

Rice and Seasoned Rice

ごはん　炊込みごはん



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