



A community information paper created and edited by people who live in Azabu.



Fascinated by Artistic Azabu 21

"Fusui no Kizami" surrounded by green space and benches

Let's enjoy the "Wind", the "Water" and the "Seasons" in central Tokyo!

—The Fountain Sculpture called "Fusui no Kizami" in Azabu Mamiana Park

The Chinese characters for "Tanuki no Ana" (a raccoon dog burrow) are pronounced "Mamiana" in Japanese. There are not so many people who know this pronunciation of these characters. Of course, we are quite sure that the people who have regional bonds around the Azabu area know about it.

Gaien Higashi Dori street runs along the ridge of the Iikura plateau, and the Russian Embassy is located there. There is a slope from the side of the Embassy site to the south, which is called "Mamiana-zaka" Slope. "Mamiana Park", with its thick covering of trees appears on the right as you walk down.

This neighborhood has been called "Maminana-cho" since the Edo Period. We imagine that once upon a time many

raccoon dogs burrowed and thrived on the gentle slope on the south side of the Iikura plateau. There are various stories told about them, but they call male raccoon dog or bagger called "Mujina" and female "Mami". Their legendary burrow is now known as one of the seven wonders of Azabu.

Mamiana Park is a green sanctuary, surrounded by gorgeous condominiums and impressive residences.

The Ghibli Studio film "Heisei Tanuki Gassen Pon Poko" ("Pom Poko") came to mind while walking around this area, and I felt nostalgic about it and was reminded of the humor. This is no surprise, because there is a small shrine dedicated to "Mamiana Inari Daimyojin" there, along with many vermilion torii (shrine gates) arranged attractively on the slope.

This was once the grove of a village shrine where a number of raccoon dogs were known to frequent. Now, this place has been transformed into a park with children running about and playing on the modern colorful playground equipment. The scene of vivid red, blue and yellow primary color playground equipment blends perfectly with the bright vermilion of the torii, transcending time, in a deep green space.

There is one more wonderful feature in Mamiana Park; the fountain sculpture called "Fusui no Kizami". It looks like a shining silver stainless screw that descended from the sky,



Looking up to the top of the Iikura plateau from the foot of the Mamiana-zaka slope



Flowerbeds managed by the Minato City Silver Center Azabu Chuo Group

piercing a pool of water. Around it, sparkling water splashes, drawing an arc to the sky.

This fountain sculpture was installed in Mamiana Park in 1997 as one of the memorial projects for the Minato City Administration 50th anniversary. It is a work of Mr. Jo ODA (1936 - 2004), a world-renowned metalwork artist.

What is the meaning behind the title "Fusui no Kizami"? Actually, we don't have any explanation as to how and why this particular object became part of the memorial project and placed in Mamiana Park. However, it must be seen simply and specifically as a work of art. It must be experienced in the imagination, so origin stories don't matter.

You will often find many people sitting on the benches around the "Fusui no Kizami" fountain sculpture, relaxing and enjoying the wind, the water and the seasons.



Shrine dedicated to Mamiana Inari Daimyojin. These are not "raccoon dogs" but "foxes".



The shrine dedicated to Mamiana Inari Daimyojin can be seen through the torii gate.



While sitting the bench overlooking the Mamiana Park, I could see the torii, the fountain sculpture, a boy trying to catch a cicada and the playground equipment on the left.

(Researched, written and photos shot by Masahiro Someya)

麻布ひと

Azabu - A Human Story
Preserving Voices of Azabu
for the Future



Ms. Yuriko Aoki

World Local Cooking
Researcher

Representative of e-food.
jp company



(Upper)
There is high demand for this book
in elementary school libraries, but
it is very interesting for adults as
well. Ms. Aoki herself visited and
researched most of the countries
in this book.

(Lower)
A book titled "Shirabeyo Sekaino
Ryouin" (Research the World Cui-
sine) (seven volumes, complete)
issued by Poplar Publishing Co.,
Ltd., written for elementary school
students

Ms. Aoki spreads information about Food Culture and Local Cuisine to bridge the gap between different areas of the world.



On the interview day, she was going to hold a Brunei Cuisine Experience Meeting. So, she was very busy preparing. The blue noodle made of rice obtained in Malaysia is unusual. It was colored using the flowers of the butterfly pea (*1). This dish looks gorgeous with the topping of boiled crab meats and shrimps.

On her small business card there are a variety of titles, including "Representative of World Cooking General Information Site e-food.jp", "World Local Cuisine Researcher", "World Cooking Recipe Museum Library Director", "Columnist", "Commentator: Lecturer", etc. How did she become so many interesting things, and how is she going to develop her business?

We listened to her telling us all about it in her office in Azabu, which is coincidentally also used as a salon.



The Influence of Ethnic Food on her in New York

The "e=earth" part of her e-food.jp company represented by Ms. Aoki, is involved in everything about foods on a global scale. We asked what brought her to start such a business.

"I had many opportunities to visit New York because I was a magazine journalist in charge of overseas theatrical plays such as Broadway for 10 years in the 1990's. I discovered a variety of local cuisine in New York, which was a melting pot of many races and cultures, and I was fascinated".

When we go around the Manhattan area, we find people from every corner of the world. Each of them forms their own communities, often in small towns like China Town and Korea Town.

She was able to see and experience their unique cuisine first hand, and found it so stimulating she was motivated to start the "World Cooking General Information Site e-food.jp" in 2000.

At first, she collected information mostly for her own interest in addition to her main job.

"I heard the word "Ethnic" for the first time when I was in New York, as it referred to specific races and cultures".

Ms. Aoki engages in all her activities with a firm sense of mission, especially when it comes to world food.

The motto of e-food.jp is "Leading People to Happiness with Foods".

Her interest in ethnic cuisine continues to expand not only in Japan, but also to how local areas in the world are adopting and absorbing them. The history behind it all is yet another aspect she explores.

Ms. Aoki knew early on that it is not enough to learn about such things from behind a desk; one must get out and actively explore. As mentioned earlier, she has been to New York, and to the US in general more than forty times. Whenever she visited New York, she was stimulated a lot as well as in Japan. She has been abroad as many as three times a month, surprisingly often.

"When I go abroad at my own expense, I make full use of low-cost carriers".

Although she has a gentle manner of speaking, she has a very powerful character.

