



Japan National Tourism Organization



Wishing you a
New Year sparkling
with Happiness,
Success and
Prosperity!



From the
Toronto office of
Japan National Tourism Organization

Message for the Japan Travel Specialists (JTS)

Thank you very much for your participation in the JTS Online Certification Program.

Congratulations to the JTS winners!

October 2008

Grand Prize of Round Trip Air tickets from Air Canada
Sara Vostaie, *Trafalgar Tours*

Special Prizes

Richard Morissette, *HRG North America*

Jessica Xia Chu, *GLP Worldwide Expedition Travel & Tours*

December 2008

Grand Prize of Round Trip Air tickets from Japan Airlines
Jacqueline Hau, *Jade Travel*

Special Prizes

Danny Ang, *American Express Platinum Travel*

Tordes Schaefer-Charlton, *Affinity Group Tours*

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**Please note the new official name as of 2009*

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the Editor, Athena Ho at athena@jntooyz.com

All previous Newsletters can be accessed at
<http://www.jnto.go.jp/canada/newsletter.html>

Meanwhile, please look out for the opportunities
of receiving invitations to the familiarization trips,
travel marts, promotional events and Japan Travel
News.

http://www.jnto.go.jp/canada/jts/jts_online2.html

Michelin Guide Book – Tokyo is the culinary capital of the world

With the release of the Michelin Guide in 2008, Tokyo has been recognized as a shining star in the world of cuisine. Michelin's Tokyo Guide awarded 191 stars to 150 restaurants in the capital city of Japan, the highest number of stars awarded in any city. Paris previously held the top spot, with only 65 stars. Eight establishments in Tokyo, three French restaurants, two sushi bars and three traditional Japanese restaurants, received Michelin's highest rating of 3 stars.



According to Michelin, a team of three undercover European and two Japanese inspectors spent a year and a half visiting 1,500 of Tokyo's estimated 160,000 restaurants to decide on the ratings. The guidebook rates restaurants on excellence in cooking, service, décor and upkeep.

The announcement by the Michelin Guide was treated as front-page news and was broadcast widely on TV. The glowing reviews for Tokyo's restaurants was also seen as confirmation of the value of something that the Japanese have long seen as a source of national pride – the mastery of sushi, sashimi and all the other famously subtle elements of Japan's indigenous cuisine. The guide sold 120,000 copies in just three days.

Tokyo Taste - The World Summit of Gastronomy



February 9 - 11, 2009, Tokyo International Forum

This is the first international culinary event in Asia. Top chefs from across the world will gather in Tokyo to demonstrate their latest culinary creations and share ideas based on their home country's cuisine. At the same time, the Summit features the latest culinary trends in Japan and will promote Japanese cuisine to the rest of the world. This event also highlights the relationship between food and nutritional sciences. A portion of the Summit's proceeds will be donated towards food relief for impoverished children around the world.

Starting from 10,000 yen (about \$100 Canadian dollars) per day, the admission covers multiple lectures and demonstrations by prominent chefs. The featured chefs will represent various culinary fields such as French, Italian, Spanish and Japanese. For more information, please access <http://www.tokyotaste.net/en/index.html>

The 60th Sapporo Snow Festival - February 5 to 11, 2009



The Sapporo Snow Festival is one of Japan's largest winter events and each year attracts a growing number of visitors from both Japan and abroad. Every winter, about two million people come to Sapporo to see Odori Park, the grounds at the Community Dome Tsudome and are filled with hundreds of beautiful snow statues and ice sculptures. For seven days in February, these statues and sculptures in a variety of different sizes turn Sapporo

into a winter dreamland of crystal-like ice and white snow.

The Snow Festival began in 1950, when local high school students built six snow statues in Odori Park. In 1955, the Self-Defense Force joined in and built the very first massive snow sculpture. These giant constructions have become the hallmark of the Snow Festival. The Festival has grown from these humble beginnings to become one of the biggest and most well known of Hokkaido's winter events. The Snow Festival is considered to be a festival of international caliber.

About the Snow Festival: <http://www.snowfes.com/english/index.html>

About Sapporo: <http://www.city.sapporo.jp/city/english/>

Festivals & Events in Japan

Experiencing local culture will make your Japan tours even more memorable. You can check the local festivals events by **map**, **month** and **location** at <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/festivals/>

A list of **traditional events** is available at:

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/index.html>

Important information about **National holidays** can be found here:

http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/history/traditionalevents/a71a_fes_holiday.html

Enjoy Chinese New Year in Japan

A 'Welcome Chinese New Year's Tourist Campaign' is organized by the Odakyu Electric Railway in Hakone.

http://www.odakyu.jp/chinesenewyear/hakone_01.html

Enoshima and Kamakura <http://www.odakyu.jp/chinesenewyear/enokama.html>

Shinjuku <http://www.odakyu.jp/chinesenewyear/shinjuku.html>

Please do enjoy the special events planned during this particular period.

<http://www.odakyu.jp/chinesenewyear/>



Yokoso! Japan Week - January 20 to February 28, 2009

Continuing the success of last year's campaign, a wide range of events will be held all across Japan to welcome the many overseas visitors to the country during winter this year. There will be many events in addition to a welcome campaign, so this is the perfect opportunity to visit Japan during winter! You can enjoy not only the beautiful winter scenery, but also wonderful seasonal food as well.

Nearly one-fourth of the 300 department stores and half of the 40 outlet malls throughout Japan are participating in the Yokoso! Japan Week 2009 campaign. Various events including hands-on experience tours and privilege campaigns will be hosted by nearly 600 stores throughout the country. A wide variety of services will be offered as well as free original gifts. Don't miss this fantastic opportunity!

The theme for this year is "Traditional Experience and Shopping" where you can get firsthand experience of Japanese culture and art while you enjoy shopping and regional specialties.

For more Information, please visit <http://www.yjw2009.jp/eng/>

The new Tokai-Hokuriku Expressway was completed last month

December 2008 saw the completion of the new Tokai-Hokuriku Expressway which has opened a link between Takayama City and the UNESCO World Heritage site Shirakawa-go. Travel from Toyama Prefecture and Ishikawa Prefecture into the Takayama area will now be faster and more reliable than ever. The trip from Takayama to Shirakawa-go along the narrow mountain road route which could take over 60 minutes is now a safe and speedy 45 minute drive on the multilane expressway route. Another benefit of the new expressway link is that groups traveling to Shirakawa-go during the beautiful but snowy winter months no longer have to worry about being snowed in, which caused delays. The highway buses from the Bus Center in Takayama City are also taking advantage of the new route with revised timetables and a new stop in Shirakawa-go along the route to Kanazawa City in Ishikawa Prefecture. The "Nohi Bus", provides bus transportation in the Hida Takayama area and has established an English website for foreign visitors. You can check the bus schedule, ticket price and other information on the website.

<http://www.nouhibus.co.jp/english/>

