

*Living in Japan with purpose,
work-life harmony and beyond*

By Mario E Gonzalez

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生き甲斐(いきがい)

The Japanese concept of a reason for being

- *Food & Photography*
- *For most of us, this is an adventure/ fun experience*
- *For your Japanese co-workers this is their life/ career*
- *Life in Japan, is quiet, peaceful and pretty easy*

Adashino Nenbutsuji, Kyoto

改善(かいぜん)

A Japanese business philosophy concept, a belief that everything can be improved, in small incremental gains on a daily basis.

Strive for that 1% better every day

- *Language learning*
- *Time management*
- *Photography*
- *Daily tasks*



Arashiyama, Kyoto

Transportation:

- Night bus/ day bus (Willard Express) ¥
- Flights ¥¥
- Bullet Train ¥¥
- Local Trains ¥
- Your own car/ rental ¥¥¥
- Ferry ¥¥¥¥
- Taxi ¥¥¥¥¥

You will spend most of your time at your school(s), so make your trips count.

Snow Monkey Park, Nagano

Accommodations:

- Night bus ¥
- Hostels ¥
- Capsule hotels ¥
- Net cafes ¥
- Business Hotels ¥¥
- Fancy pants Hotels ¥¥¥¥
- Ryokans (Japanese style inn) ¥¥¥¥

5 summer days, 20 PTO days (exam weeks), Weekends

Suzuka Twin Circuit, Mie

Marisol G. González
Fotografía



Recommendations:

- *Ryokan & Kaiseki* (Traditional Japanese style inn, Traditional Japanese course meal)
- *Hokkaido in the summer, Okinawa in the winter*
- *Eat your way through Japan*
- *One trip a month*

Avoid big trips during Golden Week (1st week of May) - x2 prices for accommodations

旅の栞 (たびのしおり)

Homemade travel planners that serve as a detailed roadmap of your trips (Canva)

- *Trip details: exact dates, destinations, and main purpose of the trip*
- *Itinerary: flight, train/ transportation and sightseeing schedule*
- *Accommodation info: hotel names, addresses, and phone numbers*
- *Budgeting: estimated costs, ticket prices, and booking confirmations*
- *Checklists: packing lists for essential items (passport, charger, travel adapters, etc.)*

Gifu Castle, Gifu

確認(かくにん)

Sharon G. Gungler

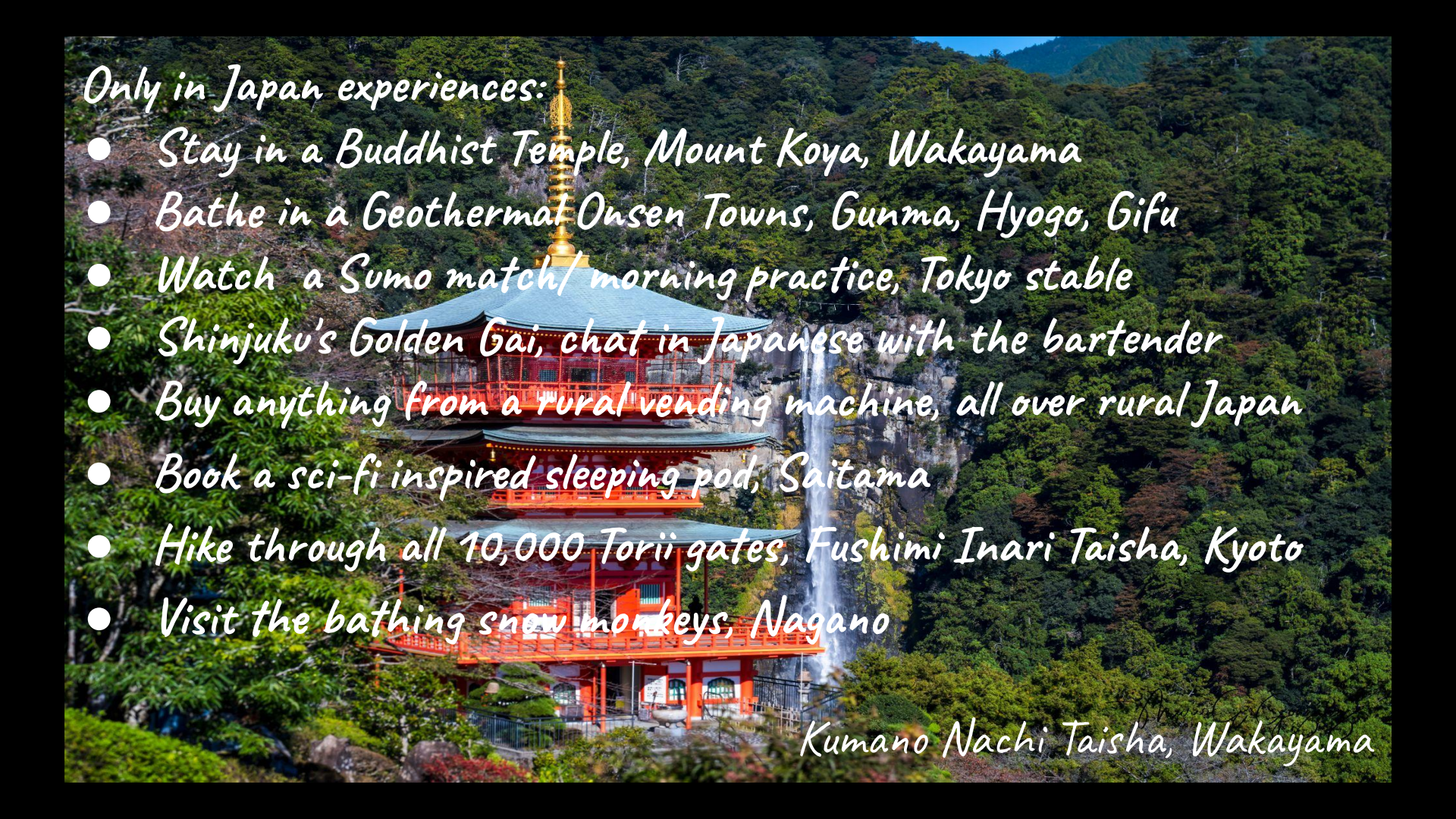
In Japanese Kakunin means confirmation, verification, check, or validation. It is one of the most frequently used words in both daily life and business Japanese.

