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June - July 2016

ATTHE BEACH

A guide to other summer activities

on Okinawa





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AT THE BEACH

There's nothing wrong with being a beach bum all summer. Resources abound listing some of the great beaches on Okinawa, including our guide to beaches at http://www.totalokinawa.com/directory/beaches.php. But if you to find yourself wondering what else there is to do on island this summer, check out our Not at the Beach guide to alternative summer activities, as well as our article on Fukushen Gardens. Going out to eat is always in season, so take a look at our reviews on Kitchen 58 and seafood restaurant Highway 1 as well as Torii Taproom. We've also got our regular Weird & Wonderful article. You can view the magazine online at: www.totalokinawa.com

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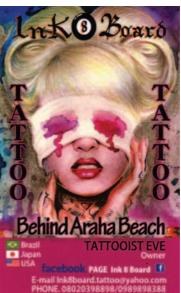
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Restaurant Review

by Louise Dupuy

Kitchen 58

Greek and American food at insanely good value



As much as I adore Japanese food, sometimes it's nice to have a change. Variety is the spice of life, after all. Kitchen 58 is a short drive from Kadena Air Base, and specializes in Greek and American food. Greek! There's something you don't hear of often on Okinawa. Have I piqued your interest?

Slightly set back from the road, Kitchen 58 is a small, unassuming place. Snag one of the parking spots outside (parking is limited unfortunately), and prepare yourselves for a quirky dining experience.

The menu is small but perfectly formed, offering a range of platters

served Greek style with salad, pasta, and coleslaw, all made fresh. There's four platters to choose from; chicken, pork (a speciality slow roasted dish that takes 48 hours to cook), mixed plate, beef brisket, and the daily special. I went with the chicken, which turned out to be seasoned drumsticks served on a bed of rice with broccoli, as well as the accompaniments mentioned earlier. It's delicious. Perfectly cooked, flavoursome, and really filling. I enjoyed it very much. I took my husband and some friends along too, who also



enjoyed it. I mention this, because my husband follows a strict diet, which the chef was more than happy to accommodate, substituting the rice on the pork plate for eggs, a touch you don't often find, and one that really made the night for us. Still peckish? Dessert is made daily. Go on, treat yourself!

Don't feel like dining out or cooking? They have you covered with a handy take out option. Lunch can be had between 11am and 3pm, and dinner is served from 5pm to 8pm.

Drinks-wise, they have a small bar, so you can enjoy an ice cold beer or a soft drink, depending of course on if you're the designated driver! I was, so I stuck with water for the evening. Let's talk price. It's insanely good value. Most platters are 1,000 yen, with the exception of the beef and pork which are 1,300 yen (this is due to the time and effort put into preparing these dishes). You get a lot of food for your money too. I did not leave feeling hungry. Opa!















Restaurant Review

by Tom Landis

Torii Taproom

A place to grab a pint of something extraordinary



Good beer isn't all that hard to come by in Okinawa. Great beer on the other hand isn't quite so easy to find. Enter the Torii Taproom and you'll think you've stumbled through some mystical porthole to craft beer heaven. If that's an overstatement it isn't much of one. They have 15 different beers on tap and a couple coolers stacked with other hard to find bottled offerings.

There is nothing remotely hipster about this no frills

beer pub. It's laid out like bars should be, simply and with plenty of room to gather around a table with a couple close friends while knocking back a few.

They have a food menu, I recommend taco Tuesday. Beer is really the main attraction,

though. The prices are in the ¥800 to ¥1100 range for a pint. The ale I drank was a local microbrew made of sweet potatoes. It was delicious and unforgettable. The staff are knowledgeable, friendly, and a great resource if you're still discovering the nuanced world of craft beer. The location is on route 6 just outside the entrance of Torii Station (thus the name).

Pro tip: pretend you're conflicted about which beer to order and the friendly bartender will offer to let you taste a couple samples.



Soogle Map & Directions



Credit cards and US dollars are welcome.

Hours are: 5pm-10pm Sunday to Thursday; 5pm to midnight on Friday; 1pm-midnight on Saturday.

