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Tokyo
Plaza

Discovering Japan

Exploring the Land of the Rising Sun

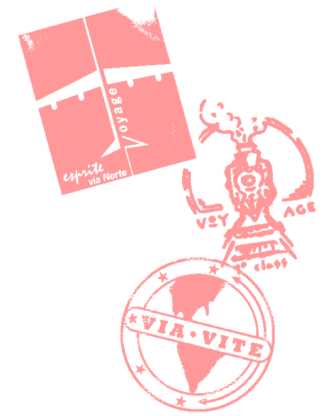
by Laurie Harris



ガンダム立像そばにて上映中!

スケジュール(連日) 19:30 / 20:30

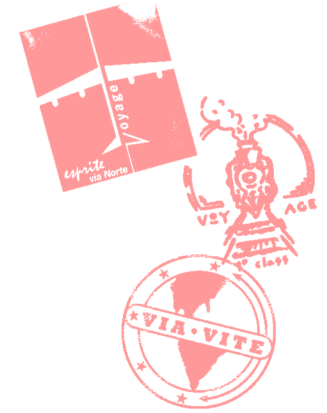
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Discovering Japan

Exploring the Land of the Rising Sun





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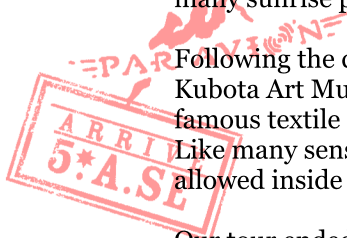
Fujikawaguchiko

My journey started out in Japan with JTB Sunrise Tours' 3-day Mt. Fuji, Kyoto and Nara Rail Tour. The first two days of the tour were unfortunately presided over by Typhoon Nangka. The typhoon caused some rearrangements of the tour schedule namely a switch from visiting Lake Ashi and Hakone to visiting Lake Kawaguchi and Fujikawaguchiko.

The first stop was Mt. Fuji 5th Station (Yoshida Trail). Due to the roads to Hakone being flooded we visited Fujikawaguchiko, a small town at the base of Mt. Fuji. After a traditional Japanese lunch we were treated to a cruise around Lake Kawaguchi in the ironically name "Ensoleille" (French for sunny). Lake Kawaguchi is the lake seen in many sunrise photos taken from Mt. Fuji.

Following the cruise we visited the Itchiku Kubota Art Museum. Itchiku Kubota was a famous textile artist and kimono designer. Like many sensitive sites no photography was allowed inside the museum.

Our tour ended in Odawara where I boarded a Shinkansen (bullet train) to Nagoya and then Kyoto.













Kyoto

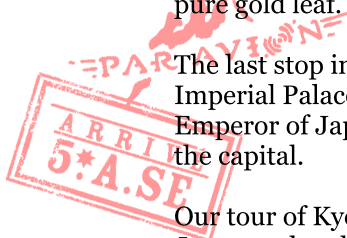
On the second day of the rail tour Typhoon Nangka was in full swing. While there was little wind, the day was marked by torrential rain (up to 29 inches). The weather meant outdoor photography was very restricted (reduced to ducking under nearby verandas or iPhone photos under my poncho). Restrictions on indoor photography at most Kyoto sites meant limited photos.

The first stop was a visit to Nijō Castle, official residence of Tokugawa Shoguns during the time Kyoto served as the capital of Japan.

The next stop took us to Kinkaku-ji ("Temple of the Golden Pavilion"), site of a popular Buddhist temple. The temple is distinctive in that its upper two storeys are covered with pure gold leaf.

The last stop in Kyoto took us to the Kyoto Imperial Palace, official residence of the Emperor of Japan during the time Kyoto was the capital.

Our tour of Kyoto ended with a traditional Japanese lunch before heading to Nara.