This of course gives her something of an advantage when she is travelling, and wanting to learn about the local cuisine and traditional foods from the local people.

This is of course the best way, and she has done this a lot! Naturally Ms. Aoki has taken the next logical step and convinced many interesting restaurants to let her into the kitchen to learn. As you might expect, she makes a lot of friends this way, and also experiences home cooked food at their homes. In this way she has also learned how to go around to local markets and supermarkets to buy food ingredients, and so she never forgets the recipes.

After she comes home, she reviews each of the recipes and reproduces the food as authentically as she can. For any ingredients not easily obtainable, she finds a suitable substitute in Japan.

"There is a supermarket here in Azabu where a wide variety of world food ingredients are sold, so I don't think I can ever leave this area!" We can easily understand why she chose to have her office in Azabu.

Ms. Aoki gathers people who are interested in ethnic food and introduces them to exotic cuisine, and she does her best to faithfully reproduce them.

She showed us a screen shot of shops and markets on her site. We could see her explaining to various people about local foods, with a lot of attractively arranged home-made dishes on the table.

These are people from all walks of life gathered together enjoying ethnic foods, and sharing their own information as well. Such These events are always announced on her e-food.jp's website.

Due to her research activities, she gets job offers from various fields.

For example, there are more than 80 embassies in the Azabu area. However, the smaller embassies are not able to have their own exclusive chef.

So sometimes she is asked to be the guest chef at one of them in the



At parties organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Serbia, etc., she is in charge of cooking.



Her research activity in Valencia



She is learning how to cook paella from an expert in Valencia.

party held by the ambassador of the country for special occasions. Japanese food is also promoted overseas at food shows as well of course, and Ms. Aoki is also asked to represent Japan. In this way, her business has really grown a lot.

Obtaining a license becoming independent, as a chef, create more business opportunities.

As opportunities to work in the kitchen increased, she realized that getting a chef's license was a good idea. To apply for a license, one has to have worked as a cook for more than two years.

At this point, Ms. Aoki asked the head chef of the Intercontinental Hotel for qualification and was accepted right away. It took her two more years in that hotel kitchen for her to earn this very desirable license.

And so, Ms. Aoki's world continues to expand: She became a member of the All Japan Chefs Association (*2) and then the World Association of Chefs' Societies (WACS). The time and enthusiasm she has for food is still increasing!

It was after reaching the point in her career as described above that she decided to expand her activities in her own way with

e-food.jp as the representative. Three years have passed since she became independent.

Another way her career and activities are expanding are providing support to the Ministry of Health and Welfare government projects, providing expertise on halal training for cooks, and lecturing on school lunch cooking training for Tokyo and Sado city in Niigata. Ms. Aoki provides a lot of video material on her website, her mail magazine, and her Facebook page, as well as YouTube. Her activities have reached a wider audience through SNS and interest continues to develop.

She continues to provide information about food both inside Japan and exotic locations, because she sees the future food issues of the world.

For Ms. Aoki, the year 2020 will be a real milestone: the 20th anniversary of the founding of e-food.jp.

"We will also have the Olympics here, and this is even more of an opportunity for international information exchange through food. Many people will be coming to Japan, and many Japanese people welcome these guests, I want to host activities that offer the chance to experience new food culture together".

Her amazing vitality is inspiring.

Ms. Aoki's office also used as a salon. In addition to various recipe books she has obtained from all over the world, there were many interesting things all around, such as her favorite kitchen utensils, tableware and foodstuffs. She gave us this interview while she was very busy preparing for a dinner party, and her hands didn't stop moving even once! We are extremely grateful to her for all the time she gave us.

*1 Legume plant native to tropical Asia; a flower that looks like a butterfly. Squeezed juice from these blue flowers is used for drinks, confectionery and other foodstuffs.

*2 The chef is a cook who prepares mainly Western cuisine.



In her salon, Ms. Aoki's favorite items from the many countries she has visited are arranged here and there, and that really caught our eyes.

Whenever she travels, she obtains some recipe books. She carefully reads them again and again. When she comes home, she always reviews them carefully and tries to reproduce the dishes as faithfully as she can. These recipe books are her motivation and are a very important treasure for her.

Her most recent favorite item, a Cataplana pot obtained in Portugal; when using it, ingredients are cooked slowly and thoroughly.



HP <https://e-food.jp>

FB <https://www.facebook.com/efoodjp/>

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/EthnicNeighborhoods>

(Researched and written by Kumiko Omura and Yukiko Takayanagi)

Looking for **Verdure** in Azabu
Series: No. 6



Photo Shooting supported by Kent Cayden S.



Very rare chance to drop in,

A Rice Paddy in Roppongi Hills!?

On a "Roof Garden" 45 meters above the ground, overlooking Tokyo Tower

The famous entertainment area and popular tourist destination "Roppongi Hills" is located in the very center of Roppongi, and has a roof garden where we can enjoy each of the four seasons. The roof garden is located high up on the 10th floor, and is only open to the public on special days such as the Spring Fair. However, rice is grown and harvested here every year by local residents, people working in Roppongi Hills and local elementary school students! Children planting and growing rice surrounding many high-rise buildings near Tokyo Tower? Who could have imagined such an amazing scene?!

- The Roof Garden viewed from above
- "Cherry Trees" flowers bloom in Spring
- "Crape Myrtle Trees" flowers bloom in Summer
- "Maple Trees" leaves turn red and yellow in Autumn
- "Camellia" flowers bloom in Winter
- These are the trees and flowers that surround the paddy field and vegetable garden.
- Frogs and loach fish thrive in the pond!



When "Roppongi Hills" was built, it was designed environment-friendly and green. Now, almost 29% is greenery, and the roof garden is just a small part of it, with an area of only about 1,300 square meters. Here, in addition to rice, vegetables including eggplant, tomatoes and herbs have been planted and are harvested. Although local residents live in the middle of a sea of skyscrapers, they can enjoy plants and flowers and the traditional food culture that goes along with it. Watching children climbing on a persimmon tree in the center of the garden, I couldn't believe that they were born and bred in the heart of the metropolis. We imagine that various local children have plenty of opportunities to play outside, and this garden is an excellent place for all of us to play or study. This roof garden is not only a place for relaxation for children, but even for wildlife such as frogs and birds. This garden may not be so big, but it is a great treasure in Azabu.

