

A photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, smiling and looking at the camera. They are surrounded by a large number of colorful balls in red, yellow, green, and blue. The balls are scattered all around them, filling the frame.

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OR OUT?  
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# THE PLAY ISSUE

## Banishing Boredom

totalokinawa

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OCTOBER & NOVEMBER

2012

Issue 12



This issue we've got a special feature on places and activities to keep your children occupied and entertained. There's also two restaurant reviews from Peter's Place Chinese and En-Raku Sushi. Finally we've got our round up of "Weird & Wonderful" as well as a summary of the changes to download laws which came into effect on 1 October.

As usual you can also view the magazine online at: [www.totalokinawa.com](http://www.totalokinawa.com)



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## 10<sup>FEATURE</sup>

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## Peter's Place Chinese Restaurant

Don't let the limited hours deter you from trying Peter's Place, located on 330 between the Plaza Shopping Center and KFC on one side, and the intersection of 22 and 85 on the other. The charming atmosphere and delicious Chinese cuisine of this well-established restaurant make it worth the trip.

The restaurant, located on the second floor above Jasmin Chinese furniture shop, has a spacious, open floor plan, allowing guests views of the kitchen, walls covered in photographs of visitors, and large display cases filled with ornate ceramics. About 50 guests would fit comfortably at the carved wooden tables, some outfitted with turning round glass platforms (also known as "Lazy Susans") to easily pass hot dishes and drinks to friends.

Speaking of drinks, large pitchers of water and ice tea came complimentary with our orders, as well as bowls of corn egg drop soup. The ice tea was not jasmine, but a refreshing black tea. The soup was quite good, with a lovely texture somewhere between broth and the thick slime found at many fast food Chinese places. The corn was not just sprinkled on top as garnish, but infused into the soup, providing a slightly sweet counterpoint to the delicate egg flavor.

The fried spring rolls are a departure from the thick, cabbage filled egg rolls typically found at other Chinese restaurants. The four rolls in a regular order (¥350) are smaller, the wrappers thinner, and the filling a gravy with bits of rice, which reminded us of curry. If you can stand a little spicy, the Kun Pao chicken (¥1100 for a regular size, ¥1800 for large) is satisfying. Bite size pieces of chicken are stir fried in sauce with peanuts, sliced hot chiles, green pepper, carrots, mushrooms, and bamboo shoots. The heat definitely creeps up on you. The beef in oyster sauce (¥950 for a regular size, ¥1600 for large) was pretty good, too, consisting of thinly sliced beef cooked in a dark gravy with a pile of crunchy bamboo shoots, plus a few mushrooms and chiles--flavorful, but not spicy. The meat was tender, though we did find a few chewy bits. Our entrees each came with a bowl of white rice, and with the soup and appetizer, the regular size dishes were more than enough for dinner.

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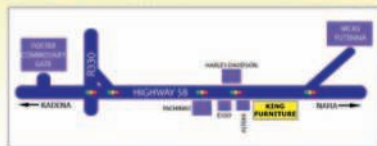
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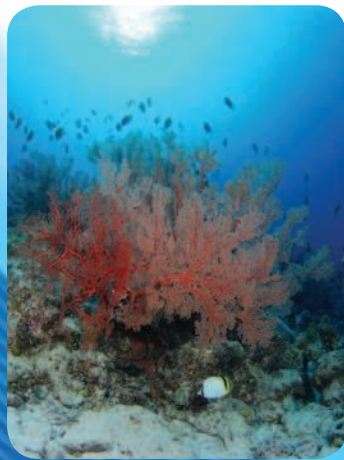



## Warm Waters & Calm Seas...

As the summer season draws to a close the best dive season of the year kicks off in Okinawa. The warm waters of the summer will still be around until the end of the year and the crowds of tourists will be back in Tokyo. As the typhoon season passes, the calm seas and great visibility of the late fall months take hold on Okinawa and in the Keramas. If you have not got your dive certification yet now is the perfect time to schedule a class at Reef Encounters. If you are already certified getting more experience with an advanced class or drift dive class to prepare you for the winter dives with whales and hammerhead sharks that will be visiting the Ryuku archipelago in just a few short months is the perfect plan.

