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6 Drinks to Enjoy This Summer

by Celine C.



Image from Canva

Getting closer to June means getting closer to the summer, and summer in Tokyo is often a hot, sticky mess. And when it is hot and humid, we often want cold, refreshing things, especially drinks. Here are 5 refreshing drinks to have over the summer that are perfect for surviving the exhausting heat.

Mango Passion Tea Frappuccino (Starbucks)

Wanting a fruity, refreshing drink to cool off in the heat? This frappuccino is made just for you. With the sweetness of mango and a hint of tropical passionfruit, this blended drink instantly drives away the heat. The tropical flavor is in perfect harmony with the slushy texture, making the drink even more flavorful.

My opinion: One of the best drinks to have in the summer. Not too sweet, making it a pleasant drink.

Price: Tall ¥590~



Mango Peach Alishan Gelato (Gong Cha)

Another refresher that is a perfect fit for the summer is this icy gelato tea. Mixed in with the Alishan Oolong tea, the fruity taste of both peach and mango tastes better when mixed in with different toppings like nata de coco, aloe, and more.

My opinion: The cold, icy texture makes it enjoyable to drink, and adding toppings adds an interesting flavor to it.

Price: Medium ¥650~



Since not everyone enjoys refreshers, here are some steady/popular sellers that bring a boost to your summer day.

Matcha Cream Frappuccino (Starbucks)

This frappuccino is a must in the hot weather of Tokyo. People often think this drink is not much of a refresher. However, it can be. The deep taste of matcha blended with ice makes the drink much more refreshing, and it does not give the impression of having a milky taste. Having it on a summer afternoon is always the best.

My opinion: The matcha isn't only sweet, it has a deeper taste, making the frappuccino a good option for the summer.

Price: Tall ¥595~



Chocolista (Tully's)

People who love smoothie-like drinks? Here's one for you. The thick texture of the Chocolista with the chocolate flakes on top? The best. The chocolate deepens the drink's flavor, making it less sweet and more enjoyable for everyone.

My opinion: The special texture of the

drink, only available at Tully's, always makes it a strong option when it comes to choosing what to drink.

Price: Short ¥650~



Strawberry & Rose Darjeeling Milk Tea (Gong Cha)

Have you ever imagined a milk tea with a hint of fruit? Well, this drink is just that. The calm flavors of Darjeeling and rose spread through your mouth as the sweet scent of strawberry follows, adding zest to the drink.

My opinion: One of the best milk teas in Gong Cha, the special flavor catches you as soon as you take your first sip.

Price: Small ¥440~



Extra: Watermelon Hwa-Chae (soda)

Looking for a drink recipe that you can make at home? Here's one for you. Watermelon Hwa-chae is a traditional Korean drink with the combination of watermelon and cider. It's simple and fast to make, and very delicious. Below are the steps to make Hwa-chae.



1. Prepare a watermelon, cut it into sizes you want
2. Prepare a bowl of any kind of soda (preferably Sprite)
3. Put the watermelon in, with any other fruits of your choice
4. Add different toppings! (Fruit jelly, sago, aloe, etc)
5. Enjoy!

As seen above, these 6 drinks, in my opinion, are the best to cool off the summer heat that is coming soon. Though it is expected to be yet another exhaustingly hot summer in Tokyo, having refreshers will always help make your day! Happy summer holidays!

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Cheap Side Quests to Do Over the Summer

by Ai L.



Image from Canva

Introduction

Everyone says that summer is the perfect time to sit back, unwind, and enjoy the peaceful moments of the year. However, I think otherwise. In my eyes, summer is the time to unleash all the chaos you can and have as much fun as you can, while not stressing or feeling like you're wasting time. It's the season for spontaneous fun and ridiculous side quests (in other words quick adventures), which you'll have stories to tell your future kids about.

Things to Bring

First things first, you need to bring a good set of items to document your great adventures. Phones do work well, but for that nostalgic feel, a camcorder or digital camera is ideal. Filming vlogs, capturing snippets of the places you go to, or candid pictures of you and your friends is a must! Doing this is the perfect way to develop a curated collection of pictures that you could use for your pinboards, share online, or even scrapbook with!

If you decide to purchase a new camera or camcorder, there are tons to fit different budgets. Some recommendations for lower budgets are the Fujifilm Quicksnap, the Kodak Funsaver, and the Amber Spark. For higher budgets, my personal favorite is the Fujifilm X-A2! Honestly, though, any camera works to capture those quick snaps – all that matters is that you're living in the moment and capturing meaningful memories along the way!

Things to Do

Most importantly, you need things to do with your friends or family. Sometimes quests can be fun to do alone, but usually, the more people, the better! Some great ideas for things to do are hunting for specific vinyl records, going on picnics while bedazzling your favorite items, or making your future self a message and leaving it in a small but special box at the side of your room. For a personal touch, bedazzle your box, add glitter to them, or draw on them!

Alternatively, you could go on a run with a friend or two at a

comfortable pace, while making stops every few kilometers. One of my personal summer bucket-list activities is going on a cookie run with a couple of friends. Every two kilometers, we could stop at different shops that sell cookies, try their signatures, and rank our favorites while still keeping our athletic grind up!

Conclusion

At the end of the day, the greatest summer memories often come from the simplest moments, which might not be that well thought-out. All that we should remember to do during the summer is relax, explore new places, and enjoy the small, exciting moments of life. Whether you decide to bring a camera to document your adventure or simply live in the moment, what matters is that we have fun with our friends and family or simply enjoy some special alone time. Have a great summer!

