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# sustainable japan

## Nations partner on tourism and development: Ambassador Richards

# Fulfilled destiny, leveraging diplomacy for development

**Name: Shorna-Kay Richards**  
**Title: Ambassador of Jamaica**  
**URL: <http://jamaicaembassy.jp/>**  
**Hometown: Kingston, Jamaica**  
**Years in Japan: 2**

### Leaders & Readers

**WARREN MEEHAN**  
 CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The island nation of Jamaica is best known for its Blue Mountain coffee, reggae music, fastest runners, scenic waterfalls and cool laid-back vibes—but as an advocate of righteous causes around the world, Jamaica is also a nation that punches well above its weight. Whether advocating for human rights, the regulation of the trade in small arms, the elimination of nuclear weapons, or dealing with sustainability, Jamaica has been championing issues of international significance since its independence in 1962.

"A mosquito might be small, but if it stings, you will know about it," explained Shorna-Kay Richards, Jamaican ambassador to Japan. Having been personally invested in many of Jamaica's vital causes over her diplomatic career, she knows the power of that sting.



Richards motto would be "if a task is once begun, never leave it till it's done, be the labor great or small, do it well, or not at all." HIROMICHI MATONO

### The invisible hand of destiny

Richards always felt her appointment as ambassador to Japan was destiny. After completing a Spanish major at The University of the West Indies, Richards attended the University's jobs fair, and a position with the foreign service was the only job she ended up applying for, becoming one of only four women eventually recruited. Years later, when she looked at her high school yearbook, she saw that in answering a question about her future, her classmates had predicted she would be Jamaica's first female ambassador to Spain. Jamaica did not then have an embassy in Spain, but she was nonetheless on a career path to bigger things in the diplomatic service.

As a young diplomat in 2005, Richards visited Japan as part of a group on a United Nations Disarmament Fellowship program, which included study visits to Nagasaki and Hiroshima. She had an opportunity to have a briefing from one of Japan's nuclear bomb victims, or hibakusha, an experience that left an indelible impact. On the final day of the study visit, Richards was asked to make a speech on behalf of the group, and in her speech she promised to take the appeal of the hibakusha if she ever had a chance to work at the United Nations and said she would take every opportunity to work on the cause of nuclear abolition, which she did. Years later, Richards had the good fortune to return to Japan as ambassador and was able to visit Hiroshima on the 76th anniversary of the bombing, having kept her promise to the hibakusha.

"I've come full circle," she mused. "I never imagined when I came here in 2005 that I would one day be ambassador to Japan. I

cannot tell you how emotional that was for me that it happened—I made that promise, and now I am ambassador. There is an invisible hand, a destiny."

### Partners in sustainability

With tourism accounting for a large portion of Jamaica's economy, the island was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since fully reopening in June 2020, Jamaica is now creating a tourism resilience plan with the rest of the Caribbean, guided by the recently created Global Tourism Resilience & Crisis Management Center at The UWI.

Jamaica has been leading the charge in its hemisphere and globally to try to build sustainable tourism and manage future crises. Jamaica is now working with Japan, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to shape best practices in tourism management and share them with the rest of the Caribbean. Partnering with JICA, Jamaica is now building back its tourism sector better and stronger, putting particular emphasis on ocean health and sustainability in areas such as ocean plastic, sea life and rising sea levels, as well as looking at ways for tourism to lessen its environmental impact. Measures include banning disposable plastics, transitioning to green energy and partnering with JICA on the transfer of technical skills with regard to waste management.

Japan, as a member of the G7, has been a particularly important friend to small island developing states (SIDS) like Jamaica and middle-income countries by providing financing for the transition to green energy and resilience to climate change. Japan uses its own Vulnerability Index to assess the needs of countries most at risk from natural



HIROMICHI MATONO

### Jamaican diplomat, U.N. adviser

Shorna-Kay Richards attended The University of the West Indies and graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in languages and international relations, before attending the Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. where she pursued a Master's degree. After graduation in 1994, Richards soon began working at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Kingston. Her first overseas assignment was to Washington in 1998 at the Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the Organization of American States.

