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Article :

Japanese Aquariums: Otherworldly Beauty in a New Immersive Experience

Directions: Read the following article aloud.

Japanese aquariums break with convention, combining marine life with scenic beauty and digital art to create an immersive experience of the aquatic world.

Surrounded by the sea, Japan is known for its many water cities. It is also home to more than 150 Japanese aquariums, a popular attraction that [ranges in](#) size [from](#) a room in a private residence [to](#) the Hanshin Koshien Stadium.

The Reiwa era which began on May 1, 2019, brought Japan a fresh breeze of inspiration and a rise in unique aquariums that pique curiosity.

The Japanese aquarium is now more than simply a place to observe fish through the glass. It has come up with ingenious ways to recreate the ocean environment, providing a [one-of-a-kind](#) immersive experience for people in all stages of life.

The Sceneries of Shikoku Aquarium

One such evolving aquarium we visited was the Shikoku Aquarium in Utazu, Kagawa Prefecture. Right off the bat, something was amiss — or missing, to be precise. It lacked the usual "unusual creatures" that most aquariums boast, and the route was left completely up to the visitor. The customary profiles describing the marine animal on display were also missing.

In their place were blackboards with illustrations and descriptions of marine creatures, drawn by the aquarium staff. They are especially popular with children for being much easier to understand compared to the usual scientific jargon.

Japanese Aquariums: The Sceneries of Shikoku

The aquarium director, Yoshimasa Matsuzawa, says, "We want visitors to experience the aquascape of Shikoku, more than to display rare creatures."

The tanks and pools are all named "sceneries" to [capture](#) the unique marine environment of Shikoku.

The "whirlpool scenery" is a water tank that reproduces the whirlpools of Naruto, where visitors can watch the famous fish of Shikoku's four prefectures.

The "dusk scenery" is an enchanting display of dolphins swimming under the sunset over the Seto Inland Sea.

Time seems to pass slowly as visitors silently gaze at the shifting colors of the sea, relax in the soothing atmosphere of nature, or take photos in an attempt to capture the beauty of it all.

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Projection Mapping, Lights, and Lasers at Japanese Aquariums

The "theatrical" aquarium átoa, which opened in Kobe in October 2021, combines art and aquatic life to create otherworldly spaces with themes like "forest of spirits" and "encounter of the miraculous planet."

Marine life thrives under laser beams and spotlights — digital art has broken through the boundaries of a [conventional](#) aquarium to create a whole new world that brings endless surprises to its visitors.

Aquariums all over Japan continue to evolve. Although the concepts vary, they share the same goal: to make people curious about living creatures. The only question left is where to start.

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2 Key phrases and vocabulary

Directions: First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

- 1. range in ~ from A to B** AからBまで～に幅・開き・差がある
 - The equipment **ranges in** size **from** 10 inches **to** 12 feet across.
- 2. One-of-a-kind** ユニークな、他に例のない、比類ない、唯一無二の
 - Those jewelry items are individually designed and some are **one-of-a-kind** pieces.
- 3. capture** (人の動きや風景などを絵や写真などに記録として) とらえる、捕獲する、選挙する、勝ち取る、(人の心などを) 魅了する
 - Everything from beginning to end of the accident was **captured** on dashcam.
- 4. conventional** 従来の、伝統の、型にはまった、社会的慣習の、常識的な
 - He is very smart but his views are remarkably **conventional**.

3 Questions

Directions: Read the questions aloud and answer them.

- 1. How is the Shikoku Aquarium different from ordinary ones?**
- 2. What is the common goal of all aquariums?**
- 3. Are there aquariums in your city/prefecture? What are they famous for?**
- 4. Which aquariums in Japan would you like to visit?**

4 日本語関連記事：進化する水族館

海に囲まれた日本は、水都とよばれる多くの街がある。水族館の人気も高く、民家の一室から甲子園球場とほぼ同じ広さまで、その数150を超えるという。令和に入り、より楽しく神秘的な空間をめざして、新しい施設も増加の一途だ。魚を見るというより、海の中にいるような演出も増え、子供はもちろんカップルやお年寄りも楽しめる。進化を続ける水族館を訪ねた。

たくさんの「ないもの」を誇るのが「四国水族館」（香川県宇多津町）だ。多くの水族館が自慢する珍しい生き物がおらず、見学順路も来館者におまかせ。

魚の生態を紹介する「魚名板」も見当たらない。代わりに置かれるのが職員が一枚一枚イラストやコメントを書き込む「黒板アート解説板」。子供にも分かりやすく人気を集める。

館長の松沢慶将（よしまさ）さん（53）は「珍しい生物を展示するよりも、四国の水景を見てほしい」と話す。

水槽やプールには「景」と名付けたテーマを掲げて個性をアピールする。

「渦潮の景」は、鳴門の渦潮を再現した水槽で、四国4県を代表する魚たちを楽しむことができる。

「夕暮れの景」は瀬戸内海に沈む夕日とイルカの調和が神秘的だ。写真を撮る人、静かに海を見つめる人、豊かな自然に包まれたゆったりした時間が流れていく。

令和3年10月、神戸にオープンしたのが劇場型アクアリウム「アトア（á t o a）」だ。アートと水族館の融合をコンセプトに「精霊の森」や「奇跡の惑星」など、世界観の異なるブースが広がる。

レーザーやスポットライトに照らされ魚たちが舞う。デジタルアートが生み出す世界は、今まで体験したことのない驚きの連続で、水族館のイメージを超えたおもしろさ。

コンセプトは異なるが、「生き物に興味を持ってほしい」という両館の思いは変わらない。進化し続ける全国の水族館。あなたはどこに行かれますか。