

# *Les Clefs d'Or Japan*

# *Key News*



*October 2024    Vol.79*

*Publisher: Aiko Imaizumi*

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## FAM trip to Awaji Island

**By Nozomi Sagasaki**

On August 7th, there was a visit to Awaji Island organized by our affiliate, Gaen Corporation. The members consisted of 8 hotel concierges, 7 tour guides, and Ms. Wada, president of Gaen visited Awaji Island. We gathered at Shin-Kobe Station in the morning and visited 7 tourist spots on Awaji Island by bus.

The first stop was a visit to the Zenpukuji Water Hall. The temple is believed to have been built in the Heian period (794-1185) and was renovated by famous architect Tadao Ando to create an innovative building. The modern concrete building has a lotus pond on the ground floor and the main hall on the basement floor. It is said that many visitors come from abroad to see the temple. After visiting Zenpukuji Temple, we moved on to Awaji Yumebutai. This is also built by Tadao Ando. The mountains of Awaji were cut down and the earth and sand were used to fill the Kansai Airport. Tadao Ando designed this facility to rebuild the nature that humans destroyed. He wishes this facility will allow people and nature to live together for 1,000 years. It was a wonderful place.



After Awaji Yumebutai, we moved on to Aqua Ignis, a stylish facility with a swimming pool, restaurant and cycling shop, where we had lunch. The ocean-view infinity pool is said to be very popular.

After lunch, we moved to the Fukura area, stopped at Roadside Station Fukura and went on the Uzushio Cruise at around 1:30pm, when the whirlpools were at their highest. Mr Ishikawa, president of Uzushio Cruises, was also present and we boarded the ship in a special VIP room. We were also given a special view of the cockpit by the captain before the ship set sail. The VIP room can be reserved for a minimum of two people.



From the port, we walked to the Awaji Ningyo Joruri Puppet Theatre, a nationally designated Important Intangible Cultural Asset with a 500-year history. We enjoyed a special backstage tour and a video of the puppet theatre. It was very powerful to see the precious puppets up close. During the summer holiday period, the theatre was devising performances that were easy to understand for children, so that they could also enjoy them. They also often perform overseas and are particularly popular in France, where they have subtitles for their overseas performances.



We then visited Nijigen no mori, a theme park with a vast area where visitors can enjoy anime x technology x nature. There is a zip line towards a giant Godzilla and attractions with popular content such as Dracula, SPY x FAMILY and Naruto. We were shown the accommodation Grand Chariot Big Dipper 135. There are various themed cottages, and we were shown the popular character rooms, Crayon Shin-chan and Hello Kitty rooms, which are spacious 75 square meters and decorated to tickle a child's fancy.



Finally, we visited Zenbo Seinei. Like Nijigen-no-mori, this Zen retreat facility by the Pasona Group is located at 135°E and is a power spot. The wooden building by Shigeru Ban is a wonderful facility and a place where it is possible to get in shape both mentally and physically. It is possible to stay overnight or take a day trip, experience Zen in the Aerial Dojo and eat healthy meals. We were surrounded by nature and could relax in the Aerial Dojo listening to the sound of insects.



We thank the warm cooperation of local tourist associations and facilities, we were able to experience many of the attractions of Awaji Island in one day and had a good inspection tour. Hopefully we will be able to introduce more about the charms of Awaji Island.



## Les Clefs d'Or Summer Party

**BY Mai Hashitani**

We held the Les Clefs d'Or Japan summer party and welcomed affiliates and members, 17 in total, at Teppandokoro Meguro on August 20<sup>th</sup>.

The restaurant is managed by Phoenix Entertainment Tours, which is also one of our affiliates. Despite being in Ginza, an area with many upscale establishments, this restaurant offers a lively and relaxed atmosphere. The gathering began with a toast of champagne from the restaurant, followed by a speech from Ms. Aiko Imaizumi, President of Les Clefs d'Or Japan. We enjoyed a course meal composed of their popular dishes such as seasonal okonomiyaki, tonpeiyaki and so on.

At the end of the party, surprise dessert plates with a logo of Les Clef's d'Or Japan were presented by the restaurant. The thoughtful surprise, infused with elegance and genuine hospitality, created a heartwarming and memorable experience for all participants.

Affiliates and members gathered in the evening to talk about our daily work, the travel industry as well as the recent guest's trend etc...

