



Japan. Endless Discovery.

Celebrating New Beginnings in Japan

GET INTO THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW YEAR!

The rituals of the Japanese New Year, known as *Oshogatsu*, are spiritual, symbolic and include a message of hope for a new beginning—one of joy, good health and success!

Message from the Emperor

“Congratulations on the New Year” proclaimed the Emperor and Empress of Japan, making their annual public address by video message for the first time “I hope from the bottom of my heart that this year will allow all of you to move forward with hope.”

At first dawn on January 1st, the Emperor performs the *Shihohai*, the ceremonial kata of worship in four directions, to offer prayers for the well-being of Japan, from within the Imperial Court.

For this New Year we wish everyone good health, safety and prosperity as we move forward with the hope of a new dawn of the rising sun. *Akemashite Omedetou!* (Happy New Year!)

Experience the First Sunrise of the Year

Catching the first sunrise of the year is a special experience called *Hatsuhinode*. Traditionally people enjoy an early-morning hike to greet the rising sun atop the nearest mountain.

Japanese people typically spend their first day of the year together with family. The second and third days are spent visiting friends to offer well wishes and share sips of *Otosu*, spiced sake.

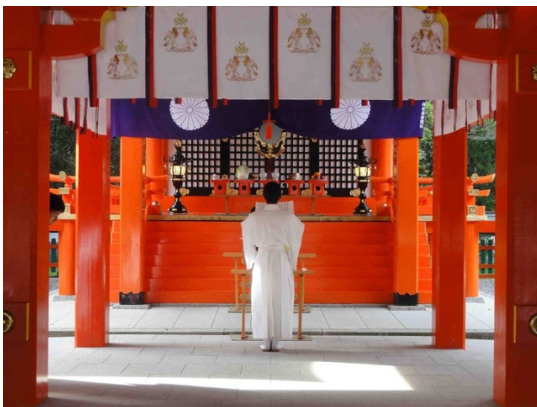


Photo: Adam Waxman

Pray for Prosperity

Within the first few days of the year, it is important for the Japanese to go to their local temple or shrine to pray. Their first visit of the year to holy ground, called *Hatsumode* involves praying for good health, safety and prosperity and includes making a donation and a New Year's wish.

Festive Food

Special foods called *Osechi Ryori* are enjoyed during

oshogatsu. A *Jubako Box*; is like a multi-leveled bento box, in which each dish has meaning. Prawns for long life; Herring Roe for fertility; “*Tai*”, seabream, is related to the word “*medetai*” which means auspicious and is therefore also included. The golden colour of boiled and mashed Sweet Potatoes and sweet Chestnuts represents the hope for wealth and financial success. Roasted and soy sauce-carmelized baby Dried-Anchovies symbolize a bountiful harvest. Marinated Burdock Root also represents the harvest and good health. Sweetened Black Bean is eaten for good health; and *Konbu* for happiness and joy.



Sweet omelet mixed with shrimp or fish paste is rolled up for good luck in academics. Pickled Baby Turnip with a chili pepper is cut to resemble a chrysanthemum flower, the symbol of the Emperor. The holes in fried and seasoned Lotus Root allow one to see the future. It is also traditional to eat *mochi* (rice cake). *Ozoni* is a rice cake soup that families enjoy on New Year’s Day, with ingredients varying between families and regions.



Cheers!

The popular way for businesses, family and friends to begin the new year is the *shinnenkai*. Typically, the *shinnenkai* is a social gathering involving sake and beer, and is a way for office workers, colleagues and friends to get together—without formality—and celebrate the promise of the new year; to wish each other good luck, make commitments to do their level best, and to show gratitude toward each other.

Introducing JNTO’s all new “Visit Japan From Canada” YouTube Channel

Each episode of our newly launched series takes you on a journey to Japan with various Canadians including Celebrity Chef, Susur Lee; Canadian Maestro, Ken Hsieh and Canadian Actor & Writer, Adam Waxman.



[Watch the videos here](#)

My Japan: Japan through the Eyes of Canadian Celebrities....

We would love to know what you think! Watch our series of short videos following the travels of five diverse Canadian celebrities on their eye-opening travels through Japan, then answer a short survey to be entered into a raffle. Please scroll down to find the survey in the link.



[Link to the Survey](#)

Webinar on Japan with Panel Discussion on Post-COVID Tourism.

JNTO Canada will be hosting a webinar on January 20th, to hear what travel industry experts are talking about right now. Please join us for an expert panel discussion on new tourism marketing strategies post-COVID.

Webinar on Japan with a Discussion Panel:

Does post-COVID tourism require new marketing strategies?

**Wednesday, January 20, 2021
at 11am (PST); 2pm (EST)**

Please join our WEBINAR ON JAPAN for an exceptional opportunity to hear what travel industry experts are talking about right now. Hosted by the Japan National Tourism Organization.

Stay for the entire duration of the webinar for your chance to win one of four exciting prizes:

- ONE (1) ECONOMY AIR TICKET SPONSORED BY AIR CANADA.
- THREE (3) \$100 VISA GIFT CARDS

REGISTER TODAY!

SPECIAL SPEAKER:

Adam Waxman
Journalist & Member of the
Advisory Board, Japan Tourism
Agency of MLIT

DISCUSSION PANELISTS:

		
Rocky Racco CEO, TTI Travel	Lauren Michell Vice President of Marketing, G Adventures	Joey-Dean Lanthier Manager, Revenue Development, Asia Pacific, Air Canada

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Travel Advisory

On top of everyone's mind is where and how we can travel safely. For the most up to date information on

travel to Japan, we encourage you to visit our Coronavirus Advisory page. Japan is taking this issue seriously and adhering to its responsibility. Follow this link to learn the latest measures being taken by the Government of Japan, travel and safety tips, and closures and resumptions of attractions and events. We want everyone to feel safe.



Visit our website



Japan National
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For more information, please contact:
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