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# COME ON IN: THE WATER'S FINE!

## WATER SPORTS IN OKINAWA

FREE



# COME ON IN: THE WATER'S HIVE WATER SPORTS IN OKINAWA



#### Issue 23



Don't stow away that bathing suit just yet! Okinawa still has warm days and water activities to try, from diving to kayaking and river trekking! Check out our feature story for the short list of activities to do in and around the water. Plus, don't miss

our back to school tips and round up review of off base schools in Okinawa. We also have a review of Shakey's restaurant in Plaza Shopping Center. And, check out the latest dive report and Weird & Wonderful. You can view the magazine online at: www. totalokinawa.com



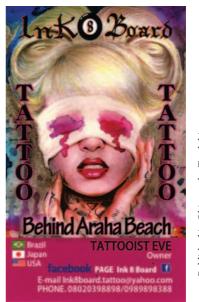
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# 9 water sports in okinawa

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## **Restaurant Review**

by Melissa Nazario

# Shakey's Pizza Parlor

It's a bar, a pizza buffet, and a salad bar, but how does it measure up?

S hakey's, like A&W, today seems to enjoy much more success and popularity with its overseas restaurants than in its original, competitive American market.

The restaurant is primarily a pizza buffet of the thin (but not crispy) crust variety. Pasta, other sides, and drinks are also included in the cost, which is just over ¥1,000 per adult.

We checked out the newer location in the Plaza Shopping Center on 330. The atmosphere is open, and set up like an American bar and grill, with old country music playing in the background.



Left to right: squid, veggie, mushroom

Pizza toppings range from traditional pepperoni or Hawaiian-style with ham and pineapple, to more exotic offerings, like corn or squid. The squid pizza is hard to miss: it includes both meat and squid ink, a distinct black color dotted throughout the cheese. The flavor is very subtle to the point of being unnoticeable, but the novelty makes it a must-try.



Salad bar offerings

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As this is Japan, white rice and Japanese curry are available, and is decent (though we're partial to Coco's). We recommend trying the potato medallions, thick slices of white potatoes that are fried and crispy on the outside, topped with seasoning, and tender on the inside. You won't be able to eat just one!

We were surprised to learn that the salad bar was not only an extra ¥300, but that the extra fee was for just one trip to the salad bar, with a smallish salad plate. This meant piling on salad and fruit, and though we liked the offerings, we didn't really think the fee for the one plate was worth it.

For dessert, there's an orange smoothie machine, offering a

juicy end to your meal. Coffee and a selection of teas are also available, plus soft drinks—all are unlimited, so be sure to sample them.

Though not the best thin pizza on island, and the extra cost for one trip to the salad bar is disappointing, we still think the atmosphere and food are worth trying, perhaps for lunch while shopping at Plaza, or as part of a family outing.





## **Dive Update**

# **Awesome Summer Diving**

**S** ummer is in full swing here on Okinawa and the diving is awesome. If you're not certified yet what are you waiting for? Now's the perfect time to join a class and get certified in the warm waters of Okinawa. If you are already certified it's time to get out and enjoy some diving. Summer is the perfect time to explore the many dive sites around Okinawa. The wide diversity of both shore and boat dive sites around Okinawa are unmatched anywhere in the world.

Starting from the south end of the island there is Channel Crevaces where dramatic drop offs and swimthroughs beckon the diver as turtles frolic along the reef. Gushikami castle site is another great southern dive spot. Moving to central Okinawa we have the Miyagi Coast dive sites better known as Sunabe seawall where soft corals abound and the nudibranchs are found in bunches. Just a bit further north we find Mizugama area where soft corals, rays and turtles are also found – and the occasional shark. Continuing our northern journey we find the famous Maeda Point where if you look past the huge



to

numbers of tourist snorkelers you will find hundreds of varieties of reef fish. Traveling further north we enter Onna area where dive sites such as Toilet Bowl and Apogama and Horshoe cliffs offer deep walls, great corals and some larger marine life. When the desire for something different grabs you it's time to head to the other side of the island and explore Tengan Pier, or Kin Red beach where muck diving finds such rare critters as the mimic octopus, seahorses and rare mud loving gobies. When walking your gear in from shore becomes a chore, sign up for one of Reef Encounters boat dives to the Keramas to swim with sharks, turtles and to explore the crystal clear waters found in these diverse islands. Looking for something closer to home? Explore the amazing coral formations found on the Pinnacles in

Ginowan or the sea fans on a Kuef drift dive. No matter what grabs your fancy the dive sites of Okinawa will fascinate you for hundreds of dives. Remember the professional staff at Reef Encounters can recommend both beach or boat dives to suit your experience level and also find the critters you are looking for.

