

Japan for Canadians

Your guide to doing business in the land of the rising sun

By: Paul Gallant

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OVERVIEW

Back in 1992, Stephen Huggins got a call from a roommate from his University of Western Ontario days, demanding that Huggins fly to Japan to be the best man for a spur-of-the-moment wedding. Huggins complied, loved the country and since 1993 has been living on and off in Tokyo, launching a real estate development and land banking investment company there and in Canada in 2003.

“I started with the Yellow Pages—I wouldn’t recommend that. I had zero contacts. I cold called. I learned pretty much the hard way. It took me 363 and a half days to get enough business to survive there for another two years,” says Huggins, founder and president of [TSI International Group](#), which now employs about 50 people, 20 in its Tokyo office. “But we’re still here and we’re definitely believers in Japan.”

Asia’s original economic miracle, Japan has lost some of its buzz in the last two decades. With its aging population and modest growth rates, the country of 127.45 million has been overshadowed by emerging Asian economies like China and India, with their larger populations and free-spending ways. In 2011, Japanese public debt was 208.20% of GDP (Canada’s was 83.50%), making it the second most indebted country in the world after Zimbabwe. Hit hard by the March 11, 2011 triple disaster of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear reactor leak, Japan’s way forward has become much less clear.

For Canadians, though, this soul-searching is not necessarily a bad thing and in fact, might result in some new doors opening. “There’s been a real change of attitude, especially since ‘3/11,’” says Huggins. “The thinking is, ‘We can’t rely on a supply chain that goes through one channel, one location.’ So they’re looking to diversity within Japan and look for more opportunities overseas.”

The opening of free trade talks between Canada and Japan, announced in March 2012 by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, coincides with this Japanese rethink. A joint study by Canada and Japan estimates that such an agreement could mean gains of up to \$3.8 billion a year in Canadian gross domestic product, with Canadian exports to Japan increasing by as much as 67%. Although everything is on the table, certain sectors have been identified as particularly delicate: “The two countries shared the mutual understanding that practical and flexible approaches should be taken with respect to sensitivities in agriculture, forestry and fishery products,” states the study’s authors.

Of course, Canada's not the only country Japan is reaching out to. With 13 existing bilateral trade agreements, the country has been expanding its base of trusted trade partners. They're more eager to partner in research and development projects, and other joint ventures. And with a population now firmly against nuclear power—the country's last nuclear reactor was switched off in May 2012—the Japanese are also searching for energy solutions, especially natural gas and green energy. A feed-in tariff for renewable energy, similar to the one Ontario introduced in 2006, is expected to take effect there this year to nurture the wind and solar power sectors.

“Every 30 or 40 years, Japan changes its mindset,” says Charles McMillan, professor of international business at York University's Schulich School of business in Toronto, who has been visiting Japan for decades. “That disaster has triggered a desire for a massive change. The timing is very good for both parties. But Canada's got to cultivate it.”

The recovery efforts, in particular, will call for Canadian know-how in construction and environmental management.

“It is mountains of debris on properties that need to be rebuilt. When the reconstruction starts, it will include a lot of Canadian businesses, who will be putting in a lot of kitchens, a lot of windows, just like Kobe [the 1995 earthquake], just spread out over more years,” says Wilf Wakely, lawyer, resident of Japan for more than 30 years and president of the [Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan](#). “We know about soil remediation. We earned our stripes in the oilsands.”

But opportunities in Japan do not lie only in reconstruction. Despite China's rapid growth, Japan remains the world's third largest economy and a global leader in innovation. The country's GDP (purchasing power parity) is \$34,300 compared to \$8,400 per person in China.

“Everybody talks about the growth in China, but growth where?” asks McMillan. “You have 400 million middle-class people in China and 800 million really poor people in the rural areas.”

In even more blunt terms: “They say Japan has this debt. But they don't realize there is also a lot of savings. People have money,” says Tyson Garbe, assistant director of trade and investment at the Toronto office of the Japan External Trade Organization, which promotes foreign direct investment in Japan.