Try to have farmed rice here, among the habitants and the neighbors



Muddy legs!

Spring : Rice Planting

This year, "Date Masayume" brand rice was planted with the assistance of Miyagi Prefecture

Summer : Growing

Great green rice plants grow to about the average height of a 4-year-old child



Comparing my height with rice plants!



Big Harvests!

Autumn : Rice Harvesting

Using the traditional methods of harvesting, drying and threshing rice by hand, we can learn and understand the traditional culture of rice farming.

Winter : Pounding Mochi

Enjoying pounding freshly harvested rice into 'mochi' rice cakes using a wooden mallet and a mortar!



* marked images provided by Mori Building Co., Ltd.

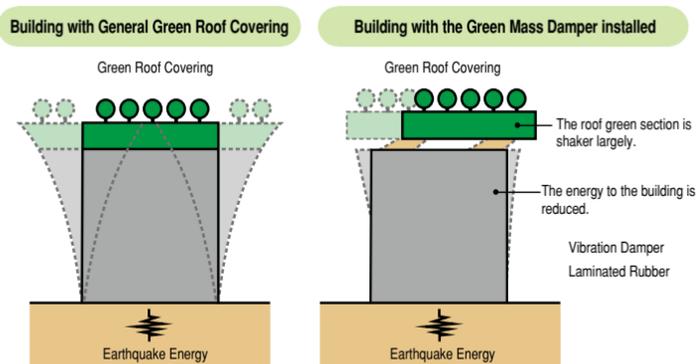
Interesting Trivia

The weight of the roof garden actually helps to reduce the vibration of the building when an earthquake occurs!

There is a special structure like a cushion between the roof garden and the ceiling of the floor right below. This structure is called a "green mass damper". The weight of the roof garden is a heavy 3,650 tones with an 80cm thick covering of soil. However, the "cushion" mechanism utilizes the weight to reduce vibration when an earthquake shakes it.



View from directly below the roof garden Powerful "Technique" behind the scenes? (Based on Japanese proverb "Power behind the scenes")



https://www.mori.co.jp/pdf/pdf_safety_02.pdf



Synecoculture Project in collaboration between Mori Building Co., Ltd. and SONY CLS: Many different types of vegetables such as edamame (green soybeans) and hot peppers have been planted.

For more information, see the Roppongi Hills website:

Roppongi Hills Roof Garden



Research Supported by Mori Building Co., Ltd.

(Researched by Takehide Kasho, Misaho Kasho and Mai S.; Written by Mai S.)

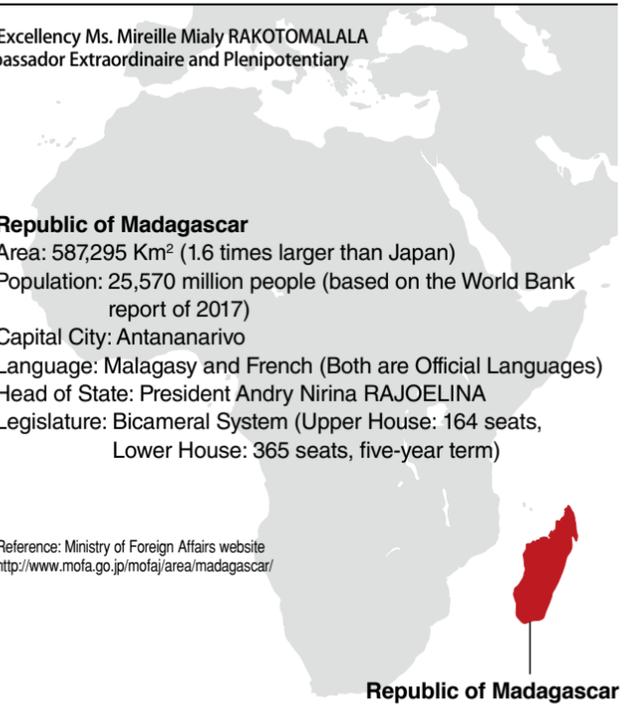


Her Excellency Ms. Mireille Mialy RAKOTOMALALA
Ambassador Extraordinaire and Plenipotentiary

Republic of Madagascar

Area: 587,295 Km² (1.6 times larger than Japan)
Population: 25,570 million people (based on the World Bank report of 2017)
Capital City: Antananarivo
Language: Malagasy and French (Both are Official Languages)
Head of State: President Andry Nirina RAJOELINA
Legislature: Bicameral System (Upper House: 164 seats, Lower House: 365 seats, five-year term)

Reference: Ministry of Foreign Affairs website
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/madagascar/>



Republic of Madagascar

Visiting Ambassadors 48
From the "World" of Azabu

MADAGASCAR

Madagascar is an island located in the Western Indian Ocean, 400km off the South East coast of the African Continent. Because this island has been isolated from any continent since the dawn of time, many species have evolved independently. What kind of country is Madagascar? What is its mysterious charm? Her Excellency Ms. Mireille Mialy RAKOTOMALALA Ambassador Extraordinaire and Plenipotentiary (hereinafter called "Ambassador") accepted our interview willingly, even though she was very busy preparing for the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) to be held at the end of August.

Interview Support: Embassy of the Republic of Madagascar in Japan



Capital City Antananarivo ©Wikipedia

Madagascar has Heavenly Scenery

The world-famous Swedish music producer, Avicii passed away last year. His video work titled "HEAVEN" (posthumously released) was shot in Madagascar. In the film, he can be seen calmly looking far out over the sea, where the dolphins are swimming, and still other scenes where he is playing with lovely lemurs. He sings aloud about "scenery too beautiful to describe" and "heaven" repeatedly.

Madagascar truly is an island of otherworldly beauty, with its bright white sandy beaches and palm trees swaying in the wind. For the average Japanese living on the island of Japan, such a world seems almost unimaginable. Surprisingly however, they have roots in Indonesia that not so far from Japan.

