

# GAZETTE

H o l l y w o o d & W e s t w o o d

## THANKSGIVING

I didn't really understand Thanksgiving Day when I was in Japan. What is Thanksgiving? How is it different from Halloween? Why take four days off? Even though I live in America now, I still don't really understand much about Thanksgiving Day. All I know is that it's the day when everyone eats turkey.

In this day and age, you can look up anything on the Internet. I'm sure that if I researched it, my knowledge would increase, but for some reason I haven't done so. The only thing that has surprised me is that my friend's restaurant receives orders for 700 turkeys every Thanksgiving Day!

Firstly, Turkey is hardly ever eaten in Japan. Secondly, Christmas decorations start to come up the day after Halloween, so everyone starts to get into the Christmas spirit. In recent years, Easter, which was unfamiliar in Japan, has become an annual event.

Thanksgiving Day may one day become an annual event in Japan, but for now it is just a part of some companies' sales strategies. I think most people don't know the meaning of Thanksgiving Day. They just get excited about the orange-and-brown decorations and about eating turkey. Of course, so do I, as things stand now. I'm going to study more about Thanksgiving Day in order to enjoy the big event even more.

*By Masako*





## THANKS GIVING



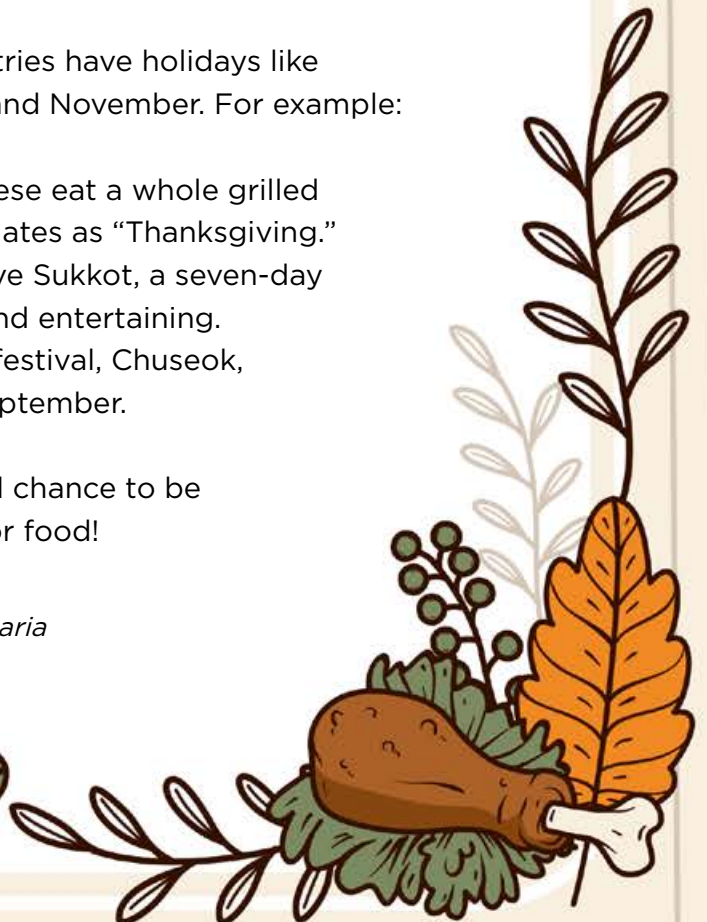
Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays in the United States. According to the Encyclopædia Britannica, Thanksgiving Day is an annual national holiday in the United States and Canada celebrating the harvest and other blessings of the past year. The Seattle Times said the turkey comes into the holiday because the big birds were plentiful in New England and were often distributed to soldiers in the army. Eventually, the typical Thanksgiving meal had a turkey at the center of the feast due to the bird's low price.

I realized that other countries have holidays like Thanksgiving around October and November. For example:

In October, native Taiwanese eat a whole grilled pig for a holiday that translates as "Thanksgiving." Around October, Jews have Sukkot, a seven-day festival of eating and entertaining. The Korean harvest festival, Chuseok, is around September.

Autumn is a good chance to be thankful for food!

*By Maria*





# NOVEMBER



Whenever I hear about November, I always get excited because it means Christmas is near. I'm from Japan. Japan doesn't celebrate Thanksgiving. Two years ago was my first Thanksgiving. I'll never forget those days (two years ago and last year). I spent time with my L.A. family. We ate Thanksgiving food, made a fire, and talked about dreams and life. I felt how life is so amazing and I was thinking about being grateful. Then, when the Christmas season comes, I always feel the importance of family.

