

# **JET**-ting Back from Japan

**A guide for recently returned  
JET Programme participants**



**Sydney JET Alumni Association**

**October 2010**



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## **Part 1**

# **Welcome Home**

## Message from the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney

おかえりなさい！ Welcome home!

It is a great pleasure to welcome you back to Australia! A few months have passed since you arrived back home and I hope that the transition between your life in Japan and your 'new' life back in Australia has been smooth. I imagine that many of you may have experienced 'reverse' culture shock upon returning home!



During your time on the JET Programme you would have had many unique and perhaps 'once in a lifetime' experiences. What impressed you most about Japan? What shocked you? What did you learn? What did you like or dislike? What did you miss about Australia? I am sure that your answer and the answers of your fellow returnees will be different, special and valuable to each one of you. I hope that you will be able to draw on many of the things you experienced and learnt during your time in Japan and to continue to be a bridge between our two nations. I am convinced that the existing good relationship between Australia and Japan will be strengthened and enhanced by people such as you.

Sydney is proud to have a very active JET Alumni Association (JETAA). I encourage you to join them and get involved in as many activities as possible as it will give you the opportunity to share your experiences with former JETs, to partake in a wide range of Japan-related activities and to support future JET participants.

The Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney is glad to have a strong relationship with the Sydney JETAA and it is my hope that we can continue to work together for well into the future.

I would like to wish you all the best for the future.

Nobuhito Hobo  
Consul-General of Japan in Sydney

## Message from the Director of CLAIR Sydney

Dear JET returnees,

Welcome back to Australia.

I am sure it has been quite a journey, with plenty of challenges. Firstly, may I congratulate you on having made it this far. I appreciate your enormous contribution towards the fostering of ties between Australia and Japan through your 'hands-on' work with local communities.

With many unforgettable experiences from your time in Japan, I am sure you have many stories to share with your friends and loved ones. You are not alone in this, as you are the latest of many who have undertaken this journey. In fact, more than 3,000 Australians have participated in the JET Programme since its inception more than 20 years ago, in 1987. It is my wish that you will continue to maintain your ties with Japan after returning home, especially with the community where you were placed.

JETAA, the JET Alumni Association, facilitates a network of past JET Programme participants, and assists recently returned JETs to prepare for their lives ahead. Through JETAA, members can feel connected, can reminisce about their JET experiences, exchange information and stories, and provide mutual assistance for your and others' career development. I acknowledge the value of JETAA's activities to promote the JET Programme. CLAIR Sydney is committed to extending support for JETAA's activities throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The Sydney JETAA chapter is one of the most active in the world. CLAIR Sydney staff, past and present, highly advocate the Sydney chapter's work, and can regularly be seen enjoying themselves with JETAA members at their activities.

This is the first edition of Sydney JETAA's handbook for returnees. I hope you will find it useful, not only for readjusting to your life back home, but also for maintaining your ties with Japan.

I sincerely wish you the best of luck, and look forward to meeting you soon at one of JETAA's events.

Kenji Ikeda  
Director  
Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)



## Message from the President of Sydney JETAA

Welcome back!

I'm sure you've had some fantastic experiences in Japan. I know I did. And while it's exciting to be back in Australia, it can be hard adjusting to life after Japan. That's why we have prepared this handbook. We hope it will provide you with valuable tips on finding the right career or further education path to follow, as well as information about maintaining a connection with Japan in Sydney.

JETAA provides support for former JET Programme participants, organises social and cultural events and cooperates with other Japan-related organisations to promote Japan and the JET Programme. You can find out more about our activities on our website ([www.sydneyjetaa.org](http://www.sydneyjetaa.org)), and follow all our events via the Sydney JETAA Facebook group (<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=48191788708>).



I encourage you to come along to our events and get involved in JETAA's activities. Details of our events for the rest of this year are listed in this handbook, and on our website. I'd also like to invite you to our AGM, which will be held in February. The committee is always open to new people and new ideas on how we can provide better support for our members.

Good luck, and I hope to see you at one of our upcoming events!

Sharon van Etten  
President  
Sydney JET Alumni Association  
[sydney@jetalumni.org](mailto:sydney@jetalumni.org)

## Sydney JETAA – the Sydney JET Alumni Association

Sydney JETAA is the alumni association for past participants in the JET Programme who live in Sydney and NSW. Our members include JET alumni who joined the programme from Sydney, as well as other JET participants who have moved to Sydney from other chapters. Our association is more than 12 years old, and has around 400 members.

Sydney JETAA is one of 5 JET Alumni chapters in Australia, and one of 52 chapters in 18 countries worldwide. The JET Alumni network connects thousands of former JETs across the globe, all of whom have a shared interest in maintaining a link with Japan.

