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ON A FULL STOMACH

The perfect combination is to have a gourmet meal followed by a great workshop – well you will have to travel to get it – *Martha Ogasawara* reports from the Japanese Lines

Wouldn't you agree that there is no better way to spend a weekend than some heavy-duty dancing followed by a good meal, all accompanied by a little pleasant fellowship? Following this simple premise, Martha Ogasawara and Taro Takayama started a series of M&T Dance & Gourmet Tours.

Martha and Taro are both instructors in the Japan Line Dance Association, an organisation which puts on workshops five or six times a year taught by various member instructors. The workshops

Pakistani, Lebanese, African, Phillipino and Israeli food. It's easy to be gastronomically adventurous in a group.

The seventh M&T Dance & Gourmet Tour was held in March. Since it also happened to be Girls Festival Day, a traditional holiday in Japan, people were asked to dress in pastel Girls Day colours. Martha was accompanied by six other dancers from her club Nagoya Crazy Feet. and there were also dancers attending from Sapporo, the Tokyo area and even one friend from Hong Kong. The afternoon was



are held on a Sunday, and since Martha usually goes up to Tokyo the day before, she and Taro decided to get together and do something fun the day before. They chose to sponsor an afternoon dance, usually with some kind of fun, perhaps even a silly theme and afterwards all go out to dinner together. Tokyo has a large selection of restaurants, so each time they try to find some kind of new ethnic cuisine to try. So far, they've been for Mexican,

spent dancing and playing games. Martha commented: "This time we went out for Persian food afterwards. The restaurant we went to was a very interactive sort of restaurant. As you came in, the owner came and dressed people up in various ethnic apparel to get everyone in the mood. You sat on the floor surrounded by Persian carpets and felt like you were in Arabian Nights! The food was delicious and plentiful. There was no menu, they

just kept bringing it out. We also got to try some water pipes, which added to the atmosphere. After dinner, they cleared away the tables for a belly dancing show. We were entertained by several dancers, and then members of the audience were pulled up to give it a try.

"All in all, it was an extremely satisfying day. Those of us who were in from out of town all went to stay at the same hotel, and ended up congregating in one room to play cards, visit and catch up on the latest dance news.

"The next day was the JLDA workshop. There were about 70 dancers and instructors attending from various parts of Japan. There were two workshop rooms going, one geared toward novice dancers and one with more intermediate level workshops. All of the dances were showcased at the beginning, then people could go choose which dances they wanted to learn. A wide variety of dances were introduced. People will then take the dances they like back to their home clubs and introduce them there."

The following dances were workshoped:
Love is Alive by Birthe Tygesen, **Mix It Up!** by The Girls, **CuCu** by Winnie,

Yu Where You Live by Judy McDonald, **My Maria** by Mike Camara & Dan Albro, **My Greek No.1** by Maria Rask, **Rockin Railroad** by Nancy A. Morgan, **Easy Cha Cha** by Chatti, **The Valley Gigoloby** Lisen Persson, **Dimension Cha** by Rachael McEnaney ...**And Fell In Love** by Michael Barr, **Crazy Cha** by Robbie McGowan Hickie, **Arabian Nights** by Marthe Thibeault

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