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Tasty Japanese Sweets

by Maya F.



Image from Canva

As many have experienced, or are about to experience, Japan has many unique and popular desserts enjoyed throughout the year. Around the world, people enjoy sweet treats, and Japan is no exception. Japan has its own desserts that are enjoyed at festivals, cafes, and street markets. Whether it's kakigori, daifuku, or taiyaki, these desserts are popular across Japan and add more fun to different seasons and celebrations.

Kakigori

Kakigori comes in many different flavors and can have many different toppings. It is made by shaving slivers of ice off the surface of an ice block, which becomes fluffy snow.



Popular flavors of kakigori include strawberry, melon, and lemon. You can also choose to add condensed milk, azuki beans, or mix syrups together. In different prefectures, they also have different styles. Near Kyoto in Uji, they mix it with green tea, making Uji Kintoki. In Kagoshima prefecture, there is the Shirokuma (polar bear), which includes condensed milk, canned fruit, and sweet syrup.

Japan Food Guide states that historical records date kakigori back to the Heian period (794-1185), when the upper class enjoyed it. The ice would have to be collected from the mountains in winter and stored in ice houses to prevent melting. As Japan moved forward in history, kakigori carried on with the changes, and by the 20th century, kakigori could be found all over Japan and had become an important part of summer. Nippon.com talks about how, as kakigori has gotten more popular, more types of kakigori have emerged, one being “Natural Ice”, which is a method where the ice is stored in an icehouse, like how it used to be, instead of being artificially cooled. By letting the ice naturally continue to freeze, it allows for a fluffier version of kakigori. Furthermore, the official

government website of Japan states that after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, Japan has been trying to come up with more ways to stay cool to help stay cool without relying more on electricity, and one way they thought of was by eating kakigori.

A quick Google search tells us that some popular kakiogori shops include Himitsudo, which is known for its handmade syrups and traditional hand-shaved ice. Another well-known location is Saka-no-Ue Cafe, which is popular for having very soft, fluffy kakigori and unique menu items such as brûléed meringue toppings, seasonal fruit flavors, and matcha-based desserts.

Daifuku

Sakuraco explains how daifuku most likely originated from uzura mochi, which is mochi shaped like a quail. They originated in the early Edo period (1603-1867), and sometime in 1875, a widow in Koishikawa (modern-day Tokyo) made them smaller and added sugar. They started being called "habotai mochi" because of the amount of filling that expanded. The name later changed to daifuku mochi. The kanji for daifuku mochi means “great luck rice cake” and was thought to bring good fortune, and is often associated with New Year celebrations and spring festivals.



There are many different types of daifuku that have developed.

The original type of daifuku is filled with red bean paste and can be colored using food coloring. Ichigo daifuku or strawberry daifuku is one of the most well-known types; it uses whole strawberries that are covered in red bean paste or cream. Yomogi daifuku is made with Japanese mugwort leaves that are kneaded into the mochi, turning the mochi green. Ume daifuku is a Japanese plum coated with red bean paste. It can only be enjoyed during winter and early spring during ume season.

Some popular places to try daifuku include Demachi Futaba, which is famous for its traditional mame daifuku filled with sweet red bean paste and salted beans. Another well-known shop is Ginza Akebono, which sells many seasonal wagashi and fruit-filled daifuku. Minamoto Kitchoan is also popular for its elegant Japanese sweets made with fresh fruit and high-quality ingredients.

Anmitsu

Anmitsu is a traditional Japanese dessert made with cubes of jelly, sweet red beans, fruit, mochi, and sweet syrup. Some versions can include matcha ice cream or whipped cream. It is known for combining many different flavors and textures. It is served cold and is popular during hot summers.



According to Tokyo Cheapo, anmitsu became popular during the

Meiji period and was often served in traditional Japanese tea houses. Japan Experience explains that the dessert is usually made with kanten jelly, which comes from seaweed and gives it a unique flavor. MATCHA also explains that anmitsu is considered a classic dessert and is enjoyed at Japanese cafes during the summer.

Some popular cafes and places to try anmitsu are Mihashi, which is famous for traditional anmitsu and matcha desserts. Kagizen Yoshifusa is also famous for traditional Japanese desserts, served in an old-style tea house setting.

Taiyaki

Taiyaki is a fish-shaped pastry usually filled with sweet red bean paste, but some more modern versions are filled with custard, chocolate, and sweet potato. The outside stays crispy while the inside is warm and soft. It is a very recognizable street food and is commonly sold at festivals, markets, and dessert shops. During summer, it is also commonly sold with ice cream filling to make it more refreshing.



According to the Japanese government's official website, taiyaki first became popular during the Meiji period. The fish shape was inspired by the tai fish (sea bream or red snapper), which is considered a symbol of good luck. Nippon explains that taiyaki quickly became popular because it was inexpensive and easy to

eat. Tokyo Cheapo also explains that modern taiyaki shops offer many different flavors and toppings, helping the dessert stay popular today.

Some popular places to try include Naniwaya Sohonten, which is considered one of the oldest and most famous taiyaki shops in Japan. Dotonbori is also another place to find fresh taiyaki from street vendors.

