

Singapore's Festivities

In this month's Obihiro Pioneer, we invited Jun from Singapore, to introduce holidays and celebrations that take place in his home country!

As you snuggle into the warmth of your *kotatsu*, you start to miss the outdoors that summer afforded - the good weather where you can easily go out to hike, and perhaps the festivals that were aplenty. In November, when it starts to get cold, the festivals within Tokachi have mostly ended. But in sunny Singapore, the festive mood is still going strong as Singaporeans prepare for Deepavali and Christmas.



Chinese New Year illuminations



Hari Raya Puasa



Deepavali illuminations



Vesak Day

Festivals in Singapore

Being a country of multicultural heritage, Singapore celebrates a multitude of festivals. This is reflected through our public holidays - Chinese New Year, Vesak Day, Hari Raya Puasa, Hari Raya Haji, Deepavali and Christmas, amongst others. These are in addition to the other observances that Singaporeans follow throughout the whole year.

At this point, you may be wondering about this: if only a particular racial/religious group celebrates Chinese New Year or Hari Raya in Singapore, what do the other groups do?

Well, for most people, it is a day to rest. However, it is also a good time to catch up with old friends and neighbours.

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What's cooler, though, is that some of these holidays are consecutive holidays during which house visiting is often involved. For example, as a Chinese Singaporean, one can be invited by his/her Malay Singaporean friends to their house to celebrate with them and vice versa.

Places to enjoy the festivities

If you happen to be in Singapore during Deepavali, then you would definitely want to check out the Hindu temples and Little India.



Sri Mariamman Temple

One of the highly recommended temples to visit is the Sri Mariamman Temple, located in the heart of Chinatown, just minutes away from a Buddhist temple, a mosque and a church. The Sri Mariamman Temple hosts the annual Fire Walking Festival and the Silver Chariot Procession, both of which are quite an experience for those unfamiliar with Hindu festivities.



Fire Walking Festival

As part of the festivities, the stretch of road along Little India is decorated by overarching lights, making it a stunning sight at night along with numerous bazaars that sell festive goodies and delicacies.

Deepavali: Origins and its symbolism

Deepavali is a festival enjoyed by most Indians, and while there are many interpretations as to how it came about, all of these interpretations have a common theme – good triumphs evil. Thus, Deepavali is a celebration of this victory.

In one of the interpretations of the Deepavali story, lighting rows (avail) of clay lamps (deepa) helped ward off evil and allowed for the King to safely return home. Perhaps that's how the festival got its name!



Clay Lamps

During Deepavali, Indians light up rows of clay lamps outside their house. This action reinforces the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and is a symbol for the inner light that protects people from spiritual darkness. Deepavali is usually celebrated over five days, with the third day being the main day of the festival. On this day, families gather for prayers, feast and fireworks.

If you visit Singapore during October or November, you definitely would want to check out the Deepavali celebrations!

Events at TIRC and in Tokachi and Obihiro

When	What	Where/Contact
11/8 (Wed) 19:00-21:00	International Mini-Volleyball Night 国際ミニバレー・ナイト Meet new friends from around the world while enjoying a fun and easy sport.	Tokachi International Relations Center 森の交流館・十勝 0155-34-0122 tirc@city.obihoro.hokkaido.jp
11/11 (Sat) 16:00-18:00	Japanese Conversation and Learning Table 日本語講座 Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment.	
11/18 (Sat) 10:00-11:30	44th Kids Playground (Singapore) 第44回キッズ・プレイグラウンド(シンガポール) Come with your children to learn and play while meeting local families. This month, you can enjoy Singaporean crafts, storytelling and much more. Come and interact with a new CIR from Singapore!	
11/18 (Sat) 18:30-20:00	64th International Talk (World High School Students) 第64回インターナショナル・トーク(世界の高校生) Learn more about the countries of the world and exchange ideas with other participants. This month, AFS exchange students from Australia, Colombia, France and Malaysia will be introducing their countries, high school life and the latest trends to participants.	
11/25 (Sat) 16:00-18:30	11th Multicultural Festival 第11回国際文化祭 Enjoy traditional dances, songs, music and fashion from all around the world. There will also be a world photo gallery and handicrafts exhibit.	
11/1 ~ 3/31	Winter Festival in Ecopark ウインターフェス in エコパ An event that is held throughout winter at Tokachi Ecology Park. After playing outdoors, enjoy a warm drink indoors, where ample space is available for recreational activities. Try out snowshoe walking (fees apply, available when snow accumulates), cross country skiing, snow rafting, sledding and more! The local café nearby also serves a menu made with locally sourced ingredients!	
11/4 – 11/5 (Sat – Sun) 10:00-15:00	Summer Appreciation Festival 夏ありがとうフェスタ Enjoy summer once again at Tokachi Ecology Park. You can try navigating through a maze, savor delicacies from food trucks, buy vegetables from the farmers market and more! Participation is free for some attractions at this festival.	

Movies At Cinema Taiyo, in Obihiro

(Nishi 3, Minami 11)
Tel: (0155) 20-1525

Movie timings are subjected to changes! (this movie list is not exhaustive due to limited editorial space)
To confirm, call or check online at: http://www.taiyogroup.jp/cinema/theater/_obihiro/movie.shtml



Title	Language	Dates
War for Planet of the Apes	ENG Subtitles	Until 24th
Blade Runner 2049	ENG Subtitles	All Month
Thor: Ragnarok	ENG Subtitles	From 3rd
A Dog's Purpose	TBD	From 11th
Logan Lucky	TBD	From 18th
Justice League	TBD	From 23rd

Winter Tea Ceremony 2017

Date: November 12th (Sun)

Venue: Sei-fu-an (Tea Ceremony Room), Tokachi International Relations Center (TIRC)

Time: 10:00-14:30

Eligibility of participants:

Foreign citizens residing in Tokachi (first 50 participates for free)

Obihiro residents above the age of 13 (limited to 10 participants)

300 yen – Tea ceremony (TC)

500 yen – Tea ceremony with tea-making session (TCM)

The time slots for the Winter Tea Ceremony are as below:

1st session 10:00-10:20 (TC)

2nd session 10:30-10:50 (TC)

3rd session 11:00-11:20 (TC)

4th session 11:30-11:50 (TC)

5th session 13:00-13:40 (TCM)

6th session 13:50-14:30 (TCM)

Apply by: November 10th (Fri)

Contact Tokachi International Relations Center

via 0155-35-1210



Obihiro Pioneer can be found at the following locations: Obihiro City Hall, Tokachi International Relations Center, Obihiro University International Center, Obihiro Tourism and Convention Center inside the Obihiro JR Station, Obihiro Public Library, Tokachi Plaza, Cinema Taiyo, Joy English Academy and online at www.city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp (click on "Information for Foreigners")

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