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1 January 2019 issue

• New Food Services Formats to Address Manpower Shortage

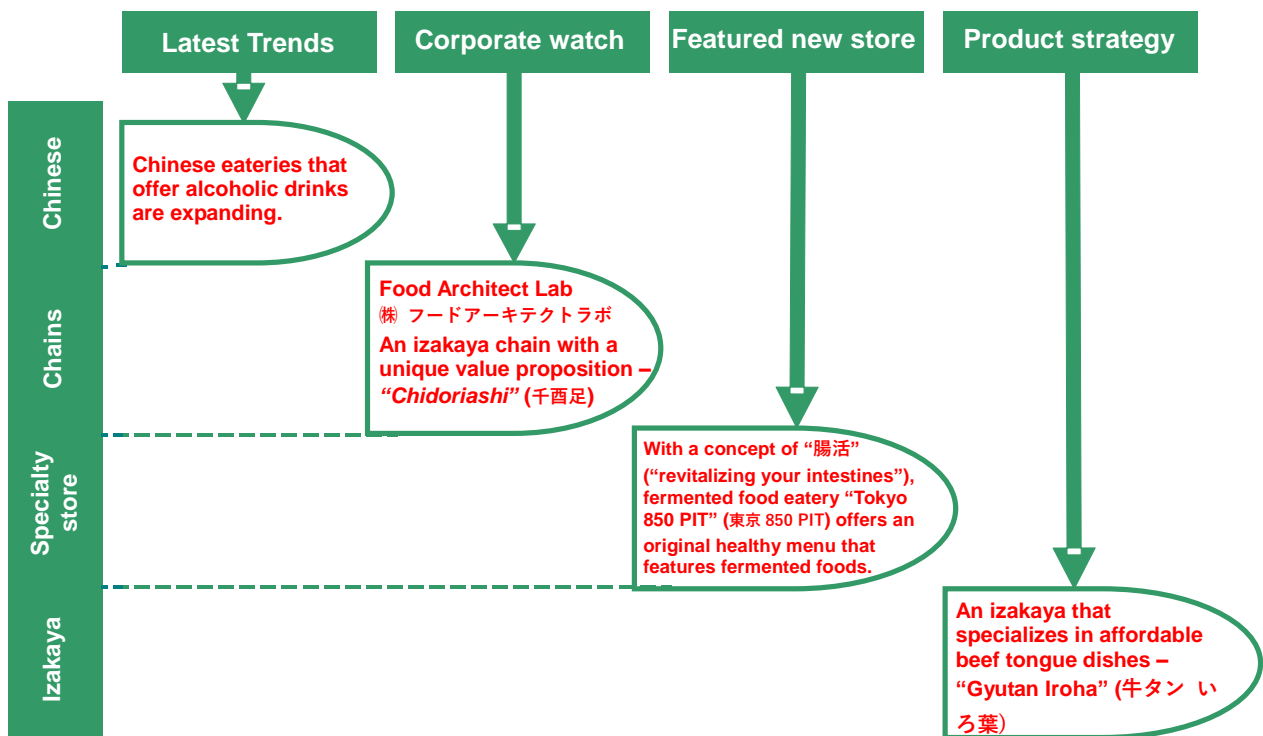
- We take a close-up look at the issue of manpower shortage. The situation is quite serious. It is not a requirement to work 5 days and 8 hours a week anymore, and age no longer matters. Wages are rising as a result of the lack of manpower supply, and it has exceeded the usual range for personnel expenses. The manpower supply is not likely to increase even with the quota for foreign worker visa relaxed. We could tide over the current situation by using older workers, but there is still a pressing need for us to develop a system that rely less on manpower, in order to sustain our businesses for the longer run.
- New mechanisms and formats such as electronic ordering panels, cashless and automated operations and service, will be increasingly adopted. Conveyor belt sushi and buffet have created new demand for eating out. New and innovative food services formats that combine human service and manpower-saving technologies will be created to address the problem of manpower shortage.