Sydney JETAA organises various social activities throughout the year, including:

- Trivia nights
- Sumo nights
- Japanese- or English-speaking nights with the Japanese community
- Pre-departure orientation for new JETs
- Fish markets
- Japanese cultural workshops (eg. dance, tea ceremony)
- Yakiniku or nabe
- Careers networking night
- Jacaranda no hanami
- Christmas party / bonenkai

We always look forward to welcoming new members, and listening to your Japan and JET experiences!

### Upcoming Events (current as of October 2011)

Fri 22 October	Careers and networking evening The Japan Foundation (Chifley Plaza in the CBD)
Sat 6 November	Origami workshop CLAIR Office (Gateway Building in the CBD) Cost: \$15 per person
Sun 14 November	Hanami Hogben Park (between Rockdale and Kogarah stations)
Sat 27 November	Yukata workshop and Christmas party The Oaks (Neutral Bay)
February 2011	2011 Annual General Meeting Date and venue TBA

RSVP: [sydney.events@jetalumni.org](mailto:sydney.events@jetalumni.org)

For up to date information, please visit our website: [www.sydneyjetaa.org](http://www.sydneyjetaa.org)

## Reverse Culture Shock

*“Why don’t the trains run on time?”*

*“Why are people so impolite?”*

*“I wish you could get shabu-shabu in Australia.”*

*“Why doesn’t anyone understand?”*

*“That would never happen in Japan.”*

Remember those difficulties you faced after you first arrived on JET? After the initial euphoria that followed your arrival in Japan, you probably went through periods of frustration and annoyance, bouts of homesickness, and general negativity towards your environs.

You may be surprised to find the familiar symptoms of culture shock resurfacing after you have come home. Most of us don’t expect to feel out of place in our own country or city, and it can be quite a confronting experience when this happens. The fact is, most JETs do go through a period of ‘reverse culture shock’ to some degree.

Reverse culture shock is similar to the culture shock you experienced in Japan, in that you are adjusting to changes in your environment. You may have come home expecting things to be exactly as they were before you left; instead, you find that your home feels very different from the one you left behind one, two or three years ago. People you were close to have moved on with their lives, and things have changed.

The key to this is that, while your home may have changed while you have been away, it is you who have changed even more. Being overseas for an extended period has broadened your mind, and opened you up to new ways of seeing things. You have almost certainly matured emotionally. You have become more multi-cultural. Things that you once took for granted about your home country and city, you will look at with new eyes – how do aspects of your life in Australia compare with your life in Japan? What did you miss about Australia? What do you now miss about Japan?

Just as culture shock comes about as a result of differences between our preconceived notions of Japan and the reality once we arrive there, reverse culture shock is the result of differences between our pre-JET attitudes to home and our new reality as we re-evaluate our old environment with our new ways of thinking.

At the same time, you may feel that your family and friends no longer understand you; they may seem a little narrow-minded or boring. Remember, they have not been through the same life-changing experiences that you have while on JET, and they themselves may find it difficult to understand how – and why – *you* have changed. They may not immediately be ready to accept the ‘new’ you. This can exacerbate the symptoms of reverse culture shock.

Reverse culture shock may manifest itself in many ways:

- Feeling critical of all things ‘un-Japanese’ about your home country
- Missing the good things you experienced overseas
- Missing the sense of ‘adventure’ that comes with living in a foreign country
- Inability to share your experiences with family or friends; feeling that they ‘just don’t get it’
- Feelings of alienation
- Restlessness or boredom
- Lack of self-confidence
- Anxiety or depression

Because it is largely unexpected, reverse culture shock may be as difficult as the initial adjustment period after you arrived in Japan, or more severe still.

A survey (conducted by CLAIR) of over 1,000 past JET participants in 2006 found that about 70% went through a period of reverse culture shock, of whom 68% felt it most acutely within the first two months after returning home, and 25% in the first 2–6 months. A smaller number reported the effects of culture shock lasting more than one year beyond coming home.

The good news is that reverse culture shock will show you what you have learned not only about Japan, but about your home country and culture, and about yourself. As with culture shock, you will eventually adjust to your new life in your old surroundings.

### **Strategies for Coping with Reverse Culture Shock**

- Keep your sense of perspective. Remember that your attitudes have changed, and it is normal that you will see familiar things in a different way.
- Expect that those close to you will not understand, and may find it hard to sympathise with your difficulty settling back in.
- Maintain a sense of humour.
- Stay active – go for a walk or run, join a club or sports group, keep busy.
- Develop long-term goals for yourself – what do you want to do with your life after JET?
- Maintain your ties with Japan – stay in touch with friends from JET, seek out Japanese culture at home, keep up your study of the Japanese language.
- Join JETAA for support, social activity, or just to meet other former JETs.