Japan is still the world's technological superpower. Although it might manufacture its electronics in Malaysia or its cars in Canada, its companies remain on the cutting edge of R&D. Japan's consumers are among the world's most demanding and adaptive, expecting innovation whether it's in the automotive, electronics, cosmetics and fashion sectors or, increasingly, in health and seniors care. Compared to China, where international companies find themselves fretting about the loss of their IP, Japan and Canada have nurtured a remarkable level of trust.

“The relationship that Canadian companies have with their Japanese partners is more thorough and offers opportunities for doing business in third-party situations,” says Tim Richardson, a professor of business and e-commerce at Seneca College and the University of Toronto. “Japan knows a lot more about us than the Chinese do. Sometimes they come looking for things.” More and more, that includes services from Canada's booming information technology and digital media sector.

Joseph Caron, a former ambassador to India, China and Japan and now president of consulting firm [Joseph Caron Inc.](#) and distinguished fellow at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, worked on a joint study on a Canada-Japan comprehensive trade agreement back in the mid-2000s. He says the details of any given economic partnership agreement are less important than the fact that the negotiations and eventual deal will result in renewed interest.

“The business community is alerted to this priority, so there's certain psychological benefit,” says Caron.

At the Chamber of Commerce, Wakely and his team are developing a wish list for the free trade talks. “We don't really see many problems. We don't have a competitive problem with Japan with food—we don't export rice. There will be regulatory stuff in medical devices that will require catching up. Japan's industrial standards for housing materials have changed to a point that it's become extraordinarily bureaucratic and have definitely become a trade barrier,” he says.

The friendship between Japan and Canada will make negotiations easier, says Wakely, but that doesn't mean there won't be surprises. “If there's anything predictable about Japan is that it will eventually change,” he says.



ALL ABOUT JAPAN

The basics

Canada's relationship with Japan is friendly and mutually beneficial. As the 2012 Report of the Joint Study on the Possibility of a Canada-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement summed it up: "Canada is rich with natural resources, while Japan is a major importer of these resources and has developed cutting-edge technologies for energy conservation and clean energy, among others.... Trade in goods between Canada and Japan is largely complementary, with each specializing in products that the other does not intensively export."

From the 1960s to the 1980s, Japan was the original "Asian miracle," growing at times by 10% annually and transforming itself into a high-wage economy. With limited natural resources and agricultural capacity (only 12% of Japan's land is considered suitable for cultivation), the country became a world leader and innovator in manufacturing. By the 1970s, Japan's high quality automotive and electronic products had claimed large swaths of Canadian market share. As one of Canada's largest foreign direct investors, Japan's economic clout here remains substantial. Japanese automobile manufacturing in Canada employs almost 25,000 people and since 1993, Canada has been a net exporter of Japanese brand vehicles. In 2011, Japan was Canada's fifth largest merchandise trading partner while Canada was Japan's 18th largest trading partner. Total merchandise trade in 2010 stood at approximately \$22.6 billion.

But the bonds between the two countries are personal and emotional, as well as commercial. It's become a rite of passage for young Japanese people to tour the vastness of Canada, taking in the Rocky Mountains, Niagara Falls and the historic sites where author L.M. Montgomery wrote *Anne of Green Gables*, a beloved classic in Japan. In the past few decades, in their own rite of passage, many young Canadians have flown across the Pacific to earn good money teaching English in Japan.

The relationship is not as intense as it once was. Since 2002, China and Mexico have surpassed Japan as suppliers to Canada, while China and the UK have surpassed it as Canadian export destinations. Japanese tourism to Canada is half what it was in 2000. Though Canada and Japan are partners in numerous international groups and organizations including the G8, G20, APEC and the OECD, they are, along with Mexico, currently sitting on the sidelines of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which is being negotiated amongst the US and eight other countries.

The earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident of March 2011 killed thousands of people on Japan's Pacific coast, wiping out entire communities and forcing many residents into temporary housing. The disaster also disrupted global supply chains, dramatically impairing Japan's ability to do business for several months. In the aftermath of the disaster, Canada was one of the first countries to accept Japanese food products and, despite continued concerns about radiation in the Fukushima prefecture, Japan has made an impressive recovery.