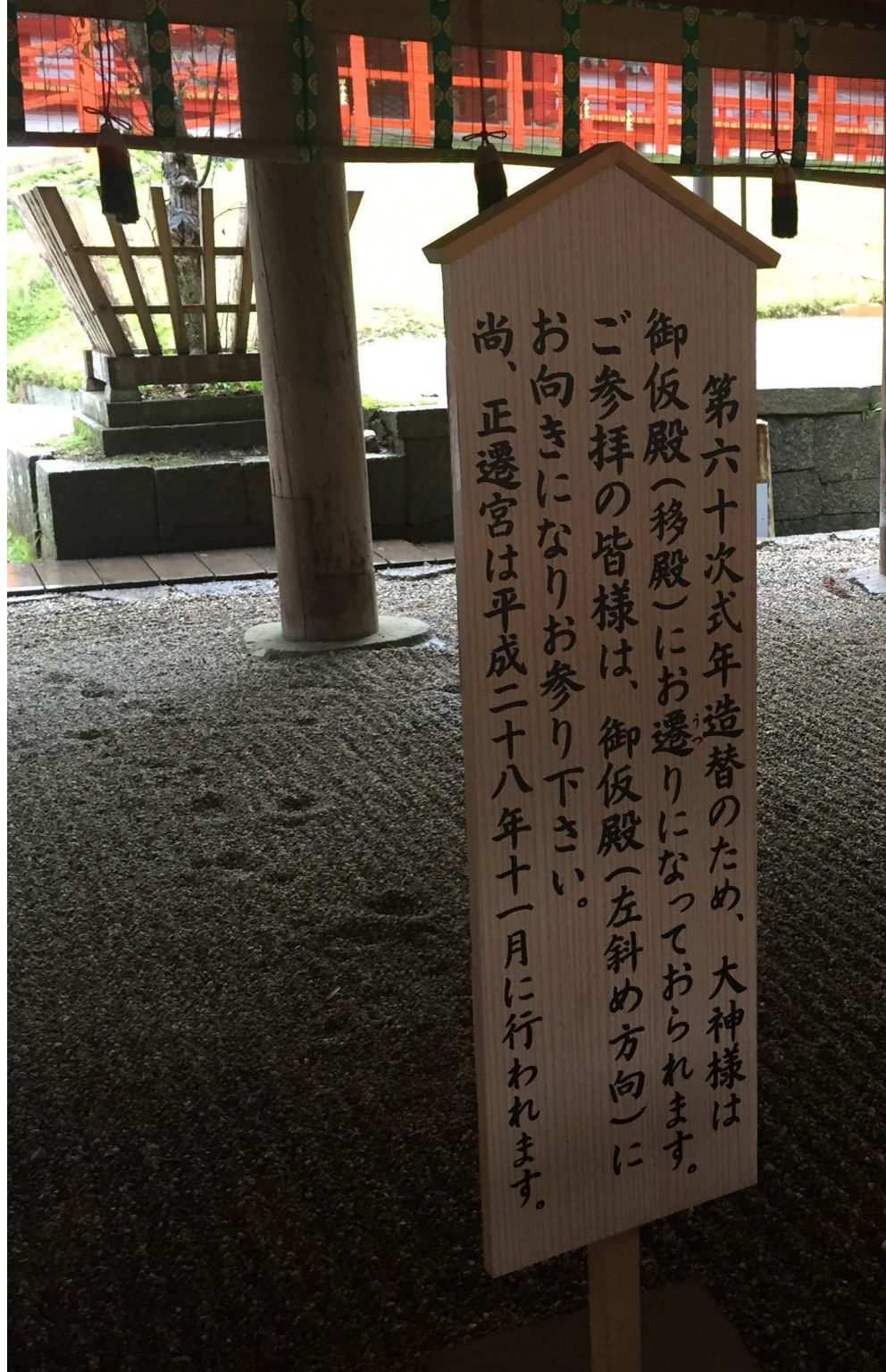
Nara

The afternoon took us to Nara which served as the capital of Japan from 710 to 794.

Our first stop in Nara took us to Tōdai-ji, a Buddhist temple which is the largest wooden structure that houses the largest bronze buddha in the world, Daibutsu. The grounds of Tōdai-ji are also home to dozens of free roaming, tame deer.

Our next stop took us to Kasuga-taisha Shrine, a Shinto shrine known for its many hanging and stone lanterns.

Our tour ended with a visit to Nara's largest souvenir shop Nara Nagomikan before heading back to Kyoto.







京都水族館

KYOTO AQUARIUM



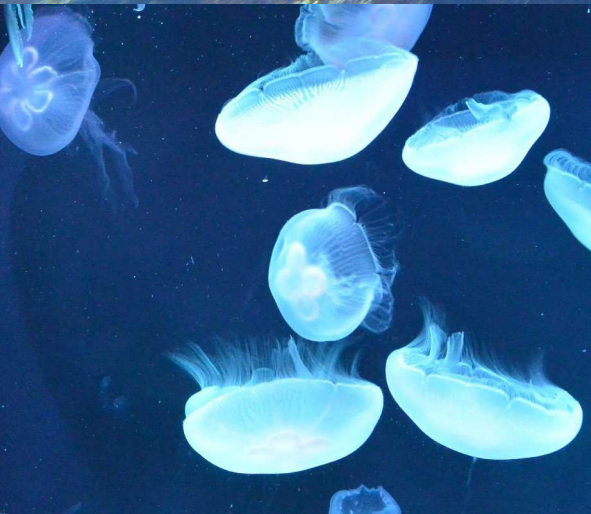
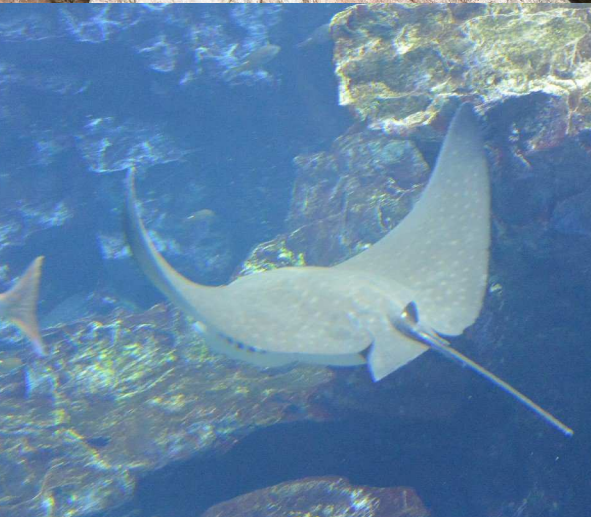
Kyoto Aquarium