*By Mao*





# NEW YEAR'S DAY IN JAPAN

There are many holidays around the world and New Year's Day may be the biggest holiday in any country. Japan celebrates the New Year in their own way. Japan has some interesting customs for celebrating the New Year. After reading this article, you will hopefully be interested in the unique culture and spirit of Japan.

First, I'll tell you about a traditional food called "Osechi". It's beautifully arranged dishes packed into elegant boxes. For example, Kuromame (Sweet Black Soybeans), Kazunoko (Herring Roe), and Kurikinton (Sweet Chestnut Paste). It started more than a thousand years ago as a way to offer food to the gods, to ensure a bountiful harvest and good fortune for the coming year. Now, it is celebrated during the New Year holidays.

Secondly, I'll tell you about a traditional gift called "Otoshimawa". It's money given to children by their parents, grandparents, and other relatives in small decorative envelopes. In ancient times, rice cakes were used for praying for good fortune and health for the next year - eventually rice cakes were replaced by money. Thanks to this change, children not only feel happiness and joy, but they also learn the value of money.

Finally, I'll tell you about a traditional custom called "Hatsumoude". It's the first shrine visit of the year. In the shrine, people pray for various things, such as health, success, and happiness in the coming year and they express gratitude for the blessings of the past year. It's more common as a cultural act than a religious act. In Japan, many people identify as non-religious.

In conclusion, Japan's New Year celebrations are a fascinating blend of ancient traditions and modern ideas. From the beautiful food to the happiness of receiving money, and the cultural customs, these represent the unique spirit and culture of Japan. By understanding these, we can gain a deeper insight into the values that shape Japanese society. Whether you are a visitor or a resident, participating in these New Year customs can be a meaningful and an enriching experience.

*By Kaho*

# A HISTORY OF THE LOS ANGELES DODGERS



The Los Angeles Dodgers were originally founded in 1883 in Brooklyn, New York, as the Brooklyn Atlantics. They became the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1932. The name “Dodgers” comes from the local kids who skillfully dodged streetcars.

In 1947, Jackie Robinson became the first African American player in Major League Baseball. His success helped change the game and society by promoting racial equality. The Dodgers moved to Los Angeles in 1958 due to issues with the Brooklyn stadium and the potential for more fans on the West Coast. They played in the Los Angeles Coliseum before moving to Dodger Stadium in 1962, which became a huge success.

Over the years, the team saw many ups and downs, winning multiple championships and facing ownership struggles. They experienced a major revival after being bought by Guggenheim Baseball Management in 2012, leading to new success. The Dodgers won the World Series again in 2020, their first title in 32 years. Recently, they’ve been a strong team, looking to build on their success with star players.

*By Ayato*

# THE HISTORY OF COLOMBIA: A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Colombia's history is rich and complex, shaped by indigenous cultures, Spanish colonization, and modern-day struggles for peace. Three key elements define the nation's past: pre-Columbian civilizations, the Spanish conquest, and the conflicts of the 20th century.

First, long before the arrival of Europeans, Colombia was home to advanced indigenous civilizations such as the Muisca and Tairona, known for their agriculture and gold craftsmanship. Then, in 1499, the Spanish began their colonization, forever altering the region's culture and society through conquest, slavery, and the spread of Catholicism. The country gained independence in 1810 under the leadership of Simón Bolívar, but peace was short-lived.

Finally, the 20th century saw Colombia endure decades of violence, including a civil war known as "La Violencia" and a prolonged conflict with guerrilla groups like FARC. However, in recent years, the country has made significant progress towards peace, with a historic peace deal signed in 2016.

Colombia's history reflects resilience and transformation, showcasing a nation that has continuously evolved while facing profound challenges.



*By Hector*



## CHRISTMAS IN JAPAN

What do you usually do on Christmas Day and who do you usually spend Christmas Day with? That depends on the culture of the country. I'd like to share three differences between America and my home country, Japan.

First of all, who do people spend the day with on Christmas? In the US, it's common to spend Christmas with family and relatives. Usually, they go to a big party in their family's home to celebrate Christmas. Most of the shops in the city are closed because everyone is at a family party. However, in Japan, spending time with family is not common. Then, who do you think they usually spend Christmas Day with? The answer is...their PARTNER. They go out and the city is active on Christmas Day. So cities, in Japan, are active.