It has been duly reported that Japan's economic growth has slowed as its population has aged in the past couple of decades. But Japan remains one of the world's richest and most developed countries. Aware of its problems, the country's policy makers have been increasingly nurturing foreign direct investment, research and development partnerships and trade agreements like the Canada- Japan Economic Partnership Agreement currently being negotiated.

Japan's GDP was estimated to be US\$5.855 trillion in 2011, making it the world's fifth biggest economy (Canada's in that year was US\$1.579 trillion). Per capita, Japan has a GDP of US\$34,300. Its Gini index, which measures social economic equality, was 37.6 in 2008, according to the CIA World Handbook, compared to Canada's more equitable 32.1, measured in 2005.

Japan uses the yen, which bears the ISO 4217/SWIFT CODE of JPY. One Canadian dollar was worth about 79.756 yen in the second quarter of 2012.

Demographics

Japanese is the official language of Japan. The nation's median age is 44.8 years. In terms of literacy, 99% of males and females can read and write. About 69.8% of its 64.97 million-strong labour force is devoted to services, while 26.2% work in industry and 3.9% in agriculture.

Canada-Japanese trade

Japan was the fourth largest destination for Canadian exporters in 2011. Our exports to Japan were hurt by the global recession but recovered back to \$10.67 billion in 2011, a little better than they were in 2008. Japan is Canada's fourth biggest supplier after the U.S., China and Mexico, sending \$13.055 billion worth of goods our way in 2011. In 2009, Japan's foreign direct investment (FDI) in Canada totalled \$13.1 billion. Canadian FDI in Japan in 2009 stood at \$3.6 billion.

In 2010, Canada's top exports to Japan were: bituminous coal (20.47%), rape or colza seeds (12.91%), copper ores and concentrates (9.79%), lumber (6.85%) and frozen boneless swine (4.16%). The automotive industry dominates what Japanese sells to Canada. Top imports were: motor vehicles (21.96%), drive axels (4.56%), mechanical shovels and excavators (3.68%), printing machinery (2.77%) and transmissions (2.43%).

Tariffs and Customs

Canada and Japan are both members of the World Trade Organization and have signed an Arrangement Regarding Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters (2005) a Memorandum of Cooperation on Container Security (2008) and a Mutual Recognition Arrangement of Partners in Protection Program and Authorized Economic Operator Program (2010) to facilitate trade.

Japan's customs duty rates are divided into the following three types: general tariff rates, temporary tariff rates and WTO-bound tariff rates. In general, the tariff rate is one of the lowest in the world; tariffs in many major sectors, such as autos and auto parts, software, computers and industrial machinery, are zero. However, products including leather goods, certain processed foods and some manufactured goods have relatively high tariff rates. In the first quarter of 2012, durum wheat was tariff-free, while beef was tariffed as high as 50%. Japan's tariff schedule is published [here](#).

Canada and Japan are currently negotiating a comprehensive economic partnership agreement.

There are 1,020 ports in Japan, 22 of which are main ports of special purpose dedicated to particular destinations or industries.



ON THE GROUND IN JAPAN

Immigration

Canadian citizens do not need a visa to visit Japan for commerce, conferences, tourism or visiting friends and relatives for up to 90 days, as long as they do not engage in paid activities while in Japan. Obtaining a working visa for one or three years—which covers activities like professor, artist, religious activities, journalist, investor/business manager, legal/accounting services, medical services, researcher, instructor, engineer, specialist in humanities/international services—requires a certificate of eligibility. The certificate, which can take months to get, is issued by regional Japanese immigration authority as evidence that the foreign national meets the conditions for landing in Japan and is applied for in Japan by the visitor's sponsor, usually an employer or business partner.

Foreigners remaining in Japan for longer than 90 days are required to register with the local municipal office.

Because of nuclear radiation caused by 2011's disaster, [the Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada has issued a warning](#) advising against non-essential travel to the areas of northern Honshu, and against all travel within 20 km of the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Okumacho, as well as to the districts and towns that have a Government of Japan recommended or pending evacuation order, including the districts of Katsurao, Namie, parts of Kawamata and Iitate and some districts in Minamisoma.



