

Japanese Cities Splurge on Gyoza, Alcohol

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. valuable (adjective) /'væl.jə.bəl/ - Worth a lot of money; very useful or important.
Example: The museum displayed a collection of valuable artifacts from ancient Egypt.
2. pattern (noun) /'pæt.ən/ - A repeated decorative design or a regular way in which something happens or is done.
Example: The wallpaper had a beautiful floral pattern that matched the room's decor.
3. sweet tooth (noun) /swi:t tu:θ/ - A liking for foods that are sweet.
Example: She has a sweet tooth and can't resist chocolate desserts.
4. top (verb) /tɒp/ - To exceed or be better than something.
Example: The athlete's performance topped all previous records.
5. resident (noun) /'rez.ɪ.dənt/ - A person who lives somewhere permanently or on a long-term basis.
Example: The residents of the apartment building met to discuss the new maintenance fees.
6. distinct (adjective) /dɪ'stɪŋkt/ - Clearly different or belonging to a different type.
Example: The two species are distinct in both their appearance and behavior.



Every year, Japan's Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications conducts a survey to track household spending across the country. The survey provides **valuable** data on economic trends and reveals average prices for household goods.

The survey highlights interesting spending **patterns**. For instance, households in Nara have a **sweet tooth**—they spent an average of 9,059 yen (about \$60) on chocolate last year.

Kobe, known for its bakeries, **topped** the list for bread spending. Each household spent 41,183 yen (approximately \$272) on bread. Meanwhile, Hamamatsu **residents** focused on rice, spending 26,724 yen (around \$176).

Hamamatsu and Utsunomiya are famous for their gyoza dumplings. Surprisingly, Miyazaki city, not known for gyoza, was the top spender in previous surveys. In 2023, Hamamatsu claimed the first spot, spending about 4,000 yen (approximately \$27) per household on gyoza.

Niigata led alcohol spending, averaging about 65,000 yen (around \$430) per household. However, different cities had **distinct** preferences: Yokohama for wine, Akita for sake, Aomori for beer, and Yamagata for whisky. Shizuoka, not into alcohol, spent the most on green tea.

DISCUSSION

1. If you were a resident of Nara, how would you spend that 9,059 yen on chocolate? Would you go for premium imported chocolates or indulge in local Japanese treats?
2. Imagine you're in Kobe, where bread reigns supreme. What unique bread creation would you invent with that hefty 41,183 yen budget? Get as creative as you'd like!
3. Miyazaki city surprised everyone by being the top spender on gyoza. What secret ingredient do you think makes their gyoza so irresistible?
4. Hamamatsu and Utsunomiya are both famous for gyoza. If they had a gyoza cook-off, whose dumplings would win? And what's the ultimate gyoza dipping sauce?
5. Niigata leads in alcohol spending. If you were hosting a party there, which local drink—wine, sake, beer, or whisky—would you serve to impress your guests?
6. Shizuoka residents prefer green tea over alcohol. How would you elevate your green tea experience with that budget? Maybe invest in a traditional tea ceremony set?
7. If you could swap spending habits with any of these cities for a day, which one would you choose? What would you splurge on?