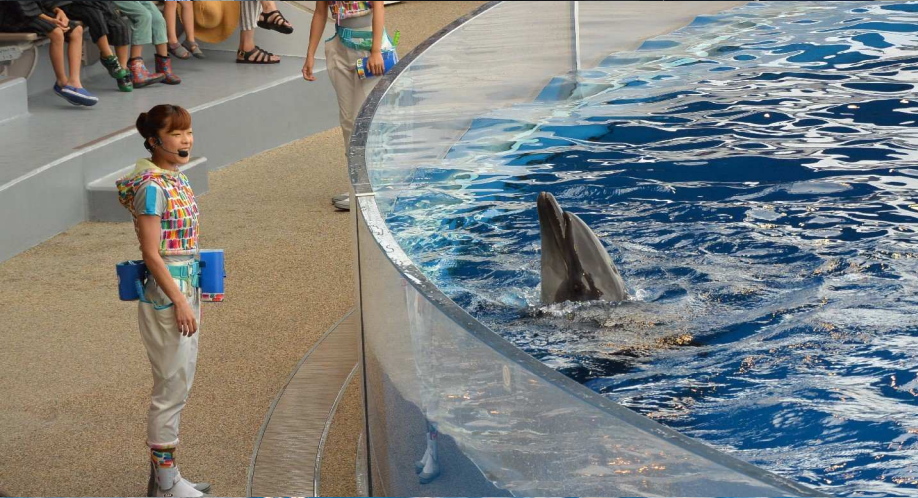
Day 3 of the tour was a free day allowing you to visit any site you wished in Kyoto. My original plan was to visit Toei Kyoto Studio Park a theme park and movie studio (basically a Japanese Universal Studios). I wanted to take my first shot at using Japan's rail service. However I got thoroughly lost in Kyoto Station, Japan's second largest station building. After walking 6 miles over an hour and a half I gave up on the idea of visiting Toei Kyoto Studio Park.

My impromptu backup plan was to visit the Kyoto Aquarium which was within walking distance of Kyoto Station. The aquarium was home to many endemic Japanese species such as the giant salamander and the giant spider crab (whose body is the size of my head). My visit was topped with a performance at the aquarium's dolphin show.

That evening I boarded the Shinkansen once again returning to Tokyo.







Diver
City Tokyo
Plaza

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Odaiba

In between tours I had a free day to explore Tokyo. I took the opportunity to explore Odaiba, a man-made island in Tokyo Bay. My journey started by first obtaining a Suica ("Super Urban Intelligent CARD") prepaid railpass card in Shinjuku Station. Navigating the train system in Tokyo was quite a bit easier than in Kyoto and I made it to Odaiba with little issue.

My first stop was to see the life-size replica of the RX-78 Gundam. Other notable attractions in Odaiba were the small scale replica of the Statue of Liberty, the Peace Monument, Fuji Television station's iconic building, one of downtown Tokyo's two beaches and the Rainbow Bridge.













