

2024 October Vol.1

New Open

1. Step Into a Fantastic World at teamLab's New Exhibition, Opening September 30, Ibaraki



teamLab: Hidden Traces of Rice Terraces,
Ibaraki, Izura © teamLab



teamLab, Resonating Secret Valley and Forest
© teamLab

The art collective teamLab has created famous exhibits worldwide that seamlessly blend art and technology to create fantastic worlds that visitors can feel completely immersed in. On September 30, teamLab opened another Japan exhibit, this time in Ibaraki Prefecture. Called 'teamLab: Hidden Traces of Rice Terraces,' the settings for this installation are water-filled rice terraces and the surrounding forest. Glowing orbs and other art pieces that are reminiscent of teamLab's ethereal, interactive exhibits will adorn the premises, complementing yet elevating the natural scenery. Those who would like to spend more time in this enchanting environment can opt to stay at the 'Hidden Traces of Rice Terraces Hot Spring – Izura', where both a cottage and glamping options are available. Located 3 to 4 hours from central Tokyo, this is the perfect way to lose yourself in the quiet countryside of Japan.

[teamLab: Hidden Traces of Rice Terraces](#)

New Open

2. Enjoy a High-End Luxury Tropical Stay at the Rosewood Miyakojima, Opening in early 2025, Okinawa



© Rosewood Hotel Group

The ultra-luxury lifestyle hotel chain Rosewood Hotels & Resorts will be opening its first Japan location on the Okinawan Island of Miyako in the south of the Japanese archipelago. Surrounded by crystal-clear, turquoise waters and home to stunning white sand beaches, Miyako Island offers unparalleled tropical scenery and activities such as snorkeling, scuba diving, and more. The Rosewood Miyakojima will hold 55 villas where guests can be treated to an extravagant experience with private pools, ocean views, and elegant designs that incorporate the surrounding nature of the island. Its beachfront restaurants and bars serving fresh seafood, local meat, and locally brewed beverages create the ultimate dining experience while overlooking picturesque views. A 20 to 30-minute drive from the airport, the hotel is easily accessible yet allows guests to immerse themselves in the exquisite nature and culture of the island.

[Rosewood Miyakojima](#)

Festival and Event

3. Hot Air Balloons Take Over the Sky During the Saga International Balloon Fiesta, October 31 – November 4



©Saga International Balloon Fiesta Organization

There is something magical about seeing colorful hot air balloons gracefully floating through the air, dotting the vast sky with vibrant shades. An optimal chance to see this splendor is the popular Saga International Balloon Fiesta, which takes place at the Kase Riverside in Saga City. Here, you can see experienced hot air balloon pilots competing to reach targets by skillfully maneuvering their magnificent balloons with the wind. There is also the "Balloon Fantasia," during which balloons shaped like cute animals and beloved characters are on display. The fiesta is the largest of its kind in Japan, featuring over 100 balloons and drawing crowds of hundreds of thousands looking to enjoy the spectacular scenery provided by these massive, vivid balloons.

[Saga International Balloon Fiesta](#)

Festival and Event

4. Hello Kitty Turns 50! Celebrate at the Tokyo National Museum, November 1- February 24



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Collaboration with collection from
the Tokyo National Museum (part of the collection)

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the iconic and beloved Sanrio character Hello Kitty. This adorable character has taken the world by storm, becoming one of the most famous representatives of Japanese pop culture. There will be special merchandise available to celebrate her anniversary, as well as an exhibition dedicated to Hello Kitty and her evolution over the years held at the Tokyo National Museum. You will also get to see new renditions of Hello Kitty by different artists in a variety of media, further exploring her versatility and illustrating her widespread popularity. The Hello Kitty Exhibition will showcase the most diverse array of Hello Kitty merchandise ever assembled. Visitors of all ages can enjoy the exhibit while tracing the evolution of Hello Kitty's design through the lens of cultural shifts over several decades and observing how renowned artists have reimagined Hello Kitty in a multitude of creative forms. The exhibit is not only for children, as adults who have grown up with Hello Kitty can enjoy it too.

