

AEON MAGAZINE

For a Sustainable World

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Bringing Smiles to Everyone

Fukushima Today, 9 Years After the Earthquake

March 11, 2020 marks nine years since the Great East Japan Earthquake. Having suffered earthquake and tsunami damage as well as the accident at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, Fukushima Prefecture is steadily making its way toward reconstruction. This issue features the fishing industry of Fukushima aiming to resume full-scale operation, as well as Namie Town, where the residents are starting to return after restrictions were lifted.



At Ukedo Fishing Port in Namie Town. From left: Hironori Kamata, Nobuyuki Amiya and Azusa Imai of Soma-Futaba Fisheries Cooperative Association (See Pg4 for details)



Top: At Onahama Port, fishing vessels moored at the pier. Left: Fish unloaded at the port are sorted by size.



Tetsu Nozaki
Chairman, Fukushima Prefectural Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations

"Fishing is dependent on nature. Global warming has affected the kinds of fish we catch and the fisherman are aging, but we're aiming to recover the catch to 50% of the level before the earthquake."

Fukushima's fishing industry on its path toward reconstruction

The southern Kuroshio current and the northern Oyashio current meet off the coast of Fukushima Prefecture, bringing an abundant catch of almost 200 kinds of fish and shellfish, including flounder, bonito, and sand lance.

The fishing industry is making the most of this rich marine resource to continue on its path toward reconstruction.

The marine products of Fukushima used to be branded as "Joban-made" and were traded at a high price. However, the situation changed overnight after the earthquake. The fishing port's embankment, facilities, and many ships were swept away or damaged. In addition, the accident at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant led to voluntary control of coastal fishing. Trial operation began in the year following the earthquake, and although the number of days and areas for operation, and the type of fish that can be sold have expanded, full-scale operation has not yet resumed.

Ensuring the safety and security of fish caught off the coast of Fukushima

The largest fishing port in the prefecture, Onahama Fishing

Port is located on the southern tip of the prefecture. Here, offshore fishing resumed in August following the earthquake for bonito and tuna, which were not affected by the nuclear power plant accident. However, the fish could not be sold due to harmful rumors or sold at bargain prices. The number of ships from other prefectures unloading fish at Onahama also dropped sharply. However, "We will not give in," says Hisashi Maeda from Onahama Trawl Fisheries Cooperative Association. "We do what we can and continue to provide information on the safety of fish caught in Fukushima."



What can be done includes conducting strict tests on radioactive materials in marine products. Ever since test operation began, after being caught all species of fish are inspected, and only those that clear voluntary standards,

During a tour of Onahama Fishing Port, Maeda explained, "The round haul netter such as for catching bonito is a spectacular sight." He says they want to restore confidence by ensuring the daily inspections.



Top: Fish landed at Onahama is auctioned off by the intermediate wholesalers. Right: Fishing boats that left early in the morning return with grunts.



Far left: All species of fish caught that day are tested for radioactive substances. Middle left: The process is managed on a whiteboard to make sure all fish types are tested. Middle right: Fish are filleted or minced for testing. Far right: The inspection room has 9 devices to measure the level of radioactive materials.

which are stricter than national standards, are shipped out. Anyone can check for their safety, as these figures are disclosed on the websites of Fukushima Prefecture and Fukushima Prefectural Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations. They are also seeking new ways as, "The newly built fish market has facilities to handle frozen fish, and we hope to increase the haul of bigeye tuna caught in deep seas."

As for the fishing industry in Fukushima, "It is still midway on its path to recovery, but we are making steady progress," emphasizes Tetsu Nozaki, Chairman of Fukushima Prefectural Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations. Initially, we could only ship three fish species, but today this has increased to around 180 species, and the operation area is gradually expanding. "In 2017, a part of the quay at Namie Town's Ukedo Fishing Port became available for use, and fishing boats that had evacuated to other ports returned. We now have clear prospects for reconstruction. Since 2018, fish tested for safety are being sold at Aeon stores in the Tokyo metropolitan area as 'Fukushima Fresh Fish Delivery'. We hope to deliver Fukushima's fish to many people and rejuvenate our fishing industry," says Nozaki with renewed determination.