As the cooler weather takes hold in Okinawa we will start to see more large marine life around the dive spots in Okinawa- this will include manta rays, sharks including whale sharks and some of the larger tuna and other game fish. The largest critters will be arriving in January with the arrival of the humpback whales in the Keramas and the hammerhead sharks in Yonaguni. We will be offering hammerhead tours in February and March again this year at Reef Encounters so make your plans now for a week of amazing diving on the ruins and reefs of Yonaguni.

As the waters start to cool off remember that as divers we will chill much more rapidly than swimmers on the surface or surfers. It may be time to dig that 5mm suit out of the closet or add that hood or cheater vest to your diving wardrobe. Remember that when adding neoprene you need to adjust your weights accordingly. You should have enough weight to stay neutral at your safety stop at 15 ft (5 meters) with only 500psi (40bar) of air left in your tank and little to no air in your BC. Proper weighting will greatly benefit your air consumption as will proper thermal protection. Hope to see you all under water.



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## En-Raku Sushi



**S**ushi delivered by train to your table? What more could you want!

Take your pick of the slew of sushi-go-round restaurants in Okinawa, and you're bound to see a familiar scene: customers surrounding a long wrap around bar with built-in conveyer belt, snatching up moving color coded plates of food. But if you think all sushi-go-rounds are the same, you haven't tried En-Raku, on the upper level of Uruma City Plaza. Though they do have a huge bar, you'll want

to sit at one of their 16 or so tables to the right of the restaurant. There, the kimono dressed waitresses will direct you to a touch screen, chock-full of photos of sushi, appetizers, drinks, and desserts. If you want something not on the adjacent sushi-go-round, simply find the photo on the screen (matching it to the English menu helps), tap it, and then tap the huge orange button with pointing cartoon finger that pops up--you can't miss it. The best part is, for many orders, a little Japanese train will deliver the food right to your table. After you've picked up your plate, you press the red button next to the screen to send the little shinkansen (and accompanying rubber ducky, at our table) back on its merry way.

Expect to pay a little more for the novelty, and for the food selection and quality. Prices range from ¥100 to ¥580 a plate, with most dishes around ¥180. If you're watching your rice intake, several sashimi plates of raw fish are available, from ¥480 to ¥780. When we went, the salmon (both cooked and raw) was melt-in-your-mouth soft, and the unagi (roasted eel) drizzled in sweet sauce was tender, yet crispy on the edges.



If raw fish doesn't appeal to you, En-Raku also offers soups, including different kinds of soba (¥260 to ¥360) and miso (¥120 to ¥180), fried appetizers (¥120 to ¥480), and surprisingly, several desserts. We recommend the crispy fried chicken "nuggets" (¥180), made with real chicken pieces and served with ketchup. The vegetable tempura (¥360) is also savory, and the server will deliver it piping hot--we liked it better than the kisu white fish tempura, which was bland, even with dipping sauce.

Depending on how many morsels you've sampled, there's a dessert at En-Raku to complete your meal, from sweet grapefruit or gelatin for the nearly stuffed, to ice cream (¥150) and slices of cake (¥360) and cheesecake (¥260) for the almost satisfied. We snagged some cream puff balls (¥180) from the conveyer belt, and were pleasantly surprised--inside each little bread was a different flavor of sweet cream--one each of chocolate, strawberry, green tea, and vanilla. The fried sweet potato (¥180) topped with syrup and sesame seeds was both delicious and rich. In fact, there was very little that we didn't like at En-Raku, although to be fair, we weren't trying the fermented natto or sea urchin.



Open 11:00 am - 10:00 pm Yen, Credit Card OK English Menu

Uruma City Plaza

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more photos : [www.totalokinawa.com](http://www.totalokinawa.com)

# Are you In or Out? (Or, Kids Just Wanna Have Fun!)

Okinawa's indoor and outdoor kids parks

# 1

## Mihama Kids Park

Mihama Kids Park in American Village is the newest addition to Okinawa's indoor play lands, and the attached café makes it convenient to have lunch and play (though outside food and beverages are prohibited). The colorful play areas are filled with slides, tunnels, a ball pit, and even a space for babies. Like most indoor parks, socks are required, but if you forget, cute cottons ones are available for purchase. Admission prices (for 2 hours on the weekend, 3 hours on a weekday) are ¥200 for guardians, ¥400 for ages 13-19, ¥200 for up to 18 months, and ¥750 - ¥950 for kids 18 months to 12 years old, depending on day of the week and hours spent at the park. Go on a weekday for a better value and to avoid the crowds.

