

# VENICE / JAPAN INTERNATIONAL FOOD+ SYMPOSIUM Live webinar March 18 - 20, 2021

## March 18th

h 10: 30 AM

**Naoki Toneri, President Kazepro Inc.**

*Italian Food Culture perception in contemporary Japan*

This panel will focus on the Italian culture in contemporary Japan and its perceptions. How are Italian culture and products perceived by Japanese consumers nowadays, 30 years after the "Italian boom" began in Japan during the 90s? Furthermore, Mr Naoki Toneri will discuss the introduction and diffusion of Italian products in the Japanese market, highlighting the particular case of olive oil. What kind of mechanisms have influenced the domestic usage of olive oil given it was still not used on a daily basis in Japan?

h 11:00 AM

**Masahiko Shimada, Novelist, Professor Hosei University Tokyo**

*About Air meal and revival of the Black market*

Everyone is anxious that the form of eating and drinking will change drastically due to the pandemic. The immediate challenge is how to overcome the harsh reality of the rush of restaurant closures, but the chance of survival may be found unexpectedly in the black market. Large-capital sushi chains, izakaya chains, family restaurants, and First Foods are also shrinking. Privately owned restaurants have been forced to withdraw before the epidemic spread, but large capital has also been hit hard. Which is faster, to regenerate or restart? Private restaurants with weak capital will soon collapse, but the selling point is the lightness of the footwork that can be rebuilt immediately. It seems that minimalism is likely to become the standard in the post-Corona era.

11:45 AM

**Eiko Koga, Mitsubishi Italia Spa, President & CEO; Natalia Francesca Sinatra, Mitsubishi Italia Spa, Food & Beverage Export Manager**

*Sogo shosha: Japanese trading companies in the Italian and Japanese market and their food business*

The presentation by Mitsubishi Italia focuses on the role of one of Japan's sogo susha (trading company) operating in Italy, with a special focus on its food department's activities. They will present an overview of the company's history, detailing the evolution of Mitsubishi Italia from its core principles to its modern infrastructure. The second part will comprise a description of the food-related businesses, with attention to the data representing the "Made in Italy" brand; lastly, they will cover the major differences of branding and usage of food products when marketed to either Italy or Japan.

h 12:15 PM

**Kentaro Ide** – General Secretary of Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Italy (JETRO), Milan

**Taketoshi Obata** – Ex-President of Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Italy (MUFG Bank, Milan)

*Food business and investment between Italy and Japan*

This panel will focus on business and investment between Italy and Japan, and will start with Mr Taketoshi Obata introducing the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in Italy and overviewing the investment of Japanese companies in Italy. Furthermore, Mr Kentaro Ide will briefly introduce JETRO and trade of foods between Italy and Japan, and highlight some of the major topics and issues about this peculiarity. Finally, they will discuss some of the expectations of Japanese companies with regards to this particular trade.

h 2:15 PM

**Stefania Viti, Journalist and Writer**

*The gastronomic tale: a link between Japanese and Italian cultures*

This panel will focus on the project of creation, development and publication of a series of books on Japanese food culture within the Italian publishing scene. We will have a chance to discuss the importance of Japanese food and culture's storytelling. Stefania Viti will examine the peculiar choice of this kind of narration, as well as the gastronomic tale as a link between Japanese and Italian cultures. Lastly, she will provide a few ideas on the nourishment of the gastronomic conversation between Italy and Japan after the pandemic.

h 2:45 PM

**Niccolò Geri, Teacher, Writer and Food Expert**

*How sushi became popular in Italy?*

The diffusion of sushi in Italy is linked to the globalization of sushi chefs and to the globalization of fish markets which allows people to buy every kind of fish they need, without thinking about the damages they could provoke. The consumption of sushi underlines also the diffusion of Japanese cultural elements and the fascination for Japanese culture in Italy. In general, sushi is not only linked to economic strategies adopted by chefs and restaurant managers, but also to the diffusion in Italy of other Japanese cultural elements.

3:15 PM

**Roberta Novielli, Professor Ca' Foscari University of Venice**

*Food between life and death in the cinema of Marco Ferreri and Itami Juzo*

International cinema of every era has told of the relationship between men and women with food, in many cases as a common thread capable of binding every life impulse: sex, spirituality, greed, even death. In the cases of Italy and Japan, there are in particular two directors in which the theme recurs with greater incisiveness, namely Marco Ferreri and Itami Juzo, especially in the films *La Grande Abbuffata* and *Tanpopo*.