Top: Imai holds two large flounders caught on the day of the interview. Bottom right: Since childhood, Kamata had wanted to become a fisherman. He says, "At the easternmost tip of Fukushima, the waters of Ukedo offer a feel of the vast Pacific Ocean." Bottom left: Nobuyuki Amiya of Soma-Futaba Fisheries Cooperative Association. As Guidance Section Chief and Usage Manager, he is responsible for the Ukedo district.



Aiming to recover what was routine: going fishing every day

Today, there are close to 30 fishing vessels moored at the pier of Ukedo Fishing Port. Next to the new unloading facility is an ice storage, and on the newly built tide embankment is a banner that reads, "Namie Town's reconstruction starts from Ukedo Fishing Port." The townspeople are happy and have high hopes about operations resuming at the port. Hironori Kamata, Youth Department Manager of Soma-Futaba Fisheries Cooperative Association Ukedo Branch says, "We're back at last." Azusa Imai, Assistant Manager of the Youth Department comments, "Since it's still test operation, we can only go fishing several days a week. I want to fish every day." They are still at the starting point toward reconstruction.

Since the market function has not resumed yet, the catch is transported to Soma Haragama Wholesale Market Fishing Port. Nobuyuki Amiya of the association says, "We want to be able to hold auctions in Ukedo to liven up the port. It will allow us to deliver fresh fish to the stores in town directly from the port." There is a long way to go before everything is back to normal, but progress is being made step by step.

"Flounder and icefish are in season now. We hope to create a brand for Ukedo as being famous for certain types of fish to revive our fishing industry," concluded Kamata.



Top: Ukedo Fishing Port is being expanded to accommodate more fishing boats. Left: Banner on the tide embankment



Fresh fish section at Aeon Namie Store sells fish from Fukushima. Sashimi and sushi are popular.

Target is 5,000 townspeople

At Namie Town located in northern Fukushima Prefecture, the townspeople were subject to evacuation in the wake of the earthquake due to an evacuation order for the entire town. Here is Namie Town today, where residents have begun returning since 2017.



Namie Station of JR Joban Line. The section between Namie and Tomioka Stations will reopen in March 2020, giving easier access to Tokyo.

Town development to attract new residents

On March 31, 2017, the evacuation order for a part of Namie Town was lifted, and the townspeople were allowed to return. As of December 2019, Namie Town has about 1,189 residents (772 households) actually living in the town, down from the population of around 21,000 people before the earthquake. The returning rate is about 6%.

Mayor Kazuhiro Yoshida says, "Nine years have passed since the earthquake, and four concerns hinder the return of the residents. How is the living environment? Is there appropriate medical care? Are there jobs? Is the radiation

level safe? The town's top priority is to resolve these concerns."

Take for example "jobs". Close to 90% of the companies in the town have not returned. "It is hard to return if companies are doing business and employ people at the evacuated sites. So, we will develop four industrial parks to attract new companies," says Mayor Yoshida. One such site is Tanashio Industrial Park, where the Fukushima Hydrogen Energy Research Field was constructed to produce hydrogen, which is anticipated as the next generation of energy. It began trial operations in October 2019. Mayor Yoshida proudly says, "The hydrogen will be used to fuel the Olympic cauldron and



Café Monpeln

Addr: 2-10, Oaza-Gongendo-Aza-Tsukanokoshi, Namie-machi, Futaba-gun, Fukushima
☎0240-23-7530
Hours: 11:00-16:30 (last order at 16:00)
Closed: Mon/Wed

Top: Namie Pan-fried Noodles are served as a limited weekend menu. Thick noodles are pan-fried simply with pork and bean sprouts. It's the soul food of the Namie townspeople. Bottom: Conveniently located near JR Namie Station. Some of the plates used in the café are Oborisona ware that had a kiln in Namie.



