



A SPECIAL FEATURE PRODUCED BY: Synergy Media Specialists

www.synergymediaspecialists.com

## Finland and Japan celebrate 100 years of friendship

Finland's history of trade with Japan spans longer than 100 years, when the two countries formally established diplomatic relations.

According to Takashi Murata, Ambassador of Japan to Finland, "The Finnish and Japanese have many similar characteristics and share common values represented by three Ps, that are punctuality, patience and prudence."

"The Finnish life philosophy of *sisu* correlates to the Japanese Bushido, a code for living a life of honor, self-discipline, bravery and simplicity," he said.

These shared values and ethics have brought Finland and Japan closer, with the latter being Finland's third-largest trade partner outside Europe.

Finland's Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade Ville Skinnari noted that Finland's exports to Japan are growing in double digits.

"Apart from our well-known and continuously strengthening cooperation with Japan in the forestry industry, our ties are becoming more comprehensive through the exchange of consumer products, innovations, creative ideas, and tourism," Skinnari said.



President of the Republic Sauli Niinistö and Jenni Haukio hosted Crown Prince Akishino and Crown Princess Kiko at Kultaranta on July 3.

Over 40 direct flights from Japan to Helsinki connect to over 60 other destinations every week, making Finland an important hub for Japanese businesspeople and travelers.

The European Union-Japan economic partnership agreement, which entered into force earlier this year, opens up new opportu-

nities for Finnish and Japanese businesses to cooperate and grow together.

Juha Pitkänen, chairman of the Finnish-Japanese Chamber of Commerce, said that the agree-

ment is changing the perception of Finnish companies about the challenges of doing business in Japan.

"It signals that the Japanese economy is opening up and is enticing more companies to look into growth opportunities in Japan, even in niche markets," Pitkänen said.

"Forecasts show that the agreement could invigorate, for example, exports of agricultural and technological products from Finland to Japan, as well as automotive and white goods exports from Japan to Finland," said Timo Vuori, executive vice president for international affairs at the Finland Chamber of Commerce.

Moving forward, Mikael Pentikäinen, CEO of The Federation of Finnish Enterprises, said: "I encourage more Finnish companies to do business with Japan and explore the Japanese market, while at the same time I hope to see more Japanese companies doing business in Finland. We are great partners who share the same values and can build a strong alliance of freedom." ♦

Read the full article online: [www.synergymediaspecialists.com/jt-fin2019-banner-story](http://www.synergymediaspecialists.com/jt-fin2019-banner-story)

## Metsä Fibre leads the way to a sustainable future

As the leading producer of pulp, sawn timber and other bioproducts, Finnish company Metsä Fibre continues to come up with ways of innovating their products and value-added technical services, setting the bar higher in the global market.

The company has been export-oriented since its establishment in 1973, expanding its market and operations from Europe to other regions, such as the Middle East and Asia, which is nowadays the main source of growth of its business.

Metsä Fibre began its close collaboration with ITOCHU Corporation early on, which enabled the company to develop its business throughout Asia.



Metsä Fibre's high-quality products are made of renewable raw material coming from northern forests. The wood raw material is acquired from areas where forests grow more than they are used.

The bond between these two companies became even stronger as ITOCHU Corp. acquired 25 percent of shares from Metsä Fibre in 2012.



Metsä Fibre, part of Metsä Group, is running a pre-engineering project to create conditions for adding a bioproduct mill to Metsä Group's current mill site in Kemi. In addition to pulp, the mill would produce various other bioproducts. This mill would be the biggest wood processing facility in the Northern Hemisphere. The final investment decision will be made early in the summer of 2020. (Illustrative picture of the mill area.)

"ITOCHU's deep knowledge of the market and extensive network allows us to expand the market areas and make more strategic investments, respond better to customer demands, and stay ahead of the trends," said Ismo Nousiainen, chief executive officer of Metsä Fibre.

Metsä Fibre also wants to further strengthen its position on Japan's sawn timber and pulp markets.

"Traditionally, Europe and Northern Africa have been strong markets for our sawn timber, and our market in China is growing strong, but we also want to continue to foster our relationship with our Japanese clients," he added.

Moving forward, the company

is aiming to develop sustainable solutions to address the issues concerning the current state of the environment. "Sustainability is in the core of all our operations. Resource efficiency saves raw materials, and our aim is to utilize 100 percent of wood raw materials. We see that wood-based solutions will replace fossil-based raw materials in, for example, packaging," Nousiainen said.

The company went through a milestone in 2017 when it replaced its old pulp mill, located in the town of Äänekoski, and invested €1.2 billion on a modern bioproduct mill, making it the largest investment in the history

of the Northern Hemisphere forest industry.

By shifting to more eco-friendly solutions, Metsä Fibre also aims to become the top producer of bioproducts all over the world.

