



An Invitation to the World of Shojin

- Team Shojin to hold events introducing 'True' Japan -

For two months starting January 9th, Team Shojin will tour California and New York to promote a world of traditional Japanese mastery and skill still unknown outside of Japan.

With Japanese food 'washoku' winning a place on UNESCO's Intangible World Heritage list, it is hard to ignore the rise in global interest surrounding Japanese dietary culture. However, Japan itself has departed from its roots and shifted towards an unhealthier, mass-produced dietary lifestyle. The true 'washoku' diet is now lost in the noise of consumerism, and authentic Japanese cuisine is a dying culture.

Shojin cuisine is also one such tradition that has been neglected. Rooted in Zen philosophy, it is considered to be healthy for both the mind and body, yet it has lost out to consumerism and is still relatively unknown outside of Japan.

Various experts and masters of Japanese cuisine were brought together to address this issue – all of them united by a deep understanding and respect for Shojin philosophy. This is Team Shojin.

Team Shojin will embark on a "pilgrimage" to increase awareness of the true, authentic Japanese dietary customs. Through a number of events, talks and tastings, taking place in both California and New York, they will introduce the heart and philosophy of Shojin cuisine and the Zen lifestyle.

Team Shojin is headed by Shojin cuisine chef Toshio Tanahashi and composed of nine corporations, each representing a basic ingredient of Shojin cuisine. The nine members and the ingredients they represent are the following: Akita Seishu (rice wine), Ishimago Honten (soy sauce/miso), Okui Kaiseido (dried kelp), Kano Agriculture (sugar), Muchimasu (salt), Marusho Refinery (vinegar), Maruhachi Tea Company (tea), Maruhon Pottery (mortar).

This team is exceptionally unique, in that most of the producers involved have been established for well over a century. Each participant has retained the first-rate skill, knowledge, and tradition passed on from their forebears from decades ago. Furthermore, Team Shojin has received government backing as a significant contributor to the advancement of the "Cool Japan" brand, and will look to introduce the unexplored aspects of Japan through its events.

In an era when globalization is flattening cultural diversity across the globe, it is now more important than ever to return to the roots of local culture and question what is truly authentic in a world of mass-production. Team Shojin will ask these very questions and reawaken the possibilities of a wholesome and organic lifestyle in a society that dictates otherwise.

For further information please contact:

TEAM SHOJIN

Shojin Consortium Headquarters

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Outline of Team Shojin California/New York Tour

■ Dates

2014 January 9th (Thur.) ~ February 27th (Thur.)

■ Joint Hosts

【The Culinary Institute of America (CIA)】

The CIA provides professional culinary education and is known to be one of the very best culinary institutions in the world. With campuses in New York, California, and Texas, CIA's outreach in culinary education is unlike any other.

【San Francisco Zen Center】

San Francisco Zen Center is a Zen training facility that draws on the Soto Zen branch. Located in the Bay Area of San Francisco, it was established in 1962 by Suzuki Shunryu. The facilities also include renowned vegetarian restaurant Green's, and organic producers Green Gulch farm.

【Ura Senke San Francisco Local Office】

This Ura Senke local office has been the heart of the Japanese Tea Ceremony tradition in San Francisco, and has more than thirty years of history.

【Harker School】

A prestigious college preparatory school in San Francisco, Harker School is known to have many distinguished pupils from the Silicon Valley Area. Harker School has become increasingly interested in Japanese culture in recent years and has established a number of cultural exchange programs with Japanese schools.