They also sell and fill growlers if partying at home sounds like more fun.

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1. Get your walking boots on

Grab your hiking boots and get exploring through one of Okinawa's beautiful trails. Hiji falls is the largest waterfall on island at 85 feet, and only a 45-minute hike from the aforementioned Hiji campground, so you can tick both off your list. Another place worth your time is Ishikawa Dake in Uruma. A little more challenging, the mountain trails will appeal to seasoned hikers and parents wishing to wear their kids out!



2. Sleep under the stars

Embrace your adventurous side and explore one of Okinawa's camp sites. There's Okinawa Sports Park; with great facilities including recreational, and at only 2,710 yen per night it's a snip, too. There's also Hiji Camp-jo in the North, at 2,000 yen per night and a 500 yen per adult entrance fee, you then have access to some of the most beautiful natural spots on island.



3. Shake it up!

Cool off with an indulgent shake at The Shack! Open Wednesday-Friday 1700-0000 and Saturday - Sunday 1300-0100, there's plenty of time to grab one and treat yourself! Small are 900 yen, large 1500 yen.

4. Embrace local culture

Discover a slice of the Ryukyus with a shrine visit. There's Naminoue-Gu in Naha's port area, a beautiful Shinto shrine with a spectacular view out across the bay. Gokuku-Ji is a Buddhist temple right next door. You can hit both in a day easily. There's Narita-San, a short distance from Nakagusuku Castle ruins, also a Shinto shrine, and this can be done in a day with the



castle if desired, and of course, stunning Futenma Shrine, only a short drive from Camp Foster's legion gate. With free entry and all in areas with food and drink access, they make for a cheap and enlightening day out. Witness traditional ceremonies, and purchase lucky charms to treasure throughout the year.



5. Make a splash

Comprehensive Park in Hiyagon is a water park; it has pools, water slides, and a kids playground, as well as full sports facilities. A full day can be had here, (it's open daily except Tuesdays). Admission ranges from

100 yen for 3-6 year-olds, to 860 yen per adult. Itoman City also has a pool; Nishizaki recreation pool is open daily (July 18th- August 31st) from 0900-1900, is 750 yen for adults, 500 yen for 6-18 year olds, and 250 yen for infants. Like your pools a little warmer? Head over to Terme Villa Chu-La in American Village. The natural hot spring has a constant temperature of 41.2*C. Open daily for bathing from 0700-2300, and outdoor area 1000-2200. Please note: tattoos must be completely covered for entry into public water parks, and some places may not permit people with tattoos at all.



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Werd and Wonderful Japan

¥1.4 billion stolen from ATMs

Police are investigating a credit card fraud case that led to approximately 1.4 billion yen stolen from about 1,400 ATM machines in convenience stores across Japan. The criminals used account information that somehow leaked from a South African bank.

Japan passports get a makeover

A committee has decided to use 24 prints from Hokusai's famous "Thirtysix Views of Mount Fuji" ukiyo-e series to adorn the inside pages of new Japan passports, beginning in 2019. Globally famous images like The Great Wave will be included.

Former U.S. Marine admits guilt in murder case

As if tensions weren't already high between U.S. military and the local Okinawa community, a former U.S. Marine and Kadena civilian worker has admitted to allegedly assaulting, stabbing and dumping the body of a 20year old Okinawa woman.

54 trafficed humans rescued

A report revealed 54 people were rescued from human trafficking operations in Japan in the past year, made up of 30 Filipinos, 13 Japanese and 10 Thai. The number is up 29 from last year.





Cultural Site Review

by Louise Dupuy

Fukushen Gardens

Don't miss this urban oasis in Naha

ocated in the downtown district of Naha is a stunning Chinese garden. Built in 1992 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Naha becoming a sister city with Fuzhou, China, the garden itself is constructed almost entirely of material originating from Fuzhou, with the assistance of artisans from the city. It's location



is of significance too, being in the Kume neighbourhood. Originally, this area was called Kumemura, and was the heart of Chinese culture for many centuries in the Ryukyu Kingdom. It is very much a traditional design, walled in and sectioned off, with much asymmetry and a large, single body of water that extends throughout. Koi and turtles reside here, symbols of

large, single body of water that extends throughout. Koi and turtles reside here, symbols of longevity and wisdom in Chinese culture. There are a variety of bridges extending over the



pond, which you can cross at your leisure, and, if you fancy for a mere 100 yen, you can even feed the Koi. They are quite bold and greedy, so expect a good show from them.

