

a cream with peach
+ fruit sauce

a sesame cheesecake
and of white chocolate and sesame
eddy biscuits base, sprinkled with
chocolate and edges

cheesecake
with ginger
stem ginger
dissolve base,
soda and
dry cake

a



suzuki amiyaki soba

sea bass, bok choy, sesame oil, and cilantro

- 6 ounces soba noodles
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 baby bok choy, trimmed and stems sliced
- large handful of bean sprouts
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons *yasai soba* salad dressing (see page 39)
- 2 x 5-ounce sea bass or grouper fillets
- salt and white pepper
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped shallots, for sprinkling
- 2 sprigs of cilantro, for garnishing
- 1 lime, cut into wedges, for serving

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes until just tender. Drain thoroughly and refresh under cold running water.

Heat a wok or heavy frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking and add 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil. Add the red onion, bok choy, bean sprouts, and garlic, and stir-fry for 1 minute until just warmed through, moving the vegetables around constantly so that the garlic does not burn. Remove from the heat.

Toss the noodles with the vegetables, sesame oil, and the *yasai soba* salad dressing in a large bowl until thoroughly combined and cover with a clean dishtowel.

Season the sea bass fillets with salt and pepper. Heat a heavy frying pan and add the remaining vegetable oil. Add the fish, skin-side down, and cook for 2–3 minutes until almost opaque. Turn over and cook for another minute.

Divide the noodles and vegetables between 2 bowls and top with the sea bass. Sprinkle with the shallots and cilantro, and serve with lime wedges.

Previous spread, right: If you can use chopsticks that's all well and good, but we provide cutlery for anyone shy of trying. All the staff will happily show you, however, and those paper placemats are ideal for covering up any early mistakes.

hake tempura

deep-fried hake with ramen noodles, watercress, and chile

There is nothing difficult about making tempura dishes; just make sure you use ice-cold beer and pure vegetable oil and don't over-whisk the batter mixture. That way, it will remain light and airy rather than gooey and elastic.

1/2 egg, beaten
1/2 cup cold beer
pinch of baking soda
salt and white pepper
1/3 cup plain flour, plus extra for dusting
1 3/4 cups vegetable oil
14 ounces hake, skinned and cut into 8 large chunks
10 1/2 ounces ramen noodles
4 cups vegetable stock (see page 18)
small handful of watercress
handful of bean sprouts
6 scallions, trimmed and cut on the diagonal into 1-inch slices
1 red chile, trimmed and sliced

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes until just tender. Drain thoroughly, refresh under cold water, and divide between 2 bowls.

Combine the egg, beer, baking soda, a seasoning of salt and pepper, and the flour in a bowl and whisk to form a light batter. Heat the oil in a heavy saucepan until a little batter dropped into it sinks to the bottom and then rises up. (If the batter stays down, the oil is not hot enough.)

Dip the fish in the flour for dusting and then in the batter, and deep-fry 4 pieces at a time for 5 minutes until golden and cooked through. Make sure that none sticks to the bottom of the pan, which can happen if the oil is not quite hot enough.

In another pan, bring the vegetable stock to a boil and ladle it over the noodles. Top with the watercress and beansprouts. Put the fish pieces on top and sprinkle with the slices of scallion and chile.



salmon ramen

teriyaki salmon with baby vegetables, miso soup, and noodles

9 ounces ramen noodles

2 ounces baby vegetables (baby corn cobs, sugarsnap peas, or snow peas)

or bok choy

a little vegetable oil

2 x 5-ounce salmon fillets

2 tablespoons teriyaki sauce, homemade (see page 28) or store-bought

4 cups chicken or vegetable stock (see pages 17 and 18)

4½ tablespoons miso paste (see page 19)

12 pieces *menma* (canned bamboo shoots), drained

4 scallions, trimmed and finely sliced

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes until just tender. Add the baby vegetables or bok choy for the final 2 minutes to cook until just tender. Drain and refresh everything under cold running water.

Heat a heavy frying pan or grill pan until hot, lightly oil with paper towels dipped in vegetable oil, and cook the salmon for 2 minutes on each side, or until opaque right through. Warm the teriyaki sauce in a small pan and brush the salmon with it.

Bring the stock to a boil in a large pan, then whisk in the *miso* paste until smooth. Divide the noodles and vegetables between 2 bowls and ladle the stock over them. Top with the salmon, *menma*, and scallion slices.

