

Queen Margrethe II's birthday

Denmark remains a world leader in creativity, green technologies

Anders Carsten Damsgaard
AMBASSADOR OF DENMARK

If you happen to pass by the Royal Danish Embassy in Daikanyama, please have a look at our facade, where we are currently showing some of what Denmark does best. There is a picture, in bold red, of the Bjarke Ingels Group-designed "8 House" and a bright yellow photo of a unique collab-



oration between Georg Jensen and Ambush designer and icon Verbal, who have interpreted the classic Koppel pendant watch. Both are examples of one of Denmark's key competencies: creativity.

The creative competencies in Denmark go far beyond design. Denmark has for decades been known for our furniture, architecture and design, but we are likewise famous for being at the forefront of creating a whole new cuisine based on the ingredients and traditions of the Nordic region. The restaurant Noma

in Copenhagen has for the last three years been selected as the world's best restaurant and young chefs from around the world are now seeking inspiration in the kitchens of Geranium, Søllerød Kro, Formel B, Relae (all Michelin-star restaurants), among others, and of course Noma, if they are lucky enough to get the chance.

The interest from Japan has also been immense. In the last few years a large number of Japanese journalists have traveled to Denmark and discovered what is cooking in the new food capital

of Europe. In a joint project with the other Nordic embassies in Tokyo, we invited five Nordic star chefs to Japan last October. Over a three-day period the chefs cooked and explained about the New Nordic Cuisine movement, and judging by the packed press conference and cooking demonstration at the Hattori Nutrition College there was a lot of interest from Japan in this new and creative approach to cooking.

Other creative industries, such as film, fashion and information and communications technology (ICT) as well as innovative solutions across sectors like clean-tech, welfare technology and health care are also putting Denmark firmly on the map as a truly creative nation.

Green growth

Another area where Denmark is world leader is within green technologies. Wind energy currently supplies almost 30 percent of the electricity consumed in Denmark, and the goal is to reach 50 percent by the year 2020. By 2050 Denmark aims to be completely carbon-free and obtain 100 percent of our energy needs from renewables. Not just electricity, but also heating, transportation and energy for manufacturing will come from renewable energy sources alone.

This cannot be achieved by wind technologies alone, but Denmark is also world leader in both energy savings for housing and biomass technologies, and right now large investments are being made in creating smart grids and smart cities that will facilitate the move away from a carbon society.



Going green: The island of Lolland has succeeded in turning a struggling rural economy into an innovative and competitive region that uses green technologies. TOMOKO KITAMURA NIELSEN

Going green is not only important in the fight against global warming, but is also good for the economy. There is a global shift toward renewables, and countries like Denmark who are at the forefront of the green technology revolution will stand to benefit from this development when the global demand increases. Many Japanese municipalities and companies have visited Denmark recently to learn how to implement sustainable technologies.

The island of Lolland in particular has received a lot of attention from Japan during the last year. The principal reason being that Lolland has succeeded in turning a struggling rural economy into an innovative and competitive region that

is succeeding in using green technologies to generate new green growth. Not only is Lolland producing more electricity than the island needs, selling the surplus to nearby Copenhagen, but it is also home to the European Union's first full-scale Hydrogen Community Demonstration facility where wind power is converted to hydrogen to facilitate a more stable supply of electricity even when there is no wind. Lolland is also home to the Algae Innovation Center that researches the potential of algae in water treatment and as fuel at biomass plants in order to generate energy.

I am certain some of these innovative and green technologies could be of great benefit for Japan, not least in some of the ar-



Queen Margrethe II of Denmark TINE HARDEN

reas undergoing reconstruction after the devastating earthquake in 2011. My team at the embassy and I will work hard to further strengthen the cooperation between Denmark and Japan in securing a greener, more sustainable planet, and on creating green economic growth together.

On this note, I do hope that

we Danes and Japanese also in coming years can deepen our friendship and continue to serve as each other's inspiration. Kindly visit our website (www.japan.um.dk) for updated news from Denmark and the embassy, or find us on Twitter @DanishEmbJapan (only Japanese) and Facebook (Japanese and Danish).



Creativity: The facade of the Embassy of Denmark in the Daikanyama district of Tokyo is currently decorated by images of works by several Danish designers. ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY

Happy Birthday to H.M. Queen Margrethe II

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