"In order to meet our strategic targets, we need to ensure that we have the best people working with us as we create new products and new possibilities towards the success of our business," Nousiainen said.

Aside from producing world-class products, the company also focuses on giving quality service to its customers worldwide.

"Our customers are very important to us and we want to



Ismo Nousiainen, CEO of Metsä Fibre

continuously exceed their expectations by giving them the best product quality and value-added services," said Nousiainen. ♦ [www.metsafibre.com](http://www.metsafibre.com)

## Tallink Silja Oy warmly welcomes Japanese guests on sea voyages across the Nordic region

Tallink Silja Oy, the official sea-carrier of Moomin and Santa Claus, is one of the leading providers of high-quality minicruises and passenger transport services in the world.

With a fleet of 14 vessels, the shipping company carries nearly 10 million passengers every year to different destinations in the Nordic region.

"We operate daily on five routes between Helsinki and Stockholm, Helsinki and Tallinn, Turku and Stockholm, Stockholm and Tallinn, and Stockholm and Riga," said Nina Tähtinen, international sales director of the company. "Each of our ships can accommodate up to 3,000 passengers."

Not only has Tallink Silja Oy been making a name in the local market, but also with foreign clients.

For over 20 years, Tallink Silja Oy has been popular in Japan, with its overnight cruise from Helsinki to Stockholm and day cruise from Helsinki to Medieval Tallinn as



The Silja Serenade in Helsinki

two of the favorite routes among its Japanese guests.

"Since we saw the patronization of our clients from Japan, we felt the need to go the extra mile and make their stay on our cruise ships as comfortable as possible," said Tähtinen.

"The Japanese love traveling

with us because of the high-class services we offer them, such as a magnificent view of the Nordic sea, a Finnish style sauna and spa, tax-free shopping with top cosmetic brands, as well as famous Finnish brand Marimekko, comfortable cabins, delicious meals that cater to the Japanese palate,



and Japanese-speaking attendants for easier communication," she added.

Along with its international recognition, Tallink Silja Oy has been developing innovations to improve its service.

In 2019, the company announced that it would be switching to cleaner energy as it will soon launch its second vessel, one that will be powered by liquefied natural gas. The new Tallink Megastar with LNG started between Helsinki and Tallinn last year.



Moomin on the promenade of one of Tallink Silja Oy's ships.

As the company continues to thrive, its vision to be Europe's market pioneer in leisure and business travel and sea transportation services is becoming clearer.

"We want our customers to enjoy their travel experience with us. Our goal is to exceed their expectations and make them want to return," said Tähtinen. ♦ [www.tallinksilja.com/ja](http://www.tallinksilja.com/ja)

## Patria gears up for success armed with new technologies

Finland is widely known across the globe for its expertise in the fields of electronics, forestry, machinery and vehicles, specifically armored vehicles.

"Patria has been a strategic partner for Finland's defence, security, and aviation sector for nearly 100 years," said Petri Jokinen, senior vice president for sales and marketing in Patria's Land business unit.

Patria has been the leading provider of armored wheeled vehicles in the country and in other regions such as Sweden, Norway and Poland.

The company rose to fame internationally in the '80s when the U.N. acquired its XA-series 6x6 armored wheeled vehicles for peacekeeping operations.

Since then, Patria became the market leader for modern 8x8 wheeled vehicles, with its Armored Modular Vehicle (AMV) selling more than 1,600 units in several countries across the globe. The biggest customer for Patria AMV has been Poland, which has close to 1,000 AMV's called Rosomak. The Polish program has been carried out through wide manufacturing



Patria is the market leader for modern 8x8 wheeled vehicles, with its AMV's (Armored Modular Vehicle) selling more than 1,600 units in several countries across the globe.

and life cycle support technology transfers to local company Rosomak S.A. Patria has also transferred technology to Croatia, Slovenia and the Republic of South Africa. These countries have significantly increased their security of supply for the life cycle support of the vehicles.

"Patria AMV<sup>XP</sup> is the top of the line when it comes to modern 8x8 AMV. Offering extra performance, protection and payload, it has superior mobility in its own class," Jokinen said.

Due to the excellent quality and performance of Patria's AMV<sup>XP</sup>, it was recently selected for one year of field-testing in Japan.

"We are very excited about the potential developments and opportunities for Patria in Japan," Jokinen said.

Because of this, Patria sees a lot of opportunities to work hand in hand with Japanese customers and industry in developing new technologies for its vehicles.



Petri Jokinen, Senior Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Patria Land Business Unit

Patria is currently looking into industry trends to be used for the further development of their AMV<sup>XP</sup>.

"We can see that the market is focusing on producing more agile units that can operate both independently and as a single unit," explained Jokinen.

"We are actively applying these new technologies on our vehicles for protection, battlefield connectivity and computer aided or autonomous operations," he added.