It is said that the ancestors of those who now live in Madagascar came from far away across the sea. Some came directly to Madagascar from across the sea, and others arrived there through the African continent. In their language, Malagasy, some characteristics of Indonesian and Swahili can be seen. We heard that a type of Banana that grows only in Indonesia, also amazingly exists in Madagascar

Their main food staple is rice, and it may have been brought over as part of the culture from Indo-

nesia. They eat rice three times a day with every meal, and produce and consume the most rice in Africa. They have many more kinds of rice than in Japan, including red rice, rose pink rice, white rice and more. For each type of rice, there are different recipes, and how they are eaten is different.

In the morning, they usually eat rice porridge with various other ingredients mixed in. For meals later in the day, plain rice is a common side dish. This is remarkably similar to Japanese dietary habits, and they even make white rice porridge for those who feel unwell.

An absurd idea suddenly came to mind: "I wonder if they eat rice with chopsticks like us?"

"We have many more things in common with Japanese people," the Ambassador told us. One of them is honoring their ancestors.

In Madagascar, traditional houses are made of wood and other organic material. They generally don't use stone for example because it symbolizes "eternity" for them. Stone is an appropriate material for a tomb or mausoleum in their world.

Also, they have the custom of honoring the spirits of their ancestors, similar to Obon in Japan. Older people are greatly respected there, and are usually seated at the ends of a table, a position of importance, similar to Japan.

It was fascinating to learn this about Madagascar, but also a little sad, as this is something that modern Japan might be going to lose.

The Ambassador of Madagascar's thoughts on Japan

The Embassy of Madagascar in Japan is very busy now (interviewed July 22, 2019) preparing for the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)* at the Pacifico Yokohama Convention Center in Yokohama, between August 28 and 30, 2019.

The President of Madagascar will be there to participate.

"Business opportunities in Africa continue to increase, and we would like you to learn more and more about Africa," the Ambassador told us.

When we asked about her impression of Japan. She remarked that wherever she visits in Japan, everything is clean and tidy. Everywhere in Japan is convenient and logically organized, and it is easy to find facilities for any and all of your needs. She really appreciates that you can withdraw money conveniently in a variety of different places almost 24hrs a day.

In Azabu, she especially likes the clean and beautiful Arisugawa no Miya Memorial Park.

There are not any Madagascan restaurants in Japan, at least at the moment. However, we can at least feel an understanding of a similar rice based food culture.

Most Madagascan cuisine uses some combination of "rice", "vegetables" and the kind of "meats" very familiar to us.

As for Japanese cuisine, she loves Sushi a lot!



More than 90% of the animal species there are endemic, and perhaps the most well known is the ring-tailed lemur. ©Madagascar tribune

*TICAD is the abbreviation for the Tokyo International Conference on African Development. The theme of this Conference is the development of Africa. Since 1993, the Japanese Government has organized this Conference in cooperation with the United Nations, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank and the African Union Commission (AUC). (Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs website) <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/ticad/ticad7/index.html>

Although she took up her post here a year and a half ago, she is still so busy she can't easily find the time to take a walk around Azabu. However, she plans to make time for this in the near future.

Conclusion

A few years ago I visited Madagascar's booth at the international festival held around Tokyo Tower.

The Madagascan women I met there were very friendly and cheerful.

How would it be to live surrounded by such beautiful nature, with the salty wind in your hair and the rustling of palm leaves in a soft breeze?

My imagination takes me away to this southern island far away from here. This is one more place I've added to my bucket list of places I should visit.

(Comment by Ms. Hatanaka)



Street lined with otherworldly Baobab trees ©evasion loisir Culture



Hat made of woven raffia palm fiber



Cute crocodiles made of vanilla pods



Freshly made and poured beer



From their terrace, the buildings in Roppongi and beer tank can be viewed.

Craft Beer made in Roppongi!?

Inazuma Beer & Inazuma Dining



In recent years, craft beer (1*) has become more and more popular. Craft beer is very different from the mass-produced beer made by major breweries, all of which has a similar taste and can be bought anytime and anywhere. Craft beer, on the other hand, is hand-made by skilled beer brewers who take great care making beer rich in taste and originality. Some craft beers can only be obtained at the specific brewery where they are made. Do you know there is actually one of these “Microbreweries” in Roppongi? When I heard that their unique beer could be enjoyed in their adjoining dining room, I immediately made plans to visit!



Beer Produced in Roppongi

A terrace suddenly appeared in a quiet residential area 5 minutes on foot from Roppongi Itchome Station. What stands out more than anything is the large tank at the back of the site. This building had been a ruin for more than 10 years, but now there is a microbrewery here. Financing for this business was provided through crowdfunding, and ‘Inazuma Beer’ production started in November 2017. Beer is made from scratch on site. This means they begin with the raw materials for the malt, preparation of sweet wort, and finally fermentation and aging before serving it right there. Mr. Imoto the Head Brewer told us that there are many kinds of beer, and the taste and color etc. depends on the raw materials and how they are combined. The type of beer we are most familiar with is called Pilsner. However, this brewery focuses on a much darker beer with a stronger aroma called Ale (2*). One of the most famous ales with a distinctive bitterness and refreshing taste is called India Pale Ale (IPA) (3*), and this is the one that really got us interested. The name “India” comes from the beer that was sent by ship from England to India in the 18th century. In order for the beer to not spoil during the long journey, it had to be brewed to a higher alcohol content than what was stan-

dard at the time. Happily, this ended up being a unique and delicious brew all on its own. At Inazuma Beer, they are very particular about the raw hops they use. As my nose comes close to the glass, the gorgeous hoppy aroma is already a wonderful experience, even before the beer passes my lips. The water used in beer preparation is also important to the taste, and they use water from right there in Roppongi. The water here is more than good enough for beer brewing! This is beer genuinely born and bred in Roppongi. There are other types of beer made here of course, including one with cacao nib and coconut milk, producing an interesting chocolate taste. As you can see, they are making quite an effort with their unique and original beer brewing.

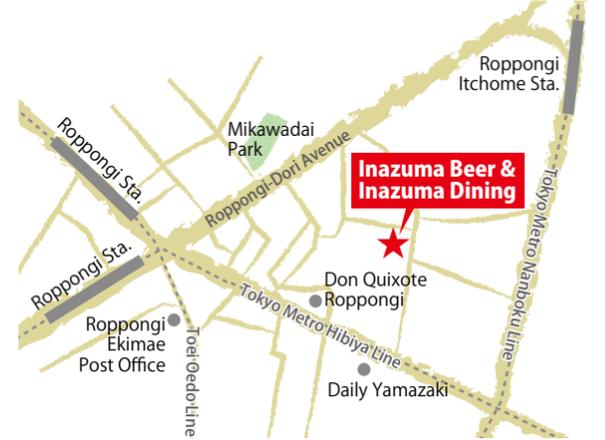
The Unique Micro Brewery Experience!

