

はいさい - めんそーれー

Hai-Sai - Mensooree

Issue 8, July 2023



The Month of July in Okinawa

<https://visitokinawajapan.com/plan-your-trip/when-to-visit-climate-seasons/okinawa-july/>

Daytime temperatures in July average around 30 degrees Celsius (88 degrees Fahrenheit), with highs and lows of about 34 and 27 degrees Celsius. Be sure to wear sun protection, stay hydrated and put on bug spray. Sudden showers sometimes roll in even if the forecast is sunny, so be prepared by carrying around a lightweight umbrella or hand towel. It is also a good idea to check the weather forecasts as typhoons sometimes occur in July.

What can you do in Okinawa in the month of July? Summer gets into full swing in July and temperatures soar. Keep cool in the water on a diving or snorkeling tour, enjoy sunning yourself on the beach, or visit a remote island to really slow down and relax. July is also a good time to discover the natural world in Okinawa, with tours



that take you to the inner depths of caves and guided kayaking adventures in mangrove forests. Renting an RV is a great way to make the most of the weather, and explore the islands at your own pace.

Exciting Events

Celebrating summer

- Summer festivals are held throughout towns and villages during the summer months. The Nago Summer Festival is a quintessential summer festival with fireworks, revelers clad in *yukata*, stalls selling food and drinks, and live performances.

Painting the sky with color

- Firework displays are a staple of summer festivals. The Ocean Expo Park Summer Festival comes to an explosive finish with a display that features some 10,000 fireworks, making it one of the largest on the islands.

Cooling caves

- Caving adventures with a guide are offered in summer for normally closed off sections of Gyokusendo Cave, one of the largest limestone cave systems in Japan. You will receive a full rental set of spelunking gear for the journey that takes you through narrow crevices and underground pools of water. It is an exciting alternative to spending a day at the beach.

The Best Food in Okinawa



Po-Ku Tamago Onigiri Monten



Goya Chanpuru



OKINAWA MATSUSOKAN TRADITIONAL KARATE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

“Spam” proper is the precooked canned pork product made by Hormel Foods Corporation in 1937 that was a well-known military staple food in World War II when it came into wide use in soldiers’ C-rations. Since fresh meat was difficult to get to the soldiers on the front, World War II saw the largest use of Spam when troops ate it for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

This signature U.S. military dish of yesteryear has since won the hearts and minds – and taste buds – of select consumers throughout the Pacific. And it is no surprise it has a strong foothold on Okinawa, where locals have long boasted they, “eat every part of the pig except its squeal.” According the canned pork labels, this still holds true today.

Okinawan’s consume an estimated 7.2 million cans of canned pork annually, more than one can for each person per week. It is an indispensable ingredient in popular local dishes such as “po-oku tamago” (pork and eggs) and “goya chanpuru” (bittermelon stir fry), and can be found in virtually every home or restaurant pantry on island.

“In Okinawa, (canned) pork is a kind of soul food,” says Asuka Ganeko of Tulip Food Company, Japan, one of the island’s leading sellers of canned pork. “It is used in virtually everything that’s cooked, not only for goya chanpuru. It is put in miso soup or cooked as stir-fried vegetables, sandwiches, rice balls, noodles and rolled sushi.”

Ganeko, who says she eats canned pork at least once or twice a day, says that although it’s precooked, locals almost never eat it without grilling, broiling or frying it first. Okinawans can be as particular about how to fry canned pork, as Americans are about how to cook their steaks.

“Every person and every family has their own way of cooking (canned) pork,” says Ganeko. “Some like it sliced thick, while others like it sliced thin and cooked well, like bacon. Sometimes, how thick it should be sliced and how to cook it can even lead to quarreling.”

As the mainstay of local comfort foods, most restaurants could not do business without it.

“Any decent restaurant in Okinawa serves good pork and eggs,” says Ganeko. “We Okinawan’s often wonder why it is so much more delicious at restaurants than when we cook them at home.”

