

Rural Tourism Press Trip Feedback



Midsummer press tip

18 - 24 JUN 2019 (5 Night)

List of Participants

	Dep	Passport Name	Mr/Ms	Company
1	NRT	TSUDA NAO	Mr	Tozainanbokushokan Co., Ltd.
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3	NRT	YOSHINO MAMI	Ms	TAKARAJIMASHA,inc
4	NRT	NAKAJIMA CHIEMI	Ms	TAKARAJIMASHA,inc
5	NRT	KAWAHARA KANAKO	Ms	FRAYDAY Ltd
6	-	ASAKO ARATANI	Ms	kukkameri
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8	NRT	SASAKI KOMEI	Mr	JAPAN DRONE TOURISM
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10	NRT	SHIONO TETSUYA	Mr	Shiong
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ESTONIA

(1) What things/attractions etc. were considered as positive during the FAM visit? (What was seen potential/successful)

- Bog hike and picnic. That was really amazing! I have been to Finnish forest several times but it was not the same at all. Being surrounded by bog scenery was very special like a dream. Picnic lunch was also fantastic! Heavenly! To be honest I have not realized Estonian people have sense of modern design. Now I really get into Estonia and visit other places as well.
- Tolkuse bog walk, Hüpasaare sun rise concert, mid-summer festival, visiting the film director Rao Heidmets, etc. the choices of the programs and the balance of them were really good. I enjoyed all of them. Especially, sun rise concert was special experience to listen the beautiful choir and musical performance at the misty bog in early morning.
- LOTTEMAA LAND was very interesting. I feel that I was able to get a glimpse of the wonderful educational ideas that Estonian children can learn while playing. At the summer concert, I could see the most beautiful sunrise of my life. It was a wonderful, mysterious mystery to me.
- Tolkuse's Bog WALK was a very impressive experience. The combination of sandy hills and wetlands is not found in Japan. The experience of walking on a wooden path while picking blueberries is what the Japanese are most looking for. The sunrise concert of Hüpasaare seemed to be in a dream. Beautiful clear singing voices, cold temperatures, views of misty wetlands. Spectators gather around the stage. Together they form a unique view of the world. At the Kurgja Farm Museum, I felt the world of the moment when the Estonian people were born. I felt that there was something in common with the agricultural history of Japan's Meiji era, such as a hydraulically driven lumber machine. The summer solstice was interesting to introduce the process of the festival. People who enjoy the mowing landscape, games and barbecues that are written on the paintings. I thought how to enjoy summer solstice variously.

(2) What was negative/needs to be improved?

- Too special. I think ordering food catering in National park and going to sunrise concert you arranged for us was too special. General tourist can't do the same things by themselves because of lack of information and public transport. If you have that kind of tour for tourist, it must be much easier for anybody to join!
- At the sun rise concert, as it was wet land, it was better to prepare or announce to bring the plastic sheet for Japanese people as we are not so used to sit and lie down at those places.
- I would like to more know about traditional Estonian hand crafts if they have some difference to Latvia's one. I found some mitten, socks and embroidery in the shop of Luhtre Tourism Farm.
- I wanted a document to understand the process of summer solstice.

(3) How should the presented tourism provision/attractions/companies to be improved?

- I thought that the sunrise concert needs to solve cold problems and toilet problems.
- There should be more time in each attractions/ provisions. The theme of each attractions was different, so it is difficult to put together the Estonian part. And some attractions (Lotteema, Fillimitalu, Kulgla Farm Museum) are not enough interesting to introduce to Japanese tourists.
- I think I need more experiences in Estonia in order to suggest you something. However I know you already have very unique beautiful nature, tasty food and very original culture like the famous animation director, Rao Heidmets and Estonian National Museum. I think we Japanese people just need an opportunity or big impression on Estonia. If they have strong impression on Estonia, more and more people are eager to visit Estonia!

(4) Was something (some offer) missing from the visit that would potentially interest Japanese tourists in our countries?

