

We love *onsens*, too.

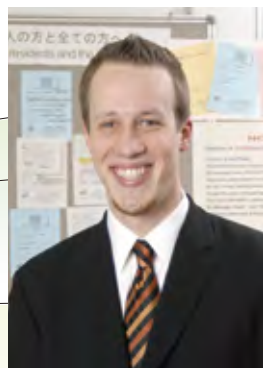
Foreingners who live in Japan
have become big fans of *onsens*.

A hot spring is like a pub



Amanda Harlow

Don't miss out on the Japanese
hot spring



Martin Y. Triche

Going to a hot spring in Japan is like going to a pub in England - it's the place where the locals go to relax and be themselves. So you can visit Japan and just see the tourist sights - but to meet real Japan it's essential to take off your clothes, slosh that water around and get naked!

My big hope is that the G8 world leaders will take the plunge together and REALLY communicate because that's what onsen are all about.

It's easy for any visitor to Japan to fall in love with the food, people, and culture, no matter the length of their stay. One thing tourists often miss out on, though, is the simple delight that is the Japanese hot spring. Some might be a bit timid when it comes to the idea of stripping down and hopping in a bath full of people you've never met, but it's amazing how quickly that bashfulness disappears once you slip into the water. A nice little soak can do wonders to erase the fatigue from a long day of work (or sightseeing), and will leave you feeling relaxed and refreshed.

So what are you waiting for? Take the plunge!