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Japan Screen Topics



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DRAMA OF VOLCANIC ERUPTION

96 feet 2 min. 40 sec.

1. (PLUME OF SMOKE) Without warning a Japanese volcano explodes. This is Mount Usu, on the northernmost island of Hokkaido, which erupted on the morning of August 7th after being dormant for 32 years.
2. (PEOPLE RUNNING) The initial eruption was so violent that residents and visitors to the nearby Toya Lake hot springs resort had to be evacuated immediately.
3. (CU OF VOLCANIC STONES) The huge plume of smoke and rain of volcanic ash sent many people running for their lives. The eruption came at the height of the summer holiday season and Toya Lake area was crowded with visitors.
4. (ASH ON THE ROAD) It was as if the snow that covers all of Hokkaido had arrived early. The gritty volcanic ash lay thick on the roads and houses. For motorists it was just like driving through a snowstorm. The ash fell on at least half of Hokkaido.
5. (SMASHED WINDSHIELD OF CAR) Large rocks hurled out by the exploding volcano smashed car windows and damaged buildings in nearby towns. The damage to crops was extensive. Fortunately, however, no deaths were reported.

6. (TECHNICIAN) The eruptions were monitored by scientists at the Hokkaido University Earthquake Research Institute. Numerous earth tremors accompanied the volcanic activity and were recorded on the Institute's sensitive equipment.

7. (CRATER) An aerial view shows the volcano apparently dormant again after weeks of activity that produced four major eruptions, one medium and 10 minor ones.

8. (CU OF ROCKS) Total damage was estimated at 11 million dollars, including 9 million dollar's worth of lost crops.... And there are fears that Usu could explode again at any moment.

HOTEL TRAIN

77 feet 2 min. 08 sec.

1. (LOCOMOTIVE NUMBERPLATE) A sight to delight any steam locomotive fan. Out in the depths of the Japanese countryside this gleaming locomotive seems to need only a good head of steam once again to spring back into life.

2. (CATTLE GRAZING) Although steam locomotive use was discontinued in 1975, and most went to the breaker's yard, this one proudly rests in Japan's largest privately owned dairy farm.

3. (FLOWER) In fact, the five sleeping cars it is towing have been converted into a unique hotel for 135 people. The D51 class locomotive is one of the favourites among Japan's many train buffs. This particular one operated for 38 years,

travelling over 3 million kilometres. Then it was taken to Koiwai in Northern Japan, broken into three pieces and hauled over six kilometre of roads to be reassembled at its present resting place. Both the locomotive and sleeping cars have been preserved exactly as they were when steam was still king on Japanese railways.

4. (GIRL IN BUNK) The hotel train is very popular with young people taking advantage of the Japan National Railways special cheap rate tours of northeastern Japan. There is no dining car, but food is available in the clubhouse of the adjacent ranch.

5. (CU OF YOUNG MAN'S FACE) In Northern Japan, a unique chance for steam locomotive addicts to indulge in a bit of nostalgia.

MATSUMOTO: GATEWAY TO THE ALPS

145 feet 4 min. 02 sec.

1. (TOWN/MOUNTAIN VIEWS) The Northern Alps, rooftop of Japan, with a number of peaks over 3,000 metres. And the gateway to the alps is the pretty town of Matsumoto.

2. (MOUNTAINEERS' LEGS) Every morning during the season, Matsumoto Station is crowded with mountain climbing enthusiasts from the cities.

3. (CASTLE) Matsumoto, a city of over 190,000 people, is a fascinating contrast of old and new. One of the main attractions is the castle built in 1504. It is the oldest five-storey castle

tower in the country. It was built by the local daimyo retainer for defensive warfare so the interior is an intricate maze of passageways to confuse attackers.

4. (RUNNING STREAM) In the surrounds are still parts of the old castle town. Part of the earthen walls still stand, for example, and draw many tourists.

5. (GLASS ELEVATOR) But only a stone's throw away are all the modern conveniences of Matsumoto 1977. The old and new, however, seem to exist in reasonable harmony.

6. (COLOURED BALL) Folkcrafts of Matsumoto. These balls were a plaything of castle young ladies of old. The wooden sculptures are made from white birch.

7. (CRAFTSMAN WORKING) White birch is very prevalent in this area and forms an integral part of local folkcrafts. This artisan is making a local variety of furniture that is now enjoying national fame. First developed in the 19th century Meiji era, it is being promoted today by many famous artists. The famed British potter Bernard Leach, for example, has done a great deal to popularise Matsumoto folk furniture.

8. (OLD HOUSE) Old and new examples of this furniture are now on display in a special museum.

9. (OLD SCHOOL BUILDING) Undergoing renovation is this fine old building, Japan's first European-style school.

10. (CHILDREN PLAYING) Matsumoto is in Nagano Prefecture, which has always been noted for its educational achievements. A history of those achievements are now on display in the school which has been converted to a museum.

11. (TALENT EDUCATION INSTITUTE SIGN) It comes as no surprise that Matsumoto is now the site of another unique educational experiment. Shinichi Suzuki, a violin teacher for many years, has developed a method of developing the musical talents of the very young. First time visitors are astonished to see two and three years olds confidently playing set pieces on the violin or piano with a maturity far beyond their years. Through listening to tapes and imitating their teacher, these youngsters can play complicated pieces long before they can read a note of music.

12. (MOUNTAINS) They, and the beautiful mountains of the Northern Alps, are sufficient enough reason to put Matsumoto on any tourist's itinerary.