

Fascinating Artistic Azabu ③6

(Contributed Article)

Ando Memorial Church and OGAWA Sanchi

IMURA Kaori, OGAWA Sanchi Researcher

The Ando Memorial Church of the United Church of Christ in Japan stands on the top of Sendai-zaka Slope in Azabu, Minato City. This majestic church building was constructed in 1917, and is made of Oya stone. You can still see the chisel marks on it from when it was quarried.

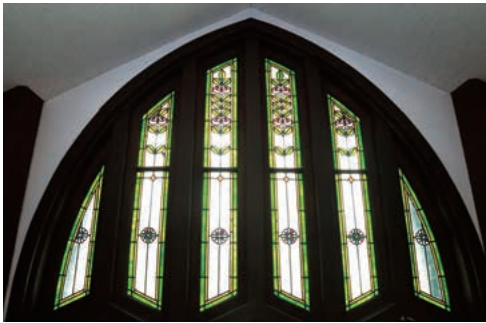
The church has three remarkable stained-glass artworks; a large window facing the street, a pair of windows with lily designs at the front of the chapel, and a pair of windows above the cross. There are records, including photos and diaries, about the artist who created the large window and the lily windows.

The name of the stained-glass artist was OGAWA Sanchi (1867–1928). He was born in Sumpu Domain (present-day Shizuoka City). His parents wanted him to take over the family-owned clinic, but he was not able to give up his longing for painting. He entered Tokyo Fine Art School (now Tokyo University of the Arts) and studied traditional Japanese painting. After that, he went to the US and studied Western painting and designs, and finally discovered his passion for stained glass.

Mr. HABUCHI Hiroshi worked under OGAWA, and he remembers that what fascinated OGAWA most was glass called “opalescent glass,” which he found in the US.

“It was opalescent glass that astonished my master. Several colors flow on the surface of a piece, and it looked just like seeing through jewels. ... When the part inside the material is selected, it can have a sufficiently three-dimensional effect, and even an effect much like an oil-painting. ... He had a strong desire to bring stained-glass techniques using this material to Japan, by any means.”

(Based on “Stained Glass: Past and Present Stories”
written by HABUCHI Koshu)



The glass that fascinated OGAWA was also used for artworks in the Ando Memorial Church, like the lily stained glass in the chapel. We can see OGAWA's solid drawing technique from the expression of the graceful flowers and leaves. The part really worth noting is that the design on the left is a mirror image of the design on the right. Crosses are arranged on the surrounding glass, so there is no mistaking that we are in a church, even in such a gorgeous atmosphere.

The founder, Mr. ANDO Taro, had a lot of input regarding the large stained-glass window facing the street. The most distinctive feature is the text “Commemoration of Pioneering Japanese Missionaries in Hawaii and the First Baptized Person” at the bottom. Mr. Ando worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because of his excellent language skills. During his time as the Consul General of Japan in Hawaii, he was baptized and received the sacraments to become a Christian. It was a great turning-point in life for him, as he became connected to the origins of this church. The roses and leaves at the top of the stained-glass design are perhaps emblematic of his love for his wife Fumiko, who passed away three years before the completion of the church. Fumiko loved roses and often drew them throughout her life.

How did OGAWA become involved with this church in the first place? The story started when Mr. Ando and his wife became members of the Ginza Church. The construction of Ginza Church was completed in 1912. Mr. Ando, who was involved in this church construction project from the design



phase, loved massive stone construction. Therefore, he asked the architect who designed the Ginza Church to construct his own church. The person who contracted the stained glass is unknown, but we suppose that the stained-glass works were created in response to a request from the architect. The original Ginza Church burnt down, so only a few documents remain.

Original works of OGAWA Sanchi that remain after the Great Kanto Earthquake and WWII are extremely rare. We would like you to see these valuable works. For a tour, please make a reservation by phone in advance.



Mr. YOSHITAKE Choichi (1879 – 1953), an architect, was in charge of designing this chapel. The two pieces of lily stained-glass work positioned on the front right and front left have the same design and are arranged like mirror images. A bouquet of lilies is painted on the lead grid as if floating. There are variations among the directions of the petals and how far the lilies have opened. The overlapping leaves are exquisite without giving an impression of heaviness, and give us a glimpse of the high aesthetic sense of OGAWA.

- ❖ For tour reservations, contact the Ando Memorial Church of the United Church of Christ in Japan.
Address: 2-14-16 Moto-azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo,
Tel: 03-3442-4988
- ❖ Please send us information about stained glass from its early days in Japan
Website of the Society Celebrating Sanchi Ogawa
<http://www.sanchi.info/index.html>



From the top Mr. OGAWA Sanchi, a stained-glass artist Mr. ANDO Taro, a founder of the Church Mrs. ANDO Fumiko, who converted to Christianity along with her husband



IMURA Kaori
She started her activities as an Ogawa Sanchi Researcher by writing a paper titled “Ogawa Sanchi no Shogai to Sakutu no Henkan – Shinshutsu Shiroyo kara no Kosatu” (The Life of Ogawa Sanchi and Changes in his Style – Consideration Based on New Materials). She is currently engaged in investigation, repair and preservation of stained-glass artworks and plans and holds lectures and tours. This year, she appeared on the NHK program “The Mark of Beauty.”

- 参考文献 ●
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“Ginza Church 90-year History” edited by Ginza Church, published by Ginza Church in 1981
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“The 100th Anniversary of Ando Memorial Church in 2017, History of Ando Memorial Church: We dedicate everything we have received to God” published by Ando Memorial Church of the United Church of Christ in Japan in 2017



Ms. TAKIZAWA Risako

She is a fourth-year student in the Faculty of Law. She is studying wide-ranging world politics from the perspective of investigating how politics and policies influence our daily lives and business settings. More specifically, she conducts comparative analysis of “Town Development” in Latin America and Japan and summarizes her opinions.



Ms. YASUMOTO Hitomi

She is also a fourth-year student in the Faculty of Law. She is studying “Consumer Law,” which specifies consumer rights and obligations, “Corporate Law” related to companies, and “Environmental Law” related to the global environment to deepen her knowledge. She is considering providing support to enable solutions to various consumer issues and environmental issues that occur in our immediate surroundings.