Hydrogen Energy Research Field, where trial operations have begun. Electricity generated by solar panels is used, so CO₂ is not generated in the production process. Mayor Yoshida has high ambitions "to build hydrogen stations in the town in the future."



Top: "Machi, Nami, Marché" next to Namie Town office. It houses a restaurant, café, souvenir shop, etc. Left: Near the entrance is a signage welcoming the returning residents.



Aeon Namie Store

Addr: 60-1, Oaza-Kiyohashi-Aza-Ozoe, Namie-machi, Futaba-gun, Fukushima
☎0240-23-6885
Hours: 6:00-20:00 (From 9:00 on Sun/holidays)

torch, and to power the Olympic Village for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games." And with a new facility to handle fish unloaded at Ukedo Port, there are high expectations that auctions will resume. The town has stepped up efforts to cultivate prairie gentian, which will hopefully be used in the victory bouquet presented to the medalists. The entire JR Joban Line will reopen in March 2020, a roadside rest area "Michi-no-eki Namie (tentative name)" is scheduled to open in July, and the town is steadily making progress toward reconstruction. "A town cannot simply offer jobs or places to shop. It must have all of this in place to be called a town. Up until now, we have sowed many seeds to revive the town under the slogan 'Save the Town', and we are starting to see results. The next phase will be to sow new seeds to develop a sustainable town, and I will work with the townspeople to realize our reconstruction."

Progress in living infrastructure development

Aeon opened a store in Namie Town in July 2019. "Until then, the townspeople had to drive 30 minutes to a supermarket in a neighboring town. Being able to shop in your own town is not only convenient, it is an important part of making this town feel like a normal town. We are relieved to be developing the living environment," says Mayor Yoshida.

Store Manager Shunsuke Nihongi, who has been a member since the opening preparations, says, "Our company policy is to respond to any request from the town, so we have a system to stock products as soon as we receive a request from the customer."

The store staff also sincerely wants to support the reconstruction of Namie. "There's a lot of dialogue going on, like 'Can you stock this medicine?' 'The grilled fish was good,' and so on," says Kumiko Mito who works in the pharmacy section. She enjoys attending to the customers with a smile and feels that her job is contributing to the livelihood of the community.

Six months since the opening, they have participated in an event to see the sunrise on New Year's Day and helped out in an athletic meet. Store Manager Nihongi feels that they are being accepted as a member of the community. "Namie Town's reconstruction and Aeon Namie Store have just begun. We will strive to continue developing together with the town."



Kazuhiro Yoshida

Namie Town Mayor

Born in Namie Town, Fukushima in 1946. Mayor since 2018 after serving as member and chairman of the Namie Town assembly. To pass on the hometown of Namie to future generations, he is tackling reconstruction under the themes "townspeople's livelihood reconstruction", "revival and reconstruction of hometown Namie", and "passing on lessons from the disaster".



Top: Store Manager Nihongi of Aeon Namie Store. "Opening the store is not our final goal. We aim to be a store appreciated by the community for many years to come by responding to local customer needs. I hope to relay my thoughts to the store staff." Left: Store staff Mito is raising a child and studying to become a registered sales clerk for pharmaceuticals. "Since I began working here, my love for Namie has grown and I want to contribute to the town."

Illustration MAP
Fukushima

Fukushima Prefecture has the third largest area among prefectures in Japan, offering attractive destinations including the sea and mountains. The illustration map highlights popular spots.

Kitakata Ramen
Aizu's local ramen

Fukushima
2nd largest production in Japan
Peach
Dates back over 1,000 years
Soma Nomaio

Fukushima Azuma Baseball Stadium
Venue for Olympic qualifiers

Hideyo Noguchi Memorial Museum
Achievements of the world-famous scientist exhibited

Lake Inawashiro
4th largest lake in Japan

Namie Pan-fried Noodles (Pg 5)

Entire Joban Line to reopen in March 2020!