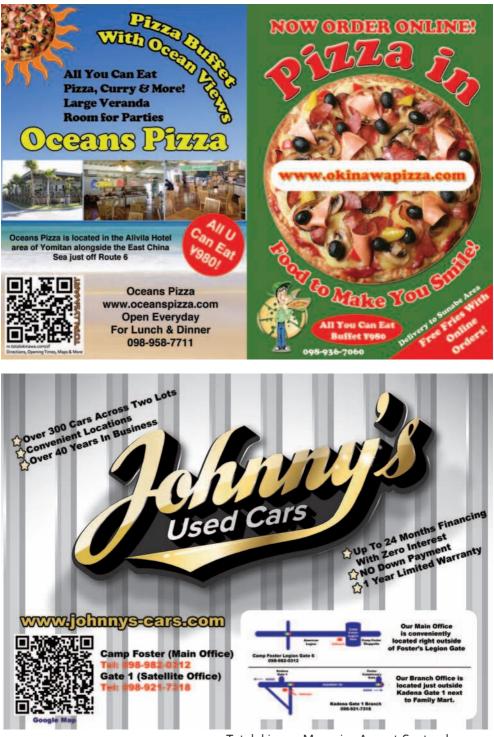
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# CORE ON RE. TEMATERS FIRE BY MELISSA NAZARIO

#### JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT SUMMER WS OVER, OKINAWA'S WEATHER CONTINUES TO BE HOT, STICKY, AND SWEATY.

There are **3** ways to survive the island's onslaught of heat and humidity:

- 1. Stay indoors and crank up the air conditioner. (This is costly.)
- 2. Abandon the island altogether, and travel to a destination with a much cooler climate. (Also expensive.)
- 3. Throw on a swimsuit, and jump in the water! (What are you waiting for?)

Don't just be a beach bum--take advantage of the island's offerings and try something a little more active (and, dare we say it, more fun).

We've rounded up some of Okinawa's most popular water activities, and point you in the direction of where to go to try it yourself. So, really, what else are you waiting for? Rub on some sunscreen, and dive in!

Scan this QR code for locations, contacts, and extra tips on all the water sports and businesses mentioned on the next pages.



http://tiny.cc/WaterSportsOki



Not only does Okinawa have some of the most amazing dive sites and reefs in the world, but it's also incredibly inexpensive to get dive certified here.

Where to learn: Reef Encounters

You can easily explore Oki's reefs and sea life closer to the ocean's surface by snorkeling. It's both inexpensive, and no certification or supervision is necessary. Just grab your mask, snorkel, some flippers, and perhaps a life jacket, and you're set!

Best snorkel spots: Maeda Flats, Odo Kaigan



# SURF & WINDSURF



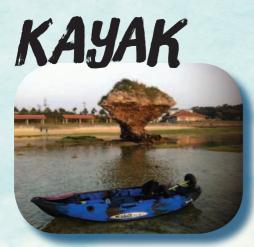
There's no cooler water sport than surfing, and you can practice catching waves right off Okinawa's shores! For an added twist, put some wind in your sails and try windsurfing!

Learn to surf: Happy Surfing Okinawa Learn to windsurf: Popolo Point



Less intense than surfing, paddleboarding offers a way to peacefully explore Okinawa's waters. Whether you kneel or stand up on the board, it's a great core workout, too.

Practice paddleboarding: Natural Surf Okinawa



For a fun water sport that's more family friendly, kayaking is a great option with little learning curve. Rent a couple kayaks and race, or set up a guided tour to scope out some of the island's gorgeous scenery, and maybe catch the sunset, too.

