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The Bonzi's with some of their staff and students at their home and school, Soleil Provence.

photography by Ben Boochay

The Bonzi Family

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to get married in Japan? Well for Alana and Michel Bonzi, on that fateful day in 1997, they found themselves in Izumi City Hall, Kagoshima. With *konin todoke* (marriage application) in hand, reams of filled-up forms from the French and Canadian consulates, it took the intrepid city officials quite awhile to figure out whether they could register them or not. Four hours of telephone calls, excited chatter, and cups and cups of hot green tea later, they were married. Finally came the photo session—the two went across the street to a small department store and headed into a sticker photo booth to create some “print club” memories of their special day, for that only-in-Japan experience!

They have come a long way since 1996 when they first arrived to Japan—Alana an ALT with the JET program and Michel a French teacher; further still from that first meeting on the Toronto-Montreal commuter train in 1995. Fast forward to today. The Bonzis now enjoy sharing their time among family spread

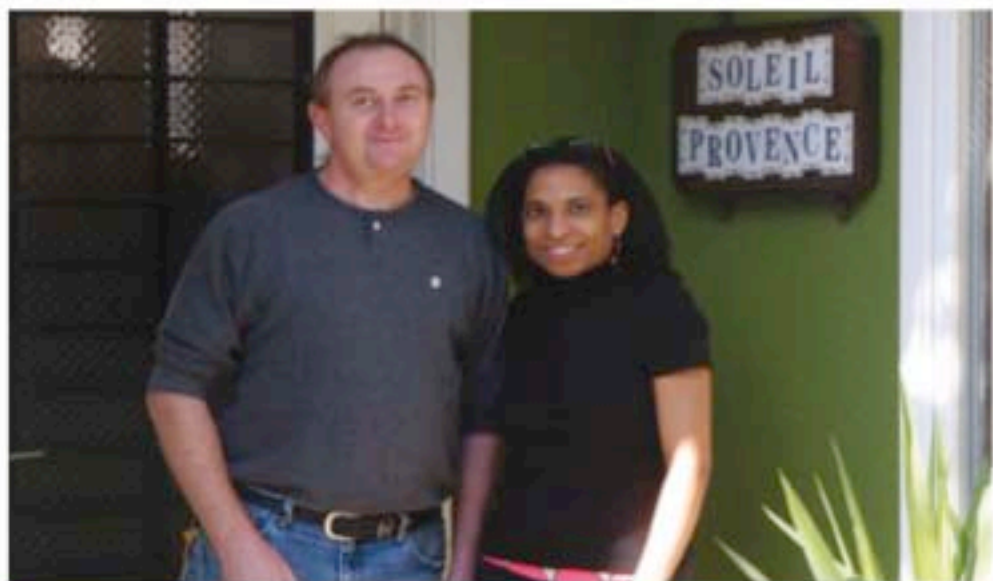
out in France, Canada and Trinidad and Tobago, while their main place is in Japan's Shonan, at Soleil Provence, www.soleilprovence.com, their French school. Michel is kept very busy running the day-to-day operations. When Alana is not helping with marketing, she lectures on Corporate Social Responsibility at Keio and Waseda universities. Because of their full schedules, the Bonzis do savor the time when they can *farniente-garden*, play *petanque*, a Southern French game, volunteer in the local community, and laugh with friends. The Bonzis have made a home here and welcome you to their Shonan, for southern French flavour with a Caribbean-Canadian twist!

One additional interesting fact about the two: Both have had rice field accidents. That is, Alana once rode her bicycle into a rice field in broad daylight and suffered a hairline fracture (and some embarrassment), while Michele drove his car into one, totaling his Honda. Surprisingly, the engine still worked and Michele now believes that Honda is truly the car “that takes a licking but keeps on ticking!”

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Answers from Crossword #38 (Weekender Nov 07)