Oodles of noodles: they are absolutely central to wagamama. Typically the restaurants serve over 13,000 pounds of ramen noodles in a week.

sake amiyaki gohan

broiled salmon with bok choy, ginger, oyster sauce, and steamed rice

5-ounce salmon fillets

2 teaspoons vegetable oil

1 garlic clove, peeled, finely chopped, and crushed with a little salt

1 tablespoon peeled and grated fresh ginger root

1 small red onion, peeled and cut into chunks

1 red chile, trimmed and thinly sliced

2 heads of bok choy, halved lengthwise

2½ cups boiling water

1 tablespoon oyster sauce

2 teaspoons light soy sauce

1 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon sugar

14 snow peas

1 tablespoon *shaoshing* wine (see page 15)

1 tablespoon sesame oil

1 teaspoon cornstarch

steamed Japanese rice, for serving

Preheat the broiler. Put the salmon on a lightly oiled baking tray, skin-side down, and broil for 2 minutes, then turn over and cook for another 6 minutes.

Heat a wok or large frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking and add the vegetable oil. Stir fry the garlic and ginger for 5 seconds, taking care not to let them color too much. Add the onion, chile, and bok choy and stir-fry for another 30 seconds. Pour in the water, oyster, and soy sauces, and add the salt and sugar. Bring to a boil. Add the snow peas and cook for 1 minute. Splash in the wine and sesame oil.

Mix the cornstarch to a paste with a little cold water. Remove 2 tablespoons of the sauce from the wok and combine with the paste. Return to the wok and stir over a medium heat for 5 minutes or until you have a shiny sauce.

Place a portion of steamed rice on 2 plates and top with the salmon. Pour the sauce from the wok over it.



The skin on fish is too often discarded. Seasoned and cooked correctly so it crisps up, it provides both a textural and flavor contrast, as well as dramatic color variation.



salmon korroke

salmon cakes with *amai* sauce, mixed greens, and *wakame*

makes 6 cakes

- 7 ounces floury potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 10½ ounces salmon fillet
- 3 tablespoons canned corn, drained
- 7 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 small carrot, peeled and finely chopped
- ¼ cup frozen peas
- salt and white pepper
- 3 eggs
- 4 heaped tablespoons flour
- 2 ounces panko bread crumbs (see page 15)
- 2 tablespoons *amai* sauce (see page 22)
- 2 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)
- 2 large handfuls of mixed salad greens
- 2 tablespoons *wakame*, soaked in warm water for 5 minutes, for garnishing



The secret to a really good fishcake is to ensure the fish remains the key focus. That, and a light hand in the forming. The idea is to keep the texture elegant and fluffy and allow the flavor of the fish to come through. Success is all in the detail.

Put the potatoes in cold water, cover, bring to a boil, and cook for 10 minutes. Add the salmon and cook for 7 minutes until it is cooked right through and the potatoes are tender. Lift out the salmon and flake it. Drain the potatoes, return to the pan, and mash them.

While the potatoes and salmon are cooking, heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes until hot and almost smoking and add 2 tablespoons of the oil. Add the onion, cover, and cook over a very low heat for 5 minutes until translucent, stirring to make sure it doesn't stick and color. Add the carrot and cook for another 5 minutes; add the peas for the last minute.

Combine the salmon and potatoes in a bowl along with the onion mixture and the corn. Season thoroughly and add 2 of the eggs. Beat into the mixture and combine thoroughly. Divide into 6 equal portions and shape into fishcakes.

Put the flour in one bowl, the remaining egg, beaten, in another, and the bread-crumbs in a third. Dip the salmon cakes first in the flour, then in the egg, and finally in the crumbs.

Heat a large frying pan, then add the remaining oil. Fry the fishcakes over medium-low heat for 2–3 minutes on each side until golden. Drain on paper towels. Heat the *amai* sauce. Divide the salmon cakes between 2 plates and drizzle the sauce around the plates.

Mix the dressing with the salad greens and place small mounds on top of the salmon cakes. Garnish with *wakame*.



salmon hot pot

with carrot, leek, soy sauce, and brown rice

This is one of the few dishes in the book that doesn't feature on the wagamama menu, but works beautifully in the home setting where 30 minutes cooking time isn't a problem.