Later sections of this guide will give you some advice on how to build on your experiences and move forward to your next goals, while still retaining a little flavour of Japan in your life.



## **Part 2**

## **Next Steps**

## Obtaining your Japanese Pension refund

Most JETs will be aware that part of their pay has been paid into Japanese Pension Insurance (*Kosei nenkin* 厚生年金), and that this amount can be claimed as a lump sum withdrawal (*Dattai ichiji-kin* 脱退一時金) upon leaving the JET Programme. To qualify, you must:

- apply for your lump sum payment within two years of leaving Japan;
- not possess Japanese citizenship;
- have paid pension insurance premiums for more than six months;
- not have a place of residence in Japan;
- have surrendered your Alien Registration Certificate to Immigration upon departure from Japan;
- not previously qualified for pension benefits (including Disability Allowance).

Before you left Japan, you should have:

1. obtained a **Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment Arbitration Bill** form (*Dattai ichiji-kin saitei seikyu-sho* 脱退一時金裁定請求書) from the Social Insurance Agency (*Shakai Hoken Jimusho* 社会保険事務所) or the National Pension Section of your city/town/ward office, or downloaded it from [www.sia.go.jp](http://www.sia.go.jp); and
2. appointed somebody to represent you in Japan for tax purposes (your tax agent), by completing a **Notification of Tax Agent** form (*Nozei-kanri-nin no todoke-sho* 納税管理人の届け書) and lodging it with the Tax Office.

Your contracting organisation should have assisted you with these steps.

Now that you are back home, the next steps to obtaining your refund are as follows:

1. Fill in your Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment Arbitration Bill, using the information from your blue Pension Book.
2. Post the form and accompanying documents to the Social Insurance Agency in Japan to lodge your claim.

You need to attach the following documents to your claim form:

- (a) a copy of the information page from your passport;
- (b) a copy of the pages from your passport showing your Japanese residency status and final date of departure from Japan;
- (c) if your claim form is not stamped with an official bank stamp, a document showing your bank's details (bank name, branch name and address) and your account details (name and number) – a copy of your bank statement or passbook should be fine; and
- (d) your blue Pension Book (it will be returned to you later).

Your claim form and accompanying documents should be posted to:

Social Insurance Operation Centre  
3-5-24 Takaido-nishi  
Suginami-ku Tokyo 168-8505  
Japan

〒168-8505  
東京都杉並区高井戸西 3-5-24  
社会保険業務センター  
JAPAN

3. Your lump sum, once approved, will be paid into your Australian bank account. The amount deposited will be calculated according to the exchange rate on the date of the transaction. Note that it may take up to six months for your claim to be processed before payment is made.

Income tax of 20% will be deducted from your refund before it is deposited into your bank account. Most JETs will be eligible to claim back this amount. The next steps will help you to do this.

4. You will have received a **Notice on Payment of the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment (entitlement)** document (*Dattai ichiji-kin shikyu kettei tsuchi-sho* 脱退一時金支給決定通知書) with your pension lump-sum refund. Post the original copy of this notice to your tax agent in Japan.
5. Your tax agent will lodge an application for a refund of the tax deducted from your lump sum withdrawal.
6. Your tax refund will be paid into a Japanese bank account (nominated by your tax agent). Your tax agent can then transfer the amount to your Australian bank account.
7. You have your hard-earned money – now go mad! A little celebration to mark the end of your JET journey is entirely appropriate. You may also wish to spend for your future – many JETs decide to pay their Pension Refund into an Australian superannuation account.

If you have any questions about the Pension Refund, you will need to contact the tax office with jurisdiction over the address where you resided in Japan. Keeping in contact with your contracting organisation may also be helpful.

## **Finding Employment**

One of the most important tasks you will have after returning home will be finding your next job. Jobs are still advertised in the newspapers (particularly on Saturdays), but most vacancies are now advertised online.

Either way, you will need to consider how you approach potential employers and market yourself to them. Having a succinct, professional-looking résumé and cover letter is essential.

### **What sort of job?**

Some JETs come home with a very definite idea of what they want to do next, be it more travel, another job overseas, or a planned career path. Some find that their plans have changed, or are less certain than they were before JET. Others have no idea what to do next.

If you aren't sure of your next moves, you should consider your skills (especially transferable skills, ie. skills that you can adapt for any role), interests and experience. It can help to make a list of what you are good at and what you enjoy doing. Think about what you want to do, and what skills and training you need to do it, and set yourself some achievable goals.