The cherry on top of the ice cream, as it were, is the beautiful waterfall. This can be found facing the East entrance, cascading down a rock pile that houses an artificial cave. You can walk through it, but be warned, even during the day it's dark and slippery, so take a small light and wear

sensible shoes. Stairs cut into the side of the rocks lead to a Chinese pavilion, allowing you a spectacular view of the entire gardens.

Other notable features are the four gates of cardinal direction, various statues cast in stone and wood, bells, six-sided pavilions, painted inscriptions, a plethora of beautiful flora, and a rather suspect looking crane, who I'm sure is eyeing up the plump koi for dinner.

It's free to enter, which makes it a very cheap day out. Restrooms and vending machines are available, and you're free to walk round at your leisure. There is an information booth. Though English isn't spoken well, the staff are very polite and will help as much as they can.

It's incredibly peaceful. It's in a quiet area, which helps, but walking through it's grand entrance, you could easily forget you were in a city. With ample seating areas, it's a wonderful place for a picnic, just make sure you clear up after and keep an eye on that crane.

My favourite parts of the garden include the zodiac bridge, a sweet little crossover with the 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac carved in stone adorning it. Great place to stop and smell the flowers. I also loved the huge stone pavilions. These face one another in an area flanked by a wooden pavilion, housing some rather large and impressive Chinese vases. The waterfall too, is quite something, especially viewed from the east entrance. Perfect photo opportunity.



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Restaurant Review

by Louise Dupuy

Highway 1

Get your fishy (or non-fishy) fix at this Ginowan restaurant



Ginowan City is concealing a hidden gem. Nestled amidst an unassuming residential area is Highway 1, a haven for seafood (and non-seafood) lovers. Step through its Dragon guarded doors into a world of delicacy and deliciousness.

For the most part, it's a sushi restaurant. However, this isn't all they offer. It has a plethora of traditional Japanese dishes on both the lunch and dinner menus, with something for everyone. Their fish and seafood selection

is extensive. They offer low tables, or you can choose a Western-style booth. There's also a large fish tank just as you walk in, opposite the low table area; this is often lively with fish the owner catches himself in the waters that surround Okinawa.

I visited at lunchtime, and opted for a booth. The place itself is clean and cozy, staff are friendly, and you are greeted with a refreshing glass of iced green tea instead of water. I really liked this, though of course you can ask for water if you prefer.

Menus are in Japanese and English, and at lunch there are sets available. I'll be honest, I'm not a seafood fan. However, they have a great range of non-seafood dishes on hand! I fancied a lunch set, so opted for fried chicken, which cost 780 yen. It came with miso soup, salad, pickled vegetables and rice. Great value. Everything is made to order. It was fresh, crisp, and delicious. And filling! I could barely finish it. My companion is a bit of a sushi lover, so he opted for the California rolls, which were served with miso soup, salad, pickled vegetables and wasabi. At 880 yen, and with 10 rolls, this was also a good value choice. I'm assured these were divine, bursting with flavour, and very filling. All around a fantastic meal. Due to the fact we already had iced green tea, we decided to forego drinks; however, you can purchase alcoholic and non-alcoholic and hot and cold beverages.

Lunch runs from 1100-1500, with last orders at 1430, then dinner is 1700-2300, with last orders at 2230. They are open daily except Mondays, and accept yen only. Another tempting feature is the "Happy Hour" that runs daily (Except Friday and Saturday) from 1700-1900. Orion beer is available in draft and regular, at 300 yen and 200 yen respectively. So if you love a drink (or several!) with your meal, this might be just the thing for you. There is a fair amount of parking available right in front, a rare and wonderful feature on Okinawa!

Google Map & Directions







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