

# National Day of Switzerland

PUBLICITY

## From traditional craftsmanship to leading innovation

**By Roger Dubach**  
Ambassador of Switzerland to Japan

It is a pleasure and an honor to address you on the occasion of the Swiss National Day and celebrate the remarkable success of our Swiss Pavilion at the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo, which has already welcomed over 630,000 visitors. Her Imperial Highness Crown Princess Akishino, our Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis and the president of the Upper House of the Swiss Parliament, Maja Riniker, are among the distinguished guests who have visited the pavilion so far.

It is truly inspiring to see the world gather in Osaka in a spirit of dialogue, exchange and shared purpose.

From tradition to innovation, from papercuts to robotics — *from Heidi to high-tech* — our pavilion invites visitors to explore the spirit and values of Switzerland. Since its founding in 1291, our alpine nation has evolved into a global hub of creativity at the heart of Europe. Today, Switzerland consistently ranks as the most innovative and competitive economy in the world, as recognized by IMD Business School and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Our deep commitment to quality and ingenuity is something we undoubtedly share with Japan. Rooted in business and trade — the first official Swiss mission to Japan was led by a group of watch merchants — our friendship spans more than 160 years. It is grounded in shared values: democracy, peace and a steadfast commitment to a rules-based international order in an increasingly complex world. Switzerland is now the seventh largest foreign direct investor in Japan, while Japan is Switzerland's top investor from Asia. The recent decision of the large Japanese company NEC to relocate its global headquarters for digital government and digital finance to Zurich is yet another testament to the trust and engagement that define our bilateral relationship.

Switzerland and Japan also share a passion for craftsmanship deeply rooted in regional identities. I have experienced, during this first year of my mission as ambassador, a wonderful diversity of landscapes, lively culinary traditions and exceptional local craftsmanship, both in small towns and larger cities from Kyushu to Hokkaido. I keep in mind the beautiful simplicity of the woodwork in Takayama, the sophisticated Nishijin textiles in Kyoto and the centuries-old tea culture in Yame, Fukuoka Prefecture. And there is still so much more to discover: I look forward to continuing this journey, one prefecture at a time.

Switzerland, too, is home to time-honored traditions of craftsmanship, including centuries-old watchmaking in the Jura Mountains and refined textile production in the east

of the country.

From artisanal techniques perfected over generations to world-leading capabilities in advanced manufacturing, automation and medical technologies, the shared spirit of transforming traditional know-how into cutting-edge innovation offers a strong foundation for strengthening our bilateral ties. The Swiss government recently adopted a new Asia G20 strategy to guide our engagement over the



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**Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis with the Swiss Pavilion team in front of the pavilion at the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo**



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**Designers Noelani Rutz and Anthony Guex and curator David Glaetli during their participation in the "Design with Japan" program in Tajimi, Gifu Prefecture**

next four years — working together to maintain a functional international order, deepening innovation and economic cooperation, and strengthening ties at the regional level.

What lies ahead? In just a few weeks, the final exhibition of our pavilion in Osaka will open with the theme of "Planet," focusing on solutions for sustainability and decarbonization. In autumn, Switzerland will also partici-



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**Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis, fifth from left, with Japanese officials during the Swiss National Day celebration at the 2025 Osaka-Kansai Expo**

Congratulations  
to the People  
of  
Switzerland  
on the Occasion  
of  
Their National Day

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pate in the WIRED Futures Conference in Tokyo exploring quantum and AI, present the outcomes of our "Design with Japan" program together with ceramics producers from the Tajimi region in Gifu Prefecture, and showcase our DeepTech ecosystem at major trade shows such as BioJapan and Mass-Trans Innovation Japan 2025.

I hope to see you there!

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