

Trends in Japan

Pop Culture

Discover manga, anime, J-pop, and much more in this section showcasing the latest pop culture phenomena to capture the imagination of Japan's young people.

Web Japan <http://web-japan.org/>
Trends in Japan <http://web-japan.org/trends/>

Sengoku Busho Now the Rage

Armored Generals as Modern-day Heroes

An ancient historical period of warring Japanese generals has taken the country by storm, inspiring everything from entertainment to tourism. And it's the young women who have been fueling this boom!



The popular *Sengoku Basara* characters Date Masamune (left) and Sanada Yukimura (right). ©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2011 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



A scene from the game *Sengoku Basara 3: Utage*. General Date Masamune wields six swords to blow off enemy warriors. ©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2011 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

In 2010, the character Date Masamune was used on a poster for the prefectural governor's election in Miyagi Prefecture to encourage young people to vote.



The Nagoya Busho Hospitality Group, based at Nagoya Castle



Member of the *busho* group demonstrating military exercises for a cheering crowd

Creating a Whole Universe on Fingernails

Japan's Intricate Nail Art



Skillfully rendered tweed is combined with polka dots and pearls for a sweet look. (Cooperation: Nail Salon Rodzina)



Bridal nail art designed to match wedding dresses, with hand-painted lace and rhinestones applied on it (Cooperation: Bridal Nail RELOVE)



A wide range of three-dimensional motifs to decorate nails for a Christmassy feel (Cooperation: Fairy Nail, mynail)



A monotone leopard print is complemented with stones and seals to create a brilliant look. (Photo: NPO Japan Nailist Association)



This Japanese design emulating lacquerware and gold leaf is a perfect match for kimono. (Cooperation: Mail-order Nail Chip Retailer: Jun*jun)

In Japan these days, young women—always on the leading edge of pop culture—have taken nail art to a new dimension, turning their nails into fascinating, virtual objets d'art.

Cute nail art using small, three-dimensional Hello Kitty nail art pieces. These can be ordered at the authorized nail salon, nail elut's Ginza. ©1976, 2012 SANRIO CO., LTD.



The Tokyo Nail Expo sponsored by the Japan Nailist Association. Free "try-on" is a very popular part of this annual event. (Photo: NPO Japan Nailist Association)



Depicting Sentiments in Everyday Life

New Anime TV Series Trends

In capturing the simple details of life, modern anime is finding a new audience.



K-On!, an example of *nichijo-kei* anime. The story depicts the everyday life of a high school girl in a band, which captured viewers' hearts and created a phenomenon. ©Kakifurai, HOBUNSHA/SAKURAKO KEONBU



A scene from *Lucky Star* (Left). It faithfully depicts an actual location (Right)—an approach of pursuing realism that is often used in *nichijo-kei* anime. ©Yoshimizu Kagami/Lucky Channel (left image) ©Washimiya Commerce and Industry Association (right photo)



Puella Magi Madoka Magica, a hit 2011 anime TV series. It gained huge popularity for its new take on the magical girl genre. ©Magica Quartet/Aniplex, Madoka Partners, MBS

Ramen

Different Styles Vie for City Favorite in Tokyo

From its simple origins, ramen has undergone a spectacular evolution to give a stunning variety to be savored today.



Harukiya continues to serve traditional Tokyo-style ramen.

Made with only the very best ingredients, the *miso* ramen at Tokyo Edoama is served only for dinner. By day, the restaurant goes by the name Shichisai and serves *shoyu* ramen.



The deluxe *morisoba tsukemen* at Taishoken. After being boiled and rinsed, the noodles are dipped into warm broth (left) flavored with *shoyu*, vinegar, sugar, and red pepper.



No soup, but also a full-fledged ramen. The specialty mazesoba is served with a variety of toppings and is the most popular item on the menu at Junk Garage.



A ramen shop crowded with customers at lunchtime



The more delicate flavor and smaller portions at Chabuya are particularly popular with female customers.