

# Les Clefs d'Or Japan

# Key News



*April 2023 Vol.71*

*Publisher: Aio Imaizumi*

*Editor : Eiji Tanaka, Nozomi Sagasaki / Adrian Fautt, Akhil Tiwari*

*Website: [lesclefsdorjapan.com](http://lesclefsdorjapan.com)*



*Les Clefs d'Or Japan*



*lesclefsdorjapan*

## UICH Les Clefs d'Or 67<sup>th</sup> International Congress In Istanbul 2023 March 11-15

By Asako Onoyama

Approximately 450 concierges and affiliates across the countries gathered in Istanbul after 3 years for the first time after pandemic. Attendees from Japan were Mayako Sumiyoshi (Palace Hotel Tokyo), Aiko Imaizumi (Grand Hyatt Tokyo) and Asako Onoyama (InterContinental Osaka).



### <Day 1>

#### **Opening Gala & Welcome Dinner**

It was a moment to show our joy to see each other after long wait.

### <Day 2>

#### **Board of Directors Meeting (Sumiyoshi and Imaizumi)**

Sumiyoshi and Imaizumi joined Board of Directors Meetings where Executive Committee, Zone Directors and Presidents attend.

#### **The Old City Tour (Onoyama)**

Tour was conducted to see Hippodrome, Ayasofya, a Turkish carpet maker and Spice market.

Three members gathered again to enjoy cruising in Bosphorus Strait which divides European side and Asian side of Turkey. In the evening a Turkish dinner was served, joining the section of Canada, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei.



### <Day 3>

#### **Statutes meeting (Sumiyoshi)**

#### **Education Day (Imaizumi and Onoyama)**

Having a moderator Mr. Mark Patterson (CEO of 360 Strategy cop), 4 speakers made very interesting points for the future concierge and hospitality industry. I thought the issue which hospitality business nowadays is facing was an issue in Japan but found out that it was happening equally across the globe. It was inspiring and encouraging to think and discuss much about the mutual issues with concierges all over the world.



#### **Speaker 1: Ms. Sheron Brambrut - Four seasons Global Senior Director or Rooms**

The phrase I remember the most was “Service is Black and White, it is a standard to follow. Hospitality is Color, how you make connection to people and make them happier, Concierge is a rainbow”. Guests have more ego than ever after pandemic. They are seeking for more unique experiences and willing to spend more on what aligns with their values and beliefs. We need to be more specific what to recommend for each guest with different needs.

#### **Speaker 2: Mr. Herman Elger - CEO Forbes Travel Guide**

At Forbes five stars hotels with LCD concierges, average level of staff service is five points higher in guest service than those without.

Key words are “Emotional connection”, “Sustainability”, “Wellness” and “Leisure demand”.



**Speaker 3: Ms. Pinar Kartal Timer - Founding partner next phase consultancy**

Importance of how we use Technology and Information was spoken.

As to show contrasting examples, a movie The Budapest Hotel with full human touch and Hen na Hotel in Japan where you only deal with robots during your stay were shown. Industrial Revolution 4.0 that involves Virtual reality, Artificial Intelligence etc. was explained followed by what's next such as a Metaverse Hotel.

We are expecting a transformation of economy from well spent to well invested.

**Speaker 4: Mr. Manny Judge - Director, talent acquisition PNS Fairmont Hotels and Resorts**

10 important points for recruitment and retention were explained such as "Understanding candidates Then and Now", " More Efficient/Quick hiring process" and "Train people well enough so they can leave, but treat them well enough so they don't want to."

Later half was for the group discussion workshop on the topic spoken. Each groups had a presenter on stage and it was an impressive moment to see the new ideas and energies come from this organization of Les Clefs d'Or.



**<Day 4>**

**General Assembly**

The very first Asian President was born, Mr. Randy Santos from Qatar that many of the members from Japan are familiar with. And most importantly, Mayako Sumiyoshi had been appointed as a new South East Asia & Oceania Zone Director. Two new born female zone directors were congratulated by all the attendees.

**Gala Dinner**

The last dinner in Istanbul was held at Four Seasons Hotel Bosphorus in the glamorous atmosphere. Starting with the award ceremony, entertainment with belly dance and band were enjoyed and members were deepening exchange to spend the last precious time together at the congress.

## *Greetings from New Les Clefs d'Or Japan President & Zone Director*

### ***Aiko Imaizumi*** ***President of Les Clefs d'Or Japan***

I am honored and humbled to be appointed to the role of Les Clefs d'Or Japan President at a time of great transition for hotel concierges and the industry. The tourism industry is beginning to regain its vitality with the return of many inbound guests since the easing of entry restrictions to Japan in the fall of 2022. As a hotel concierge, I am very happy to see this, but at the same time, we are facing many challenges, such as the shortage of staff and the need to rebuild the environment for welcoming guests, and I feel strongly once again the need to cooperate with other concierges and all related organizations. Now is the time for us to strengthen our network under the motto "In Service through Friendship" and develop as a team that can provide the best Japanese hospitality to our guests at our hotels.