THE PRIVATE SIDE OF BUSINESS IN JAPAN

Overview

Although Japan's language and cultural particularities can make it a tricky place for Canadians to navigate, those who overcome the culture shock often become the country's biggest advocates. The Japanese passion for all things high-tech and up-to-the-minute contrasts with its rich culture and a genuine affection for nature and beauty. It's a country where politeness and respect for others is paramount, where lost items are reliably returned to local police stations as a matter of course.

Though etiquette nuances like bowing and exchanging business cards (use both hands to accept the card and read it before putting it away) can seem daunting, Japanese people are usually willing to forgive foreigners their missteps. Although Western food, fashion and other products are widely available, Japan is not a multicultural society; identifiably foreign people will often be treated as guests, regardless of how long they've lived and worked in Japan. Transportation is excellent—the rail services are among the best in the world—and the country is compact and easy to get around. While the mountainous countryside is spectacular, most of the Japanese population—and most foreigners—live in sprawling coastal cities.

While Japan has the longest life expectancy in the world, it also spends significantly less on healthcare than the U.S. and Canada. It manages this, in part, through set fees for medical practitioners. Universal health coverage is offered through two programs: National Health Insurance, which is used mostly by students, self-employed people and employees at smaller companies, and Employees' Health Insurance, which is offered to workers in medium and large companies, government and schools. Membership in one or the other is mandatory for all long-term residents of Japan. Members pay a monthly premium, usually set according to income, as well as a percentage of the cost of healthcare, usually between 20% and 30%. Members can choose their own providers, whether it's a hospital, clinic or doctor in private practice. There are private insurance plans available as well and some expats in Japan use international travel insurance rather than the national programs.

The Japan National Tourism Organization provides a [list of hospitals](#) with English-speaking doctors.

Where to live

With a population of almost nine million, Tokyo is one of the undeniable world capitals. Throw in the neighbouring prefectures of Chiba, Kanagawa, Saitama and you have about 36.5 million people, making it the world's most populous metropolitan area. Though the cost of living is high, especially in Tokyo itself, Chiba, Kanagawa and Saitama are considered more affordable alternatives, both for living and for establishing a business.

The ward of Minato-ku is a well-established expat favourite for business and living, containing several neighbourhoods with good restaurants, bars and international schools. Hiroo, where the Red Cross Hospital is located, is nicknamed the "gaijin ghetto" for all the foreigners who live, shop and socialize there. Also in Minato-ku, the districts of Azabu, Akasaka, Roppongi, Shirokane and Shirokanedai are all desirable, though most, especially Azabu, are pricey. Because of its proximity to Tokyo and its lower cost of living, Chiba attracts some expats, though its cultural offerings are more limited than Tokyo's.

Although a vast majority of expats to Japan will end up in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka and even Kobe all have expat communities.

[The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has published a handy guide](#) to living in Japan that explains everything from how to apply for electricity, gas and water services to avoiding noises that can be annoying to your neighbours.

Social life and kids

In the last few decades, many young Canadians have moved to Japan to teach English and many of those have stayed on, giving Canadians a good expat showing on the ground. There are an estimated 12,000 Canadians living in Japan, compared to about 55,000 Americans (not counting more than 35,000 military personnel).

Because homes in the larger cities tend to be small, much of Japanese social life takes place in public at restaurants, nightclubs, karaoke bars, amusement parks and shopping malls. The capacity of the Japanese to invent new forms of entertainment is astonishing.

While sumo wrestling is still considered the national sport, the Japanese have passionately embraced American baseball and, like the rest of the world, soccer. Hockey is barely on the radar for Japanese nationals, so expats have gathered together for both the [Tokyo Street Hockey Association](#), a casual recreational group founded by Canadians, and the [Tokyo Canadians Hockey Club](#), an amateur, independent hockey team that is also, needless to say, founded by Canadians.

The [Tokyo Canadian Club](#) hosts regular social events including pub nights and hockey nights (or, rather, days, considering the time difference). The [Canadian Women's Club in Japan](#) is a social and volunteer-oriented group that was formed in 1970.

