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INTERVIEW

MAME: Coffee with Care

Interview with Ms. Emi Fukahori, co-founder of the coffee shop MAME

Ms. Emi Fukahori and Mr. Mathieu Theis are the co-owners of MAME, a coffee shop located in Zurich. Opened in 2016, MAME rapidly became one of the very best coffee shops in Switzerland - according to many rankings. This is no surprise, considering the talent of MAME's co-founders. Emi has been awarded Swiss Barista Champion 2015 and World Brewers Cup Champion 2018. Mathieu has been Swiss Champion 2016 and 2018, and placed 3rd at the World Barista Championship 2018.

I met Emi in MAME, and I must say that I certainly had one of the best coffees I'd ever enjoyed.

Please introduce yourself

My name is Emi Fukahori. I left Japan 10 years ago in order to study tourism in Switzerland. Over the years I developed an interest for coffee, and fell deep into this beautiful world. I am curious by nature and like to try new things. To be honest, it could have been wine, chocolate or tea, but the hazards of life brought me to coffee.

What is MAME?

"Mame" means beans in Japanese. MAME is a coffee shop focusing on specialty coffee. Spe-



Ms. Emi Fukahori, Swiss Barista 2015 and World Brewers Champion 2018

cialty coffee is a high quality coffee. These coffees are cultivated with care, seasonal, characteristic. They are carefully roasted in order to preserve the specificity of the beans. In addition, sustainability is important for us and for our consumers; therefore we build good and trusty relationships with our partners and pay a fair price to the producers. We only have specialty coffees – coffees produced with care. "Coffee with care" is our motto and definition of specialty coffee. We opened the shop in 2016 and have now a second spot in Zurich.

Aside from great coffees,

which other services do you provide?

We give coffee lessons to people or companies. For the moment we don't have a classroom, but we would like to have one in the future.

We also sell roasted beans in MAME; the same ones we use for our coffees.

Anytime soon we will start to roast the beans ourselves. We already have the machine; we are just waiting for the beans to arrive. This will allow us even better controls of the parameters in order to offer the best possible coffee.

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MAME: Coffee with Care

(Continued from page 1)

会見

INTERVIEW

What brought you to open this shop?

My partner Mathieu Theis and I shared the same interest in coffee. We started as home baristas and having a shop was a good way for us to share our passion for coffee. At the time, a source of inspiration for us was the Bear Brothers and Cow: a pop-up coffee shop which opened in 2013. It was different and fresh.

Is this a new trend?

Yes it is. It started in Switzerland around two or three years ago; a bit earlier than elsewhere. There is a demand for sustainable products. People are also curious to try new things. It is not limited to coffee though. Tea, wine and whiskies enjoy similar trends; food as well. It is incredible that one coffee can taste of fruit and another of chocolate. I hope this doesn't stop as only a trend but lasts as a culture.

How would you explain it?

I believe it is a natural evolution. Looking at coffee, the scene has drastically changed over the last few decades. Nespresso brought espressos into people's houses. The capsule system is very convenient; it is easy, clean and constant. Starbucks also had a huge impact with their shops and take-away offering. I suppose that there is a kind of natural cycle. First we go for convenience, then quality. One does not exclude the other. Many of our customers have capsule machines at home. They don't want to spend 30 minutes getting their first coffee in the morning but they might enjoy quality coffee, slowly, in the afternoon, and there we are.

We are not competitors, because we provide a completely different service. It is not a matter of size, but of kind of products. Since we buy only specialty coffee, we cannot be compared when it comes to the price, but we can present tasteful,

characteristic coffees in return.

What are people's preferences?

It varies a lot. For MAME, 50% of our customers like milk in their coffee, 30% prefer filter coffee and 20% espressos. At MAME we consider that the best coffee is the coffee you like. Every coffee offers different characters and we guide each customer to find which one he likes. Every coffee is good; we help customers find their favorite. Certain beans are better suited towards filter coffee. Others accommodate well with milk, and espresso has to be different.

Our main task is to guide or advise; not inform or teach. If people know what they want we will go for the most suitable option and if they want to be surprised we will make suggestions so that they can try new things. Communication really is the most important thing. We started to explain what we do even before the shop was open, and we haven't stopped since.



Emi and Mathieu in their shop in Zurich

How to start with specialty coffee at home?

Naturally, it depends on your preferences, but generally speaking, filter coffee is easier than espresso. The entry cost for espresso is high considering the price of a good espresso machine and a grinder. Additionally, maintenance and cleaning require lots of time to spare. On the other hand, filter coffee such as French press or Pour Over do not cost much and are more accessible. I would recommend starting there.

Valentine's Day in Japan: chocolate instead of flowers

In Switzerland, for those who celebrate it, Valentine's Day is about romance and flowers. Restaurants have special menus for this particular day and the flower shops enjoy one of the best days of the year.

In Japan, Valentine's Day is more important than in Switzerland but has not necessarily the same meaning. Traditionally, women offer chocolate to the men in their entourage. It can be honmei-choco (chocolate of love) or giri-choco (courtesy-chocolate) which is often given to their colleagues. One month later, for the white day, men have to return the favour with chocolate, cookies, jewellery, etc. The return present should be worth more than the one they received.