In 2009 she was assigned to the Jamaican High Commission in Pretoria, South Africa, where she served as head of chancery and briefly as acting high commissioner, before taking up an appointment in 2012 as Jamaica's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations in New York, where she served until 2016. In 2020, she was appointed as the Jamaican ambassador to Japan and from 2022, she was appointed as a member of the U.N. Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

population, high levels of education, we've been ranked very highly for ease of doing business, and the government is putting in all sorts of incentives for investment."

### What's the next port?

After nearly 30 years as a diplomat, Richards isn't certain what will be next. For the moment, she is still working on what she terms her "J-J garden," a fusion of Jamaica and Japan, growing mosses, tulips and her beloved Bougainvilleas, and is focused on her carrying out her duties as a member of the U.N. secretary-general's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters to which she was appointed recently. After so many years as a diplomat, Richards is still a confident believer in the power of culture. "Everyone is using soft power nowadays," she said. "We just have to rely on it more."

disasters and climate change.

### Investment Opportunities

"Japan and Jamaica may not be privileged by geographic proximity," Richards explained, "but we are privileged by trade, and we see Japan as a strong, reliable, supportive and good friend to Jamaica." One area for investment that the G7 nations have identified to support low and middle-income countries such as Jamaica is infrastructure. Jamaica has a dynamic culture and is home to the International Seabed Authority and the seventh-largest natural harbor in the world.

Richards highlighted Jamaica's strategic location as a logistics hub offering opportunities in the recently created low-tax special economic zones. Shipping and port-facility companies can set up operations as developers or occupants in the zones for warehousing and distribution centers to benefit from Jamaica's near-shore advantage vis-a-vis North America and our capacity to accommodate Panamax-sized vessels. And it is not just physical infrastructure that advantages Jamaica as an investment opportunity, Richards explained, "Jamaica is a stable democracy, we have an English-speaking

## Don Bravo

### Italian restaurant innovates in suburban Tokyo



**TAKEO TERAO**  
 CONTRIBUTING WRITER



**Address**  
 Don Bravo  
 3-6-43 Kokuryocho,  
 Chofu-shi, Tokyo  
<https://www.donbravo.net>

**Don Bravo**

Don Bravo is neither located in a rural area abundant with nature, nor in a tourist destination. It is located in a residential area in Tokyo's suburbs, the Kokuryo district of the city of Chofu, a place people do not usually visit in search of gastronomic delights.

Chef Masakazu Taira, owner of the Tokyo restaurant Don Bravo learned his skills at some of Italy's most prestigious restaurants. Using superior ingredients and techniques, he cooks every pizza with the utmost care, winning over the hearts and minds of his guests. With time, the restaurant gradually attracted a more gourmet fan base, and the cuisine it offered changed to suit.

Today he offers pasta and pizza lunch specials. In early summer, he starts with a cold corn soup. The second dish is raw oysters with Sicilian lemon oil. There is nothing surprising in these combinations of ingredients; indeed, they are the height of orthodoxy, "serving a dish that people have never seen before might result in a brief surge of popularity, but it wouldn't last long. I want to serve dishes that everyone knows but develop new ways of cooking them to deliver higher quality." For example, he does not follow the Neapolitan style of making pizza, which is characterized by a soft and fluffy dough; instead, he lets a dough that includes whole-

wheat flour rise in the refrigerator for two to three days before baking it in a wood-fired oven at 450 degrees Celsius for just a minute and a half. The result is a dough that when baked is clearly savory, crispy and sharply delicious, a flavor that is unique to the Don Bravo group of restaurants.

Complementing the various hidden innovations in Taira's orthodox menu are clearly more experimental dishes, such as confit of

ayu sweetfish served with Shine Muscats and edamame. He also provides alcohol pairings as well as nonalcoholic pairings such as Chablis-inspired blended teas with lemon peel and other ingredients.