Aeon Namie Store (Pg 6)

Ukedo Fishing Port (Pg 4)

Namie Station (Pg 5)

Iwaki Lalamew (Pg 7)

Onahama Fishing Port (Pg 3)

Aizuwakamatsu
No.1 for 7 straight years at Annual Japan Sake Awards!
Sake of Fukushima Prefecture

Aizu Tsuruga Castle
Symbol of Aizu

Koriyama
Young Aizu samurais who died at the end of Edo period
Byakkotai

Tohoku Shinkansen

Summer paradise Spa Resort Hawaiians

Folk toy Akabeko

Introduction of Onahama tourist spots

Iwaki Lalamew
Tourism product center where you can "find the best of Iwaki". Houses a seafood market offering fresh marine products hauled at Onahama Port, a gourmet & BBQ zone, souvenir shops and tourist information in one location.
Addr: 43-1, Onahama Tatsumicho, Iwaki City, Fukushima
☎0246-92-3701

Making Fukushima home to electricity with renewable energy

Fukushima Prefecture had formulated a renewable energy vision since even before the earthquake. After the disaster, renewable energy projects are being promoted in the prefecture in order to make the vision more concrete. The prefecture financed the establishment of Fukushima Electric Power in 2013, and the company is involved in power generation projects using solar panels and programs to raise awareness. It has built five solar power plants in the prefecture and has contracted the management at one solar power plant.

Development of a transmission network is currently underway, which will be connected to solar power plants in stages in order to supply electricity to the Tokyo metropolitan area, explains Kiyonori Watanabe, the manager at Hamadori Office. This shows that efforts to realize practical application of renewable energy are advancing.

The profits from the solar power plant in Okuma Town are returned to the town in ways such as operating a strawberry cultivation facility. And weeding work in the area where solar panels are installed is outsourced to local farmers, so the power plant has also helped to create jobs. "We are determined to promote not only power generation but also reconstruction together with the community. Before the earthquake, Fukushima Prefecture had supplied electricity generated at the nuclear thermal power plants to the Tokyo metropolitan area. This is the home of electricity. Going forward, we want to make it a home of electricity again with renewable energy," said Watanabe with enthusiasm.



Top: Watanabe explains the solar power generation facility built by Fukushima Electric Power. Right: Tomioka Recovery Mega Solar Power Plant SAKURA, located next to the office. Annual power generation with the 110,880 panels is equal to electricity consumption of 9,100 households.

To give back to Fukushima, relaying its charm through a "sharing mission"

Freelance announcer Yumi Karahashi has close ties with Fukushima Prefecture. Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, she has continued to support the reconstruction.

INTERVIEW

Born in Kitakata City, I grew up eating Fukushima's delicious rice and drinking its water. My family runs a Japanese sake brewery. In the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake, my older brother said, "Damage in our district was not as serious as Hamadori, so we are the ones that must put in the extra effort." I totally agreed.

But I can only help in small ways, so I call it my "little sharing mission" (laugh). When I visit Fukushima, I bring back delicious things such as gifts, I recommend nice hot spring spots, and so on. I try to "share" my discoveries of charming places, things and people of Fukushima, using my

own words to express their charm. I believe one-to-one conversation is the key to communication. If that person liked, bought or visited what I recommended, I feel that I was able to support Fukushima in a small way.

Fukushima has a lot of charm, but what I find the most attractive is the people. When I worked for a TV station in Fukushima, I met many people at interview sites who warmly welcomed a novice like me, and I was encouraged by them. After the earthquake, I met rice farmers who were working to obtain certifications on safety standards to produce better rice, and I was touched by their desire to grow. My wish to

see these people who inspire me, has been the driving force for me to visit Fukushima time and again.

A project I want to do is a trip to all of Fukushima Prefecture by bus. I went on a bus trip two years after the earthquake as part of a TV program. At the time, people were visiting Fukushima to support the reconstruction. But today, I believe you will be attracted to Fukushima simply for its climate, local food and the warm welcoming people. I wish to continue contributing in my own way.



