

恵方巻き

節分にその年の縁起の良い方角(恵方)を向いて、太巻きを無言で丸ごと食べる習慣。

Ehōmaki (Lucky-direction Roll)

Ehōmaki is an uncut vegetable sushi roll. It is customary to eat it on setsubun day facing the yearly lucky direction determined by the Chinese zodiac. Further, the rolls are usually eaten in silence.



鬼とは?

鬼は伝説や民話に登場する、日本の妖怪。ツノとキバを生やした大男で、腰に虎皮のふんどしをまとっています。古来、日本では、各方角に十二支の動物をあてはめて表現しますが、北東(艮・丑寅)を「鬼門」とよび、縁起の悪い方角としています。鬼のツノ、キバ、虎皮というビジュアルは、「丑(牛)」と「寅(虎)」からきています。昔話などでは、退治される悪者、恐ろしいもの、として表現されることが多いですが、「仕事の鬼」など「卓越した人」の比喩として使われることも。頭にツノを立てて鬼の真似をするジェスチャーは、「(誰かが)怒っている」の意味になります。

What are Oni?

A common character in Japanese folklore, Oni are creatures akin to demons or ogres. They are portrayed as giant male creatures with horns and fangs, wearing tiger-skinned loincloths. Traditionally, the twelve animals in the Chinese zodiac calendar are applied to cardinal points; the northeast direction, as represented by the cow and the tiger, is called "kimon" (demon's gate) and is considered bad luck. The visual image of oni is said to be derived from the combination of the cow and tiger. In most Japanese folk tales, oni are an evil force that needs to be defeated. But they are also a symbol of transcendent power, as in the expression "Shigoto no Oni" (Work like a Demon, or workaholic).

バレンタインデー Valentine's Day

日本では、2月14日のバレンタインデーは、「女性が男性に愛を伝える日」と考えられています。「本命」と想う男性に、チョコレートやプレゼントを贈るのが一般的ですが、本命ではない相手に贈る「義理チョコ」や、女性の友だちに贈る「友チョコ」という習慣もあります。プレゼントを贈られた男性が「お返し」をする日が、日本独自のホワイトデー(3月14日)です。

In Japan, Valentine's Day is the day on which women are supposed to declare their love. Generally, a woman gives presents like chocolate to the man she loves, and this chocolate is called "honmei-choko" (chocolate for a loved one). On the other hand, other traditions consist of distributing chocolates to male colleagues, which are called "giri-choko" (obligation chocolates) and exchanging chocolates among girls, which are called "tomo-choko" (friendship chocolates). Men who received chocolates on Valentine's Day are expected to return the favor on March 14, which is called White Day and is celebrated only in Japan.



マメ知識

節分の翌日は立春(春のスタート)。この日には「椿(つばき)」を飾ります。椿はその字の通り、春を表す植物。

The day after setsubun marks the beginning of spring. The spring flower *tsubaki* (camellia) is decorated.



3月 (弥生)

March (Yayoi)

弥という漢字には「よいよよ」という意味があり、弥生=「草木がよいよ生い茂る様」を表しています。

Yayoi symbolizes growing leaves.



お内裏様とおひな様を最上段に、三人官女を2段目、五人^{五人}樂子を3段目に並べます(地方や段数によって飾り方、位置は変わります)。

The Emperor and Empress are displayed on the top tier; three attendants are on the second row and five musicians are on the third. (Displays vary according to regions and the size of the set.)

く本邦の節句の食べ物

Momo-no-Sekku delicacies

白酒 Shirozake
(sweet white sake)



もち米と麹で仕込んだお酒。
飲むと邪気を祓うといわれています。

Shirozake is drunk to ward off evil spirits.



ひしもち Hishimochi
(diamond-shaped rice cakes)

上から赤(桃の花)、白(残雪)、緑(草萌える大地)を表しているともいわれます。

Hishimochi is a special diamond-shaped rice cake with red (pink), white and green layers. The red symbolizes peach flowers, the white lingering snow, and the green the green field.



男女の人形を食べて、
簡単な人形に!

Display a pair of dolls as hina dolls.