Second, what do people eat on Christmas? In the US, they make turkey or glazed ham as the main dishes. For dessert, they eat cookies and candy canes. Children are excited to make gingerbread houses too. In Japan, people eat fried chicken. KFC is very popular on Christmas. They don't eat cookies or cake with strawberries on it. This is probably because strawberries look like Santa Claus' red clothes.

Lastly, how does Santa Claus deliver presents? In the US, Santa Claus puts presents under the tree while the children are sleeping and there are usually lots of presents. In Japan, he puts a present next to a child's pillow. When children wake up, they will see the gift right away and usually there is only one present.

There are many differences between Christmas in America and Japan. But both countries enjoy Christmas for sure. I think other countries have different cultures too when it comes to celebrating Christmas. It would be nice to try out a different culture next Christmas!

*By Hiyori*



# DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AMERICAN AND JAPANESE CULTURES

Do you know the difference between American and Japanese manners? I'm going to share three different manners in America and Japan! The first one is tip culture. In America, you need to pay a tip when you eat dinner at a restaurant or take a taxi. The percentage of tips depends on the case. If you eat at a restaurant, you will have to tip 15% to 20% of the total. If you have your luggage carried at the hotel, it will cost you \$1-2. There is no tip culture in Japan because a service fee is included in the price. So most Japanese people are not used to it. But if you travel to America, don't forget to tip!

The second one is wearing shoes at home. When I heard that it's usual in America, I was so surprised. In Japan, it's common to take off your shoes at home. The reason why Japanese people don't wear shoes at home is because Japan is a humid country and if you wear shoes in a Japanese home, you will sweat and it will be very uncomfortable. When I was little, my mother taught me that there is a God in the house, so I have to take off my shoes so as not to be rude to God. There may be many reasons why Japanese people don't wear shoes at home.

The last one is making a phone call on public transportation. Since I came here, I often see people making phone calls on public transportation. It's prohibited in Japan. The reason why making calls on public transportation is prohibited is that when mobile phones became popular in Japan, the number of people who call on trains increased and there were many complaints. Public transportation in Japan is very quiet so be careful when riding public transportation in Japan.

There are other different manners between America and Japan. It is important to know the manners of foreign countries. There is a very famous saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." I hope this article is useful for your travels.



*By Yu*



# SAY HELLO TO SLOVAKIA



Have you ever heard about Slovakia? A small state in the heart of Europe? I was born and raised there until I was 21 years old. Even though I haven't lived in Slovakia for 6 years, I would like to return there to visit my family and friends someday. Let me tell you about Slovak culture, its historical monuments, its nature, and its traditional food. If I wanted to describe Slovak people, I would say, they are hardworking, friendly, and hospitable. On the other hand, they are also very conservative, especially the older generations.

Slovakia is a small state located on the European continent. It is surrounded by five countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Austria, Hungary, and Ukraine. In comparison to California, the Slovak Republic is eight and half times smaller. The capital city (the biggest city of Slovakia) is Bratislava. It is located in the west of the country near Vienna (the capital city of Austria). This is where you have a lot of connections to the whole world and to Slovakia too. It is one hour from Bratislava by car or bus.

Each region of Slovakia has its own original and unique folklore elements such as dialect, folk songs, folk dances, legends, fables, poems and garbs which were based on the way of life and work of the previous generations. Additionally, traditional folklore festivals are held here yearly, where many Slovaks and people from abroad come to enjoy. Visitors can see various folklore groups dancing, see handicraft work, and taste traditional food. The most popular are The Festival Vychodna and Janosik's Days in Terchova.

Slovakia has many castles. There are more than 100 castles! For example: Bratislava castle, Bojnice castle, Orava castle, Trenčín castle, Devín castle and many more. There are also a lot of museums, cathedrals, and theaters such as the museum Bank of Love in Banská Stiažnica, the Cathedral of St. Elisabeth in Košice, the Cathedral of St. Martin in Bratislava, St. Francis Cathedral in Banská Bystrica or the National Theater in Košice or the Slovak National theater in Bratislava.

Finally, I would like to say, if you come to Slovakia, don't forget to taste the traditional food. The most typical traditional food is called Bryndzové halušky with bacon. I'm sure that if you have read this article about Slovakia, you already know where Slovakia is and also that the Slovak republic offers many kinds of opportunities such as how you can spend time there or what to visit and what to see.

*By Mia*