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INTERVIEW

## Japanese Food Supporter: More of that taste of Japan

Introduction of this new program from Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries

Over the last years, Japanese food has become very popular in Switzerland. Sushi, for instance, was a niche market 10-15 years ago, but can now be found in supermarkets. Following the sushi trend, other specialties are becoming popular, like ramen and tempura.

Today the variety and availability of Japanese food has never be higher. Unfortunately, the quality and authenticity is not always what we would expect from Japanese specialties.

In order to promote Japanese food and beverages, we would like to introduce the Japanese Food Supporter program to our readers.

This program was designed to certify overseas restaurants, bars and retailers that carry Japanese food and beverages as official "Japanese Food Supporters" in order to further promote Japanese agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products around the world.

The certification works for both restaurants and retail stores. Certified restaurants and retail stores shall be able to use the "Japan Food Supporters" logo and promote that their stores as certified.



## More of that taste of Japan

The Certificate from Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

The requirements are as follow:

### For Restaurants

- Consistently serving food made with Japanese food products.
- Alcoholic beverages produced in Japan shall be offered as a specialty shop.
- The fact that the restaurant uses Japanese Food and alcoholic beverages shall be displayed on the menu.
- Promoting the appeal and characteristics of Japanese food and alcoholic beverages.

### For Retail Stores

- Consistently selling Japanese food and alcoholic beverages.
- The fact that products are

Japanese foods and alcoholic beverages shall be indicated on the product shelf.

- Promoting the appeal and characteristics of Japanese food and alcoholic beverages.

So far, four restaurants have earned the certificate: Bimi and Saku in Zurich as well as Yukiguni and Nagomi in Geneva (interview with Nagomi on page 2).

For the retail shops, the two Nishi Shops in Zurich have also earned the certificate.

As of May 31, 2019, 4,087 stores and restaurants have been certified worldwide.

More information on [JETRO](#) and the [Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries](#).

## “Every serving is crucial for me”

会見

INTERVIEW

Interview with Mr. Masahiko Numabukuro from Nagomi restaurant



Chef Masahiko Numabukuro's sushi

To better understand why the Japanese Food Supporter certification is important, we met Mr. Masahiko Numabukuro from the restaurant Nagomi in Geneva. He runs one of the oldest Japanese restaurants in Switzerland.

### *Can you please introduce Nagomi?*

Today, we have three Nagomi restaurants in Geneva. I started with Nagomi-Sushi in 1990. It is certainly one of the oldest authentic Japanese restaurants in town. To guarantee the quality, the restaurant itself is small: 20 people maximum. We do one or two services for lunch and dinner. Later, my son Kenta opened Nagomi-Tempura just near the first restaurant. Kenta is the only Tempura-specialist in Switzerland. Finally, in 2018 we opened Nagomi-san, a Ramen restaurant providing ramen-specialities from Hokkaido.

### *When did you get the certificate?*

It was in August 2018. We got it through a company located in Dusseldorf. The certificate applies to the three restaurants.

### *Have you noticed any difference since you have the certificate?*

Not really, to be honest. I don't think that we have more customers since then. This said, some people noticed the sticker on the door and asked what it was.

We will see if it has a positive outcome, with time.

### *Why it is important to use Japanese products?*

Today, you can find many products that look like Japanese, but are not Japanese at all. Someone that never went to Japan can run a Japanese-like restaurant without using any Japanese products. They might be good, but a customer who wants an authentic Japanese taste could be disappointed.

Nowadays, many people have visited Japan and know how Japanese specialities should taste. My customers are looking for this taste and have high expectations.

You know, it this business you do not get a second chance. Therefore every serving is crucial for me.

### *For which products is it especially important to be Japanese?*



Tempura from Chef Kenta Numabukuro



Gastronomy and art

Certainly, fresh wasabi. Authentic wasabi is fragile, difficult to cultivate and therefore expensive.

(ed. The common wasabi-paste we find everywhere is a substitute made from a local and cheaper root with some green colorant).

Soy sauce and gari are also important to be Japanese, the choice here being limited.

### *What do you do with products that cannot be imported from Japan?*

In my case, the most obvious challenge is where to find good fish. The fish must be very fresh for sushi and sashimi. Importing frozen fish from Japan is not a suitable option. Therefore, I carefully select my suppliers to be as close as possible to the taste I am looking for.

For instance, I recently started to import Tuna from Croatia, where I found a high quality product containing a lower level of mercury than what we usually find on the market.

They told me that I am their only importer in Switzerland.

[Nagomi Restaurant](#)

## Japan-Switzerland Summit Meeting

On June 10, Prime Minister Abe met President Maurer for a bilateral meeting during the G20 Finance Summit. Both sides agreed on the excellent quality of the relationship between the two countries.

Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan hopes to cooperate with Switzerland on various challenges in the international community, which is an important partner to Japan that shares fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. In response, expressing his gratitude for the invitation to the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting in Fukuoka, President Maurer stated that G20 Finance Ministers were able to share their views on various issues including the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment. Prime Minister Abe requested Swiss cooperation toward the repeal of the restriction measures on products imported from Japan after the Great East Japan Earthquake and the related nuclear incident.

Regarding the regional situation and the Tokyo 2020 Olympic

Games, President Maurer stated that Switzerland offers its utmost support regarding the abductions issue and hoped that many Swiss citizens will take this opportunity to visit Japan, and that this will deepen the bonds between the citizens of both countries.

President Ueli Maurer reiterated Switzerland's willingness to update the successful bilateral Free Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement, which has been in force

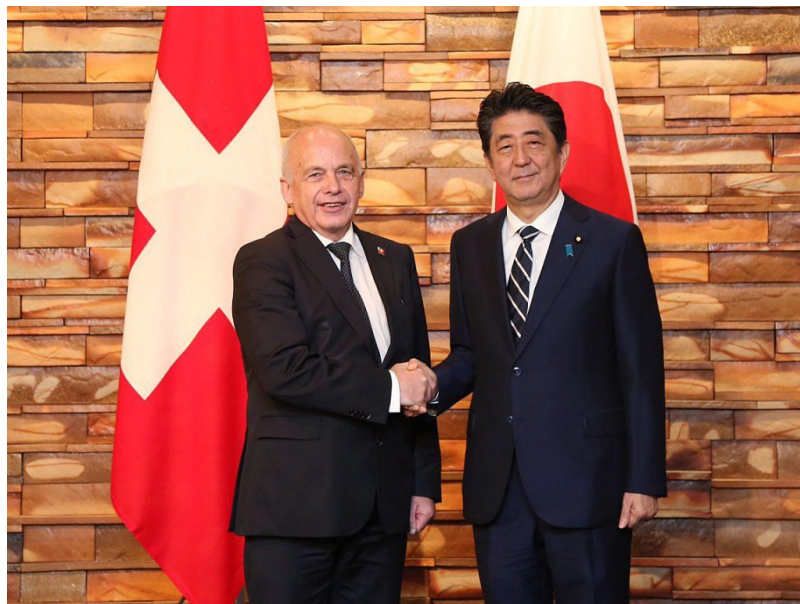
for ten years.

He also welcomed the important work under the Japanese G20 presidency, which promotes a lifecycle approach to investments and thus long-term, sustainable infrastructures.

Sources:

[Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)

[Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs](#)



Prime Minister Abe welcoming Federal Councillor and President Maurer

活動

ACTIVITY

## Japan strongly commits to preserve global trade

Japan has set the promotion of free and fair trade as a priority. Japan has been very active regarding bilateral and regional agreements, but also wants to contribute to unlocking the current blockage in the WTO. Therefore, Prime Minister Abe set global trade as the first and main topic on the agenda of the

coming G20 summit in Osaka (June 28-29).

Read the opinion brief of Prime Minister Abe in the [Japan Time](#).

JETRO is also putting a lot of energy into safeguarding the multilateral trading system.

On April 18, JETRO and the Inter-

national Chamber of Commerce (ICC) cohosted an [international symposium](#) under the theme: "The World Trading System at a Crossroad and WTO Reform for a Sustainable World Economy." WTO reforms, data flows, and sustainability were on the menu.

動向

TREND

## Olympic and Paralympic Games are driving innovation in Japan

革新

INNOVATION

Major sport events stimulate innovation.

The Tokyo 1964 Summer Olympics, for instance, were the first games to be telecast internationally using geostationary satellites.

Transport also benefited from a world-first innovation in 1964 with the Tokaido Shinkansen, the world's first high speed train.

What was true in 1964 will also be true next year for both broadcasting and transport.

The Japanese national television, NHK, will cover and broadcast the Tokyo 2020 Olympics in "8K" resolution.

Self-driving vehicles will be used to transport the many expected visitors.

The robotics company ZMP is testing autonomous taxi services be-

tween Tokyo Station and Roppongi district.

All Nippon Airways is also conducting trials for driverless shuttles inside Haneda Airport.

Those are only a small taste of Tokyo 2020, which aims to be the

most innovative Olympic and Paralympic Games to date.

Sources:

[ZMP](#); [NHK](#)

See also this interesting article from the [World Economic Forum](#)



ZMP shows its technology in this [video](#) on YouTube.

## Agenda

日程

AGENDA

- ✓ September 29: Fête Japonaise

The 9th edition of the Fête Japonaise will take place on September 29 in Carouge. [Details](#)

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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