- I thought it would be nice to have a place where you can buy attractive local souvenirs such as whipped honey, herbal teas and net baskets that Japanese people like.
- Japanese tourists like craft things, it would be nice if we could visit the craft market or the atelier of Estonian folk arts.
- I understand well that the theme is "Rural tourism". But that is a shame that we could not take our time for Tallinn. Because Tallinn is the entrance to rural area for general tourists, it is important. Many tourists are not able to reach to wonderful secret place at a stretch. They need a base for reach to rural.
- If you have other kinds of traditional dance, I would like to watch more and Japanese tourists would like them as well
- We don't know much about Estonian history, so learning about Estonian history along with the nature experiences will be better. Folk music will be also interesting to listen and learn.
- Estonia is said to be close to Finland as cultural area, but I wanted to know its own characteristic as a country. (I wanted to know more historical background, even just about recent 100 years)

(5) Were the products presented/packaged so that they can be bought, what about the prize-quality ratio?

• During this press trip, I could not find opportunities enough to see and buy Estonian products, but through the experience of food catering in the national park I realized Estonian people have a sense of design! So I must check your products next time. I also have heard about the good quality of Estonian food. I think there must be good food products at shops as well.

(6) What could be USP (unique selling point) for our area in Japanese markets?

• The experience of nostalgic and natural life style in rural area

• Summer solstice, rising sun live, ethnic dance

• We can go Estonia from Helsinki by Ferry, it's quite big advantage. There is many attractive places not only Tallinn in Estonia. Estonia is similar to Finland, but the tourist will be able to find unique attractive things there. For example, beautiful white beach, bog near the sea. And sophisticated service. It's important the introducing those area for that you take the tourists into there.

• Nature is beautiful and there are many things that can't be found in the city.

Above all, Bog walk in the National Park was a amazing experience!

I think Estonia's beautiful nature is a big selling point.

• I would like to say Filmitalu is the best place for teachers and students. This institution is very unique for Japanese people so that they will like it.

(7) Any other observations?

• How to get the detail - We just need to know how to get information in English about Estonia.

• I think it is interesting to go to the fruit garden.

• During the celebrating Midsummer day in Farm Museum, the guide didn't interpret,so we couldn't understand the meaning of each activity . it was very important part so more detailed information was needed. (Compared to Latvian guide, the explanation about cerebation of summer solstice was too simple)

Latvia

(1) What things/attractions etc. were considered as positive during the FAM visit? (What was seen potential/successful)

- The celebration of summer solstice was a very fantastic and rare experience. Detailed explanation about Latvian Shinto was very interesting.
- By visiting Latvia on mid-summer season, I saw the special time flows from the morning (like decoration of house entrances). Visiting of Loktene Shrine of Dievturi was very interesting experience as comparing with Japanese culture. Also I learned a lot at local mid-summer festival which is held under big oak trees by spending time together with local people with dance, sing, and surrounding the fire. There were also some similarities with Japanese at perspective on nature.
- Celebration of Summer Solstice - This is the most interesting thing for me among this press trip. Celebrating with local people, dance with them and watching each moment they celebrate midsummer were very impressive. Just one thing I regret is I could not see all of the ritual from beginning to the end. Odziena Manor - The manor house and castle ruins are very impressive and photogenic too. Special dinner cooked by two young chefs on the first day was absolutely amazing. However the equipment was not enough to stay for tourist. In my room, there was no hair drier and no glass to drink water. The room and the interior were so fantastic and romantic! Such a shame the equipment is not enough. On top of that, the location is a bit far from central of town. So everything must look gorgeous otherwise nobody wants to come and can't recommend others. Vecsiljani farm and Janavas biological farm, Skriveri Homemade ice-cream - These three were very nice! Their passion to make their products and keep them good quality for a long time impressed me. Their success in a sense of business is interesting too. On top of that, I was happy to buy their products. For other tourists it also must be good points.

(2) What was negative/needs to be improved?

- Nothing special - The guide, Ugis knows very well about Latvian history and culture and also Japanese ones. That was really amazing. He has much more knowledge and read very classic books than Japanese people do. Thanks to him, I really get to know about Latvia and even about Japan. His comparison between two countries helps us understand them. So I can't find negative thing during this trip.
- Basically Ugis's guide was very nice, but as his specialty is about Latvian Shinto and his explanation was very detailed, people think as if the Latvian Shinto is very common and major religion in Latvia. However actually the Christianity takes high percentage in Latvia, it would be better to explain also about the other religion and basic information. Personally, I was interested in mid-summer festival and Latvian nature worship, so it was good that we could hear a lot about it and visit shine and the festival.

(3) How should the presented tourism provision/attractions/companies to be improved?