This tradition started in 1932 when



Chocolate in Japan

the confectionery company [Moro-zoff](#) cleverly localized the Western custom to offer a present, but adapted it to chocolate.

According to a [recent article](#) in the Japan Times, the tradition is evolving. What becomes sometimes an "obligation" for women to offer chocolate has turned to become a day where women buy chocolate for themselves and their friends.

What has not changed is the fact that Valentine's day is all about chocolate and a great period for chocolate companies. With an annual per capita consumption of 2.2 kg Japan is the largest Asian chocolate consumer. Japan is still far from the 11 kg Swiss people eat on average every year, but this is continuously growing. More surprising, Japan produces more chocolate than Switzerland (241,000 tons in 2017, compared to 190,731).

According to Swiss customs, Switzerland exported 1,737 tons to Japan and imported 1.1 tons from Japan.

Sources: Swiss Customs, Chocolate and Cocoa Association of Japan and Chocosuisse

文化
CULTURE

Japanese economy recovered in the last quarter of 2018

In the last quarter of 2018, the Japanese economy recovered from the natural disasters that hit the country during the third quarter (July-Sep. 2018).

Thanks to a solid domestic consumption (0.7%) the GDP grew by 0.3% in Q4.

Both imports (2.7%) and exports (0.9%) increased compared to the previous quarter.

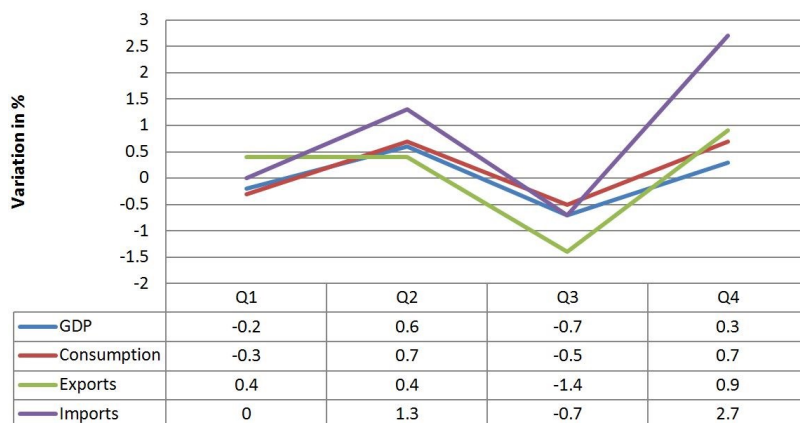
The figures published by the Cabinet Office show an uneven year for the Japanese economy in 2018. The first and third quarters were less

positive, but fortunately compensated by stronger second and

fourth quarters.

Source: [Cabinet Office](#)

Japanese economy 2018: quarter-to-quarter figures, seasonally adjusted



動向

TREND

革新

INNOVATION

ITOCHU wants to increase traceability thanks to Blockchain

The Japanese trading company ITOCHU wants to develop a Blockchain traceability system.

The company is one of the largest Japanese companies and a pioneer when it comes to sustainability.

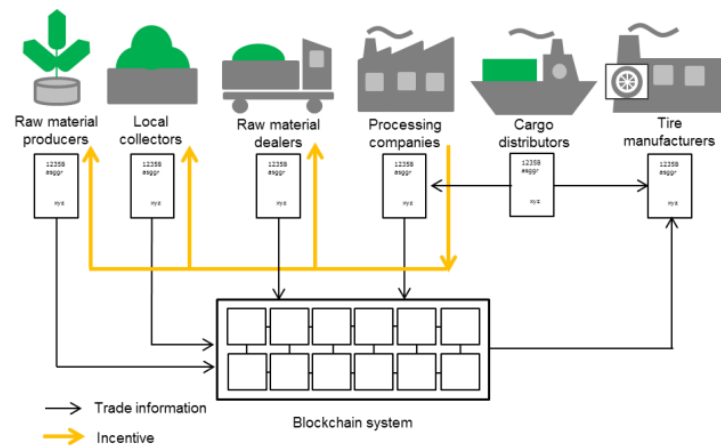
The company will start a proof of concept in the Indonesian natural rubber supply chain. The demand for rubber is booming and generates negative outcomes which the company wants to prevent. "It is critical to assure that our business activities demonstrate a strong respect for the environment and human rights." said ITOCHU.

To achieve this goal, the company

will provide a smartphone app to allow buyers and sellers to conduct mutual authentication. Additionally, an incentive system will be im-

plemented to promote the cooperation.

For more details check the [press release](#)



Agenda

- ✓ Save the date:
 - Impulse Japan Zurich
 - Organizers: JETRO, Switzerland Global Enterprise and the Swiss-Japanese Chamber of Commerce
 - March 7th, 13:30-19:30
 - Venue: Forum St. Peter, St. Peterstrasse 19, 8001 Zurich
 - Program available [here](#)

JETRO is a government-related organization that works to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and the rest of the world. Originally established in 1958 to promote Japanese exports abroad, JETRO's core focus in the 21st century has shifted toward promoting foreign direct investment into Japan and helping small to medium size Japanese firms maximize their global export potential.

The JETRO Switzerland Newsletter can also be viewed and/or downloaded online: <http://www.jetro.go.jp/switzerland/newsletter>

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