桃の節句(ひな祭り)

女の子の健やかな成長を祝う行事。この日は祖父母や親類、友人などを招き、ひな飾りを披露してもなします。

飾る時期は地方によって異なりますが、節分を過ぎた大安の日などに飾るのが一般的。「しまい遅れると婚期が遅れる」と言われるように、3月4日中にしまうのがよいとされています。

Momo-no-Sekku (Doll Festival)

Momo-no-Sekku, or Hina Matsuri (Doll festival), is held on March 3 to pray for girls' healthy growth and happiness. A set of ornamental dolls that represent the Emperor, Empress, attendants and musicians in court dress from the 9th century are displayed. Parents of the girl invite her grandparents, relatives and friends to celebrate together.

Although it varies by regions, it is generally displayed after setsubun and put away immediately after hina matsuri is over. According to superstition, a girl whose parents are slow to put away the set will be slow in finding a husband.

はまぐり
虫合の
お吸い物

Clear soup of hamaguri clam

蛤の貝殻は、自分の二枚貝以外は絶対に合わないことから、夫婦の和合、女性の貞節を意味します。ちらし寿司と一緒に。

Hamaguri symbolizes couples' unity and women's chastity because of its bivalve shells. It is served along with chirashi-zushi (scattered sushi).





お彼岸

春分の日(3月21日頃)と秋分の日(9月23日頃)は、昼と夜の長さがほぼ等しくなる日。この日をはさんで前後3日の一週間を、お彼岸(春の彼岸、秋の彼岸)と言います。彼岸はあの世とこの世が交わる日と考えられ、先祖に心が通じやすいとされるこの時期に墓参りをするようになりました。

Ohigan (The Other Shore)

Ohigan literally means "the other shore" in Buddhist terminology. It is two periods of seven days with the middle day falling on spring and autumn equinox. People pay a visit to family graves during these periods.

● お墓参りの仕方 Rituals When Visiting Family Graves



1. Clean up around the family graves by picking up fallen leaves or burnt incense.
2. Wipe off the grime on the gravestones.
3. Place offerings of flowers and food.
4. Offer incense and fill up water in the water basin.
5. Using the dipper, pour water from the pail over the gravestone.
6. Put your hands together and pray.
7. Take home offerings of food with you.



仏教式のお墓参りでは、本堂にお参りをし、僧侶にあいさつをしてから、お墓の掃除をします。法事ではないので服装に決まりはありませんが、僧侶などにあいさつすることも考えて、ラフすぎる服装は避けて。

According to Buddhist custom, visitors should first visit the main building of the temple and greet the monk before cleaning the graves. It is not necessary to wear black formal attire, but avoid looking too casual.

What to Bring to Family Graves

Bring the following items when visiting family graves: candles, incense sticks, a matchbox, a rosary, flowers, a pail and dipper, a broom, a cleaning cloth and trash bags.

4月 (卯月)

April (Uzuki)

卯の花が咲くことから。または稲を植える、植え月という説も。

April is the month when the flower U (pronounced as /oo/) blooms.

Hanami (Flower Viewing)—March through April

Hanami is an eagerly awaited annual event when Japanese gather to view cherry blossoms, or *sakura*. Because *sakura* lasts only for a week or two, many people plan *hanami*, or cherry blossom-watching parties, by checking blossom forecasts (*sakura zensen*). Many reserve a spot under a *sakura* tree for lunch or a dinner party.



目で舌で、花見の雰囲気を楽しみましょう。

From the flowers to the food to the festive atmosphere, enjoy all that *hanami* has to offer!

花祭り(4月8日)

お釈迦様の誕生を祝う仏教の行事。「花御堂」という草花で飾られた小さなお堂の中の釈迦像に、ひしゃくで甘茶をかけてお祝します。それは、お釈迦様の誕生の際に、天から甘露の雨が降った、という伝説に由来します。

Hana-matsuri (Flower Festival)—April 8

Hana-matsuri is the celebration of the Buddha's birthday, and in Japan always takes place on April 8.

花見(3月~4月)

桜の枝を折らない、近隣住民の迷惑にならないよう騒音に注意する、ゴミを持ち帰るなど、基本的なマナーを守って雅びな時間を楽しんで。

Some basic *hanami* manners to keep in mind: Do not break off a branch from a *sakura* tree; try not to be too loud when you have a party; take all your trash home with you.



