

Japanese Food Culture

—Healthy Way of Eating—



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Japanese Cuisine

- Healthy
- Seasonality
- Eye Appeasing
- No Food Taboo



Brief History

Japanese food culture has developed over 2000 years;

- First it has been influenced by China and Korea in the 8th and 9th centuries,
- It has further developed during the last 300-400 years to what we can describe as 'Japanese cuisine'.

Rice

- Rice has been the staple food in Japan since ancient times. It has become the part of Japanese agriculture by the third century B.C., the beginning of Yayoi period.
- Japan produces 10 million tons of rice a year, maintaining near 100 percent self-sufficiency.
- The consumption of rice before World War II was 130 kg per person, it was 110 kg in 1965 and declined to 70 kg in 1990.



Sashimi and Sushi

- Around the 8th century sushi was introduced into Japan from China. Fish was salted and wrapped in fermented rice. Fish used to be eaten and rice used to be discarded. It was called *nare-zushi*.
- *Namanare* or *Namanari* became popular in Muromachi period as Japanese preferred to eat fish and rice together.
- *Haya-zushi* became the unique dish of Japanese culture as rice and fish was put together.
- During Edo period, Yohei, a famous chef created two styles of sushi,
Edo-style: finger formed nigiri-zushi
Osaka-style sushi: hako-zushi

Sashimi and Sushi

- Some of famous local sushi:
Funa-zushi from Shiga prefecture
Masu-zushi from Toyama prefecture
Ayu-zushi from Kyoto prefecture
Kakinoha-zushi from Nara prefecture
- Sashimi: Extremely fresh and bite size pieces of fish beautifully served with wasabi (horseradish) and shiso in artistic way.





Soy Bean Products: Miso

- Miso, originated in China and known as Chiang, was introduced to Japan by visiting Buddhist monks in the 7th century.
- *Misosiru* holds a special place in the hearts of Japanese people. People fondly remember their mothers *misosiru* as '*ofukuro no aji*'



Tofu and Natto

- *Natto*: Fermented soy beans. Traditional Japanese food more popular as a breakfast food specially in Kanto, Tohoku and Hokkaido. It is like vegemite in Australia.
- Tofu: Bean curd. Originated in China and introduced to Japan in Nara period. Tofu caught attention all over the world among health conscious people as it contains less calories but high quality of protein, iron, calcium and magnesium. We can find tofu in many countries but tofu in Japan is the best in texture.



Noodles: *Soba* and *Udon*

- An alternative food for rice.
- In Edo period art of making *soba* was brought to Japan by a Korean monk. Wheat flour noodles, *udon*, were introduced from China.
- *Hiyamugi* and *Somen* are other kind of noodles commonly enjoyed in summer.



Noodles: *Ramen*

- Long noodles in steaming hot soup.
- Roots of Ramen lie in China, but ramen we know it today was developed independently in Japan.
- Instant ramen was invented in 1958 and ramen in disposable cup was introduced in 1971 and overseas production began in 1973.



Bento: Lunch boxes

- Making *bento* is the beautiful Japanese art of packed lunch.
- Home made *bento*
- Convenience store chains *bento*
- *Ekiben*, the *bento* sold at train stations.

Other Popular Foods

- *Kare-rice*

First introduced in Japan in Meiji period by British. In 1910 first recipe of Japanese curry with onion, potato and carrots. In 1923 the founder of S & B foods developed curry power.

- *Tempura*

Tempura was introduced by Portuguese in the 16th century.

- *Sukiyaki*





Thank You