

Gastronomy Tourism In Japan



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WASHOKU: Intangible Cultural Heritage

- Japanese food was approved by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Respect for Nature

In 2012, Japan submitted the nomination file of "WASHOKU; Traditional Dietary Cultures of the Japanese" for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO.

WASHOKU is a social practice based on an essential spirit of the Japanese, "respect for nature". It contributes to healthy life and strengthens familial and community ties.

Various fresh ingredients and using their natural tastes

Ingredients used in WASHOKU are diverse, fresh and available in four distinct seasons. WASHOKU requires minimum cooking and processing.

Well-balanced and healthy diets

WASHOKU contributes to a healthy life, long life expectancy and prevention of obesity among the Japanese since it requires well-balanced and low-fat diets.

Highest & Lowest

Japanese people have

- Highest life expectancy: 83 years
- Lowest obesity rate: 3.9%

(OECD Health Data, 2011)

Emphasis of the beauty of nature in the presentation

The beauty of nature and changing of seasons is emphasized in the presentation of WASHOKU. Plates are decorated with leaves, flowers and bamboo, and natural motifs are represented in decoratively cut foodstuff. Decorating tables and rooms with objects matched to the season are also closely associated with WASHOKU.

Connecting to annual events

WASHOKU has developed using traditional knowledge and customs closely associated with nature and a connection to annual events. It strengthens the bonds of family and community members when they share mealtime together, appreciating nature-gifted ingredients.

PHOTO: Preparation of rice cake (rice pounding) for New Year's celebration

© Masahiro Kuma, 2006

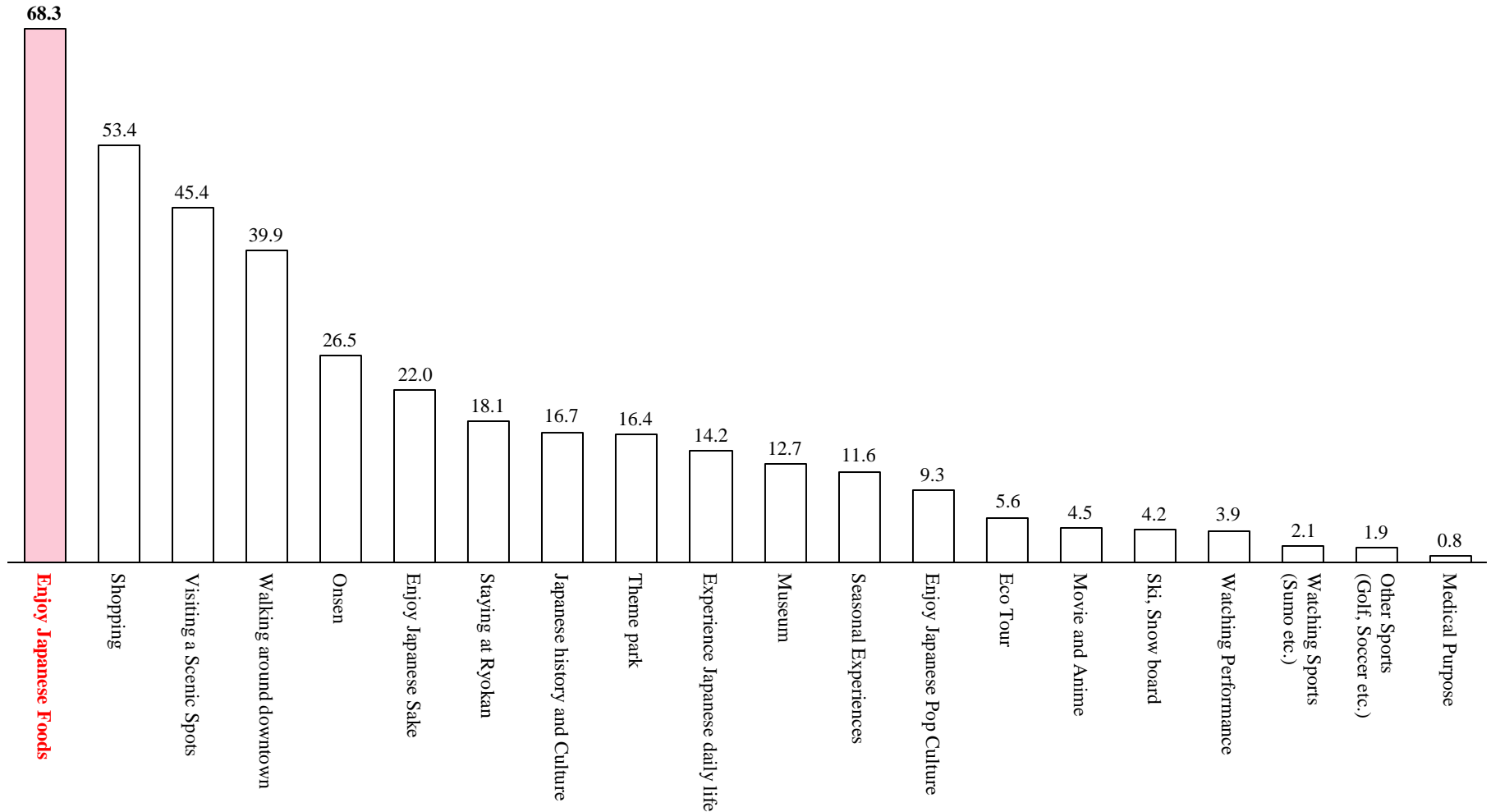
Seasons:

- 春 (Spring)
- 夏 (Summer)
- 秋 (Autumn)
- 冬 (Winter)

WASHOKU: Popularity

- Japanese food is one of the key factors attracting inbound tourists to Japan.

Foreign Tourists Expectation Before Visiting Japan (n=31,828 MA)



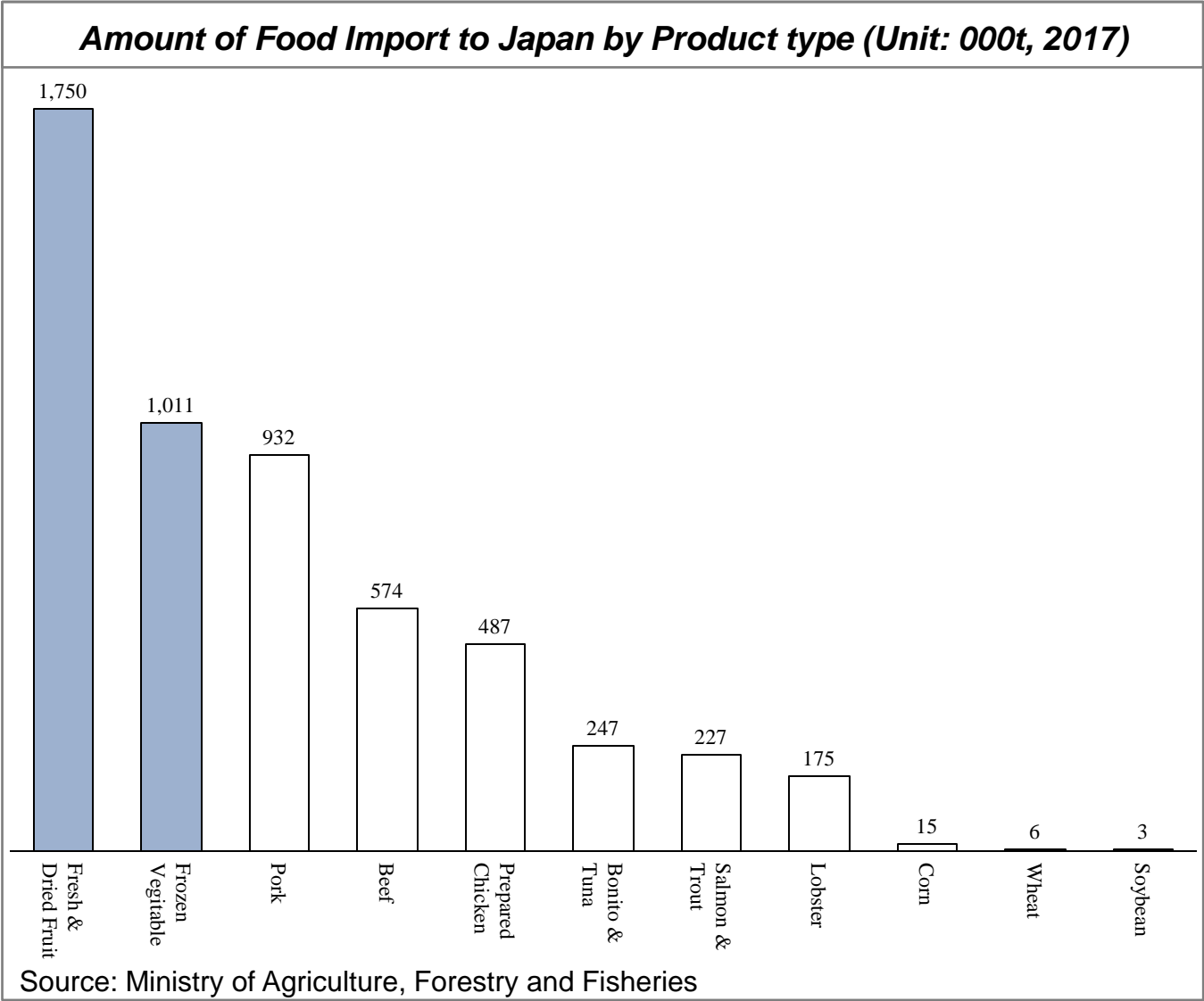
Gastronomy Tourism Best Practice

- The best practice that combines Japanese cuisine and hot-spring experiences for tourists.



