

Profiles of Tokyo Tourism Ambassadors Appointed January 15, 2025

SUZUKI Yahei

(In Japanese alphabetical order with titles omitted)



Piatto Suzuki, Owner and Chef

Suzuki Yahei began following the path of Italian cuisine at the age of 19, training at La Patata and CUCINA HIRATA. In 1992, he studied abroad at a culinary school in Italy for one year, furthering his studies on his own at restaurants in Sicily and Tuscany. After returning to Japan in 1993, he was appointed chef at VINO HIRATA. Setting out on his own in 2002, he opened Piatto Suzuki, receiving one star in the Michelin Guide Tokyo for 14 consecutive years, from 2007 to 2021. In 2018, he won a Gault & Millau. While rooted in traditional Italian cuisine, he presents dishes that combine seasonal ingredients and innovative techniques.

SEKIYA Kenichiro



Château Restaurant Joël Robuchon, Executive Chef

After graduating from vocational school, Sekiya Kenichiro worked at a hotel before moving to France in 2002. Since 2006, he has been working at L'ATELIER de Joël Robuchon in Paris. At the tender age of 26, he was picked by Joël Robuchon to become the restaurant's sous chef. In 2018, he won the 52nd Le Taittinger Prix Culinaire International final, the first Japanese to hold the world title in 34 years. In 2021, he was appointed executive chef of Château Restaurant Joël Robuchon. In 2023, he became the first Japanese to receive the Meilleur Ouvrier de France (M.O.F.) for culinary skill. In 2024, he received the "Chevalier of the Order of Agricultural Merit" from the French Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries.

CHEN Kentaro



Shisen Hanten, 3rd Generation Executive Chef

CHEN Kentaro's grandfather, Chen Kenmin, was regarded as the father of Sichuan cuisine in Japan, while his father, Chen Kenichi, became famous as the Iron Chef Chinese on the television series Iron Chef. In 2002, Chen joined MINKEN KIGYO K.K., the company that operates Shisen Hanten. In addition to starting his training, he studied abroad at Sichuan University for two and a half years, where he learned authentic Sichuan cuisine at Bian Shi CaiGenXiang in Chengdu, Sichuan Province. After returning to Japan, he honed his skills at Shisen Hanten Group, and in 2011 was appointed head of the cooking department. In 2014, he opened the group's first overseas restaurant, Shisen Hanten by Chen Kentaro, in Singapore. The restaurant has been awarded a star in the Michelin Guide Singapore for seven consecutive years, since 2016. In December 2014, he was appointed president and CEO of MINKEN KIGYO K.K. As the third generation of Shisen Hanten Group, Chen is engaged in a variety of activities to convey the allure of "Sichuan cuisine cultivated in Japan" both domestically and internationally.

NONAGA Kimio



Nihonbashi Yukari, 3rd Generation Chef

NONAGA Kimio was born into the long-established Japanese restaurant Nihonbashi Yukari, one of the establishments permitted to serve the Imperial Household Agency. After training under Yoshihiro Murata at Roan Kikunoi, he displayed his skills as the third owner of Nihonbashi Yukari. In 2002, he won the Iron Chef JAPAN CUP '02. Selected as one of the five young chefs of Japan by the New York Times, he presented Japanese cuisine while representing Japan at international expositions and other events. His many overseas activities led to his appointment as "Tokyo Meister" and "Japanese Cuisine Goodwill Ambassador." He has made numerous media appearances, published recipes, and provided cooking guidance at events, as he continues to communicate the allure of Japanese food to the world.