### ***Mayako Sumiyoshi*** ***Zone Director, Southeast Asia & Oceania***

I was appointed as a Zone Director of Southeast Asia & Oceania of UICH Les Clef d'Or during the International Congress in Istanbul, Turkey in March 2023. I have been serving as the President of Les Clefs d'Or Japan for the past 6 years, since 2017. Now, I have an international role as a liaison between 8 member sections in the Southeast Asia & Oceania Zone, which includes Japan, and the Executive Committee for the next 2 years.



As this is the first case from Les Clefs d'Or Japan in our history, it will be a new challenge for me and our section. I have been proudly working as a hotel concierge and have been a member of Les Clefs d'Or for about 20 years.

During my mandate, I will do my best to serve the tourism industry in Japan, our colleagues in the region, and our esteemed organization.

## Monthly Meeting

### March

▪ Mayako Sumiyoshi from Palace Hotel Tokyo talked to the members how impressive to see fellow colleagues from all over the world at the recent Istanbul congress (March 11 th ~ 15 th ) after three years of suspension due to the world pandemic. Also Mayako announced that she had been elected as the new Zone Director of SEAO (South East Asia & Oseanea).

▪ There was a report from CSR team how the International team contributed at the Istanbul Congress. The participants had donated clothing to the victims from the recent Turkish earthquake through Sevgi Magazasi. Also, there was a report as domestic activity, the members and affiliate members to visit Kids Door class room for 3 to 4 times a year onwards and offer some talking sessions.

▪ There was an election for the next new president of Les Clefs d'Or Japan and Aiko Imaizumi the Chief Concierge from Grand Hyatt Tokyo has been elected as the new president of the society. Aiko revealed the statement and blessed from all the members for her great success.

▪ We had a presentation from our member Misa Yamamoto from Hotel Granvia Kyoto in regards to their current CSR programs which includes; changing all the lighting system to LED, utilizing an app called "TABETE" which helps in reducing the food loss by exhibiting their food items which potentially to be ended up disposing due to various reasons. Inside the hotel they display some masterpieces from the local craftsman and also held some craft workshops. They launched a space called ATELIER JAPAN began developing and selling products such as craft tour plans that contribute to the promotion of Kyoto's traditional culture. They began cultivating and dedicating Futaba-aoi to Kamigamo Shrine as part of KES (Kyoto Environmental Management System Standard.) The company is making efforts to increase the average number of years of service of female employees as part of its action plan.





## April

- As beginning of the new business year, the Annual General Meeting was held. There were some reports and went through entire the events happened last business year, final financial (budget) result, the movement of some members and more details had been covered.

- Our new president Aiko Imaizumi had published a statement for the year. The statement includes; look into the supporting system for the current active members especially we all had been suffered with the severe staff shortage against the steep increase of the inbound travel, look into the way the steps we should take in order for us to be able to hold the monthly meeting all in face to face rather than the current hybrid system, look into the contents during the monthly meeting, look into the way how we could find the new candidates for the society and how we should accept the members from abroad by possible consideration of revising the current international transfer system.

- There was an announcement that the registration for Asian Congress in Malaysia Langkawi has opened. It will be held from September 10 th to 13 th.

- In the 2nd part of the monthly meeting, affiliate members have given presentation on how each of them had managed business during the busy cherry blossoms season. It was the first time we experienced the season with inbound travelers after the pandemic. One of the retail stores mentioned that the guests had to wait outside of the store, as the store was filled with the guests.

Also, the tour guide company mentioned due to the heavy demand, tour guides had to hop around two to three guests a day. One of the universities shared with us a joyful news that they finally would be able to restart all the school events which had been suspended during the pandemic.

Chauffeur company mentioned they had been also extremely busy, and overseas visitors queued up at some of the attractions having have to wait for more than an hour.

There was also a good constructive feedback from the restaurants and advised us how we should prepare prior to contact the restaurant for asking the availability.

# National Parks of Japan Saikai National Park 西海国立公園

**Crossroad Connecting the Islands,  
Ocean, Nature, and Culture.**

Date of Designation: March 16, 1955  
Area: 24,646 ha (land area)  
Related Prefecture: Nagasaki

Photo by Tokyo Peral



Les Clefs d'Or Japan

5日 · 🌐

Pearls are mysterious gems that the more you gaze at them, the more deeply you will be into them. 🍷  
Especially Akoya pearls, produced in Japan, continue to fascinate people around the world.

Besides, Nagasaki Prefecture, home to Saikai National Park, is one of the top three pearl producers in Japan. Pearl cultivation has flourished in the area because of its many bays and rias coastlines with calm waves.

Why not visit Nagasaki, the world of beauty with over 400 islands of various size in this area? 😊

Les Clefs d'Or Japan is an official partner of National Parks of Japan. 🇯🇵

*Les Clefs d'Or Japan is  
an official partner of  
the National Parks of Japan*



National Parks of Japan  
Official Partner