- All spot was very nice, but the access was not friendly to foreign tourist (especially Japanese). It is good if access by public transport is clearly indicated
- Latvia felt that there was a big part in common with Japan. Although it seems like a country far from Japanese people, I felt that it would be good to appeal that it is a country with a culture very close to Shinto, agriculture, festivals and so on.
- How to get the information - I have heard from Ugis it is possible even for general tourist to join “Celebration of Summer Solstice” but I wonder how we can get the information like where and when it is held, how to join. If we can see the info on the web, it must be helpful. I think there are quite a lot of “Celebration of Summer Solstice” in Latvia. Tourist Board should show their recommendation out of them.

(4) Was something (some offer) missing from the visit that would potentially interest Japanese tourists in our countries?

- Daina (folk music) is one of the important and valuable Latvian inherited culture, it would be nice to have a chance to hear the songs more and visit the national museum where the millions of daina are preserved.
- As for Japanese tourists, they would like to try on Latvian traditional clothes and take some pictures. If there is a chance to do it, they would be satisfied with the experience.
- I wanted to see the Vecsiljāņi farm barn.
The history of Latvia is very complicated for Japanese people, so I felt that it would be nice to have a simple document to understand the history.
- I understand well that the theme is "Rural tourism". But that is a shame that we could not take our time for Riga. Because Riga is the entrance to rural area for general tourists, it is important. Many tourists are not able to reach to wonderful secret place at a stretch. They need a base for reach to rural.

(5) Were the products presented/packaged so that they can be bought, what about the prize-quality ratio?

- I think there are many Japanese who want to participate in the summer solstice.
I felt that the means of transportation and the method of participation were the issues. Because it is not good if it becomes tourism.
- It was very good because I could purchase after actually experiencing the product. It was very nice to buy souvenirs after tasting.
- Cheese at Vecsiljani farm and natural cosmetics at Janavas biological farm were fantastic!

(6) What could be USP (unique selling point) for our area in Japanese markets?

- Watching of storks! and know more about them as it has also image of happiness and very rare in Japan. I couldn't join the visiting of botanical garden and don't know what was held at the program, but it would be interesting experience. Workshop of puzuris and handcraft would be also nice. Puzuris is becoming popular in Japan recently.
- Recently, organic is very popular in Japan. Japanese people, especially female tourists, love organic food, cosmetics and so on. If there is the tour of organic products, they will be liked it.
- Latvian Shinto was very interesting. This is because we Japanese people also worship nature, have shrines, and have many similar ideas and rituals to pray to God. Because there is such a soil, Japanese people will be very interested in Latvia.
- It seems like plants and use of it are ordinary thing for Latvian who loves the nature, I would like to know more detail about how they use herbs (as drinks, as medicine, etc.) in daily lives.
- The local and sacred cerebation of summer solstice is very valuable experience.

(7) Any other observations?

- If there is bee farm, it might be interesting to visit.
- Ugis gave us the opportunity to see which our God protect us. His description about meaning of marks on the woven cloth attracts us very much. I would like to know more about it and Japanese people must be interested in their own God who protects them.

Finland

(1) What things/attractions etc. were considered as positive during the FAM visit? (What was seen potential/successful)

- The program of experience of the traditional midsummer, kokko, making the flower crown, and picking up the wild flowers, were excellent! I'm sure that Japanese tourist is interested in the traditional custom for midsummer magic. The tour about midsummer have potential to attract them.
- Villa Långstrand was glad to experience the traditional smoked sauna. After swimming in the sauna, I swam for the first time in the Baltic Sea. It was very cold, but I felt that everyone was in one. The host family was very kind and experienced traditional food. The wooden building by a famous architect is also interesting. I could see a bedrock not seen in Japan.
At the Ms Riitta Laine family, I was surprised to see the mayor of Lohoya. I could see the lake well from the wide window, and I felt a way of living in harmony with nature.
Kettukallio Experience farm felt so wild. I was surprised at the fur of the wolf. I felt the farmer's life lasting over 100 years. Barbecue dishes were also delicious, especially the banana dessert. It is a pleasure for Japanese to be able to stay in an old farmhouse building. The bonfire that floats on the lake is impressive.
The museum at Mustion Linna was great with Trompe-l'œil. It is interesting that there is such a French-style Western-style building in Finland. I felt a deep connection with Sweden. I felt that it was like Finland to be wooden for health.
- Making flower crowns and swimming putting that on our head - I really enjoyed this. It must attract a lot of Japanese women! Like a dream!
Cooking experience at Ms Riita Laine's home - Most people especially women are into Finnish food. I think some of them want to take cooking class in Finland but don't know where we can do it. So if Riita can teach them how to make blueberry pies/korvapuusti/karjalanpiirakka and so on, they would love to participate in that.