Japanese desserts are more than just tasty snacks, they are an important part of culture in Japan. Whether people are eating fluffy kakigōri, chewy daifuku, enjoying traditional anmitsu in a café, or grabbing warm taiyaki from a street stand, these desserts continue to be popular across Japan. Many of these sweets also have long histories and traditions connected to different regions of Japan. From old-fashioned tea houses to modern dessert cafés, Japanese desserts continue to bring people together and remain an important part of Japanese food culture.

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Bedazzle Your Summer!

by Claire P.



Image from Canva

Introduction

Summer is usually a leisurely time where you sit back and relax, doomscroll on your phone for at least 10 hours a day, or even stay home for 1 week straight. But is looking at your phone all day good for you? According to the National Library of Medicine, spending too much time on your phone can cause stress/pain on parts of your body, increase levels of cortisol, and can interfere with cognitive development. Fortunately, there are so many activities that you could do indoors instead of scrolling on your phone. The trendiest and most recent activity is bedazzling. Bedazzling is a simple activity where you glue rhinestones and decorative gems onto objects to make them sparkle and look more customized. From phone cases to makeup containers, almost anything can be transformed, and almost anything can be turned into a fascinating and creative design.

What Do You Need in Order to Bedazzle?

The main supplies you need in order to bedazzle are superglue, rhinestones, a wax pencil, and, optionally, tweezers. Typically, you can order bedazzling kits on Amazon that include all of these necessary materials. As it is quite affordable (normally in the 2,000 to 4,000 yen price range), you can ask to get it as a gift or even save up for it on your own, just in time for summer. Many of these kits contain 24 or even more colors, which allows you to match the perfect color to your item for a unique and personalized design. This variety of colors and styles gives people the opportunity to experiment with different patterns, themes, and aesthetics. For example, pastel rhinestones can create a softer and cuter look, while metallic or brightly colored gems can make an item appear bold and eye-catching. Because of this flexibility, bedazzling has become increasingly popular on social media platforms such as Pinterest and TikTok, where people share creative designs and tutorials.

What Can You Bedazzle and How Do You Bedazzle?

There is a plethora of things that you could bedazzle, from a simple skincare bottle to a TV! Some ideas inspired by Pinterest are makeup bottles, phone cases, calculators, hairbrushes, Sonny Angels, and claw clips. Bedazzling is a fun way to not only get off of your phone but also customize everyday items to make them more cute,

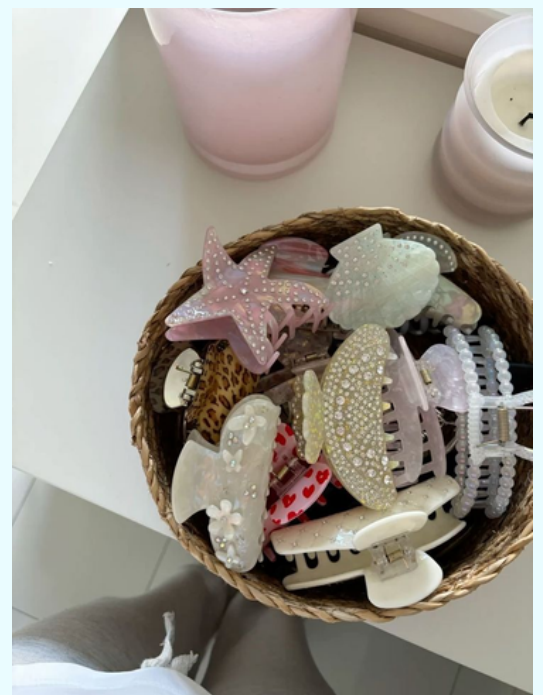


Image from Pinterest



Image from Pinterest

unique, and eye-catching.

In order to bedazzle, you can follow a step-by-step process that will make you a professional in 10 minutes. First, plan out your design and colors so you know where you want the gems to be placed. Then, apply the glue directly onto the object you are bedazzling and pick up a rhinestone by gently pushing the wax pencil on

the sparkly and bumpy side of the rhinestone. Then place the rhinestone on the glue. After letting the glue dry and set completely, your finished product will have a new dazzling and shiny look.

Tips and Techniques

Although bedazzling may seem very easy, it actually takes patience and passion to upgrade your items. When bedazzling, it is important to work slowly and carefully to create a nice design. Before starting, it is necessary to wipe the surface of the object so you have a clean and tidy surface to work with. It is most efficient to work in small sections so that you have the most precision with your design, and the glue will not dry when working on another section. Additionally, taking your time when placing each rhinestone can make the final product look much

more professional. Using different sizes and colors of gems can also add more detail and dimension to your design. With practice, bedazzling can become both a relaxing hobby and a fun way to express your personal style.

Conclusion

Although summer may seem like a time to spend all day on your phone, there are fun crafts and activities that you can do, such as bedazzling. Bedazzling is helpful for people who find boredom during long, hot summer days because it allows them to stay productive and creative while still expressing their personal style. In addition, it can be a relaxing and enjoyable hobby that gives ordinary objects a unique and sparkling transformation. Whether you are decorating a phone case, makeup container, or hairbrush, bedazzling is a simple yet entertaining activity that can make summer both more creative and memorable.

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Summer Reads

by Layla P.



