

Shiseido Parlour Celebrates Its Centenary in 2002

In 1902, Arinobu Fukuhara, founder of Shiseido Co., Ltd., established what was to become the Shiseido Parlour. Fukuhara sited the western-style Soda Fountain, the Parlour's precursor, in a corner of the Shiseido pharmacy on Ginza 8-chome, in the heart of Tokyo's fashionable Ginza district.

The Soda Fountain sold soda water and ice cream. This was a "Japan first," and the products were thought of as quite exotic. The Soda Fountain strengthened Shiseido's image as a leader in cultural trends. The Soda Fountain later became the Shiseido Parlour, located at the same site on the Ginza, and added food to its lineup.

In 2002, the Shiseido Parlour marks its centenary. Today, the main Shiseido Parlour is within the Tokyo Ginza Shiseido Building, still located on the same site as the Soda Fountain established by Arinobu Fukuhara a century ago. In total, the Shiseido Parlour chain extends to nine restaurants and cafes, and four food and beverage shops which sell sweets, wine and other high-quality goods direct to the public. They are sited at prestigious department stores throughout Japan.

The history of the Shiseido Parlour is illustrious. It has been frequented by some of Japan's leading cultural figures, including novelists Shotaro Ikenami, Yasunari Kawabata, Yukio Mishima and Junichiro Tanizaki. Kabuki actor Kanzaburo Nakamura loved to spend time in the Shiseido Parlour, as did actress Hideko Takamine and others. Shiseido will hold a number of events, outlined below, to mark the Shiseido Parlour's centenary and to look forward to another chapter in the parlour's storied history.

Events to Mark the Centenary of the Shiseido Parlour

In spring 2002, Shiseido Parlour's centenary events program starts, under the theme "Remembering the Past, Understanding the Future." The events will strengthen ties with existing patrons and provide an opportunity to meet new customers.

1. Restaurant L'osier Gastronomique Week

(January 28–February 2, 2002)

Shiseido has invited leading French chef Mr. Dominique Bouchet, of the Hôtel de Crillon, Paris, to display his talents in Shiseido's fully French-style restaurant, L'osier. Throughout the week Mr. Bouchet will offer a menu of dishes brimming with his unique technique and sensibility.

* Gastronomique: "Good eating" in French

2. Old-style Menus to Mark the Centenary

(April–June 2002 and September–November 2002)

In Spring and Autumn, 2002, the Shiseido Parlour will offer a selection of menus which date back to the time of its establishment. The menus will be available at each Shiseido Parlour. The delicious offerings will include Chicken Croquette, Macaroni Gratin, and others. The Shiseido Parlour will also suggest a "food culture of the future" to its patrons by offering a variety of innovative western-style dishes.

3. Centenary Memorial Sweets

(April 2002 and October 2002)

The Shiseido Parlour will sell a limited number of commemorative sweets and wine. The products will carry an illustration originally by Mr. Ayao Yamana, a famous Shiseido designer of the 1920s-70s. The illustration is regarded as a symbol of Shiseido's leading-edge design.

4. Invitations to Shiseido Parlour for Couples, Families and Groups with a Combined Age of One Hundred

(February 2002–October 2002)

Shiseido will invite a total of 100 couples, families and groups, each of whose combined age adds up to 100, to the Shiseido Parlour. The guests will be selected via a prize draw. They will be offered the special centenary menu, free of charge, at the main Shiseido Parlour on Ginza 8-chome, the shop on Ginza 4-chome, or the shop at Takarazuka, Tokyo.

5. Centenary Memorial Books

Shiseido will publish two books to mark the centenary of the Shiseido Parlour:

* *“The Story of Ginza Parlour”* (provisional title)

(Planned publication date: April 2002, through Kodansha Ltd.)

* *“Shiseido Parlour”* (provisional title)

(Planned publication date: October 2002, through Kyuryudo Art-Publishing Co., Ltd.)

The History of the “Shiseido Parlour”

In 1872, Arinobu Fukuhara founded Shiseido Co., Ltd. in the Ginza, Tokyo as Japan's first Western-style pharmacy. In 1902, Shiseido opened the “Soda Fountain” within the original pharmacy. Since 1928, Shiseido has been operating a fully western-style restaurant on that same site. In time, the restaurant won popular acclaim both as a symbol of Ginza and as an institution at the cutting-edge of modern living.

In 1962, on the same site, Shiseido built the Shiseido Kaikan, which on its completion was the tallest building in the Ginza. Standing at 50-meters tall, Shiseido Kaikan had nine stories above ground and three stories below. In 1973, Shiseido renovated the entire building, renaming it the Shiseido Parlour Building.

In 1999, construction started on a new building on this site, and on March 1, 2001, Shiseido opened the multi-functional Tokyo Ginza Shiseido Building. This new building, on what for Shiseido is a historical site, is the home of Shiseido’s corporate culture in the 21st century. It serves as a base to disseminate Shiseido and beauty-related information, and stands as a “Beacon for the Ginza.” Tokyo Ginza Shiseido Building is home to restaurants, including the head Shiseido Parlour, shops, a gallery and a salon. Standing 55-meters tall, it has 11 stories above ground and one story below.

The building, erected using the very latest in construction technologies, demonstrates that Shiseido still stands for “Western-style,” “high quality” and “the cutting-edge,” just as it did a century ago when Arinobu Fukuhara established the Shiseido Parlour, and before that the Shiseido pharmacy itself.