Where to start your kayak tour: Padaloha

# CHASE WATERFALLS

Whether or not you're a "land lubber" by heart, Okinawa's waterfalls are a must-see. Throw on your water boots and hike through Okinawa's hills to find some of the best photo opportunities on island.

Best waterfall hikes: Hiji Falls, Tadake Falls





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# Weird and Won<mark>derful Japan</mark>

#### Eggs pelted at politician's office

About 20 raw eggs were pelted at the office of Tokyo metropolitan assembly member Akihiro Suzuki after he apologized for making sexist jeers at an assemblywoman on June 18. It's unclear whether the disgruntled citizen was angry at Suzuki's sexist comments, or for the fact that he apologized. Let's hope it's the former!

# Sewing needles spotted in supermarket



Police in Shizuoka City said that sewing needles nearly five centimeters in length were found inserted in bread rolls at a supermarket. The needles were found in

five bread rolls delivered from a major distributor. A 56-year-old woman who bought the bread noticed the needle in a roll before eating it and notified the store.

# Company director arrested for embezzling ¥10 million

Police in Tokyo arrested a former employee of a major high-end hotel management company after it was discovered that he had embezzled ¥10 million from an account holding funds intended for employee welfare programs. The ex-employee was in charge of the account and had no supervision, and began embezzling in 2009 by transferring the money online directly into his account. It seems the company shared some of the blame for this oversight.

#### Ramen with a side of kisses

Police in Tokyo's Nakano Ward arrested the manager of a ramen restaurant for assault after he forcibly kissed a woman. The suspect admitted he saw the woman in a convenience store and couldn't control himself. Police said he had asked her to go out with him and to kiss him. When she refused, he followed her and forcibly kissed her. Perhaps Japan needs its own campaign warning citizens that "No means no."

# Bungled inspection causes delays at Ishigaki airport

ANA employees bungled their jobs at security when instead of running passengers' plastic PET bottles through the inspection machine, they just handed passengers' plastic bottles back to them. The mistake forced all passengers on ANA fllight 92 from Ishigaki to Haneda to go through the inspection again, and caused many other flight delays, affecting approximately 1,000 passengers.

#### Shamed politician video goes viral

Japan hasn't been very easy on its politicians lately. Amidst questions of Hyogo Prefectural assemblyman Ryutaro Nonomura using public money to visit hot springs more than 106 times last year, a video has emerged in which the politician bursts into tears, blubbering nonsensical phrases and banging his desk, then shouting, "I'm putting my life on the line." Though the hot springs visits were legally reported, one wonders how difficult his life could really be with so much time and ¥3 million spent enjoying hot springs!

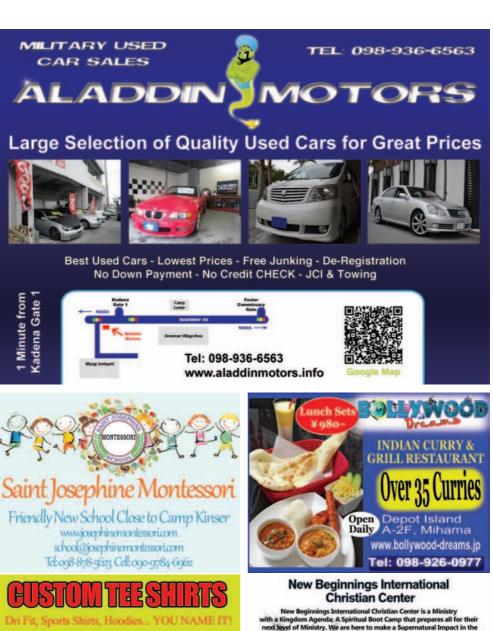
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by T. Denise Manning

## Here are 7 tips to help you stay focused!

**Total You: Back to School** 

Are you an adult getting ready to go back to school? Whether it's managing classes, organizing your schedule, or breaking the habit of procrastination, going back to school can be stressful for adult students. These seven tips can make it easier and hopefully provide some encouragement and motivation for your journey.

#### 1. Get organized.

Create a to-do list of the things that need to be accomplished for the week. Highlight and underline if you need to. Create a space in your home that is dedicated to you and your study time.

