

MESSAGE FROM CONSUL-GENERAL SASAYAMA TAKUYA

April 2022

Easter has come and gone, and days when temperatures exceed 10C are increasing. Safety measures against the spread of COVID-19 still cannot be ignored, but health restrictions have mostly been lifted in Toronto. The number of people coming to our Consulate-General of Japan's service window has also visibly increased. We will continue to require reservations for in-person visits. We remain committed to responding promptly to your requests and providing the necessary information accurately.

In-person events which we could not hold for a long time are now being planned one after another. This month, I would like to inform you about the first time in 15 years that the Government of Japan is participating in the RC Show to be held in Toronto's Enercare Centre by Restaurants Canada from May 9 to 11.

As I mentioned in my January and February messages, Ontario enjoys a highly developed food culture with an international flair. As a market, it is the rare example of a large North American city which still holds great potential for growth. At present, however, many Torontonians seem to feel that, "Although Japanese food is plentiful, it is difficult to know where to go to acquire and experience authentic Japanese cuisine." It is against such a backdrop that we at the Consulate-General of Japan, in co-sponsorship with JETRO Toronto, are exhibiting at the RC Show, Canada's largest restaurant trade fair. We hope we can do our part in promoting the export of authentic Japanese food and ingredients to Canada.

Iwate and Ehime Prefectures, which have experience promoting its products here, will participate in our exhibit. Starting with products from these two prefectures, the Japan Pavilion will feature businesses which have a track record of importing food products to Canada.

The RC Show will also feature cooking demonstrations by world-renowned chefs. The Japanese team will feature Chef MAKINO Yuta, the Chef at the Official Residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Honolulu. He will be joined by Chef SUZUKI Haruna, the chef at my official residence here in Toronto, to hold a demonstration fully exhibiting the immense appeal of seasonal ingredients from Iwate, Ehime, as well as Ontario (May 10 starting from 4 pm). Chef Makino of course places great importance on such basics of traditional washoku as dashi, but he also emphasizes flavour above all. Please come enjoy this very imaginative demonstration. (Chef Suzuki is also scheduled to appear at the pop-up stage described below.)



Chef MAKINO Yuta



Chef SUZUKI Haruna

We are planning two events for the pop-up stage.

Rediscovering the charms of sake: Mr. Michael Tremblay, a Sake Samurai (a title bestowed upon him by The Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council) who works at Ki Modern Japanese +Bar , will provide an introduction to sake. The noble figure of Mr. Tremblay, by now a familiar face to many, will be present once again. I would be pleased if those who are unfamiliar with sake can also use this opportunity to discover its appeal. As well, sake in which fruit has been soaked then filtered, as well as those which are served containing actual fruit or fruit flavours, are currently trending in Toronto. Mr. HASHIMOTO Kei of the restaurant Kaiseki Yuzen Hashimoto will tell you about their allure (on May 9, starting from 4:15 pm).



Mr. Michael Tremblay (centre)



Mr. HASHIMOTO Kei

The charms of green tea: I feel green tea is a beverage indispensable to Japanese cuisine. Thanks to Ito En, there will be presentations of just how to enjoy Japanese tea which goes so well with Japanese cuisine. In addition to a demonstration of how to prepare tea in a teapot, we also plan to introduce dishes utilizing Japanese tea. Chef Suzuki of our Consulate-General of Japan in Toronto will also present recipes which use Japanese rice for mini onigiri (rice balls) and baked sweets, both of which go extremely well with tea.



Ito En products

When we think of tea, we Japanese yearn for onigiri. As such, we will also have on hand an onigiri-making machine made in Japan for Torontonians to see (on May 10, starting from 4:15 pm).



The onigiri maker

Despite the limited time and space, we would like to take advantage of this rare opportunity to let everyone know of the appeal of Japanese food and tie this to the promotion of exports of authentic Japanese food products.