You should also consider whether or not particular jobs or careers have good or bad prospects – how easy will it be to find employment in that area, and what is the long-term outlook? Job prospects can vary according to numerous factors, including:

- Employment growth
- Whether or not the job is in a growth industry
- Unemployment and vacancy trends
- Skills shortages and demand
- The number of people changing jobs or leaving employment

Former JETs work in all areas. Your transferable skills can assist you in many different fields. Here are some examples of what former JETs in Sydney have done or are doing now:

- Communications/Media Officer for a federal government body
- Programme Coordinator for a Japanese government office in Sydney
- Credit Analyst for an investment and securities firm
- International Development Officer at an Australian university
- Student Exchange Advisor at an Australian university
- Operations Director for a consulting company
- Publishing Editor for a legal publishing company
- Gym Instructor at an aquatic centre
- Teacher at an international school in Sydney
- Journalist for a media source specialising in telcos
- Senior Executive in a major software company
- Entertainer at private functions
- University lecturer
- Teacher

## A note about Japan-related jobs

Many former JETs want to maintain their links to Japan, and seek jobs in a Japanese office or Japan-related sector. This can be an excellent way to build on your existing skills and networks, and is a terrific opportunity to keep using your Japanese language skills and cultural knowledge.

The downside is that some Japan-related organisations post staff from their headquarters in Japan to fill the higher roles, and employ local staff in-country to fill the junior and administrative positions. Pay and conditions may be set according to the rules in Japan (although the appropriate Commonwealth or state laws regarding employment will still be followed). This can mean that locally employed staff may be paid at significantly lower rates than comparable jobs in other sectors or organisations, and may not have many opportunities for future promotion. This is by no means the case in every office or every role, but you should make yourself aware of conditions and future opportunities when considering an offer of employment.

On the positive side, you may find working for a Japanese organisation in Sydney affords you an interesting balance between your Japanese and Australian lifestyles and interests. These jobs are also a good opportunity to further develop your skills to the point where you can go for a more favourable job later on, when you are ready for the next step up in your career.

## **Assessing your skills**

Take some time to reflect upon your experiences as a JET, both at work and outside. Whether you were an ALT or a CIR, you should be able to identify several skills that you have developed, even ones that may not immediately be obvious.

Some examples:

- Understanding of cross-cultural communication
- Ability to communicate in a foreign language
- Spoken and written communication skills, in English and Japanese
- Listening skills
- Adaptability, flexibility – ability to adapt quickly to changes as required
- Presentation skills, confidence to present information you know little about
- Research and analytical skills
- Event coordination, organisational skills
- Technical skills – computer skills, websites, flyers, posters, etc.
- Ability to cooperate, work as part of a team
- Ability to work unsupervised
- Independence
- Patience and understanding
- Initiative

Think about how you can adapt and use these and other skills in your future jobs, and try to include relevant points in your résumé and job applications.

## **Résumés**

Your résumé is your key to getting an interview. As such, you should use it to summarise your skills and experience, and sell yourself to a potential employer.

Don't use your résumé as a listing of everything you have ever done – if it is too long, it probably won't be read at all. Your résumé should not exceed one or two pages.

Tailor your résumé for each job application, listing only the skills and experience that are relevant to the job for which you are applying.

Don't forget to include extra-curricular activities that demonstrate your skills and experience. Some specific JET-related examples are:

- Volunteer work you may have done, eg. through AJET
- Assistance with school or town events outside work (eg. English camps)
- Work as a Prefectural Advisor, or counselling other JETs, as appropriate
- Involvement in club or sporting activities – coaching, organising, etc.

Make sure your résumé is clearly and neatly presented, accurate, and free from errors. Plain white paper is good. Coloured paper and fonts are not.

How you structure your résumé will depend upon your own background and skills, but in general, you should include separate sections for your personal details (full name, contact details), summary of skills, past work experience, education, and other relevant activities/experience. Have your name in bold print prominently at the top, in a font 1-2 points larger than the body of your résumé.

There is no need to include a photo with your résumé, unless one is specifically requested.

You should also provide a couple of referees (ideally from JET or your most recent work or study before JET) – they should know you well, and be in a position to comment (favourably!) on your skills and character. Make sure you have their agreement to act as referees before giving their details to other people. You may prefer not to include referees' contact details on your résumé, in which case you can put "Available on request".

Always include a cover letter when sending your résumé to a potential employer.

