

St. Patrick's Day Special

Committed to future growth together

PAUL KAVANAGH
AMBASSADOR OF IRELAND

In this very special year for Japan and her people, I extend warm greetings to all. Ireland's national day, St. Patrick's Day, is one of the world's best known. Each March 17, it is celebrated around the world by the Irish and by friends of Ireland.

In 2019, for the 10th year in a row, iconic structures worldwide are being illuminated in green, Ireland's unofficial national color, in a gesture of friendship toward our country.

This year's some 400 "greenings" include the Sydney Opera House, the Empire State Building in New York, the London Eye, Sacre Coeur Basilica in Paris, the Colosseum in Rome, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, the pyramids in Egypt, the Great Wall of China and the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio de Janeiro.

Here in Japan, St. Patrick's Day parades and major events are being held this month in 15 cities across the country. Everyone is invited! Shizuoka Stadium Ecopa in the city of Fukuroi will "go green," since it is there that Ireland and Japan will meet on Sept. 28 as part of the 2019 Rugby World Cup.



Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Josepha Madigan

In Tokyo, the family-friendly parade will kick off at 1 p.m. on Sunday, March 17, on Omotesando street. Nearby Yoyogi Park will once again host the I Love Ireland Festival — the largest Irish event in Asia — over the weekend on March 16 and 17. Last year, it attracted some 100,000 visitors. Please come along and enjoy the interesting booths and people, music, food and fun!

Our warm thanks go to the members of many splendid Irish organizations and

volunteers, as well as to the very thoughtful Japanese friends who assure success for these Irish festivals across Japan.

This year, St. Patrick's Day events in Tokyo and Yokohama will be attended and addressed by Ireland's Minister for Culture, Josepha Madigan. Madigan will bring good news from Ireland to her political, business, cultural and other engagements in Japan.

For over four years, Ireland has seen the strongest economic growth in the European Union. Public accounts are in balance. An economy based on innovation, high technology, advanced applications, higher education and scientific research is approaching full employment. For innovation and the quality of its scientific research, Ireland ranks in the top 10 countries worldwide.

Global Ireland is firmly committed to its continuing membership of the European Union, the EU's single market and the eurozone single currency area. There is a strong public, political, business and trade union consensus in Ireland in favor of our EU membership; recent opinion polls indicate 92 percent want to remain as part of the EU.

Looking forward, Ireland's English-speaking and common law status will

see the country as even more of an ideal platform within the EU's single market for investment from around the world, including Japan, in financial services, life sciences, information and communication technologies and other sectors. Japan is already the largest source of investment from the Asia-Pacific region in Ireland.

As a committed member of the EU, Ireland will participate fully in implementing the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the biggest trade deal in the world.

Against this background, Ireland and Japan — which share common democratic values, as well as both venerable and dynamic, contemporary cultural ties — also have an ambition to build a new, higher phase in economic and other relations. Irish exports of world-leading goods and services, including food, beverages and agribusiness, find a ready and growing market in Japan. We strongly encourage people-to-people exchanges, including in the education and tourism sectors.

Madigan's government is engaged in a major capital project to build a showcase, state-of-the-art Ireland House in Yotsuya in Tokyo. It demonstrates perfectly a strong commitment from Ireland to take our ties and connections with Japan, including people-to-people exchanges, to a new, higher level in years to come.

A bright future in Ireland-Japan ties is therefore a genuine prospect as, together this week, we celebrate St. Patrick's Day.



Newgrange is a 5,200-year-old passage tomb, which consists of a passageway and a chamber, in the Boyne Valley in the central eastern area of the country. TOURISMIRELAND / WWW.TOURISMIRELAND.COM



The Blasket Islands are a group of uninhabited islands off the west coast of Ireland. Visitors can travel by ferry to one of these beautiful islands and spend several hours or all day marveling at the natural beauty.

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Happy Saint Patrick's Day

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St. Patrick's Day
from your friends in
IRELAND**



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