■ Program

January

- January 9th CIA Graystone Campus (California, Napa)
"The Philosophy of Shojin Cuisine" Seminar and Demonstration
Talk by Toshio Tanahashi
- January 20th Ura Senke Foundation San Francisco office
Demonstration of Shojin Tea-Ceremony dishes/Presentation of products
- January 23rd Ura Senke Foundation San Francisco office
"Ichiju Issai" Workshop
- January 30th CIA San Francisco Zen Center Restaurant Greens
Shojin cuisine dinner party and fund-raising event

February

- February 7th CIA San Francisco Zen Center
City Center community meals
- February 17th Urasenke Foundation San Francisco office
"Ichiju Issai" workshop part II
- February 19th CIA Graystone Campus (California, Napa)
Talk and Tasting by Team Shojin
- February 20th, 21st Harker School (Silicon Valley)
Shojin dietary education class (open to both students and parents)
- February 22nd Silicon Valley
Private dinner event
- February 23rd Hudson Ranch
Napa winery event at Hudson Rance
- February 27th Japan Society New York
"Shojin: Zen cuisine for the body and mind" Talk and Tasting

Team Shojin Members

■ Aim

Team Shojin will establish the “SHOZIN” brand and cultivate a non-Japanese market for Shojin cuisine through coordination with advocates of Shojin philosophy.

■ Team Shojin

【Akita Seishu (Akita refined sake)】 (Japanese Rice Wine)

Rice wine producers based in Akita. The fundament of Akita Seishu’s sake-making comes from the idea that nature and people are connected by a continuous cycle of well-balanced symbiosis. **【Ishimago Honten】** (Soy Sauce, Miso)

Soy sauce and miso producers based in Akita. Ishimago Honten has been making additive and preserving-agent free miso and shoyu since 1855.

【Okui Kaiseido】 (Dried Kelp)

Dried Kelp producers based in Fukui. Established in 1872, Okui Kaiseido has always selected the very best wild kelp for processing and is a purveyor of renowned restaurants in Kyoto such as Suiheiji, the home of priest Dogen.

【Kano Nosan】 (Sugar)

Sugar producers based in Kagoshima. Kano Nosan’s passion of many years is to make wholesome and pure sugar. Their muscovado sugar is free of additives and processed one hundred percent organically.

【Nuchimasu】 (Salt)

Salt producers based in Okinawa. Nuchimasu has won over numerous chefs all over Japan with its flavorful salt that contains over 21 varieties of minerals. Nuchimasu has received the gold prize from the Monde Selection without fail since 2006.

【Marusho Vinegar Brewery】 (Vinegar)

Vinegar brewery based in Wakayama. Established in 1879, Marusho Vinegar Brewery has continued to produce vinegar through careful temperature and humidity control using traditional techniques passed on from their forebears.

【Maruhachi Tea】 (Kaga-Bocha)

Tea producers based in Ishikawa. Established in 1863, Maruhachi Tea’s Kaga-Bocha is made from first flush, hand-picked, high-quality stems that have been roasted lightly to bring out maximum fragrance.

【Maruhon Pottery】 (Mortar)

Pottery maker based in Gifu. Founded in 1910, Maruhon pottery is a well-established manufacturer that manufactures mortars that are sturdy enough to last years on end.

■ Supporting Corporations

Information Workshop Co.

(Kyoto: Corporation representing local consortiums in branding and marketing)

Authentic Japan

(Kyoto: Service assisting development of markets outside of Japan)

Kyoto Journal

(Kyoto: Quarterly online magazine on Asian and Japanese perspectives)

■ Producers

Tanashi Toshio (Head of Branding)

World-renowned Shojin cuisine chef. After a three year apprenticeship at the Gesshinji Temple, a nunnery renowned for its abbess’ excellent Shojin cooking, Tanahashi opened his own restaurant in 1992. Ever since closing his restaurant in 2007, he has managed the Zecoow Culinary Institute and is active across the globe, promoting a vegetable-based Shojin diet that purifies both body and soul.

Kosaka Yasuo (Head of Marketing)

Director of Marusho Refinery. Based in Wakayama, Kosaka has been highly successful in integrating the tradition of soy sauce into modern lifestyles. Kosaka has also been highly active in marketing his brand overseas, and his products have been selected for the Monde Selection list, an international criteria for consumer products.