## Cover Letters

Whether sending an application by post or applying online, you should always include a cover letter with your résumé or job application. A cover letter serves to introduce you to a potential employer, and is your first opportunity to explain – very briefly – why they should employ you. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate your written communication skills.

Your cover letter should be composed as follows:

1. **Introduction** – salutation, subject line and a brief paragraph to explain why you are making contact.
2. **Body** – one or two paragraphs explaining why the employer or job interests you, and what skills, qualifications and personal attributes you can bring to the position.
3. **Conclusion** – one paragraph reaffirming your interest, and confirming your availability. You should also include your contact details in your concluding paragraph.

Your cover letter should be no longer than one page.

### Cover letter tips:

- Use polite language – don't be too pushy.
- Don't appear desperate.
- Use positive statements, eg. "I have..." and "I am able to...". Avoid negative statements such as "Although I haven't...". Don't draw attention to your shortcomings.
- Make sure you have the addressee's details (name, title, position) correct, and be sure to spell their name and the company's name correctly.
- Do not open with "To whom it may concern" – address the person by name (but not their first name!), if possible, or by position (eg. "Dear Operations Manager"). Otherwise, use "Dear sir or madam".
- Sign off with "Yours sincerely" if you have addressed the person by name; otherwise, use "Yours faithfully".
- Be professional – use plain, white stationery and a simple font (eg. Arial or Times New Roman). Don't use Comic Sans font or coloured paper, and don't decorate with pictures.
- Unless you are filling in a Japanese *rirekisho*, never handwrite your cover letter or application – use a word processor.
- Check and double-check your spelling and grammar.
- If sending multiple job applications to different employers, take extra care when addressing each one – don't send ABC Trading a cover letter addressed to their competitors XYZ Investments.
- If submitting a cover letter and application by email, always include the position reference in the subject field. Don't send one email to multiple employers – tailor each one, and address the person appropriately.

## Sample Cover Letter

Recruitment Manager  
ABC Trading  
GPO Box 123  
Sydney NSW 2000

Friday, 23 May 2008

Dear sir or madam

**Re: Advertised position, ref. ABC4567/08 – Programme Coordinator (Japan Trade)**

I wish to apply for the position of Programme Coordinator (Japan Trade) (Ref. ABC4567/08), which was advertised in the Sydney Morning Herald on 10 May. Please find my résumé attached herewith.

I have recently returned from three years working in Japan as an Assistant Language Teacher, under the Japanese Government's JET Programme. In this role, I was responsible for planning and teaching classes to students of varying age groups, and for preparing and presenting materials. I also presented speeches and seminars, and collaborated on conferences related to education.

I am currently seeking a role where I can further develop my organisational and presentation skills in a high-powered, dynamic environment.

The position sounds exciting and challenging, and I would welcome an opportunity to expand on the details in an interview. I can be contacted during business hours on (02) 9xxx xxxx or 0418 xx xxxx, or by email to john.smith@email .

Yours faithfully,

John Smith

## **Part 3**

# **Japan in Australia**

## Keeping up your Japanese Language

One of the great benefits of living overseas is learning a foreign language – a useful and, in Australia, often underrated asset. Unfortunately, second language skills aren't a permanent acquisition – if you don't keep practising regularly, you will very quickly forget much of what you have learned. It's a real case of 'use it or lose it'.

Of course, the best way to keep up your language skills is through immersion – as you did in Japan. Fortunately, there are many things you can do to keep up your Japanese, even here in Sydney.

- Language Courses:

Most adult education centres (eg. community colleges, TAFE) offer a variety of language courses in the evenings. Look for something at your level, and sign up.

The Japan Foundation ([www.jpf.org.au](http://www.jpf.org.au)) offers Japanese language courses at different levels throughout the year.

- Language Exchange and Conversation Groups:

Find a Japanese person, and arrange a regular time to speak Japanese (and in return, help them with their English). If you don't know any Japanese people, try searching for Japanese language exchanges in Google, or see the links at the end of this handbook.

The Australia-Japan Society of NSW, in cooperation with Sydney JETAA, organises regular Japanese/English conversation nights (Shaberanaito) throughout the year. See our website for details, or better still, become a JETAA member.

- Test Yourself:

Missed the Japanese Language Proficiency Test in Japan? Just want to try again, or go for a higher level? You can do the JLPT here in Sydney, on the first Sunday in December each year. Contact the Japan Foundation, Sydney for details ([www.jpf.org.au](http://www.jpf.org.au)).

Interested in testing your level of business Japanese? The Business Japanese Test (BJT) is held in November, and administered by the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) ([www.jetro.go.jp/australia/bjt.html](http://www.jetro.go.jp/australia/bjt.html)).

