

Chick flicks and Shoot em ups!

Like many people perhaps, I think I got my first glimpse of Japan from films. I can well remember, as a child, watching in fascination as James Bond visited Tokyo and elsewhere in the 007 adventure *You Only Live Twice*. In this film, penned incidentally by the author of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, we see Sean Connery as Bond san, relaxing in a hot spring with a collection of beautiful young women; watching sumo in Ryogoku; dropping into the Otani Hotel (was it 'new' then?) and still finding time for a fist fight in Kobe harbour and a battle with ninjas in Himeji castle.

The film was quite an education as James Bond proves himself to be 'exceptionally cultivated' and well-versed in the ways of the orient. He even knows the perfect temperature to serve hot sake (98.4 degrees Fahrenheit, apparently).

'You only live twice' would fall into the broad category of action adventure films, though in its day it was certainly a '*blockbuster*', a term that describes heavily promoted, big budget films from the major studios. Particularly violent action films are often referred to as '*shoot em ups*'.

Other genre terms for movies include:

'*chick-flick*' – films enjoyed mainly by ladies, and mainly endured by men, of which the dreaded (by me) '*romcom*' (romantic comedy) is a prime example.

We also use the terms '*weepies/tearjerkers*' for sad films that might induce crying.

If you want to know which film is showing at your local cinema, the easy question to ask is *What's on?*

What's on at the Odeon?

Oh just some awful chick-flick. I wouldn't bother if I were you.

In Britain, cinema attendance is still hugely popular with box office takings for 2009 topping 1 billion pounds for the first time ever. Part of this popularity is down to the greater variety of places where films can be seen and an improvement in the comfort and service available in cinemas.

London's most beautiful cinema is probably The Coronet , a stunning Victorian theatre with luxurious interior and 'Hogwarts' type towers. This lovely cinema featured in the film *Notting Hill*, while a contender for the UK's most beautiful would be the The Wee Picture House, Cambeltown with its fabulous waterfront location affording truly cinematic views.

For foodies there's Zeffirelli's in Cumbria which boasts an award winning restaurant while for hipsters, the gft in Glasgow houses the funky Café Cosmo within its gorgeous art deco building.

007 himself would probably choose the Dominion Cinema in Edinburgh, which is possibly Britain's comfiest. It boasts a gold class lounge with adjustable black leather armchairs, or he might find it hard to resist the lure of the 'secret cinema' (a members only group that organize screenings in unusual locations).

There have been about 15 more James Bond adventures since 'You only live twice' and they are still filling cinemas all over the world. Sadly though, none have been set in Japan but Sean Connery did return unofficially in the early 1990's to make one final, rather 'hammy' appearance as Britain's super spy. His mission? - to promote meat products in a CM for the Ito company. James Bond, licensed to carry a big sausage.

I wonder if he knows what the perfect temperature to serve cooked ham is?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PEafo_6_N84

Cinemas:

www.coronet.org

www.weepictures.co.uk

www.zeffirellis.com

www.gft.org.uk

www.dominioncinemas.net

www.secretcinema.org