

Utsunomiya



What is on the logo: the yellow carp that is the lucky symbol of Utsunomiya, called a “kibuna.”



Carp have been historically revered throughout Japan, and Tulsa’s sister city Utsunomiya has its own reasons for loving this fish. According to legend, when a smallpox epidemic struck the city several centuries back, an abnormally large, magical yellow carp was caught in the Tagawa River. When it was fed to those who were sick, they were cured.

The yellow carp, known locally as “kibuna”, now appears in many forms as a lucky charm. Around the lunar New Year, it’s time to buy another kibuna to ward off trouble in the year ahead! Another day to give thanks to the kibuna is September 27. The date is a homonym to “kibuna” and is designated to honor medical professionals.

In Utsunomiya, bliss comes not only from water, but from land as well. The area’s horticultural specialty is strawberries – renowned throughout the whole country. Utsunomiya also holds the title of “gyoza capital” of Japan. Gyoza is the Japanese version of a dumpling, or potsticker.

Going beyond the edible, Utsunomiya is also notable for its jazz culture, love of cycling, and the temple for the Buddhist deity Kannon (yes, the namesake of the world-famous camera-maker Canon!).

Click on the photo or logo to see Utsunomiya on a map.