

Shiba Inus Welcome Passengers Arriving from Tokyo Haneda Airport

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Furry (Adjective) /'fɜ:ri/ covered with fur; made of or having a surface like fur
Example: The shop selling dog accessories, food, and clothing was named “Furry Tails” by the owner.
2. Wag (Verb) /wæg/ (of an animal's tail) to move or cause to move quickly from side to side
Example: The dog wagged its tail in delight when it saw its owner.
3. Organize (Verb) /'ɔ:rgəˌnaɪz/ to plan or arrange an activity, event, etc.
Example: I have to organize our reunion this December.
4. Sacred (Adjective) /'seɪkrɪd/ treated with respect due to a connection with a god or religion
Example: It is a sacred place for the natives so people should respect it.
5. Breed (Noun) /bri:d/ a particular type of animal or plant
Example: I like all breeds of dogs including shih tzu, chihuahua, shiba inu, and akita.
6. Descend (Verb) /dɪ'send/ to be related to someone who lived in the past
Example: He is believed to be descended from King Charles II.



It's always nice to be welcomed by a friendly face when you walk out of an airport's arrivals gate. However, at Hagi Iwami Airport in Shimane prefecture you are likely to be welcomed by furry faces and wagging tails.

Twice a month, a group of 10 or more shiba inu are brought to Hagi Iwami Airport in the city of Masuda to welcome passengers arriving from Tokyo's Haneda Airport. Passengers can pet the dogs and take photos with them. The event is organized by a group of around 30 shiba inu owners from Masuda. The group hopes that this event will encourage more tourists to use

Hagi Iwami Airport and also to visit Masuda, which is believed to be a "sacred place" for shiba inu.

Shiba inu are a small, friendly breed of dog, and the most popular dog in Japan. Although they are a very old breed — believed to be over 2,000 years old — research has found that all modern shiba inu are descended from one male dog called Ishi who was born in Masuda in 1930.

The first shiba inu event at Hagi Iwami Airport took place on June 18, 2022. Now a line of 10 or more shiba inu welcomes arriving passengers on the first and third Saturday of each month. Called the "Shiba Inu All-Stars," the dogs welcome the arrival of ANA flight 725 at 9:45 in the morning. And the event has been successful. According to the airport's website, more people are now taking the 90-minute flight from Tokyo to Hagi Iwami Airport just to meet the dogs.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on shiba inu welcoming passengers at Hagi Iwami Airport?
2. Do you know anyone who owns a shiba inu? Would you consider getting one?
3. What dog breeds are popular where you live? Why do you think that is?
4. Do you generally prefer small or large dogs?
5. How expensive are purebred puppies in your country?