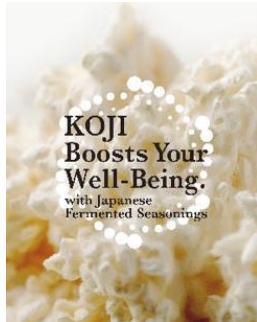


Press Release

KOJI Boosts Your Well-Being

JFOODO Partners with Acclaimed Chefs and Restaurants in Los Angeles and New York to Promote the Japanese Fermented Seasonings Made from KOJI

KOJI forms the foundation of Washoku – the Japanese cuisine – as the base ingredient for world-renowned foods, such as miso, soy sauce, mirin sweet seasoning, and rice vinegar



The **Japan Food Product Overseas Promotion Center (JFOODO)** is partnering with notable chefs and restaurants in Los Angeles and New York to promote the usage of various traditional Japanese seasonings fermented with **KOJI**.

KOJI is an indispensable ingredient in making Japan's fermented seasonings like **soy sauce, miso, mirin sweet seasoning** and **rice vinegar**, which are the **fundamentals of Japanese cuisine** - just like how lactic acid bacteria is essential in cheese-making, or yeast in bread-making. KOJI is an ingredient produced by growing Koji Fungus (the fungus *Aspergillus oryzae*) in grains such as rice, wheat, or soybean. As Koji Fungus produces a large quantity of enzymes, it creates nutrients that can be easily absorbed into the body, such as vitamins and amino acids. Furthermore, amino acids alter taste and aroma, and are the foundation of "Umami," the essence of deliciousness. This is fermentation, a positive change in foods resulting from increased microbes. It makes food last longer and improves its functional and nutritional value.

For example, **miso**, which is a fermented soybean-paste globally known as the main ingredient for miso soup, contains a wide variety of nutrients such as carbohydrates, lipids, minerals, vitamins, potassium, magnesium, and fiber.

Fermentation of soybeans, the primary ingredient of miso and soy sauce, increases amino acids and vitamins within soybeans themselves, and produces peptides, a substance attracting academic attention for traditional claims of efficacy in reducing blood pressure and improving liver function. In the case of soy sauce, it is said that its glutamic acid can help regulate body mass and influence intestinal tract activity. Equally, mirin sweet seasoning and rice vinegar also have their own benefits. They are versatile seasonings that can be easily incorporated with a variety of ingredients to enhance your daily dining into a healthier experience simply by adding it to your recipes.

Award-Winning Cookbook Author, **Nancy Singleton Hachisu** explains "*The Japanese seasonings derived from KOJI are incredibly versatile, with a greater depth of taste and potential health benefits. When a dish needs something "extra," instead of salt, use a little bit of miso or soy sauce to enhance almost any dish, savory or sweet.*"

On **February 9th**, an **exclusive media event will take place at RYLA**, Hermosa Beach, to demystify KOJI and to demonstrate dishes prepared with KOJI-fermented seasonings. Additionally, Award winning writer and 7x best-selling author **Candice Kumai** will give a fabulous presentation on incorporating Japanese fermented seasonings into your diet and lifestyle. She says, "*Growing up between Kyushu, Japan and California, miso, soy sauce, mirin, and rice vinegar are the pillars of my best recipes. I am excited to share with you my favorite recipes that contain Japanese fermented seasonings and good-for-you health benefits.*"



The food will be prepared by **chefs Ray Hayashi and Cynthia Hetlinger**. At the experiential event, Hachisu will give an approachable, anecdotal talk on koji to illustrate the magic of this National Fungus, including its history and preparation, with the aim of the guests reaching a more visceral, deeper understanding of KOJI.

Simultaneously, **10 top-rated restaurants in Los Angeles and New York City will participate in this campaign** and offer dishes using Japanese fermented seasonings to the public from 2/10 to 2/23. The full list of participating restaurants can be seen below.

More details on Japanese fermented seasonings, their benefits, and more can be found at

Web Site; <https://miso-jfoodo.jetro.go.jp/en/koji/index.html> Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/wellbeing_jpn/

Press photos can be found in [this link](#).

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Participating Restaurants & Highlighted Menus

<i>Los Angeles</i>	<i>New York</i>
Kagura Torrance Saikyo-yaki Grilled Buri Fresh buri(yellowtail) from Ehime Japan marinated for 2 days & charcoal-grilled with white miso, mirin sweet seasoning, sake, sugar and soy sauce from Kyoto. Moderately sweet with premium flavor.	Ootoya Chelsea Japanese Wagyu Sukiyaki Gozen A5 Miyazaki Japanese wagyu sukiyaki nabe cooked with soy sauce and mirin sweet seasoning, premium Japanese rice, miso soup, matcha oshiruko with matcha powder & red beans from Japan, etc.
n/soto Kanpachi Sashimi with Sansho Ponzu and a Miso Vinaigrette Fresh kanpachi sashimi from Japan is dressed with a sansho ponzu and miso vinaigrette.	Tonchin Brooklyn Madai Japanese sea bream sashimi with ikura soy koji vinaigrette made from soy sauce, mirin sweet seasoning, rice vinegar, and a hint of yuzu. Served with nasturtium leaf & green tuille.
RYLA Hokkaido Scallop Sashimi Hotate (scallops) from Hokkaido, Japan with black truffle vinaigrette using soy sauce and rice vinegar, meyer lemon, satsuma mandarin, pickled celery, and bonito crème fraiche.	Towa Japanese Wagyu Donabe Traditional rice pot cooked with Japanese rice, soy sauce and mirin sweet seasoning. Topped with A5 Japanese wagyu, myoga ginger & scallion.
Tsubaki Salt-grilled Japanese Tai/Sea Bream with garlic koji miso Salt-grilled Japanese Tai (sea bream), served with awase miso mixed with garlic that's been cured in miso and shio-koji from Japan.	Wokuni Japanese Wagyu Steak Hitsumabushi A5 Miyazaki Japanese wagyu marinated in soy sauce and house blend red miso on premium Japanese rice. Served with assorted condiments and dashi broth.
Wadatsumi Beverly Hills Sushi&Yuan-yaki Sea Bream Combination Plate Yuan-yaki is made by lightly marinating slices of fish in soy sauce, mirin sweet seasoning, sake, and often a hint of yuzu citrus before grilling or broiling it.	1OR8 Buri Daikon Poached fresh buri (yellowtail) from Japan & daikon simmered with soy sauce, mirin sweet seasoning, sake and dashi. Topped with three kinds of sauces. (white miso/haccho miso/soy-based)

ABOUT JFOODO

JFOODO (The Japan Food Product Overseas Promotion Center) was established by the Japanese government in 2017 with the aim of boosting the export of Japanese agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products by branding them and promoting them widely around the world.

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