

Tokyo Tourism Ambassadors

(In Japanese alphabetical order with titles omitted)

Akiyama Yoshihisa



Ginza MUTSUKARI, Executive Chef

After training at “Kappo Suzuki,” Akiyama Yoshihisa studied the essence of shojin cuisine (Buddhist vegetarian cuisine) at the famous shojin restaurant “Gesshinkyo.”

In 2005, he became the executive chef of Ginza “MUTSUKARI.” In 2022, Akiyama was ranked 55th in the world and 6th in Japan on the “We’re Smart® TOP 100.”

He served as general director of the World Cuisine Academic Meeting in ARITA

in 2016 and the World Cuisine Academic Meeting Tokyo in Toyosu in 2019, where he worked with top chefs from Japan and abroad to promote the potential of regional areas in Japan and Tokyo.

Last year, Akiyama started serving at the cruise line “TRAIN SUITE Shikishima” operated by JR East Japan. Given his passion for food, he is working to promote the sector with activities that position food as a bridge between regions and people.

Alan Poul



Film Producer, Director

Alan Poul graduated Summa Cum Laude from Yale University, majoring in Japanese language and Japanese literature. He then began his filmmaking career in Japan. Poul was an associate producer on Paul Schrader's *Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters* and Ridley Scott's *Black Rain*, and was a producer and director on *Six Feet Under*.

He has worked on both film and television, and has won prestigious awards over the past 25 years, including the Emmy, Golden Globe and Peabody Awards.

Currently, Alan Poul is the Executive Producer and Director of the drama series *TOKYO VICE* co-produced by HBO Max and WOWOW.

Kusumoto Katsumi



Vegan Restaurant SAIDO, Chef

After graduating from culinary school, Kusumoto Katsumi gained experience in French cuisine working at hotels and restaurants in Tokyo, but was fascinated by the delicate taste of Japanese food and switched his focus to Japanese cuisine.

Dedicating himself to his work at a Japanese restaurant, he established a unique style that incorporates French elements.

In 2018, Kusumoto opened a vegan restaurant “SAIDO” in Jiyugaoka, Tokyo. Just one year after opening, it won the first place worldwide on “Happy Cow,” the world's most popular vegan and vegetarian restaurant information website. In January 2023, he opened a pop-up restaurant at “Japan House Los Angeles,” a center to communicate information on Japan to people around the world established by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Passionate about issues ranging from veganism to religions to food allergies, Kusumoto is active in Japan and abroad to find ways to support food diversity.

Kumakawa Tetsuya



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K-BALLET COMPANY

Bunkamura Orchard Hall, Artistic Director Ballet Dancer, Director, Choreographer

In 1989, while studying at the Royal Ballet School, Kumakawa Tetsuya became the first Japanese to win the gold medal at the Prix de Lausanne. In the same year, he became the first Asian to join the Royal Ballet. In 1991, Kumakawa became the youngest soloist in the Royal Ballet's history, and in 1993 he was promoted to principal (highest rank). He has given many impressive performances and established a reputation as a world-prominent dancer both in name and reality.

In 1998, Kumakawa left the Royal Ballet and founded K-BALLET COMPANY in 1999. Since then, he has led the company as artistic director and principal dancer, and demonstrated his enormous talent as director and choreographer.

Kumakawa has developed ballet schools that meet various needs, contributing to the promotion of art education. In 2013, he received the Medal with Purple Ribbon from the Japanese Government.

Jonathan Malveaux



Investor, Entrepreneur

Jonathan Malveaux was born and raised in New York City.

He graduated from Harvard University, Columbia Law School and Columbia Business School. He began his career in finance as a lawyer at Latham & Watkins, a major U.S. law firm and transitioned to investment banking at Credit Suisse and Deutsche Bank. In 1993, he joined Oshima & Partners Patents, Trademarks, Designs in Tokyo. After that, he worked in the patent licensing division of Panasonic Osaka headquarters as the first American employee.

As an investor and entrepreneur, he co-founded and operates DESAVO and ALTO USA, with clients including Four Seasons, THE RITZ-CARLTON, Google, Apple, and UNIQLO. Based on 30 years of experience and about \$100 billion USD in transaction volume, he has a strategic global network to realize unique perspectives and ideas.

Nomura Yusuke



Vegetarian meal DAIGO, 4th Generation Owner

After gaining experience as a bartender, sommelier, and French chef, Nomura Yusuke has been awarded two Michelin stars for ten consecutive years since becoming head chef at the age of 32.

While respecting time-honored traditions, he also works on “change and challenge” by developing new menus, discovering new ingredients, and giving lectures at culinary schools, the University of Tokyo, and Ritsumeikan University.

Through activities such as collaborative events with Para Support Ambassadors and teamLab Inc., and being a member of Champagne Maison certified RE:UNION, as well as a project to serve vegan cuisine at a sauna, Nomura is engaged in educational activities to promote barrier-free awareness, and is also actively working on environmental problems such as methane gas reduction through food, virtual water problems, and food loss.

Hakken



Cosplayer

Hakken, crowned with the title 'cosplay royalty', is a globally well known Cosplayer from Malaysia. Being one of the biggest in their game, the icon has captured the hearts of millions across the world with their unique style and visuals, bringing people's favorite characters to life since their journey started in 2010.

Harry Sugiyama



Media personality

Born in Tokyo, 1985. Moved to the UK aged 11 and having graduated from Winchester College, started a career in M&A. He went on to study SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), as well as Beijing Normal University, and upon returning to Japan, started his career as a talent. His father is the former Tokyo branch Head/Asia Bureau Chief of the New York Times. Multilingual in Japanese, English, Chinese, and French.