(2) What was negative/needs to be improved?

- Access/Public Transport - Langstrand and Kettukallio are very interesting but just one thing I worried about it is how to get there. That's the big problem. I have been to Tammisaari and Hanko before and I basically don't face difficulty of communication in English but it seems difficult for tourists to visit Langstrand and Kettukallio by themselves. However if the owner can pick them up at the nearest station or he/she books the taxi instead of tourists, it could be easier to reach the place and make them relieved.
- We didn't get any idea about local town itself (like Lohja, Tammisaari) . It would be nice if we had time for town walk

(3) How should the presented tourism provision/attractions/companies to be improved?

- More instructions/descriptions in English - When I came to Finland for the first time in 2009, I was surprised and stuck to see there was less or sometimes no instructions at all in English at bus stops and train stations even though Finns are much better at speaking English than Japanese people. I think the situation is getting better compared to 10 years ago, but if more cafes or restaurants have English menus it would be easier. I know because of that kind of difficulty, our experience would become more interesting, precious and unforgettable though.
- When thinking about Japanese tourists, I thought it would be necessary to maintain sandals after entering a sauna and a place to get dressed. I felt it was a matter of thinking whether to separate men and women or not. It is more fun together.
- There were a lot of food & eating programs. If you include more cultural/historical programs and craft workshop/factory tour would be more interesting for various people.
- All spots were very nice, but the access was not friendly to foreign tourists (especially Japanese). It is good if access by public transport is clearly indicated.

(4) Was something (some offer) missing from the visit that would potentially interest Japanese tourists in our countries?

- For introducing new perspectives, visiting exhibitions or studios of young or unknown designers/architects for Japanese. (Other than major brands/architects like Alvar Aalto, Artek, Iittala, Arabia, Marimekko).
- I wanted to see Hanko's spa at the southernmost tip of Finland.
- Nothing special - Japanese people have good impressions on Finland and most of them would like to visit Finland someday but some of them haven't been there yet. I think the reason is that they just don't know deeply about Finland and the differences between other northern European countries. I know once they visit Finland, most of them almost fall in love. So the strong trigger is just needed such as northern lights, beautiful sunset in scenery of archipelago and so on.
- This is because, almost all Japanese tourists in Finland visit only Helsinki and the information about local towns in rural areas is needed more.

(5) Were the products presented/packaged so that they can be bought, what about the price-quality ratio?

- During this press trip, I could not find an opportunity to buy something in Finland, but I always love good quality of Finland products such as well-designed tableware/clothes, traditional items, very natural, organic food/cosmetics. So as tourists, I think there are plenty of good products in Finland.

(6) What could be USP (unique selling point) for our area in Japanese markets?

- As it seemed like having boats are not special thing in Finland and boat trip is quite popular in Southern Finland, boat trip (for few days), canoeing, fishing, and other water activities would be interesting for Japanese people.
- Although I knew only urban areas such as Helsinki and Tampere, this trip was perfect for the image of Lake and Forest Finland. I think it's a trip that today's Japanese people are looking for, such as saunas and barbecues with local people.
- It's near Helsinki, we can go your area by short trip. Tammisaari is beautiful and unique town of Swedish language area. Introducing the Swedish language area, you can show the variety of Finland. Villa **långstrand** is quite nice place, we can experience the style of Finnish countryside!
- Sightseeing in local town (other than Helsinki) Feeling the nature and enjoying the experience of lifestyle in Finnish rural area.

(7) Any other observations?

- How to get the detail of each place/event - Whenever I find something interesting in Finland even at supermarkets and ask Finnish friends about it, I would find out it much more interesting than I expected. We Japanese feel there are some similarity between Finland and Japan, but I sometimes find big differences. I would love to introduce that kind of aspect of Finland to Japanese people.
- I found that there are more things in the Finnish countryside than cities.
- Plastex factory tour - This watering pot is popular in Japan. I think there are people who are interested.
- Japanese tourists like Finnish design and craft products. It would be better if we could visit that kind of shops, designer's atelier or workshop.