It’s no mystery, however, how this canned delicacy became so popular.

Excerpted from Article by Takahiro Takiguchi, Stripes Okinawa, March 22, 2023



Okinawan Phrase for July

“Shikinoo chui shiihii shiru kurasuru” - Let's live helping each other in this world.

Learn about Okinawa

<https://www.okistyle.com/a2z/>

Why do I document Okinawan (Ryukyuan)?

by Yukari Akamine

Within the last hundred and several years, the Okinawan language has been dramatically affected by political history. Until 1878, Okinawa was an independent country called the Kingdom of the Ryukyus. In 1879, Japan annexed Ryukyu as a Prefecture of Japan and the name of Ryukyu was abolished and it became Okinawan Prefecture. In accordance with the modernization policy of the Japanese government, Okinawan people had to learn and speak Japanese in school and public places. Thus, Ryukyuan language gradually faded out. In order to understand how the Okinawan language has survived, we must trace the historical development by looking back into the days of Kingdom of the Ryukyus and how the Ryukyuan language has transformed since then.

In the past, the Okinawan language encountered many obstacles in its development.

The first and most important would be that the language has always been at the mercy of politics or the existing authority or ruler of the Japanese government or the U.S.A.

The second is the mode of language succession from generation to generation.

Therefore, it is also important to know the historical aspects of how Okinawan was mobilized by policy or politics and to understand the historical aspects in order to realize the need for documenting the language and passing it on to the next generation.

The Kingdom of the Ryukyus

In the 15th century, the King of Sho Hasshi established a centralized Kingdom of Ryukyu Islands in the city of Shuri. The official language of the court was the Shuri dialect, while those outside of Shuri spoke the same Okinawan language but with a little difference in pronunciation, intonation and or expression. The Ryukyu kingdom did not have sufficient resources for living, and the climate was so severe that typhoons hit the islands



from time to time. Therefore, Ryukyu economy mainly depended upon foreign trade with South-eastern Asian Nations, China, Japan, Holland, and other countries. To maintain peace and order within the country and with outside powers the kingdom adopted unarmed policy, there were no weapons of any kind. It is said that the famous Italian traveler, Marco Polo, was surprised to hear about this unarmed kingdom. In these social conditions, the classic literature of the Ryukyu Kingdom, "Omorosoushi", was born.

Invasion by Satsuma Clan from Southern Japan

In 1609, over 3000 soldiers of the Satsuma Clan invaded Ryukyu. Without weapons to defend themselves, the kingdom had no choice but to surrender. Since then the Kingdom came under the strict control and constant surveillance of Satsuma.

Satsuma permitted the Kingdom to continue its relation with China, by allowing the Kingdom to pay respect and tribute to China. This policy made the Kingdom to appear as an independent nation as it used to be. This policy, however, was taken by Satsuma only because Satsuma wanted to exploit or to confiscate all the fruits and or profit gained from the trade between the Kingdom and other nations. The accumulation of the profits from the Kingdom contributed to Satsuma to gain its status of being as most powerful domain in Japan by early 19th century.

For the people in Ryukyu, education was not permitted by the Kingdom, so people could not learn to read and write. However, without letters, they orally passed their rich culture, arts, music, songs, and the language to the next generation.

Annexation by Japan

In 1879, Ryukyu was annexed by Japan. As a result, the kingdom of the Ryukyus was abolished, and it became Okinawa Prefecture. Ryukyuan language was not officially used anymore since Japanese became the official national language throughout the Ryukyu Islands as it was in other parts of Japan. Therefore, Ryukyuan language positioned as Okinawan or Okinawan dialect. Moreover, in promoting the modernization policy by the Japanese government, school education came to be mandatory in Japan, including Okinawa. The most important objectives for compulsory education were apparently to make people to understand or communicate in "Standard Japanese" and to establish among the people a "national identity," pledging to serve and die for the Emperor. To share one standard national language by all the people in the nation hastened rapid industrialization and modernization. Through extreme anti-Okinawan language policy, local governments in Okinawa vigorously tried to spread standard Japanese language through a crusade against the Okinawan. Thus, since 1878, standard Japanese has been the official language in Okinawa.



