

Very good evening, Excellencies, Ladies & Gentlemen. It's my great privilege to offer you the tonight's foods cultural event. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the guests who are joining in, even though it has changed the original concept.

So, my first words should be I apologize for missing your opportunity to enjoy unique collaboration of Japanese cuisine in a French restaurant. I have to confess what happened behind the scene. At the last minutes, the restaurant suddenly decided to require every guest to make a payment about hundreds of dirham per person. Of course, I definitely couldn't agree about it. This is an official promotion of Japanese culture by the Japanese Cultural Envoy. I want everyone fully enjoys it without any burden, even one dirham.

In the meantime, changing the concept, and changing the venue fortunately brings us tangible gifts. First, you can enjoy Japanese sake, Japanese wine, as well as Japanese special halal juice. The restaurant we previously planned to use is an alcohol free restaurant. I myself prefer "charge free event", instead of "alcohol free event", while I fully respect the muslim culture.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I'd like to introduce you a tonight's most important actor, an award-winning chef, Mr. Keigo Tamura, an owner of one of the most famous Japanese traditional restaurant in Kyoto, where the former Japanese capital was established more than a thousand years ago. Chef Tamura's restaurant, named "Man Shige", is a signature of Kyoto cuisine, and he is a Japan Cultural Envoy appointed by the Japanese government. I also introduce you

Chef Watanabe. He supports Chef Tamura tonight. Last night, I tasted one dish a little bit and the flavor was marvelous, bar none.

Originally, Chef Tamura planned to serve five dishes of Japanese cuisines. Fortunately, with the change in the venue, he offers us more than 10 dishes of sophisticated traditional Japanese cuisines for our pleasure. This is another gift we can enjoy tonight. Especially, we have many varieties of sushi menu, such as tuna, salmon, mackerel, yellow tail, sea eel, and so on. When we are in Japan, and go to a sushi restaurant, we order each sushi item in Japanese. For example, if you want to eat tuna, we order “Maguro”. When you want to eat mackerel, we say “Saba”. But, it’s not French. If you order, “ça va” in a sushi restaurant, a chef replies “Oui, ça va bien, merci!”. You can’t eat it. Another example, for the order of yellow tail, we Japanese call it as “Hamachi”. You should not say “how much?” Again, you can’t eat it.

Today, I was seriously nervous before starting the event. Even making a speech just before dinner is one of the hardest pressured task. Today, it is further pressure on me as we changed the concept and the venue at the last minutes. But, thankfully, you all join in the today’s event. I’m deeply aware of many strong supporters, we have in Dubai, for the Japanese cultures, Japanese cuisine, and the Japanese Consulate.

Finally, I also announce, Japan Agricultural Cooperative, Ichikawa Branch, provides us the special fruit, “water pear”, Japan’s juicy treasure in autumn. Thank you very much, President Konno, and Mr. Watanabe.

I hope tonight is a truly extraordinary dining cultural experience.