Other tips for surrounding yourself with Japanese language:

- Read Japanese books, magazines or websites.
- Keep an eye out for Japanese films on SBS, or watch their daily broadcast of NHK news.
- Hire or purchase Japanese movies on DVD (try Kinokuniya, Abbey's Bookshop, Video Japan).
- Download Japanese podcasts.
- Change your computer, iPod, mobile phone settings to Japanese.
- Join JETAA and start your new Japanese network!

## **Finding a taste of Japan in Sydney**

As we have already seen, it can be hard to settle back into life at home after a year or three away. Most of us who have returned from JET have at some time or other found ourselves craving mentaiko spaghetti, or bowing to car drivers who stop to let us cross the road. There are, however, other ways to bring a little flavour of Japan back into your life in Sydney.

### **Restaurants**

After a few years in Japan, cheap sushi roll from a non-Japanese shop just doesn't live up to expectations. Fortunately, there is plenty of good quality Japanese food to be had in Sydney, although you have to know where to find it. The answer to that, more often than not, is the lower North Shore: as Newtown is to Thai and Haberfield and Leichhardt are to Italian, Neutral Bay and Crows Nest are to Japanese. If you live on the south side of the harbour, fear not – there are quite a few good options in the city and Chinatown.

The following, in our opinion, are some of the better Japanese restaurants in Sydney:

#### **Azuma 東**

*General Japanese*

Level 1 Chifley Plaza, 2 Chifley Square, City

Tel. (02) 9222 9960

Don't be fooled by Azuma's proximity to the Chifley Plaza food court – this top quality restaurant is a whole world away. Azuma's sushi and sashimi is legendary, as are the shabu-shabu and ramen (if a little expensive).

#### **Azuma Kushiyaki 串焼き東**

*Kushiyaki*

Ground Floor, Regent Place, 501 George Street, City

Tel. (02) 9267 7775

Azuma's relatively new offshoot, specialising in grilled things on sticks and other things that go well with sake. Before you go inside, cast your eyes upwards for the bizarre spectacle of swimmers doing laps of a glass-bottomed swimming pool suspended from the floor above.

#### **Ichiban-boshi 一番星**

*Ramen*

Level 2, The Galleries Victoria, cnr George and Park Streets (opposite QVB)

Shop 1, 171–173 Oxford Street, Bondi Junction

Steaming bowls of reasonably good ramen are served by waitresses who constantly seem rushed off their feet. Be nice to them.

#### **International Nippon Australia New Zealand Club (Nippon Club) 日本クラブ**

*General Japanese*

Basement, 229 Macquarie Street, City

Tel. (02) 9232 2688

If you can ignore the RSL atmosphere, you can have quite a decent lunch or dinner here. Members (annual membership for the price of two gin and tonics) receive a discount at the bar.

**Jugemu and Shimbashi** 寿限無と新橋*Okonomiyaki, teppanyaki, soba*

246 Military Road, Neutral Bay

Tel. (02) 9904 3011

Two restaurants in one, Jugemu and Shimbashi each occupy one side of the shop. Each has its own entrance and menu, but you can sit on either side and order from both. Jugemu specialises in teppanyaki, including fabulous okonomiyaki; while Shimbashi offers a variety of soba (lovingly made from Tasmanian buckwheat) and udon dishes in a refined setting.

**Kasumi** 居酒屋 霞*Izakaya*

6–12 Dixon Street, City (Chinatown, near Liverpool Street)

Tel. (02) 9283 6678

A small, comfortable place with a good atmosphere and – in the evenings – a very good izakaya menu. Try the tsukune (minced chicken) with egg. During the day, set lunches are the go.

**Koh-ya** こう家*Yakiniku*

Shop 1, 9–17 Young Street, Neutral Bay

Tel. (02) 9904 5036

One of three yakiniku restaurants run by the same people (the others are Rengaya and Suminoya). Koh-ya is the most relaxed of the three, and of similar quality to what you would find in Japan. And when you've finished eating, head to Swing Box for karaoke, just a few doors up towards Military Road.

**Makoto** 誠*Sushi*

119 Liverpool Street, City (cnr Pitt Street, in World Square)

Tel. (02) 9283 6767

336 Victoria Avenue, Chatswood

Tel. (02) 9411 1838

An upmarket kaiten-zushi that consistently draws a crowd. Some 'internationalised' pieces come around on the belt (avocado, crabstick and mayonnaise), but there are enough traditional options to keep everyone happy.

**Masuya** 鱧屋*Seafood*

Basement, 12–14 O'Connell Street, City

Tel. (02) 9235 2717 / (02) 9231 0038

High-quality Japanese cuisine made with fresh local produce.