4月は新しいスタート

日本では一般に、4月は、入学、進級、就職など、人生の新しいスタートの時期と考えられています。親しい間柄では、入学祝、就職祝などを贈る場合も。

Make a Fresh Start in April

For school and business, April is the month to make a fresh start, since the school year and the fiscal year start in this month. Congratulatory gifts for starting school or finding one's first job are given among relatives or close friends.

〇〇小学校





鯉のぼり

「鯉の滝のぼり」という中国の故事に由来し、立身出世を表します。五色のふき流しや矢車には魔除けの意味が、その上の丸い飾り(籠玉)には神様を招く「廻りしる」の意味があります。

Koinobori (Carp Streamer)

A carp symbolizes a successful career because, according to a Chinese saying, a carp swims upstream. *Fukinagashi* (five-colored streamer) and *yaguruma* (a pair of arrow-spoked wheels) are put up to drive away evil spirits. The round accessory on top of it is called *kagodama* and is believed to be the place where gods descend.

端午の節句(5月5日)

男の子の健やかな成長を願ってお祝いします。

Tango-no-Sekku (Children's Day)—May 5th

Tango-no-Sekku is a seasonal festival held on May 5. Previously known as *Boy's Day* and now as *Kodomo-no-Hi* (Children's Day), May 5 is the day on which to wish for boys' healthy growth and happiness.

柏もち

柏の葉は、新芽が育つまで古い葉が落ちないので、子を思う親の愛情を表しています。

Kashiwamochi

Kashiwamochi is a Japanese rice cake stuffed with red bean paste and wrapped in *kashiwa*, or oak leaves. *Kashiwa* represents parental affection because old leaves wait for new leaves to grow before they fall.



鎧かぶと

事故や災難から身を守る。

Armor and Helmet

Displayed to protect children from accidents and bad luck.



ちまき

形が銃筒に似ていることから、「武士魂」を表しているとも。

Chimaki

Chimaki is a rice cake rolled in bamboo leaves. It is said to represent a warrior's spirit because it is shaped like a gun.



菖蒲

湯舟に菖蒲やヨモギを入れる「菖蒲湯」は、厄払いの意味があり、無病息災を願うもの。

Shōbu (Iris Leaves)

Shōbu-yu is another Children's Day tradition. People take baths with iris leaves sprinkled in the water. Iris leaves are believed to fend off evil.



6月 (水無月)

June (Minatsuki)

水無月の「無」は「ない」という意味ではなく、連体助詞の「な」であり、「水の月」という意味になるという説がある。ほかに、「梅雨で天の水がなくなる月」「田植で水が必要になる月」という説も。

According to one theory, *Minatsuki* means *mizu no tsuki*, which translates into "month of the water," because the rainy season starts in June. Other theories say it's the month with no water in heaven (*mizu no nai tsuki*) because of the rainy season, or that it's the month when water is much needed for rice planting.

つゆ
梅雨

梅雨とは、雨季の一種で、日本各地(北海道を除く)に毎年めぐって来る雨の多い期間のことです(5月~7月)。それほど雨足の強くない雨が各地域で1か月~2か月に続きます。梅雨の時期が始まることを梅雨入り(入梅)、梅雨が終わって夏になることを梅雨明けといい、ほとんどの地域では気象庁が梅雨入りや梅雨明けの発表をします。

Tsuyu (Rainy Season)

All parts of Japan, except Hokkaido, experience the humid period of the year called *tsuyu* (rainy season), with daily drizzle from May to July. The Japan Meteorological Agency makes an official announcement of *tsuyuiriri* (the beginning of the rainy season) and *tsuyuake* (the end of the rainy season).



衣替え

学校や会社の制服などは6月1日から夏物に、10月1日から冬物に衣替えをするのが一般的。和服の場合、6月と9月は単衣(裏地がない)、7月、8月は絨や紗などの薄物、10月から5月までは袷(裏地あり)が決まりごとです。

Koromogae (Seasonal Change of Clothings)

Generally, June 1 and October 1 are the days on which to change one's wardrobe for the new season. School and office uniforms are also changed on these days. In the case of kimono, rules are stricter. In June and September, unlined kimono (*hitoe*) are worn. In July and August, gauzy summer kimono like *ro* and *sha* are worn, and from October until May, lined kimono (*awase*) are worn.

