



# Nasushiobara & Linz

## “Land of Mountains” Austria

Do you know the song “Edelweiss” that is used in Sound of Music? Edelweiss is a flower that represents Austria. It grows in the Alps. The landscape of the Alps is such an important symbol for Austria that the national anthem starts with the words “*Land der Berge*” (Land of Mountains). About 60% of Austria are part of the Alps. There are many rare animals and plants. Animals you cannot see in Japan include the *gämse* (chamois), the *steinbock* (Alpine ibex) and the *murmeltier* (marmot /groundhog). If you would like to



Groundhog©François Trazzi, CC BY-SA 3.0

see a groundhog, I recommend the area of Austria’s tallest mountain, the Grossglockner. There, you can see a glacier throughout the four seasons. In Werfen you can find the world’s largest ice cave, where you can enjoy a wonderland of ice even in the height of summer.

Austria is famous for ski sports. Skiing and snowboarding are popular and Austria is amongst the top players in ski jump or slalom. Theodor von Lerch,



Grossglockner©Michieliosios, CC BY-SA 3.0

who first brought skiing to Japan, is an Austrian landsman.

Come summertime, many people go hiking in the mountains. It is very pleasant due to the clear, beautiful mountain lakes and because you can escape the summer heat. It is customary for cattle to spend the summer on mountain pastures. Every year, some hikers get too close to the animals and get hurt. So if you come across cows when hiking, make sure to keep your distance when walking past.

The culture of the Alps is important to Austrians too. Every valley has its own special customs. Folk music that uses instruments such as the alphorn or zither is found in Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Italy alike. It’s a beautiful culture that is shared across borders.



Organic Chocolate  
©Zotter Schokoladen

## Culture Corner: Chocolate

Befitting the season of Valentine’s Day, I would like to talk about Austrian chocolate. In Austria, Valentine’s Day is celebrated by going for a romantic dinner with one’s partner or exchanging gifts. You can give any present you like, but flowers and chocolate are most popular. Usually, men give presents to women, or they give each other presents. We don’t have White Day and there is no making of Valentine’s Day cards in schools as is customary in the US., either.

Amongst Austrian chocolates, Mozartkugeln are very well-known, but there are many more delicious chocolates. By the way, many people get

this mixed up, but Lindt chocolate has no connection to our Sister City Linz - it is a Swiss chocolate maker. As for traditional Austrian chocolate makers I suggest Kastner or Heindl. I also highly recommend Zotter chocolate. They use organic ingredients and constantly develop new, exciting chocolate flavors.

# Nasushiobara & Linz

## People : Kazue Fujita



*„When I saw the joyful faces of the athletes when they heard the national anthem, I was very happy.”*

### Past Exchange Activities:

Since last fiscal year I am responsible for conducting and leading the “Austria-Exchange-Choir” that is managed by the lifelong learning division of the city office. For the first practice, around 30 people with an interest in choir and exchange with Austria attended. Two months later, Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt visited our city and we performed four pieces in the former Aoki Villa: the



Mr. Salm-Reifferscheidt and his mother Nathalie are impressed by the choir’s beautiful singing voices

### Profil

**Lastname:** Fujita

**Firstname:** Kazue

**Born in:** Ohtawara  
(ehem. Kurobane)

**Living in:** Ohtawara

**Occupation:** Singer

**Motto:** Always positive!

Austrian national anthem, “Heidenröslein”<sup>1</sup>, “Mitsu no Warabeuta”, and “Sakura” since it was the season of the cherry blossom. In August we cheered on the Austrian triathletes with our choir.

### An experience or memory that left a strong impression:

German has some vowels that don’t exist in Japanese, which was a challenge when teaching. However, when I saw the joyful faces of the athletes when they heard the national anthem, I was very happy. After the performance, I watched as the members of the choir actively approached the athletes and I realized once again, that while the language barrier does exist, it can be overcome, and meaningful exchange is waiting on the other side of it. I was deeply moved that our choir, which had been established to foster the exchange during the Olympic and Paralympic games played a central role in the exchange with the athletes and we could make such a valuable experience.