Kumano Nachi Taisha, Wakayama

The Three Yas (beef bowl chains)

- *Yoshinoya (吉野家)*
- *Sukiya (すき家)*
- *Matsuya (松屋)*

Kumano Nachi Taisha, Wakayama



Only in Japan experiences:

- *Stay in a Buddhist Temple, Mount Koya, Wakayama*
- *Bathe in a Geothermal Onsen Towns, Gunma, Hyogo, Gifu*
- *Watch a Sumo match/ morning practice, Tokyo stable*
- *Shinjuku's Golden Gai, chat in Japanese with the bartender*
- *Buy anything from a rural vending machine, all over rural Japan*
- *Book a sci-fi inspired sleeping pod, Saitama*
- *Hike through all 10,000 Torii gates, Fushimi Inari Taisha, Kyoto*
- *Visit the bathing snow monkeys, Nagano*

Kumano Nachi Taisha, Wakayama

Worthwhile adventures:

12 original castles still stand

5 of those are national treasures:

1. Himeji Castle (Hyogo)

2. Matsumoto Castle (Nagano)

3. Hikone Castle (Shiga)

4. Inuyama Castle (Aichi)

5. Matsue Castle (Shimane)



Shirley C. Gonzalez

Himeji Castle, Hyogo

Real life locations that inspired Studio Ghibli:

- *The forest from 'Princess Mononoke' - Yakushima Island, Kagoshima*
- *Ponyo's Island from Ponyo - Tomonoura in Fukuyama City, Hiroshima*
- *The bathhouse from Spirited Away - Dogo, Onsen, Matsuyama City, Ehime*

Harriet Gonzalez

Kawaguchiko, Yamanashi

Real life locations that inspired Studio Ghibli:

- *The safflower field from Only Yesterday - near Takase station, Yamagata*
- *Hotel Kasakura - Kamikochi Imperial Hotel, Nagano*
- *The green forest from My Neighbor Totoro - Sayama, Tokyo/Saitama*

Matsumoto Castle, Nagano

Bonus Ghibli:

- *Ghibli Park - theme park located in Nagakute, Aichi*
- *Ghibli Museum - located in Mitaka, Tokyo*
- *Ghibli Inspired Towns :*
Kichijoji & Seiseki Sakuragaoka, Tokyo
Yufuin Floral Village, Oita
Kamakura, Kanagawa

Maria C. González
Fotografía

Snow Monkey Park, Nagano

Last bit of advice:

- *Take it easy the first three months, jet lag, big move, and the heat is brutal*
- *Say yes to invitations and make friends early on*
- *Explore your neighborhood you will discover the best local spots*
- *Get comfortable with the train system as soon as possible*
- *Use Google Translate's camera feature for Kanji*
- *Always keep cash on hand, 3,000 ¥*
- *Pack light, you can buy just about anything here*
- *Keep digital copies of your important documents*
- *Basic Japanese (What will you do with the language after JET?)*
- *Don't overpack your schedule, leave room for spontaneity*

Arakurayama Sengen Park, Yamanashi



Embrace the differences instead of comparing everything to home!

Sharon C. Gonzalez
PHOTOGRAPHY

Shirakawa-go, Gifu

Leave Japan saying, I'm glad I did and not I wish I did...

No one on their deathbed ever said, 'I wish I had spent more time at the office'. Paul Tsongas



Meoto Iwa, Mie

Questions?

What is your purpose in coming to Japan?

What stories would you like to share after your time here is complete?

Work-life balance is just a fancy term for nap schedule

*Tokyo Tower,
Tokyo*



Arakurayama Sengen Park, Yamanashi