

## 14<sup>th</sup> Thai Festival in Osaka

Over 100,000 local Japanese residents, Thai people in Japan and foreign tourists attended the 14<sup>th</sup> Thai Festival at Taiyo no Hiroba, Osaka Castle, held during 21-22 May 2016.

The Royal Thai Consulate-General in Osaka has organized Thai Festival since 2002 to strengthen Thailand-Japan bilateral relations, especially at people-to-people level. It also aimed to promote Thailand in Japan, especially in Kansai, in every aspect through Thai food, beverages, products, culture, sport and music. The Thai Festival, which has become an annual event, has also helped strengthened the Thai Community in Kansai.

This year's Thai Festival featured more variety of activities including exhibition booth on the occasion of H.M. Queen Sirikit's 84<sup>th</sup> Birthday Anniversary, fruits carving demonstration, Thai desserts cooking demonstration, Maui Thai demonstration, Sepaktakraw demonstration by the Thai women national team from the Takraw Association of Thailand, activities to promote Thai trade and investment in Thailand, Thai tourism promotion, and 80 booths selling Thai food, beverages, products and services.

Activities on the main stage were popular among the Thai Festival attendees including Khon (Thai classical mask play) by students of Bangkok Christian College, Thailand, Thai contemporary cultural performances by Southern Breeze Thailand from Chiang Mai, contemporary Thai music by Korphai Band, live concerts from famous Thai artists including Banyen Rakkaern and singers from RS/RSiam and lucky prizes drawing with 4 return air tickets of Thai Airways to Thailand and 4 return air tickets of ThaiAirAsiaX to Thailand as the main prizes.

This year's Festival achieved its main objective in strengthening Thailand-Japan bilateral relations especially at people-to-people level. Many of the Festival attendees commended the Royal Thai Consulate-General on the organization of the event and expressed their appreciations on a variety of activities offered at the Thai Festival. The Thai Festival in Osaka is the biggest event organized by a foreign country to promote cultural exchange with Japan in Kansai region. It raises the pride of the Thai community in Kansai region. Apart from the support of the Thai government agencies, this year's Festival enjoyed the generous support from the Osaka Prefectural Government, the Osaka City Government, as well as Thai private sectors namely Thai Beverage Public Company Limited and ThaiAirAsiaX.

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