

Chigasaki Breeze

Truly great friends are hard to find, difficult to leave, and impossible to forget.

No. 57

“HAMAMINA” to Open in April たもくてきふくごうしせつ 多目的複合施設「ハマミーナ」が4月にオープン

The multipurpose facility “HAMAMINA” will open on April 1 (Wed) in Hamami-daira. The new facility is being constructed on the site of the Hamami-daira Housing Complex, and it is expected to be the nerve center of everyday life and disaster prevention for the people living in and around this area. The name “HAMAMINA” was selected from among the many suggestions received from citizens, and is a compound word of “Hamami-daira” and “MINA”, the name of one of Chigasaki City’s official characters.

The facility itself is composed of a public area called “HAMAMINA” and a private or commercial area called “BRANCH”. Within these areas, public utilities such as a City Hall branch office, a library, a nursery school, a volunteer center, and a gym, as well as a post office, medical clinics, a convenience store, a coffee house, and so forth will be tenants. In addition, a park which can also be utilized in a disaster prevention capacity will be created nearby.

The establishment of “HAMAMINA” in the south-west of the city should make citizens’ daily lives much more convenient and much safer, especially as they will be able to receive official certificates, perform registration activities or make tax payments at the City Hall branch office therein rather than having to visit the main office.

The opening event will be held on March 29 (Sun), at which a “Mikoshi Parade”, “Hula”, and “Music” by a junior high school students’ brass band will be performed, as well as a “Talk Show” hosted by a special guest.

Dolls Festival まつ ひな祭り

Hina-matsuri, or the Dolls Festival, is a celebration for girls held on March 3. It originates from an ancient Chinese event in which people purified themselves by taking a bath at the waterside. This was introduced to Japan and ancient Japanese people floated simple hina-dolls, made of paper or straw, wishing they would take evil spirits and various sufferings away. During the Edo Period (1603 ~ 1867), people started displaying hina-dolls together with decorations such as bride’s outfits, court carriages, and offerings, wishing for their daughters’ healthy and happy futures. A young imperial couple in the full dress of the Heian Period (794 ~ 1185) is placed on the top of a stair-like altar, three ladies-in-waiting on the second tier, a band of five musicians on the third, two ministers on the fourth, servants on the fifth, and miniature palatial furniture, tools, carriages, etc. on the sixth and seventh tiers.

Today, an increasing number of families display just a pair of dolls because of limited space. Some dolls have refined appearances wearing beautiful silk-made costumes. At night, their graceful expressions can be illuminated by two lamps, one standing on either side of the imperial couple, making them appear as if veiled in the moonlight. In peach-blossom season, you can appreciate hina-dolls at department stores. These days, reasonably-priced small hina-doll ornaments are available at a variety of stores. Alternatively, how would you like to enjoy making your own hina-dolls with origami or papier mâché for your good health and happiness?



Cherry Blossom さくら 桜

The cherry blossom is regarded as an iconic flower of Japan. And, in fact, for many Japanese, it is synonymous with the word ‘flower’. More than 300 different varieties of flowering cherries grow around the country. For over 1,000 years, people in Japan have perceived the cherry blossom to be the mirror of their sensibility. Cherry blossoms have long been used as a design element in various ways – serving dishes, cloths, Japanese sweets By depicting cherry blossoms on everyday objects, people have managed to suggest and enjoy a sense of spring.

In addition, people have long made use of the whole tree for their livelihoods. The leaves and blossoms are preserved with salt to bring out a particular flavor. The leaves are indispensable in the confectionery called *sakura-mochi*, consisting of a sweet pink *mochi* (rice cake) and red bean paste, covered with an edible *sakura* (cherry blossom) leaf. The blossoms are also used to make *sakura-cha*, a tea often served at celebratory occasions. The beautiful barks of the trees embellish tea leaf boxes and letter boxes because the bark is easily removed. The trunks are sold as wood chips, which produce fragrant smoke when burnt.

Of course, spring is the season for *hanami* (or flower-viewing), the traditional custom of enjoying the transient beauty of flowers, usually cherry blossom, and these days, the cherry blossom favored by many comes from a rather new variety of flowering cherry tree called *Somei-yoshino*, created in the middle of the 19th Century. *Somei-yoshino* only blooms for a particularly short period of time, their petals seeming to start dropping almost as soon as their buds have opened. This dovetails perfectly with the traditional Japanese aesthetic sensibility that finds beauty not only in the blooming of flowers but also in the way they flutter to the ground.



Sagami Jūkan-dō Road Completed じゅうかんとろろぜんせんかいつう さがみ縦貫道路全線開通

The construction of the Samukawa-Ebina section of the expressway, Sagami Jūkan-dō Road, will be finished by the end of March, leading to the opening of the entire stretch. Chigasaki residents will have access to the nation’s major expressways, Kan-Etsu, Chuō and Tomei Expressways, without having to use local roads, from interchanges (IC) in and around the city; Fujisawa, Chigasaki Nishi and Chigasaki Kaigan on the Shin-Shonan Bypass; and Samukawa Minami on Sagami Jūkan-dō Road. (You cannot get on the expressway from Chigasaki Chuō IC.) As a result, Chigasaki will also become more accessible to people in Ko-Shin-Etsu and Northern Kanto.

In the near future, probably around 2020, the Shin-Tomei Expressway, whose Gotenba-Mikkabi section in Shizuoka prefecture has already been opened to traffic, will be extended east and connected to the expressway at the southern end of Ebina.