Yumi Karahashi
Freelance Announcer

Born in Fukushima Prefecture. Began her career as an announcer at TV-U Fukushima. Freelance since 2004. Currently appears in TV and radio programs including "Sunday Morning". Since the earthquake, she has participated in many events and programs related to Fukushima's reconstruction, and her activities continue even today. Hobbies are watching sumo and cooking. She can teach Japanese kimono dressing, is a qualified sake sommelier, and serves as ambassador to support Kitakata City. Author of "Watashi-no-Kuki-no-Tsukurikata (How I Create My Air)" (Tokuma Shoten).

AEON Topics!

Botanical Cosmetics from France

Bringing beauty to all women with botanical power. The French cosmetics brand “Yves Rocher”.

“Yves Rocher” is a popular French cosmetics brand featuring quality products made with high proportions of naturally derived ingredients and cute, colorful packaging. The brand that has captivated women around the world was launched in Japan for the first time in November 2019.



Bris Rocher during his visit to Japan in December 2019. He talked passionately about nature and creating products that have been passed down from his grandfather, the company's founder.

Creating products that bring out the power of plants

“Yves Rocher” was incepted in 1959 in La Gacilly, a village in France’s northwestern region of Brittany. The brand first began with the founder Yves Rocher making a plant-based ointment in the attic of his home. Bris Rocher, Chairman and CEO of Groupe Rocher and the grandson of the founder, says, “This village is where the brand all started.”

“The village of La Gacilly is a truly relaxing place full of nature. From this small village, my grandfather created a brand with a policy to deliver natural beauty to all women. We have made a botanical garden and a farm for research and have been offering skin care, hair care, body care, and fragrance products made with natural ingredients that we cultivate ourselves.”

More than 1,500 species of plants are grown at the botanical garden, the center of research, and more than 200 botanical specialists are engaged in research day in and day out. Various herbs are organically grown at its own farm, and plant oil and essence are extracted while the plants are fresh, for use in the products at the in-house factory. It is Yves

Rocher’s unfaltering commitment that has realized the high quality and affordable products for daily use. Since 2006, the company has also supported tree-planting activities around the world, mainly in developing countries, and has continued to be grateful for the blessings that nature brings.

“Nature is essential for us to live a rich life. However, many people with an urban lifestyle have drifted away from nature. Our mission is to connect people with nature again. That is at the heart of our product development and our tree-planting activity.”

The company’s development efforts also aim to reduce global environmental load. Bris says his favorite product line is the concentrated shower gel. “The gel concentrates moisture from 400 down to 100. Just one pump is enough to wash your whole body. The plastic used for the bottle is halved, contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Currently, this is the product that we take most pride in,” says Bris with confidence.

Delivering quality products to more customers

This policy and excellent quality are the reasons why Yves

Rocher is loved by women around the world who are keener about natural products. Since the launch of the brand in Japan, the products are being sold at around 100 stores, including Welcia stores and Aeon general merchandise stores in the Tokyo metropolitan area.

In order to market the products in Japan, Aeon Co., Ltd. and Welcia Holdings Co., Ltd. established Aeon Révecosme Co., Ltd., a jointly owned company to serve as the exclusive distributor. Hiroko Nakashima, the Representative Executive Officer of Aeon Révecosme, commented on the context that led to the partnership. “The cosmetics market in Japan is seeing a rising need especially for natural and organic products. However, many of these cosmetic products are expensive, and the hurdle may be high for some customers. With quality cosmetic products, you can really feel the effects after continued use. Yves Rocher was the ideal brand because it allowed us to offer good quality, affordable products for daily use.”

For Yves Rocher, which markets products at more than 6,700 stores in around 90 countries, the partnership with Aeon also brought many advantages, as Aeon has an extensive nationwide sales network and boasts the top share



Left: Yves Rocher products displayed at Welcia Yakkyoku Nihombashi first store (B.B.ON). Dried flowers are used to create a natural image. Top: Products introduced in Japan. Attractive products include rinsing vinegar, a line of unique haircare products that use vinegar.

in domestic cosmetics sales*. “We were able to distribute our products at 100 stores from the initial launch because we joined hands with Aeon,” says Bris.