THE VOICE

The Current Voices of the Young People Who Gather in the Roppongi and Azabu Areas

Recently, the young people of “Generation Z,” who were born between the late 1990s and early 2000s, are gaining attention. “Generation Z” are actually in their 20s, and these young adults will become the core members of society in the near future.

It can be said that the main feature of Generation Z’s consumption behavior is the power to appeal—they collect information through social media and share it after having a “real experience.” They invest money into things that they personally feel are valuable, or things they are moved by. They choose goods based on the story of the developed goods or a concept with which they can “empathize,” rather than the brand name. Many of them live their lives using digital platforms^{*1} daily.

I would like to deliver the real voices of this generation, who move between the digital and real worlds, having a “real experience” in Azabudai Hills.

They have a campus life and part-time jobs in their dream location, the Minato City Roppongi & Azabu area.

Ms. Hitomi Ten years ago, my eldest brother had a part-time job in the coffee shop where I work now, and that was the inspiration for me starting my part-time job in Roppongi Hills. My brother surely enjoyed a fulfilling university life. He prepared the shop between five to six in the morning before its opening at 7, when he was on shift, and after the job, he attended lectures in his university. Looking at my brother, I admired him a lot when I was an elementary school child.

Now, I am a university student and, just like him at that time, after my job at the coffee shop, I go to Shirokane campus where my university is located, which takes about 45 minutes on foot, going through Azabu-Juban Shopping Street.

By walking, I feel I can take time for digital detox, paying attention to the sounds of the surrounding environment and the landscape. On the other hand, I attempt to reduce future health risks by visualizing my daily activity levels using an app that accumulates points^{*2}—I get points by moving around.

Ms. Risako Three years ago, at the same time as I entered the university, I started living with my father in Shibaura, who works away from home. I was born in Fukuoka, so I’m a “Hakatacko” (Hakata

native). Every day, I go to my university in Mita from Shibaura, and then to Roppongi Hills, where the coffee shop in which I work with Hitomi is located, and go home to Shibaura. I travel around this triangle on foot. For me, the days I spend walking in this area of dreams are fulfilling. The reason for this is that I feel “empathy” with the achievements of this town of easy living, where a small community bus is provided for us to go to necessary places, including the Regional City Office and hospitals, driving through this town of many slopes.

Experiencing the Azabudai Hills “Modern Urban Village” surrounded by greenery, a plaza-like town that connects people

Ms. Hitomi When I request information, I use video-focused social media or social media that has excellent search functions using hashtags, rather than a search engine. I react to the images with which I can feel empathy (interest), from among those displayed one after another on my vertical smartphone screen. This time, I visited Azabudai Hills, somewhere I have always wanted to visit, having seen a cityscape filled with greenery and delicious food on social media.

In the Azabudai Hills Cafe^{*3} where you can experience “Green and Wellness” (one of the themes of Azabudai Hills), I tasted the juice made using fruits full of natural flavor, and the popular food menu. Straight juice^{*4} made using Unshu mikan (Satsuma mandarin) contains a lot of beta-cryptoxanthin. When I want to recover from eye fatigue caused by digital equipment in everyday life and maintain good health, I make sure to drink it proactively.

Ms. Risako The Azabudai Hills Cafe^{*5}, which carries the name of the town, is located at the place facing Central Plaza, which opens out when you come up to the ground level from Garden Plaza C, through the Central Walk from Kamiyacho Station (Photo A).

The concept of Azabudai Hills is to create a town like a plaza. The juice mentioned before by



Ms. Hitomi is provided in the Central Plaza, the symbol of the town and located at its center, where you can relax with the juice in hand, sitting on one of the scattered benches, or enjoy authentic dishes in a cafe terrace seat. In this plaza, we can spend our time freely, using the facilities in accordance with our purpose, like a living room in town. The people who gather in Azabudai Hills spend their time enjoyably. There must be many of the people in our generation, who can “empathize” with the successful achievement of ideal town development.

^{*1} This refers to systems or services that connect users and business operators to each other, including social media, EC sites, video streaming services, etc.

^{*2} Activities accumulate points in various ways, and there are ways to use the accumulated points.

^{*3, 5} Azabudai Hills Cafe (Photo A): A cafe and casual dining place with terrace seats in front of the Central Plaza, where coffee and a la carte menu items can be enjoyed casually all day. Events and promotions are held in the open space connecting to the Plaza.

^{*4} Mikan juice produced in Ehime Prefecture (Photo B): Because the freshly squeezed juice of mandarin oranges is used as it is, we can enjoy the original rich taste and refreshing scent of Unshu mikan. It is a highly nutritious juice through which we can feel the deliciousness of mikan.

Acknowledgement: We would like to express our gratitude to the people of Azabudai Hills Management Promotion Office of Mori Building Co., Ltd., and the staff members of Azabudai Hills Cafe, for their acceptance of our interview and the time they took for it. They must have been very busy because an event was held until the day before in the Plaza. We also thank them for lending us valuable photos.

● Research and Photo Shooting Support

Azabudai Hills Cafe
Address: Azabudai Hills Mori JP Tower B1F, 1-3-1 Azabudai, Minato-ku Tel: 03-6277-6623

(Research and text by OBA Marika)





Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Romania to Japan, Dr. Ovidiu RAETCHI

Romania

Area: Approx. 2,380,000 km² (almost the same area as mainland Japan)
Population: 19,060,000 (in 2023)
(Source: Romania National Institute of Statistics)
Capital City: Bucharest (population approx. 2.14 million in 2023, according to the Romania National Institute of Statistics)
Languages: Romanian (official language) and Hungarian
Head of the State: President Nicusor DAN
Legislature: Bicameral System
(Upper House 133 seats, Lower House 330 seats, four-year term)

Reference: Ministry of Foreign Affairs website
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/romania/data.html>

Romania

Interview Support: Embassy of Romania in Japan

Visiting Ambassadors

From the “World” of Azabu

Romania

“Resilience” inherited through the ages in Romania, so the people could survive the times

The Embassy of Romania in Japan is located close to Nishi-azabu Crossing, and a little way up the Ooyokocho-zaka Slope from Gaiken-nishi-dori Avenue. Upon entering the heavily guarded entrance, we were immediately able to see another world unfold, where we could forget the hustle and bustle of the city. On a summer afternoon, we listened to the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Romania to Japan, Dr. Ovidiu RAETCHI. The hall is decorated with colorful traditional Romanian embroidered national costumes.

