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**NEW ZEALAND'S
ADVENTURE CAPITAL**

3 BIG PHILIPPINE FESTIVALS

FITNESS TRENDS AND VACATIONS



Clockwise from top left: The textile industry as seen through menswear and cosplay outfits to the manufacturing process. An extensive example of the popular cafe set meal called "morning service." **Below:** Ichimin, the city's mascot



Ichinomiya: Textile Capital and More

HELLO JAPAN LOVERS! Have you heard of Ichinomiya City? With a population of 386,000 people, it is located right in the middle of Japan, in Aichi Prefecture, and is 46 minutes away from the Chubu Centrair International Airport while it is less than 30 minutes by train from Nagoya.

TEXTILE CAPITAL

Located along the bountiful *Kiso River*, Ichinomiya is blessed with an abundance of high-quality groundwater. Driven by its textile industry, the city began to flourish long ago and has become Japan's top producer of woolen fabrics. Indeed, many of the most famous European brands use fabrics woven in Ichinomiya.

As a thanksgiving to the local textile industry, the **Ichinomiya Star Festival** has been held every July since 1956 and attracts over 1 million visitors each year. What's more, true to its status as the textile capital of Japan, the city plays host to cosplay aficionados who handmake their own costumes and parade as anime characters. How about joining the parade next time?

COFFEE SHOP FAVORITE

Ichinomiya is also the birthplace of the famous "morning service" that has popularly spread to its neighboring regions. All of the 600 coffee shops in the city offer it. Just what is the morning service? You pay anywhere from 300 to 500 yen for your coffee or tea, but you get amazing complimentary service that includes toast with sweet *Ogura an* (bean paste) and salad, as well as



A celebratory sky during the Ichinomiya Star Festival.

chawanmushi (steamed egg hotchpotch) and even gratin. Over the years, as the coffee shops competed against each other, the complimentary service items have gotten increasingly extravagant. And despite the name, most shops serve the morning service well into the afternoon.

The morning service can trace its origins to the textile industry. During the time around 1955, the machines used in textile factories made loud noises and people began going to coffee shops so that they could have conversations. Shops started serving boiled eggs and peanuts as compliments to coffee and tea, beginning the origins to what is now known as the morning service.

Why not stop by Ichinomiya, the textile capital of Japan? ■



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MORE ON ICHINOMIYA



TV DRAMA DOUBLES AS GUIDEBOOK

Many come to Japan to visit or work and still can't understand the language, customs, culture, and people. If you're one of them, check out "Halo Halo House", a new drama series. Its main character is a young Filipino who simply can't forget the Japanese girl he met when he was a boy. He flies all the way to Japan and, after some interesting twists, finds himself living in a share house in Ichinomiya City, Aichi Prefecture. Each 30-minute episode contains 20 minutes of entertaining drama and 10 minutes of commentary on the Japanese words, food, and customs that appeared on the show. Catch it on PTV in the Philippines from January 16 until February 7, 2016, Saturdays and Sundays, 5 pm to 5:30 pm.



BIKE OF THE FUTURE

Created by the Philippines and Japan, the **E-trike "Pecolo"** is an environment-friendly, high quality, yet low cost vehicle. Manufactured in the Cebu factory of Prozza Corporation, it is headquartered in Ichinomiya. The e-trike's most unique feature: the **removable lithium-ion battery**, which has caught Asian investors' interests and is tagged "the battery of the future."

MASUMIDA SHRINE

Built 2,600 years ago, this grand shrine located in Ichinomiya is still highly revered by local residents. It was named Masumida because of the highly clean and clear waters that were perfectly suited for the rice fields.

ICONIC FOOD

Originating from this region, **miso katsu** (miso pork cutlets) are breaded, deep-fried, and topped with a unique miso-based sauce with varied ingredients like fish stock and sugar.



ACTRESS OF ALL TRADES

Actress, Philippine tourism ambassador. Former member of idol group AKB48. The highly versatile **Sayaka Akimoto** has starred in dramas, movies, and theater productions, even hosting a program on the economy. Akimoto was born to a Filipino mother. In 2014, she was appointed Goodwill Philippine Tourism Ambassador while in Japan. In June 2015, she was a special guest at the Meeting of the Filipino Community in Japan with President Benigno Aquino III. She stars in the live-action movie *Bikuu*, which opened in theaters in November 2015.