



## <Aref Saade>

Country/Region: Lebanon

Age: 65 years old

Current Positions:

Owner of Shogun Lounge Japanese restaurant

Owner of Tropical Bamboo

that engages in the supply of Japanese food and the recruitment of chefs

Treasurer of Syndicate of Owners of Restaurants, Cafés, Night-Clubs, and Pastries in Lebanon

### ○ Contribution to the popularization of Japanese cuisine in Lebanon

- Since establishing a company partaking in the supply of Japanese ingredients and recruitment of chefs for Japanese cuisine in 1985, Aref Saade has been working on the procurement of Japanese ingredients mainly in Middle East. In Lebanon, Saade manages Japanese restaurants and has a successful career as a pioneer of Japanese cuisine in the country.
- Saade has also jointly hosted seminars and workshops on Japanese cuisine with the Embassy of Japan in Lebanon. He has contributed greatly to the popularization of Japanese cuisine and food culture over the last 35 years.

Since the establishment of Tropical Bamboo that partakes in the supply of Japanese food and recruitment of chefs in 1985, Aref Saade has been involved in opening 42 restaurants in 12 countries including the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. In addition, Saade has been working on the supply of Japanese ingredients and recruitment of chefs as well as consulting, and he has a successful career as a forerunner of Japanese cuisine in Lebanon.

In 1998, Saade opened the Japanese restaurant, Shogun Lounge, as a pioneer of Japanese cuisine restaurants which are now said to number 230 or more across Lebanon. The restaurant concept and wide variety of restaurant menus are created and continually refined by Saade himself, and the restaurant is highly acclaimed and popular in Lebanon.

In 2006, Saade was selected as treasurer for the Syndicate of Owners of Restaurants, Cafés, Night-Clubs, and Pastries in Lebanon. Moreover, he was awarded “Best Restaurateur of the Year” at the Grumpy Gourmet Event in Jordan in 2009. Saade has been closely working together with the Embassy of Japan in Lebanon as well, and he has jointly hosted Japan related events with the focus on Japanese cuisine and participated and cooperated in events including a reception to celebrate the Emperor's birthday. Saade also worked in coordination with the Japanese embassy toward lifting import controls by the government of Lebanon following the Great East Japan Earthquake. As illustrated by these examples, Saade has been contributing greatly to the popularization of Japanese cuisine for over 35 years.

Saade's youngest child, Imad Saade, is a successful chef, and upon graduating from the Paul Bocuse Institute in Lyon, France, Imad was trained at the 3-star Michelin restaurant Kikunoi in Kyoto, Japan. Clearly, both father and son are actively involved in the popularization of Japanese cuisine.