

St. Patrick's Day Special

Irish youth lead the way in variety of sectors

DAMIEN COLE
AMBASSADOR OF IRELAND



My warmest greetings to the readers of The Japan Times on the occasion of St. Patrick's Day. Each year, on March 17, the people of Ireland celebrate St. Patrick's Day, our national day. We are joined in

these celebrations by the 70 million people of Irish heritage and by our friends and supporters all over the world. I would like to take this opportunity to express the deepest sympathies of the people of Ireland to all those affected by the Noto Peninsula earthquake on Jan. 1.

St. Patrick's Day is an occasion to take stock of the strong and growing ties between Ireland and Japan. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the government of Japan and members of the Diet, as well as our political, economic, cultural, academic and media partners for all of your work in nurturing this relationship.

Japan sees a rich program of St. Patrick's Day events during March every year, from Tokyo to Matsue and from Sapporo to

Kumamoto. I am delighted to see the variety of events around the country this year, too, with parades, music and dance and several popular landmarks and castles illuminated in green.

I look forward to participating again in the Tokyo parade in Omotesando on March 17 — St. Patrick's Day itself — and the Green Ireland Festival in Yoyogi Park on March 16 and 17. The Tokyo parade is the oldest and largest St. Patrick's Day parade in Asia, and with the Green Ireland Festival, it is the largest Irish event in Asia.

This vibrant St. Patrick's Day program is thanks to the dedication of the Irish community and friends of Ireland in Japan who work tirelessly to make this happen, and to whom I express my sincere thanks and appreciation.

I am delighted that Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Roderic O'Gorman is representing the government of Ireland at the St. Patrick's Day events in Japan this year. He will lead an intensive program including official engagements with political counterparts and the launch of Ireland's concept for the 2025 World Expo in Osaka.

This year's St. Patrick's Day festival highlights Ireland's future in the world, celebrating our young people and our dias-

pora. We are very proud of our young Irish and diaspora leaders across the fields of innovation, creativity, community development, business and academia around the world.

Ireland shares with Japan a commitment to international peace and security and the rules-based multilateral system, especially at this time of conflict and turbulence. Like Japan, we continue to denounce Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine. Two years on, Ireland and the EU are committed to continuing our support for Ukraine for as long as it takes. Ireland's support will continue to focus on nonlethal assistance. To date, Ireland has welcomed almost 105,000 Ukrainians, more than 2% of our total population.

Last year Ireland celebrated 50 years of membership in the European Union. Ireland remains a core member of the EU single market and the Eurozone. The EU has been a catalyst in the creation of the prosperous and progressive Ireland of today and Ireland has also contributed to the development of today's EU.

Ireland has experienced a period of sustained growth. Our economy is a highly developed and open knowledge economy, focused on services in the high-tech, life sciences, finance and agribusiness sectors. EU membership is a key to our prosperity, providing barrier-free access to the EU market of 500 million people and to free trade agreements with over 70 countries, including Japan.

This year, team Ireland in Japan is busy preparing for the opening of the new Ireland House in Tokyo in 2025 and for Ireland's participation in the 2025 World Expo in Osaka. These combined investments are a tangible expression of Ireland's continued commitment to Japan. We look forward to celebrating St. Patrick's Day 2025 at our new embassy in Tokyo's Yotsuya area.

So on this St. Patrick's Day, I would like



Roderic O'Gorman
EMBASSY OF IRELAND

to invite you to join us in wearing something green, supporting your local parade, and joining in the fun and spirit of the day. *La Fheile Padraig sona daoibh go leir* (Happy St. Patrick's Day).

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



The annual St. Patrick's Day parade proceeds along Tokyo's Omotesando-dori in 2023. EMBASSY OF IRELAND

Happy St. Patrick's Day from Team Ireland in Japan!



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駐日アイランド大使館



<https://ireland.ic/tokyo>



Kylemore Abbey in County Galway is one of the featured spots in Connemara along Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way coastal touring route.

TOURISM IRELAND

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

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