

Japanese Food Tips

How to cook delicious rice

Although rice cookers are commonly used in Japanese homes, rice can be cooked in a pot if a rice cooker is not available. Japanese rice is even more delicious when cooked in a claypot. The secret to delicious rice lies in the type of water and the amount of heat used when cooking.



1. Wash the rice / Rinse the rice once or twice using a generous amount of water. Next, fill the container with just enough water to cover the rice, press down gently two to three times with the base of the thumb, and wash the rice again.



2. Add water / Place the rice in the pot and add 1.2 times that amount of water. Soft water, rather than hard water, is recommended for fluffy rice. Allow the rice to soak for about 30 minutes in summer or an hour in winter.



3. Cook the rice / Start the rice off on high heat. Reduce to low heat once the water begins to boil and cook for 15 minutes. Make sure the lid stays on the pot while the rice is cooking.



4. Allow the rice to steam / Once the rice is done, allow it to steam in the pot for approximately 10 minutes, which seals in the rice's delicious flavor. To keep steam from escaping, do not remove the lid from the pot during this time. After about 10 minutes, gently stir the rice to release the steam.

Tips for making your fish even more delicious

In Japanese cooking, fish features in a wide range of dishes and can be eaten raw, simmered or grilled. To truly savor the flavor, the Japanese have developed innovative ways of preparing and eating fish.



Sprinkling salt over fish

Sprinkling salt over fish and allowing it to stand before cooking will extract any excess moisture. Wiping this off reduces the distinctive odor of the fish and makes it easier to prepare.



Eating fish with grated *daikon* radish

Grilled fish is often accompanied by raw grated *daikon* radish. This not only allows you to enjoy a fresh flavor but also neutralizes the odor of fish with a distinctively spicy flavor as well.

Various ways of cutting vegetables

In Japan, with its four clearly defined seasons, seasonal vegetables feature in all meals, enabling the seasons to be enjoyed and appreciated through food. As aesthetics is also an important aspect of Japanese cooking, there are many different ways of slicing and cutting ingredients.

Rangiri (chopping into chunks)



Ichougiri (cutting round slices into quarters to form wedges)



Hyoushigiri (stick-shaped cutting)



Kushigatagiri (wedge cutting)



Example of presentation

How to brew delicious green tea

As the fermentation process is arrested in green tea by steaming the tea leaves, the result is a beautifully vivid color and depth of flavor. There are several key points to unlock this rich flavor.

1 Use soft water / It is recommended that you use soft water to draw out the smooth, delicious flavor of the tea.

2 Warm the teapot and bowls / Warming the teapot and bowls before pouring the tea prevents the tea from cooling and also enhances its flavor.

3 Use hot, but not boiling, water / Boiling water tends to strengthen the bitterness found in tea. For a more natural flavor, let the water cool slightly before using it to make tea.



Types of *dashi* ingredients

Dashi refers to a liquid in which animal or vegetable ingredients have been steeped or simmered to extract the *umami* flavor. *Dashi* forms the taste and flavor basis of a wide range of Japanese dishes including *miso* soup, simmered and boiled dishes, and *takikomi gohan* (savory rice).



Small dried sardines
Fish such as anchovies that are simmered and dried.



Kombu kelp
Seaweed found on the coast off of northern Japan. Used dried.



Dried bonito
Flesh of the bonito, dried and fermented until it hardens.

Experience the tastiness of Japanese food ingredients within your own national cuisine.



Japanese food is of high quality, and the raw ingredients themselves are richly flavored. Using them, not just in Japanese cuisine but in combination with the cuisine of any nation, broadens the reach of these wonderful flavors. Here we have taken popular recipes from various countries and modified them using Japanese ingredients. Why not try the novel flavors produced by these combinations with Japanese ingredients?

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Herb-Roasted Scallops

French Cuisine

Use this simple recipe to enjoy these Japanese scallops, which are full of savory flavor. Crisp, light *panko* bread crumbs beautifully complement these meaty scallops. You can also use scallops in the shell. If you do, then place the *panko* bread crumbs directly on top of the scallops and bake them in a toaster oven.

[Ingredients]

Scallops (raw) : 4
A Garlic : 1/2 clove
Eschalot : 1/4
Parsley : 1 tablespoon
Panko bread crumbs :
4 tablespoons

Butter : 2 tablespoons
Cooking oil : 1 tablespoon
Salt/pepper : To taste
Chervil (if available) : For garnish

[How to cook]

1. Finely chop the garlic, eschalot and parsley. Sprinkle salt and pepper on the scallops. Heat oil in a frying pan and sauté the scallops on both sides until lightly browned.
2. Heat butter in another frying pan, sauté A, and season to taste with salt and pepper.
3. Place the scallops on a heat-resistant plate then add 2. Bake in a toaster oven for approx. 7 to 8 minutes until nicely browned.
4. Arrange 3. on a platter and garnish with chervil.



Wagyu Beef and Beans

American Cuisine



Here we take pork beans, a popular American home-cooked dish, and make it using Japan-produced *wagyu* beef. As *wagyu* beef is typically tender and juicy, cooking time is shorter than pork, and the flavor is richer. Just savor the juices in this dish, which are full of the meat's sweetness and rich flavor.

[Ingredients]

Wagyu Beef (in a piece) :
200g (approx. 7 oz.)
Onion : 1
Mixed beans : 1 can
A Mustard : 1 teaspoon
Salt : 1 teaspoon
Pepper : To taste
Barbecue sauce : 1/4 cup

Cooking oil : 2 tablespoons
Salt/pepper : To taste
Water : 2 cups

[How to cook]

1. Cut the *wagyu* beef into 1 cm cubes and lightly salt and pepper. Cut the onion into 3cm squares.
2. Heat the cooking oil in a saucepan, add the beef, lightly cook until brown, and remove from the saucepan. Sauté the onions in the same saucepan and return the beef.
3. Add the water, bring to a boil, then simmer on low heat for 20 minutes while skimming off the scum.
4. Add A and the mixed beans and simmer further for 6 minutes on medium heat. Continue boiling on high heat for a short time to reduce some of the liquid.