

# Sekai wa Hitotsu

Gifu International Center (GIC)

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Introducing  
our newest  
Coordinator for  
International  
Relations!

Gifu Prefecture Coordinator for  
International Relations (CIR)

**Gustavo Sorato** (São Paulo, Brazil)

Pleased to meet you all! Please call me Tabo!

I grew up in a small town in São Paulo called Santa Fé do Sul, which is home to many Japanese Brazilians. As a result, I grew up in an environment where I had many opportunities to experience Japanese culture, which is probably why I became interested in Japanese things when I was a child. I was particularly fond of Japanese cuisine, manga, and ninja!

I majored in Japanese language and literature at São Paulo State University, with a year spent studying abroad in Tokyo. At the time, I was really happy that one of my dreams had come true, as I'd been able to come to Japan. It was the first time I had lived in a big city like Tokyo, and it is a treasured memory that I will keep with me for the rest of my life.

I would really like to learn more about Gifu's history. The fact that Gifu has strong links to the Sengoku period (the Warring States period; 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries; during which time Japan had no centralized government and warring samurai factions fought each other) is of great interest to me. I would also like to form bonds with the Gifu community, as I did when I studied in Tokyo. I am looking forward to seeing what my future in Gifu holds, and to enjoy more of the places Gifu has to offer. I hope the time I spend here as a CIR will further relations between Brazil and Japan.

I look forward to working as a CIR and promoting Brazil in Gifu!



## What comes to mind when you think about Easter?

Do you celebrate Easter? Easter is celebrated in many countries all around the world, but is not very well known in Japan. Regarding its origin, Easter began many years ago as a way to celebrate the rebirth of nature every spring in both Lithuania and Britain. However, with the spread of Christianity, it became the most important Christian holiday, celebrating the rebirth of Jesus Christ. The largest Christian denomination in Lithuania is Catholicism, and in the UK it is the Church of England. In recent years, the influence of Christianity throughout Europe, including in Lithuania and the UK has declined, but Easter is still celebrated as a tradition even among non-Christians.

Easter's date is not fixed, so it changes every year. The Sunday after the first full moon following the Spring Equinox becomes Easter Sunday, and the Friday before is also an important day. This is because Jesus was crucified on the Friday, and resurrected on the Sunday. This year, Easter was on April 9<sup>th</sup> in both Lithuania and the UK.



Easter eggs dyed using boiled  
onion skin broth.

What comes to mind when you think about Easter? The most famous symbol of Easter is Easter eggs. The reason eggs are used to celebrate Easter is linked to Lent. Lent is a fast that begins 40 days before Easter, and traditionally meat, dairy, and eggs were not eaten during this period. The day before Lent began, in order to use up all of the eggs and milk so they would not go to waste, pancakes were eaten. This custom has continued until today, and in the UK it is called "Pancake Day". In Lithuania too, before Lent begins there is a festival that celebrates the end of winter called "Užgavėnės", during which pancakes are eaten.

These days, in the UK Easter eggs are always chocolate eggs. For Easter, chocolate eggs are exchanged as gifts and there are chocolate Easter egg hunts, which are very popular among children. In Lithuania, it is customary to make Easter eggs using real eggs. Leaves are stuck to the shell of the raw egg, and the egg is then put into water boiled with onion skin. This stains the eggshell, and when you remove the leaf, you can see the outline of where it was, creating a pretty pattern. Another traditional method is done by drawing patterns onto the shell of a boiled egg using beeswax, then dipping the egg in brightly colored dye. Why not give one of these a try next Easter?

# Introducing tourist spots in Gifu Prefecture!

Following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions, many foreign tourists are now visiting Japan. Gifu Prefecture also has many spots that are popular with foreign tourists, which we will introduce here!

## ★ Shirakawa-go ★



Shirakawa-go

Shirakawa-go is in the Hida region, in northern Gifu Prefecture. The village is home to a traditional architectural style called "Gassho-zukuri" in Japanese. In recognition of the beautiful Gassho-zukuri landscape, in 1995 Shirakawa-go was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Gassho-zukuri is a unique Japanese building method in which wooden beams are arranged in the shape of a mountain. There are various theories, but it is said that the name "gassho", which literally translates to "hands joined together in prayer", comes from the steep shape of the thatched roofs looking like palms pressed together. The "zukuri" part of "Gassho-zukuri" means making or building.

Shirakawa-go is one of the areas in Japan with the heaviest snowfall, and so this building method was developed a long time ago by the locals to prevent their houses from being crushed under the weight of the snow.

Visitors can enjoy the scenery during each of the four seasons, and there are even Gassho-zukuri houses where you can stay overnight!

Shirakawa-go Tourist Association English website: <https://shirakawa-go.gr.jp/en/>

## ★ Gujo Hachiman ★



Gujo Odori

Gujo, located in central Gifu Prefecture, has a castle town featuring Gujo Hachiman Castle, known as Gifu's "castle in the sky", where you can enjoy an old townscape with a long and rich history.

As well as the quaint townscape, the area has a lot of nature to enjoy with water so clean that Gujo Hachiman is often referred to as the "water town". Rivers and canals run through the town, which is drained by these irrigation channels, sustaining the lives of its residents.

