



OIZUMI FOODS EXPANDS GLOBAL DINING

OIZUMI FOODS FOCUSES ON QUALITY AND SERVICE, SETTING IT APART AS IT SEEKS TO EXPORT ITS ARRAY OF CULINARY EXPERIENCES WORLDWIDE. *By Daniel de Bomford*

Dining at a restaurant should not feel routine. Each experience should be the culmination of the producers' dedication, the chefs' skill and the staff's hospitality. Every bite should be a revelation of flavor, and every sip memorable. Oizumi Foods sets its sights high; the restaurant company aims to provide culinary experiences beyond the standard fare.

President Kenji Oizumi wants guests to experience the dedication of Japanese producers not just in Japanese cuisine but also in its global restaurants. "Working directly with producers allows us to understand production processes and procure ingredients with confidence," he said. The company operates over 320 restaurants across dozens of locations, from classic Japanese staples like izakaya to global favorites like Italian, Chinese and American. In Japan, sales have consistently exceeded 100 percent year-over-year.



With Japan's shrinking population, Oizumi Foods is looking abroad for partners to continue its growth. In terms of overseas expansion, having started in 2016 in Vietnam, the company has experienced a post-COVID boom with sales consistently exceeding 100 percent year-on-year, despite a "red ocean" of competitors opening nearby. However, Oizumi said that "cultural differences make direct operation everywhere unrealistic, so strong local partners are essential," and added, "the most important thing is to find the right

partner who can operate responsibly and sustainably." The company packages its unique operations and know-how, cultivated and standardized across 50 business formats, allowing partners to benefit from this wealth of operational knowledge.

Growth isn't the company's only focus, and Oizumi said that maintaining and improving service was just as important. Oizumi sees the industry's traditionally high level of service slipping as skilled staff become harder to find, making expansion meaningless. However, the company strongly believes that the human touch creates value and a more satisfying experience. That's what differentiates Oizumi Foods; rather than relying on automation, it concentrates on maximizing performance. Ultimately, better service results in higher customer loyalty and increased profits.

The proof is in the pudding: Oizumi Foods' dinner restaurants deliver a high level of service that automation simply can't replicate. "Dinner-centered formats require high levels of service skill and cooking skill," Oizumi said. "That is the main reason we have operated directly."



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