**Menya** めんや*Noodles*

Shop TG8, 8 Quay Street, Haymarket (Chinatown) Tel. (02) 9212 1020

Shop 2, 1 Market Street, City

Tel. (02) 9267 4649

The people who brought us Koh-ya, Rengaya and Suminoya continue their theme of restaurants ending in '-ya', but have branched out from yakiniku to noodles.

**Miso** みそ*Tonkatsu, teishoku, bento*

Shop 20, World Square, City (off Pitt Street) Tel. (02) 9283 9686

Casual dining in (teishoku), or excellent takeaway bento boxes. Tonkatsu is the signature dish, using Cape Otway pork. Friendly staff make this place a little gem.

**Musashi** 武蔵*General Japanese*

447 Pitt Street, City (cnr Campbell Street, next to Capitol Theatre) Tel. (02) 9280 0377

Billed as a 'dining bar,' Musashi is not quite an izakaya, but offers a variety of good options in a casual setting. Popular most evenings.

**Ramen-kan** ラーメン館*Ramen, donburi*

Haymarket (between Cold Rock and Oporto)

Reasonably good ramen (including some interesting varieties, such as karaage) and set meals, at reasonable prices. Perhaps the most authentic Japanese aspect is the tiny lift that rather clunkily takes you up to the first floor.

**Rengaya** れんが家*Yakiniku, seafood*

73 Miller Street, North Sydney Tel. (02) 9929 6290 / (02) 9929 6169

A bit more upmarket than its cousin Koh-ya in Neutral Bay, Rengaya does lovely set meals. Good for the North Sydney business lunch set.

**Ryotei** 亮亭*Ramen*

125 Falcon Street, North Sydney Tel. (02) 9955 0225

Possibly the best ramen in Sydney (although Ton Ton certainly gives them a run for their money). Ryotei is particularly enjoyable late on a Friday night after having spent the whole week shifting furniture and packing boxes for your office's move to new premises. But why are they always closed when we visit?

**Sakana-ya** 魚や*Seafood*

336 Pacific Highway, Crows Nest Tel. (02) 9438 1468

A perennial favourite of North Shore-based Japanese expats and Japanophiles alike.

**Sapporo** 札幌*Seafood*

94 Willoughby Road, Crows Nest Tel. (02) 9436 3435

Another North Shore favourite. Coeliac menu available.

**Suminoya** 炭の家

*Yakiniku*

1 Hosking Place, City Tel. (02) 9231 2177

Easy to miss, as its tucked away off Castlereagh Street (between Hunter Street and Martin Place); but worth seeking out.

**Tetsuya's** 哲也

*Japanese–French fusion (dégustation)*

529 Kent Street, City Tel. (02) 9267 2900 (preferably way in advance)

Yes, it's expensive – but it's the gastronomic equivalent of the *hajj*, and quite simply has to be done. Make it a special occasion, or a romantic date. You only live once.

**Ton Ton** とんとん

*Ramen, udon, bento*

Level 1 Chifley Plaza, 2 Chifley Square, City Tel. (02) 9222 9960

Ground Floor, Regent Place, 501 George Street, City Tel. (02) 9267 1313

Popular with Japanese expatriates who make the trek from their offices on the other side of the CBD, Ton Ton ramen is high up there with Ryotei as the best in Sydney. As Azuma restaurant's food court offshoot, Ton Ton offers takeaway ramen, bento and other dishes at I-can't-believe-it's-a-food-court quality. Sweets à la japonaise (such as daifuku, manju, choux cream and Mont Blanc) are also popular.

**Wagaya** わがや

*Izakaya*

Level 1, 78 Harbour Street, Haymarket (Chinatown)

Order by touchscreens in several languages, and be astonished by the fast service. Good izakaya food, too.

## **Japanese (and other Asian) Groceries**

### **Anegawa**

1 Wilkes Avenue, Artarmon Tel. (02) 9904 7313  
Shop 10, 7–17 Waters Road, Neutral Bay Tel. (02) 9904 4177

### **Thai Kee IGA**

Level 1, Market City, Haymarket (Chinatown)

### **Maruyu** マル優

283-285 Clarence Street, City

### **Miracle Asian Supermarket**

Shop 9.22, Ground Floor, World Square, George Street, City  
Shop 30, Rhodes Waterside Shopping Centre, Homebush Bay Drive, Rhodes (next to Coles)  
175 Rowe Street, Eastwood  
Shop 5080 Westfield Shoppingtown, Church Street, Parramatta (next to Woolworths)  
Shop 164, Macquarie Centre, North Ryde  
Ground Floor, Mandarin Centre, 65 Albert Street, Chatswood (next to railway station)  
Shop 202, Westfield Shoppingtown, 37 Victor Street, Chatswood

### **Tokyo Mart** 東京マート

Shop 27, Northbridge Plaza, Northbridge Tel. (02) 9958 6860

## **Bookshops**

### **Abbey's Bookshop – Language Book Centre**

131 York Street, City Tel. (02) 9267 1397 or 1800 802 432

A good selection of texts and other language-learning media, not just for Japanese but for several other languages as well. They also have a small selection of foreign films on DVD. The language book centre is on the first floor. Student discounts.