The cozy dining room in the basement of the brewery has about 20 seats including the counter and tables. Turnover is very high, as customers file in one after another after work for a quick drink, or settle in for a hearty meal washed down with special beer. Many foreign visitors frequent this shop, and you can hear a variety of languages being spoken including English and of course Japanese. In fact, about as many as 40% of the customers at any given time are foreigners, and they often come as a pair or group. Along the wall there are many taps, each advertising a different flavor of beer, and this is quite exciting. The atmosphere here is really extraordinary, to drink amazing beer knowing that it is being brewed right overhead. They serve about 10 different types of beer that change from day to day. For limited times, they sometimes collaborate with other breweries and host a guest beer. Customers return again and again for the beer that has become their favorite, because the beer taste becomes slightly different, smooth and deep, according to the degree of aging. If the timing is good, we can get a chance to talk to the Head Brewer himself and learn more about the beer directly.

Inazuma Dining’s main feature is actually the combination of the brewer’s beer and chef’s cuisine. It was a great pleasure for us to get their recommendation for the best match of food and beer. There is a lot more to enjoy here in addition to the regular

fish and chips and hand-made sausages. When we asked them about future business development, Mr. Kobayashi in charge of sales said, “Roppongi is a kind of cultural oasis. “We want to continue producing beer only as it can be in Roppongi, and spread information about it as far and wide as possible”. Their amazing effort to bring excellent craft beer and wonderful food right here between the high-rise buildings will continue. This is a place where people from all walks of life can gather, and drink beer comfortably and enjoyably.

- 1* A small brewery business started with a small amount of capital. This unique and original brewery has a shop called the “Brew Pub”.
- 2* Specifications for ale yeast: Top fermentation beer style with an especially rich and fruity taste
- 3* A beer style with a higher alcohol content and a larger amount of hops than is usual



Inazuma Beer & Inazuma Dining
 1F&BF1, Ichibee Bldg. Apartment, 3-6-9, Roppongi, Minato-ku
 Tel: 03-6441-2802
<http://inazumabeer.com/>

How Craft Beer is Brewed:

1. Barley is dipped in hot water causing it to sprout. It is then dried and used to make the malt.
- ↓
2. The malt is crushed and mixed with water to make sweet wort.
- ↓
3. The wort is then boiled and mixed with hops.
- ↓
4. Finally, yeast is added and it is left to ferment and age.



Dishes perfect for various types of beer



Brewing Tanks taller than the average adult



The cozy dining area looks like a wine cellar.

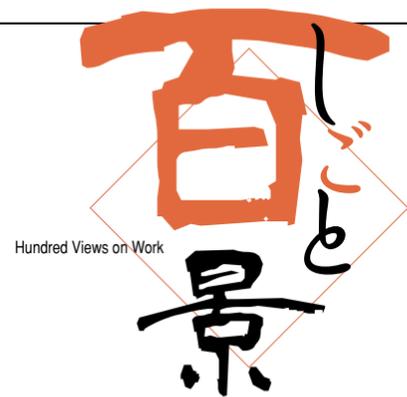


Mr. Imoto (on the left), Head Brewer, and Mr. Kobayashi (on the right), in charge of sales, told us this wonderful story

(Interviewed by Mai S. and Akiko Horiuchi; Written by Akiko Horiuchi)



Mr. Akashi and Tokyo Tower: In this photo, there is modernist architecture designed by disciples of Le Corbusier, and a Japanese Garden designed by OGAWA Jihei VII. This gorgeous combination can only be seen at the International House of Japan.
On the interview day we had glorious weather, in contrast to the cold rain on the previous couple of days.



Hundred Views on Work

Mr. Yasushi Akashi
Honorary Advisor to the
International House of Japan
(88 years old)



Mr. Akashi was born on January 19, 1931. After graduating from the University of Tokyo College of Arts and Sciences, he completed a master's degree at the University of Virginia post-graduate school and finally a doctorate at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy postgraduate school. Between 1957 and 1997, he worked for the UN Secretariat. He successively held the positions of UN Undersecretary General (in charge of Public Relations, Disarmament and Humanitarian Problems), and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General (in charge of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia and the war in the former Yugoslavia), etc. After he came back to Japan, he was appointed the first Director of the Hiroshima Peace Institute and the Chairman of the Chiune Sugihara Centennial Celebration Committee. Between 2009 and 2018, he served as the Director of the International House of Culture where he is presently an Honorary Advisor.

“To work for me is to live as I am. I want to live a way of life that contributes to society, fully utilizing my knowledge and experience.”

The new era we call “Reiwa” has begun, and next year at last the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics will be held. At the same time, we are about to launch some new technology.

The “IT revolution” continues, where people first connected through the Internet and a new culture was created, and now we will soon have 5G* technology and a new era of AI, another big step. Soon, our work will be even more automated through Artificial Intelligence.

The issue of depopulation is challenging us to radically rethink the way we work, and the solution seems to be a combination of AI and being more open to an immigrant labor force.

In response to this, this paper has been written and this project has begun, more than 10 years in the making. We have asked people who are playing an important and active role in this regard in the Azabu and Roppongi areas about their attitude to work, and how the way we work will change in the new era. We are well aware that there are a great many people, with many diverse ideas that can contribute to this.

For the first of the series, we asked Mr. Yasushi Akashi, the first Japanese UN staff and expert international negotiator for his thoughts. He was in charge of the United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Cambodia and the former Yugoslavia. He has been living in Azabu for 20 years, since he came back to Japan.

He is still in great demand as a consultant for various organizations in and out of Japan, including Minato City’s “City Internationalization Project”.

On one of the last days of the Heisei era in April this year, we interviewed the “World Famous AKASHI”, under a clear blue sky.

*5G: The 5th generation mobile communication system. The speed of information will be 100 times faster than that of the existing system.

His mentor inspired him to learn practical English, and the basics of cultural anthropology.