Both movies also represent a critique of consumer society and the general decay of civil entourage. The characters thus contribute to representing a sort of mythology of the human being, each distinct in a grotesque, surreal and in many cases parodic way while they use food to translate their impulses.

# VENICE / JAPAN INTERNATIONAL FOOD+ SYMPOSIUM

## Live webinar

### March 18 - 20, 2021

# March 19th

h 10:00 AM

**Giorgio Starace, Ambassador of Italy to Japan**

*Challenges and opportunities for the Italian agri-food sector in Japan*

Japan represents an important market for Italian companies in the agri-food sector, particularly following the tariff liberalization and thanks to the EU – Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), in force from the 1st February 2019. Despite the crisis due to COVID 19, the entire Italian productive system proved to be very resilient and prepared to catch any economic opportunities in the post-pandemic phase. In this context, the strategic approach of the Embassy of Italy to Japan has been oriented to support the Made in Italy initiative in Japan, in line with the key objectives of the “Patto per l’Export”, launched last year by H.E. the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hon. Luigi Di Maio. The Embassy of Italy will work using a promotional approach, in close synergy with public and private Institutions, main players of the initiatives of the so called ‘Sistema Italia’.

h 10:30 AM

**Davide Fantoni, Italian Chamber of Commerce in Japan, General Manager**

*Italian F&B in Japan*

Italy in Japan resounds with fashion, lifestyle and most of all food. From ho.re.ca to home cooking to gifts, Italian F&B products have taken Japanese consumers by storm in the past few decades, imposing Made in Italy as the most loved national brand. But the Japanese market is extremely mature, fast and notoriously one of the most sophisticated globally. Competition is fierce and relying on the quality of the product itself is not enough to secure commercial success in a country where form often prevails over content. That is when (good) food marketing becomes the crucial element in dictating the lifespan of a brand. To what degree are Italian producers aware of this? And what is the best approach to minimize failure?

h 11:00 AM

**Yamamori Nanako, Journalist, The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan**

*Current affairs of Japanese food*

The presentation will highlight current affairs in food; Japan's declining food self-sufficiency, food waste, sustainability, trends and changing attitudes after the Great East Japan earthquake to the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. We will discuss how the government has been trying to reduce food loss, while Japan's declining food self-sufficiency rate has fallen to the worst among developed countries. We will look into some initiatives in the private sector that promote “sustainable food”. Furthermore, we will focus on current trends and attitudes: the after-effects of the Great East Japan earthquake; rising interests in food “made-in-Japan”; slow food vs fast food; food for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

h 11:45 AM

**Michele Bianco, Manager Ubercom Treviso, Professor of Marketing & Strategy**

*Evolution and future development of the food experience for Made in Italy and Japanese products*

Starting from a preliminary analysis of international markets in light of the impacts of the pandemic and foreseeable future scenarios, focusing in particular on Italy and Japan, we will outline an overview of the trends that will guide the future development of the world of food, highlighting new approaches to consumption, the challenges to be faced in the new normal and the opportunities to be seized, under the perspective of the online approach. The objective of the speech will be to investigate the evolution of the food experience for Made in Italy and Japanese products, identifying affinities and possible synergies between food and cultural styles, sharing points of reflection for strategic business development.

h 12:15 PM

**Eugenio De Angelis, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Centro di ricerca Marco Polo - Center for Global Europe-Asia Connections, Research fellow**

*Shokutaku jigoku Visions of family meals in Japanese cinema*

Cooking and dining scenes have been a ubiquitous presence in Japanese cinema since its inception, and the relationship between Japanese people and food has been frequently exploited to play out family dynamics, rites of passage, etc. Therefore, the dining room often becomes the place where drama unfolds in striking contrast with this supposedly safe environment. In this presentation, I will focus on three films where dining scenes are particularly relevant – Ozu Yasujiro's The Taste of Green Tea Over Rice (1952), Morita Yoshimitsu's The Family Game (1983) and Miike Takashi's Visitor Q (2001) – in order to analyze how Japanese cinema has documented the transformation of family relations in time.

h 12:45 PM

**Francesco Bicciato, Secretary General of Italian Sustainable Investment Forum**

*Sustainable finance strategies to promote the agri-food industry*

The agri-food sector has important consequences for environmental and social issues and is crucial for achieving climate goals. Sustainable finance strategies and instruments, integrating environmental, social and governance criteria into financial products and processes, are the most suitable ways to promote the agri-food industry towards an even more sustainable growth. In this period of the COVID-19 pandemic, ESG funds are showing a strong resilience in the financial market and in the next future the European taxonomy of environmentally-sustainable activities will provide the essential tools to improve sustainable investments in strategic sectors like agri-food.