Presently active as a regular personality of TV programs such as CX's *Nonstop!*, TBS's *Discovery of The World's Mysteries*, NHK's *Domo*, NHK, NHK BS1's *Ransuma Club*, TX's *Tokyo GOOD*, and *POP OF THE WORLD* on J-WAVE

Bessho Tetsuya



Actor, President of Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia

In 1990, Bessho Tetsuya made his Hollywood debut in the Japanese-American co-production film *Crisis 2050*. He is a member of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) in the US. Since 1999, Bessho has presided over the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia, an international short film festival organized in Japan, for which he received the Commissioner for Cultural Affairs Award. In addition to his wide-ranging activities in films, dramas, stage performances, radio, etc., he has served as a “VISIT JAPAN Ambassador” of the Japan Tourism Agency, a member of the Expert Committee on Content Enhancement of the Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters of the Cabinet Secretariat, a goodwill ambassador of the Qatar Friendship Fund, a member of the Film Classification and Rating Organization, and a member of the “Japan House” Advisory Council of Experts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Bessho was selected as one of “Japanese people who play an active role in the world and disseminate information on Japan” of the Japan Project set by the Cabinet Office.

He received the 1st Iwatani Tokiko Award Encouragement Prize and the 63rd Yokohama Culture Award.

Sakura Miko, Mori Calliope, Gawr Gura

VTubers from Hololive Production



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▶ Sakura Miko (center)

Used to work hard in the Virtual Sakura Shrine accomplishing duties as a shrine maiden until, following the gods' orders, she was led to Japan where she found out about Tokino Sora. After developing huge admiration for her, she decided to become a virtual shrine maiden idol and continue to keep working hard for that dream!

▶ Mori Calliope (left)

The Grim Reaper's first apprentice. Calliope decided to become a VTuber to harvest souls. That being said, despite the image her hardcore vocals and manner of speech gives off, she's actually a gentle-hearted girl who cares greatly for her friends.

▶ Gawr Gura (right)

A descendant of the Lost City of Atlantis, who swam to Earth while saying, "It's so boring down there LOLLOLOL!"

Gura bought her clothes in the human world and she really loves them. In her spare time, she enjoys talking to marine life..

hololive production is a VTuber agency that consists of talent groups such as hololive and HOLOSTARS that focus on live streaming and content creation on platforms such as YouTube.

Mikuni Kiyomi



HÔTEL DE MIKUNI, Owner and Chef

At the age of 15, Mikuni Kiyomi aspired to become a chef and worked at the Sapporo Grand Hotel and the Imperial Hotel. In 1974, he became head chef at the Embassy of Japan in Switzerland. While working at the embassy, Mikuni studied under Frédy Girardet.

In 1985, he opened HÔTEL DE MIKUNI in Yotsuya, Tokyo. In 2013, Mikuni was awarded an honorary doctorate from Université de François-Rabelais in recognition of his contribution to French food culture. In 2015, he became the first Japanese chef to receive Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Légion d'Honneur from the French Republic. In 2019, Mikuni published *JAPONISÉE Kiyomi Mikuni*. The book won the "Gourmand World Cook Book Award 2020" in the Hall of Fame category.

Currently, Mikuni is promoting food education activities for children, and also introducing on YouTube easy recipes that can be made at home.

Misha Janette



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Fashion and Beauty, Creative Director

Misha Janette is from Washington State, USA.

She came to Japan in 2004 and graduated from Bunka Fashion College. Janette began her career as an orthodox journalist writing for national and international media.

She drew people's attention with her popular bilingual blog *Tokyo Fashion Diary*, which was launched in 2011 as a bridge between Japan and overseas, and she has been working hard as an influencer. Her own fashion has also attracted attention, and she has been active in stylist work for shows of New York collection brands, etc. and creating artist costumes.

In 2017, Janette launched her own creative house "TOTTEOKI.PRO" and currently serves as a creative advisor for the cosmetics brand SHU UEMURA.

HARUYUKI YAMASHITA



HAL YAMASHITA, Owner and Executive Chef

In order to develop his culinary knowledge, skills, and a sense of borderlessness, HARUYUKI YAMASHITA sought training in countries around the world, and established “Shinwashoku” (new Japanese cuisine) that maximizes the inherent nature of the ingredients. He is active in Japan and abroad as a pioneer in that new field.

In 2010 and 2012, YAMASHITA represented Japan at the World Gourmet Summit two times in a row, and in 2010 he was named the best chef of the year.

In 2015, he opened a restaurant “Syun” at a casino in Singapore, which has made waves in the scene of the new Japanese cuisine overseas and has been praised around the world.

Currently, he has seven restaurants in Japan and overseas, and is engaged in activities to spread “Shinwashoku” and Japanese sake, advising on international foods, domestic and foreign import/export for the Japanese Government, and also giving guidance and lectures throughout Japan.

Richard Collasse



CHANEL G.K., Chairman

Richard Collasse was born in Aude, France.

He graduated from the Faculty of Oriental Languages at Université de Paris, and came to Japan in 1975.

After working at the French Embassy in Japan for two years and the French agency of a Japanese company, Collasse joined GIVENCHY in 1979. Then he joined CHANEL in 1985 and became President and Representative Director of CHANEL G.K. in 1995, and has been in his current position since 2018.

In addition to his role as a prominent businessman, Collasse is also active as a writer, and in 2006 published his first novel *La Trace*. He has written nine books, including his latest novel *Le Dictionnaire amoureux du Japon*. His books have been published in Japan and France.

In 2008, Collasse was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star by the Government of Japan, l'Ordre national de la Légion d'Honneur in 2006 and Officier de l'Ordre national du Mérite in 2014 in his native France.