

Tokyo

FREE

WEEKENDER

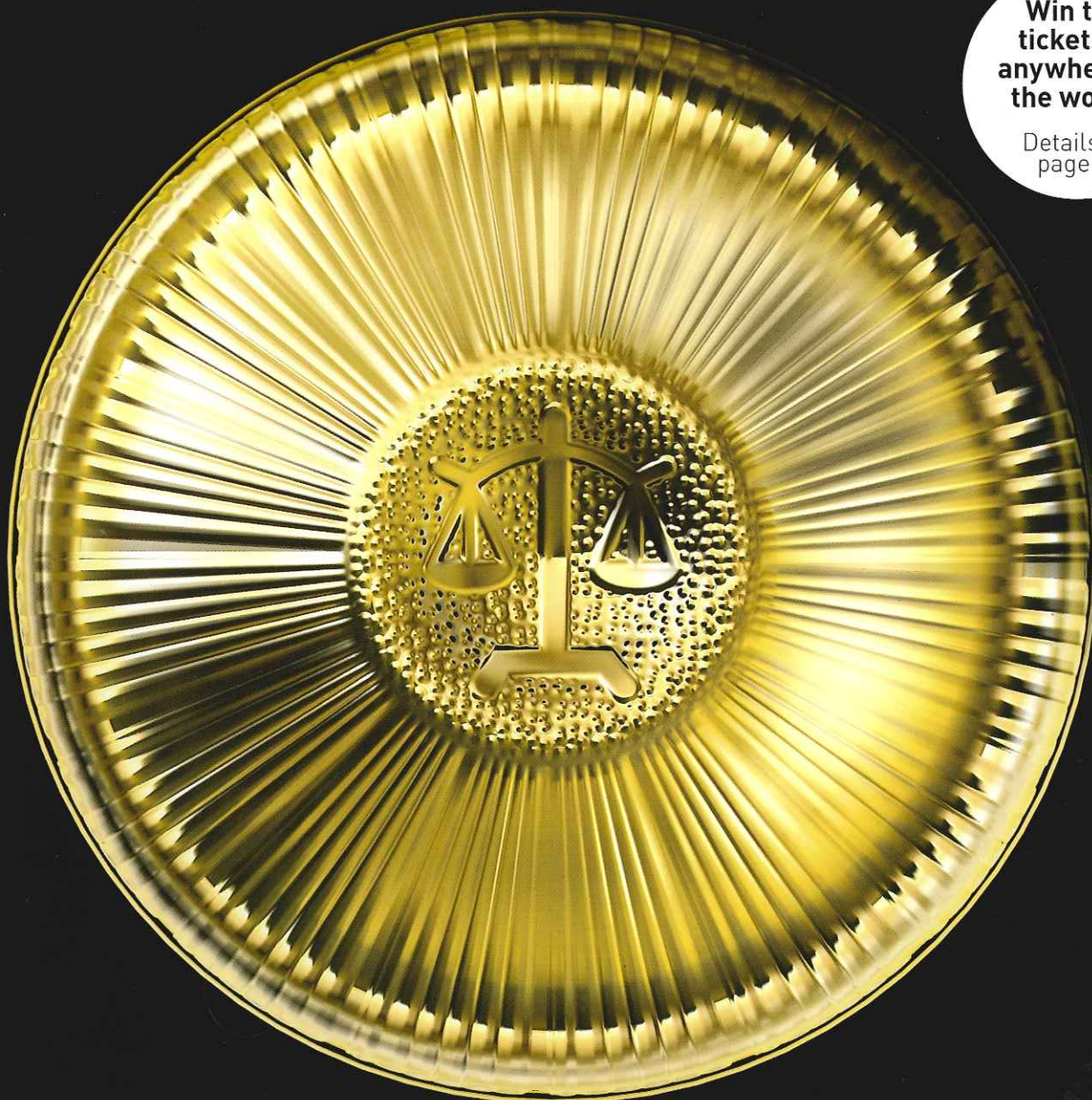
Since 1970

Vol.40 No.15 Aug 7th-Aug 20th, 2009

Now Including Japan's Largest Online Classifieds

Win two
tickets to
anywhere in
the world!

Details on
page 15



The Law in Japan

Are You in the Right?

Visually Deceptive Art
Soccer for Kids
Summer Events & Festivals

TOKYO ECO:

Beat the Heat

by Danielle Rippingale

While many escape summer in Tokyo in favor of cooler shores, the rest of us are seeking ways to stay cool and sane as the temperatures and humidity soar. While it may be tempting to turn on your air conditioner and not leave your apartment until October, there are alternatives that won't damage your social life, wallet, or the environment. It's cool to be green.



1. As you leave for work, close up your apartment to avoid unwanted heat and humidity from entering; draw your curtains and angle your blinds downward to reflect the sun's direct rays. Darker means cooler.

2. If you can, hang bamboo shades outside your east, south and west facing windows to reduce 60–80 percent of the sun's heat getting into your windows.

3. Wear lightweight, loose and light-colored clothing made of natural fibers. Bamboo is a great eco-textile that is breathable, moisture wicking, and thermoregulating. Check out www.thatgirdani.com/Bamboo_Yogawear.html.

4. Wear a wide-brimmed hat, carry an umbrella, take advantage of the shade, and use a hand fan. While a simple brochure or newspaper will suffice, you can say no to the wasteful disposable freebies by investing in a beautiful Japanese fan that will last from season to season.

5. Avoid exerting yourself in the heat and drink enough water. Carry your refillable water bottle (like the ones by SIGG) to ensure you have water without waste at all times.

ECO FACT

On July 20, 2004, Tokyo hit a record-breaking 39.5°C, the hottest temperature ever recorded since records began in 1923.



Photos by Danielle Rippingale

6. Turn off your lights and computer when not in use, and hold off on household activities that generate heat, like dishwashing and baking, until the evening hours.

7. Eat small, light meals and avoid liquids that contain large amounts of caffeine, alcohol, and sugar that only serve to increase water loss. Tip: Prevent stomach cramps by avoiding icy cold drinks. At restaurants, just say *kori nashi, onegaishimasu* (no ice, please).

8. Unless the incoming air is less than 25°C, it is difficult to effectively rid your apartment of heat through ventilating. However, if used properly at night or on cooler days, window fans are a ventilation option if placed facing out and on the downwind side of the apartment. Interior doors must remain open to allow air to flow.

9. Easy to install and more affordable and energy efficient than air conditioning, a ceiling fan set on slow will create sufficient air flow to increase your comfort without using a lot of energy.

10. If you are in the market for an air conditioner, make sure you buy a properly sized unit designed to deal with high humidity. Look for models with variable or multi-speed blowers, keep the doors and windows of your home closed, and try to keep moisture sources out of the house.

11. Dehumidifiers create heat and force your air conditioner to work harder, so don't operate both at the same time. However, using an electric fan in conjunction with your air conditioner will increase cooling efficiency by 30 percent.

12. Buy a high-efficiency room air conditioner with an energy efficiency ratio (EER) rating above ten. Also, maintain your air conditioners and properly clean the air filters every month during the summer to increase air flow and efficiency.

Don't air condition unused rooms, and turn off your air conditioning when you leave for more than an hour. There is little benefit in keeping your house cool all day when you aren't there.

Green Glossary

Global Warming: Certain natural and human-produced gases prevent the sun's energy from escaping back to space, leading to an overall rise in the temperature of the Earth's atmosphere.