

# Spotlight on The Art of Sake

On 10 March, the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney was proud to hold an exclusive cultural lecture – “The Art of Sake” – at the official residence of Mr Masato Takaoka, the Consul-General of Japan.

The lecture was presented by the eminent sake expert, Mr André Bishop, who is the only Australian national to hold the title of “Sake Samurai” – the highest honour awarded by the Japanese sake industry.



Mr André Bishop during the lecture

Mr Bishop outlined the sake production process, observed the state of the sake market in Australia and introduced the best combination of cuisines to pair with sake. He shared his passion for the unique charms of sake with over 50 attendees, who included food editors and journalists, chefs, top sommeliers and discerning bar managers.



Guests during the sake tasting

Also joining the event were five Sydney-based sake distributors (Daiwa Food, JFC, Jun Pacific, Déjà vu Sake, Sakenet Australia), and three Japanese breweries (Asahishuzo, Kizakura and Yoshikubo). Together they introduced guests to sake representative of over 14 prefectures, 17 breweries and 25 varieties.

The Consul-General’s chef also prepared a specially designed tasting menu, which fused Japanese culinary influences with the freshest local ingredients, to provide guests with the perfect accompaniment to the sake on offer.

As Sake Samurai André Bishop said during his lecture: *Sake never fights food.*

LEARN MORE ABOUT SAKE AND ITS ROLE IN JAPANESE CULTURE AT  
<http://web-japan.org/nipponia/nipponia44/en/>

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\* Nipponia was replaced by Nipponica.

# Abenomics: an update

With media on such a short cycle reporting all economic ups and downs, it can be hard to get a sense of overall trends. For those wanting to get a handle on the basic developments of Abenomics, consider reading “**Abenomics is progressing!**” released in February 2015 by the Cabinet Office of Japan.

The document gives an overview of developments under Abenomics divided into ten sections: i) recovery track for Japan’s economy, ii) steady progress towards fiscal consolidation, iii) restoration and enhancement of corporate earning power, iv) stimulation of financial and capital markets, v) reform of the agricultural sector, vi) reform of the healthcare sector, vii) reform of the energy market, viii) progress on national strategic special zones, ix) enhancement of women’s participation and advancement, and x) attraction of talented people from overseas.

There are some key points to note.

- Real GDP for the 4th quarter of 2014 increased at an annual rate of 2.2%, and Japan’s economy is expected to exit deflation and recover steadily.
- The target of halving the primary deficit to GDP ratio (announced in August 2013) is expected to be achieved as a result of fiscal consolidation.
- In April 2015, the effective corporate tax rate is being further reduced and another reduction is set for April 2016. The rate will be reduced to within the 20% range in the next few years.
- Reforms are being made to the Agricultural Cooperative System for the first time in 60 years, and local cooperatives are to become more independent.
- The number of women working has increased, some 1.03 million in the two years since the start of the Abe administration (began December 2012).

Find the document at:

[www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/document/english/kaikakudankouEN\[1\].pdf](http://www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/document/english/kaikakudankouEN[1].pdf)

## Letters to the Editor

The Editor of *Japan Reports* welcomes any comments and suggestions you may have. Tell us about your experiences of Japan or Japanese culture in Australia.

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