富士山の環境を守りましょう

Mt. Fuji

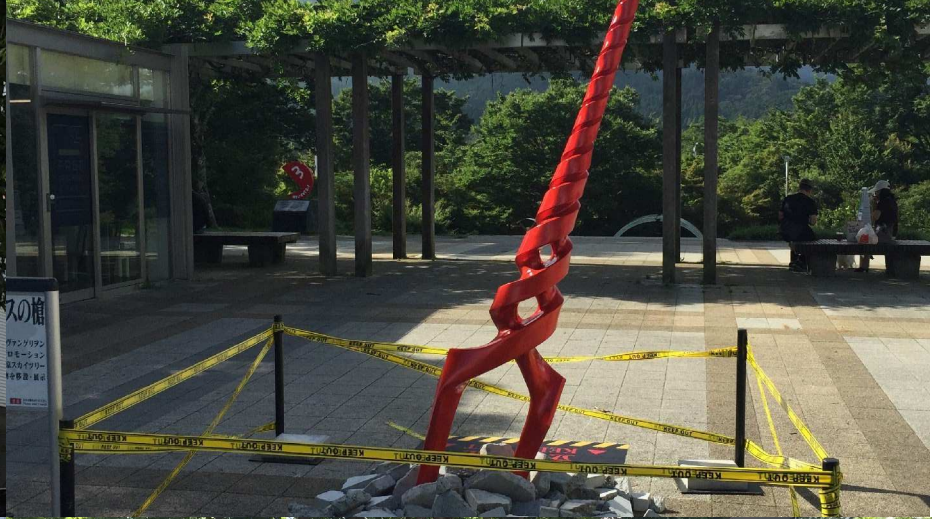
My next challenge was to tackle climbing Mt. Fuji. Typhoon Nangka had drawn most of the typical cloud cover away from the usually obscured Mt. Fuji summit meaning clear visibility of the summit and a rain-free climb for the next two days.

On our way to Mt. Fuji we stopped briefly at a "Neon Genesis Evangelion" themed rest stop in Oyama near the base of Mt. Fuji. I was able to take some photos of a trio of extravagantly decorated Dekotora trucks in the parking lot.

Our climb started at the Subashiri Trail 5th Station roughly halfway up the mountain (1950m). The Subashiri Trail is less developed and less used than the Yoshida Trail I visited a few days earlier. It is also lower down the mountain meaning a longer climb. The goal was to reach the 8th Station Fujisan Hotel (3400m) by sunset. Although my climbing pace started out steady, the more I travelled above 2500m the more I needed to slow down as the thin air took its effect on me. Frustrated with my slow pace and after more than 4 hours of climbing I decided to spend the night at a 7th Station hut (3090m).

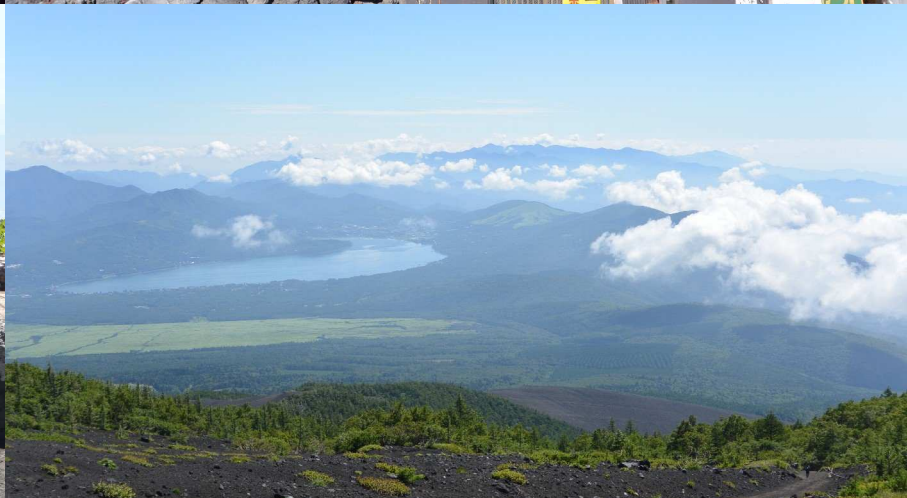
The next morning at around 4:45am I was greeted by a spectacular Mt. Fuji sunrise before joining the rest of the group down the mountain.