Image from Canva

Introduction

The end of the school year is coming fast- less than three weeks. For the seventh and eighth graders, you're probably thinking, "Oh my god, exams!" which I'm sure you've already stressed enough about (I would know). For those truly suffering from exam season – just think about what's after. Summer! The best part of the year. After exams you'll have a few days of fun and then you are free. For the fifth and sixth graders, just enjoy the time you have now – exams aren't entirely pleasant. Back to summer, though, it's two months long, so maybe you need ideas on how to spend your time. Oh, I know, you should try reading. Reading is a productive thing you can do during your summer while enjoying the time and the sun. Now picking the books is the hardest part, which is why I'm making it easier for you. Below are several recommendations that you can enjoy during summer as

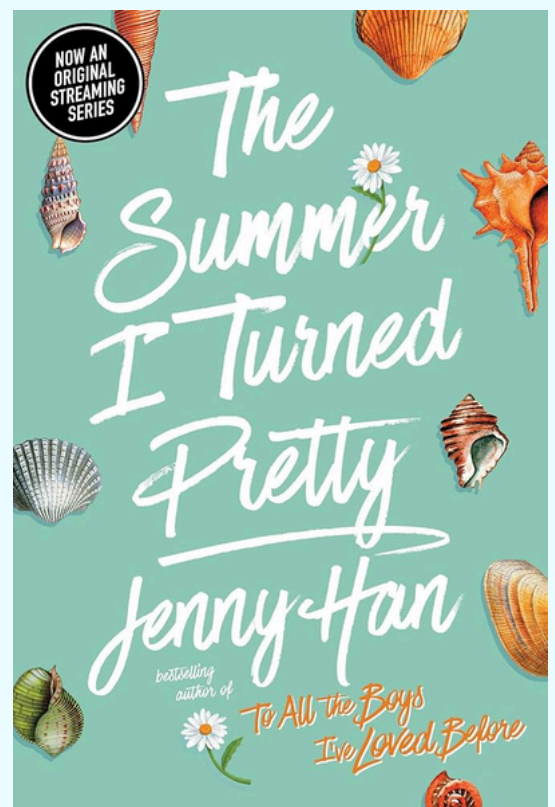
well as at any other time. Not all books are set in summer but all are young adult romance books, 4 featuring heterosexual relationships and 4 featuring lgbtq+ relationships. All are mostly sweet and loving (keyword: mostly). However, for the younger readers – the genre "young adult" does normally mean books geared towards teenagers, which includes 18 and 19-year-olds, so read with caution and use this website

<https://www.commonensemedia.org/> to check content warnings. (Editor's note: It's always good to check if the age of the protagonist is similar to yours.) Now let's go on to the books.

The Summer I Turned Pretty by Jenny Han

After the show adaptation blew up, known for its crazy love triangle, constant drama, and interesting choices by the main character, many people know the name. But many people haven't read the books that started it all. *The Summer I Turned Pretty* follows Isabel (Belly) Conklin, who finds herself in a love triangle with the two sons of her mom's (Laurel) best friend (Suzannah). She

grew up always having a huge crush on the older brother Conrad, but she finds that he's changed. Conrad has become moodier, more grumpy, and less interested in spending time with Belly. Now the younger brother, Jeremiah is fun, flirty, and



head over heels for Belly. What Belly doesn't know is that Conrad is dealing with some dark secrets alone, which can never end well. In this 3-book series, filled with struggle, love, and growing up, you will never find yourself getting bored or tired.

Love & Gelato by Jenna Evans Welch

I tried to pick romance books for this article, but this one also has a bit of mystery if you're looking for that. *Love & Gelato* is a summer romance set in Tuscany, Italy—a countryside known for sunshine and beautiful views. Lina Emerson is in Tuscany, as it was her dying mother's last wish for her to spend time with her father... who wasn't around for all sixteen years of her life. She is not happy to be there until she is given her mother's journal, documenting her time in Italy. Suddenly, Lina's hearing all about her mother's secret romances, art, and hidden places to visit. As she follows in her mom's footsteps she's not alone; she has the charming Ren to help her with it. But things aren't as simple as she thought they were, and she starts to unearth a secret her mom kept buried. This book is sweet, fun, and keeps your mind racing as you keep up with the budding romance between Lina and Ren and all they discover about her mom.

Better than the Movies by Lynn Painter

Lynn Painter is one of the best young adult romance authors of all time (I'm not lying). I have devoured most of her books, and whenever a new one is announced, I can't wait. *Better than the Movies* is her most well-known series, and for a good reason.

Elizabeth (Liz) Buxbaum has always relied on her favorite rom-coms to navigate life—especially after losing her mom. So when her childhood crush, Michael, moves back to town, Liz is determined to stage the perfect love story. To win his heart, she reluctantly partners with her frustrating neighbor and lifelong rival, Wes Bennet. But as Liz and Wes team up, she begins to wonder whether she's been looking at the wrong boy the whole time and if the happy ending she's been searching for has been next door all her life. This series (and all of her books) is heartwarming and adorable enough to make you cry.



The Summer of Broken Rules by K.L. Walter

This was probably my first official romance book, and it did not disappoint. Reading this book practically started a pandemic of romance reading for me. Meredith Fox and her family have been going to Martha's Vineyard every summer all her life. Every year they have a game of assassin (using water guns to shoot specified opponents). Meredith's sister Claire has always been the winner, but there's a twist this year. Claire's dead, killed in a car crash. This year a wedding is taking place, and assassin is continuing as usual. Meredith is determined to be the winner in honor of her sister, but when an annoyingly handsome

groomsman gets in her way, it's impossible to stay focused. So they team up, and as Meredith fights to the death (I'm kidding) with her partner, something more develops along the way. This book is witty, sweet, but also speaks about grief. Oh, also, it talks a lot about Taylor Swift (for all the Swifties out there).



