



JAPAN'S TASTY SECRETS

*Local food that
satisfies the world's most
demanding eaters*

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You like Japanese food?

Think you've already tried the best that Japan has to offer? It might be time to think again.

Japan is packed with delicious dishes. All over the country people are constantly cooking up new ways to satisfy a nation's hunger for culinary perfection. Hundreds of gourmet treats come and go, some starting out as a local favorite and then sweeping the land. Occasionally a food fad will last, or maybe the nation grows to love a local delicacy over a period of years. The greatest success stories are rewarded with a place in the nation's heart.

While various dishes are popular for showcasing local ingredients, many others succeed for the most basic reason of all: they taste great! And once a local food becomes established at the national level, it's made it. It's passed the ultimate test of culinary fitness. In many cases you don't even need to be a fan of mainstream Japanese cuisine to appreciate its value. It appeals instantly to anyone with an appetite. Other dishes are more of an adventure, requiring at least some awareness and

appreciation of Japanese ingredients and their applications. And one or two delicacies may strike you as extreme cuisine: enjoyable only by those whose palate is completely attuned to the full range of tastes and textures found in Japan, surely the world's most diverse culinary culture.

That easy-to-extreme diversity is evident even in our initial selection of local cuisines loved all over Japan—but you probably won't have to read long before something gets your mouth watering. Our second selection focuses on food that has won a loyal local following in the region where it originated. Here, too, you will find many dishes that can be—or already are—cherished across regional or national boundaries. And even if occasionally you catch yourself thinking, "I'm not sure I could eat that," remind yourself that each dish is a survivor of a merciless process of food selection. If Japan says it's fit to eat, it could be time to take your tastebuds to the gym!

Now come on; let's eat! Itadakimasu!