

Sweden National Day Special

Celebrating our strong relationship with a digital push

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June 6 is Sweden's National Day. To be honest, not many Swedes know the reason, but in 1523 on this day, the Swedish King Gustav I was enthroned. Also, on this day in 1809, a new constitu-

tion was adopted. For me, this day is about being with friends and family, welcoming immigrants to our nation and eating delicious food while welcoming the arrival of summer. This is when Sweden is at its best!

The bonds between our nations are strong and in no small part founded on the passion of individuals. The interest Japanese people show in Swedish culture is equaled only by the Swedish interest in Japanese culture. In Japan there are many successful Swedes in the fields of literature, film, design, fashion and gaming. Some are even active in typical Japanese art forms, such as swordsmithing, manga, traditional landscaping, tea or *rakugo* (comedic storytelling).

Nearly 1½ years into the pandemic, many companies and organizations have

come to embrace the digital transformation of society — and the Swedish Embassy is no exception. In December last year we launched Sweden Digital Village, a platform designed to be the ultimate virtual space for exploring what Sweden has to offer in Japan. At Sweden Digital Village (www.swendigitalvillage.jp), you can find food and travel inspiration, discover Swedish music and literature, learn about Swedish companies and innovation, and view online events ranging from seasonal celebrations to academic or business-oriented webinars.

There are several well-known Swedish companies in Japan and it is often found that, although many people know about the brands, not many are aware that they are in fact Swedish. Therefore, we initiated an interview-based series of short videos called "Did you know it's Swedish?" in which CEOs of different Swedish companies tell their stories of creativity, innovation and hard work. The series is available on Sweden Digital Village.

On June 6, the Embassy of Sweden will broadcast a show to celebrate Sweden's National Day on Sweden Digital Village, Facebook and on YouTube. In this 90-minute program you can enjoy music and performances, short features on Swedish people and cookalongs.

I encourage everyone, Swedish and

Japanese, who is helping to build bridges between our countries through business, co-creation and cultural exchange, to celebrate the curiosity, openness and respect that have brought our nations this close. I am certain this bond will grow even stronger and our exchanges will bring more economic, scientific and cultural prosperity to both. We will celebrate online this year with greetings from Sweden (<https://www.youtube.com/sweden-intokyo>) at 6 p.m. on June 6.

I wish everyone a peaceful, safe and happy sixth of June! And a great year ahead for the growing Swedish-Japanese partnership!

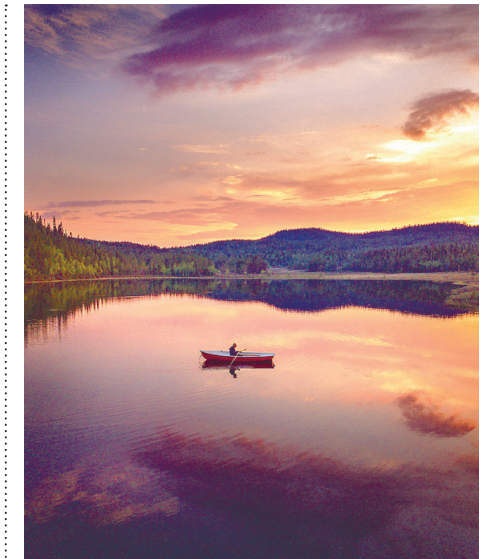


Midsummer is one of the biggest holidays in Sweden. This June, the celebration of the summer solstice will be observed with social distancing rules. ANNA HÄLLAMS/IMAGEBANK.SWEDEN.SE

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



Stockholm Central Station was designed with "sustainable design" in mind. ULF LUNDIN/IMAGEBANK.SWEDEN.SE



A boat under the midnight sun in Sweden's Lapland PER LUNDSTRÖM/IMAGEBANK.SWEDEN.SE

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