

TOP TIPS FOR KIWI RUGBY FANS HEADING TO JAPAN WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

From specialist travel insurance and emergency assistance provider Allianz Partners New Zealand.

Rugby used to be an elite game played mainly in Japan's private universities, but the sport's popularity across the country has soared over the past ten years, with public interest now at an all-time high. If you're one of the lucky Kiwi rugby fans heading to Japan this September, Allianz Partners New Zealand has put together some useful tips to ensure a fun and worry-free trip.

GETTING TO THE VENUE

Queue to the left or the right...

In Tokyo, it is social etiquette to stand to the left when queueing or taking an escalator, leaving room for others to pass you on the right side. However, if you are attending a match on the other side of the country, in Oita or Fukuoka you'll find that it is the other way round, and locals gravitate to the right. Not adhering to these unwritten rules may result in a few stern looks, but if you can't remember which side to stick to, just follow the person in front of you.

Don't be late

To fit into Japanese society, you must be punctual. A 30-second train delay can become a national scandal so it's a wise idea to arrive ahead of time when catching public transport. Trains and buses run like clockwork, so ensure you have a timetable on hand when you are travelling to and from matches.

AT THE STADIUM

Sporting events in Japan are quite different to those you would experience in New Zealand. Local fans are known for being highly active, singing rally songs, and waving merchandise.

Be a tidy Kiwi

Japan is an immaculately clean country and locals take great pride in their tidy ways. In fact, last year Japanese football fans cleaned their section of the stadium, following their team's first victory. With a sporting spectacle as big as this one, Japanese rugby fans are likely to follow suit, so make sure you take your rubbish with you too.

Food for thought

One of the main distinguishing features of a Japanese sporting experience is also the stadium food and drinks. It is not uncommon to see vendors walking up and down the seat aisles with kegs strapped to their backs, ready to serve up freshly poured beer. There's also a selection of unique foods on offer, such as:

- Yakitori - Grilled chicken on a stick is one of the most convenient game day snacks in Japan. Often seasoned with shio (salt) or dipped in tare sauce, it's the equivalent to an American hotdog at a US baseball game.
- Bento Boxes - A convenient way to eat, bento boxes contain a balanced ratio of rice, protein, vegetables and salad. The container is partitioned into sections to ensure each component stays separate, making it the perfect mess-free Japanese stadium food.

- Takoyaki - A street food hailing from the Japanese region of Kansai, Takoyaki is widely available in sporting stadiums around the country due to their popularity. The fried octopus balls come with toothpicks for ease of consumption, so you don't need to worry about dropping your chopsticks under your seat.
- Edamame - Boiled and salted, these easy to eat soybean pods are an addictive and healthy game day snack. These are widely popular around stadiums all over Japan and are often served as a complimentary entrée in restaurants.
- Kakigori - A Japanese treat of shaved ice and syrup will hit the spot for a game on a warm Autumn's day. At the stadium, it will likely be served in a bowl with a spoon, much bigger than the shaved ice you'll get in New Zealand.

Learn the lingo

When visiting a new country, it's always useful to learn a few words in the local language. Don't worry if you don't get your pronunciation perfect as Japanese people will be delighted that you've made the effort.

- Rugby - ragubii
- Where is the game? - Shiai wa doko de ari masuka?
- Pass the ball! - Bōru o pasu shite!
- Can't believe you missed that! - Nantoiu misu da!
- Come on! - Ike!
- Go for it! - Ganbatte!

Protection for unexpected incidents

Half of those surveyed in the 2016 Travel Insurance Market Monitor survey* thought that travel insurance cover could only come into effect once travel commenced. However, this is not the case. Most travel insurance policies include valuable cancellation benefits which are valid from the moment that the policy is purchased, provided you purchase the policy when you book your travel.

Remember that medical costs aren't the only risk when we are travelling and let our guard down. Large crowds at big events spell opportunity for thieves and pickpockets.

We recommend downloading important details such as your policy number and emergency contact telephone numbers to have ready in case you need them.

* The Travel Insurance Market Monitor survey is carried out by Colmar Brunton. This online survey includes New Zealanders aged 15+. Sample size 3,011. Data weighted to online population by gender and age.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

About Allianz Partners

Allianz Partners is a world leader in B2B2C insurance and assistance, specialising in the areas of international health and life, automotive, assistance and travel insurance. Operating in over 78 countries, Allianz Partners offers global solutions that are redefining help, going beyond traditional insurance to help and protect customers wherever they are and whenever they need it. Our innovative experts deliver future

ready, high-tech, high-touch products and services through four commercial brands: Allianz Assistance, Allianz Care, Allianz Automotive and Allianz Travel. Our 21,500 employees handle over 54 million cases each year, motivated to go the extra mile to help and protect customers and employees around the world.

About Allianz Partners New Zealand

Based in Auckland, we employ more than 100 staff, specialising locally in providing and managing assistance services, travel insurance, event insurance, student insurance and pet insurance through our New Zealand and international business partners. Our strength lies in combining the solidarity and trust that comes with being part of an established global organisation with the local expertise of our New Zealand team.

For more local information, please visit: <http://www.allianzpartners.co.nz/>

Press contact

ALANA MCISAAC | Adhesive PR | alana@adhesivepr.nz

Social media

 Follow us on LinkedIn [Allianz Partners](#)