



June 30, 2016  
Press Release

# The Washoku World Challenge 2016 to Take Place

## Call for Applications for the Japanese Cuisine Competition for Non-Japanese Nationals

The Washoku World Challenge 2016, a contest of *washoku*, or Japanese cooking, participated by foreign nationals, will once again be held this year, hosted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries of Japan. The event, a festival of Japanese cooking, is designed to identify talented individuals engaged in the field of Japanese cuisine in different countries and regions of the world, and to popularize the special appeal of Japanese food even further.

This year marks the fourth such event, and we have begun receiving applications from cooks or cooking school students of non-Japanese nationality to compete in the Washoku World Challenge 2016. The deadline for applications is scheduled to be Wednesday, August 31.

Ten applicants who have passed the initial screening will go on to participate in the actual competition held in Tokyo on December 15, 2016 (Thursday). The three top contestants will be awarded the Gold, Silver and Bronze prizes, and other finalists will be awarded with an honorable mention prize.

The preliminary screening to decide individuals who will appear in the actual competition will be carried out in two stages. First is the initial document screening held in mid-September, based on the applicants' entry sheets that describe the recipes of their dish. Contestants will be judged comprehensively on how well their dish fits the characteristics of Japanese cooking, as well as the beauty of appearance, originality, the applicant's approaches toward Japanese cuisine, and more. A second screening will be held in early October where the judges sample the dish re-created, based on the recipes, and select ten finalists who will go on to the actual competition. At the actual competition, the finalists will be asked to prepare, at the competition venue, the dish they described in their application, plus another dish using specified ingredients as their task (to be announced at a later date). A panel of judges comprised of culinary experts and renowned individuals will evaluate the contestants based on their culinary techniques, the taste of the dish, and the degree of perfection achieved.

Japanese cooking continues to attract worldwide attention, with "*Washoku*, the traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese," being included among UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and the number of overseas Japanese restaurants having increased from approximately 55,000 stores in 2013 to approximately 89,000 in 2015. This is not only because Japanese foods are delicious, but also because they use diverse and fresh food ingredients, such as fish, meats and vegetables that vary according to region, and from season to season. Another important reason is that it is healthy: it makes use of the *umami* ingredients such as *katsudashi* (bonito stock) and *konbudashi* (soup stock made from dried kelp) that are designed to bring out the flavor of the ingredients and cuts the use of oils, fats and salt.

In order to further spread the popularity of Japanese cuisine and Japanese food ingredients around the world, and make them part of people's everyday living, the presence of cooks from the different countries who understand the tastes of the local people is essential. The Washoku World Challenge aims to discover men and women who are working around the world to improve their skills, offer authentic and delicious Japanese food, and make as many people as possible happy with Japanese food, and supports their efforts in contributing further to spread Japanese food and food ingredients.

For details on how to apply and for the application form, please refer to the following website.

<http://washoku-worldchallenge.jp/>

For inquiries:

■ Press-related: The Washoku World Challenge Executive Committee (persons in charge: Kenji Toda)

E-mail : [washoku-question@nikkeibp.co.jp](mailto:washoku-question@nikkeibp.co.jp)