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In 1940, a dispute over the Okinawan language broke out. Okinawan people themselves were, more or less, involved in the movement of speaking standard Japanese. At the same time, as militarism grew in Japan, speaking the Okinawan language was strictly forbidden in schools and public places in order to have a unification of ideology among the people according to the Okinawan educational policy. This policy antagonized many intellectuals associated linguistic, folklores and social studies. They feared this policy may result of extinction of Okinawan language completely. In Okinawa, people spoke both Japanese and Okinawan. For example, while some people spoke Japanese officially; they might speak Okinawan at home; others spoke Japanese publicly and privately. Thus, due to this controlling of the language, Okinawan, the traditional mother tongue, rapidly faded out.

Under U.S. Occupation

As soon as I stepped on the island of Okinawa,
I greeted an islander in Okinawan language, "Ganjyuui?"
(How are you?)
"Hai Okagesamade Genki desu."
(Yes, I am very fine.)
The Islander replied to me in Japanese,
My nostalgia for the island was disturbed,
and I said, "Uchinaa guchi madin ikusa ni sattaru basui?"
(Was Okinawan language also dismissed by war?)
The Islander smiled bitterly,
and said in Japanese,
"Okinawa go jyouzudesune."
(You speak good Okinawan)
(Translated by Author)

This poem was written by Yamanoguchi Baku, poet from Okinawa when he came back to his homeland. In the Battle of Okinawa, total of more than 200 thousands people were sacrificed, including native Okinawans, Japanese soldiers, and U.S soldiers. When he returned to Okinawa after the war, he mourned that the language itself was also stolen from Okinawa.

As a result of war, the U.S. Occupation of Okinawa began in 1945 ended in 1972. Although there was no Okinawan language regulation under U.S. rule, Okinawans themselves waged a campaign to speak standard Japanese language in educational institutions. In school, teachers encouraged students to speak standard



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Japanese. Those students who spoke Okinawan were given Hogenfuda, a dialect tag, to hang on their neck. Students were free to speak their own dialect at home with their family; however, Okinawan people gradually began to lose Okinawan. Also, the psychology of those people controlled by foreign power must be understood. Okinawa under U.S. rule did not enjoy “democracy” completely. People had no autonomy, and on some occasions, human rights were neglected by the ruler. This led to an anti-American movement as well as movement towards Japanese culture and language.

Using of standard Japanese in school was a way to show Americans that Okinawans are Japanese just like those on the mainland Japan. After this reversion movement, Okinawa finally reverted to Japan in 1972. Finally, it cannot be dismissed the important role played by the mass communication system such as the radio, television and newspapers to communicate and entertain in our social life. With a few exceptions of musical and stage performances, the language used in this proper from the beginning up to present time is mostly Japanese.

Today

Sixty years have passed since the war, and the Okinawan language still exists to some extent and has transformed into something different from the days of the poet Baku.

Okinawan has been revitalized through a cultural entertainment: Ryukyu classical dance, Okinawan stage plays, and Okinawan folk songs or tales. Also, traditional Okinawan culture, mixed with modern tastes, has become very popular among students, from preschool to college. However, young people today cannot speak Okinawan fluently and most of them cannot fully understand it either. Today, Okinawan young people speak Uchina-Yamato guchi, which is mixture of the Okinawan and Japanese languages. In addition, native speakers of Okinawan are getting older. With the exception of elderly people, activists promoting the Okinawan language are becoming much smaller in number. The speakers of Okinawan in younger generations are mostly stage entertainers, such as actors or singers. Other groups are those who are closely connected in linguistics and culture. Those excellent native speakers, entertainers, and scholars have voiced out their concerns in the future of Okinawa language. They say we are facing a challenge in successfully passing down our language to the next generation.

