

Step Into Japan's 'Good Old' School Days in Chiba

黒板や机、制服に至るまで、昭和の学校生活を再現した展示が注目を集めています。今とは違う学びの環境や日常の風景には、懐かしさだけでなく、その時代ならではの価値観や工夫も感じられます。教育の形は時代とともに変わってきたが、変わらず大切にされてきたものもあるのかもしれません。もし昭和の学校に通うとしたら、どんな点に驚き、どんなところに魅力を感じると思いますか。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

A program held at a former school in Chiba Prefecture is giving visitors the chance to experience the "good old days" of Japanese student life. Participants spend a full day role-playing as students, attending classes in classrooms that were once in active use. The opportunity to step into a world many had previously known only through manga and anime has proven especially popular, attracting growing interest from foreign tourists.

The program takes place at Kimi no High School in Kimitsu City, Chiba Prefecture. It utilizes the buildings of a former municipal junior high school that has since closed, with most of the original facilities preserved through minimal renovation.

The experience is modeled on high school life in the late Showa era. Upon arrival, participants select a school uniform, take commemorative photos in front of a sign reading "Entrance Ceremony," and then head to their assigned classroom.

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1. Article

The day begins with lessons in traditional Japanese school etiquette, including how to stand properly, come to attention, and bow. The teacher, played by an actor fluent in English, explains the purpose behind each action and clearly outlines the background of rules and manners in Japanese schools.

Classes are varied and hands-on. In Japanese language class, participants practice calligraphy, writing their favorite characters with a brush while learning kanji. Physical education is held in the gym and features classic Japanese sports day activities such as ball toss games, tug-of-war, and obstacle courses.

At lunchtime, participants change into kappogi smocks and serve the meals themselves. Desks are pushed together so everyone can eat together in the classroom.

The program is run by Undokaiya, a Tokyo-based company known for organizing corporate sports day events. It was launched in November 2023, as **inbound** tourism began to recover following the reclassification of COVID-19 as a "Class 5" disease, placing it on the same status as seasonal influenza.

Drawing on its experience organizing Japanese-style sports day events in eight countries, the company designed the program to allow foreign visitors to enjoy authentic Japanese school culture in a real school setting.

The fee is ¥38,500 JPY (around \$250 USD) per person for the full-day program, which includes all activities, lunch, uniform rental, and round-trip transportation from central Tokyo. "It may seem expensive, but overseas visitors value the opportunity to experience real student life in an actual school building rather than a studio," a staff member said.

The program has gained attention through social media posts by overseas influencers, with more than 500 people having participated so far. Currently, around 30 visitors take part each month.

A couple visiting from Singapore **recreated** a familiar anime scene — running to school with a piece of bread in their mouths after oversleeping — and exclaimed with delight, "Our dream came true."

After completing the day's classes, participants receive a certificate and officially "graduate."

Reflecting on the experience, the husband said he was surprised by the practice of students cleaning the school themselves to **maintain** a good learning environment, as well as by school lunches that include milk. "They're well balanced and impressive," he said.

His wife added with a smile, "It was fun to experience the dream school life I'd only seen in anime. In Singapore, we usually eat in a cafeteria, so eating in the classroom felt refreshing. The Japanese rice curry was delicious."

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2. Key phrases and vocabulary

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

1. facilities 施設、設備

The hotel **facilities** include tennis courts, a gym, a swimming pool, and a banquet hall.

2. assign 割り当てる、任命する

Five people were **assigned** to each group at the research lab.

3. inbound (外から中へ) 入ってくる、到着する

Over thirty **inbound** planes were stuck at the airport because of the snowstorm.

4. recreate 再現する

The amusement park attraction **recreates** a scene from a famous Disney movie.

5. maintain 保つ、維持する

A team of ten gardeners, mechanics, and engineers **maintains** the castle and the castle grounds.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What program was started at a high school in Chiba? Who is it for? Who started it?
2. What kinds of activities can people participate in?
3. How have visitors reacted to the program?
4. Would you like to experience a little bit of Showa school life? Why or why not?
5. What special memories do you have of your junior high or high school days?

4. パンをくわえて登校、憧れの学生服に懐かしの給食… 廃校で外国人が日本の学生生活を体験

千葉県の廃校で実施されている、日本の「古き良き」学生生活を体験できるプログラムが外国人観光客から注目を集めている。参加者は生徒になりきり、実際に使われていた教室で1日を過ごす。漫画やアニメで見て憧れていた世界観を体験できるとあって、好評を得ている。

プログラムを体験できるのは千葉県君津市にある「君ノ高校」。廃校となったかつての市立中の校舎をほとんど手を加えずに利用している。

イメージしたのは「昭和の高校」。参加者は学校に到着すると好きな制服を選択し、「入学式」と書かれた看板の前で記念撮影を行い教室に向かう。

最初に、起立・気を付け・礼など日本式のあいさつを学ぶ。教師役を演じるのは英語が堪能な役者。ひとつひとつの行為の理由を話し、日本の学校でのルールやマナーの背景をしっかりと説明している。

授業もバラエティー豊かだ。国語の時間には筆で好きな文字を書き、漢字を学ぶ。体育は体育館で玉入れや綱引き、障害物競走など日本の運動会の定番種目を実施。

給食の時間には割烹（かっぽう）着に着替え、自分たちで配膳を行う。机をくっつけて教室で食べる。

プログラムを運営しているのは、企業の社内運動会のプロデュースなどを手がける「運動会屋」（東京都渋谷区）。事業は令和5年11月にスタート。新型コロナウイルス感染症が5類になってインバウンドが戻りつつあった時期に、外国人向けのサービスを考えていた。同社は海外8カ国でも「日本の運動会」を企画・運営してきた実績があり、実際の校舎を生かして外国人に日本の学校文化を楽しんでもらおうとプログラムを考えた。

料金は1人1日3万8500円。各種体験費用、給食や貸衣装代、都内からの送迎も含まれる。「割高に感じられるかもしれません、スタジオでなくリアルな校舎で実際の学生生活を楽しめるとあって海外の方から人気です」（運営スタッフ）だという。

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体験した海外のインフルエンサーなどのSNS投稿をきっかけに広まり、これまで500人以上が利用。現在は月に平均30人ほどが訪問するという。

シンガポールから旅行できたヨン・ゼン・ホンさん（27）とジョディー・モーさん（27）夫妻は、アニメで見たという寝坊しパンを口にくわえて登校するシーンを再現し、「夢が叶った」と喜んでいた。

参加者は一日の授業を終えると、卒業証書を受け取って「卒業」する。

感想を聞くと、ヨンさんは「学習しやすい環境にするために自分たちで行う清掃や、牛乳が出てくる給食には驚いた。栄養が考えられていて素晴らしい」と感心していた。

ジョディーさんは「アニメで見ていた夢の学校生活が送れて楽しかった。シンガポールではカフェテリアに食べに行くので、教室で食べるのが新鮮。日本のお米のカレーライスがおいしかったです」と笑顔だった。



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