These were not the only reasons that realized the partnership. “Yves Rocher values plants, nature and our planet, and an environmentally-friendly philosophy is reflected in making the products. We thought that the brand with a wish to deliver quality products to all women would be a compatible partner for us to advance hand-in-hand,” says Nakashima, who stressed that the partnership was made possible owing to the common values of both parties.

With a display that conveys the rich nature of the village of La Gacilly and the French feel and friendliness, Yves Rocher has already appealed to many woman in Japan. The target is to expand sales to around 2,000 stores nationwide by FY2025, and to deliver botanical beauty care that brings out the power of plants to a broader clientele.

*Based on each company’s financial results for FY2018.

Aeon Happy Yellow Receipt Campaign



Left: A user, Mitsuya Ito, packing konnyaku bags. Top right: Stirring steaming hot konnyaku. Bottom right: The main ingredient: konnyaku potatoes

Delivering Homemade Konnyaku to the People of My Hometown, Shiojiri

“Sumire no Oka”, an employment support office in Shiojiri City, Nagano Prefecture, provides support for people with disabilities to work and live with peace of mind in the community. Since its establishment in 1987, users have made various things such as gift boxes and molded precision equipment parts in response to various requests from local companies. Sumire no Oka is full of users every day. The users understand each other and in the lively atmosphere, exchange smiles and move their hands very well to get the job done. Director Naoe Sato explains that, “All the users get along very well together.”

A product that is well-known and liked by the local people of Shiojiri is the homemade konnyaku. Using a traditional recipe, production started about ten years ago. Made from raw potatoes cultivated in Nagano Prefecture, the konnyaku has a reputation for its excellent chewiness and texture. It can be purchased through reservations and at local contract stores and events, where it's so popular it is sold out each time.

Participation in the Yellow Receipt Campaign began in 2014. Returned gift cards turn into material to create handicrafts and items needed in order to display and sell the completed products.



Left: Seiya Yamaguchi, who is good at illustrations. Right: “Sumire Konnyaku” (300 yen per bag, tax excluded). The konnyaku character was drawn by Yamaguchi.



Top left: Care is required with the molding of precision equipment parts. Bottom left: Naoe Sato, director of the Shiojiri City Council of Social Welfare “Sumire no Oka” comments, “I’m happy when people say that handmade items are wonderful. It really helps to motivate everyone.” Right: A toriyam woven work made by a user from an old kimono. In 2019, it won the Encouragement Prize in the handicraft division of the Disabled Cultural Arts Festival in Nagano Prefecture.



On the 11th of every month “Aeon Day”, the yellow receipt issued by the cash register is put into the local group box that the customer would like to support. Aeon will donate 1% of the total amount of the receipts collected to the relevant organizations. It is a system that connects the groups that need support and the customers in the area that want to give a helping hand.

Wheelchair Basketball



Aeon is an active supporter of parasports.



In the competition style practice, the wheelchair is fabulously maneuvered just like in an actual game, and passes and shots are made.

The Appeal of Powerful Offense/Defense and the Fast Pace

Wheelchair basketball, where you can freely manipulate the wheelchair and whiz across the court or at times bump into each other with force. The powerful plays captivate the viewers in an instant. Kenji Yamaguchi, who plays for the “Chiba Hawks” club team in Chiba Prefecture, is one such person. “When I first saw the game, even though it was a practice, I was blown away by the intensity and speed. It made me think that I would like to move in a wheelchair like that and control the ball.”

