**Mostly Vegetarian Diet**

Giant pandas love bamboo! In fact, their diet is 99% bamboo. Along with bamboo, they eat other plants, small rodents, and occasionally fish. The mystery behind their diet is they have the digestive system of a carnivore.

Their ability to digest bamboo is attributed to tiny microbes that live within their digestive system. As they can only digest about 20% of what they eat, the average giant panda consumes around 14 kilograms (30 pounds) of bamboo a day. In comparison, humans eat about 2 kilograms (5 pounds) of food a day. This enormous diet means the giant panda spends more than 12 hours a day eating to stay nourished.

**Quick Fact** As the seasons change, the giant panda prefers different species and parts of bamboo.

**Tiny Cubs**

An infant giant panda cub is about the size of a croissant, weighs less than a teacup and is about 900 times smaller than its mother. An average adult mother weighs around 91 kilograms (200 pounds) while newborn weighs only 83 to 190 grams (3 to 4 ounces).

Other Fun Giant Panda Facts

1. Researchers have recently discovered that the gene responsible for tasting savory or umami flavors, such as meat, is inactive in giant pandas.
2. For many centuries, giant pandas were thought to be a mythical creature, like a dragon or unicorn.
3. Unlike other bears in the region, giant pandas don’t hibernate.
4. Giant pandas can stand erect on their hind legs but rarely walk.
5. The Qinling panda, another giant panda species with a dark brown and light brown coat, lives only in the mountains of Shaanxi.
6. Giant pandas have very sensitive hearing and smell, but they have poor eyesight.
7. A newborn giant panda is blind and looks like a tiny, pink, hairless mouse.