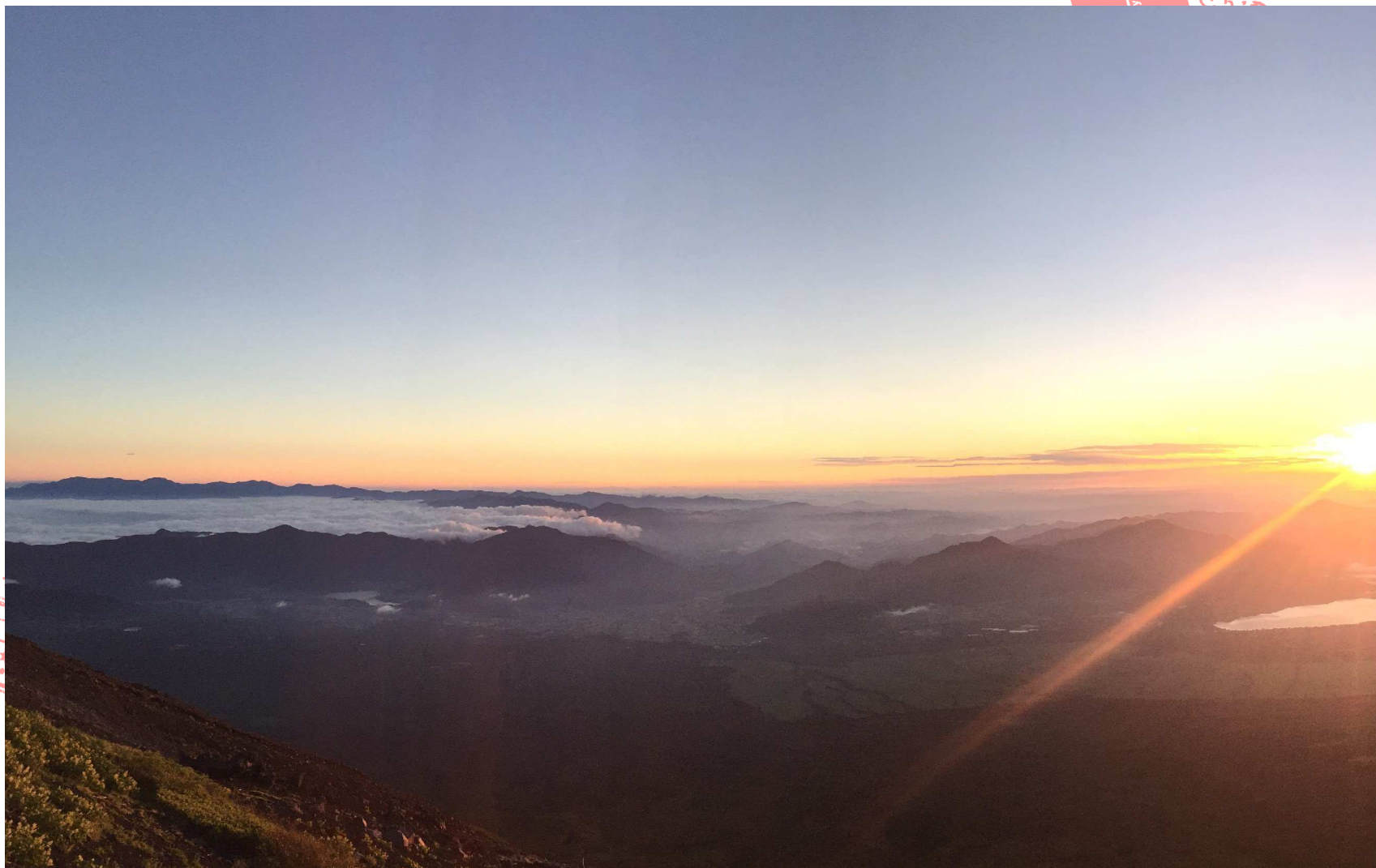








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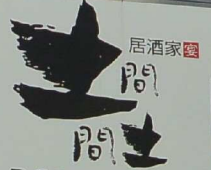
ラブライブ!
The School Idol Movie
2015年6月13日(土) ロードショー!!

8F
焼肉酒家



Gyu-Kaku

7F



居酒屋

営業時間
16:00
~
翌5:00

DOMA-DOMA



入口はこちらです



300万人突破!!