Though it is free for foreign children to attend Japanese schools, most Westerners living in Japan send their kids to international schools. [There is a wide selection](#), including [a Canadian school](#) in Tokyo (established with the Department of Education of Prince Edward Island) and [one in Kobe](#), founded in 1913. Because Japan is so safe, children who live close to school often walk to and from classes unattended, so picking a neighbourhood within walking distance of school is especially handy.



PROFILE

Inniskillin

About a decade ago, [Inniskillin](#) staff noticed that Japanese tourists were making up a good percentage of visitors to its winery in Ontario's Niagara region. The winery's pricey ice wine was considered a prestigious and exclusive find in a society that has elevated gift-giving to an art.

Inniskillin decided to seize the opportunity. At the time, Japan was Canada's third largest source of visitors, with Japanese visitors making 493,000 annual visits and spending \$687 million. (By 2010, Japanese visits had dropped to 215,000 with spending adding up to \$330 million.) To expand on that tourism-based business, the 150,000-case-a-year winery established partnerships with duty-free concessions not just in Canada, but at any airports where Japanese travellers would be passing through. The pricing per ounce was set to be close to that of Dom Pérignon and the packaging was made even more luxurious.

"We certainly ramped up our game," says Randy Dufour, export manager for Vincor Canada, Inniskillin's parent company, which exports to 73 different countries. "We knew we had enough cache at that point that if they saw our ice wine, they would buy it. About half our international sales were to the Japanese market."

But Inniskillin's master stroke of marketing was about eight years ago when they took out a full-page ad in the Japanese equivalent of *Time* magazine. In English, the ad spelled out all the attributes of Inniskillin's ice wine and all the awards it had won. "And then in very small print at the bottom, we put in Japanese, 'Not available in Japan.' Which drove them crazy because they wanted to know where they could get it."

Since then, Inniskillin has purposely kept the Japanese availability of its ice wine very limited, distributing it at high-end department stores and top-end restaurants and hotels.

"We wanted to protect our duty-free position so our retail pricing reflects that," says Dufour. While a 375ml bottle might go for US\$60-\$80 at a duty-free store, the Japanese department store price is closer to US\$120. The company worked with the Japanese sommelier association, the gatekeepers of the Japan's high-end wine culture, on the best ways to serve ice wine. "At the restaurants, the attention to detail is phenomenal. It's like a well-oiled machine." To maintain the ice wine's status, they've also resisted the temptation to export less pricey non-ice wine to Japan, making sure the Inniskillin name is associated with only the top quality.

As other Asian economies—namely China—have grown stronger, Inniskillin has, over the last five years, changed its approach to Japan to make it part of a broader Asian strategy. (It's currently rethinking its Japanese distribution system to better partner with local distributors.) Dufour says China, with so much new money flying around, is still "the wild west" with tastes and industry players changing quickly.

"We've always known that the Japanese are hard and good negotiators, which forced us to ramp up our skills sets in dealing with them," says Dufour. "That learning has helped us in China, because the Chinese are equally difficult in terms of negotiating. I've seen other people in China get frustrated and just walk away. For me, I understand that as being normal."



PROFILE

Evolution Health Systems Inc.

Back in the 1970s, some English-speaking expats living in Tokyo realized that if they wanted to find a dentist or doctor who spoke English, they had to figure it out themselves. In 1973, they founded the [Tokyo English Life Line \(TELL\)](#) to offer English speakers assistance through a toll-free number. Since then the service has grown to offer free country-wide crisis counselling and emotional support for English-speaking people with mental health and addiction problems. Over the years, TELL found it was receiving more and more calls from distressed Japanese people who spoke English as a second language. They decided to reach out online to these struggling Japanese nationals and so reached out to Toronto's [Evolution Health System](#) as a partner.

