# Japanese ambassador Hiroshi Suzuki promotes cultural exchange through Paddington Bear



The Japanese ambassador to the United Kingdom, Hiroshi Suzuki, has gained significant online popularity due to his enthusiastic celebration of British culture, with a particular focus on his adventures with the beloved children's character, Paddington Bear. Suzuki, who has been in his diplomatic role since September 2022, has risen to internet fame by sharing his experiences on social media platform X, showcasing a vibrant enthusiasm that resonates deeply with audiences.

In his initial foray into British culture, Suzuki fully embraced the traditional pub scene, traversing the UK to sample various ales and lagers. His exploration was highlighted by a video he posted on New Year’s Day, in which he cheerfully enjoyed a pint at 10 a.m., happily showcasing the blend of cultures by juxtaposing a Japanese spirit, Roku, in the shot. Among his notable stops were the Churchill Arms in West London and the Turf Tavern in Oxford, a historic pub frequented by the Emperor during his studies.

A particularly successful post featured a matcha latte adorned with a shamrock for St Patrick’s Day, which has since garnered over 22 million views. This post, among many others, reflects Suzuki's ability to blend cultural elements from Japan and the UK. “I love how this combines the Japanese way of doing things while honouring the host nation's traditions. All diplomats should take note,” commented one social media user, exemplifying the positive reception his posts have received.

Suzuki’s affectionate portrayal of Paddington Bear further endeared him to the public. Frequently seen with the plush toy, the ambassador has invited Paddington to accompany him on official visits, establishing a charming narrative that resonates with both children and adults. His interactions with various UK officials included whimsical moments where he posed with stuffed toys, adding a light-hearted touch to formal diplomacy. For instance, after a meeting, Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham presented Suzuki with a teddy bear symbolising the city, while Speaker of the House of Commons Sir Lindsay Hoyle gifted him a teddy dressed in Speaker’s robes.

Suzuki’s social media presence also extends to celebrating specific cultural events, such as St David’s Day, when he filmed himself enjoying a Welsh cake alongside a red-dragon-adorned mug of tea, complemented by a vase of origami daffodils. He expressed a deep appreciation for British traditions, showcased through a heartfelt rendition of the Welsh national anthem, which he practised extensively at his colleagues' request prior to a visit to Wales.

His culinary explorations continued with a visit to the Sarson’s vinegar factory in Manchester, where he highlighted the significance of Sarson's vinegar to the quintessential British dish, fish and chips, stating, “I just can’t think of fish and chips without Sarson's.” During various culinary forays, he also tried local delicacies such as a Manchester tart and celebrated traditional events like Burns Night, reinforcing his message of cultural exchange.

Further solidifying his role as a cultural ambassador, Suzuki has been actively involved in the Sakura Cherry Tree Project, a programme aimed at enhancing the friendship between Japan and the UK through the planting of cherry trees. Originally intended to commemorate the friendship post-Brexit, the initiative has expanded from a goal of 1,000 trees to 8,000 in various locations across the UK. Suzuki passionately expressed his hope for British people to enjoy picnics under the blossoms, drawing parallels to Japan’s ohanami tradition, enjoyed in springtime.

In his public statements and social media activity, Suzuki has maintained that “Japan and the UK are irreplaceable partners who share fundamental values and common strategic interests,” a sentiment that he continues to reinforce through his charming and approachable ambassadorial style. As his online fame grows, Suzuki’s adventures with Paddington Bear and his dedication to celebrating the cultural ties between Japan and the UK contribute to his image as a beloved diplomat, making a lasting impression in both nations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hiroshi_Suzuki_(diplomat)> - Corroborates Hiroshi Suzuki's role as the Japanese Ambassador to the United Kingdom and his diplomatic career. However, it does not specifically detail his cultural celebrations or Paddington Bear interactions.
2. <https://www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/2024ambsuzuki.html> - Supports Suzuki's role as Ambassador to the UK and his efforts to strengthen Japan-UK relations, mentioning cultural events but not those specific to Paddington Bear.
3. <https://soranews24.com/2025/04/03/japanese-ambassador-goes-viral-for-being-the-paddington-bear-of-ambassadors/> - Highlights Suzuki's use of social media to engage with British culture and his affection for Paddington Bear, showcasing his humorous and endearing approach to diplomacy.
4. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/02/15/japan-ambassador-becomes-unlikely-social-media-star/> - Unfortunately, this specific URL is not available, but publications like The Telegraph have reported on Suzuki's social media fame and his Paddington Bear antics.
5. <https://www.balliol.ox.ac.uk/news/2025/march/balliol-welcomes-japanese-ambassador-hiroshi-suzuki> - Documents Ambassador Suzuki's visit to Oxford, highlighting his engagement in cultural and academic activities in the UK.
6. <https://www.noahwire.com> - Listed as a source in the provided text, but since it's not a direct article link, it is included here as a general reference to the narrative about Hiroshi Suzuki.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14610673/Japanese-leader-viral-Paddington-Bear.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data