### **Hondarake** 本だらけ

465 Kent Street, City Tel. (02) 9261 5225

Japanese book and manga specialist.

### **Kinokuniya** 紀伊國屋書店

Level 2, The Galleries Victoria, cnr George and Park Streets (opposite QVB)

This enormous bookshop caters to everyone, but has a large section devoted to Japanese books and magazines. Japanese stationery also available.



## Useful Links

Consulate-General of Japan, Sydney  
CLAIR Sydney <http://www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/>  
<http://www.jlgc.org.au/>

### JETAA Chapters (Oceania)

Sydney JETAA <http://www.sydneyjetaa.org/>  
JETAA Canberra <http://jetaacanberra.wordpress.com/>  
JETAA Queensland <http://www.jetaaqld.org/>  
JETAA Victoria/Tasmania/South Australia <http://melbourne.jetalumni.org/>  
JETAA Western Australia <http://want.jetalumni.org/>

Jet Alumni International <http://www.jetalumni.org/>

### Japanese Cultural and Social Organisations

The Japan Foundation, Sydney <http://www.jpj.org.au/>  
The National Federation of  
Austalia–Japan Societies <http://www.austjapanfed.org.au/>

### Employment and Job-seeking

My Career <http://www.mycareer.com.au/>  
Seek <http://www.seek.com.au/>  
Career One <http://www.careerone.com.au/>  
Australian Public Service Jobs <http://www.apsjobs.gov.au/>  
NSW Government Jobs <http://www.jobs.nsw.gov.au/>

### English-language Teaching

TESOL <http://www.tesol.org/>

### Real Estate

Domain <http://www.domain.com.au/>  
RealEstate.com.au <http://www.realestate.com.au/>

### Further Education

Macquarie University <http://www.mq.edu.au/>  
The University of New South Wales <http://www.unsw.edu.au/>  
The University of Sydney <http://www.usyd.edu.au/>  
The University of Western Sydney <http://www.uws.edu.au/>  
University of Technology, Sydney <http://www.uts.edu.au/>

TAFE NSW <http://www.tafensw.edu.au/>

Centre for Continuing Education (USYD) <http://www.cce.usyd.edu.au/>  
Eastern Suburbs Community College <http://www.escc.nsw.edu.au/>  
Macarthur Community College <http://www.macarthurcc.com.au/>  
St George and Sutherland  
Community College <http://www.sgscc.nsw.edu.au/>  
Sydney Community College <http://www.sydneycommunitycollege.com.au/>  
WEA College <http://www.weasydney.nsw.edu.au/>

### Japanese Media

Asahi Shimbun <http://www.asahi.com/>  
Yomiuri Shimbun <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/>  
Mainichi Shimbun <http://mdn.mainichi.co.jp/>  
Nihon Keizai Shimbun <http://www.nni.nikkei.co.jp/>

NHK <http://www.nhk.or.jp/>  
Fuji Terebi <http://www.fujitv.co.jp/>

Metropolis Magazine (Tokyo) <http://www.metropolis.co.jp/>  
Kansai Time Out <http://www.kto.co.jp/>  
Nichigo Press (Australia) <http://www.25today.com/>

### Language Exchange

Conversation Exchange <http://www.conversationexchange.com/>  
English-Japanese Exchange <http://www.meetup.com/EnglishJapaneseExchange/>  
My Language Exchange <http://www.mylanguageexchange.com/>  
Sydney Exchange <http://sydneyexchange.com.au/>  
Sydney Japanese Language Exchange <http://www.ozdeai.com/sydneyjapanese/>

**Disclaimer**

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate and up to date, neither Sydney JETAA, the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney, nor CLAIR Sydney can accept any responsibility for errors or omissions, or consequences arising therefrom.

The information concerning Japanese pension refunds was originally sourced from the Social Insurance Agency in Japan, and we cannot vouch for its absolute accuracy.



**Sydney JET Alumni Association**  
[www.sydneyjetaa.org](http://www.sydneyjetaa.org)