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## Season's Greetings from JETRO Geneva



Kurokawa Onsen in Kumamoto prefecture © JNTO

Dear Readers,

Another challenging year is ending, but better days are coming. It is now time to rest, treat yourself and prepare for the bright new year. Why not feast with some sake or wagyu, or keep the cold outside with green tea or ramen?

Our office will be closed from December 29th to January 3rd.

We wish you all a lovely holiday season!

Kind regards,  
JETRO Geneva's team

## A Sake day in GastroSuisse's Swiss Wine Sommelier seminar

We attended the one day sake seminar taught by Dr. Charly Iten, SSA Master Sake Sommelier

GastroSuisse is the largest industrial association in Switzerland for the hotel and restaurant industry with over 20,000 members.

Among others, GastroSuisse provides trainings to professionals. One of these trainings is the popular Swiss Wine Sommelier which is divided into two parts. In 2021, GastroSuisse added a Sake day in Part Two of the seminar. Part two lasts 15 days, during which participants deepen their knowledge about wines from different countries, pairings, vineyards, the latest trends, and now also Sake with one dedicated day to the "Nihonshu".

The "Introductory Sake Professional" seminar from the Sake

Sommelier Association is provided by Dr. Charly Iten, the first SSA Master Sake Sommelier in Switzerland and approved course provider.

*One day seminar in Zurich*

The course took place in Zurich on November 15. The day was divided as follows: An introduction to the culture of Japan, the history of sake, sake as part of Japanese culture, the making process of sake, comparisons between cold and hot sake, a tasting, and the Introductory Sake Professional exam which is internationally recognized.

While the Swiss Wine Sommelier seminar is meant for professionals of the industry who usually already have working experi-

ence with wine, sake was new to most of the fifteen participants. Only three of them were familiar with sake.

*The history and making of sake*

Dr. Iten is not only a Master Sake Sommelier, but also a specialist of Japanese culture and a great teacher. The morning lessons covered Japan's history as well as the history of Sake. Participants learned about the deep roots of sake and its importance in Japanese culture over the centuries. For instance, it is remarkable that Japanese sake makers used pasteurization three centuries before Louis Pasteur explained it!

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## 行事

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## A Sake day in Gastrosuisse's Swiss Wine Sommelier seminar



Dr. Iten serving sake for the tasting

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Afterwards, participants learned about the unique sake-making process including the importance of the rice, the water, the polishing, the fermentation, etc. Dr. Iten took enough time to explain the differences between the different types of sake and the related vocabulary.

***Temperature consumption influence the taste***

In the afternoon another theory part focused on the effects of temperature on sake. Sake is indeed one of the rare alcoholic beverages that can be consumed in a wide scale of temperatures. Usually served at room temperature, hot sake (up to 55°) or cold sake (under 10°) is also perfectly suitable depending on the sake, one's personal taste, and the context.

This has a strong influence on the taste as we could try them during the tasting.

***The tasting***

For the tasting part, Dr. Iten brought four different sakes that

well represented the diversity of what can be found. Those sakes, and many more, can be bought on Charly Iten's website. He also organizes private tasting events for those who are curious but don't want to take the full Swiss Wine Sommelier seminar.

The four sakes were:

Urakasumi, a Junmai from Saura brewery located in Miyagi prefecture (polished to 65%)

Amabuki, a Daiginjo from Amabuki brewery located in Saga prefecture (polished to 40%)

Dassai 45, Junmai Daiginjo, from Asahi brewery located in Yamaguchi prefecture (polished to 45%)

Yuki no Bosha, Yamahai Honjozo, from Saiya Shuzoten located in Akita prefecture (polished to 65%)

The sake sommelier apprentices could identify many different aromas from fruity ones such as bananas, pear and melon to milkier aromas. It was also possible to see what differences higher polishing brings in terms of aroma complexity as the core of rice is used which has the highest density of starch.

An interesting comparison everyone can do easily at home is to try the differences in temperatures. For the fourth sake, it was first served at room temperature and then warmed to 40° (by putting the bottle into hot water).

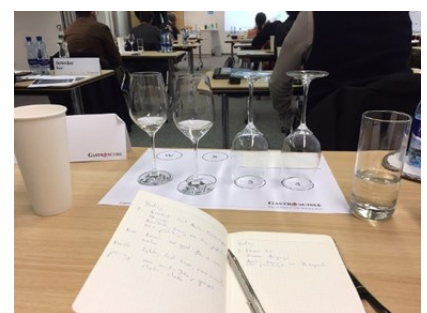
As temperature increases, the alcohol and mouth-filling sensation become more pronounced. The aroma changes as well. The class was divided on whether they preferred it hot or not, showing how much this is a matter of personal taste.

***How to add sake on your menu and how to sell it to your customers***

As this is a seminar for professionals, Dr. Iten also gave advice on how to make a good sake selection for your customers and how to sell it. This is an important aspect to consider as sake is not yet a self-selling product in Switzerland. If not advised, most customers may go for beer or wine.

It is a good idea to start with a rather small selection of five to ten sakes that are well-chosen and covering broad types of sake and prices. It is also important to guide customers who are not familiar with sake by suggesting the best sakes that match with their food or asking about their preference with other alcoholic beverages.

Last tip that is perfectly suitable for Switzerland: sake works especially well with cheese. The umami taste of cheese, due to the milk fermentation, is underlined by the sake while wine tends to "cut it". Sake is perfectly suitable with cheese dessert or strong tasted blue cheese explained Dr. Iten. In a previous interview with Foodex, Ms. Catherine Ruchti said that she liked to have sake with raclette. Another thing to try!



