



JAPAN INFORMATION
AND CULTURE CENTER
在米国日本大使館広報文化センター

TEACHING TUESDAY

TSUYU

Tsuyu is the period that encompasses most of June for Japan, and is more commonly known to foreigners as the “rainy season.” The word for “tsuyu” is made up of the kanji for “plum” and “rain”, 梅雨, as this season is not only the season for rain, but also the time when plums are ripe.

Most people generally hate the rain, but tsuyu provides a lot of opportunities as well. The long rainy spells are known for clearing out the air and bringing out the nature beauty of the landscape. Hiking, especially in wooded areas like Mount Fuji, is popular because of the atmosphere tsuyu gives to the mountains. Open air hot springs are another way to enjoy the season; soaking in a hot bath while viewing the clouds and listening to the patter of the rain is considered relaxing. Another popular tsuyu activity is “ajisai” (hydrangea) viewing. Hydrangea bloom in Japan during the right in the middle of the rainy season and have become a symbol of tsuyu. The rain brings out their natural beauty, and bring people from all over to places like Meiget-su in Kamakura, which has over 2000 hydrangea.

If you are really adverse to the rain, however, you can always visit Hokkaido, which is barely affected by the rainy season. Otherwise, you can make some Teruteru-Bozu (照る照る坊主), which literally means “shine shine monk”, and hang them outside your window in anticipation of the summer sunshine to come. If you don’t mind a little wet though, the tsuyu season is a great chance to avoid crowds and see amazing sights.