Welcome to Aomori City! This time, we want to let all of you who have moved to Aomori—regardless of whether you are from Japan or abroad—know a bit more about the prefecture/Aomori. To do so, we are going to introduce some of Aomori’s unique culture and customs that will make Aomorians blurt out “true, true!”

I know what you are thinking, “hey, isn’t this supposed to be an international exchange information magazine?!” but please make sure to read till the end!

**New Year’s meal is eaten on New Year’s Eve**

In Aomori we feast on the New Year’s meal, sushi and New Year’s soba noodles etc. on New Year’s Eve and then eat the leftovers on New Year’s Day.

**English!? But I thought this was Aomori!**

English Toast which has been cherished for many years in Aomori, is traditional English food…not! English Toast is a sweet pastry sold only in Aomori Prefecture. You can buy it easily in supermarkets and corner shops.

**Eating the offerings**

When we visit a grave, we eat or take home the sweets and other food left as offerings on our own families’ and surrounding graves. It is believed to be done to avoid the food going rotten or being scattered everywhere when animals get a hold of it.

**Apples are something you receive!**

There is often at least one person amongst your family, relatives and acquaintances that grows apples, so for many people, apples are not something you buy but something you are given.

**There aren’t many TV channels**

In Aomori, anime that is shown nationally is often broadcast a week late. And don’t even think about the popular dramas from Fuji Television shown at 9pm on a Monday.

**Sekihan (red rice) is sweet**

As a rule, the seasonings in sekihan and chawanmushi (an egg custard dish) -which are usually savory- are sweet.

---

**Aomori expressions**

We will introduce some easily misunderstood expressions often used in Aomori. If you master these phrases, you too can become a respectful Aomorian!

**“Throw the rubbish”**

If you are told “それ投げておいて” (throw that for me), don’t just fling it somewhere nearby! Let’s use the rubbish bin, OK?!

**“Pull the car”**

If someone tells you “わ（私、車引っ張るよ” (I’m going to pull the car), don’t worry they aren’t about to perform a herculean feat, they are just going to drive the car.

**I’m in a pickle!**

The word “こまる” doesn’t just mean (to be in a pickle/be put out), we also use it to describe bowing and the act of leaning the upper half of your body forward. When we use it in this way we pronounce the “る” (ru) strongly.

**“Wear the shower”**

In Aomori the shower isn’t something we “bathe in” (浴びる) it is something we “wear” (着る).

**“Step into a pair of gloves”**

While “履く” is a verb usually used for things worn on one’s lower half such as trousers, skirts and shoes, in Aomori this verb is also used for when one puts on a pair of gloves. Throughout the rest of Japan, the verb “はめる” is usually used to describe the action of wearing gloves and is also used for rings.

**Smash the cash**

“お金を碎く” (smash/break the money) means to “break a note” (change money into smaller denominations). So it isn’t all that different from English!

Now to introduce the origins of some of the facility names that could only be found in Aomori:


---

Aomori Unearthed March 2016
## Aomori Lifestyle Calendar

The "Wa no machi Aomori" section of Aomori City's official webpage is packed full of information on leisure, sightseeing, food and events!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
<td>Flower viewing</td>
<td><strong>Yomiya Festival</strong></td>
<td>Hakkoda Farm Festival</td>
<td>Hakkoda Maru Countdown Event</td>
<td><strong>Aomori Nebuta Festival</strong></td>
<td>Firework Display</td>
<td>Opening of the Season</td>
<td>Autumn Leaves</td>
<td><strong>Aomori Lantern Pageant</strong></td>
<td>Ski resorts open</td>
<td><strong>Aomori Winter Festival</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lifestyle Calendar</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entertainment (events etc.)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lifestyle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average temperature (2015)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Heaviest snowfall</strong></td>
<td><strong>Food</strong></td>
<td><strong>Scallops</strong></td>
<td><strong>Togekuni Crab</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wild Vegetable Picking</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chirin-chirin Ice Cream</strong></td>
<td><strong>Apple</strong></td>
<td><strong>Harvesting experience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ke-no-shiri (vegetables, wild plants and miso soup)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Warming winter food</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Don’t put your coat away just yet!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Can you hear the Nebuta music? Anyone can participate!</strong></td>
<td><strong>The lingering summer heat during the days hand and at night it suddenly cools down so look after your health!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Start preparing your snow removal equipment in Aomori City.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sukiyaki</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ke-no-shiri (vegetables, wild plants and miso soup)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ginger miso oden</strong></td>
<td><strong>A staple main ingredient in Aomori’s ice balls Without this, we cannot survive!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Main varieties</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chirin-chirin Ice Cream</strong></td>
<td><strong>Aomori Nebuta Festival</strong></td>
<td><strong>Aomori Snow Lantern Festival</strong></td>
<td><strong>Aomori Lantern Pageant</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:
- Enjoy festival food to your heart’s content! For detailed information on the festival check the "Official Aomori City webpage" or local newspapers.
- It’s time to start using your headlights.
- There are unexpectedly hot drinks too!
- You may want to remember to take your winter clothes out of storage yet.
- Keep wiping your face and remember to keep your body hydrated.
- If you need to refill your water bottles, be aware of the price changes for the season.
- Snow removal vehicles are mobilised. Don’t panic if you need assistance late at night or in the morning.
- Aomori was fed so much attention towards them that we have to use our camera that after growth speed.
- When people mention Aomori’s winter sports, (curing is what comes to mind)