[Hello Kitty Exhibition As I change, so does she.](#)

Festival and Event

5. Witness the Fastest Drivers in Japan Is Decided at the JAF Suzuka Grand Prix, November 9 – 10, Mie



©Suzuka Circuit

Japan is known for its thriving automobile industry and hosts quite a few motorsport competitions. The 2024 All Japan Super Formula Championship Round 8-9 23rd JAF Suzuka Grand Prix, held at the racing mecca Suzuka Circuit in Mie Prefecture, aims to find the fastest 4-wheel formula racing car driver in Japan. Some of the best drivers in Japan will be appearing in this race, whizzing by at exhilarating speeds as they aim for the first-place spot in front of their opponents. It goes without saying that it's quite thrilling seeing them zoom across the tracks! In addition to the races, another feature of the event will include a "Pit Walk," which offers up-close views of these powerful automobiles. Tickets are required to watch these races, so be sure to check the website for more information.

[SUZUKA CIRCUIT](#)

Seasonal Topic

6. Take in the Striking Colors of the Autumn Foliage at Nakano Momiji Mountain, Aomori



The vibrant colors of autumn are a seasonal symbol in Japan, and the northern Tohoku region is particularly famous for its dazzling foliage at spots like Zao Onsen, Naruko Gorge, Tsutanuma Marsh, and more. Nakano Momiji Mountain in Kuroishi City is one of the most famous autumn foliage spots in Aomori Prefecture, with over 100 trees that burst into fiery colors peaking in mid-autumn. Within the grounds of Nakano Shrine, located on Nakano Momiji Mountain, are several trees that are hundreds of years old, with one of the oldest being a cedar that is around 600 years old. This cedar was designated as a Natural Monument of the city in 1983, and its splendor alone is enough to take your breath away. There is a path around the shrine that visitors can walk to bask in the splendor of the vivid colors of the leaves. The foliage of the trees surrounds a waterfall and flowing stream, which add relaxing sounds of nature as you gaze at the leaves. From mid-October to early November, the autumn leaves are illuminated at night, adding a sense of mysticism to the already spectacular scenery.

[Nakano Momiji Mountain](#)

Special Experience

7. Find Peace and Tranquility Through a Guided Zen Tour, Nagano



©Shinshu-Iiyama Tourism Bureau

The village of Kosuge in Nagano Prefecture has been a site for mountain monks practicing Shugendo ascetic worship since ancient times. Here, you can participate in a farm stay tour that will give you deeper insight into this fascinating religion, as you get to partake in Shugendo practices such as authentic Zen meditation, a vegetarian lunch, and a Buddhism lecture at a temple. You will also be guided through the area, on an e-bike the first day and by foot the second. As a Shugendo practitioner and an English-speaking guide take you up the mountain, you will be treated to stories and facts about the area and its history and culture. By partaking in special Shugendo traditions and interacting with friendly locals who are happy to introduce the regional food and culture, you are sure to gain a new appreciation for this ancient religion and perhaps obtain some new perspectives on life that you can take back and incorporate into your daily life.

[Find Your Inner Peace Spiritual Adventures ~ 3Days2Nights Guided Tour](#)

Special Experience

8. Learn About the Complex World of Moss at Konshoji Temple, Shiga



©KONSHOJI TEMPLE PREMIUM TOUR

Konshoji Temple in Ritto City, Shiga Prefecture, is famous for its moss as it has over 70 different kinds growing around its premises. Here, you can partake in a special type of fieldwork, studying moss with a specialist while exploring the mystical grounds of the temple. With a magnifying glass and map in hand, you will get to observe every nook and cranny as you walk past ancient structures to discover the beauty of the moss as your guide explains their different

characteristics. Located around 1 hour by car from Kyoto Station, the temple offers a serene escape from Shiga's popular neighboring prefecture, allowing visitors to enjoy traditional Japanese culture without fighting the crowds. Along with moss fieldwork, it also offers Zen meditation sessions and outdoor yoga in the forest. It is also close to Lake Biwa, the largest freshwater lake in Japan and the perfect spot to enjoy water sports and marine activities.

