



Nasushiobara & Linz

CIR Rena's first

World Festival 2025

This year's World Festival was held on September 27th. The World Festival is organized by the Nasushiobara International Association and is hosted once a year with the aim to facilitate cultural exchange with the foreign residents of the town and foster cross-cultural understanding. It features performances of various countries' music, as well as stalls selling ethnic foods.

This year I got to attend and be inside the Austria booth, selling "Linzer Augen" together with the local confectionary "Nemunoki". "Linzer Augen" are traditional Austrian cookies



and the versions that "Nemunoki" makes are based on a recipe developed by students from Nasu-Takuyo High School. These cookies are filled with strawberry jam from Tochigi prefecture and milk cream from Nasushiobara city and represent the sister city relationship between Linz and Nasushiobara. They were also recently sold at the restaurant of the Austrian pavilion at the World EXPO in Osaka, Kansai.

This year's world festival was held at Nasu Garden Outlet, which meant that a lot of people from outside of town also came by. I am happy I got to share a piece of Austria with so many different individuals.

Hopefully, I will keep seeing Linzer Augen all throughout Nasushiobara. For the time being, they are available for sale at "Nemunoki", and I highly encourage anybody who has not tried them yet to do so and enjoy the taste of Austria!



Linzer Augen: The taste of friendship



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Autumn in Austria means...

Time for “Sturm”!

Maybe it is because I grew up in a small town with a lot of vineyards, but the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about autumn is wine. With the arrival of September, grape harvesting season begins, and Austrians start looking forward to the various beverages that follow.

When talking about drinks that are made from grapes, the most obvious one is wine. However, one other very popular option is “Sturm”. “Sturm” is German for “storm”, and it is grape must that has only just begun to ferment. In other words, it is in a transitional state between grape juice and wine, with a sweet taste and a low alcohol content. As the fermentation process continues, the alcohol content rises and the sugar level decreases, causing the flavour to constantly change. This unpredictability is what gives Sturm its name and also why it is only available for a short time in the autumn.

When drinking Sturm there are some traditional customs to follow. First and foremost, Austrians do not clink glasses with Sturm. Therefore, before drinking it one also should not use the usual “Prost”

(Cheers) but say “Mahlzeit” (“Bon Appetit”). Furthermore, Sturm should always be held in one’s left hand. If somebody breaks one of these rules, they must buy the next round of drinks.



The best way to enjoy Sturm is by going “Weinwandern”. “Weinwandern” literally translates to “wine hiking” and is the Austrian tradition of drinking wine while walking through vineyards. Within the vineyards, every few hundred metres, the owners of different local wineries set up stalls and sell their own wine and Sturm, as well as snacks and sweets. When you go “Weinwandern”, you will usually see many people wearing traditional “Dirndl” and “Lederhosen”, which gives the experience a very authentic feel.

It is no surprise that wine is one of the most popular alcoholic beverages in Austria. Each year the wine consumption per capita adds up to about 26 litres. Therefore, a popular past time for Austrians is going to a wine bar. These wine bars are typically family-owned businesses and are only when there is no work to be done on the vineyards. In the case of my



I also did some “Weinwandern” and drank “Sturm” last year.



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hometown for example, they are only in business for about two weeks every two months. A small bush on a stick in front of the establishment signals whether a wine bar is open or not. If the bush is facing the street, it means the wine bar is open. If it is facing the wall, it means it is closed. By the way: These wine bars are called “Heurigen”, and among the popular drinks sold there are sweet grape juice (“Most”) and white wine mixed with sparkling water (“Spritzer”). They also offer snacks like cheese and ham platters.



The bush signaling “We’re open”

As you can see, Austria has many traditions related to grapes. Sometimes even primary school children will help with



Otto Domes via Wikimedia Commons

the grape harvest as part of their schools’ extracurricular activities.

If you get the chance to travel to Austria, I highly recommend visiting a “Heurigen” and enjoying the traditional drinks.



Barbara Marko-Bartilla via Wikimedia Commons

Austria Quiz

What is the sweet grape juice, that is sold at “Heurigen” in Austria called?

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| A : Saft | B : Most |
| C : Traube | D : Spritzer |

This quiz can be solved by reading the text above!

Find the answer on page 4

I am from Austria

On September 15, the middle schoolers from Nasushiobara who took part in the mixed choir that performed at the EXPO in Osaka in July, stood on stage together one last time. They sang at the Nasushiobara Middle School Choir Festival, and I got to attend and listen to their version of “I am from Austria” – which is seen as the unofficial anthem of Austria – for the first time. This was a very special experience for me, as I could have never even imagined hearing this song from my home country in Nasushiobara. I hope to see the students from the choir project again soon at future exchange events between Linz and Nasushiobara.





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Things CIR Rena finds
curious about Japan:

Baumkuchen



The first time I walked into a Japanese supermarket one word quickly caught my eye: “Baumkuchen”. I immediately recognized it as German, but I had never



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Prügeltorte

seen the product it was referring to. Considering that “Baum” means “tree” and “Kuchen” means “cake”, it was easy to understand the name, but the product was very different from what I had seen sold as “Baumkuchen” in Austria.

What is called “Baumkuchen” in Japan seems to have originated as a wedding cake in various European countries, starting in the 15th century. It is said to have then been introduced to Japan by a German confectioner in 1919. “Baumkuchen” does indeed exist in Austria as

well, but in contrast to Germany it is widely referred to as “Prügeltorte”. “Prügeltorte” is a specialty in Tyrol, but since I grew up quite far away from Tyrol, I have never actually eaten it. I will definitely try it in the future!

What I have seen sold as “Baumkuchen” on Austrian Christmas markets actually originates from Hungary and is a yeasty dough baked over an open fire.



Maro Verch via CCNUL

Hungarian Baumkuchen

Once baked, sugar or nuts are added, making it soft on the inside and crunchy on the outside. It is a popular dessert in Eastern European countries.

By the way: The taste of Japanese “Baumkuchen” is very similar to “Gugelhupf”. If you love “Baumkuchen”, you should also give “Gugelhupf” a try!

V Shagow via Wikimedia Commons



Gugelhupf

Quiz answer: [B]
“Traube” is grape and “Saft” means juice,
but at a “Heurigen” we always call it “Most”.

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