"You typically don't go to your doctor to talk about depression in Japan. There's a much bigger stigma than in North America," says Trevor Mierlo, Evolution Health's CEO. Founded in 2000, Evolution Health uses interactive phone and web-based technology to assess and help people struggling with mental health and addiction problems. Working with medical professionals and using behavioural modification research, its seven full-time and four part-time staff create targeted programs for healthcare and pharmaceutical companies, governments, non-governmental agencies, insurance and employee assistance firms, among others, all with the aim of conquering behavioural problems through online and text-message coaching.

Considering Japanese society's passion for automation—it's a country that's been experimenting with robots to provide care to seniors—Evolution Health realized there might be a place for them in the Japanese market. About five years ago, they met with the [Japanese External Trade Organization \(JETRO\)](#), which set up meetings for them which led to an endorsement from the [Japanese Internet Medical Association \(JIMA\)](#), the first endorsement the association has given to a non-Japanese enterprise. The endorsement in turn attracted the attention of professor Norito Kawakami from the University of Tokyo. Kawakami has done research showing that since 1999, rates of depression have risen 2.5-fold and the Japanese suicide has also increased.

"He was interested in translating our online cognitive behaviour therapy program for depression into Japanese," says Mierlo. Meanwhile, Evolution Health set up a two-person sales team in Tokyo to leverage the relationships with TELL, JIMA and the university to generate deals with public and private organizations interested in addictions and mental health.

Although Evolution Health has translated its English programs into Canadian French and Swedish, translating them into Japanese has required a far more comprehensive approach.

"We knew the content would have to be changed but we didn't realize how much. Typically when you assess someone for depression, you might ask a question like, 'Are you feeling sad, flat or blue?' In Japan, you don't really ask those types of questions. The emotions are there, but the question doesn't really exist. So you might ask, 'When the sun is out and everyone's happy, do you have a dark cloud?' It's more of a cultural adaptation than a translation. People can tell right away when something's not been developed for their demographic." To get it right, Evolution Health used several translators and tested the programs extensively before using them.

Although they're already making money in Japan, Mierlo knows it could take years to generate significant revenue.

"You're never going to close a deal after a few meetings," he says. "People will never say no to you in Japan. Some companies go over and they get 'Yes, yes, yes,' but it never really happens for them. Even with contracts, in North America, when we sign a contract, it could be 20, 30, 40 pages. Your respective legal teams battle it out. In Japan, contracts are one or two pages because you have to build a relationship and the relationship is built on trust."



CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

[Canada-Japan Relations](#)

The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service has published an overview of the Canada-Japan economic relationship.

[The Embassy of Canada in Japan](#)

7-3-38 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8503

The Canadian Embassy and Trade Commission to Japan are located in the capital, Tokyo. The Tokyo trade commission's priority sectors are Advanced Materials, Aerospace and Defence, Agriculture, Food and Beverages, Environmental Industries, and Information and Communications Technologies. Trade commissioners can help businesses on the ground by providing market research, resolving business problems and arranging meetings with government and business leaders.

[The Consulate of Canada, Nagoya](#)

Nakato Marunouchi Building 6F 3-17-6
Marunouchi, Naka-Ku, Nagoya 460-0002

This office in the Kansai region has the following priority sectors: Advanced Materials, Aerospace and Defence, Agriculture, Food and Beverages, Environmental Industries, and Information and Communications Technologies.

[Canadian Government Trade Office, Kitakyushu](#)

AIM Building, 8th Floor 3-8-1
Asano Kokurakita, Kitakyushu 802-0001

This office covers western Japan and has the following priority sectors: Advanced Materials, Aerospace and Defence, Agriculture, Food and Beverages, Environmental Industries, and Information and Communications Technologies.

[Canadian Government Trade Office, Sapporo](#)

F Nikko Building, North 4 West 4, Chuo-ku
Sapporo, Hokkaido 060-0004

This office covers northern Japan and has the following priority sectors: Advanced Materials, Aerospace and Defence, Agriculture, Food and Beverages, Environmental Industries, and Information and Communications Technologies.

[The Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan](#)

Sai Aoyama 3F, 1-10-5
Minami Aoyama, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-0062

Founded in 1975 as the Canadian Businessman's Association, the chamber promotes the development of commerce between Canada and Japan, serving its 300 members through communications, networking and advocacy. Representing some 33 business sectors, the CCCJ is a member-driven, member-focused organization and is the longest serving Canadian chamber in Asia.