A Young Leader Who Is a Former Politician

Dr. RAETCHI started his career as the Ambassador to Japan at the end of June 2024. He is presently only 45 years old, but with an impressive history: he served as a member of parliament for eight years. He has also earned doctoral degrees in History and Politics. He said, “After coming to Japan, my interest in Japan’s culture and history has continued to grow.” The Azabu-juban area has a nostalgic shopping district, and is his favorite. He sometimes stops by a bookshop he loves in Roppongi.

The World Heritage Wooden Churches of Maramures

Dr. RAETCHI has a doctorate in the History of Romania, and recommends visitors see the “World Heritage Wooden Churches of Maramures.” These traditional wooden buildings stand in northern Romania and have been designated as World Cultural Heritage. The church buildings are all made of wood—something they have in common with the shrines and temples of Japan. Recently, the similarities between Shinto



Wooden Churches in the Maramures region: In Romania, research is being conducted comparing these with shrines in Japan.

shrines in Japan and the wooden churches in Maramures have been comparatively studied. The skilled techniques used for the churches are reminiscent of Japan’s shrine carpenters, and “will surely be loved by Japanese people,” said the Ambassador, who gave his stamp of approval.

Remnants of Ancient Rome

As you can tell from the name of the country— “Romania” (the Land of the Romans)—the significant influence of Ancient Rome still remains there today. For example, the first name of the Ambassador,



Peles Castle located in Sinaia, in Central Romania: It was constructed by the first king, Carol 1 of Romania. There are many beautiful castles in Romania.

“Ovidiu,” came from “Ovid,” one of three great poets of the Augustan Age. Names from the three poets (Virgil, Horace, and Ovid) are not uncommon in Romania. However, we don’t really see such names anymore in other countries, including Italy. The origin of the Romanian language is Latin. Therefore, mastering other languages with the same roots, such as Italian, Spanish, French and Portuguese is not too difficult for the people of Romania.

Rapid Influx of Japanese Culture

Japanese manga and anime are dominating the global market, including Romania. The Ambassador’s children are crazy about Japanese anime. The Ambassador has no choice but to watch it together with them. This situation is quite different from that of people of his generation, who grew up in a time of transition from communism to democracy. In that era, the first foreign culture to come into Romania was Western culture. He did not have any chance to experience Japanese manga and anime like today’s children. Because of this, the most famous Japanese person in Romania is KUROSAWA Akira, a world-famous film director. This seems to be related to the fact that people watched foreign films under the dictatorship during the 1960s and 1970s, to seek freedom.

Stay “Creative” all the time.

The thing the Ambassador wants Japanese people to understand most about Romanians is how “creative” they are. Due to geopolitical factors, Romanian history consists of invasions and control by many ethnic groups and great nations. However, “they have shown great ‘creativity’ in difficult times.” For example, Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957), a sculptor, was born in a poor family in a small village, but he spent most of his life in Paris, France, and became a great sculptor representative of the 20th century. In the field of sports, the female gymnast Nadia Comaneci (born 1961) recorded the first-ever perfect 10. This was in 1976, under the regime of Nicolae Ceausescu (1918–

National costumes of Romania displayed at the entrance of the Romanian Embassy building. The unique embroidery is eye catching.



1989), a great historical achievement in the Montreal Olympic Games. The scoreboard from that time had only three digits. The display was supposed to be “10.00.” However, it was displayed as “1.00.” This episode became a legend. In Japanese society, where the word “XX Gacha” (internet slang meaning that you cannot select for yourself, but the result depends on luck) is trending, the spirit of Romania of not blaming others for your life or not blaming your life on your origins, but continuing to create earnestly, is something thought-provoking for us.

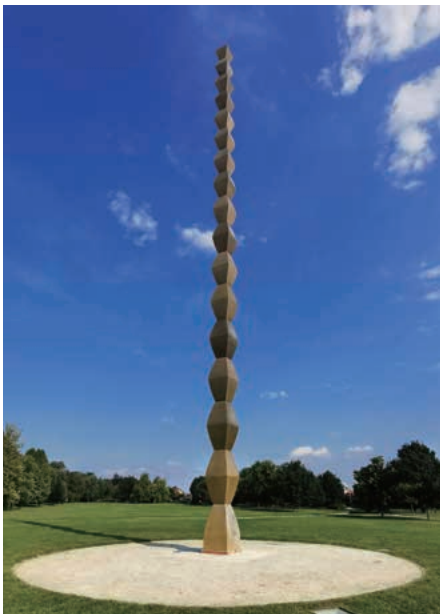


Nadia Comaneci, who is beloved in Romania, recorded the first-ever perfect 10 in the Montreal Olympic Games

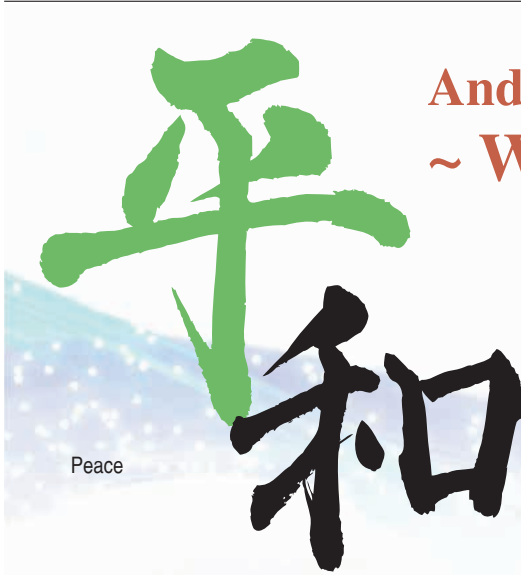
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This time, we understood the “Resilience” (the ability to overcome difficulties and recover) of the people, that has been cultivated over the long history of Romania. The Ambassador himself is surely one of the people who embodies the “Resilience” of Romania. On the other hand, when he cheerfully spoke about his daughter, who went to university in Japan, he showed the universal face of fatherhood. We are looking forward to seeing how the country of Romania will grow in the future with the young people who were born after democratization.