- 14 ounces salmon**
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 1 leek, trimmed and finely sliced**
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped shallot**
- 1 carrot, peeled and finely chopped**
- 1 stalk celery, peeled of any strings and finely chopped**
- 1 teaspoon sugar**
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped**
- salt and white pepper**
- 1/3 cup light soy sauce**
- 2 1/3 cups cooked brown rice**

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Remove any skin and bones from the salmon and cut the flesh into bite-sized pieces. Heat the oil in a heavy, ovenproof pan, and when it is hot add the leek, shallot, carrot, and celery, and sauté gently for 10 minutes. Add the sugar and garlic, cook for another minute and then add the fish and season with salt and pepper. Pour the soy sauce over it, add 1/4 cup of water, cover, and bake in the oven for 15 minutes. Remove and let rest for 5 minutes. Divide the rice between 2 bowls and ladle the salmon hot pot over it.

Chefs go through a lot of training when they start. Many are new to kitchens, or have worked in places where systems are not important. For wagamama, quality is our first priority and we must deliver that consistently well. Every dish has a procedure to follow, so that each time it comes out looking and tasting consistently good.

spiced sake soba

salmon soba with oyster mushrooms and red and yellow peppers

8 ounces soba noodles

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 x 5-ounce salmon fillets

salt

½ yellow pepper, trimmed, seeded, and sliced

½ red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and sliced

½ red onion, peeled and sliced

handful of oyster mushrooms

large handful of bean sprouts

1 zucchini, cut into thin strips

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

2 tablespoons chili oil

1 tablespoon fried onions

2 tablespoons *yaki soba* sauce (see page 32)

2 eggs, beaten

1 teaspoon sesame seeds, for sprinkling

1 lemon, cut into wedges, for serving

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes until just tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Heat a frying pan until hot and add 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil. Season the skin on the salmon with salt, then cook, skin-side down, over a high heat for 5 minutes, then turn over and cook for 2 minutes on the other side. Set aside.

Meanwhile, heat a wok or large frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking and add the remaining vegetable oil. Add the peppers, onion, mushrooms, bean sprouts, zucchini, rice vinegar, chili oil and the fried onions. Stir-fry for 5–8 minutes until tender. Stir in the noodles and *yaki soba* sauce and cook for 1–2 minutes.

Add the eggs and stir-fry for another minute or until the eggs are cooked. Divide between 2 dishes, scatter the sesame seeds over them and top with the salmon fillet and a lemon wedge.

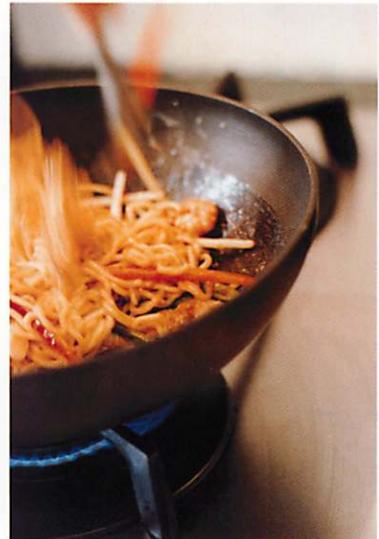
OUR website is a central part of our communications strategy. Talk to us and we will talk to you. We fundamentally believe in listening and responding to you. For us the customer really does come first.

yaki soba

stir-fried chicken and shrimp with soba noodles and pickled ginger

This dish has become known as *yaki soba* even though, traditionally, it doesn't use soba noodles. You can use *ramen* instead if you prefer, as we do in the restaurants.

- 4 ounces *soba* noodles
 - 2 tablespoons *yaki soba* sauce (see page 32)
 - 1 small onion, peeled and cut into half-moon slices
 - 4 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths
 - large handful of bean sprouts
 - 15 small cooked peeled shrimp
 - 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
 - 1 boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into strips
 - ½ red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cubed
 - ½ green pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cubed
 - 2 eggs, beaten
- for serving*
- 2 tablespoons pickled ginger (*gari*, see page 14)
 - 1 tablespoon dried shallots
 - ½ teaspoon toasted sesame seeds (see page 164)



Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes until just tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water.

Put the *yaki soba* sauce, the onion, scallions, bean sprouts, and shrimp in a large bowl and mix in the noodles.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking and add the vegetable oil. Add the chicken and red and green peppers, and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the noodles and vegetables to the wok and stir-fry quickly for 3 minutes until warmed through. Add the eggs and continue to stir-fry for another minute or until the eggs are just cooked. Serve with the pickled ginger, shallots, and sesame seeds.

