



## Sukiyaki, Shabu-shabu and Teppanyaki

### Sukiyaki

The main ingredients in **teppanyaki**, **suki-yaki** and **shabu-shabu** are red meat and seafood. Among the three, **sukiyaki** has the longest history. **Sukiyaki** gets its name from an old-fashioned method of cooking (**yaki**) seafood and poultry on top of a farmer's spade (**suki**). Early 19th-century Japanese cookbooks describe a similar dish of grilled poultry and seafood such as yellowtail flavored with grated **daikon** radish and green onions, eaten with **yuzu**\* soy sauce or **wasabi** soy sauce. However, after Japan opened the country in 1854, more and more Western food

was introduced, and around 1870, the name **sukiyaki** came to be used to describe thinly sliced beef and green onions simmered in a thick broth of soy sauce, **miso**, **mirin** and other ingredients. In the next era, **sukiyaki** evolved from a stewed meal-for-one into a meal shared from a single pot among family members or close friends. It is nutritionally balanced by the inclusion of green onions, napa cabbage, edible chrysanthemum, mushrooms and **tofu**.

\***yuzu** : a Japanese citrus fruit



Sukiyaki



Shabu-shabu

In the Kansai region, **sukiyaki** is prepared by first grilling the beef in the pot, then adding soy sauce, sugar and broth stock in which to boil the vegetable ingredients. In the Kanto region, after a broth made of stock, soy sauce, sugar and **mirin** has been heated in the pot, the meat and vegetable ingredients are added at the same time. In some regions, hot-from-the-pot morsels are dipped into raw beaten egg to cool them before eating.

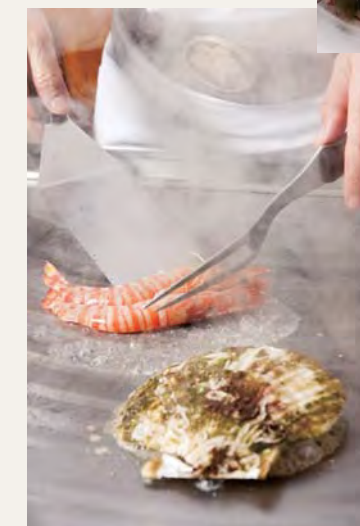
### Shabu-shabu

While its history in Japan is relatively short, **shabu-shabu** is said to have originated from Chinese lamb hot-pot dishes. **Shabu-shabu** starts with a broth in which napa, **shiitake** mushrooms and **tofu** are simmered. Thin slices of beef or pork are swished around in the broth to cook them, and then immediately dipped in a sauce, usually a citrus-infused soy sauce using the juice of the **yuzu** or **kabosu**\*, or a sesame-based sauce blending numerous ingredients including ground sesame, **miso**, soy sauce, sugar, sake, **mirin**, rice vinegar, soup stock, chili pepper and garlic. Each region of Japan has its own variant of this kind of stew, usually eaten during the winter. These include stews based on fish sauce that contain boiled fish, red meat and vegetables. There are also stews made from a

\***kabosu** : a Japanese citrus fruit



Teppanyaki



**konbu** seaweed broth stock that contain boiled blowfish and vegetables. These are eaten with a dipping sauce mixture of citrus-infused vinegar and grated **daikon** and chili pepper.

### Teppanyaki

**Teppanyaki** is said to have originated as meat cooked on an iron griddle made from scrap metal. It has evolved into a cuisine that friends or family members might gather to eat while out camping and typically consists of meat, vegetables and potatoes. In recent years, a popular type of **teppanyaki** restaurant consists of an iron griddle installed in front of counter seating, allowing customers to watch the chef cook steaks, seafood and vegetables right in front of them.



## Tempura

**Tempura** is said to have been brought to Japan by the Portuguese in the form of fried ground fish or other deep fried foods. **Tempura** in the form of white-flesh fish and shrimp lightly fried in batter developed in the late 18th century when people began frying seafood caught in today's Tokyo Bay and nearby waters. Creating **tempura**'s thin coating of fried batter demands skillful control of the temperature of the egg, water and flour, as well as a careful frying technique. Nowadays, seafood such as shrimp, whiting, squid and scallops are commonly used, complemented by batter-fried vegetables such as sweet potatoes, green beans, Japanese ginger and pumpkin. In Japanese, **tempura** consisting of only vegetables

is referred to by a separate term: **shojin-age**.

**Tempura** is usually eaten by either dipping it into a sauce called **tentsuyu**, made from broth stock, soy sauce and **mirin**, with a garnish of grated **daikon** radish and ginger, or by seasoning it with salt alone or a mix of salt and either powdered Japanese pepper or powdered Japanese green tea. In Japan, grated **daikon** radish and ginger was historically used as an antidote for poison, while the use of Japanese pepper and powdered green tea for their pungent taste, smell and color is a hallmark of Japanese cuisine.