- Jotaro Fujii

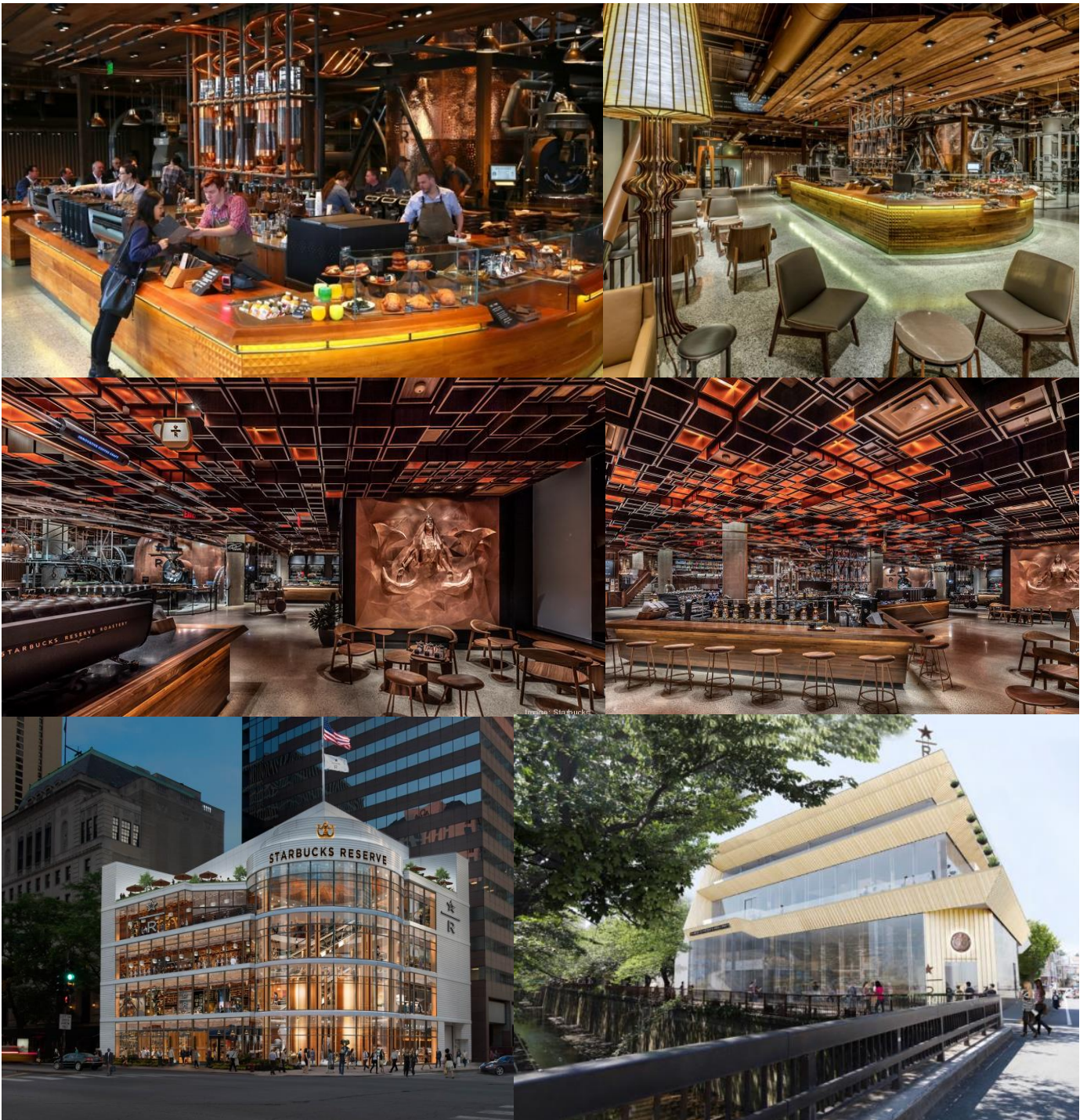
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HOT NEWS! America: The 4th Starbucks Reserve Roastery



1.HOT NEWS! America: the 4th Starbucks Reserve Roastery

On 14 December 2018, a Starbucks Reserve Roastery opened in New York, Manhattan. This is the 4th outlet, after Seattle (2014), Shanghai (2017) and Milan (2018). Customers are served special freshly cooked coffee that is roasted in the store. It occupies the ground floor of a building designed by architect Rafael Vinoly. The 3-storey building measures 23,000 square feet, and includes a cocktail bar and a bakery. The fifth outlet will be opened on 28 February 2019, next to Don Quijote in Naka-Meguro, Tokyo (bottom right photo); followed by the sixth outlet in Chicago in May 2019 (bottom left photo). Kengo Kuma is the architect for the Tokyo outlet. He is also the architect for a new national stadium that is currently under construction.