The most famous thing about Gujo Hachiman is "Gujo Odori", or Gujo dance, which is said to have over 400 years of history and is one of Japan's three great Bon Odori festivals. "Bon" is a Buddhist Japanese festival which takes place every August and celebrates ancestors. Gujo's festival is also the longest Bon Odori in Japan, performed every night for about 30 days during the summer, attracting some 300,000 visitors every year. Last year, this traditional dance was added to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List.

For the last few years, due to the COVID-19 pandemic the dance could not go ahead as usual, however this year the festival will be held as it was before the pandemic, with a focus on tradition, so come along and join Gujo Odori this summer!

The ultimate guide to Gujo Hachiman's tourist spots! 2023 "TABITABI Gujo", English website: <https://en.tabitabigujo.com/>  
Gujo Odori Dance Schedule for summer 2023, English version: [http://www.gujohachiman.com/kanko/odori\\_schedule\\_e.html](http://www.gujohachiman.com/kanko/odori_schedule_e.html)

## ★ Magome-juku ★



Magome-juku

A tourist spot that has recently been attracting a lot of attention is Magome-juku in Nakatsugawa. Magome-juku flourished during the Edo period (1603-1868) as a post town on the Nakasendo, a route linking the capital city of Edo (present day Tokyo) to Kyoto.

The stone-paved slopes are lined with shops serving freshly made senbei, oyaki, and the local specialty gohei mochi, making it a lovely place to eat and stroll. For those unfamiliar with these Japanese treats, senbei are rice crackers, oyaki are buns stuffed with vegetables or even red bean, and gohei mochi is a rice cake skewer often dipped in sweet soy sauce. Also, just outside the town there is a viewpoint where you can see Mount Ena, and the other striking natural features in this beautiful area.

From Magome-juku it is only about 7.3km to Tsumago-juku in Nagiso, Nagano Prefecture, and a popular hiking trail links the two post towns. Walking this two-hour journey might be fun,

as if you were a person from the Edo period!

Magome-juku | Nakatsugawa Tourist Association: <https://nakatsugawa.town/> (this website is not available in English but can be translated using Google.)  
Get to know Magome | Magome Tourist Association: <https://kiso-magome.com/> (available in English.)



全国健康保険協会 岐阜支部  
協会けんぽ

For information about National Health Insurance please visit the Japan Health Insurance Association website!



Available in 5 languages, in addition to Japanese and English!

岐阜支部 マスコットキャラクター

## Let's enjoy Gifu's beautiful rivers safely!

Having fun in rivers and the sea is one of the pleasures of summer. We are lucky to have large, clean rivers like the Nagara River flowing through Gifu Prefecture.

Having BBQs and camping at river spots are popular activities, however, there are some precautions that need to be taken to make sure you stay safe this summer!

### 1. The danger of drowning When going on summer trips to rivers, accidents involving drowning are a risk.

- When going in a river, always check the depth and currents of the water.
- Wear a life jacket.
- Check the weather forecast, and cancel if it is going to rain.



Please check the Gifu Prefecture River Disaster Prevention Information website, which includes information about weather conditions and river water levels throughout the prefecture in Japanese, English, Tagalog, Portuguese, and Chinese.

#### Areas of the Nagara River & Itadori River in Gifu Prefecture where accidents frequently occur:

- ◆ Around Mino Bridge (Mino city), upstream of the Ayunose Bridge (Sekai city), and in all areas of the Itadori River (Sekai city and Mino city). Please be very careful when visiting these areas.

### 2. Watch out for heatstroke! During the summer season there is a high chance of suffering from heatstroke.

- Stay hydrated.
- Avoid staying out in the sun.
- If symptoms of heatstroke start to appear, move to a cool place and replenish your body with fluids and salt.
- If the person in question loses consciousness, call an ambulance immediately.

(How to call an ambulance)

1. Call 119
2. You must say whether you need the fire department, ("shobo" in Japanese), or the emergency services ("kyukyu" in Japanese). When someone is ill, please say "kyukyu", to request the emergency services.
3. You will then need to inform the emergency services of the address. If you do not know the address, please give the name or address of a nearby building.
4. After that, give your name and phone number.

\*If there is someone who speaks Japanese nearby, please ask for their help!

The main symptoms of heatstroke	Severity
Dizziness, fainting, sore or stiff muscles, sweating profusely	Mild
Headache, feeling uncomfortable, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, despondency	Moderate
Losing consciousness, convulsions, problems with limb movement, high body temperature	Severe

### 3. Let's take care of the environment!

There are many living creatures in rivers, and they are important areas for preserving our natural environment.

- Please take your trash home with you and do not forget to bring a trash bag.

**We can enjoy ourselves this summer while being polite, following the rules, and caring for our environment!**

**Let's work together to protect Gifu, "the land of clear waters"!**

## Important notice for technical intern trainees

In Japan, it is prohibited to force a woman to leave her job due to pregnancy, and this also applies to foreign nationals enrolled on technical intern training programs. If you wish to do so, after giving birth you can renew your period of stay in Japan and continue technical intern training.