Fried in vegetable oil, **tempura** greatly enriches the natural flavors of its ingredients yet is also remarkably healthy.



Tempura

## Vegetarian Cuisine



Sesame tofu

Ganmodoki

Steamed vegetables

**Shojin-ryori**, a form of vegetarian cuisine in Japan, was originally brought back to Buddhist temples by priests who studied in China from the 12th century onward. Influenced by Buddhist teachings that prohibit the killing of living creatures, **shojin-ryori** developed as a cuisine that does not use animal products. The featured ingredients are vegetables, beans and potatoes. In order to supplement the protein content, soy and soy products as well as wheat gluten are also used. In the quest to add zest to the otherwise bland flavor of a vegetable-based diet, cooks turned to sesame and sesame oil, which contains large amounts of fatty oils, and created dishes that mimic traditional meat-based foods. One example is **ganmodoki**, a dish of fried **tofu** and vegetables that mimics goose

meat. One signature **shojin-ryori** foodstuff is sesame **tofu**, similar to kneaded **tofu**. This is made from ground sesame and arrowroot starch. Broths based on seaweed and dried **shiitake** mushrooms are flavored with **miso**, soy sauce, **sake** and **mirin**.

During the 18th century, taking advantage of Japan's abundant and high-quality water, the firmer **tofu** that had originally come to Japan from China was improved to create a softer type that spread in popularity among the masses. **Tofu** contains less fatty oils than meat but is high in proteins, leading to its nickname, "meat from the fields." **Koyadofu**, freeze-dried **tofu**, and **yuba**, a **tofu** product made by skimming heated soy milk, are essential ingredients in Japanese vegetarian cuisine.





## Rice and Seasoned Rice

ごはん  
いしん  
はんみ



White rice and pickles

Japan's staple rice is japonica, a short-grain variety of rice, valued for its soft, plump texture that is consistent right through the grain. Even among modern Japanese it is a favorite daily staple food. White rice is eaten with all sorts of dishes. It goes well not only with Japanese dishes but also Western food such as steak and Salisbury steak. **Onigiri** is made by placing grilled salmon, pickled plum or other ingredients inside a lump of rice and then shaping it by hand into a firm ball, with a small amount of salt.

This conveniently portable, easy-to-make and tasty food has been enjoyed for a long time. Today, **onigiri** are made with many new kinds of ingredients and they're a popular food all over Japan. Young people tend to be especially fond of **onigiri** made with tuna mixed with mayonnaise.

Seasoned rice, **takikomi-gohan**, is a colorful and seasonal treat made from vegetables, seafood and meat all mixed into rice. Recipes vary by region, though in general it starts with rice seasoned with salt, soy sauce and **sake**. To this are often added ingredients such as carrot, **shiitake** or **shimeji** mushrooms and chicken. In spring, bamboo shoots and peas are typical, and in the autumn, chestnuts and ginkgo nuts. Local delicacies such as oysters, salmon and sea bream can also be used as ingredients.

Seasoned rice



## Noodles

めん類

Among the many types of noodles introduced to Japan from China, **udon** has become the favorite noodle of western Japan. Hand-pulled **somen** noodles, made by stretching a dough of flour mixed with salt, water and oil until it becomes thin, are a classic summertime treat. In western Japan's Kansai region, the clear broth used with **udon** is made from a soup stock seasoned with salt and a light soy sauce. While in the Kanto region of eastern Japan, sugar, **mirin** and dark soy sauce are added to the stock. **Soba** noodles, which are made from buckwheat, became widely eaten among Japan's population in the mid-17th century. Both **soba** and **udon** are boiled and served in a bowl with broth, then topped with **kamaboko** fish sausage, chicken, **shiitake** mushroom or egg, along with condiments such as sliced green onion or ground chili pepper. Cooked **soba** and **udon** can also be served "dry" on a bamboo sieve and dipped in a deeply-flavored broth, with spices such as **wasabi**, ginger and chili peppers.

**Ramen** noodles in modern Japan differ from the Chinese version and feature a range of soup flavors based on soy sauce, salt, **miso**, butter and pork stock. In order to create a complex flavor that cannot be reproduced at home, **ramen** restaurants make their soups from a combination of chicken and pork bones, dried bonito, dried sardines and seafood. Restaurants compete fiercely to innovate in offering an abundance of **ramen** flavors and varieties. The most popular ones often attract long lines of customers.



Soba(buckwheat noodles)



Udon(wheat noodles)



Ramen