Opening a high-end restaurant in a residential district is one adventure, and including pizza to the high-end menu is another, but many foodies today are starting to embrace such a bold attitude.

**YURIKO KOIKE**  
 GOVERNOR OF TOKYO



We are very pleased that the Italian restaurant Don Bravo was selected as one of the Destination Restaurants 2022. Don Bravo, located in the city of Chofu in the Tama area, takes extreme care with the ingredients and techniques of the dishes it offers, and is endorsed by many gourmets. One of Tokyo's strengths is how you can enjoy food from all over the world, with charming restaurants around the metropolis devoting themselves to improving their cuisine. We hope that people from around the world will come to Tokyo and enjoy the charms of its various cuisines.

**YOSHIKI NAGATOMO**  
 MAYOR OF CHOFU



We are very pleased that Don Bravo was selected as one of the Destination Restaurants 2022 and that chef Masakazu Taira chose the city of Chofu as the location for opening Don Bravo. Though Chofu is located near the metropolitan center, it is blessed with rich nature such as lush greenery and spring water typical of the historical Musashino region and the gently flowing Tama River. It is a scenic town that features the ancient Jindaiji temple. When you come to Tokyo, take a little detour to Chofu, and while strolling around, go spend a wonderful time at Don Bravo.

## Times Gallery



The celebration of Tequila Day and the launch of the Visit Mexico website in Japanese took place at the Embassy of Mexico with reporters, celebrities and company representatives in attendance. Shown here are Ambassador Melba Pria and Japanese talent Exile USA. EMBASSY OF MEXICO



Organized by the Embassy of Panama, Panama Film Weekend—Latin American Movies in Japan was held at Libra Hall in Tokyo from July 22 to 24, in which four Panamanian movies produced in Panama were shown. EMBASSY OF PANAMA



EMBASSY OF FINLAND

After four years in Japan, Ambassador Pekka Orpana and Mrs. Paula Kuru-Orpana said goodbye to friends and colleagues at a farewell reception at the Finnish Embassy in Tokyo.



EMBASSY OF SLOVENIA

Upon completing her tenure, Slovenian Ambassador Ana Polak Petric met Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike to thank her for the successful Olympic Games, which further deepened cooperation between Japan and Slovenia.



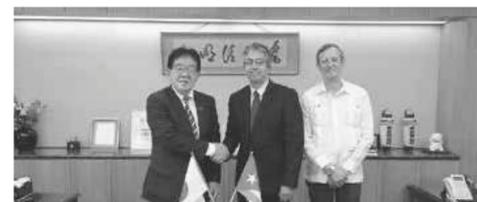
Acclaimed director and choreographer Dimitris Papaioannou, known for creating the opening ceremony of the 2004 Athens Olympics, presented his latest work, "Transverse Orientation," in Tokyo and Kyoto. Here he stands with Greek Ambassador Dimitrios Caramitsos-Tziaras (center) and Margarita Mavromichalis. JUNKO NAGATA@GREECEJAPAN.COM



The Embassy of Bolivia in Japan celebrated the 197th anniversary of Bolivia's independence at the Kumin Center Hall in Tokyo's Akasaka area on Aug. 7. From left: Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Kentaro Uesugi, Bolivian Charge d'Affaires Natalia Salazar and Tako Mayor Tomiko Hirayama. EMBASSY OF BOLIVIA



Ambassador Aleksandra Kovac of Serbia with Hiroshima Mayor Kazumi Matsui during her visit to the city on July 8. She also visited memorial sites and discussed cultural exchange projects with the Senda Pan Flute Choir, supported by EU-Japan Fest. EMBASSY OF SERBIA



The minister of internal affairs and communications, Yasushi Kaneko, and the First Deputy Minister of Communications of Cuba, Wilfredo Gonzalez (center) meet to discuss bilateral cooperation in telecommunications. At right is Cuban Ambassador Miguel A. Ramirez. EMBASSY OF CUBA

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