

**VOICES From THE NEW YORKERS**

**My Obsession with Yuzu by Ashley Matarama**

I don't remember when exactly I first encountered the yellow, bumpy citrus fruit called yuzu, but it was



most likely after a trip to Mitsuwa in Edgewater, New Jersey. It is one of my favorite fruits and fruity flavors to date. So much, in fact, I had written down Kochi prefecture as one of my preferred placements to teach English partly because of its notoriety for yuzu (and seeing most yuzu product packaging mention Kochi).

When I go out with friends, you'd better believe I'll order yuzu if I see it on a menu: from yuzu tea and cocktails to yuzu and pepper seasoned fries and chips, yuzu pastries and yuzu sorbet; the list goes on. I've yet to try yuzu ramen and the newly released yuzu sake Kit Kat (I also haven't gone to Kochi or taken a yuzu bath yet), but I would in a heartbeat because savory or sweet, yuzu is fantastic. Fun fact, I was gifted a yuzu cocoa shower gel from Lush, which shortly after discontinued.

When I go to Japanese supermarkets like the aforementioned Mitsuwa or Sunrise Mart in the city, I'll pick up yuzu cider, a yuzu lemon drink, and yuzu ramune. I used to be able to pick up yuzu ramune fairly easily, but a few months ago they were running out of stock. Were they getting popular? I'd try again two or three more times and still, nothing. Shortly after this dry spell, I managed to procure what would end up being my last couple of yuzu ramune for a while at the Korean supermarket H Mart. I even realized that they too have yuzu in their cuisine (called yuja), so I got myself yuja marmalade and ordered a cup of yuja tea at a Korean cafe once I memorized its spelling in the Hangul alphabet and saw it on the menu.

Bear in mind that this yuzu ramune was apparently manufactured in California, and I had never seen yuzu ramune in Japan (maybe they sell

# THE JAPAN VOICE

## COOL JAPAN from New Yorkers' Viewpoints



Photo courtesy of Stephanie Berge

Satoshi Miyagi, a representative of the Japanese theatrical world, started his play *Antigone* on September 25 at Park Avenue Armory in Manhattan. As the king in the play says, should we expose the bodies of the dead to the elements bury them respectfully? Adding the Japanese mindset of life and death to the famous Greek tragedy, Miyagi's rendition is getting rave reviews from the crowd that filled up almost 1,000 seats. What's surprising is that the pool-like stage filled with 18,000 gallons of water. Many Japanese performance techniques were presented in this play. The actors walked quietly around the watery stage and the *zenza* (curtain raiser) coyly explained the story of the play. Subtitles were shown while others spoke and acted. Other techniques incorporated from Japanese traditions fascinated New Yorkers including Noh, Japanese literature and a Japanese monk.

After another play on September 28, crowds praised the work and said, "The contrast between the percussion instruments and the slow motion was brilliant," and, "Beautiful, just beautiful." The crowd lined up in front of Miyagi who was seeing guests off to tell them what they thought of the play. Miyagi said, "I heard that today all the tickets were sold out. I am very happy to hear that. New Yorkers have such diverse backgrounds and it means that my

## The Antigone of Satoshi Miyagi Leaves New Yorkers Fascinated

"The size and overall atmosphere were amazing!"



Photos: Ryoichi Miura



play has a universality hidden inside. I think it was a great experience for me." The play was performed until Sunday, October 6 for a total of 11 acts. It was co-sponsored by the Shizuoka Performing Arts Center and the Japan Foundation. (Kaoru Komi/Translated by Kanta Hakamada)

**SHIZUOKA PRESENTS**

Jiro Katahira and Mohei Honda serve Japanese tea from Shizuoka prefecture to New Yorkers at Park Avenue Armory Theatre on September 26. Noriyuki Suzuki gave a speech introducing Shizuoka prefecture.

some in Kochi?). After they sold out everywhere I looked, even on Amazon, I dreaded my days of drinking yuzu ramune being over. That is,

until I took a friend to Japan Village in Brooklyn and found a fully stocked batch of Kimura branded yuzu ramune! I didn't mind that the brand and pack-

aging in stock had changed from Hata with a cute drawing of a smiling cartoon yuzu to Kimura with white stars flying about and an illustrated yuzu. I

carried as much as I could and checked out of Sunrise Mart with a smile beaming on my face.

As you can see, my obsession with yuzu knows no end. Have you tried this lovely citrus fruit? If not, next time you see it on the menu or in a supermarket, give it a try!



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● Haiku in English may consider the following as a model:

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through upcurls of morning mist  
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- O. Mabson Southard

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