

Japanese Culture Now

まんが喫茶: まんがを読む場所から、くつろぎの空間へ

Manga Cafes: From Reading Spot to Relaxation Space



Many of the customers at this Shibuya manga cafe are the young people in their late teens and early twenties who frequent this Tokyo commuter and shopping/entertainment hub. Six to seven-hundred people visit daily, and on busy weekend evenings, all of its 144 seats are likely to be taken. During the day, men and women often take a break from their work to stop by, and in the evening and nighttime the cafe is a popular stop-off for students and working people on their way home. The shop's shelves are lined with some 40,000 manga, magazines, and photo collections.



Television is of course available, and customers are free to watch any of 70 DVD titles and listen to any of the 200 music CDs available in the cafe. There are also about 300 video game titles to choose from for use with the PS2 and X-Box consoles. These cafes are also popular as places to go with a friend or a date to sit in a love seat and watch movies or enjoy video games.



Every week the cafe posts a ranking of the most popular manga. This week they are, from first to fifth: *no oji sama* [The Prince of Tennis], *Bagabondo* [Vagabond], *Ai yori aoshi* [True Blue Love], *Doragonboru* [Dragon Ball Z] and *Beruseruku* [Berserk].



It is also quite common for people who miss the night to spend the night at a *manga kissa*. Shows are available for use at 300 yen per half-hour. A pair of Boxer shorts (500 yen) and a fresh pair of Boxer shorts (500 yen) and the personal toiletries available for purchase.



At the self-serve drink bar all drinks are free. There is also bento (box-lunch of rice topped with sweet-ginger sauce) for 100 yen; a *karubi-don* (bowl of rice with seasoned, sliced beef) for 100 yen; and *bifu kare* (rice with beef curry) is 380 yen. Customers are free to bring along their own food and drink.

Visiting a Manga Kissa

Step 1.

First you visit the reception counter.



Step 2.

Choose your seat preference: There are five types, including massage chairs and recliners. All types of seats cost the same.



Step 3.

Select non-smoking or smoking.