2. Latest Trends

Chinese eateries that offer alcoholic drinks are expanding

■ Renge Shokudo Toshu (レンゲ食堂 toshu) By [Origin Toshu オリジン東秀 様](#)



● The Chinese eatery has expanded to 36 outlets since it was established in March 2017. More than 10 outlets opened in 2018 alone. It offers 64 kinds of Chinese dishes, including ramen at ¥400, fried rice at ¥450, gyoza at ¥180, and various types of set meals, noodles and rice bowls. There are 18 types of side dishes at affordable prices. They include cold tofu (冷やっこ) and chives with egg (ニラ玉), both at ¥180 each. There are also other dishes like meat stir-fried with ginger (生姜焼き) and wood ear mushrooms with egg stir-fry (きくらげの玉子炒め), at prices from ¥180 to ¥680. The outlet, which is located in the center of a shopping district in front of a subway station, is patronized mainly by male diners looking for a little drink (choi nomi) and homemakers buying take-outs in the evenings.

■ Shoken Chuka Shokudo (松軒中華食堂) By [Matsuya Foods Co., Ltd 様](#) 松屋フーズホールディングス



● The Chinese eatery opened its third outlet in front of the North exit of Tanashi Station on the Seibu Shinjuku Line, on 18 October 2018. Aspiring to be “the dining table for everyone”, the eatery serves noodles and its signature soup ramen. There are 8 kinds of ramen such as “Shoyu ramen” (醤油拉麵) at ¥450 and “Soya dan dan noodles” (豆乳担々麵) at ¥690. The eatery also serves 4 types of a la carte dishes such as pork slices stir fry with chives, beansprouts and ginger (ニラともやしの豚生姜焼き); and “Sichuan twice-cooked pork” (回鍋肉); and 15 types of side dishes, all priced from ¥180 to ¥550. The Tanashi outlet was converted from a previous concept “Serori no Hana” (セロリの花), to increase the number of Chinese concepts within the Group.

[Discussion : The Future of “Chuka Shokudo” \(中華食堂 or Chinese eateries\)](#)

“Chuka Shokudo Hidaka” (中華食堂 日高) and “Chuka Shokudo Ichibankan” (中華食堂 一番館) took advantage of the increasing demand for meals and alcoholic drinks to expand. They offer an affordable menu with a wide variety of ramen, fried rice, set meals, etc. Renge Shokudo Toshu (れんげ食堂 toshu) attracts customers with its 20 types of lowly-priced side dishes, in addition to the standard menu; and opens up a new sales channel by offering a la carte dishes for takeaways. Shoken Chuka Shokudo (松軒中華食堂) is selling its signature ramen and side dishes in front of a subway station. They are setting up more stores that offer simple meals to go with a little drink, and to expand the demand for takeaways.

3. Progressive Companies

■ Food Architect Lab 株式会社 フードアーキテクトラボ

- Sales for the fiscal year ended March 2018 was ¥15 billion (115.4% as compared to the prior year). Sales had increased for the fourth consecutive year.

Food Architect Lab (株) フードアーキテクトラボ was established in April 2014 to inherit the food business from Studio Nagare (スタジオナガレ). It started with “Kakiiredoki” [牡蠣入レ時(カキイレドキ)] and “Wain sakaba” (ワイン酒場) in Naka-meguro and Shibuya; and Italian “Antonio del Pollaiolo” (アントニオ デル ポライオーロ) and Japanese “Yakitori Suehirogari” (焼鳥スエヒロガリ) in Shinagawa and Naka-meguro. In January 2016, it started the “Skellman” concept that served cuisines at a price point above ¥6,000; and in October of the same year, the company expanded the “Kakiiredoki” concept in Tokyo using a franchise model. On 13 December 2018, the company started a pub “Chidoriashi” [千酉足(ちどりあし)] that specializes in cup sake, at Shinjuku 3-chome. There are now 31 stores across 16 concepts under the young company.

● Chidoriashi 「千酉足 (ちどりあし)」

The store is stocked with more than 200 types of cup sake from across the nation, selling at ¥600 to ¥1,200 each. It also serves 50 kinds of side dishes such as the classic Kushiyaki (串焼き) and Ham Katsu (ハムカツ), and unique ones such as “Nishin no oyako ni” (にしんの親子煮 or simmered herring), “Ichibo no namero” (イチボのなめろう or minced Ichibo meat) and “Pig brain fritter” (豚脳みそフリット). They are sold at 5 levels of prices from ¥350 to ¥950. The store is patronized mainly by middle-aged male diners.



Showcases with a wide variety of cup sake

Potato salad topped with flying fish roe (とびこのポテトサラダ)

4. Featured New Store

With a concept of “腸活” (“revitalizing your intestines”), fermented food eatery “Tokyo 850 PIT” (東京 850 PIT) offers an original healthy menu that features fermented foods.