Wheelchair basketball began as a competitive sport in the 1950s. The court and ball are the same size as basketball, but the challenging part is manipulating a competition wheelchair. When Yamaguchi joined the team, he practiced so hard that the skin peeled off his hands. There were times when he struggled so much and wanted to quit, but he would think “I want to become like the good players even a little bit.” Now he leads the team as captain and actively participates in elementary and junior high school trial sessions. “I want the children

to come in contact with the sport and experience how fun it is. I also want to tell them about the athletes competing on the world stage.”

Representative and head coach Koichi Tanaka hopes that the Paralympic Games will increase public interest in parasports. “If the training environment is improved with the support of local governments and companies, the level of parasports will increase even more. It is my dream to grow a strong team that makes people want to watch the sport, and then eventually create a professional league.”



Left: Warming up before practice. Riding the wheelchairs in a row. Right: Captain Yamaguchi recommends watching live games. “At actual matches, you can feel the sounds and movements!”



Upper left: Turn to the goal and shoot! Above: Run into the wheelchair to block the pass. Lower left: “Chiba Hawks” representative and head coach Tanaka. “Applaud good plays and boo bad ones. Please cheer like any other sport.”

T o p i c s i n A s i a

As the center of Cambodia's politics and economy, the vibrant capital of Phnom Penh was once called the "Paris of the East" during the French colonial era (late 19th century to early 20th century), and beautiful colonial buildings from the period give the city its unique charm.



Left: There are many tuk-tuks on the streets. They are a convenient mode of transport for both citizens and tourists. Center: Colorful, tropical trees are planted along the streets. Right: Independence Monument in the city center. It was built to commemorate Cambodia's complete independence from the French in 1953.

Located in the southern part of the Indochina peninsula, Cambodia shares its border with Vietnam, Laos and Thailand. The majority of the population is comprised of the Khmer people.

The capital of Phnom Penh sits where the Mekong River flowing from the north to the south of the country meets with the Tonle Sap River. Phnom Penh literally means "Penh's hill" in the Khmer language. Legend says the city's name was taken from a hill ("Phnom") in the center of the city where Lady Penh, who lived here, enshrined Buddha statues in a temple.

Phnom Penh developed as a city in the 14th century and later flourished as the capital of the Khmer Empire. Since 1866, the city underwent modern urban development during the French colonial rule and many colonial-type buildings were constructed. After experiencing a turbulent civil war from 1970, the country was reborn in 1993 as the Kingdom of Cambodia. Since then, the country has continued to achieve rapid growth.

Present day Phnom Penh offers historical sites such as the Royal Palace, temples and buildings from the French colonial era, while progress in infrastructure development and an increasing number of high-rise buildings also give it a modern city atmosphere. The average age in the country is 25.6 years old*, and Phnom Penh is thriving with the young country's energy to pursue development.

National Museum of Cambodia



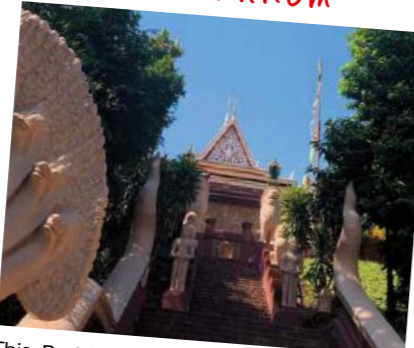
The museum displays cultural assets of precious historical value collected from all over Cambodia, dating back from prehistoric times (3rd - 2nd century B.C.) to the French colonial era. Marvelous sculptures from the ruins of Angkor are a must see.
 Fee: \$10 (Adult) Hours: 8:00 - 17:00
 Addr: St. Preah Ang Eng (13), Sangkat Chey humneas, Khan Doun Penh

Silver Pagoda



This extravagant Buddhist temple features pure white marble columns and a golden roof. The floor is inlaid with more than 5,000 silver tiles. Visitors can view precious items such as an emerald Buddha, a Buddha adorned with precious stones, a Buddha with a golden crown, and wall paintings.
 Fee: \$10 (Adult, includes admission to the Royal Palace)
 Hours: 8:00 - 11:00, 14:00 - 17:00
 Addr: Oknha Chhun St. (240)