**Open: 10am - 8pm**

**Tel: 098-936-5667**

**Admission: Varies ¥ONLY**



## Round 1

If you have the yen, you should check out Round 1, located in Ginowan near Tropical Beach. It has games & activities for kids of all ages--in fact, adults tend to have just as much fun as the kids! The entrance fee allows access to do anything on Floors 4-7, including a roller rink, arcade games, jungle gyms, a bouncy room, ping pong, billiards, simulated boxing, golf, and soccer, relaxation rooms with massage chairs and manga, and a top "open air" floor with basketball and tennis courts, archery, mini golf, and lots, lots more. For the younger ones, a ball pit with "ball shooters" and tricycle track are conveniently located in front of a row of recliners, perfect for parents to kick back while watching the kids burn off energy. On the weekend, prices for kids 2-5 years are ¥350 for 90 minutes and ¥600 for 3 hours; 6-12 years are ¥1,200 for 90 minutes and ¥1,550 for 3 hours, and adults are ¥1,600 for 90 minutes and ¥1,950 for 3 hours. **Yen and Card OK**

## Xystus Kids Land

# 2

On the top floor of Uruma Shopping Center, just off of 85 across from Main City Mall, Xystus Kids Land is a lesser known, but spacious play park that the kiddies are sure to love. In addition to their three large jungle gyms, they also offer a rock climbing wall, mini golf, a painting space, and areas for relaxing, watching DVD's, and playing with baby. After getting food from the Xystus café, kids will want to sit at the round table surrounding a huge, friendly faced tree in the middle of the park. Entry prices (for 2 hours on the weekend, 3 hours on a weekday) are ¥200 for guardians, ¥200 for up to 18 months, ¥400 for ages 13 to 19, and ¥750 - ¥950 for 18 months to 12 years, with discounted group rates of ¥650 - ¥850 for 10 or more children. **Open: 10am - 7pm**

**Tel: 098-973-4105**

**Admission: Varies ¥ONLY**





The children are restless. They just want to want them to be happily worn out. What to No matter if you want to get out and enjoy Okinawa offers lots of different play parks picked a handful of the most outdoor, free and with a fee.

3

### Wakamatsu Park

Close to Foster in Kitanakagusuku, Wakamatsu is another fun little park to take the kids. In addition to a large roller slide, this park boasts a massive wooden jungle gym, with lots to climb, slide down, and explore. Leashed dogs are okay to bring, and there's also a large field to throw around a Frisbee or baseball. Watch out on some of the stairs around the park--they're a bit steep and angled from years of wear. Upright style toilets are available in their restroom, too. Wakamatsu is tricky to find the first time; if you're on 81 coming from Foster's Legion Gate, pass 146 and take the next available right after Restaurant China. The road dead ends, and two stone Japanese figures and stairs point the way to the park.

**Open: 9am - 9pm**  
**Admission: FREE**

5

run around, play, and have fun! You do? Try one of Okinawa's kids parks. the weather, or avoid it altogether, for kids (and adults) to enjoy. We've popular ones, both indoor and

### Comprehensive Park

Comprehensive Park is not just a clever name--it's an outdoorsy family's dream.

The sprawling grounds just off of 329 offer long tree-lined trails for running, biking, or strolling around with Fido, plus jungle gyms for the kids, lots of grassy fields to run around or relax in, tennis courts, soccer fields, camp sites and more. Best of all, the price is right--there's no fee for entry or parking. However, you can rent bikes or buy food to feed the fish in the ponds. And, we checked--upright toilets are available in their clean restroom facilities.

**Open: 6am - 9.30pm**  
**Admission: FREE**



4

### Yaejima Park

Also known as Civic Center Park, this outdoor slide park on 23 is a minute away from Kadena Gate 2. Spread out into three main areas, the front has an open field where you'll often see Okinawans playing gateball, a version of croquet, plus picnic tables, a fenced in basketball court, and best of all, a huge roller slide. You'll want to bring pieces of cardboard, lunch trays (available at 100 Yen stores), or mini sleds (available at Makeman) to ride, both for cushion and velocity. Follow the walking trail, and you'll see in the middle of the park a steep metal drop slide that'll make adults quiver, but is fun just the same. The back of the park offers smaller slides, a jungle gym, swings, see-saw, and more. Grab a picnic table and people watch, or bring the bikes and ride around with the kids. Brining tissue and hand sanitizer for the Japanese style toilets is not a bad idea, either.

