

## News Release from JNTO Toronto, April 18, 2007

### 2007 Canada-Japan Tourism Exchange Year

The “Canada-Japan Tourism Exchange Year” was established to mark the 120th year since the inauguration of the first regular sea route between Yokohama, Japan, and Vancouver, Canada, in 1887. Both countries will continue to put in great effort to work together towards the growth of tourism between Canada and Japan and to enhance opportunities for interaction between the citizens of both nations.



### Joint effort in Logo design

A logo was created with the key concept of “exchange” between Canada and Japan. It is designed as a joint effort with hopes for deeper bilateral ties and prosperity on both ends. Featuring a crane to represent Japan and the Canadian goose unique to Canada flying towards a common future, it will be used in the joint initiatives and any related tourism brochures.

### Appointment of the Goodwill Ambassadors for Canada-Japan Tourism Exchange

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/canada/exch2007/goodwill.html>

Prominent figure skaters, Mai Asada and Mao Asada, were recently appointed as Goodwill Ambassadors for the Canada-Japan Tourism Exchange. The goal is to promote bilateral tourism exchange between Canada and Japan. There are plans for Mai and Mao Asada, to communicate to the citizens of Canada and Japan the appeal of figure skating as well as tourism attractions in both countries through various vehicles such as posters and special tourism events.

### ‘Yokoso!Japan Day’ on April 18th, 2007 at the Rogers Center

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/canada/exch2007/event.html>

During the major league baseball game between the Toronto Blue Jays and the Boston Red Sox in Toronto, the general public, members of the press and travel industry are invited to attend a very special first pitch ceremony on April 18th at the Rogers Center. A welcome message from Prime Minister Abe will be broadcast on the stadium’s giant screen. To the energetic and upbeat sound of Japanese taiko drums, Vicky Sunohara, a member of the Canada National Women’s Hockey Team and 2-time Olympic Gold Medalist, will be escorted by Ambassador Nishida to throw the first pitch. The goal of this event is to make the announcement of the 2007 Canada-Japan Tourism Exchange Year and raise awareness of Japan as a travel destination.



## **VISIT JAPAN CAMPAIGN (VJC)**

Under the former Prime Minister Junichiro Kozumi's administrative initiative and the continued efforts from present Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the Government of Japan has set a goal of promoting inbound tourism and attracting 10 million overseas tourists to visit Japan by the year 2010. In March 26, 2003, the 'Strategic Meeting of the Inbound Tourism Initiative of Japan' was held under the auspices of the Minister for Land, Infrastructure and Transport with the objective of uniting the forces of the public and private sectors and initiating the Visit Japan Campaign. Branded as 'Yokoso!Japan', the campaign initially started in Korea, China, Taiwan, the United States, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, France and Germany and was expanded to Thailand, Singapore, Australia and Canada from 2005. The goal is to lessen the gap between Japanese travelling outbound and inbound visitors to Japan. Judging from the statistical data for 2003 with 13.2 million outbound vs. 5.2 million inbound in comparison with 2006 with 17.5 million outbound vs. 7.3 inbound, the gap has been lessened. For more information, please refer to the official site at [www.visitjapan.jp](http://www.visitjapan.jp)



## **VISIT JAPAN CAMPAIGN (VJC) IN CANADA**

The official launch of VJC took place in Canada on April 1, 2005. Since then, promotional efforts have been focused on the joint promotional projects with tour operators and other Asian countries in tour development, ad campaigns, seminars, press and travel agent inspection tours. For the past several years, we have enjoyed a healthy growth in the number of Canadians visiting Japan. In 2006, there were 157,438 Canadians travelling to Japan, a 5% increase from 2005. For more statistical data, please access <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/ttp/sta/index.html>



**CONGRATULATIONS to Ms. Vicky Sunohara and the members of Canada National Women's Hockey Team for winning the 9th Gold medal of the 2007 ITHF World Women's Championship.**

It is our great honour to have Ms. Sunohara to throw the first pitch at our "Yokoso! Japan Day" during the Jays vs. Red Sox game on April 18, 2007.

### **Japan National Tourist Organization**

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