[Fermented Food Eatery “Tokyo 850 PIT” \[東京 850 PIT \(ハッコウピット\)\]](#) [BY Try International](#) [トライ・インターナショナル](#)



- On 5 December 2018, Tokyo 850 PIT [東京 850PIT \(ハッコウピット\)](#) opened near Exit No. 7 of the Akasaka Station on the Tokyo Metro Chiyoda Line. Its operating hours are from 11:00 to 22:30, with a seating capacity for 14. There are four choices for lunch sets, e.g. “Fish Plate” (お魚プレート) and “Meat Plate” (お肉のプレート), that are priced from ¥850 to ¥1,000. There are 8 items on the dinner menu priced at ¥850 to ¥1,200. They include the “9-selections Plate” (9種類プレート) which is a combination of a variety of cooked dishes; and the “Fermented Tagine pot” (発酵タジン鍋) which is filled with vegetables and pork. The menu indicates the types of live bacteria in the food e.g. Lactic Acid bacteria (乳酸菌) and Koji-kin (麹菌 or *Aspergillus oryzae*), which help to improve gastrointestinal health. The eatery also serves 8 types of side dishes such as Sauerkraut and fermented mushroom in garlic oil (きのこにんにくオイル発酵). There are mainly female solo diners in the evening. It is a new healthy dining concept that was converted from “Miso & Tomato Ramen Tadokoro Shoten” (みそ&トマトらーめん 田所商店).

Evaluation

“Cosme Kitchen Adaptation” and “Mr Farmer” are multi-outlet concepts that are located in commercial facilities in Tokyo. They feature “gluten-free” and “vegan” menus, under the themes of “beauty” and “healthy living”. Tokyo 850 PIT [東京 850PIT \(ハッコウピット\)](#) aims to attract customers by highlighting the health benefits of fermented foods. A fermented drinks specialty store “Tokyo 850 STAND” [東京 850STAND](#) is located next to it. There is a lot of interest in health and beauty among women. The company intends to expand this business by leveraging on their know-how in miso, and improving their brand awareness among consumers. This new concept is expected to attract customers, even for the dinner segment.

5. Product / Business Strategy

Public Izakaya 大衆酒場

A new concept that features affordable beef dishes
“Gyutan Iroha” (牛タン いろ葉) BY (株) Good market&shops

■ **Features** : The store’s signature items include “grilled thick cut beef tongue” (厚切り牛タン焼き), “calf tongue” (仔牛の牛タン), and the classic “tongue stew” (タンシシユー). For skewers, they have “beef tongue and scallion skewer” (牛タン葱間); and for stews or simmered dishes, they have “beef tongue and ginger stew” (牛タンの生姜煮) and “beef tenderloin” (牛たんメンチ). There are altogether 12 types of beef tongue dishes priced from ¥199 to ¥999. The store also serves 18 types of sides such as tomagoyaki (厚焼玉子 or thick omelette) and stews, at ¥199 to ¥579. There is a counter and 20 table seats on the first floor, and 44 tatami seats on the second and third floors. On 30 November 2018, the 9th outlet opened in Shinjuku Omoide Yukocho (新宿思い出横丁) near JR Shinjuku Station’s West Exit. The store is patronized mainly by middle-aged to senior male diners, young people and foreigners.



Strategy: “Gyutan Tororo Mugi-meshi Negishi” (牛タン とろろ 麦飯「ねぎし」) is found in the busy districts of downtown Tokyo, and beef tongue sumiyaki “Rikyu” (利久) is found in commercial facilities and shopping centres. They serve mainly set meals, and operate multiple outlets. “Gyutan Iroha” (牛タン いろ葉) features original beef tongue dishes such as kushiyaki and stews at affordable prices, and the outlets are located at shopping streets and alleys in front of subway stations. It aims to expand by attracting customers from a wide age range and by being present in more areas. Negishi and Rikyu are struggling with rising beef prices as they are relying on sales of set meals. Iroha is an izakaya. They could better manage their margins with sales from alcoholic beverages. They serve a variety of dishes that are not found elsewhere.

- Latest new store

21 December “Steak-juu Kumaki” (ステーキ重 くまき)

Located at the West Exit of JR Kanda Station

A specialty store that serves different cuts of steak in rice boxes. This is the first outlet in Tokyo for Gut’s International, which has been running all-you-can-eat concepts such as yakiniku “Gut’s Soul” (ガッツ・ソウル) and “Gut’s Grill” (ガッツ・グリル).



Beef loin steak rice box (牛ロースステーキ重) ¥980

Beef ribs steak rice box (牛バラステーキ重) ¥580

Gaisyoku.com 1 January 2019 issue

Produced by Fujii Consulting 1 January 2019

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