<http://tokyo.mae.ro/en>



The masterpiece of Constantin Brancusi, titled “Infinity Column,” in Targu Jiu, a city in southwestern Romania. It was registered as World Heritage in 2024.



And, What's to Come? ~ Workshops Connecting People of Different Generations ~

2025 is a milestone year: the 80th year since the end of the War and the 40th year since Minato City's Declaration as a City of Peace. In Minato, events were held for citizens to think deeply and spread the word about peace. In "Café and Snack HARMONIA" in Minami-azabu, two workshops were held for participants to speak with each other about peace in their daily lives this summer.



Our "Peace" was discussed together with the Director of Nagasaki University RECNA Center in a roundtable discussion. The Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (RECNA)'s "Dialogue Project"

HARMONIA values creating a space where visitors can relax and exchange ideas, with "harmony" as its main concept. They also regularly help to develop various peace activities and workshops with another important concept, "Nagasaki," to spread the word about peace.



The representative of "HARMONIA," President TAKATA Haruna (from Nagasaki), interacts with Prof. YOSHIDA Fumihiko, Director of Nagasaki University RECNA Center, through their peace activities. This project was realized through dialogue between them.

In Part 1, Prof. YOSHIDA and Ms. TAKATA had a discussion about "dialogue" and "peace," and what we should do to encourage it. In Part 2, they talked about the "importance of a relaxing space" and "thoughts for peace" together with like-minded related people, staff members and visitors.

On the day, many people of all ages from various backgrounds participated in this event. This included high school students who are engaged in peace activities, people who wanted to discuss peace and participate in peace activities, parents and children who came from Nagasaki, and the elderly who wished for peace.



What is Nagasaki University Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (RECNA)? <https://www.recna.nagasaki-u.ac.jp/recna/>

This center was established in April 2012, recognizing that it is necessary to pass down the intentions and wishes of the Hibakusha (A-bomb survivors). This center for common education and research was established to carry out education and research activities as a thinktank for citizens, being responsive to local concerns.

Who are the Hiroshima Nagasaki Peace Messengers?

High school students selected from 18 prefectures participated in this project this year. Their slogan is "Although the power of individuals is small, they are not powerless."

In 2024, when the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations won the Nobel Peace Prize, four representatives of the Hiroshima Nagasaki Peace Messengers attended the award ceremony. They were able to expand their range of activities, by strengthening bonds with local high school students and young people in Oslo and discussing the importance of peace.

Thinking About "Peace" With Children

"HARMONIA Children Café" holds a "Children's Restaurant" event every month. The special event was held on August 17, 2025, immediately after the anniversary of the end of WWII. Children and adults spend a peaceful time here, transcending generations.

During snack time, they compared the foods we eat nowadays with those in war time. These included rice balls and miso soup inspired by that time, which they compared with the modern versions. Fried potatoes and juice were also provided. The children enjoyed tasting these foods, full of curiosity. After that, Ms. MAEDA Mari, an announcer visiting from Nagasaki, read four picture books and a digital picture book produced by high school students in Nagasaki.

The children spoke amongst themselves while looking at these. "Pictures are bright and enjoyable in peacetime." "Pictures are dark and sad in wartime." The children were able to understand that people have different perspectives and ways of thinking about "conflicts" depending on their position. They naturally shared their opinions about how solutions can be found.

Here are some of the comments from the adult participants: "I remember that indescribable emotion welling up inside me, when something I cherished was taken away." "I would like to protect what is important to me." "I would like to read them again for myself."



Café and Snack HARMONIA
Address: Azabu-juban HARMONIA Bldg., 1-6-5 Minami-azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo
Tel: 050-1331-4970 <http://www.espring.co.jp/>
Café (1F)
Select Shop (2F)
Rental Space (B1F, 3F, 4F and 7F)



Ms. HIJIKATA Maiko

Ms. HIJIKATA is the manager of HARMONIA and came from Nagasaki Prefecture. She has a lot of experience dedicated to her work and child-rearing. She cherishes the warm hospitality and close connections, similar to Nagasaki. She wants to make the cafe a comfortable and familiar place where people can relax and naturally express how they care for themselves and others.



Ms. MAEDA Mari

Ms. MAEDA was born, raised, and still lives in Nagasaki. She is a freelance announcer and the representative of "Peace by Peace NAGASAKI." She creates spaces to think about "Peace" in schools and communities, through public readings and as a visiting lecturer, and carries out research about the Atomic Bombs in and out of Japan.



Mr. HAYAMA Takahiro

Mr. HAYAMA came from Unzen City in Nagasaki Prefecture. He is active as one of the 24th intake of Hiroshima Nagasaki Peace Messengers. He is also a staff member of HARMONIA. Based on his experience as a Hiroshima Nagasaki Peace Messenger, he learned the importance of "expressing one's own feeling in one's own words." Making use of his learning, he plans and holds workshops for peace activities.



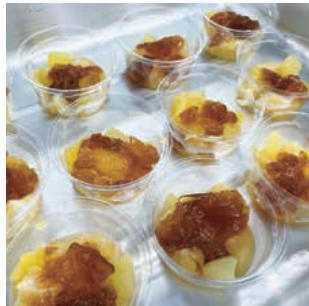
Editor's Azabu Enjoy Eating Report 8



Bon appétit

Bon appétit! French-Style School Lunch! ~ School Lunch to Commemorate Minato City's International Friendship City Agreement with Paris ~

In March 2025, Minato City concluded an Agreement with the 15th Arrondissement of Paris: the International Friendship City Agreement. This will strengthen ties between Minato City and the 15th Arrondissement of Paris, France in terms of cultural exchange and global competitiveness. To mark the French National Foundation Day (Bastille Day) on July 14th, commemorative French-style school lunches were provided for all elementary and junior high schools in Minato City, incorporating French cuisine into school lunches. Mr. SUGIMOTO Keizo, owner and chef of the Restaurant La FinS in Shibmashi, was in charge of the menu. We were excited to visit a municipal elementary school for our research, wondering what kind of French dishes would be provided.