Wat Phnom



This Buddhist temple sits on top of a hill where the city got its name and is said to have been built by Lady Penh to enshrine Buddhist statues. It is still a holy place worshiped by many people. A golden Buddhist statue is enshrined in the main pagoda, and a statue of Lady Penh is also standing next to it.
 Fee: \$1 Hours: 6:00 - 18:30
 Addr: St. 96 Norodom Blvd.

kroma



The cotton kroma is multipurpose and can be worn as protection from the sun, used as a towel, etc. The shiny silk kroma is used as a scarf. Photo of items purchased at Central Market (see right page). Silk kroma \$5 each. Cotton kroma available from \$1.

Recycled goods



This stylish shop offers handmade novelties including notepads made by recycling old newspaper (large \$8, small \$6) and greeting cards made of recycled paper that mixes boiled elephant dung and used paper (\$4 each). The proceeds are donated to help street children and their families.
 ● Friends 'N' Stuff Addr: #215, St. 13 Khan Doun Penh

khmer cuisine



One of the best-known Khmer dishes is Amok, made by steaming freshwater fish such as snakehead fish with coconut milk and spices. This riverside restaurant serves the popular Amok in a coconut shell (\$9.25, photo is a serving for two).
 ● Bopha Phnom Penh Titanic Restaurant
 Addr: Sisowath Quay, Next to Siem Reap Ferry Dock

khmer dessert



Pumpkin pudding and sweet rice cakes are popular, but the dessert served at the exquisite Khmer bistro "Malis Restaurant" is very sophisticated. A mousse accompanied by a sauce with hints of rare Cambodian honey is a perfect way to end a meal.
 ● Malis Restaurant Addr: No. 136 Norodom Blvd.

Aeon Cambodia Neat's Recommendation



Green peppercorn is used to cook many dishes in Cambodia. It is not a familiar ingredient for the Japanese, so Neat recommended a good restaurant. Her favorite dish is fried seafood with green peppercorn. "Take the fried peppercorns off the stem and add it to your taste. You will be surprised by the rich aroma."
 ● Sleuk Tnort Restaurant
 Addr: #21B St. 294 Sangkat Tonle Basak Khan Chmkar Morn Chamkar

Central Market



Central Market's unique architecture features a dome-shaped building in the middle with wings extending in four directions. You can find almost anything here, from daily necessities, clothing, food, and jewelry to souvenirs.
 Addr: Calmette St. 53



Aeon Mall Sen Sok City is the 2nd Aeon mall in Cambodia. It features an aquarium, cinema, indoor amusement park and other attractions.
 Addr: St. No. 1003, Village Bayab, Sangkat Phnom Penh Thmey, Khan Sen Sok



Chanty Vongvothaneat
 Assistant Manager, Marketing Dept., Aeon (Cambodia) Co., Ltd.
 There are three types of pepper: white, black and red. Red pepper is a rarity in Japan. "The peppercorns are red because they are harvested after they ripen. It has a sweet note," says Neat. It enhances many dishes and she gave us an interesting idea: "Crushed dried pepper baked in cookies is delicious."



World-renowned **Kampot Pepper**
 Of the pepper grown in the province of Kampot, only those grown by farms that comply with the fully organic production guidelines of Kampot Pepper Promotion Association are allowed to carry the "Kampot Pepper" certification. Aeon offers a lineup of three types of pepper: black, white and red. Photo is pepper from Paradise Gardens (100g each, \$5.9).

- information**
- Direct flights to Phnom Penh International Airport (PNH) are available daily from Narita Airport. Flight time is around 7 hours from Narita to Phnom Penh, and around 6 hours on the return flight.
 - A visa is required for entry into Cambodia.
 - The local time is 2 hours behind Japan.
 - Currency: 1 riel (KHR) = 0.027 yen. 4064 riel = US\$1. US\$ can be used in Phnom Penh. (As of Jan. 6, 2020)

13 *Source: JILAF (Japan International Labour Foundation) 2016 data