The method of utilizing musical and or theatrical performances might be one of the effective and easy ways to spread and popularize our language to younger generations.

However, we should keep in mind that those people who are able to speak the Okinawan are getting older and the number decreasing. Therefore, we must immediately make a record of our language from fluent speakers of



older generation. Moreover, we should make an effort to preserve the language in a public way. I believe that documenting Okinawan language will motivate people to pass on Okinawan to next generation.

Ippei Nifee Debiru.

(Thank you very much.)

Historical Karate



Itosu Ankoh (1831 – 1915), (also known as Itosu Yasutsune), was born in Gibo, Shuri, into a noble family and was raised in the traditional settings of the kemochi (a family of position). Like other karate masters of his time who came from upper class families, he is said to have also been well-educated in Chinese classics and calligraphy.

Itosu studied karate under Sokon Matsumura, Nagahama Chikudon Peichin of Naha, and Gusukuma Sensei of Tomari.

After passing civil service exams, Itosu worked as a clerk for the Ryukyu government. He later rose to a more prominent position, the Secretary for the Administrative Office of the Ryukyu Kingdom and held this role until the abolition of the Ryukyu monarchy by the Japanese government in 1879.

According to Motobu Choki, Itosu first studied under Sokon Matsumura, but Matsumura disliked him and didn't teach him much because he considered Itosu to be a slow learner. Itosu then left and trained under Nagahama sensei who emphasized building a strong body but not practical fighting situations. As his death approached, Nagahama told Itosu to go back and study under Sokon Matsumura.

However, it appears that after Nagahama's death, Itosu did not return to Matsumura but went on to study under Gusukuma Sensei of Tomari village.



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Itosu is considered by many as the grandfather of modern kata because he was the one who formalized the method of teaching karate techniques and introduced karate to the general public for the first time. Before Itosu began teaching it at local schools, karate was only passed down within noble families or trusted individuals in Okinawa and was never taught to the general public.

Amongst Itosu's students were many influential karate masters including Yabu Kentsu, Funakoshi Gichin, Hanashiro Chomo, Motobu Choki, Kyan Chotoku, Chibana Choshin, Tokuda Anbun, Oshiro Chojo, Mabuni Kenwa, and Gusukuma Shinpan.

Perhaps thanks to the royal status of the Motobu family, Itosu Ankoh was recruited to teach Motobu Choki and his elder brother, Motobu Choyu, and he would come to their house to teach them every day. Motobu Choki studied under Itosu for 7 to 8 years. However, as quoted above, Motobu felt that training with Itosu wasn't enough because he constantly lost to his older brother. So, he went to study under Sakuma Sensei from Gibo and Matsumura Sensei from Yamagawa.

Motobu Choki learned his favorite kata, Naihanchi, from both Sokon Matsumura and Itosu Anko and noted in his second book that he wanted to follow Matsumura's view on how the Naihanchi stance should be performed.

"I want to follow the venerable Matsumura's opinion. First, if you try to stand in the character-8-stance of the Itosu school, and squeeze the soles of your feet together, and another person just slightly pushes you from behind with the fingertips, you will easily fall over. Thus no matter how much strength is put into this posture, there is no effect whatsoever."

Motobu Choki

<https://www.karatephilosophy.com/who-were-motobu-chokis-teachers/>

A look into the next issue

Okinawa Underwater - The Island of Yonaguni is the westernmost island of Japan

Thank You for your time, I hope you have enjoyed the info.



[OKINAWA MATSUSOKAN TRADITIONAL KARATE ASSOCIATION](https://www.karatephilosophy.com/who-were-motobu-chokis-teachers/)

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NEWSLETTER



#KnowOkinawa

How many
native languages
are spoken in
the area currently
known as Japan?

Hint: It's not just Japanese.

The Fine Print

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