Going Bicoastal by Dahlia Adler

This book is LGBTQ+ and revolves around the bisexual (and Jewish) teen Natalya Fox. Natalya Fox's parents are divorced, and she's not even sure why they got married in the first place. But now she has a decision to make: staying in her home in NYC with her dad or going across the country to take an internship in LA with her mom. She can't pick, so her summer goes on in alternating timelines, New York and

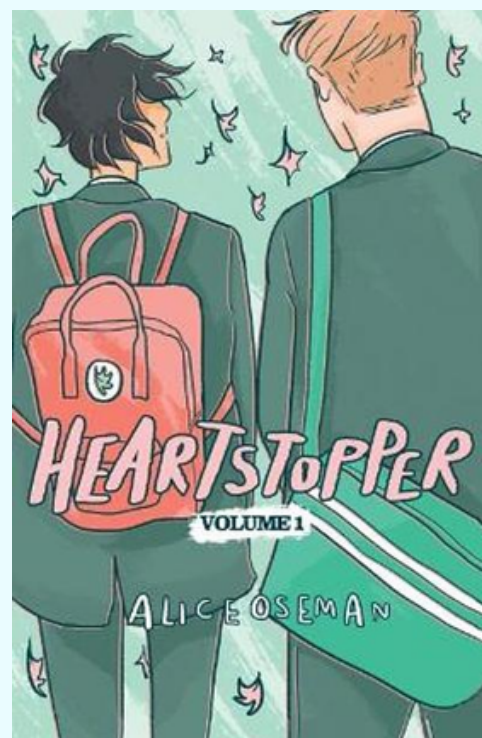
California. In New York she gets more chances to spend time with "the redhead" she's been obsessing over for ages. While in LA, her annoying internship partner becomes the guy she never saw coming. This book is not normal, as you get to see both of her decisions play out and get to pick which one you like better. It's fun, hilarious, and a great read for someone who is indecisive and spends days wondering what could have happened if they'd acted differently.

Imogen Obviously by Becky Albertalli

Becky Albertalli is a huge queer writer, well known for *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* and her collaboration with Adam Silvera on the duology *What If It's Us* (another book on this list). *Imogen Obviously* is another one of her amazing books. Imogen Scott has forever been the heterosexual but the biggest ally. Her sister's queer, her two best friends are queer as well, yet Imogen has also been completely straight. When she goes to visit her best friend Lili at college, she's more than excited to see her again and meet some new friends. What she isn't prepared for is that Lili has told all of her friends that Imogen and Lili used to date. None of them know the truth, that Imogen is a hetero, even Lili's new best friend Tessa. But as Imogen gets to know the pretty and funny Tessa, she starts wondering if maybe bending the truth was the right thing to do. *Imogen Obviously* is relatable, cute, but also explores the hard parts of coming out and the mistreatment some people get, without others realizing they're actually doing it.

Heartstopper by Alice Oseman

This well-loved, lgbtq classic is not a regular book. It's a series of graphic novels. So if you have a shorter attention span, maybe it's better for you. And even if you don't, I beg you to read this book; it will change your life. Charlie Spring is a year 10, openly gay



boy who's been bullied badly. Nick Nelson is a year 11 rugby player, and straight. But when Nick and Charlie cross paths, things change forever. Nick has to train Charlie in rugby, something Charlie doesn't want to do. And as they spend more time together, Nick starts to realize some new things about himself, while Charlie is falling hard. This whole series is sweet but deep as well. It explores the discovery of sexuality, gender, and different queer relationships. It shows homophobia and how people fight against it. It is inspiring but also heartbreaking in the last couple of books. Be prepared for tears, cause the last two books get deep.

What If It's Us by Adam Silvera and Becky Albertalli

Adam Silvera is the life-changing author of the *Death-Cast* series, and this duology with Becky Albertalli (yes, I know I've said it already) is another wonderful work. Arthur, a Seuss-forever musical lover, a newbie in NYC, and never been kissed, isn't expecting to meet Ben Alejo, recently dumped, fantasy reader who is dropping off a breakup box at the post office. But they do meet and though Ben ends up running away, Arthur does everything he can to find him. When they do find each other, it feels right. Though they have three first dates, their first kiss changes everything. Things aren't always perfect, though. Ben's breakup box has not been sent, and things with his ex are messy. Arthur's overthinking had him thinking the worst possible things about Ben, which cannot end well. Things may seem perfect and sweet, but do summer loves ever last? This duology is funny but emotional, and perfect for summer or if you find yourself in NYC.

This series has huge mentions of musicals, so it's also great for theater kids.

My goal for you this summer is to read at least 1 book. It can be from this list or any other book you're interested in. Reading 1 book doesn't mean you have to give up tanning, binge watching TV, and doom scrolling. It just means you can try to use your free time better. You can find some of these books in our library, or you can buy them physically or digitally. If you're not a fan of reading, then at least listen to an audiobook. So when school ends, have fun... and open a book.

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Refreshing Summer Treats Recommendations

by Zora S.



Image from Canva

Prologue

Picture this: You feel as hot as your crush. (If you have one.) Okay, okay not that kind of hot. I'll admit I'm talking about temperature. You feel sticky like your hands when you make sticky tack. You sweat to the point where it's getting uncomfortable, and you're getting self-conscious. The sun shines as brightly as when you check your phone at 2 am. The cicadas try to sing my name, but they're only able to pronounce the first letter. The buzz and chatter that they produce is so loud that at this point it's the updated version of white noise. You're on the verge of death, trudging through the streets searching for that one store that holds the antidote to these uncomfortable feelings.