#### 2. Create your circle of cheerleaders.

Having a support system that will encourage and motivate you is important. If you don't have any cheerleaders in your family, create your own circle by networking with other classmates in your program. Introduce yourself to other students and share information.

#### 3. Stay focused.

Remember why you started in the first place. Never forget your end goal and what you are trying to achieve. Keeping in mind your future accomplishments will motivate you and cause you to be serious about what you're doing.

#### 4. Take care of yourself.

Going back to school can be stressful enough. Don't neglect yourself. Take care of YOU. Remember to exercise, get sleep, and eat right. Stressed? Get a massage or facial to relieve tension and clear your mind.

#### 5. Fight Procrastination.

How? With your thoughts! Make up in your mind that you're going to succeed no matter what, and JUST DO IT! When despair, laziness or the potato chip monster come around ... FIGHT BACK!

#### 6. Stay in contact with your instructors.

It's important to email or stop by to introduce yourself to your professors. This isn't being the teacher's pet, it's being responsible and letting them know you take your grade seriously.

#### 7. Be patient.

The most important tip anyone can have while going back to school is to be patient. Patience is key. Nothing comes overnight and success takes time. Be patient with yourself and everything will fall into place.

#### About the Contributor:

T. Denise Manning is the owner of Imagine Potential Life Strategies Coaching Firm at www.imaginepotentialnow.com. She is a new contributor for Total Okinawa, writing the

16 "Total You" segment.



# **Okinawa School Roundup**

by Melissa Nazario

More info: www.smisoki.com

## 5 schools in Okinawa that make the grade

#### Santa Monica International

Santa Monica International School (SMIS) is located in Sunabe near Kadena Gate 1. It is one of the few off-base schools fully accredited by the U.S. for grades Pre-K through 8th grade. SMIS accepts students starting at 6 weeks old to 4 years old for preschool all the way to 8th grade. SMIS opens at 6 for to 8 am for extended care, 8 am to 4 pm for school hours (3:40 for kindergarten), and 4 pm to 6 pm for after school care. Class size is 16 to 20 students per class. SMIS also has a new preschool campus located outside the main Camp Courtney gate.

#### St. Josephine Montessori

More info: www.josephinemontessori.com

St. Josephine Montessori School was founded in 2011 in a two-story home in Urasoe City to offer guality Montessori education to families in Okinawa. Classes are offered in English for children ages 2 to 6 years old. Following the Montessori tradition, the classroom ages are mixed, and subjects include Practical Life, Arts, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics, Science and Geography, plus opportunities for music, creative arts and crafts, physical education, and cultural outings.

Leonardo da Vinci Academy

Leonardo da Vinci International Academy (LDVA) in Uruma City is U.S. accredited and provides English-based, holistic education for elementary through high school. LDVA's approach is tutorial in nature, focusing on learning at the pace of the student, making it ideal for students and families in need for both flexibility and excellence. The school provides a custom-made curriculum, an honors advanced program, small classes (up to 8 students per teacher), English or fully bilingual programs (with Spanish or Japanese), and full-time psychological support.

#### Kuwae Preschool

#### Kuwae Preschool on Camp Lester is a NAEYC-accredited half-day preschool program for children ages 3-5. The program promotes learning and development through the use of learning centers. Children move at their own pace, and teachers have a degree in education or a related field. All classrooms have a Japanese co-teacher who is bilingual and aids in teaching Japanese language and Okinawan culture. Kuwae offers low teacher-to-student ratios of 10-15 students per class. Students can attend two-day, three-day, or five-day morning or afternoon programs.

#### Sunset Music School More info: www.sunsetmusicschool.com

Sunset Music School Okinawa, founded in 2002, helps students identify and develop their musical talents. It offers lessons to children as young as 4 years old all the way to adults. Students can learn the piano, guitar (acoustic, electric, classical), drums, saxophone, clarinet, flute, trumpet, and sanshin. Teachers are performing artists and well educated in their craft and provide individualized learning. Teachers encourage and adjust to a students' capacities and capabili-17 ties to learn.

See more school info at www.totalokinawa.com





More info: www.ldva-japan.com

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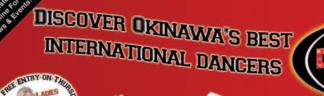
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