Working in the kitchen. All the menu items are provided hot.

Fruit Tea Cocktail

Cocktails are generally thought of as alcoholic. However, this word just means "a mixture of many ingredients." For this dessert, jellied black tea is mixed with fruit.

Croque Monsieur

The word "croque" means "crunchy" and "monsieur" means "gentleman." This is a dish that was liked by middle-aged men, and so it was named after them. This dish is made with bread and ham, with plenty of white sauce and cheese poured over it.

Rice Salad

In France, rice is treated like a vegetable. Sometimes, it is included in salads or used as a side dish. This refreshing salad is perfect for summer.

Paris-style Soup

Soup made with white leek ("poireau") is called "Soupe Parisien." This name was given to the soup because leeks are widely farmed in the outskirts of Paris.

Today's Menu

(Each item as described by Chef. SUGIMOTO).



School lunch today was a bit different than usual. The bread was hard, so I thought it was probably French-style bread used for the croque monsieur. It was the first time that I had zucchini soup.

Rice salad is interesting! Very delicious!

Preparation started at 7 o'clock in the morning

The preparation for school lunch started early in the morning. About 10 staff members diligently prepared school lunches for the children in a remarkably clean kitchen. Access to the kitchen is limited, and only staff members can enter.

"In my elementary school, pre-prepared school lunches were delivered to classrooms. We did not have a kitchen. Therefore, I am quite envious that school children can have freshly cooked hot meals."

"In our school days, the best we got was fried bread. French dishes are unbelievably gorgeous."

Research staff members told each other about their memories of school lunches, as they watched the food being prepared behind a glass window.

It took time and effort, because all menu items were heated before they were provided. The nutritional balance was also considered. The total calories for the day's lunch was 600 Kcal, with 24.9 g of protein.

Just as the fourth class period ended, the dishes were arranged in front of the classroom. Wow, it was exciting! All the children love school lunch time. The children eagerly anticipated it with big smiles on their faces.

A perfect menu, including dessert

Before eating, the teacher explained the day's menu. This included "croque monsieur," "rice salad," "Paris-style soup," and even a dessert "fruit tea cocktail." We were very surprised how well-prepared the French menu was. It was hard to believe it was a school lunch.

The first-graders quickly stood in line for another cup of soup, saying: "Hot soup is delicious!" "I love soup the best!" Other comments included: "The cheese on the croque monsieur is wonderful!" "This was the first time I had rice salad. It had tuna in it, and was delicious with mayonnaise." Listening to them and watching such a lively dining scene, we felt really happy. "The dessert was really delicious, with various tastes such as bitter, sour, and sweet."

On the other hand, the older fourth-grade students' comments included: "I don't like zucchini, but this soup is good!" "This is the first time I've tried zucchini. I'd like to have it again." "The melted cheese with the ham in the croque monsieur is a great combination." "I feel that the tea flavor of the dessert is an acquired taste."

I liked the soup the best and the rice salad the second, then the croque monsieur the third.



The tea cocktail is very delicious, with bittersweet tea jelly mixed with fruity sweet and sourness.

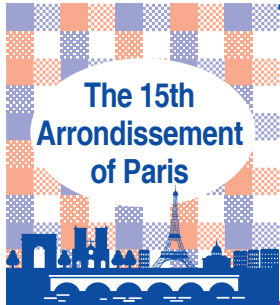
"The combination of bittersweet tea and sweet and sour fruits is perfect." The comments from the fourth-graders were impressive. They were excellent food reporters, somehow outperforming the adults! There was also a line for a second helping in this classroom.

International exchange based on food culture

Unsurprisingly, many first and fourth-graders wanted more, and said: "I want the event to happen again." "I want to try even more French cuisine."

We also had the school lunch. We were surprised at the extensive menu items made on a limited budget. Adults can also enjoy the school lunch food. If appropriate tableware and coffee was added to the menu, this lunch would be suitable for a restaurant. We really enjoyed it.

We thought it would be wonderful if all children in the international city of Minato could connect with the world through food culture by way of school lunches. We expect a lot from the next school lunch event! We were very grateful for the chance to participate.



The 15th Arrondissement of Paris

The 23 Wards of Tokyo have proper names such as Minato-ku and Shibuya-ku. However, in Paris, there are 20 "arrondissements," and the numbers are arranged clockwise from the center.

The 15th Arrondissement of Paris, located in the southwest of Paris, is the sister city of Minato City. The population of Minato City is about 260,000, and the population of the 15th Arrondissement is roughly the same at about 242,000. The 15th Arrondissement is a quiet, upscale residential area and shopping district. The townscape extends for a few kilometers along the banks of the Seine. The features of the city resemble that of Minato City, with a waterfront and a thriving media industry.



Restaurant La FinS Chef. SUGIMOTO Keizo

French cuisine has a high-class image. However, French people usually eat home-cooked food, just like you do. They have dishes somewhat similar to the Japanese oyakodon and teriyaki. For the school lunch, I selected the dishes all French people know, regardless of their level of wealth. If you meet a French person, tell them that you had the experience of eating a "croque monsieur" at a school lunch as a student. If your foreign friend tells you that he/she has the experience of eating teriyaki, you will have something in common. I am sure that French people feel the same.

