



Guesthouse owner Pearl Rooney with Japanese film crew cameraman Yasushi Nakamoto, presenter Maiko Kozuka and sound operative Ayako Kakitsu.

Picture: Gary Anthony. Image No. 02245

Guesthouse owner serves up a taste of the Highlands for Japanese TV viewers

A GUESTHOUSE proprietor has 2.4 million reasons for smiling this week — and it has nothing to do with the National Lottery or a Euromillions bonanza win.

Instead, Pearl Rooney has hit the jackpot in another way with a prime time spot on Japanese television singing the praises of her luxury Inverness guesthouse.

Ms Rooney, who owns Pitfaranne Guest House in Crown Street, has been chosen by the Japanese Asahi Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) to feature in a popular reality travel show, *Tabi Salad*.

It pulls in 2,400,000 viewers every Saturday.

"I thought it was a wind-up at first when I got a call from a Japanese TV company but it wasn't," she said. "They told me they wanted to film in the house and also asked me to cook a traditional Scottish meal for the presenter. I was delighted."

A TV crew from ABC visited her home on Monday where they filmed inside and out and the show presenter Maiko Kozuka, who enjoys film star status in Japan, sampled traditional Highland delicacies prepared by Ms Rooney.

ABC production manager and interpreter Yumi Hasegawa explained they had been filming in Edinburgh and wanted to get a good

Highland location and discovered Pitfaranne Guest House through a tourism brochure.

She said: "I did a lot of research on guest houses and B&Bs in Inverness looking for a place which is homely and would be good for a Japanese family coming here on holiday.

"I saw Pitfaranne and it is just what we wanted. I sensed it had a lovely homely feel and I contacted Pearl who was very nice on the phone and we decided this was the place for us."

And presenter Miss Kozuka added: "It is a very happy place. It feels like you are visiting someone private home,, not a guest house. We feel very much at home."

Ms Rooney, who has been in Pitfaranne for three years, gets quite a lot of Japanese visitors and believes the programme, which will be screened in Japan on July 27th, will be a bonus for tourism in the Highlands.

She said: "They were lovely people and they enjoyed my traditional Scottish meal. They actually thought they would be getting a roast beef dinner but I explained to them that this is not traditionally Scottish. Anyway, they ate the lot. I am looking forward to getting a DVD of the film which they have promised me."