お帰りなさいませ
ご主人様・お嬢様

当ビル6F maidreamin

SEGA

SEGA

結 寿 め
焼 司 じ 員

海 船 派 派
遊 戯 結 員 結 員

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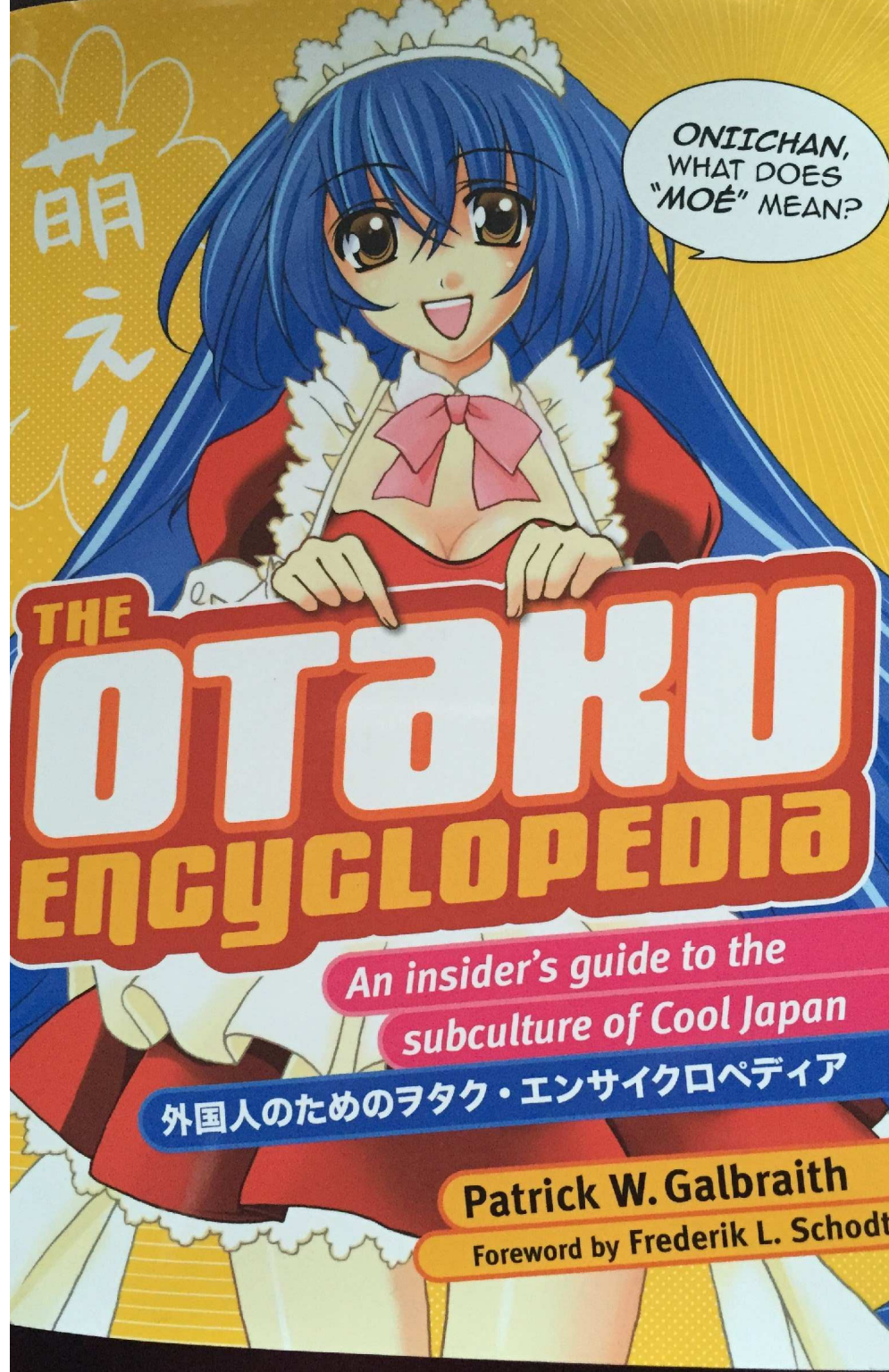
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SALES