### Additional Information:
- Aomori is known for its natural beauty, particularly during the cherry blossom and maple leaf seasons.
- The city is also home to a variety of traditional festivals and events throughout the year, which attract visitors from all over the world.
- Aomori’s cuisine is well-known for its fresh seafood and local specialties, such as scallops, sea urchin, and Togekuni crab.
- The city’s lush greenery and natural beauty make it an ideal destination for outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling, and fishing.

---

**(Image 1)** Aomori City webpage

http://www.city.aomori.jp/english/
How to survive in a “Snow Country”

The whole city has been assigned the title of “snowy region” (in other words, it is an area of particularly high snowfall). In order to live in Aomori it is important to get on well with the snow. For those who have never lived in a snowy region, use this guide as a reference to sufficiently prepare yourself!

**Clothes (for walking in the city)**

**Outerwear**
- A long, waterproof coat that keeps in the warmth is ideal.
- It is useful to have a hood to keep your hands free from umbrellas.

**Gloves**
- Thick waterproof gloves are ideal.

**Shoes**
- High winter-use boots that keep in the heat.
- Shoes that have good tread will make it harder to slip.
- We recommend using attachable spikes!
- Shoes that have fluffy insides like sheepskin boots are warm!

**Undergarments**
- We recommend long sleeved thermal wear.

**Bag**
- Something that won’t clog up your hands like a shoulder bag.
- It’s important to have a fastener so the snow doesn’t get in!

**Other useful items**
- Ear muffs · Scarf
- Disposable pocket warmer (sticky type) etc.

**Things to note**
- Keep your hands free to catch yourself in case you fall.
- The snow sticks easily to woolen items.

**How to walk on a snowy road**

The trick to walking snowy path is…

1. Take small steps!
   - Walk like a penguin!
2. Don’t rush, walk slowly.
3. Keep your centre of gravity forward and walk ensuring that the whole sole of your foot is in contact with the road.
   - It is easy to slip if you step with your heel first, so it’s dangerous!

**Be wary of pipes freezing!**

Because water pipes freeze due to the cold in snowy regions, be sure to avoid this occurring be sure to shut off the water supply and drain the pipes of water when the temperature falls to -4°C or below, and when leaving the house for extended periods of time. The tap locations and operating methods vary from household to household so be sure to check how to drain your pipes with your landlord etc. Also, don’t forget to check the weather report for guidance on whether to drain your water pipes!

**Snow removal equipment**

As winter draws near, a variety of snow removal tools start to be lined up in home centres. Tackle the snow in different ways depending on the amount and quality of the snow!

- **Necessity**
  - **Snow scoop**… a must-have for snow removal
  - **Snow dump (snow scoop)**… an indispensable tool for gathering and moving large amounts of snow.
  - **Yuki hane (Snow shovel).**… Used for removing soft, light snow.
  - **Kado sukoppu (shovel).**… more durable than the snow scoop due to being made of metal and is used with hard snow.
  - **Pusher**… Used to push snow like a bulldozer.

**Recommended heaters**

For places with cold climates like Aomori, we recommend petroleum heaters which have overwhelmingly high heating capabilities!

- It can heat the whole room! We suggest using it in late October when the temperature change is particularly harsh.
- Also, potbelly stoves, which do not use electricity are useful in emergency situations!

---

**Aomori Unearthed** exists to promote international relations and understanding in Aomori. The magazine is meant not only for Japanese people, but those of all races who happen to find themselves living in Aomori.

**Aomori Unearthed** is made by…

Volunteer Groups: Aomori International Relations Volunteer Association (AIRVA), Junior Global Training School, Aomori International Volunteer Center, Ohisama Project, Hippo Family Club, AIRS, International Relations and Culture Club, Aomori, Aomori Overseas Youth Association and Aomori City Hall Domestic and International Relations Section.

Special thanks: Aomori International Exchange Association and JICA Tohoku.

Published by: Aomori City Hall Domestic and International Relations Section
Tel.: 017-734-5235  Fax: 017-734-5146  E-mail: kouryuu-suishin@city.aomori.aomori.jp

---

Aomori Unearthed March 2016