There.

You spot it, and your mouth runs dry. Your face becomes bathed in a familiar beacon of white, green, and blue. You cry tears of joy as you enter the icebox full of snacks and refreshing treats. You footslog through the hallways looking for one thing and one thing only. No, not the artificial candy, no, not the cheese sticks, and no, definitely not the onigiris. You're here for top quality. You're here for the best treatment. You're here for the thing that'll revive your soul. You're here for ice cream. When you finally reach the freezer, you stare down longingly at all the colorful packaging just begging for you to buy them. But there's just one problem:

Which one??

Well, my friend, I'm glad you asked! In this article, my dear reader, you're in for a treat! *heh get it? Since the summer is fast approaching, here are four descriptions including fun facts, history, and flavors of the most refreshing delicacies from convenience stores and supermarkets in Tokyo that I recommend you eat the next time you find yourself in the scenario I just described! Without further ado, let's get started!



Image from Canva

Refreshing Treat #1: GariGari Kun

The first refreshing treat that I recommend to you, reader, is GariGariKun!



When I was digging around for research to back up this article, I stumbled upon the website for the brand Akagi that manufactures ice cream such as GariGari Kun. According to this source, GariGari Kun (the boy on the package) is depicted as an elementary school boy who has the power to turn into the actual ice pop or ShariShari Kun. So technically, you're eating a kid... anyways. On the packaging you can usually find him with his mouth wide open, and apparently he has a sister named Gariko Chan but that's a story for another time!

This ice pop is like the shaved ice treat kakigori, but turned into an ice pop that's easier to carry and melts more slowly! Personally I love the ramune flavor but they have other seasonal specials that are flavored with a variety of fruits!

In a regular combini in Tokyo, this is generally sold for around 88 yen. Only 88 yen guys! Inflation hasn't targeted this childhood treat like it has the (no longer) ten-yen gum! This would definitely be my first choice if I needed a yummy, inexpensive, refreshing ice pop!

Refreshing Treat #2: Aisu no Mi

The second reviving sweet treat I recommend to you is called Aisu no Mi! Launched in 1986, according to the brand, Glico, this ball-shaped ice cream is delicious. It's easy to eat on the go, and there are two ways to open the package. One opening is just a normal tear place at the top, good for sharing with friends. But if you don't want to bother getting your supposedly grimy hands all over your refreshing ice cream, this ice cream snack also has a smaller opening at the top of the package in the corner that allows you to eat one sphere at a time, which is really handy.



This dessert mainly goes by fruit flavors, such as the grape flavor shown in the image below. The ice cream's texture on the outer shell is hard and slightly crunchy, but once you bite into the ice cream the texture changes and the inside is soft, creamy, and refreshing.

Another reason why this ice cream is superb is because it's way easier to store if you don't want to finish the whole thing in one sitting. Just use a clip like you would for a bag of chips, store it in the freezer, and you're done.

Refreshing Treat #3: Suika Bar

(Watermelon Icepop) *Please note this is seasonal and usually only shows up during the summer

Ahem. For frozen treat recommendation number three, here's a quote from the company Lotte who produces them to let you know exactly what it is. "An ice cream bar that looks just like a slice of watermelon!" Yup, that's right. That's all it is. Though this ice cream has personality, I'll give you that.



From my past experiences, the actual watermelon part AKA the red part tastes a bit like watermelon but is really, really sweet as expected. Located in the red part of the ice pop are black spots, which represent the seeds found in the actual fruit. These are actually miniature pieces of chocolate and add more texture to the overall ice pop. The green part at the bottom of the ice pop has a bit more of a melon taste, however it tastes equally sweet and artificial.

Refreshing Treat #4: Choco Monaka Jumbo

Ever had a s'more? You know, those mini unhealthy sandwiches made from graham crackers, marshmallows, and chocolate? If you haven't, I recommend trying them because if you haven't

tasted that marshmallowy goodness with chocolate put all together, you're missing out, my friend. (Though if for religious reasons, or allergy-related reasons, or if you genuinely just don't like it, that's understandable and don't worry, you're not really missing out.)

I brought up s'mores because whenever I eat this company's (Morinaga Industry) ice cream sandwich I just imagine that they created this by taking the blueprints of a s'more and making it into a hybrid. It's a giant smore sandwich except the marshmallow is replaced with ice cream, and the graham cracker is replaced with a wafer shell made from mochi. In short, if you're a person who loves soft serve, every main ingredient in s'mores, this Choco Monaka Jumbo ice cream is for you, my fellow food critics...in training.



Well, that's a wrap! Unless you tear the packaging, of course...!

Epilogue

Your breath fogs on the ice cream you've chosen as you exhale. It sits in your hands as you clutch it to your chest. You don't hold it like a crown - powerful and precious. You don't hold it the way

What To Do When You Have Nothing To Do

by Kaeli S.



Image from Canva

Over the summer, I find that I often say, “I’m bored.” Sometimes I don't feel like watching a show, but I also don't feel like reading a book or drawing. So, when you are feeling like this, what can you do? That was the inspiration for this article, and I have tried to come up with a list of activities that can keep you away from boredom. Hopefully, it helps you this summer.

