

Free Japanese Classes at Obihiro City Hall 日本語講座

Starting from **May 9th**, there will be free Japanese classes **every Tuesday and Wednesday** in **Obihiro City Hall**.

There will be 2 evening classes on **Wednesdays**, 「**Beginner Level I**」 and 「**Beginner Level II**」. On Tuesday mornings, 「**Fun Conversation**」 classes will be available for intermediate level participants. The class is for free conversation in a relaxed environment.

All classes are run by the Tokachi International Association



and taught by local volunteer Japanese language teachers. Tentatively, the dates are scheduled to be from **May 9th to July 12th**. If a teacher needs to reschedule a session, dates may be changed. There will be at least **10 sessions** given.

To sign up or for inquiries visit or contact:

Obihiro City Hall
International and Domestic Relations Section (3rd Floor)
West 5 South 7
Tel: 0155-65-4133
Email: international@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp

OR

Tokachi International Relations Center (森の交流館)
West 20 South 6 (next to JICA)
Tel: 0155-34-0122
Email: tirc@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp

Japanese Class Information:
@ Obihiro City Hall (West 5 South 7)

Tuesdays (Starting May 9th)

「**Fun Conversation**」
10:00–12:00

- Open conversation practice in a relaxing environment.

Wednesdays (starting May 10th)

「**Beginner I**」
18:30–20:00

- For beginners! No prior understanding of Japanese needed.

「**Beginner II**」
18:30–20:00

- For upper beginner/lower intermediate learners.

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Events at TIRC and in Tokachi and Obihiro

When	What	Where/Contact
4/12 (Wed) 19:00-21:00	International Mini-Volleyball Night 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.obihiro.hokkaido.jp
4/8, 4/22 (Sat) 16:00-18:00	Japanese Conversation and Learning Table Improve your Japanese language skills in a friendly environment.	
4/15 (Sat) 19:00-21:00	International Potluck Night (Philippines) Meet local and international residents while enjoying a dish from around the world. This time, you can enjoy “embutido” a savory Filipino-style meatloaf. Fee: Free of charge (no registration required) Please bring a dish and drink to share. Organized by the Committee for Improvement of the City	
4/22–23 (Sat, Sun)	Michi no Eki Nakasatsunai Spring Thanksgiving Festival 道の駅なかさつない春の感謝祭 Enjoy spring and shopping at the 3 stores at Michi no Eki Nakasatsunai! There will balloons given out, as well as a raffle drawing for prizes.	Michi no Eki Nakasatsunai 道の駅なかさつない Nakasatsunai Village Odori South 7-14 0155-67-2811
4/23 (Sun)	Michi no Eki 「Pia 21 Shihoro」 道の駅「ピア21しほろ」グランドオープン After a renovation and relocation (1 km south of the previous location), Michi no Eki 「Pia 21 Shihoro」will be having their grand re-opening! Enjoy a café and food court with goods made by local farmers, as well as a store of local specialties. To commemorate the event, there will also be a special opening ceremony.	Michi no Eki 「Pia 21 Shihoro」 道の駅「ピア21しほろ」 Shihoro Town West 2 sen 134-1 01564-5-5213
4/23 (Sun) 10:00-11:00	Fish Day 魚の日 Every 4th Sunday is “fish day.” To celebrate, fish and other ingredients taken from the sea are used to make healthy dishes native to the north. A variety of products are on sale for the event.	Hiroo Town Fisheries Cooperative Food Division 広尾漁協食品部 Hiroo Toen Kaisho Mae 2-79 01558-2-3202

Happy New Year! In April?

More than a quarter of 2017 has passed. From under the layers of packed snow, the black asphalt finally starts to shine through as spring slowly arrives. In most of Japan, the cherry blossoms or *sakura* 桜 are blooming as new graduates go on to their first day of class or work. April is the beginning of Japan's fiscal year (may also be referred to as academic year, work year, financial year, etc.) or 年度 *nendo* in Japanese. In this month's Obihiro Pioneer, we will learn more about how Japan's 年度 differs from the rest of the world.

Why does Japan's "new year" start from April and not January?

Most of Japan (unfortunately, not Hokkaido) experience spring in late March-April. During this time, the iconic *sakura* 桜 are blooming. After a long winter, the change of seasons and blossoming of new life has historically been associated with the new year. This tradition is still strongly held in Japanese culture as many events associated with "new" such as going to a new school or moving to a new place, usually occurs in April. Many



The *sakura*-filled entrance of a university in Tokyo on the first day of school.



countries in the west also had their calendars starting in spring, but had changed to the current January as the first month over several hundred years ago.

New year, new coworkers?

For many working adults, you may have noticed your manager who you finally became good friends with, suddenly not at his desk. 人事異動 *jinji idou* or the notorious "personnel change" occurs in most offices and schools around Japan. Most changes happen suddenly and with little notice, forcing many to move homes with less than 2 weeks before having to start their new position. This is another long-held tradition in most Japanese companies and organizations. Dating back as far as the late 700's when

Japan ran under a military government. With the Emperor as the head, he would appoint *shougun* 将軍 or high ranked military officers to lead various territories across Japan. Periodically, these officers were forced to change areas/

jobs in order to not to gain a strong stance and become a threat to the Emperor. It is

believed that these 1000+ year old tactics are still used today in Japanese offices.

As Hokkaido's spring slowly comes around, we hope that you quickly adjust to the "new year!"

Times and movies are subject to change! (for space reasons not all movies are listed)
To confirm, call or check online at: http://www.taiyogroup.jp/cinema/theater/_obihiro/movie.shtml



Title	Language	Dates
Moana	JP Dubbed	Until 28th
SING	Eng Dub/Sub	All Month
Kong: Skull Island	Eng Subtitles	Until 21st
Beauty and the Beast	TBD	From 21st
The Fate of the Furious (Wild Speed: Ice Break)	TBD	From 29th

International Recipe: Spicy Ahi Poke from Hawaii (USA)

Hawaii is a special place with many people from different cultures. This month's recipe mixes Japan's love of raw fish and Southeast Asian heat. "Ahi" (pronounced ah-hee) and "poke" (po-keh) are Hawaiian words. "Ahi" means tuna and poke means cubes (similar to サイコロ saikoro).

Get heated with this easy local dish from Hawaii!

*Contains raw fish

Ingredients (2 servings):

1 Cup Sashimi grade tuna (raw)

1 Tsp Sesame seed oil

1 Tsp Soy Sauce

1 Tbsp Mayonnaise

1 Tbsp Hot sauce

*Sriracha brand is recommended

Optional:

Cooked white rice

Green Onion

Sweet Chili Sauce



Directions

1. Remove excess water from the tuna with a paper towel.
2. Chop the tuna into roughly 2 cm sized cubes.
3. In a bowl, evenly coat the tuna with sesame seed oil and soy sauce.
4. Chill the mix in the refrigerator for 30 mins.

5. After chilling, mix in the hot sauce and mayonnaise.

***Note:** the ratio of mayonnaise to hot sauce may be adjusted to your liking. For some sweetness, sweet chili sauce may also be added.

6. Ready to eat as is, or served on warm cooked white rice.

May be stored in a sealed container in the refrigerator for

up to 2 days.

*Feel free to garnish with chopped green onions!

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")

"Obihiro Pioneer" is a newsletter published monthly by the Obihiro International and Domestic Relations Section for residents of the Tokachi District and related parties. The contents of this newsletter do not necessarily represent the official views or opinions of the International and Domestic Relations Section or the City of Obihiro. Questions? Tel (0155) 65-4133 or send e-mail to the Editing Team at international@city.obihiro.hokkaido.jp.