

Land of the Risen Son

イエス・キリストは日本を愛する

(Jesus loves Japan)

Interesting Facts

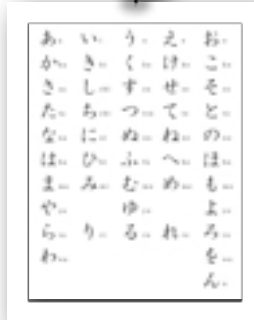
Japanese Language

One of the most complex languages to write is Japanese. It is made up of three written languages: Hiragana, Katakana & Kanji (or Chinese characters). In order to read the newspaper you need to learn all three.

Hiragana (see right)

These characters are used for words for which there are no Kanji.

These characters date back to the 5th century. Their appearance, however, has changed over the last 1600 years.



Katakana (see right)

Katakana characters are used for the transcription of words from foreign languages. The language was developed between the 8th & 12th centuries as a form of shorthand.



Update: On the Road to Japan (Peter & Valerie Limmer)

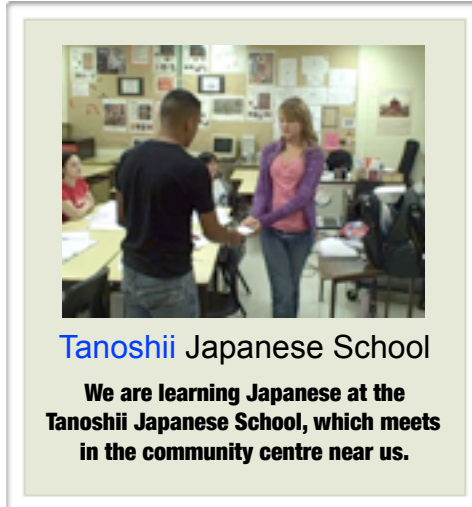
ABCD...

Hiragana has over 100 characters and permutations of characters, as does Katakana. Kanji has about 2,000 additional characters. In order to be literate, we will need to learn all three of these character sets. No wonder the Harvard scholar Edwin O. Reischauer once said that Japanese is "possibly the world's most difficult writing system"!

The Joys of Language Studies

I was walking through downtown Toronto a few weeks ago and happened to glance at a sign which helped me determine my route. I was startled to realize, on reflection, that soon I won't be able to just glance at anything anymore. It will be quite an adjustment to be a university-educated person living in a foreign land, and functionally illiterate. That thought has definitely helped to spur us on in our language classes!

We're now in the thick of our studies as we try to soak in as much as possible



Tanoshii Japanese School

We are learning Japanese at the Tanoshii Japanese School, which meets in the community centre near us.

before we leave for Japan. It's been more than 5 years since I last took a language class, so I'm thoroughly enjoying the challenge. Peter's aural language talents are starting to assert themselves, and I don't think it'll be long before he starts enjoying himself as well.

I've now learnt Hiragana and Katakana, but will likely wait to learn most of the

Kanji (Chinese) characters until we're actually immersed in the culture.

Dear God...

A book I've been reading talks about the fact that some people seem to have a special knack for looking at the Kanji characters, with next to no guidance, and recognizing their meaning. In this way the American poet, Ezra Pound, was able to translate the writings of Confucius.

My prayer the day I read that went something like this: "Dear God, Please make either Peter or me a genius in reading Kanji!!!" I'm sure God has quite a good laugh at some of the things we pray for!

Thank You

Thank you for your interest in our work. We plan to send out newsletters every two months. If at any point you decide that you don't want to receive them anymore, just email (japan@peterandvalerie.com) or call us (905-848-2529).

One of my favourites...

This is one of my favourite desserts to take to potlucks - mainly because it means that Peter and I can enjoy it without eating the entire batch ourselves! It's very yummy, and I usually get oodles of people asking for the recipe afterwards.



Lemon Squares

BASE

1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup butter or margarine
1/4 cup sugar

TOPPING

1 lemon
1 cup sugar
2 tbsp all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp salt
2 eggs
Icing sugar

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 325F. For base, combine flour, butter and sugar; mix until crumbly. Press into 8" square baking pan. Bake 20 minutes or until lightly browned.
2. For topping, zest 2 tsp rind from lemon. Juice 3 tbsp lemon juice. Add to remaining ingredients, except icing sugar. Mix until well-blended.
3. Pour topping mixture over base. Bake 20-25 minutes or until nearly set. Cool in pan, and then cool in refrigerator for 1 - 1.5 days.
4. Sprinkle with icing sugar and cut into squares. Store in refrigerator.

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