# VENICE / JAPAN INTERNATIONAL FOOD+ SYMPOSIUM

Live webinar

March 18 - 20, 2021

## March 19th

h 2:15 PM

**Paola Scrolavezza, Professor University of Bologna**

*Menus for the Soul: Changing Food Landscapes in Contemporary Japan*

As Nancy K. Stalker (2018) points out, in recent years food in Japan has established itself as a fundamental feature of national and local identity and became one of Japan's most influential cultural brands. An intriguing example is the B-kyū gurume boom, the celebration of creative versions of typical comfort food, intertwined with the obsession for local traditions. Such processes are reflected in representations of food in media and arts: contemporary culture plays a fundamental role in shaping but also in connoting food culture with new meanings. The aim of this paper is to analyze the construction and narration of contemporary Japanese food culture in one of the most recent and successful franchises, Shin'ya Shokudō, the popular manga by Abe Yarō, which inspired the Netflix series that enjoyed unexpected international success in 2017.

h 2:45 PM

**Giovanni Bulian, Professor Ca' Foscari University of Venice**

*Savoring authenticity: food consumption and nostalgia in Japan*

The Japanese culinary tradition and contemporary food-related values are often characterized by an emotional and evocative tone that can be traced back to nostalgia, a global multidimensional phenomenon that blends cultural anxieties, sentimental values and sense of place. The desire to remember home through food consumption, as a valuable way of approaching the past, enables the construction or redefinition of ethnic identities, cultural boundaries and a sense of uniqueness. This paper offers some introductory reflections on present-day practices and affective aspects related to Japanese food culture from the point of view of their symbolic meaning in media narratives.

h 3:15 PM

**Bonaventura Ruperti, Professor Ca' Foscari University of Venice**

*Food Culture and Traditional Performing Arts in Japan*

Food and cuisine in Japan as well as in Italy - and certainly not only in France - are culture. The importance of food is naturally vital and is therefore the foundation of the rites, in which offerings to the deities also take place. In Japan, gods are presented offerings of rice, foods from the seas and the mountains, drinks (sake), as well as flowers, in rituals. At the same time the performing arts; poetry, music and dance are also important in the rituals, dedicated to the divinities and to all the bystanders/audience on the occasion of rites and festivals. Professor Ruperti will therefore discuss food and drink, which are the basis of civilization and nutrition in Japan, in connection with traditional theaters: from nō, to kyōgen.

## March 20th

h 10:00 AM

**Nakabasami Chieko, Professor Toyo University; Michihata Fumi, Foodbiz-net.com, Representative**

*Acculturation and Rediscovery in Japanese Food Culture*

Since the Meiji era (from 1868), in Japan, the excess acculturation towards foreign cultures cannot be stopped. Japan is a surprising food acculturation country. Recently Japan recorded the worst self-sufficiency rate, and the diet has been placing disproportionate weight on meat. Japanese people see its diet as unhealthy and try to find a way to coexist for both their traditional food culture and international one. In Italy, many families still keep eating together at home, but in Japan, families are often eating out. Now Japanese people should rediscover the value of home-made dishes.

h 10:30 AM

**Emiko Kumano, Advertisement & PR Nihonshu Oendan**

*NIHONSHU OUENDAN: Brewing sake lifestyle and bringing it to the world*

Based on the vision of bringing "sake lifestyle, to the entire world", Nihonshu Oendan is a venture company operating in sales and small quantity production of brand-new sake varieties, with the purpose of magnifying the uniqueness of local sake. In collaboration with six partner breweries from six different prefectures in Japan (Ishikawa, Niigata, Saitama, Okayama, Shimane, Oita), they brew pure sake handling exclusively locally grown rice and using the toponymy of the growing regions as sake's name.

h 11:00 AM

**George Amano, George Creative Company, President & CEO**

*The relation between food and design*

As a design business producer, George Amano oversees several businesses in Japan keeping a focus on the perspective of design. In the last few years, he has produced a large number of cafes and restaurants that rose in popularity. Through the analysis of several examples from his works, he will explain the relation between food and design. Furthermore, he would give some insights on "foodtech", an abbreviation representing the fusion of food and technology.