

## *Reading and Talking*

### Let's collect railway stamps!

Visiting temples and shrines is a tradition in Japan. It is still popular today. When you visit a temple or shrine, you can collect a “goshuin” (red stamp) in a “goshuinchou” (book of stamps). In July, a similar book appeared for collecting stamps from railway stations. 40 small local rail companies from Hokkaido to Kagoshima joined to make a “Tetsuincho” (Book of Railway Stamps) to help their companies and the local economies. The 2,200-yen book soon sold out. You can get the stamps, which cost 300 to 500 yen each, at one special station on each rail line.

(105 words)

Do you want to collect stamps in the “Tetsuincho”?

↳ Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--Have you ever collected train station stamps? / Have you ever ridden a train in Hokkaido?)

↳ No, I don't. (--How come you don't want to do it? / Do you like traveling by train? / Have you ever ridden a train without a “shashou” train conductor?)

Do you have a “goshuinchou” book of temple and shrine stamps?

↳ Yes, I do. (--When did you start collecting temple and shrine stamps? / Why did you start doing it? / How many stamps have you collected so far?)

↳ No, I don't. (--Are you interested in it? / Do you know someone who collects “goshuin” stamps? / Do you like visiting temples and shrines?)

Are there a lot of temples and shrines near your house?

↳ Yes, there are. (--How many temples and shrines are there? / How long does it take you to walk to the nearest temple or shrine from your house?)

↳ No, there aren't. (--Is there a church near your house? / Is there a “bochi” cemetery near your house? / Did you visit a shrine or temple at New Year?)

(August 7, 2020)

## *More information*

### Let's collect railway stamps!

Temple and shrine tourism has long been popular in Japan. Some courses, like the Shikoku 88-temple pilgrimage, are religious in nature, while others were largely an excuse to sightsee, eat regional cuisine and take hot spring baths.

Part of this tourism was collecting stamps from the temples and shrines as proof of your visit. They are called “goshuin” (red stamps), although “stamp” hardly describes these elaborate combinations of ink stamp and calligraphy. You collect goshuin in a notebook that's called a “goshuinchou” (book of stamps). Collecting goshuin is still popular today.

In July this year, a similar book appeared for collecting stamps to commemorate your visit to railway stations. 40 small regional rail companies from Hokkaido to Kagoshima collaborated to make a “Tetsuincho” (Book of Railway Stamps) to help revive their companies and the local economies. The 5,000 copies of the ¥2,200 book quickly sold out. Stamps, which cost ¥300 to ¥500 each, are available at one designated station on each line. If you collect all 40, you are eligible to buy a 1,000-yen Tetsuincho Meister card. For more information, see <https://bit.ly/3knXqLY>.

(187 words)  
(August 7, 2020)

## *Reading and Talking*

### Curry from Japan to India

On August 3rd, Japanese curry chain Curry House CoCo Ichibanya (Cocoichi) opened a branch in Gurugram, which is near India's capital, New Delhi. India is, of course, where curry originally came from. Most people in India don't eat beef or pork, so Cocoichi is making chicken, seafood and vegetable dishes, which are served with rice instead of naan oven-baked flatbread. The first Cocoichi opened in Kiyosu, Aichi Prefecture, in 1978 (Showa 53). There are now almost 1,500 branches in Japan, and overseas in Asia, the United Kingdom and the US.

(98 words)

Have you ever had curry and rice at a Cocoichi curry house?

↳ Yes, I have. (--Do you like the curry at Cocoichi? / Do you have pork curry, beef curry, vegetable curry, or hashed beef sauce? / What's your favorite topping on your curry dish there?)

↳ No, I haven't. (--Is there a Cocoichi curry house near you? / Have you eaten curry and rice recently? / Do you like "hayashi rice" Japanese-style beef bourguignon and rice?)

Which do you like better, spicy curry or mild curry?

↳ I like both. (--Have you ever tried very spicy curry? / Do you like spicy potato chips?)

↳ I like [XXX] better. (--How about coffee: do you like it strong or weak?)

↳ I don't like either. (--Do you like curry and rice? / Do you like spicy food?)

Do you know a good Indian restaurant?

↳ Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--Where is it? / Is it a big restaurant? / What is the best food there? / Do you know any other good Indian restaurant?)

↳ No, I don't. (--Do you like naan? / Do you like Indian chai tea?)

(August 7, 2020)

## *More information*

### Curry from Japan to India

“Selling coals to Newcastle” is a British idiom that means “doing something foolish.” Newcastle, in the north of England, was a coal-producing area when the idiom was coined, and so selling coal to a place that has its own coal might seem impossible. That hasn’t stopped enterprising people from trying their own versions of this difficult trick, and “selling curry to India” is the latest example.

On August 3, Japanese curry chain Cocoichi opened a branch in Gurugram, a suburb of India’s capital, New Delhi. India is, of course, the original home of curry. As most people in India don’t eat beef or pork for religious reasons, Cocoichi cannot use the same recipes that it uses in Japan. Instead it is providing chicken, seafood and vegetable dishes that are served with rice instead of naan oven-baked flatbread.

Curry House CoCo Ichibanya, commonly called Cocoichi, began as a mom and pop restaurant in Kiyosu, Aichi Prefecture, in 1978 (Showa 53). It grew, and it is currently closing in on 1,500 branches in Japan and elsewhere in Asia, the United Kingdom and the US.

(189 words)

(August 7, 2020)