With the busy Bon holiday behind us, this gathering became a moment to truly appreciate the value of spending relaxed time and sharing conversations with cherished companions.



# Getting to know our members!

## Conrad Tokyo Chief Concierge Koji Notake

**Experience as Concierge: 20 years**

**Member of Les Clefs d'Or: 10 years and 6 months**

### Highlight of the Hotel

Conrad Tokyo is located in the heart of Tokyo Shiodome within walking distance to Ginza and strategic access to Tokyo's major business areas and tourist attractions such as Roppongi, Harajuku and Asakusa. Our hotel overlooks Tokyo Bay with Rainbow-bridge and picturesque Hamarikyu Garden. The design concept of our hotel is the fusion of Japanese and modern. Especially our huge mural "For Thee", which is created by Toko Shinoda and displayed at the lobby, represents the heart of our hotel and continues to live here with us at Conrad Tokyo while gently welcoming customers every day.

### How to spend my Day Off

On my days off, I like driving my car, and playing with my son. When I am driving, it is needless to say that I am concentrating on my driving, but sometimes I think about things and come up with some ideas. Also, my son is a big fan of Shohei Ohtani who is a MLB player of the Los Angeles Dodgers and loves to play baseball. Although I have no baseball experience ever, I play catch with him and enjoy it.

### My Favorite Place

My favorite place is Karuizawa. I spent about two months in Karuizawa during my summer vacation when I was a student, working as a part-timer at one of the hotels in the area with my friend. The hotel where I used to work as a part-timer is now a family of the HILTON, and has been reborn as the "Kyukaruizawa KIKYO



Curio Collection by Hilton. Although I cannot visit and stay at the hotel often, I miss the days of being young, enjoying the recent Karuizawa, and having a relaxing time when I stay there.

### My Favorite Restaurant

My favorite restaurant is COEDO BREWERY THE RESTAURANT that is located in Kawagoe, Saitama. As the name suggests, it is a restaurant attached to the COEDO Beer brewery. You can enjoy all COEDO beers, including freshly brewed beers directly shipped from the brewery. Even those who do not drink beer can enjoy the food menu based on Chinese cuisine, with a large selection that incorporates attractive local ingredients and organic vegetables, which are the COEDO's roots. My recommendation is the Tantan noodles. The spiciness can be customized as you like, and the sesame's aroma and rich broth are exquisite. I believe it is my best Tantan noodle ever, which I had at least once a week.



# Monthly Meeting

## July

- The July monthly meeting was held at Shisui, A Luxury Collection Nara.
- Tobu Railway Co. Ltd invited us to visit Nikko by Spacia X on September 24 for a FAM inspection tour.
- A study and exchange meeting with The Ryokan Collection held on September 10. This will be the last social event with them for this year.
- It was reported that Park Hyatt Tokyo will be closed for a year for renovation, and during the closure our member Mr. Adrian Fautt will serve as Chief Concierge at the Hyatt Centric Ginza.
- There was a presentation of the summary of opinions on CSR activities discussed in June. There were many ideas that were helpful, and we plan to examine them closely.
- Members exchanged ideas and brainstormed about the contents of the January seminar.
- In the second part, we were guided around the Shisui Luxury Collection Nara hotel and had a look at the wonderful facilities.
- Mr. Mutsumi Nagano, the 7th generation sumi ink artisan and Nara's sumi ink craft company, Nishikikouen, spoke about the history and current state of Nara's sumi ink. We also got to experience activity of making an original nigiri-zumi ink. It was a very valuable experience.

## August

- The regular monthly meeting in August was held at Tokyo International Airport (Haneda Airport) at Terminal 3 TIAT SKY HALL.
- Updates on the Les Clefs d'Or and Japan Concierge Association joint seminar meeting were shared to us.
- As part of topics about our CSR activities, participation in the Charity Walk Mile is mandatory. All participants of this monthly meeting have been registered. Let's walk a lot and earn miles!
- We welcomed Mr. Tetsuya Kawabe Senior Managing Director and Executive Officer of Haneda Future Research Institute and Mr. Kono of CRIL Privée & Cie. Mr. Kono welcomed us to Yugawara in September for a special, authentic Kabuki tour of Japan. We were also connected online with Kabuki actor Mr. Hashinosuke Nakamura and Japanese dancer Mr. Naozo Fujima and received a passionate message from them of the tour.