Mr. Yasushi Akashi was born in Akita, the youngest child of five. He lived in Akita until he graduated from junior high school, then went to Yamagata for high school and finally came to Tokyo for university. He was a second-generation student at the University of Tokyo, College of Arts and Sciences, established in Komaba.

“Because I spoke Japanese with an Akita accent, I often felt like standard Japanese was a second language for me. In the latter half of my second year at university, I studied under Professor Gordon Bowles **, and that was my first encounter with real English.

Professor Gordon Bowles held tea parties for students in his own house in Meguro once a week. He had two beautiful young daughters, and I’m still not sure how much we went to listen to him, or see his girls!

However, I did in fact study, and after around one year we were able to discuss things in English. Professor Bowles taught us that this was an era of multiculturalism, where Japanese culture and American culture etc. are just some among many. He taught us from “Patterns of Culture” written by Ruth Benedict, who is also the author of “The Chrysanthemum and the Sword”, in class. He taught us to not view different cultures hierarchically, but to see them as equal”.

Mr. Akashi still occasionally takes a walk in Aoyama Cemetery.

“There are many graves of people who came to Japan from the beginning of the Meiji Era who became teachers and contributed to education. The grave of my mentor, Professor Bowles, is one of them”.

** Professor Gordon Bowles: A British cultural anthropologist.

His father Gilbert Bowles was a peace activist and Quaker missionary at Friends Girls Junior & Senior High School, presently located in Mita 4-chome.

Growing opportunities for the Japanese people!

Mr. Akashi was 24 years old in 1955, the 30th year of Showa Era, when he went to the US as a student on a Fulbright Scholarship.

In his first year, he obtained a master’s degree and in the second year, he advanced to the doctoral program at the prestigious Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

It was during this time that his youthful energetic attitude attracted the attention of Mr. Jordan, the UN Administration Director. In December 1956 Japan achieved its long-desired status as a United Nations member, and Mr. Akashi was selected as the first Japanese UN staff member. This is quite remarkable, given that he had not yet completed his doctorate, and had to continue his education while he began his illustrious career at the UN.

“I often hear from American university sources and people in academia, that the number of students coming from Japan has decreased markedly, and may even be at a standstill. This is not ideal since we are still in an era of rapid change in the world in a variety of significant ways.

Recently, Asian students who go to America to study are mostly from China, followed closely by students from India and Korea. I am anxious about the current situation where the number of young students from Japan studying in the US has become very small”.

Mr. Akashi became the Chairman of the International House of Japan in June 2009, the 21st year of Heisei Era.

Before that, he was the principal of “Nitobe International Juku (private school)” where he developed and fostered human resource projects that can send people to work around the world. Even after moving on to the International House, he maintained contact with the students every term for totally 10 years, without missing a single semester. He has been instrumental in sending 143 young social leaders out into the world, each one an expert in their particular field.

“Our relationship with foreign countries becomes at risk if we become careless and complacent here in Japan.

Diplomacy must be conducted regularly between all countries.

These days what both institutions and individuals can do for international relationships is becoming more important than ever”.

For 40 years he served as an ambassador for world peace as a UN official.

Mr. Akashi said that although jobs at the UN appear prestigious, most people actually work in the background and the spotlight is rarely on them. He says that when he decides something needs to be done he will persevere, even if those around him give up or throw up obstacles. No doubt this is in part due to having been born in snowy Akita Prefecture in winter!



In 2012 the International House of Japan’s 60th anniversary Dinner Party for the Members was held. The late Mr. Donald Keene and the late 12th Danjuro Ichikawa were special guests. This party took place over two days. (Photo provided by International House of Japan)

For nine and a half years, Mr. Akashi served as the Chairman of the International House of Japan. He was always busy “Creating places for imaginative conversations” through memorial symposiums, dinner meetings and parties.

“After the Cold War, small conflicts have broken out here and there, but large scale wars between countries like in the past have not occurred.

In many cases, part of the problem that remains is differences between ethnic groups or races.

Differences in language and culture can cause misunderstandings that can occasionally lead to conflicts. Indeed, this is no small matter, and we ignore such things at our peril.

War always causes a great deal of suffering and misery for many people. Nothing is so ridiculous as a war caused by a simple misunderstanding.”

“I was very lucky to be given such a great job in the sixties almost by chance. Of course, I did choose to put myself in an environment that made the possibility much more likely.

In the 90’s, I did my best for a year and half to bring peace to Cambodia. Also in the 90’s, there was a serious conflict in the former Yugoslavia and Balkan Peninsula. In this area, people on three different sides with different religions beliefs and other cultural differences fought bitter and bloody battles. How can we stop such things from happening?

How can we do our humanitarian duty to preserve the lives of those involved and the innocent bystanders who inevitably get caught up in conflict?

Is aerial bombing by NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) really permissible for the greater good?

I had to deal with many difficult issues, especially since I often had a different position from that of the US, the post powerful country in the world. However, I did my best and I have no regrets”.

These are some of his thoughts as he looked back on that time.

Minato City’s Project: “Internationalization of the City”

Minato City has the largest number of foreign embassies, legations and consulates in Japan. More than 60% of them are located in the Azabu and Roppongi area.



●参考文献

“Kiru Kotonimo Kokoro Seki: Kokusai Shakai ni Ikitokita Hitorino Kiseki” (Excited even in living: Memoirs of a person who has lived in Global Society) written by Yasushi AKASHI in 2001, published by Chuo Koron-sha
“Kokusai Rengo: Kiseki to Tenbou” (United Nations: Tracks and Prospect) written by Yasushi AKASHI in 2006, published by Iwanami Shoten Publishers
“Leadership and the International Mind” at the International House of Japan, Nitobe International Juku in 2009, published by International House of Japan
“Negotiation Techniques to use with Dictators” written by Yasushi AKASHI and Motohiko KIMURA in 2010, published by Shueisha
“Imakoso Gaiko “Fukken” no toki” (Now, it’s time for the “Restoration” of Diplomacy) in “GAIKO (Diplomacy)” magazine Vol. 52 Nov./Dec. in 2018, published by Toshi Shuppan

●Research Support

Yasushi Akashi Office
International House of Japan
5-11-16, Roppongi, Minato-ku
Tel: 03-3470-4611, Fax: 03-3479-1738
<https://www.i-house.or.jp/>

(Interviewed and written by Mimi S Koike)

Full of Neighborhood Information! Community SNS App “PIAZZA” PIAZZA has started! Let’s develop “connection” which is useful for your daily life.