Creative



Image from COS

Start a New Craft

Crafting is a good way to keep yourself from being bored, with the added benefit of ending up with a physical result of your work. For instance, taking up needlework can be very relaxing, and you can have music or even a movie in the background. Fabrics with patterns for hand embroidery, and sashiko, a type of Japanese embroidery, can be found in 100 yen stores such as Seria. Needles and thread are also sold at 100 yen stores, making stitching easy to try without spending too much money. Jewelry-making is another craft that isn't too expensive to start, as beads and string are easily accessible. Finally, one last craft that I would like to recommend is building 3D wooden puzzles/miniatures. These miniatures can be a bit tedious at times, especially the smaller ones, but I find them very rewarding as they always turn out very pretty at the end.

Make a Scrapbook

Making a scrapbook can be a great way to keep a record of all the memories you've made over the past year! To make a scrapbook, you can choose a blank notebook that you have or you can buy a special book from Loft or other stationery stores. A stationery

store like Loft is also a good place to buy masking tape, pens, construction paper, and other materials you might want for your scrapbook. Then, you can pick out photos that you would like to use and print them at a combini near your house. Once you have all the materials you want, you can cut, glue, and tape the materials you have into the book, and you now have a beautiful scrapbook!

Write a Story

Writing can be a good escape from boredom, and one that also gives you as much freedom as you want. Even if you think that you don't like writing, or that there's nothing that you want to write about, you should at least try it. What's something that you daydream about often? What's something that's interesting to you? Make a story out of it, write it down, and just see where it goes.

Bake/Cook

If you have plenty of time during the summer, you might as well learn something useful, like cooking or baking. Either one can be calming and a good process to learn. If you've always wanted to learn how to make a cake or a pasta, you can search up a simple recipe online, or, even better, have a family member teach you. It can be a great bonding experience, and as a bonus, it ends in something delicious.

Draw

Drawing is something that you probably do often (definitely not on the corner of your notes during a lesson), but you might not

actually do it in your free time. If you don't, then it could be worthwhile to try! You can use how-to draw videos or just sketch something on your own. If you have any extra coloring materials, such as paints or colored pencils, those would be fun to practice with, too. However, sketching on paper isn't the only way to draw. Drawing apps have a very different feeling from pencil and paper, and can be more appealing to some people. If you haven't tried using one before, it could be an interesting experience to try.

Active



Image from Pikbest

Take a Walk

Getting fresh air is important, especially in summer, when you sometimes don't have any motivation to leave your room. If you find that you are really bored, taking a walk, even a short one, can refresh you and might make you more interested in something else by the time you return home. Since it's so hot out in Tokyo, it might be a good idea to bring a portable fan if you have one. If you don't know where to walk to, you can go to a convenience store near your house (maybe buying snacks can be an incentive). Going somewhere new can also be exciting. Just make sure you can get back home again 🙌.

Meet with Friends

Although staying inside and being a couch potato can be tempting, especially on the excessively hot days of summer in Tokyo, meeting up with friends can help you get out of your room and actually talk to someone. Sometimes, it might feel like it's a waste of energy and you would rather just hide in the air conditioning, but once you start talking with your friends again, it is really fun and totally worth leaving your house. You could meet at a department store or a cafe, or plan out a time when you could go to each other's houses. If your friends aren't in the country for the summer or if you aren't available to go out, calling each other is a good backup. Although texting is more convenient than calling, I find that speaking to each other over a call can be more fun.

Clean up or Reorganize Your Room

Sometimes cleaning or even reorganizing your room is exactly the kind of rewarding activity you need over the summer. Maybe you didn't have time during the school year, especially if you had to study for exams or end-of-year tests, so this is an opportunity for you to make your room look the way you want it. You can make it a big change and redecorate entirely, or just a small adjustment, like moving around the stuff on your desk. However you want to change up your room, it is your decision.



Image from Canva

Relaxing



Image from Houseplant UK

Read

Reading stories can transport you away from your house to places where you will (hopefully) not be bored. If there's a book on your shelf you haven't read yet, one that you've heard about, or one that you've been debating over starting, just go for it! If you are hesitant about trying a new book, then think about some movies or series you've liked that were based on books or have novels based on them. Reading the book can give you more details or material that wasn't present in the version you watched. Owning a Kindle or E-reader is also an advantage in this case, as buying the books for them is usually much cheaper than buying a physical copy.

Start a New TV Series

Sometimes you just need to sit down and binge a good TV series. Search through the shows you've added to your list but never watched, or the 'recommended for you' section, and maybe you'll find something there to keep you entertained. If not, you can try to find something that is totally different from what you normally watch, just to switch it up a bit. If you usually watch anime, maybe try a K-drama and see if you like it, or vice versa.

The good thing about TV series is that they have multiple episodes, and so they can keep you hooked for a while.

Grow Plants

If you want to try something therapeutic and calming, grow some plants. Buy a pot, some soil, a watering can if you don't have one already, and seeds of your choice. You can plant anything from a flowerbed to a tomato plant to a cactus. Watching the plant grow can be a very exciting process, and taking care of it daily can help you get into a routine, which can at least keep you from getting bored for a few minutes of the day.