Akihabara

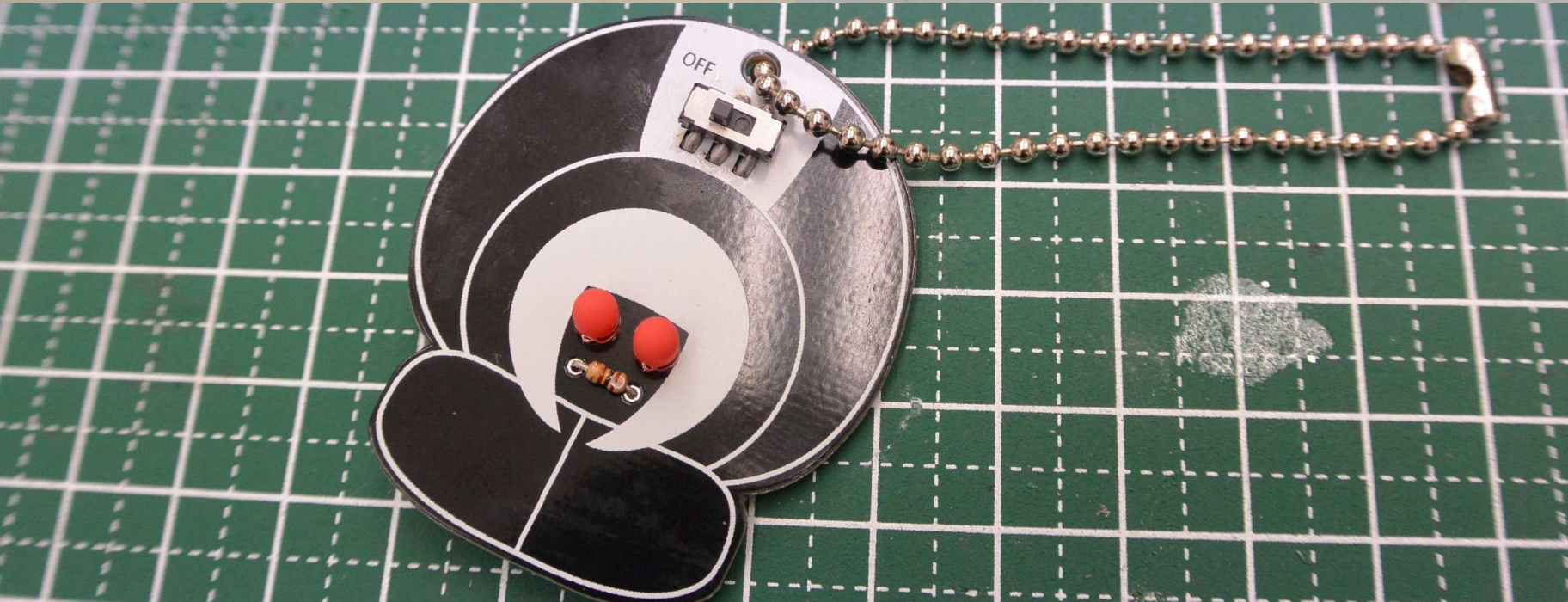
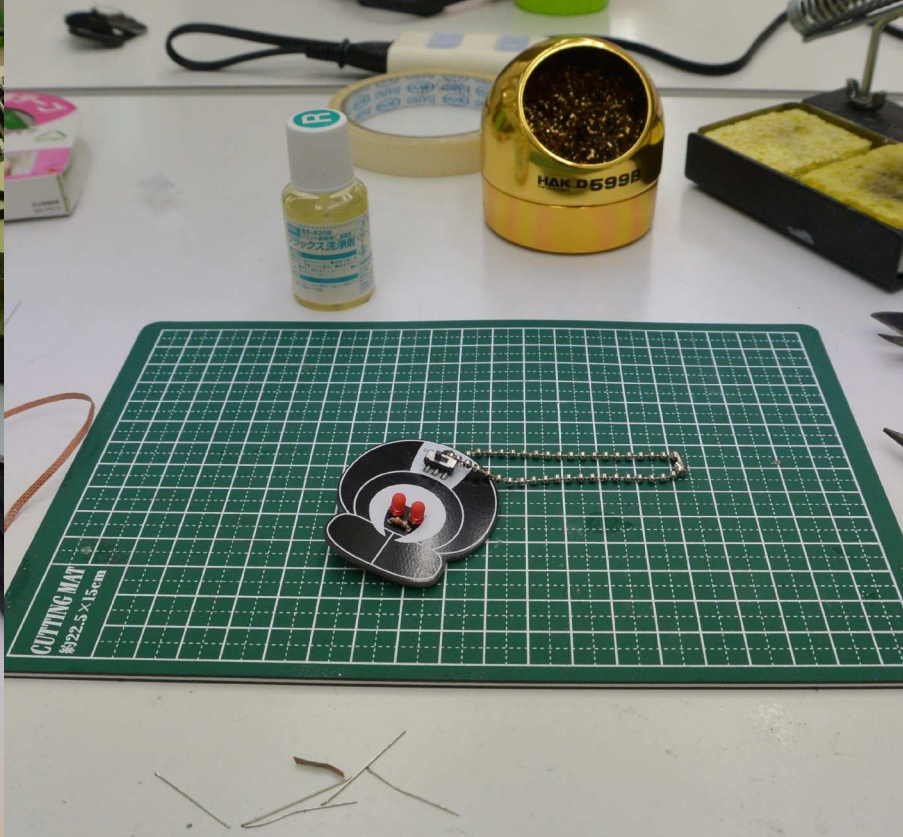
My next tour was a guided tour of the Akihabara region of Tokyo the cultural center for "otaku", Japan's nerdy, geek sub-culture. Originally known for its electronics goods following World War II, in the last few decades Akihabara has become an otaku mecca consisting of multi-storey gaming arcades, manga and anime stores, cosplay stores, model shops and maid cafes.

My guide, Alaskan Patrick Galbraith, provided an overview and history of the region. I was given the opportunity to visit an electronics workshop where I soldered together a simple LED keychain (after notifying the shop owner that I had the unfair advantage of doing this before as an electrical engineer).

The tour concluded at the @home cafe, a popular maid cafe where I tried the iconic green melon soda before taking a photo with my waitress Momoa and receiving my Level 1 International My Master card.