* Japanese only

PIAZZA
街のみんなで情報交換

地域の情報が集まる
街の中心地

住民、在勤者、お店、
行政、街のみんなが
ここに

教えて！お譲りしま
す！など、心温まる
ご近所付き合い

有事の時も頼れる地域
のコミュニティ

Make Your Life Rich Through Connections in the Town

PIAZZA is an Italian word meaning “square” and it’s an app which promotes communication of community rooted information informing you about events taking place nearby or exchange of information relevant to your daily life without any special devices necessary.

It has been deployed centering in Chuo ward and Koto ward where there has been an influx of population and is being used especially by families in their 30’s to 40’s.

It is now being deployed in the Azabu and Roppongi area!

Minato City, Azabu Town Council and local government associations have concluded an alignment agreement with PIAZZA Co. Ltd. which operates PIAZZA under aim of community activation of the Azabu region. “Azabu/Roppongi Area” has become available within PIAZZA from July of this year.

dents and those relevant to the community.

Going forward we will aim at further providing community information which can be obtained by anyone through alignment with PIAZZA so that the region and local administration can easily be connected and to be able to create a new approach to communication between resi-

Information useful to daily life such as “a festival will be held”, “does anybody need a baby stroller” or “there’s a pet café” is currently being sent into PIAZZA. Timely information will be posted from the local administration on crime prevention, disaster prevention and child rearing so for those of you have “just moved and want to know about the community” and “want friends to bring up your children together with”, please access PIAZZA once.

PIAZZA Will Make Your Life in Azabu Much Easier

For example interacting about information regarding life in the town, asking for advice on some problems you might have or even offering things to someone that you’re not using anymore Your life in Azabu will become more enjoyable by getting to know more about the town and by connecting with each other. Let us introduce you to some neighborhood postings. Why not try to post something as well?

Events and Lessons

Information on events and lessons are very popular! There’s a lot of word of mouth flying about such as “I found something like this!” or “I went and participated!”



A Festival Will be Held!

Reusing Things in the Neighborhood

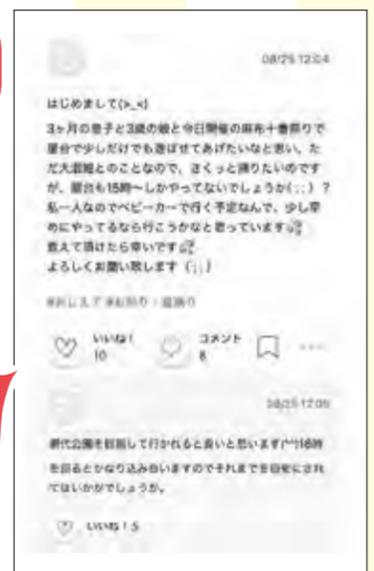
Reusing big things such as items you used when you were bringing up your children to furniture and electrical appliances. If it’s your neighbors, they can come easily to pick it up!



Does anybody want electric appliances?

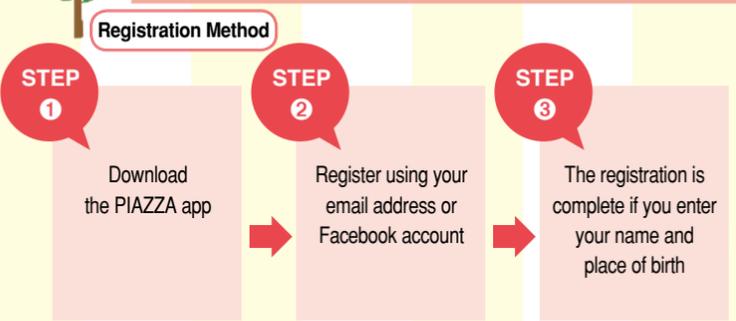
I’m Looking for Information!

About restaurants that you can go with your children, a delicious cake shop or playground you recommend. Information you want to know is easily available!



Teach me about ways I can enjoy my time with my children.

Information you have will be useful for others! Please register if you want to enjoy Azabu.



- It will be uploaded to the Welcome! posting.
- The town folks will welcome you when you register!
- It’s easier to make friends when you enter your birthplace or interest because a connection is born there.



Download the app from here.

Inquiries: Collaboration Project Subsection,
Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office
Tel: 03-5114-8802

Information from the Metropolitan Taxation Office (December)

The due date for the payment of Fixed Assets Taxes and City Planning Taxes in the third quarter is by the end of December (within the 23 Wards).

Please pay the amount of tax stipulated on the reverse side of your payment statement by December 27, 2019 (Friday) at a financial institution or convenience store listed on the reverse side of your payment statement. Bank transfer is the most secure and convenient way of paying your taxes. Payment is also acceptable through credit card, via computer or smartphones.

For more details please refer to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation website, or contact the offices as below.

Inquiries:<Taxation> <Tax Payment> Minato Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (Rep.)
<Bank Transfer> Tax Collection Promotion Section, Tax Collection Division, and bureau of Taxation Tel: 03-3252-0955

December is “All Tokyo Arrears STOP Project Intensive Month”!

December is “All Tokyo Arrears STOP Project Intensive Month”!
In order to maintain a stable tax income and fairness in taxation, the metropolitan and municipal governments have designated December of every year as the “All Tokyo Arrears STOP Project Intensive Month”. As part of this effort, a variety of tax collection strategies have been employed. This includes tax payment promotion and disposition of delinquency, property seizure, wheel clamping, and specific investigations.

For more information, contact the office as below.

Inquiries: Individual Metropolitan Residents’ Tax Project Section, Tax Collection Division, Bureau of Taxation Tel: 03-5388-3039

Information from Azabu Regional City Office



Announcing the Azabu Future Photo Studio Panel Exhibition!!

The Azabu Regional City Office collects old photos of the Azabu district as well as taking and archiving contemporary scenic photos of Azabu in cooperation with Minato City residents.

