

Scottish rugby team coached on Japanese food and etiquette

Just before they left for Japan the Scottish Rugby team were given some coaching on cultural etiquette by the chef patron of Harajuku Kitchen Kaori Simpson. The restaurant is the official caterer for the team.

The players had an afternoon of Japanese cooking and culture before they flew out for the tournament. Kaori explained that Japanese cooking focuses on using fresh produce and a balance of carbohydrates and protein for cooking which is tasty and healthy.



She said: "It was a great honour to work with the Scottish Rugby team and teach them about Japanese culture. The dragon rolls and nigiri sushi were particularly popular. They had just come from a training session so as you can imagine they were keen to refuel!"

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Gregor Townsend, Scotland Rugby coach said: "There are a number of challenges that await us in the tournament, starting

with facing some quality teams in our pool as well as adapting to Japan's unique environment.''

Her etiquette presentation for the players included an introduction on the correct etiquette for eating various dishes such as miso soup, sushi and noodles. Famous for using chopsticks, Kaori and her team also taught the players how to use these correctly and gave golden rules for good and bad chopstick use. She also gave the team, including players and coaches, translations of popular dishes so that they would be comfortable ordering food in a restaurant and useful phrases for their time in Japan.

If you are also visiting Japan for the Rugby World Cup, we have included some of Kaori's advice below to help you during your stay.

Helpful phrases included:

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- Itadakimasu – Before meal
- Gochisousama – After meal
- Okawari / Okawari kudasai –More food please
- Oishi – delicious
- Kekkou desu- No thanks
- Onaka ippai – I am full
- Kanpai – Toast, Cheers, slàinte

She also warned the players that it is considered rude to pour a drink for yourself. Always reciprocate when someone pours a drink for you. Refill another's glass when it's empty. If you are full, it is best to leave your glass full if you had enough.

Kaori also recommended some traditional Japanese dishes to try :

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- Tamago yaki (sweet omelettes)
- Onigiri (triangle rice with seaweed and fillings)
- Kara age Chicken Japanese fried chicken
- Gyoza, or Pot stickers
- Tonkatsu (Panko Breaded meat)
- Japanese Curry rice
- Japanese Beef: Kobe, Matsusaka and Omi
- Ramen
- Sushi – Which was first introduced as a way of preserving fish with vinegared rice

