

Ambassador's Greeting at the Japanese Tea Ceremony Event
18 May 2019
Hutt Minoh Friendship House

Hutt City Mayor, H.W. Ray Wallace
Hutt City Councillor Michael Lulich
Hutt City Councillor Campbell Barry
Omote-Senke Sado Club President, Ms Masae Ito,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

Thank you for coming here today to the Hutt Minoh Friendship House, for a Japanese Tea Ceremony experience with the Omote-Senke Sado Club. The Embassy of Japan is grateful to be able to collaborate with this club, to introduce traditional Japanese culture to the people of New Zealand. Japanese culture in New Zealand is very popular, and I attribute this to the friendly relationship that both of our countries share.

The green tea used in a tea ceremony is called "matcha" in Japanese, and has been used as a drink for close to a thousand years. It has grown in popularity in the rest of the world recently, after becoming known for its many beneficial health properties. Not only the tea itself, but the act of participating in a tea ceremony is also a calming activity, often described as similar to meditation or Zen. I invite you to experience and appreciate this Japanese style of mindfulness.

I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to the people of the Hutt Minoh Friendship House for accommodating this event, and also for their valuable efforts in bringing Japanese culture to New Zealand. Their hard work has truly had a positive influence on the Sister City relationship between Minoh City and Hutt city. I would also like to sincerely thank Mayor Ray Wallace, who has always been very supportive of Japan and the Japanese culture. Thank you.