



BENTO BOX: ISSUE 1

Welcome to the NEW “Bento Box” newsletter.

The newsletter will feature information on the many activities that go on in the company and within the Bento family.



A Message from the President: Glenn Brown

We are living in a very unusual time right now and I could easily write about Bento in COVID-19 times. But rather than do that I thought it would be more interesting to tell you a little about myself and how Bento came to be.....I hope it isn't too boring 😊

My younger years:

I was born in the mid 1960's in Harare, Zimbabwe, a small country in the Southern part of Africa where I lived until I was 14 years old.



Harare



Jacaranda Trees in Harare



Victoria Falls

My parents decided to move to Canada and my family settled in Toronto in the late 1970's. Throughout my high school years, I worked in restaurants to earn money, and fell in love with the foodservice business. This led me to study Hospitality and Tourism Management at Ryerson University where I learned so much in the four fantastic years there. I am still engaged with Ryerson today and we have the annual Bento Scholarship that is offered for Hospitality students.

“I decided to visit another country that had always interested me...this was one of my life changing decisions I will never regret.”

INTERNATIONAL SUSHI DAY

\$5000 Raised!

June 18th was International Sushi Day and in order to celebrate this important day for us, we decided to combine it with our Sustainability pillar of “Society” by donating to Food Banks Canada.

We asked our employees, customers, partners and fans on social media to #HelpUsHelpOthers by liking, sharing and commenting on our International Sushi Day post and we would donate \$1 for each action. We were able to donate \$5000 to Food Banks Canada which equals 10 000 meals for people in our communities. During Covid-19, more people than ever have visited food banks so our donation is a great way to help others in times of need.



bento

**\$5000
Raised!**

**HELP US
HELP OTHERS**

INTERNATIONAL SUSHI DAY | JUNE 18



Food Banks Canada / banques alimentaires Canada

SPECIAL APPEAL / APPEL SPECIAL

COVID-19 Relief Appeal / Fonds de secours COVID-19



My not so young years:

After graduating from Ryerson, I spent time living and working in Jasper, Alberta for a year with Fairmont Hotels, and then continued in the hotel business with the Four Seasons Hotel Group in Toronto, where I worked in various positions.



Jasper Alberta



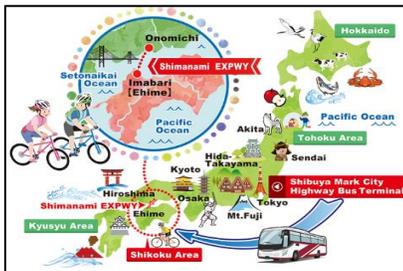
Jasper Park Lodge



My Cabin in Jasper

While reading the newspaper on my lunch break at the Four Seasons hotel, I saw an advertisement looking for English teachers in Japan, and decided I should apply to try something new and visit another country that had always interested me. This was one of my life changing decisions I will never regret.

In 1990, I arrived in the small town of Imabari, Japan where I worked as an English teacher for a company named GEOS.



Imabari, Ehime, Japan



Imabari Castle



Kurushima Kaikyo Bridge

While in Imabari, I was a true “gaijin” (foreigner); there were only 2 non-Japanese people that lived there, and I was one of them. The lifestyle was so different and interesting in many respects, especially food. This is where my love of sushi began! I really enjoyed Imabari, where I also met my wife, Eiko. We have been married for 26 years and still go back to Japan to visit her family when we have the opportunity.

After a year of teaching English, I was offered a job at the Four Seasons Hotel in Tokyo. This was a great opportunity to get more experience in the hotel business, so I jumped at the chance. It was also an excellent opportunity to experience a different part of Japan and learn more about the best food in the world....sushi! After a year at the Four Seasons, my work visa expired, and it was time to go home.

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Starting sushi:

After returning to Toronto in 1992, I went to work with a good friend of mine that did all the catering for movie productions in Toronto. This was the first chance to share my love of sushi with others. My wife and I prepared some sushi for the movie production people to eat for lunch, and they all thought it was delicious. And so, came another life changing moment.....we decided to quit our jobs and start a wholesale sushi company, MakiSushi.

The Bento years:



About 10 years later in 2002, I met Ken Valvur, the owner of Bento Nouveau, and we decided that we should work together as a team to grow our business and become the largest sushi company in Canada. So, we joined forces to try and make our dream come true. I'm proud to say that we were able to do this, and more.

In 2017, we sold the majority of Bento Sushi to YO! Sushi in London England, and at the time of the sale we had built Bento, with your help, into an incredible business. We had over 900 sushi bars in Canada and the US in supermarkets, universities, airports, shopping malls, hospitals and more. We also had 5 factories across Canada and one in Rhode Island. Joining up with other companies has set the goal of becoming the world's largest sushi company outside of Japan, and we are on our way!!!!



The story will continue our next newsletter when I will let you know more about our sushi partners, YO! Snowfox and Taiko.



Glenn

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