You can also take work leave from 6 weeks before your due date. If this leave is unpaid, you can receive childcare allowance (approximately 60% of your wage) from your health insurance provider.

If you return to your home country temporarily for childcare leave, you can resume your technical intern training at a later date. To resume training, you must complete the necessary procedures at the Organization for Technical Intern Training (OTIT), and at other relevant organizations.

New life is precious, and if you find out you are pregnant, do not struggle alone. First, consult with your company, relevant organizations, and/or government departments.

#### OTIT Consultation Services in Foreign Languages (for technical interns only)

Language	Opening times	Phone number (free of charge)	URL for consultation website
English	Tues, Thurs 11:00-19:00 Sat 9:00-17:00	0120-250-147	<a href="https://www.support.otit.go.jp/soudan/en/">https://www.support.otit.go.jp/soudan/en/</a>

## Preparing for emergencies

Emergency email bulletins are sent from the national government to mobile devices countrywide when a time-sensitive situation arises, including but not limited to; ballistic missile information, emergency earthquake bulletins, and major tsunami warnings. In addition, separate sirens and messages will be broadcast on official local disaster prevention radio services. This system is called the Japan Alert System (J-Alert).

If a message is broadcast about a ballistic missile potentially hitting Japan, remain calm and take immediate action.

#### What to do in the event of a ballistic missile strike

##### ● Evacuate to a nearby building or underground

Please note that sturdy buildings are preferable if possible. If there are none nearby, any building is acceptable



##### ● Take cover or get down on the ground and protect your head.



##### ● Get away from windows, or move to a room without windows.



## Interview with Eloise Miyasaka, from Brazil, about her charity work

### Q How did you first get involved in charity work?

I started doing charity work in 2007, making and giving out soup to those in need in Londrina, a city in Paraná, Brazil. In Japan in 2015, I shaved my head and donated my hair to be made into wigs for children undergoing treatment for cancer. In response, 70 other Brazilians living in Japan shaved their heads and donated their hair too. We donated all the hair we'd collected to an organization in Osaka.

After this, we found out that there are 10 children's homes in Gifu Prefecture. So we could make a donation to the children's home in Gifu city, we sold Brazilian coxinha (Brazilian-style chicken croquettes) and donated all of the proceeds.

This charity work is possible thanks to the help of Seito Andressa, Takigawa Fernanda, and Pachecoria. I could never have done all this alone.

### Q So far, what kind of response have you had from the people you've donated to?

When we made the donation to the children's home in Gifu city in 2021, we got thank you letters from 60 children. For Respect for the Aged Day, we collect goods and donate them to elderly care facilities. We make donations to facilities in Tajimi and Minokamo, and they contact us every year to participate in an event, where we sing songs and do other recreational activities with the elderly people. As a thank you, we received origami that they had folded, handkerchiefs, and hair ties.

### ● For those who would like to support Eloise's charitable work by making a donation ●

We collect goods twice per year, for Respect for the Aged Day (third Monday of September; September 18<sup>th</sup> this year) and one month before Christmas. Throughout the rest of the year, we do not have a place to store donations. Please call us during these two periods, and we will let you know how to donate.



↑ With fellow charity workers



↑ Collecting goods to support those in need



↑ Eloise after cutting off her hair to donate it

TEL: 080-1174-4202

## HIRO Gakuen School has opened a Center of Learning for Long Term Residence (CLLR).

- For those who have graduated from Japanese school, but want to improve their Japanese and go on to higher education.
- For those who want to enroll in a university or a technical school in Japan.
- For those who want to work a full-time job in Japan.
- For those who want to improve their Japanese skills and change jobs.

A class that combines career support and Japanese language education has been set up for those who would like to live in Japan for the foreseeable future, and accordingly would like to learn more Japanese.

● If you would like to go on to higher education, Japanese language-learning support and entrance exam support is provided for both universities and technical schools,

● If you would like to find employment, we will introduce you to workplaces, and after you have found employment, support will be provided for one year so that you feel content and fulfilled with your work. Your timetable will be such that you can learn Japanese while you work.

(This program has been designated by Gifu Prefecture as a model service for creating an integrated system for Japanese language education and providing support for employment and settlement.)

**Location:** HIRO Gakuen School, 2-90-2, Jomen, Ogaki City, Gifu Prefecture

### One year course (until March 2024)

**Language level requirement:** JLPT N4 or above

**Four classes per week:** Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat 9:20-12:40

**Course fee:** 18,000 yen per month

**Content:** Express your thoughts and feelings in Japanese.  
Learn the Japanese necessary for finding employment and entering higher education.

### Japanese for work course

**Language level requirement:** Able to read hiragana and katakana

**Once per week:** Saturdays 13:30-14:30

**Course fee:** 3,000 yen

**Content:** Japanese useful for a workplace setting

**Contact HIRO Gakuen School for enquiries**

TEL: 0584-82-6045 (9:00-17:00)

\* Available in Japanese and Portuguese



Issued By

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Opening hours: Sunday to Friday 9:30 - 18:00

Closed: Saturday, Public Holidays, New Year Period

Languages: English, Chinese, Portuguese, Tagalog, Vietnamese

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