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~Stay Independent, Stay as ONE TEAM~ July 19th, 2024



Kiwi Corner



In the last edition of Kiwi Corner, I wrote about the difference in smoking culture in New Zealand and Japan. This month, however, I'd like to talk about something summer-themed that produces a lot of smoke:



Of course, Japan is famous around the world for its incredible firework displays. Some of the most popular ones include the Nagaoka Fireworks Festival, held in Nagaoka in Niigata prefecture, and the Sumidagawa Fireworks Festival held in Tokyo.



A shot of the 4th of July Fireworks in New York

In Japan, fireworks are typically a main event in summer festivals in mid-August. However, in other countries, fireworks are used at other times of the year. One famous example is in the United States on the 4th of July, which is known as their Independence Day. The Fourth of July is a huge deal in the USA with firework displays in most major cities. One of the very best shows is found in New York City. The annual Macy's Fourth of July firework display lasts for 26 minutes with over 75,000 shells set off from six barges from 18th street to 43rd street along the Hudson River.

A scene from the Nagaoka Fireworks Festival

Another famous firework display from around the world is the one held on Guy Fawkes Day in London, the U.K. I wrote about the story behind Guy Fawkes Day in the Kiritaka English Journal Vol. 14, which you can find [here](#). Along with fireworks, large fires called bonfires are lit as part of the celebrations. Being celebrated on the 5th of November, Guy Fawkes Day is towards the end of autumn when it is already getting quite cold and dark in the U.K.



The Tower of Big Ben, in London, with fireworks

Fireworks are one of my favourite parts of summer, and I feel extremely lucky to be in a country that celebrates with fireworks as much as it does. What are your favourite parts of summer? I hope you enjoy your summer break!

This month I'd like to introduce an older song that was released in 1985 (almost 40 years ago!). It's quite upbeat and good for summer. You can listen to it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPUmE-tne5U>

(Liam Campbell)



Lauren's Newsletter



Shaved Ice Around the World

Hi, everyone! Happy (almost) summer vacation! For this month's article, I'd like to talk about one of the most popular desserts during summer, shaved ice! In Japan, shaved ice, or **kakigōri**, might be served with flavored syrup or condensed milk, but what makes Japanese shaved ice special is toppings such as Azuki beans, roasted soybean flour (kinako), or even matcha syrup. Let's learn about some other ways people around the world enjoy this cool and sweet treat.

First, every shaved ice starts with, well, ice. Most varieties use a normal block of ice and put it into a machine to shave it. However, some places put a fun spin on this. In Peru and Bolivia, they get and make ice blocks from glacier ice in the mountains to make **shikashika**, a delicious shaved ice drink. Also, South Korean **bingsu** ice is milk-based, and the ice is also sometimes made with boiled red beans or fruits. For the Italian **granita**, a frozen mixture is made from fruit, liquid such as lemon and lime juice, and sugar. The ice can also be different textures depending on location. In New Orleans, the famous **sno-ball** is made with ice that is softer and fluffier than the average shaved ice.



Bingsu made in South Korea



Halo halo made in the Philippines

Next, we have toppings. They can turn a good shaved ice into one that is superb in taste, looks, and individuality. Sweet syrups, condensed milk, and fruit are a few fan favorite toppings used around the world, but each country has its own special combination of flavors. For **Nam Kang Sai** in Thailand, there are 20-30 different toppings you can choose from, from toppings like basil seeds, to grass jelly and sweet corn. **Ice Kacang**, also known as **ABC**, is a Malaysian favorite during the summer and can be topped with red beans, palm nuts, peanuts, and more. The

Philippines has their own spin on shaved ice called **halo halo** that has toppings such as ube ice cream, jackfruit, and coconut strips. **Raspado**, Mexican shaved ice, can even include toppings such as chili powder and lime juice!

I hope during these hot months, you get to have some shaved ice at a summer festival or local snack bar. If you're feeling brave, try a new flavor this year and see if you like it! Enjoy your summer, and stay cool!

Your Friendly Neighborhood ALT,

(Lauren Taylor)

For this week, I'd like to share a song about someone as cold as ice. Enjoy!



Song: "Cold as Ice" - 氷のように冷たい