



Food in Japan



Food is plentiful, inexpensive, fresh, and tasty in Japan. Sushi comes to mind, but also ramen noodles, tonkatsu (fried pork cutlet), curry rice, okonomiyaki (savory pancake), takoyaki (grilled balls of octopus), taiyaki (fish-shaped cake with sweet filling), yakitori (grilled chicken skewers), karaage (fried chicken), Japanese crepes (rolled up with a filling), dango (steamed rice dumplings skewered on a stick), and green tea.

Many Japanese start their day with natto (sticky, fermented soy beans), rice, grilled fish, and miso soup (seaweed and tofu in a broth). Tamagoyaki (egg omelette) is also popular at breakfast, or in a bento (lunch box) as a side dish. They are usually slightly sweet and rolled into a rectangle. Convenience stores carry a variety of fresh foods, available at all hours, such as sandwiches, or rice balls (onigiri). Lunch may be a quick bowl of ramen at a stand-up noodle shop (tachigui), or a bento from home. There are many options for dinner, such as a hot-pot of vegetables, noodles, and meat (nabe) or a meal that includes multiple small serving dishes of fresh and pickled vegetables, rice, and fish. Salarymen working long hours may stop at an Japanese bar (izakaya) for drinks and snacks late at night.

In Japanese restaurants, you'll find that serving sizes are generally smaller than we have in America, and tipping is not customary. You will often find that food is served as a 'set' meal. Chopsticks (ohashi) are used for almost everything, although you can request a fork if needed. You will usually get your check at the table and pay at the cashier as you leave, although some ramen shops let you order and purchase a ticket from a machine, which you present to the staff. Check out the websites below for much more, including popular dishes and table manners.



Food and Drink in Japan:

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e620.html>

Etiquette:

<https://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2005.html>