What to Do If You Are Suffering from ✨ Extreme Boredom ✨

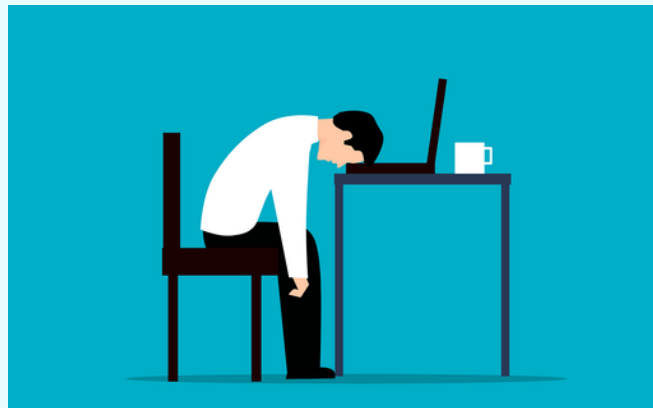


Image from Empowering Performance Inc.

Review Papers from Earlier Assignments in the School Year or Even from Previous Years

Rereading notes from the year can help you remember and retain information that you might have forgotten already by the time the year finished. It can also help your brain not to get 'rusty' from disuse and can make you feel really smart if you remember most of the material.

Make a Monstrosi-Interesting New Dish

Sometimes, you are too lazy to follow a recipe, and you want to just mix some unopened tofu in the fridge with something random left in the freezer. Just messing around and trying something new could result in a new classic that you will make all the time...or not.

These are all the activities I have managed to think of for now, but there are many, many more that you can try over the summer break. I hope this has at least given you a new idea for something to do this summer, and that you enjoyed reading this article!

Have a great summer break!

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Summer Camp: An Original Short Story

by Lynn U.



Image from Canva

The hot summer light dazzled down from the sky like golden honey, melting through the verdant leaves of oak. An arid wind sank into the withered autumn leaves as birds warbled their usual tunes. I shifted the synth piano on my back as I blew strands of hair away from my face. It was deemed useless though; even if my hair was out of the way, leaves and dirt would come subsequently. Sweat slipped from my cheeks as I hiked through the rough terrain. I jabbed my hand in the left side pocket of my grey jacket and combed through the various crumbled bits of sheet music that I had promised to straighten out later. Out I pulled a dusty soiled piece of paper as I traced my thumb over the title, “Subtonic Summer Camp- a summer camp where composers around the world can come to share their amazing work! (36th anniversary)”

I groaned at the cheesy title, but still deep down, I knew it myself- I was excited. This was the first time someone was going to listen to my music- not just anyone's music- it would be my music, the music I spent hours composing on Logic Pro, ignoring sleep and rest, ignoring time itself as a concept. I took in a breath of the autumn air, cold and crispy, smiling.

The camp was deep in nature, surrounded by wooden fences carved into artwork. Leaves of amber, ruby, topaz, blanketed the floor and a sign hung from a taller portion of the fence, the title etched deep into the wood. The moment I stepped in, a girl sitting on one of the benches bounced right up and sprinted towards my direction, "Oh my god it's another person!"

I stammer, "...yes?"

The girl spinned, "I was the only one here, I thought I got terribly lost! I have no sense of direction, y'know?" She peered over at my synth. "You brought a whole synth? Wait, do you compose? Wait—" she gasps, "- SHOW ME YOUR MUSIC—" she tackled me to the ground and checked all my pockets.

"Hey—stop—"

The girl pulled out one of my wrinkled sheet music and flattened it out on one of the wooden tables. She opened her grey, worn-out violin case and pulled out a viola shining in the color of a Tiger's Eye. I dove under the wooden table out of embarrassment, becoming one with the dry leaves. She squinted at the music for a moment, then started playing the melody. The sounds twisted and turned like an opal snake, made the

leaves carpeting the ground rustle, made the air quiver with excitement. After she finished, she took a dramatic bow, as if she were the lead actor in a Shakespearean play.

She peered under the table. “Come out,” she said.

“No,” I say.

“I really liked it,” she says. “Are you performing this one?”

I hesitate. “...No...” A wave of nausea crashes into me. “...I’ve been thinking maybe I shouldn’t perform and just watch...”

She gasps and looks at me, “No! That would be such a waste!” She grabs my shoulder with such intensity I flinch. “I don’t care what song you perform. It could be this one. It could be another one. But you have to perform! If you don’t, I’ll drag you onto the stage myself.

I opened my mouth to object, but more students were filing into the camp.

“U-um...I—” Someone tapped her shoulder as she was pulled somewhere else. I was left here by myself.

I gently brush the keyboard of the piano. More students flooded into the seats as I sat down. I felt a surge of something as I placed the sheet music on the music stand. What do you call it? A soothing sensation like cold water, washing everything away until all that was left was love. A deep, genuine love for music, a love that made my heart swell whenever my fingers brushed the keys. I loved music.

“You’ll never be good enough!”

“So lazy.”

“Look at that other kid– he’s so much better than you!”

It wasn’t music I hated. It wasn’t music I feared. I was scared. Scared of rejection, of punishment, of comparison. This fear held my courage back, my music back. But I can’t let that happen anymore. I can’t let my past control the present.

I lifted my fingers onto the piano and started playing. *A minor, G major, F major, G major, A minor...* the chords vibrated with my hands, flying off into the sky like a bird. The music swelled and pulsed like a wave, the melody as clear as raindrops. ...I love music. I love playing. I don't want this to end yet.

I finished playing, as the audience clapped. I stood up and bowed. I smiled.

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THE STUDENT OUTLOOK

Members

Celine C.

Layla P.

Maya F.

Kaeli S.

Ai L.

Zora S.

Claire P.

Lynn U.

Sponsor: Ms. Shiozawa