This latest panel exhibition will be held to display interesting and contrasting scenes of the Azabu Area, from both the past and the present. We hope the experience will deepen the affection felt for Azabu among residents and non-residents alike, all of whom are welcome at the exhibition.



For anyone who enjoys taking photographs themselves, is interested in the history of Azabu or wants to deepen their affection for the town, please don't hesitate to contact us.

◆ The 1st Floor Lobby of Minato City Hall

1. Date and Time: 9:00am to 17:00pm, From Wednesday January 22nd Tuesday January 28th, 2020
* Closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays
* Until 16:00pm on the last day

2. Venue: The 1st Floor Lobby of Minato City Hall (1-5-25, Shibakoen)



港区ホームページ

◆ Fuji Film Square Mini Gallery

1. Date and Time: 10:00am to 19:00pm on Friday January 31st to Thursday February 13th, 2020
* Until 16:00 on the last day
* Entrance is allowed until 10 minutes before closing.
* The hall may be closed or the opening times changed under unavoidable circumstances.

2. Venue: Fuji Film Square Mini Gallery (Tokyo Midtown, 9-7-3, Akasaka, Minato-ku)

Inquiries: Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office
Tel: 03-5114-8812
Fax: 03-3583-3782

Azabu Future Photo Studio Subcommittee

This is an organization for residents of Azabu, "Azabu wo Kataru Kai" in Japanese. The Azabu Future Photo Studio Subcommittee (from here referred to as the "Subcommittee") collects old photos of the Azabu district, as well as taking new photos at fixed-point locations. These photos are archived and then exhibited at specific times on panel displays to show residents and visitors how the town of Azabu has changed.

The panel exhibitions are held in cooperation with local businesses and universities. The history and culture of Azabu is presented in this way on the Internet as well.



Subcommittee Meeting

Activities:

Every year a theme is chosen, panels are prepared, and a panel exhibition is planned and a schedule finalized. The exhibition is usually held from the beginning of the calendar year to the end of the fiscal year.

Recruiting new Subcommittee Members.

We are looking forward to having new Subcommittee Members.

Please fill in the necessary items in the following application form and send it to us by March 30, 2020 (Wednesday).



Town Walk

Toward a Roppongi with ZERO Violations! Our Slogan is "ZERO ROPPONGI" — The Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind —

Rules exist for a good reason, and if everybody follows the rules, we will all have greater freedom. Our aim is to have everybody enjoy their freedom and enjoy their time as comfortably as possible in Roppongi, where many people from a variety of cultures gather together.



ルール違反 ゼロの六本木へ。
会い言葉は、ZERO ROPPONGI
Toward a Roppongi with ZERO violations.
Our slogan is ZERO ROPPONGI.

We continue our campaign to work with neighborhood associations, resident's associations, store associations, businesses, and concerned administrative organizations for these reasons: "Cleaning and Enlightenment Activities" and "Patrol for the Prevention of Touting".

If you are interested in our activities, please don't hesitate to contact us.

We are recruiting Shops and Businesses to support the Charter.

Minato City is promoting the "Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind" Certification System for Recommended Businesses as part of efforts to increase awareness of the Charter. Shops and businesses that support the Charter are always being recruited.

Eligibility Businesses etc. must be located in, or be active mainly in the Roppongi District (Roppongi 3-chome to 7-chome and Akasaka 9-chome 7)

Applications You can send your application by post or submit it in person. Fill out the required information in the Letter of Agreement and send it to the Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office. Applications are also being accepted on the Minato City Official Website listed below.

Access the application form for the Letter of Agreement here.

Minato City Official Website: <http://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp>

Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind

Search



*: The names of the certified businesses, etc. will be posted on the Minato City Official Website or published in this information paper "The Azabu" as Recommended Businesses, etc."

Inquiries: Collaboration Project Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office
Tel: 03-5114-8802

Going shopping?
Visit our local shopping streets.

Please send us your comments or requests regarding
The Azabu



Please send your application with your address, name, occupation (school name), telephone number, and the reason why you are interested (in Japanese or English, format and number of letters have not limit), and deliver directly, mail, or fax to the following:
Community Policy Subsection Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, 5-16-45, Roppongi, Minato City, Tokyo (106-8515).

● Tel: 03-5114-8812 ● Fax: 03-3583-3782

We are looking for
Editorial Staff

You can also access this newsletter from the Minato City website.



AZABU

● Locations of the Newsletter: Roppongi 1-chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabujuban and Akabane-bashi subway stations, The Chit Bus, Minato Library, Azabu Library, Minami-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Nishi-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Iigura Iki-Iki Plaza, Azabu Civic Center, Azabu Regional City Office, etc.
● Usage of articles, illustrations, and photographs from this newsletter is prohibited.

Staff

Kyoko Ideishi
Marika Oba
Kumiko Omura
Takehide Kasho
Misaho Kasho
Suime Kolke
Mai S.
Masahiro Someya
Emi Taoka
Yukiko Takayanagi

Aki Tanaka
Yasuhiro Tanaka
Mizuho Nishimori
Minako Hatanaka
Akiko Horiuchi
Jitsuzo Horiuchi
Michiko Horikiri
Ayako Yamaki
Harumi Yamada

Editor's Note

I participated in the editing of "The Azabu" in April, and my first job was to interview the Ambassador of Madagascar in Japan. Because it was the first time for me to enter an Embassy and interview an Ambassador, I was greatly excited. As I went into the Embassy building, I felt warmly greeted by the lovely chandeliers above us. The interior of the building was calm, spacious and inviting, an atmosphere like a deep forest. During the interview the Ambassador spoke gently, and I felt her wish that she would like us to know much more about Madagascar and Africa was genuine. At the end of the interview, the Ambassador said, "Shall we all take a photo together?" I was very pleased that she had thought of this, and now I have a commemorative photo. I am genuinely grateful to all the members of the Embassy for their warm hospitality and kindness.

(Written by Michiko Horikiri)

The original article is written in Japanese.

"Minato Call" information service.

Minato call is a city information service about services provided by City Hall, facility guide, event information, etc., available from 7:00am to 11:00pm everyday.

* English speakers are also available.

Minato Call :

Tel: 03-5472-3710 Fax: 03-5777-8752

E-mail: info@minato.call-center.jp

Inquiry submission form: <https://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/kouchou/kuse/kocho/iken/form-inquiry.html>