

The impressive Japan Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai with a façade that expresses the links between Japan and the Middle East, and a water feature that has a cooling effect

Photo: Expo 2020 Dubai JAPAN PAVILION

# Where ideas meet

## Japan Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai

The Japan Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai, held from October 2021 to March 2022, presents a diverse range of Japanese contents by using cutting-edge technologies under the theme of “Where ideas meet.”

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EXPO 2020 Dubai is being held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from October 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. Various organizations and a total of 192 countries are participating in Expo 2020 Dubai, which is being held under the theme of “Connecting Minds, Creating the Future.”

Among the distinctive pavilions at the Expo venue is the Japan Pavilion, which is exhibiting under the main theme of “Where ideas meet.” The building’s white façade with its three-dimensional latticework is striking. Expressing the links between Japan and the Middle East, the motifs for the façade are the arabesque

patterns of the Middle East, the *asanoha* (hemp leaf) patterns of Japan, and geometric Japanese origami. The water feature installed in front of the building reflects the façade and, by making use of the heat of vaporization, cools the breezes that pass through the building.

According to the website of the Japan Pavilion, its vision is as follows: “Since ancient times, encounters with external influences have played a key role in the development of Japanese culture and learning, as ideas from the outside have been embraced and reinterpreted to create something new and uniquely Japanese. Moving towards the future,



Exchanges between personalized avatars created based on what visitors did at the Pavilion (Scene 5)

Photo: Expo 2020 Dubai JAPAN PAVILION

Japan will continue to be a place where ideas from around the world meet. And by bringing these ideas together to spark new innovation, Japan will work to create a better tomorrow.”

The exhibition is divided into six “scenes.” Scenes 1 and 2 use cutting-edge technology to introduce the nature, culture, and history of Japan through impressive images and sounds. Scene 3 uses miniatures incorporating *mitate*, a time-honored Japanese method in which one thing is represented via another, to represent 128 examples of solutions that have emerged out of the meeting of ideas in modern Japan. Scenes 4 and 5 in the second half of the exhibition present the global issues that Japan cannot solve alone, encouraging action and telling visitors that bringing together ideas from people with different backgrounds is linked to resolving the issues. As the first step of taking action, it is possible to post



One example of a miniature using *mitate* that express some of Japan’s solutions based on the meeting of ideas: “Cutting-Edge Beanbags” (Scene 3)

Photo: Expo 2020 Dubai JAPAN PAVILION

# Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan

**Period** April 13 to October 13, 2025  
**Venue** Yumeshima Island, on the waterfront of Osaka City  
**Theme** Designing Future Society for Our Lives  
**Concept** People's Living Lab

- The Expo will endeavor to give a realistic picture of a future society not just through thought but also through action. This endeavor will begin before the Expo, by inviting diverse participants to come together with various initiatives in their respective positions and tackle challenges whose solution will help achieve the SDGs at or outside the Expo venue.
- Positioning the Expo venue as a laboratory where new technologies and systems will be verified, the Expo will raise it as a platform that will trigger the creation of innovations by diverse players and apply those innovations to real society.

**URL** <https://www.expo2025.or.jp/en/>



Credit: Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition



The first floor of the Japan Pavilion conveys the appeal of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai and the Kansai region. The JUNKAN Platform for posting messages and global issues is installed here (Scene 6)

Photo: Expo 2020 Dubai JAPAN PAVILION



Nanchu Soran (dance) performance by students at the Japanese School in Dubai at the official ceremony on Japan Day

Photo: Expo 2020 Dubai JAPAN PAVILION

issues and ideas for solutions on the JUNKAN online platform (described below) in Scene 6. The exhibition also features a display that communicates the outline and attractions of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai planned for 2025.

The exhibition space is filled with cool, ultrafine mist. Visitors can enjoy an immersive experience in a space that combines mist with vivid images.

As a new form of challenge to impart the message that the actions of individuals are important, the Japan Pavilion lends a smartphone to every visitor. The device collects data to track what visitors have shown interest in at the pavilion, then creates a personalized avatar based on their interests. Through exchanges with other avatars, the climax of the experience unfolds differently for each visitor.

Visitors can also enjoy sushi, ramen, miso soup and other traditional Japanese foods at the Japan Pavilion Restaurant. The menu has been specially created for the Japan Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai. All ingredients are halal, so Muslim visitors can also enjoy the restaurant at their leisure.

## JAPAN DAY

During the Expo, each country organizes a national day to celebrate its participation. Japan Day was held on December 11, 2021. Representatives from the UAE and Japan gave speeches at the official ceremony attended by delegates from Japan and the UAE. Various locations at the Expo venue hosted events introducing Japanese culture including a Japanese *taiko* drum performance, a demonstration of the Japanese martial art of



Participants parading on Japan Day with a banner promoting Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai

Photo: Expo 2020 Dubai JAPAN PAVILION

*aikido*, and a dance performance by students at the Japanese school in Dubai. Japan Pavilion attendants and other crew members paraded through the Expo venue with PR banners for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, and informed visitors about the upcoming Expo.

## THE VIRTUAL JAPAN PAVILION

Due to the spread of COVID-19, the Japan Pavilion set up a special website, “Virtual Japan Pavilion,” enabling virtual visits from anywhere in the world to learn about and participate in the Japan Pavilion. The Expo 2020 Dubai Japan Pavilion Special Website (<https://expo-whereideasmeet.go.jp/en/>) presents concept movies and the variety of content that makes up the Japan Pavilion. JUNKAN—Where ideas meet—is an online platform (<https://expo-junkan.go.jp/en/>) for sharing ideas for solving various issues facing the world as messages. Messages posted on JUNKAN will be passed on to Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai. 

**Note:** This article has been created with the consent of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and on the basis of materials published by the Ministry.