In terms of its future growth, Patria seeks to maintain its position as the leading manufacturer of protected mobility on Patria AMV<sup>XP</sup>.

"We will continue our company's vision to be the number one partner for critical operations in defence markets all around the world," Jokinen concluded. ♦ [www.patria.fi](http://www.patria.fi)

### At Metsä Fibre, we always aim to do better.

Exceeding expectations.




Metsä Fibre is a leading producer of pulp and sawn timber, and we deliver these high-quality products to customers around the world. [www.metsafibre.com](http://www.metsafibre.com)



## Patria AMV<sup>XP</sup>

XTRA PAYLOAD · PERFORMANCE · PROTECTION

[www.patria.fi](http://www.patria.fi)



# FINLAND

www.synergymediaspecialists.com

## Oulu: The capital of northern Scandinavia enjoys strong ties with Japan

Through the years, the Nordic city of Oulu and Japan have established a good relationship with each other based on shared values.

Oulu and Sendai in Japan became official sister cities in 2005 and have since been fostering closer cooperation.

"We are similar in the way we work, we take time to build connections and we appreciate long-term relationships," said Takako Uchida, BusinessOulu's coordinator for international affairs with Japan.

Some events held in Oulu, such as the Air Guitar World Championship, which will mark its 25th year in 2020, Polar Bear Pitching, and Race

of Drones Oulu, have gained popularity with the Japanese community.

Oulu gained global recognition as Nokia's research and development center. Today it thrives as a dynamic high-tech hub with a diversified information and communication ecosystem based on a deep knowhow in mobile network technology complemented by start-ups and innovators providing finance, health, gaming, automotive and other industry solutions.

"We are like Silicon Valley but faster, cheaper and more execution oriented," said Juha Ala-Mursula, executive director of BusinessOulu.

Oulu's success lies in the close cooperation and synergy between the city's industry, academia and local municipality that work together toward common goals.

"About 3 billion people around the world use products that were manufactured in Oulu or through the technologies provided by the innovative companies in Oulu," Ala-Mursula said.

Aside from technological innovations, Oulu is opening its doors and sharing its knowledge, particularly with the Japanese community.

Through the efforts of the University of Oulu and Oulu University of Applied Science, universities and companies in Japan and Europe are able to work together closely on their research programs.

"Education has always been important for us, and in recent years we have focused on educa-



OuluHealth (innovative and proficient integrated health ecosystem in Oulu) organized Health Hack at the University of Oulu, focusing on digital transformation in health care.

tional visits. About 10 to 20 students from Japan come to Oulu every year to learn our ways," Ala-Mursula said.

Along with more technological advancements in its future, Oulu also sees a more solid relationship with Japan.

"We hope to continue strengthening our ties with our friends from Japan," Uchida said. "There are many business opportunities for them to explore, especially in the field of wireless connectivity." ♦

www.businessoulu.com  
www.airguitarworldchampionships.com  
www.polarbearpitching.com  
https://rod oulu.com



Photographer Juuso Haarala. Japanese air guitarist "Seven Seas" got the world title in 2014 and 2018 in the Air Guitar World Championship in addition to the world winner "Dainoji" from Japan in 2006 and 2007.

## Fortaco Group: Shaping industry for a safer and better tomorrow

Fortaco Group, the leading strategic partner to the heavy off-highway equipment and marine industries, is giving new meaning to excellence.

Benchmarked to the automotive industry and its quality standards, Fortaco Group has become a trusted tier 0.5 partner offering technology, vehicle cabins, steel fabrications and vehicle assemblies to industry leaders such as Komatsu Group, Hitachi Construction Machinery, Cargotec and Sandvik.

"Close to 20 percent of Fortaco Group's turnover comes from our business with Japanese customers," said Lars Hellberg, president and CEO of the company.

Hellberg has practiced the value of paying close

attention to details and giving the best service to clients through his many years of working with the Japanese automotive industry.

"Japanese companies have enormous engagement with their people. I try to build these values into Fortaco Group's cultural DNA."

What makes Fortaco Group different from other companies is that it oversees the entire process, from conceptualization up to the manufacturing of its products.

"It is important for us to be part of the conceptual phase so we can support the design and development of their products," said Hellberg.

The company has adapted Toyota Motor Corp.'s people approach and production system.

"We are dedicated to work the Toyota way — by continuously making improvements on our products and respecting the people in our field," shared Hellberg.

Fortaco Group also places importance on using technological advancements to give the best possible products and services to its customers.

"Beyond manufacturing, we work with our customers on the technological aspect to improve their products — for example, we help decrease weight, measure data, work on digitalization, develop algorithms and use these to improve the overall design of their machines," Hellberg explained.

Aside from focusing on its clients and its products, Fortaco Group aims to further strengthen its ties with Japan.



