



Bring a taste of Europe to Japan

Thanks to a far-reaching trade deal, it is now easier to access top-quality food and drinks from the EU for your customers

We know that Japan is world-famous for its traditional cuisine, healthy diet – winning UNESCO heritage status for its ‘washoku’ cuisine. The European Union (EU), too, is recognised in Japan and worldwide as having a proud tradition of high-quality food and drinks. Parma ham, Irish whiskey, Hungarian Tokaj wine and Greek feta – these are just some of the products that any Japanese food-lover will want to try. And it will be easier than ever now that trade tariffs have been dramatically reduced between these two markets.

Since its foundations, the EU has championed free trade within its borders, and sought open and fair trade worldwide wherever it found compatible allies. In 2018, the EU and Japan signed the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the biggest trade agreement ever negotiated by the EU. The agreement came into force on 1 February 2019, allowing 127 million Japanese consumers to benefit from easier and better-value access to food and drink products from the EU.



The European Union

The European Union (EU) is a political and economic union of 27 Member States with an estimated citizenship of around 445 million. It is the world's biggest exporter of manufactured goods and services, and the biggest import market for over 100 countries. Free trade among its members was one of the EU's founding principles and beyond its borders, the EU is also committed to liberalising world trade.

Shared standards ensure that the EU has a unified approach to food and product safety, meaning consumers can access top-quality products and make informed choices using EU wide certified labelling schemes. As a hub of international trade and commerce, the EU has widespread transport and communications links with the rest of the world, which allows people worldwide to enjoy the high quality of EU food and drink products.

Useful links



<https://www.foodmatcheu.jp>



https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries_en



<https://www.eu-japan.eu/epa-helpdesk>



Discover the best food and drinks from the EU

New ingredients, new flavours, new experiences





By 2018 the EU was already exporting nearly €5.8 billion worth of agricultural products to Japan every year. The EPA will make it easier for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Japan to import goods from the EU, with simplified procedures and greatly reduced costs. For example, the deal has already eliminated all import tariffs on wine and in time will also do so on many European cheeses; plus it will drastically reduce import tariffs on European beef and pork, and open up trade in popular processed foods such as pasta, chocolates and confectionery, and biscuits.

In addition, the EPA will open up the Japanese market to more EU products covered by its quality scheme of geographical indication (GI), such as food and drinks with Protected Designations of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) labels. These are a guarantee that a product is of exceptional quality and associated with distinctive regional characteristics.

The trade agreement between the EU and Japan is about more than just quotas and tariffs; however, it's also about shared values and principles. The EU and Japan have some of the highest consumer protection standards in the world. The EPA will reinforce these standards, while consumers can be reassured that EU products are safe, sustainably produced, and of the highest quality.



Why should I import food and drinks from the EU?

With its wide variety of soils, climates and cultures, and centuries-old traditions and techniques, it's not surprising that so many delectable food and drink products originate in the EU. Japanese consumers will relish the opportunity to add something new to their tables, making a perfect match with Japanese ingredients to create 'fusion' dishes, and upgrading regular ingredients with top-quality EU products. It's also a great source of special gifts for friends or family. Whether it's Italian mozzarella, Spanish chorizo, Belgian chocolate or organic wine from France, your customers will be intrigued and delighted by the variety on offer and reassured by the high standards that go into their production.

Authenticity

Many EU food products have developed over centuries and have unique connections to the regions in which they are produced. These proud traditions are cherished and protected by an EU labelling system that scrupulously details ingredients, origins and production methods in order to reassure customers and protect producers from inferior imitations – for Japanese customers, they are a guarantee of authenticity and high quality.

Quality

The EU is meticulous in promoting high standards in food production from 'Farm to Fork'. The EU supports its farmers and champions sustainable and eco-friendly farming practices. Cutting-edge production and processing methods plus strict quality controls ensure food and drink products meet the exacting standards of the Japanese market. The EU prohibited the use of substances having a hormonal action for growth promotion in farm animals.

Safety

Traceability and transparency are key in the production, processing and preparation of all EU food and beverage products. From promoting 'greener' farming, to packaging and labelling, the EU checks everything to ensure food safety. Maintaining strict levels of food hygiene, being mindful of the health of animals and plants, and of course, the health and safety of consumers, are our guiding principles.

What to look out for



PDO – Protected Designation of Origin

Where you see this label, you will know that all aspects of production, processing and preparation for a food or beverage have taken place in the specific region flagged. This is very common for regional cheeses such as Roquefort (France) or Noord-Hollandse Gouda (Netherlands).



PGI – Protected Geographical Indication

This label denotes that at least one aspect of the food's production has taken place in a specific region, marking the significant link between the food and its place of origin. Examples are Cordero Manchego cheese from Spain and balsamic vinegar 'di Modena' from Italy.



Organic

Look out for the EU leaf label, which signifies a product was made in compliance with EU organic food production rules. All ingredients are organic; there are no additives or GMOs; use of artificial fertilisers, herbicides, pesticides and antibiotics are strictly limited.



The Perfect Match



Find your Perfect Match

Perfect Match is a campaign to introduce EU foods to Japan and celebrate our shared values and the spirit of cooperation and curiosity between the two markets.

Find out more about food and drink products from the EU: French cheeses, German beer, cured meats from Spain and pasta from Italy – not to mention smoked sausage from Romania, sweet milk-fed lamb from Greece, glorious custard tarts from Portugal and fiery vodka from Poland.



Be inspired by our recipes online, and choose which products would most appeal to your customers.

Find out more at www.foodmatcheu.jp or check out our Instagram:

[foodmatcheu](https://www.instagram.com/foodmatcheu)

DID YOU KNOW?

As a result of the EPA, 99% of duties on European imports to Japan are to be scrapped