

MY Paper

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# 'French maids' for Anime Festival



SO CUTE! The costumed girls of Moe Moe Kyun Maid Cafe. (PHOTO: NEO XIAOBIN)

## KOH HUI THENG

**T**HIS November, sweet "French maids" will be on hand to serve Japanese popular-culture fans at Anime Festival Asia (AFA) 2009.

Dressed in frilly outfits adorned with ribbons and lace, they will bow and greet visitors, saying "Oketaimasaimase goshujin-sama (Welcome home, honoured master)."

They are waitresses at Moe Moe Kyun Maid Cafe, a theme cafe to be set up for the first time at the festival, where tired visitors can rest and "soothe their souls", said AFA's executive festival director, Mr Shawn Chin.

They were unveiled yesterday at a pre-event conference at Suntec Singapore. One of them, polytechnic student Teo Jie Ling, 18, who goes by the moniker Hitomi, said: "At the cafe, I'll be using a sauce to write the customer's name on food like omelette rice. It's going to be a really cute experience."

Now in its second year, the annual showcase of Japanese pop culture will boast several other firsts, including performances by Japanese actress-singer Shoko Nakagawa and anime rock-singer Yoshiki Fukuyama.

Animax Asia and AFA are co-producing a half-hour documentary on "cosplay", or costume roleplay. It will star contestants from AFA's Regional Cosplay Championships, to be held at this year's festival here. Well-known cosplayer Kaname is among the judges.

Japan's "King of Anime Songs" Ichirou Mizuki and celebrity May'n, who performed at last year's inaugural event, will be back.

Organisers I-Promo, Sozo and Dentsu Singapore said that they expect more than 50,000 visitors at the two-day event. More details about exclusive merchandise will be released at a later date. For more information, visit [www.afa09.com](http://www.afa09.com)

[kohht@sph.com.sg](mailto:kohht@sph.com.sg)