Fortaco Group, the leading strategic partner to heavy off-highway equipment and marine industries, oversees the entire process, from conceptualization up to the manufacturing of its products.

"We really enjoy working with our Japanese customers. Once you gain their trust and respect, they become your long-term strategic partners focused on ensuring continuous improvement," he said.

"By giving our clients respect, simplicity and fast service, we would be able to help them in finding the right solutions for their businesses," Hellberg concluded. ♦

www.fortacogroup.com



Lars Hellberg, President and CEO of Fortaco Group

## Nordic BioTech Group offers groundbreaking antimicrobial protection globally

NordShield, the revolutionary antimicrobial innovation developed by the Nordic BioTech Group Ltd. received the Sustainable Healthcare Innovation award earlier this year by the Nordic Center for Sustainable Healthcare. Nordic BioTech Group Ltd., established in Helsinki, Finland in 2016, is the first Finnish company to receive the prestigious award.

"NordShield revolutionizes the way antimicrobials work by offering an outperforming natural alternative for hazardous antimicrobial substances," explained the company's CEO Kristoffer Ekman.

"Our technology forms a bioactive

molecular net on treated surfaces, providing safe and long-lasting antimicrobial protection, that is highly effective against mold, bacteria and viruses," he continued.

NordShield was revealed after more than 10 years of research and development by its inventor, Finnish chemist Kari Holopainen, who has over 30 years of R&D experience in the areas of chemicals for water treatment, cleaning systems, cosmetics, cutting fluids and construction.

The renewable product is of natural origin, making it nontoxic and nonharmful to the environment. It can be applied through patented water or solvent solutions, as well as through ointments and liniments, making it useful for a wide variety of industries.

"We are currently focusing our efforts on further developing applications especially targeting the medical, personal care and fiber industries," shared Ekman.

When applied to textiles and fibers, the NordShield treatment eliminates mold and mildew, ensur-

ing the product's economic lifetime and having a large impact on logistics and warehousing.

Hand-in-cage studies conducted in Bangalore, India, have also shown that treating textiles with NordShield provide high mosquito repellent efficacy.

Nordic BioTech Group partners with organizations around the globe to develop applications for NordShield. Third-party partners in Finland, Sweden, Germany, France and Japan, among others, are continuously conducting tests.

"We are currently in collaboration with a major Japanese multinational organization involved in the blood transfusion industry to develop a NordShield solution intended to reduce the risk of transfusion-transmitted infections by targeting to inactivate pathogens that may be present in donated blood units," said Ekman.

The NordShield technology has shown good antimicrobial efficacy, including enveloped viruses, specifically HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C.



Kristoffer Ekman, CEO of Nordic BioTech Group Ltd.

Nordic BioTech Group is driven by a world-class scientific team that combines entrepreneurship with experience from global leaders like David Jay Weber, professor of medicine, paediatrics and epidemiology, and associate chief medical officer of UNC Health Care.

"Apart from NordShield being a highly commercially viable product with a range of applications, its ability to do a tremendous amount of good is what motivates us to push it forward," concluded Ekman. ♦

www.nordshield.com



## Handmade chocolate with Nordic berries and wild Arctic flavors acclaimed in Asia

Starting its business in 2018 producing chocolate tablets, Taiga Chocolate Oy evolved into a company that focuses on the production of a line of uniquely flavored dark chocolates, such as lingonberry, bilberry and sea buckthorn to cater to the growing demand of international consumers.

"Our vision is to allow the foreign market to enjoy Taiga Chocolates and take a piece of Finnish happiness with them," said Mirja Palola, CEO of Taiga Chocolate Oy.

Due to its success, the company eventually received its first award at the Natural & Organic Awards Asia 2018 in Hong Kong for its line of dried fish dark chocolates.

"We were delighted to see Taiga's Dark Chocolate with Smelt Fish win first prize for Outstanding Natural/Organic Product," said Palola.

This year, the company received its second award in time for its first anniversary, as it bagged the top



Taiga Chocolate's Dark Chocolate with Smelt Fish

spot in the confectionery category of the Speciality & Fine Food Asia

2019 trade fair held in Singapore.

Taiga Chocolates are currently available in Finland and Hong Kong. Taiga Chocolates has also been available in Singapore since late September via RedMart. The company also plans to export its

products to Japan in the near future.

"We are excited to introduce the wild and tasty combinations of Arctic flavours to Japan as we welcome partnerships with various Japanese distributors," concluded Palola. ♦

www.taigachocolate.com



Kenichi Tokunaga, Managing Director and Shinichiro Yamaji, President of DENSO Manufacturing Czech s.r.o.

In our report on the Czech Republic published on Oct. 25, 2019, Kenichi Tokunaga, Managing Director of DENSO Manufacturing Czech s.r.o. was wrongly identified as Atsushi Murase. SMS regrets the captioning error.