Issues Related to Japanese Gastronomy

*Excessive Food
Import from Outside*



Issues Related to Japanese Gastronomy

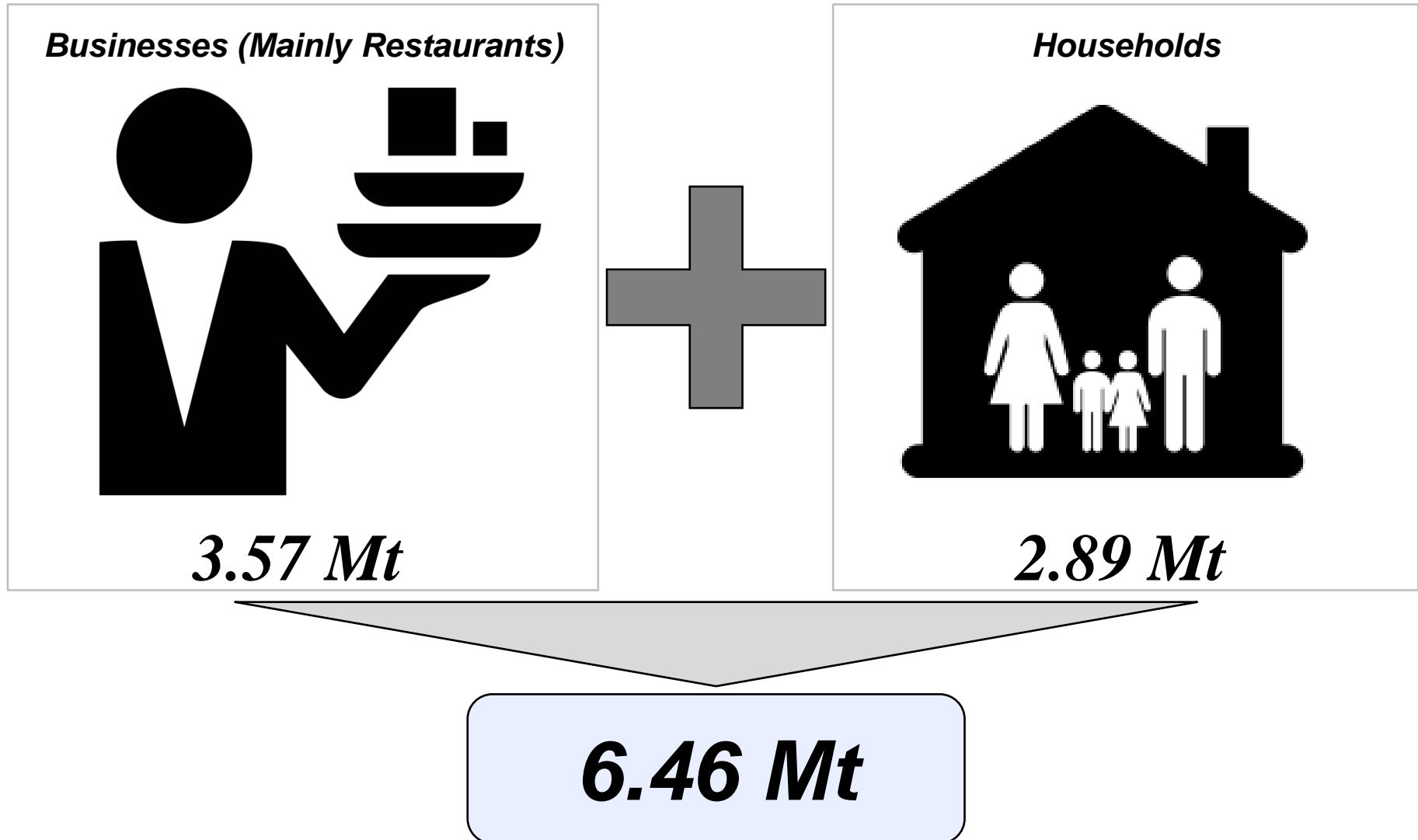
***“All-You-Can-Eat”
system at many
restaurants in Japan***

Typical All-you-can-eat posts of most Japanese restaurants



Food Waste Issues in Japan

- In Japan, 6.46 million tons of edible food is thrown out.



Solution: “30:10 Initiatives”

- The 30-10 initiative aims at disseminating “Leave No Leftovers” message to the general public and restaurants.



Comment

- “Sanmaru Ichimaru” [30-10] movement was first initiated in 2011 by Matsumoto City, Nagano Prefecture.
- This initiative dictate a dinning rule (mainly at the party) as:
 - ✓ Remain seated and enjoy the food for 30 minutes after the first toast
 - ✓ And come back to the seat 10 minutes before end of the party

Potential Solution: Stimulate the Power of “Mottainai” Slogan

- A Japanese environmental protection slogan, “Mottainai”, can also be applied to combat food waste problem in Japan.



Dr. Wangari Maathai

Comment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deeply rooted terminology in Japanese culture• The term refers to the feeling of regret at wasting the intrinsic value of anything, including food• Dr. Maathai used this terminology at the United Nations in order to promote environmental protection• However, Dr. Maathai’s “Mottainai” campaign for environmental protection can also possibly replicate for food waste problem in Japan

Sum Up

Leveraging on the Sector

- Japan should **leverage on Gastronomy Tourism** as the popularity of Japanese cuisine offers significant potential in stimulating national economy.

Public-Private Partnership

- With the concept of PPP, it is advisable to **create several gastronomic routes** (mainly for foreign tourists) that highlight local products in Japan.
- Travel intermediaries, including JTB Corp. should necessarily be part of this program.

Combating Food Loss

- **Travel intermediaries in Japan**, including JTB Corp. **can play a vital role in food waste reduction** through fostering communication with tourists and the public in general.
- The **concept of “Mottainai” should widely be implemented** at the national level to enhance awareness in the minds of residents as well as tourists.
- The Japanese concept of “**30:10 initiatives**” can also be a potential solution **for many other Asian countries.**