Fascinated by the Artistic Azabu

Extra Part

“Kamon”:
The crests of the daimyo families
who once lived in the Azabu area

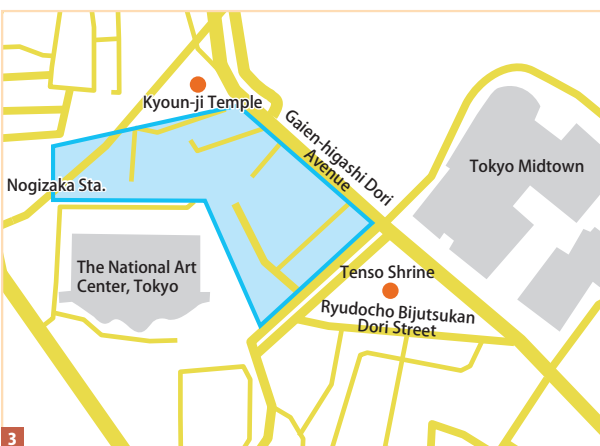
Hasunoike Domain,
Hizen Province
(Present-day Saga Prefecture)
Kashima Domain,
Hizen Province



Hana Gyouyo
HANAGYUUYO
(apricot flower and leaves)



Reprint from "Revised and Extended Edition of the Minato City Modern Historical Map Book: Azabu and Roppongi"



View from the Midtown side toward the National Art Center, Tokyo: The former Hasunoike Domain Residence was located on the hill on the right (samurai area) and the townspeople's residential quarters were located in the lowland on the left.

The daimyo (feudal lord) families whose main residences once stood in Azabu and their family crests have been serialized on this page starting from the Azabu No. 66. This time, we introduce Hasunoike Domain and Kashima Domain. Both were branch family daimyos of the Nabeshima main family, the feudal lords of Saga Domain. Their main residences in Edo were adjacent to each other in Ryudocho (present-day Roppongi 7-Chome) and they had the same “Hana Gyouyo” family crest. Something of the relationship between the main family and the branch families in the samurai society of the Edo Period can be understood from their mansions and the family crest.

The Secondary Residence of the Main Family in Edo became the Main Residences of Branch Families.

In 1607, the Nabeshima family took over the Ryuzoji family (former feudal lords of Saga Domain) estate of 357,000 koku (rice crop yield) and became the lords of the Saga Domain in their place. The Nabeshima main family established the branch family daimyos of Ogi Domain (73,000 koku), Hasunoike Domain (52,000 koku) and Kashima Domain (20,000 koku) between 1609 and 1639. The Nabeshima main family sent some family members of these branch daimyos and their retainers to Edo (Edo-zume) to live (partly as hostages) and demonstrate their loyalty to the Tokugawa Shogun family, and reinforce the power base of the Nabeshima family. While each of these three branch families had a direct master-servant relationship with the Tokugawa family as daimyos, they were still under the control of the Nabeshima main family as members of the Nabeshima “Clan.” However, their residences in Edo were not directly granted by the Shogun, so the spare residence and secondary residence of the Nabeshima main family were used as their temporary residences. **1**

1 Saga Domain Nabeshima Family Mansion granted by the Shogun (Prepared based on “Shomuki Jimen Torishirabe Sho” (research report on the mansions of Daimyos and Shogun retainers))

Type	Name	Area (m ²)	Remarks	Present-day Location
Main Residence	Sakurada	Approx. 38,500 m ² *		Hibiya Park (Chiyoda City)
Spare Residence	Tameikebata	Approx. 23,000 m ²		National Printing Bureau and Surrounding Area (Minato City)
Spare Residence	Saiwai-bashi-no-uchi	Approx. 8,920 m ²	Ogi Domain Residence	TEPCO Main Office (Chiyoda City)
Secondary Residence	Azabu Ryudocho	Approx. 29,500 m ²	Shared by Hasunoike Domain Residence & Kashima Domain Residence	The National Art Center, Tokyo (Minato City)
Secondary Residence	Azabu-Sakashita-cho	Approx. 8,820 m ² **		Kenso-ji Temple and surrounding area (Minato City)

* Including 82.5m2 of neighboring land (perpetual imperial property which cannot be sold or purchased) and 2,228m² of land (imperial property for the time being which cannot be sold or purchased)
** Includes 5,112 m² of the neighboring “Azabu Zoshikicho Ipponmatsu Kakaie-yashiki”

The main functions of secondary residences were as evacuation sites in the event of disasters, storehouses (kura-yashiki), and flower and vegetable gardens. In many cases, secondary residences were located on large suburban sites. In the case of the Nabeshima main family, it was recorded that the Hasunoike Domain Residence was actually used as an evacuation site when their Sakurada Main Residence, a spare residence in Akasaka Tameikebata at the edge of a reservoir pond, and the kakaie-yashiki residence (this refers to a residence for which land was bought and buildings were constructed by the daimyo) in Azabu Zoshikicho were destroyed by a huge fire in 1854.

Location of the Residences (Azabu Ryudocho)

On the map **2** from 1862, the mansion grounds of the Nabeshima Bizen-no-Kami (Governor of Bizen Province, Kashima Domain) and the Nabeshima Kai-no-Kami (Governor of Kai Province, Hasunoike Domain) are clearly designated. They are both described as “Rented land from the Secondary Residence of the Matsudaira Hizen-no-Kami (Saga Domain),” as described above. When compared with a current map **3**, the positions of Kyouin-ji Temple marked on the upper left part of the map, Tenso Shrine (Shimmei) marked on the lower right, and the surrounding roads (present-day Gaien-higashi Dori Avenue and Ryudocho Bijutsukan Dori street) are almost unchanged. Also, the mansion grounds of the Date Totomi-no-Kami (Governor of Totomi Province), adjacent to both the Nabeshima clan’s mansion grounds, shown in the lower left part of map **2**, is now the National Art Center, Tokyo site (Refer to the Azabu No. 68). This means that the Nabeshima family’s mansion site in Edo can still be identified as the pale blue section on map **3**.

The two straight parallel roads connecting Midtown and the National Art Center, Tokyo have existed since the Edo Period. At that time, they were on the property line of the Hasunoike Domain Residence and also the border line between the samurai area (white section on map **2**) and the townspeople’s residential quarter (gray area on map **2**). If you stand in this place knowing that, you might realize that the areas were divided so that “samurai areas were located on a hill and the townspeople’s residential quarters were located in the lowland.” **4**

After the Meiji Restoration, all the old samurai mansion sites were confiscated by the new government and were incorporated into the townspeople’s residential areas. Then, block numbers and owners were decided upon for each land parcel, which was called a “hitsu.” The Nabeshima family no longer owned the Kashima Domain Residence site, an area of about 15,000 m². The former Lord of Kashima Domain, Nabeshima Naoyoshi obtained a parcel of land about 11,230 m² in Shibasakae-cho 7-banchi (the area around present-day Masonic 38 MT Building in Shiba Koen 4-Chome) and moved there. The Hasunoike Domain mansion site, about 19,230 m², became the property of Nabeshima Naoto,

from the former daimyo family of Hasunoike Domain. However, after Naoto moved out in the mid-Meiji period, the land became a general residential area. Now, this area is relatively quiet and is mostly mid-rise apartments and office buildings.