[KONSHOJI TEMPLE PREMIUM TOUR](#)

Adventure Travel

9. Experience Adventure Tourism in Tropical Okinawa Prefecture



With a unique topography and local culture, Okinawa offers an experience unlike anywhere else in Japan. Okinawa's history as the once autonomous Ryukyu Kingdom, with relationships with several surrounding countries, to the modern-day prefecture that has withstood almost unbelievable events has led to the formation of a special local culture. From exploring the distinctive natural scenery that includes both the ocean and forests to feasting on delicious Okinawan cuisine, an adventure tour will introduce you to the many wonders of this tropical prefecture. The resilience and warmth of the locals that you will also meet during your time in Okinawa is inspirational, and interacting with them is a joy. Recognizing its remarkable adventure tourism potential, AdventureWeek, held with the Adventure Travel Trade Association, will take place in Okinawa this November, highlighting the importance of peace and nature conservation. If you're seeking an adventure tourism destination in Japan that has it all, Okinawa is a sure-fire choice.

[Adventure In Okinawa](#)

10. Breathe in the Scent of Citrus While Walking Along Yuzu Road, Kochi



©EIGASHA

Kochi Prefecture in Shikoku is the largest producer of yuzu in Japan, which is a kind of citrus fruit with a bright yellow skin and refreshing aroma, often used to add a zesty tang to dishes. High concentrations of yuzu trees can be found in certain areas such as Chugei, decorating the terrain that features a flowing river and mountains. Many yuzu trees surround a now-abandoned forest railway, affectionately known as Yuzu Road, creating a fantastic sight that only becomes more extraordinary when the fruits turn shades of yellow in the autumn and the scent of yuzu can be smelled wafting through the air. The Chugei area is also home to villages that host hot springs where travelers can rest their weary bodies while soaking in the calm of the surrounding nature. If you are ever in the area, do not forget to also try some mouthwatering local delicacies that utilize the region's bountiful yuzu.

[Yuzu and Forest Railway](#)

Visit The Symbol of Expo 2025, the Massive Grand Ring



©Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition

On Wednesday, 21 August 2024, the wooden structure of the Grand Ring, the symbol of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan (hereinafter referred to as “the Expo”) venue and one of the world’s largest wooden structures, was completed with the installation of the Skywalk ramps, connecting the entire 2 km circumference into one complete ring.

The Grand Ring, conceived by architect FUJIMOTO Sou, the Expo Site Design Producer, is the symbol of the venue that represents the venue's design philosophy of ‘Unity in Diversity.’ Assembly began on 30 June, 2023, and construction has been progressing ever since work will continue towards the opening of the Expo in April 2025, including the installation of elevators, escalators, and rooftop greenery.

■ Overview of Grand Ring

The Grand Ring is the symbol of the Expo site. When completed it will be one of the world’s largest wooden structures.

It is constructed using modern construction methods in addition to the traditional timber joints used in the construction of Japanese shrines and temples. It will be used as the main route of flow around the venue, providing smooth movement of crowds as well as a comfortable space to stay out of the rain, wind, and sun.

From the rooftop of the Grand Ring, the entire venue can be viewed from various points, and if you look outside the ring, visitors can enjoy the charms of the Expo site surrounded by sea and sky, such as the rich nature of the Seto Inland Sea, the spectacle of the setting sun, and the city of Osaka.

- Building Area: Approx. 60,000m²
- Inner Diameter: Approx. 615m Outer Diameter: Approx. 675m
- Width: 30m
- Height: 12m (External height: 20m) *The height of the sky walk that visitors can walk on.

Building work on the Expo site is progressing steadily. Super early-bird tickets are available until October 6! Get the Expo in your pocketbook now! We look forward to seeing you at the Expo.

[Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan Official Website](#)

Notes:

- The above details are correct as of the time of publication, and are subject to change.
- Item 7 is based on information from JNTO Partners.

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