6



# Weird and Wonderful Japan

## Chimpanzee Mauls

\* Several people predicted it would eventually happen and now it has. The TV chimp star Pan-kun went crazy and attacked a member of staff while on stage. She had pretty severe damage to her head, arms and back. Not before time Pan-kun has now retired.

## A Bargain..

\* For a not too tiny 2.05 billion yen the Japanese government has agreed to purchase three of the Senkaku islands currently the source of running disputes with China. This agreement to purchase has unsurprisingly upset the Chinese government. Question is, what happens next!

## Snatch & Grab

\* The Japanese Ambassador to China's car was recently forced to stop by other cars then the Japanese flag grabbed from the hood. In other countries this could have ended rather differently with shots exchanged but in China the suspects are only likely to get a fine.

## Counterfeit Anime

\* A Chinese student living in Chiba, was recently arrested for selling hundreds of fake anime figures online. When police raided his home they found 85 of the collectibles "in stock" which he had bought from China for a few



dollars and was selling on the internet to Japanese collectors for up to 20,000 yen!

Police estimate that he may have made

12 as much as 5 million yen.

Totalokinawa Magazine October 2012

## Anti-Japanese Protests

\* Anti-Japanese protests erupted in China at the end of August in response to Japan's deportation of Chinese activists who landed on the disputed Senkaku islands. Since then Japan purchased the islands which has provoked widespread rioting, demonstrations and property damage across China. The dispute looks set to rumble on.

## Red Notice

\* Interpol has issued a red notice asking countries to assist in detaining Paul Watson, the leader of Sea Shepherd. It's part of a national arrest warrant issued by Costa Rica, after an incident with a Costa Rican fishing boat in 2002. However, Sea Shepherd believes the warrant is part of an international conspiracy led by Japan.

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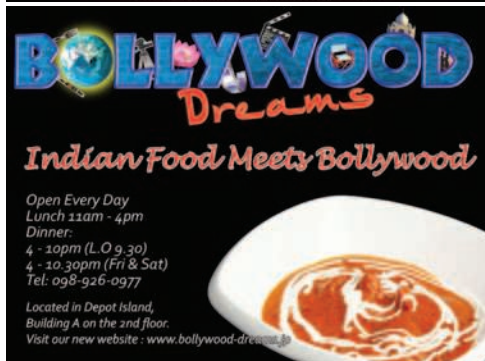


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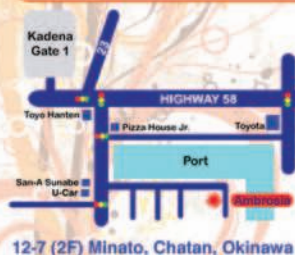


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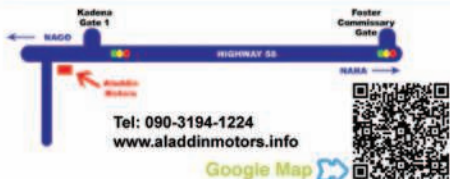
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# NEW DOWNLOAD LAWS

If you've been getting your fill of torrents, downloads and newsgroups, now's the time to stop!

In recent ammendments to a law that was passed originally in 2010, the Japanese Diet has recently added criminal penalties to download laws that came into effect on 1st October. Read on for what this means to you:

## What's in the revised law?

In 2010 download of copyright material was made illegal, but from 1st October criminal penalties will be introduced of up to 2 years in prison and a fine of 2 million yen.

## What's classed as downloading under the law?

The law states that an offence is committed if an individual KNOWINGLY downloads illegal files such as music or movie titles. Contrary to some rumours on the internet it doesn't include streaming viewing such as files on YouTube that may have been illegally uploaded. The key here is that the law states "knowingly" so it's likely the police will go after clear breaches of law where there is no doubt a user knew a file was illegal.

## What else is included in the law?

Ripping DVDs by circumventing copy protection has been made illegal but as yet no penalty has been included for this in law.

## Any exclusions?

Ripping CDs will not violate the law if done for personal use. Also, downloading content that was shown free on television or other media that wasn't pay for view does not attract criminal penalties but may attract civil ones.



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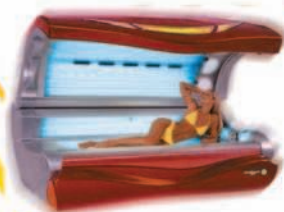
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