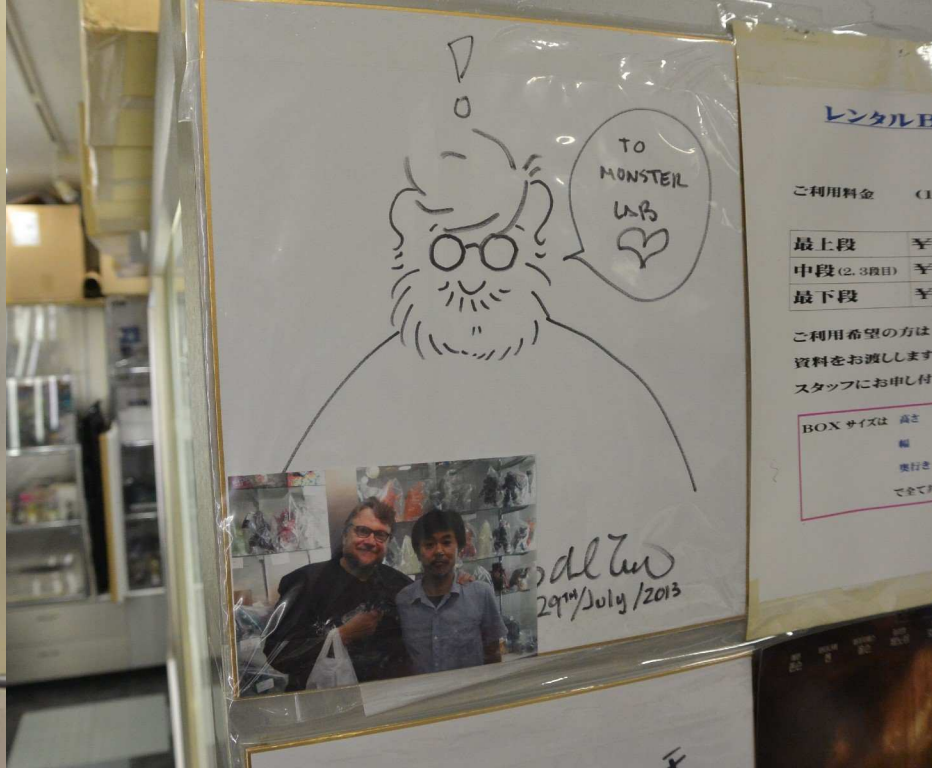








特價
東京SOSボックス





ファミリー家物語
お互い存分に
在陣を尽くしての

怪力乱神に手を付けてはならない
怪力乱神の所持は厳禁
お叱りください

飲食禁止
店の外で

非売品
抜刀禁止
お断り致します

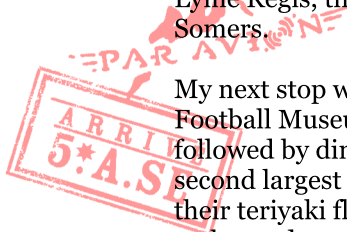


Tokyo Tower

For my final day in Tokyo I decided to visit the iconic Tokyo Tower, the Eiffel Tower-esque landmark featured in many Japanese movies and anime. Although long since dwarfed by Skytree Tower (the largest structure in Japan and second tallest structure in the world), Tokyo Tower still held nostalgia for me.

Ascending to the mid-level viewing deck I could see many of the locations I had visited during my time in Japan including Mt. Fuji (although the summit was now shrouded in clouds) and Odaiba. On my way back to the train I found a barber shop called Bermuda-Lyme. I spoke briefly with the owner who couldn't speak much English but I believe it was named this because he liked the sound of it. It is possibly a reference to Bermuda and Lyme Regis, the birthplace of Sir George Somers.

My next stop was a brief visit to the Japan Football Museum to purchase football jerseys followed by dinner at MOS Burger, Japan's second largest fast food franchise, known for their teriyaki flavoured burgers and green melon soda.







Hair Salon
Bermuda-Lyme

OPEN

TOWER SIDE BUILDING
HIKURA

財形不動産
土地・建物

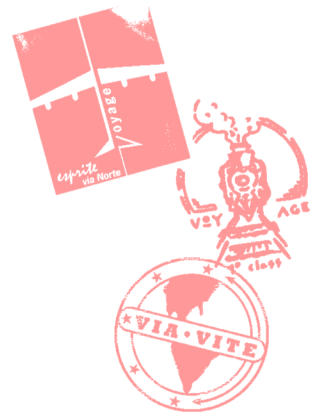


自転車を除く

MENU PRICE
カット700-12,200
カラー44,000
トリートメント14,500
MENU PRICE
HAIR CUT ¥2,200
CUT, SHAMPOO 44,000
COLORING 14,500







Equal mix of modern and ancient describe the islands of Japan. This photo journal explores the ancient temples and shrines of Kyoto and Nara and the futuristic landscape of Tokyo's many distinct prefectures. Topped off with a strenuous climb up Mt. Fuji to greet the rising sun for which Japan is known.

