

Samoan Ambassador's School Visit (12 Oct 2017)

With less than two years to go until the Rugby World Cup is held in Japan (and less than three years until the Tokyo Olympics!), Iwaki is actively promoting Samoa in order to build support for the team when they arrive in the city for training. In order to raise awareness about other cultures to the younger generation, Iwaki City invited the ambassador of Samoa to introduce Samoan culture to local schools.

The ambassador was welcomed by children waving Samoan flags and performing on taiko drums when she visited Kawabe Primary School. After giving her presentation to the children, she enjoyed a Samoan-inspired school lunch with a classroom of 5th year students before departing the school.

After briefly visiting a local preschool, the ambassador made her second presentation at Kawabe Junior High where the students welcomed her with a yosakoi performance.

This was just the first of many school visits and just one of many more exchanges between Iwaki and Samoa to come as we head towards the Rugby World Cup and Olympics.



Children greeting the ambassador at Kawabe Primary School



Having Samoan taro curry for lunch with the 5th year students at Kawabe Primary School



Doing a presentation for students at Kawabe Junior High



Group photo with the mayor of Iwaki City (front right), the principle (front left) and all of the school students of Kawabe Primary School

Thai Travel Agents' "Fam Trip" (5-7 December 2017)

Iwaki is striving in its efforts to bring more international tourists to Iwaki - often referred to in Japan as "inbound tourism". As part of Iwaki's inbound strategies, four Thai-nationals who are members of various travel agencies in their home country were invited to participate in a "fam trip" tour of the city. "Fam trip" is an abbreviation of "familiarisation trip" and is a term used in the travel industry to define when travel agents visit an area that they are considering recommending to their customers.

Starting off with a ferry cruise around Onahama Port, the Thai guests visited major tourism facilities such as Iwaki La La Mew, Aquamarine Fukushima and Spa Resort Hawaiians and also enjoyed the coastal view from Iwaki Marine Tower. In addition, the group also visited Kanazawa Shoko Art Museum to experience Japanese calligraphy and tea ceremonies and had the chance to try local tomatoes at Wonder Farm. During their stay in Iwaki, they spent one of their nights in a ryokan in Yumoto to experience staying in a traditional Japanese-style inn.

This small tour will hopefully lead to more tourists from Thailand including Iwaki in their travel itineraries the next time they visit Japan.



Enjoying the various kinds of tomatoes at Wonder Farm



Trying out some large calligraphy brushes at the Kanazawa Shoko Art Museum



Checking out the water slide and other facilities at Spa Resort Hawaiians



The four Thai guests with their interpreter (far right) at Marine Tower