Acquisition of the Hana Gyouyo Family Crest

“Gyouyo” is an ornament for horse saddles etc., that originated in China. In the Kamakura Period (1185–1333), this design became popular as a family crest for court nobles. After the mid-Muromachi Period (1336–1573), it started being used by samurai families. In the age of civil war (the Sengoku Period), the Otomo daimyo family of Bungo Province (present-day Oita Prefecture) decided to use the “Gyouyo” design (apricot leaves) as their family crest. Retainers who had achieved great deeds were awarded the use of it, and this gave them preferential treatment as “vassals of the family crest.” This practice effectively increased the power of the Otomo family. The “Gyouyo Family Crest” became an object of envy among the military families of Kyushu. It is said that in the battle of Imayama in 1570, when Nabeshima Naoshige defeated the Otomo army, the Gyouyo family crest was established as the crest of the Nabeshima Family to mark the victory. Ms. NOGUCHI Tomoko collected, compared and did a lot of research regarding Gyouyo family crests. They were often marked on various containers passed down in the Nabeshima family. These objects show not only when the crest was used, but how it changed over time. According to her, in the beginning all members of the Nabeshima Clan used the same Gyouyo family crest. However, from the late 17th century, stripes were added to the design of the Nabeshima main family. In the early 18th century, it was decided that “The crest of the main family should use the striped Gyouyo design, and everyone else (including brothers of the head) and the members of branch families should use the Hana Gyouyo design.” Only female members of the main family marrying into higher-status families could use the “Striped Gyouyo” design on their wedding furniture. However, if not, they used the “Hana Gyouyo” design. The design of family crests for the daimyo families in the Edo Period was quite important to express status and hierarchical relationships.



Striped Gyouyo Family Crest

Hana Gyouyo Design Family Crest on Roof Tiles

Nabeshima Naoto was the 10th head of the Hasunoike Nabeshima family and became a viscount. The building of his own residence and other structures were relocated to Gokoku-ji Temple (in Bunkyo City) and also to Myoju-ji Temple (in Setagaya City), and they still exist today. They were constructed in the mid-Meiji period, after Naoto moved from Ryudocho to Mamianacho (present-day Azabu-dai 2-Chome); he transferred the land to the Russian Embassy in 1927, and the residence building and other structures were moved to the two temples. Both buildings and facilities have the “Hana Gyouyo” family crest on the roof tiles, indicating the connection to the Nabeshima family. The structure relocated to Gokoku-ji Temple is used as a small study in the Gekikoden Entrance Hall, and multiple Hana Gyouyo family crests can be found on the roof. **5** The residence building relocated to Myoju-ji Temple is used as a guest house. Over time the roof tiles were changed, but the original tiles are carefully preserved. Some of them are displayed on the side of the guest house entrance hall. **6** (The interior of these buildings is not open to the public, for either Gokoku-ji Temple Gekikoden or Myoju-ji Temple Guest House)



Gokoku-ji Temple Gekikoden Entrance Hall



Myoju-ji Temple Guest House

The “Mansion of the Former Viscount Nabeshima” was constructed in Mamianacho during the Meiji Period. Details of this will be described in the next or a later issue. Before that, I would like you to look at the “Hana Gyouyo” family crests that remain on the roof tiles. Use your imagination to appreciate how much history they have watched over. This family crest has been passed down to the present day. Sengoku warlords once upon a time risked their lives for the right to use them, and the design was changed under the strict class system.

● Support and Provision of Family Crest Images ●

Nabeshima Houkokuai Foundation
(Museum Chokokan Nabeshima)

● Main References: ●

“General Research on Saga Domain” written by FUJINO Tamotsu, published by Yoshikawa Kobunkan in 1981
“Changes in and Use of the Akasaka Tameikebata Mansion” by SHIBUYA Yoko, from “Hizen Saga Domain Nabeshima Family Residence Site Excavation Survey Report” published by Simmon in 2017
“Gyouyo Family Crest of the Nabeshima Family” written by NOGUCHI Tomoko, in “Saga Castle History Museum Research Bulletin No. 2” in March 2007
“Conservation and Repair Work Report for the Gokoku-ji Temple’s Gekikoden (Moonlight Hall) (Former Nikkoin Guest Hall), an Important Cultural Property” published by Japanese Association for Conservation of Architectural Monuments (JACAM) in 2014
“Myoju-ji Temple Guest House, Former Nabeshima Mansion” published by Nichiren Sect (Honmon School) Honkaku-zan Myoju-ji Temple in 2009

(Research, text and photos by YAMAKI Ayako)



Information Items in November



Land/Building prices for fixed asset tax purposes will be available for viewing starting in April (within the 23 special wards of Tokyo)

- Eligibility** Taxpayers owning land/buildings within the 23 special wards as of January 1, 2026
- Content** Land/building assessed values, etc., used for taxation in the ward where the taxpayer owns properties (Public Inspection Ledger)
- Period** From April 1 (Wed) to June 30 (Tue), 2026 (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays)
- Time** From 08:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Location** Metropolitan Taxation Office in the ward where the taxpayer owns properties

The notice of tax payment will be sent on June 1 (Mon), 2026.
For more information, visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation Website or the office below.

Inquiries:
For properties located in Minato City Minato Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)

Tax payment certificates for metropolitan taxes can be applied for at any of the Metropolitan Taxation Offices, branch offices, and island branch offices

Tax payment certificates of metropolitan taxes can be applied for at any of the Metropolitan Taxation Offices, branch offices, and island branch offices.

However, if you apply for tax payment certificates within one to two weeks after the declaration and tax payment, bring both (1) the original receipt (with an official stamp) and (2) a copy of the application* (with a receipt stamp) to the counter of your nearby Metropolitan Taxation Office, etc.

