



LIFE IN JAPAN

Numazu's Dollhouse Shop & Yumenoshima Tropical Greenhouse

There is a store in downtown Numazu where you can make your own miniature-size house. The store is called Kimura dollhouse, and it is right next to Nakamise Shopping Street. I went with a couple of other Numazu city ALTs. It was a very cute and fun shop. You buy house kits there and then you can make them at home. You can also add custom parts to the houses to make themed houses like Christmas and Halloween houses. We also found miniature accessories at Daiso and Seiyu.



This is the outside of the store, there are many dollhouses displayed in the window.

Miniature things seem to be popular in Japan. They also have displays in the shop with miniature mansions in them, some costing over 200,000 yen! If you like making things or like looking at cool things, I would recommend going to this store.



This is the miniature matcha ice cream shop my friend bought. It is so detailed and beautiful. These miniature houses take a lot of time to make because they are so detailed, but it's worth it to see the final result.

Did you have a fun Halloween? Halloween is a very big holiday in America. To celebrate, I went to Yumenoshima Tropical Greenhouse to see giant pumpkins. Yumenoshima is one train station away from Disneyland and is surrounded by the sea. It used to be a landfill (garbage area) for Tokyo, but was remade into a tourist area. Yumenoshima has over 1,000 species of tropical plants in three greenhouse domes. It looked like it was from a dinosaur movie. Some of the plants were as tall as 38 meters, now that's a big plant. In their garden they had a special giant pumpkin exhibit for Halloween. It was a fun place to take photos and look at all of the amazing plants. They also have a small room of carnivorous plants that eat bugs, very cool! The pumpkin exhibit runs from the end of September to the end of Halloween so don't forget to visit Yumenoshima next year!



This is the front entrance of Yumenoshima's tropical greenhouse. The three domes are very big and you can see giant plants inside the glass.



My friends and I dressed up as witches for Halloween and took pictures sitting on the giant pumpkins.

LIFE AROUND THE WORLD

Harbin Ice Festival & Ljubljana Dragon Carnival



Every year in January a famous ice festival named "Harbin Ice & Snow Sculpture Festival" starts in Ice City, China. Famous artists from all over China come to build these giant building replicas made from ice. When the festival opens, there is a large fireworks display. You can ski, ride on snow slides, sled, skate, and build your own snowman. At night, the ice castles are lit up with beautiful light displays. You can also look at all the snowmen, and count how many you see. You won't be able to count all of them though because there are 20,000 snowmen at the festival. That's a lot of snowmen!



A picture of one of the giant replicas at the Harbin Ice Festival during sunset.

Every year in winter there is a dragon festival named "Ljubljana Dragon Carnival" in the country of Slovenia. People dress in masks and scary costumes to "scare away" winter. Many people dress in costumes, including bears, witches, fairies, and devils. The festival is held in the city of Ljubljana.



Some locals in traditional bear costumes.



Ljubljana's mascot is a green dragon. The big green dragon is at the top of the parade, and all of the "monsters" (people dressed in monster costumes) follow behind it. There are many other carnivals and festivals in Slovenia you can enjoy too.

The main part of this parade is the large green dragon, seen here.

AMERICAN RECIPE

Stuffed French Toast



Ingredients	115 g cream cheese
4 slices of bread	30 cc lemon juice
4 eggs	180 cc heavy cream
15 cc vanilla extract	225 g strawberries
240 cc milk	43 g sugar
15 cc cinnamon	Maple syrup

1. Egg wash: Whisk eggs, cinnamon, vanilla, and milk in a bowl.
2. Cream cheese mixture: In a different bowl mix the cream cheese, vanilla, sugar, lemon juice, and heavy cream.
3. Take 2 slices of bread and spread the cream cheese mixture in the middle of the bread slices.
4. Thinly slice the strawberries, and put the strawberries in the middle of the bread slices also.
5. Sandwich the two bread slices together.
6. Put the sandwich in the egg wash and soak the bread.
7. Melt butter in a pan and cook the soaked sandwich on medium heat. Heat the sandwich until the bread is solid.
8. Put maple syrup on top and enjoy!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My name is Ashley. I am the new ALT at Numazu Ichiritsu High School. I'm from Oregon state in the United States. My hobbies are fashion, videography, and dancing. I like to explore cute things in Japan with my fashion friends and film our adventures together. I love creative fashion, especially Harajuku fashion. Thank you for reading, and I look forward to meeting all of you!