

Reading and Talking

“Iki” Mickey

Loft stores are now selling “Disney Modern Japan Design” goods for summer, with pictures of Mickey Mouse, Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*, and Alice in Wonderland. The theme is “iki” (粋/stylish; chic), and Mickey Mouse looks like a kabuki actor that is drawn by “ukiyo-e” artist Sharaku. There’s also Mickey in a kabuki “mie” pose. The Disney characters are on drinking glasses, fans, “kinchaku” traditional Japanese bags, shopping bags, and many more things <<https://bit.ly/3e9pYff>>. You can buy them until September 6th at Loft and its online store.

(90 words)

Do you want to buy goods with Mickey Mouse in “ukiyo-e” style?

↳Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--Do you want a tumbler with Mickey Mouse in a kabuki pose? / Do you want a fan with Mickey Mouse who looks like a Sharaku “yakusha-e” picture?)

↳No, I don’t. (--Do you like Mickey Mouse? / Have you ever been to Tokyo Disney Resort? / Do you have something with Hello Kitty on it?)

Do you have a “kinchaku” drawstring bag?

↳Yes, I do. (--How big is it? / What color is it? / How long have you been using it? / Did you make it?)

↳No, I don’t. (--Do you have any cloth bags? / Do you have any “omamori” lucky charms from a shrine or temple?)

Have you ever been to a theater to see kabuki?

↳Yes, I have. (--When did you go? / How was it? / Do you want to see a kabuki show again?)

↳No, I haven’t. (--Do you want to see it? / Have you ever seen “kyougen” traditional comic theater or “noh” classical theater?)

(June 19, 2020)

More information

“Iki” Mickey

As life returns to normal and public spaces gradually open, Tokyo Disney Resort is a notable exception. Tokyo Disneyland and DisneySea have been closed since February 29 and, at the time of writing, no reopening date has been set. Meanwhile, if you need a Disney fix, try the household goods specialty store Loft.

This month, Loft introduces “Disney Modern Japan Design.” It’s a collection of goods for summer that features Mickey Mouse, Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*, and Alice in Wonderland. The most novel are the Mickey Mouse items, which picture him “ukiyo-e” woodblock-print-style. The theme of the collection is “iki” (粋/stylish; chic), and Mickey is posed like a kabuki actor in a portrait by ukiyo-e artist Sharaku. There’s also a Mickey who is frozen in a kabuki “mie” emotion pose. The characters are on items such as tumblers, coasters, handheld fans, “kinchaku” traditional Japanese drawstring bags, and tote bags.

Disney Modern Japan Design summer collection <<https://bit.ly/3e9pYff>> is available until September 6 at Loft stores, and from its online store. Further collections for autumn and winter are planned.

(181 words)

(June 19, 2020)

Reading and Talking

Where is oatmeal?

After the coronavirus arrived in February, toilet paper disappeared from stores. Natto, instant ramen noodles, and spaghetti also disappeared. Now it is hard to find oatmeal. Nisshoku (日本食品製造) is a company that sells oatmeal. It says that some people eat oatmeal instead of “okayu” rice porridge. Some people use oatmeal for baby food. Some sports players, and people who are trying to lose weight, eat a lot of oatmeal, so they bought a lot of it recently. Nisshoku says that its oatmeal is going to be in stores again by the end of June.

(98 words)

Do you eat oatmeal?

↳Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--How do you eat it? / Do you eat it for breakfast? / Do you like cereal or granola?)

↳No, I don't. (--Have you ever eaten oatmeal? / What do you usually have for breakfast? / What time do you usually have breakfast?)

Do you like “okayu” rice porridge?

↳Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--Do you sometimes have rice porridge for breakfast? / What's your favorite kind of rice porridge? / Do you buy packets of instant rice porridge?)

↳No, I don't. (--Why don't you like it? / How about “zousui” Japanese-style risotto? / How about “ochazuke” steeped rice?)

Do you buy any food “matome gai” in bulk?

↳Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--What food do you buy in bulk? / Do you buy drinks in bulk? / Have you ever bought a 10-kilogram carton of “mikan” tangerines?)

↳No, I don't. (--Do you buy anything in bulk? / How often do you go food shopping? / Do you buy shampoo and soap one at a time?)

(June 19, 2020)

More information

Where is oatmeal?

After the coronavirus outbreak began in February, certain household staples disappeared from stores. It began with panic buying of toilet and tissue paper. Other items that were in short supply at one time or other, in response to rumor or sudden popularity, were natto, instant ramen noodles, spaghetti, pancake mix, and flour for home baking.

Another food has gradually been getting scarcer on grocery store shelves: oatmeal. Oats are a cereal plant that is similar to rice and wheat. Oats are rich in diet fiber, vitamin B1, iron and other minerals. Oatmeal is coarsely ground oats. Nippon Food Manufacturing (Nisshoku/日本食品製造), a company that sells oatmeal, says it can be eaten like “okayu” rice porridge, so some of its customers buy it instead of rice. Others use oatmeal for baby food. Some athletes, including bodybuilders and people who are trying to lose weight, eat oatmeal as a staple food, and so they buy it in bulk.

After the state of emergency was declared, oatmeal sales spiked unexpectedly. Nisshoku says that it expects its oatmeal products to be back in stores by the end of June.

(188 words)

(June 19, 2020)