A tasting set for professionals!

## RCEP: the world's largest trade agreement enters into force on Jan. 2022

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will enter into force on January 1st, 2022 between Japan and nine other countries.

The RCEP is an economic partnership covering the Asia Pacific area. Together, the 15 involved countries account for about 30% of the world's population and GDP. The ten ASEAN countries have signed the agreement as well as Japan, China, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. The members have agreed to eliminate 90% of import duties within 20 years and agreed for common rules for e-commerce, trade, and Intellectual Property.

The signature took place (virtually) on November 15, 2020 in Hanoi. With the ratification of Australia and New Zealand on November 2nd, 2021, the treaty can enter into force between the countries who have already ratified it. Therefore, the treaty will be effective between Japan, Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China,

Lao Republic, New Zealand, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand and Vietnam.

Since South Korea just ratified the treaty (early December), it will enter into force on February 2022 between Korea and the other countries.

The agreement is less comprehensive than other recently negotiated trade agreements such the Trans-Pacific Partnership, but it set common rules in the most dynamic

trading area of the world. The unified rules of origin throughout the members will, for instance, reinforce the international supply chain.

According to the Asian Development Bank, the RCEP could bring an additional gain of \$174 billion to the members by 2030.

Japan welcomed the entry into force of the agreement expecting it to contribute to the economic growth of Japan and the region.

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)



[MOFA](#): Japan's network of Economic Partnership and Free Trade Agreements  
In green, in force or signed agreements. In red, under negotiations

分析

ANALYSIS

## Minor adjustments to the Swiss-Japanese travel restrictions

Minor adjustments to the travel restrictions between Switzerland and Japan.

The Federal Council has amended the entry restriction in Switzerland. No country is subject to a mandatory quarantine anymore. All travellers from Japan and several other countries had to quarantine for 10 days. This is no longer the case, but a negative PCR test is required to enter the country as

well as fulfilling the ad hoc form. As second test (PCR or antigenic) must be taken four to seven days afterwards. However, people can move freely during this period complying with the mandatory sanitary measures.

For Swiss nationals it is still forbid to travel to Japan. Japanese citizen can return to Japan but have to quarantine for ten days at least. When coming from Switzerland,

the first three days must be spent into a designated facility. Should a passenger on your flight be tested positive to Omicron, it is ten days in the designated facility for all passengers.

Those entry restrictions are a temporary measure meant against Omicron variant. They are limited to December 31th, 2021.

Source: [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#)

動向

TREND



## 革新

INNOVATION

## Japan's day at the Expo 2020 Dubai: culture and innovation

Japan is an important exhibitor at the World Expo in Dubai as the next edition will take place in Osaka in 2025. The Japanese national pavilion gives a glimpse at what Osaka will look like. Visitors will experience the diversity of the country, from ancient culture to cutting edge technologies. Indeed, after a Space week with astronaut Naoko Yamazaki, the visitors enjoyed Japan's rich culture with several performances during the Japan Day on December 11th. On that day, every visitor of the Expo was welcomed by a traditional drum troop present at all main entrance of the site.

The Pavilion designed by Ms. Yuko NAGAYAMA is another evidence of this cohabitation of tradition and modernity. The tradition origami shape of the façade both symbolize the respect shown to others

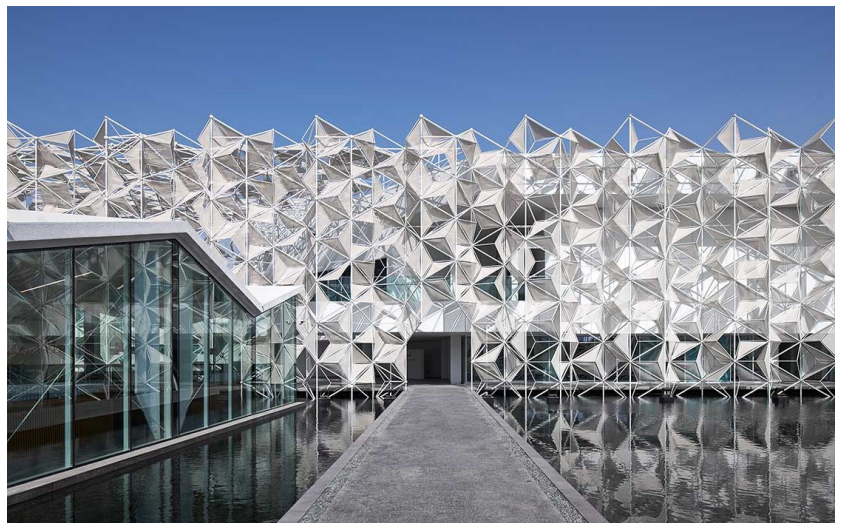
through the Japanese art of gift wrapping but also serve a efficiency purpose. It protects the pavilion from the sun light and his part of the natural cooling system of the pavilion mixing traditional Arabic and Japanese techniques.

Expanse of water in front of the

Pavilion cools the area and reflects the three-dimensional façade.

Sustainable architecture employing use of environmentally-friendly system equipment.

Source: [Official website of Japan's Pavilion](#)



The entrance of the Pavilion designed by Yuko NAGAYAMA  
Copyright: Japan Pavilion

## Agenda



Stay tuned!

## 活動

AGENDA

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>

# JETRO

Japan External Trade Organization

JETRO Geneva  
80, Rue de Lausanne  
1202 Geneva  
Phone: 022 732 13 04  
Fax: 022 732 07 72  
E-mail: SWG@jetro.go.jp