

Sweet Treat

These exquisite little toys come like afterthoughts when you buy caramel candy. Japanese people seem to go for small things, so small wonder these little freebies are so popular.

Candy maker Ezaki Glico has an 80-year history of giving away little toys with its candy. The first toys were made of paper, but now they are made of anything from wood and bamboo to metal, rubber, celluloid and plastic, and each one comes in its own box. Miniature versions of electrical appliances, accessories, figures of characters—the toys reflect the times in which they appeared.

The latest series has a nostalgic feel, though—it is a collection of cars, comic heroes and other items from the 1960s. They are priced at just one or two hundred yen, which is a small price to pay for the pleasure of anticipating what is in the box.



Photo by Takahiro Sakai

Letters

Readers are invited to send in their opinions on any topics raised in any issue of APP: Japan+, or indeed on any topic relevant to Japan and the Asia-Pacific region. Letters are welcome either by e-mail (j-plus@jigoho.or.jp) or by post (APP: Japan+, Jiji Goho Sha, Inc., Forte Akasaka Building, Akasaka 7-10-17, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-0052, Japan).

I want to thank APP: Japan+ for doing such a fine job of covering one of the world's most pressing global problems: water. Your special feature on water in the June 2003 edition touched on an issue that all of us need to know more about but unfortunately overlook, because we in Tokyo are spoilt with a seemingly endless supply of fresh drinking water.

I have traveled much of Asia and Africa as a photojournalist during the past decade, and have seen for myself how the sheer lack of fresh water is shaping societies in developing countries.

In developed countries 90 out of every 100 people have access to drinking water. In southern Africa however, 90 out of every 100 people are without clean drinking water.

Water scarcity is a problem that will affect every continent and every household in the coming years. It is the duty of rich nations like Japan to support water projects in developing nations so that the people in poorer countries can have access to a basic human right, water.

With the help of Japan through funding such projects and technology, we can make a difference.

I thank you again for highlighting this issue that affects millions of people across the globe.

Andy Rain
Photojournalist