[The Japanese Society](#)

157 Adelaide Street West, Suite 604,
Toronto, Ontario M5H 4E7

The Japanese Society was set up in 1989 to discuss major economic, political and business issues with leading Canadian and Japanese authorities; to meet and establish relationships with senior executives, professionals and academics who are involved in business, consulting and teaching in each country; and to become identified with serious and informed efforts to strengthen the Canada-Japan relationship. The organization regularly hosts luncheon and dinner meetings, seminars and conferences, and presentations of art exhibitions, films and various performing arts of Japan in Canada.

[The Embassy of Japan in Canada](#)

255 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 9E6

[Consulate General of Japan in Montreal](#)

600 de la Gauchetière West, Suite 2120,
Montreal, Quebec H3B 4L8

Serves Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador

[Consulate General of Japan in Toronto](#)

Suite 3300, Royal Trust Tower, 77 King Street West, PO Box 10
TD Centre, Toronto, Ontario M5K 1A1

Serves Ontario

[Consulate General of Japan in Calgary](#)

2300 TransCanada Tower, 450-1st Street SW,
Calgary, Alberta T2P 5H1

Serves Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, The Northwest Territories and Nunavut

[Consulate General of Japan in Vancouver](#)

900-1177 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, British Columbia V6E 2K9

Serves British Columbia and the Yukon

[Tokyo Canadian Club](#)

This Tokyo-based social club is open to Canadians and “friends of Canada” who speak either English or French.

[Japan External Trade Organization \(JETRO\)](#)

Vancouver office: Suite 1202, Pender Place, 700 West Pender Street,
Vancouver, British Columbia V6C 1G8

Toronto office: 181 University Avenue, Suite 1600
Toronto, Ontario M5H 3M7

This government agency promotes trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world, with a key focus on attracting foreign direct investment and helping small and medium-sized Japanese firms maximize their global business strategy. They can help Canadian companies with Japan’s regulatory structure, facilitate meetings with potential partners and take advantage of government programs designed to attract foreign business.

[Japan Guide](#)

This website provides a good overview of life in Japan for expats.

[Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation](#)

APEC promotes sustainable economic growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. It does this, its mission states, by “championing free and open trade and investment, promoting and accelerating regional economic integration, encouraging economic and technical cooperation, enhancing human security, and facilitating a favourable and sustainable business environment.”

[Pacific Economic Cooperation Council](#)

PECC is a partnership of senior individuals from business and industry, government and academia that produce research including economic studies on the Asia Pacific region.

[TFO Canada](#)

Founded in 1980 as the Trade Facilitation Office Canada, this non-governmental organization assists developing countries to export to the Canadian market. It has become an established source of training for exporting and for investment attraction for developing and transition economy countries. The agency can also help Canadian importers learning about sourcing alternatives.

[Canadian Association of Importers and Exporters](#)

This 800-member not-for-profit organization provides trade policy information through its events, publications and websites. IE Canada also lobbies the federal government on issues of international trade. Its members-only membership directory provides networking and expert contacts.

[Export Development Canada](#)

This Crown corporation provides insurance, financing and bonding to help Canadian companies do business internationally. It also has detailed and up-to-date market reports on Japan and many other countries.

[Business Development Bank of Canada](#)

This Crown corporation provides financial and consulting services to Canadian small and medium-sized businesses, with a particular focus on the technology and export sectors of the economy. It also offers advice on going after international markets.

[Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development](#)

Founded in 1961 to stimulate progress and world trade, the OECD publishes several reports on the economic situation of Japan and the other 33 member countries.

[World Bank](#)

The global institution prepares regular market reports on markets, including Japan, as well as country-specific background papers. Its [Doing Business report](#) ranks countries according to the ease of doing business, calculating the time and cost of various permit and registration processes.

[Federation of International Trade Associations](#)

The federation has a mini-portal with more trade data, including economic indicators, practical information, agricultural data and an overview of Japan.