athlete, Fukushima Triathlon Association
Noritake Nagasho

③ A Triathlete with a Well-Toned Physique Living in Fukushima City and Aiming at World-Class Success

④ Founded a Triathlon Club at University, and Topped the Japan Ranking at the Asia U23 Championships

Height 182 cm, weight 72 kg. Noritake Nagasho is aiming at world-class success with his well-toned physique. On the day we visited him, he was practicing swimming straight in the Fukushima University pool under the blazing sun, heading for the yellow buoys. This is an exercise intended for open-water swimming, in which swimmers follow a straight course to a target of their own choosing in order to avoid exhausting their strength when swimming in nature, such as in the ocean, rivers, or lakes, rather than in a pool.

It was in the 5th grade of elementary school that Nagasho first met Tetsuya Hasunuma (Associate Professor of Sociology of Sport at Fukushima University), who continues to be his instructor today. In junior high and high school, Nagasho trained and competed as a member of the track and field team while sharpening his competitive skills in a junior club led by Hasunuma. In 2018, he entered Fukushima University and immediately started a triathlon club, and in 2019, he achieved a remarkable accomplishment at the Asian U23 Triathlon Championships, where he finished in 4th place, the highest place among the Japanese competitors.

A Sport that Allows You to Enjoy Three Activities at Once While Becoming One with Nature

When we asked Nagasho about the appeal of triathlon, he told us, "There are three events, namely swimming, cycling, and running, and you can do a lot of different things. I am not the type of person who concentrates on one thing at a time, so I think it suits me well. Another thing is that it allows me to enjoy the feeling of being one with nature."

Last year, Nagasho traveled to France on his own to attend a training camp and take part in a local competition. "In France, when you go out of town into the suburbs, it is a totally different world. There are fields, forests, and gravel roads. And then, one day such a place suddenly becomes the site of a race. I also like the fact that triathlon is not about world records, but purely about the ranking of the competition, because it depends a lot on the weather and on nature."

Turning Fukushima City into a Sports Field by Maintaining its Rich Natural Environment

Triathlon is sometimes referred to as Ironman racing. In addition to official distances such as Olympic distances and sprint distances, there are various other races of different distances, and in recent years, according to Nagasho, triathlon has been attracting attention as a lifelong sport. "Members of the public can participate in tournaments designated in five-year age groups, so that they can compete according to their own age and ability." Nagasho, who experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake when he was in the 5th grade and the COVID-19 pandemic when he was in college, also hopes to contribute to the community and promote both his hometown and triathlon.

"The total number of triathletes in Fukushima Prefecture is larger than the combined number of triathletes in all the other five prefectures in Tohoku. On top of that, there are many places in Fukushima City where people can enjoy the sport while experiencing nature. If the area is suitably developed, it could also become a tourist resource. My dream is to hold a triathlon in the Moniwa district of Fukushima City, where much of the original Japanese landscape remains, and at the Surigamigawa Dam." In October 2023, Nagasho will take part in several major competitions, including the Kagoshima National Athletic Meet 2023 and the 29th Japan Triathlon Championship (in Daiba, Tokyo). Let's all support him as he builds on his achievements and aims to qualify for the Los Angeles Olympics.



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① Scarlet, vermilion, orange... The autumn leaves of Fukushima City, which colorfully decorate the mountains, are waiting for us all once again this year. From classic sightseeing areas to lesser-known or hidden spots, why not explore the beautiful foliage in Fukushima this fall?

② Tsubakurodani Valley

This spectacular spot along the Bandai Azuma Skyline is a steep-sloped valley named after the Japanese rock swallows that used to fly over it.

The view from the Fudosawa Bridge, which spans the valley at a height of over 80 meters above the floor, is breathtaking. Address: Jinnomori, Machinawasaka, Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture Best viewing time: Mid- to late October

③ Azuma Sports Park

The 520-meter-long parkway is lined with 116 ginkgo trees. These beautiful trees are illuminated during the peak viewing season in late October, when they are at their best, creating a scene like a movie.

Address: Kamikotoba, Sabara, Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture Best viewing time: Late October–early November

④ Mochizuri Kannon

Mochizuri Kannon is a place of worship that was visited by the poet Matsuo Basho. Hundreds of maple trees in the precincts turn bright red as autumn deepens, delighting visitors who come to see them. Visitors are recommended to take a leisurely stroll while getting a sense of the history of the area.

Address: 68 Mochizuri, Yamaguchi, Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture Best viewing time: late October–early November

⑤ Surikamigawa Dam (Lake Moniwa)

Lake Moniwa, the lake created by the Surikamigawa Dam, is surrounded by a canopy of colorful red and yellow foliage beneath the blue autumn sky. In the vicinity are camping grounds and a day spa facility called Moniwa-no-yu, adding to the outdoor enjoyment for visitors.

Address: 25 Semikarinoyama, Moniwa, Iizakamachi, Fukushima City, Fukushima Prefecture Best viewing time: late October –early November