### Ideas, hopes and visions for the future:

I want to create more opportunities for an active exchange with the athletes, and learn simple German to use at such occasions as well as deepen my understanding of the culture.

I have two dreams. My first dream is cheering for the team at the Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo and singing the national anthem while one of the athletes receives a medal.

As for my second big dream, I would like to go to Linz and perform a concert.



Performance at Austria Festa on October 6<sup>th</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Heidenröslein” (Rose on the Heath) is a German song based on a poem by Goethe.



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## Lively Sister City Exchange



2019, the year of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Japanese-Austrian Friendship has come to a successful end. Thanks to your help we were able to realize many fun exchange activities!

During “Linz Japan Day” on June 22<sup>nd</sup> and “Austria Festa” on October 6<sup>th</sup> we collected your “Messages to the Sister City”. The heart-felt messages are now accessible on Nasushiobara city’s homepage at <https://www.city.nasushiobara.lg.jp/03/6874.html>



Nasushiobara Sister City Newsletter



### Trying Austrian Cuisine at School Lunch

In November 2019 Austrian food was introduced in all elementary, junior high and schools for compulsory education in Nasushiobara.

I joined Aoki elementary school’s 4<sup>th</sup> graders in their meal of chicken schnitzel, garlic cream soup and Austrian-style cole slaw. It was great to see many of the children enjoy the food so much.

### Experiencing Austrian Winter

This year, we again enjoyed the Christmas season with cooking and handicrafts.

- \* Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> 2019: Girl Scouts  
“Arigatou Cooking”
- \* Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> 2019: Tsudoi Hiroba Hoppe  
“Austrian Christmas and Songs”
- \* Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> 2019: Oyama Kominkan  
“Making Wreaths”



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**Q:** Which one is Austria’s highest mountain ?

**A:** Matterhorn

**B:** Grossglockner

**C:** Mount Etna

**D:** Mont Blanc

# Nasushiobara & Linz

## Handmade ☆ Delicious Easter Decoration

In Austria, we like to grow cress sprouts and eat them on a buttered bread. If you sprinkle cress seeds on wet cotton, they start sprouting after just a few days. They are especially liked by kids. An adorable spring version for Easter time is growing the sprouts in broken, emptied eggshells. Combined with hollow, painted eggs and other Easter decoration, you can make an adorable, edible Easter arrangement. Instead of cress sprouts, you can use *shiso* or broccoli seeds or broccoli sprouts from the super market. They taste delicious, especially as bread or soup toppings!



## Regional News

## “Cheese State” Vorarlberg



Käsespätzle

More than half of all milk that is produced in the Austrian State of Vorarlberg is *heumilch* (hay milk). Hay milk is produced by cows that feed on herbs and grasses on mountain pastures in summer and are fed hay in winter. They are not fed any fermented fodder such as silage. Milk made in this way is high quality and delicious. Most of this milk is used to produce *bergkäse* (mountain cheese). You can also try other delicious cheeses like *sura kees*, a healthy, low-fat sour milk cheese with a 770 year long tradition or the wash rind soft cheese *bachensteiner*. There is a special “power spot” where you can enjoy the landscape while learning all about cheese: Take the ropeway from Bregenz up to Pfänder mountain and you can see Bodensee lake and the alpine landscape of the four countries Switzerland, Germany, Liechtenstein and Austria. There is also a “cheese path” to follow. To everyone who would like to try cheese dishes at a restaurant, I recommend trying *käsespätzle* made from soft noodles with cheese and onions.



State: Vorarlberg ♥ State Capital: Bregenz ♥  
Population: ca. 394,300 ♥ Area: ca. 2,600km<sup>2</sup> ♥

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**Contact**: Tochigi Prefecture, Nasushiobara City, Kyoukonsha 108-2, 325-8501 Japan  
TEL: 0287-62-7324, FAX: 0287-63-1240, E-Mail: f.ronniger@city.nasushiobara.lg.jp



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Quiz-Answer: B  
Matterhorn is in  
Switzerland, Mount  
Etna is in Italy and  
Mont Blanc is in  
France.