* For (2), only for the declared tax items.

Inquiries:
Minato Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)



There is a system for reduction or exemption of metropolitan taxes for those who have suffered extensive damage due to circumstances such as disasters, etc.

There is a system for reduction or exemption of taxes that have been assessed but remain unpaid as of the tax payment due date, for those who have sustained extensive damage due to circumstances such as disasters, etc. (There is also a system that grants a grace period for tax payment.) The applicable taxes are the fixed assets tax & city planning tax (within the 23 special wards), the real estate acquisition tax and the business tax on individuals, etc. In principle, the taxpayer will need to apply by the payment due date (excluding real estate acquisition tax). Please apply to the Metropolitan Taxation Office with documents certifying the disaster damage.

Inquiries:
Minato Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)

When a vehicle owner moves, they must complete a registration of change procedure (changing owner's/user's name or address) for their vehicle

When a vehicle owner moves, they must complete a registration of change procedure for their vehicle at the Tokyo Transport Branch Office or the Automobile Inspection and Registration Office. Delaying this procedure could cause issues such as not receiving Tax Notices for motor vehicle tax (category base).

If delaying the procedure is unavoidable, please notify us of your new address for sending Tax Notices through electronic application or by telephone, etc.



Inquiries:
Tokyo Metropolitan Motor Vehicle Tax Call Center Tel: 03-3525-4066

Applications for motor vehicle tax (category base) exemptions for the disabled are being accepted in regular taxation procedures for FY2026

Applications from people who have just received their Handbook for the physically disabled or have not applied for the motor vehicle tax (category base) exemption for the disabled are now being accepted for FY2026.

- Eligibility** Those who have received their Health and Welfare Benefit Handbook for people with mental disorders or Handbook for the physically disabled and who also meet certain requirements
- Application Deadline** June 1 (Mon), 2026
* There is an upper limit to the exemption amount.

Inquiries:
Tokyo Metropolitan Motor Vehicle Tax Call Center Tel: 03-3525-4066

Beware of fraudulent metropolitan tax mail and telephone calls!

Recently, there have been cases of criminals misrepresenting themselves as members of the Metropolitan Taxation Office to illegally obtain personal information or financially defraud people. If you receive any kind of contact that seems suspicious, don't answer immediately, and contact the following office.

If you happen to fall victim to such fraud, immediately contact the police.

Inquiries:
Consultation and Public Relations Team, General Affairs Division, General Affairs Department, Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation
Tel: 03-5388-2925



Why don't you join us?

Come and join the Roppongi Safety and Peace of Mind Project Campaign!

Once a month, local residents, staff members of shops and companies, and government bodies come together to carry out cleaning activities around Roppongi Crossing. Coffee packs with an original design are handed out to pedestrians as a PR activity for the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind. Cleaning with everyone and promoting "good manners" can help you see the town from a different perspective. Sometimes, you can exchange smiles with the people walking down the road, and they might say, "Keep it up!" or Thank you!" How about spending a fulfilling time with us? If you are interested in our activities, don't hesitate to contact us!



Campaign activity



Information from the Azabu Regional City Office

Celebrating One-Year Anniversary of Azabu Slope Curry! Share Your Feedback
The Joy of Tasting, the Pleasure of Collecting. We Want to Hear Your Ideas!



This map is as of February 2026.

Azabu Slope Curry is a local delicacy that showcases the charms of Azabu. It launched in January 2025 as a project to rediscover local history and charms through special curry dishes themed around Azabu's many slopes.

At first, the curry menu was provided at three locations and has now expanded to 12. Each store features its own collectible character stand of “Azaburashi,” the official mascot character designed by the students of Hiroo Gakuen Senior High School. The designs of the character stands are unique to each location, making them fun items to collect.

To commemorate the first anniversary and further spread the charms of Azabu, we are conducting a survey about Azabu Slope Curry. Please share your feedback on the character stand designs, restaurants, potential events, potential menu items you would like to see in the future, and more.

Please complete the survey by March 31, 2026, using the QR code.



Complete the survey from here

“Azaburashi” is the official Azabu Slope Curry mascot character. “Azaburashi” comes from the words “Azabu Rashii,” meaning “quintessentially Azabu.”

Why not offer Azabu Slope Curry at your restaurant?

We are recruiting restaurants to participate in the Azabu Slope Curry project.

Full of neighborhood information not found in any guidebook! The community social media app “PIAZZA”



Connect with other Azabu lovers!

This app gathers local information useful for daily life in the Azabu area from users, such as: “We are holding a festival in Azabu-juban.” “I’m thinking of giving my electric fan away to someone in the area.” “Please recommend a dentist for children in or around the Roppongi/Higashi-azabu area.” etc.

New information from the government such as crime or disaster prevention information, local government news, and event news will be posted when relevant.

You’ll be able to find anything and everything on the PIAZZA app, from general and interesting information about the area (without having to go out and search yourself!) to specific topics like how to address concerns about taking care of children locally.

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



Three-step registration procedure

- STEP 1

Download the PIAZZA application.
- STEP 2

Register your name through your email address or Facebook account.
- STEP 3

Input your name and birthplace and select “Azabu/Roppongi Area”.

Your information will help somebody!
Get involved to enjoy living in Azabu even more!



Download the app from here.



● Locations of the Newsletter: Roppongi 1-chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabujuban and Akabanebashi subway stations, The Chii 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.

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Editor’s Note

I have just finished my second round of research since becoming an editorial committee member. However, I still consider myself a newcomer. It will soon be seven years since I became a Minato citizen. However, I have not had much communication with local people and my days have been uneventful. I can say, however, that I participated in an event described in the Minato City Kawaraban (bulletin) where I experienced food culture from various countries, and entered an embassy. Recently, I was surprised that Minato City municipal junior high school students would go to Singapore on a school trip. In summer, I found that many grand festivals were held all over the city and I unexpectedly had many chances to connect with local residents, which were very interesting.

(ISHIBASHI Katsuhiko)

The original article is written in Japanese.

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“Minato Call” information service answers your questions about everyday life! Feel free to ask about services provided by City Hall, facility guides, event information, and more. Available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm every day.

* This service is also available in English.

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