A wok with one long handle is easier to toss and that is what's so crucial to stir frying because it keeps the ingredients moving constantly round the pan. The flicking of the wrist is almost impossible with two handles but then some people prefer to stir and there is nothing wrong with that.

in Japan there are four main types of noodles: *ramen* (Chinese style), *soba* (whole-wheat!), *udon* (thick and white), and *somen* (thin and white). Does it matter which one you use? Not really, but as with pasta, spaghetti Bolognese and meatballs just isn't the same if you don't use spaghetti.





monkfish yakitori

with green-tea soba noodles, soy sauce, ginger, and lime

Monkfish, also known as angler fish, is perfect at picking up strong flavors and is a dream to broil. If you want a variation on this recipe, try using scallops, which are even more succulent. If you cannot find lemongrass stalks, wooden skewers make perfectly good substitutes.

4 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1½-inch lengths
10½ ounces monkfish (angler fish), cleaned, boned, and cut into 1-inch slices

2 lemongrass stalks, outer leaves removed, split lengthwise

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

salt and white pepper

9 ounces soba noodles

3 cups tea green tea

generous handful of roughly chopped choy sum (see page 14)

generous handful of bean sprouts

1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed

1 green chile, trimmed and sliced

1 teaspoon chopped cilantro

1 red onion, peeled and finely sliced

for the dressing

1 tablespoon olive oil

2 tablespoons light soy sauce

½ teaspoon peeled and grated fresh ginger root

juice of 1 lime

½ teaspoon sugar



These yakitori make fantastic party food when served on their own. Just the thing to partner ice-cold beers.

Preheat the broiler. Make a small slit in each cut length of scallion. Thread the monkfish and scallion pieces equally onto the 2 lemongrass stalks. Place on a baking tray and brush with the vegetable oil. Season with salt and pepper.

Place the tray of monkfish *yakitori* under the hot broiler and cook for 6–7 minutes, turning the stalks once.

Meanwhile, cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling hot green tea for 2–3 minutes until just tender. Drain thoroughly and refresh under cold running water. Combine the remaining ingredients, toss with the noodles in a large bowl, and divide between 2 plates.

Top the noodle mixture with the monkfish. Mix together all the dressing ingredients and drizzle them over it.

seafood ramen

with menma, snow peas, noodles, and scallions

Seafood ramen is another top seller, the perfect fast food offering a nutritionally complete meal in a bowl. One-stop dining of the best kind, and able to provide you with energy that you will start to burn immediately.

9 ounces ramen noodles

4 cups chicken or vegetable stock (see pages 17 and 18)

a small handful snowpeas and baby corn

10 small squid, prepared

4 cooked tiger shrimp, peeled and deveined

2 crabsticks

2 x 1/4-inch slices kamaboko-aka (see page 14)

12 pieces menma (canned bamboo shoots), drained

1 ounce wakame (see page 15), soaked in warm water for

5 minutes and roughly chopped

4 scallions, trimmed and finely sliced

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes until tender. Drain thoroughly and refresh under cold running water.

Bring the stock to a boil in a large pan. Add the snow peas and baby corn and cook for 3 minutes until just tender. Add the squid, cook for 1 minute, then add the shrimp and remove the pan from the heat.

Divide the noodles between 2 bowls and ladle the stock, vegetables, and fish over them. Top with the crabsticks, kamaboko-aka, menma, wakame, and scallions.

*Food this good, this fast? Until I tasted
a bowl of your chicken ramen, I thought
all fast food was rubbish. Thanks for
breaking the mold.*

Francoise, Paris



mackerel with soy and ginger

with sake, mirin, and Japanese rice

1 mackerel, scaled, cleaned, and filleted

for the marinade

3 tablespoons light soy sauce

1-inch piece of fresh ginger root, peeled and grated

1 garlic clove, peeled, chopped, and mashed to a paste with a little salt

2 tablespoons sake

1 tablespoon *mirin* (see page 14)

1 teaspoon sugar

for serving

2½ cups cooked Japanese short-grain rice

pickles (see page 15)

Place the fish fillets, skin-side down, in a flat china dish or non-metallic container.

Mix together all the marinade ingredients and spoon them over the fish. Set aside for 1 hour.

Preheat the broiler, then cook the marinated fillets, skin-side down, for 2 minutes.

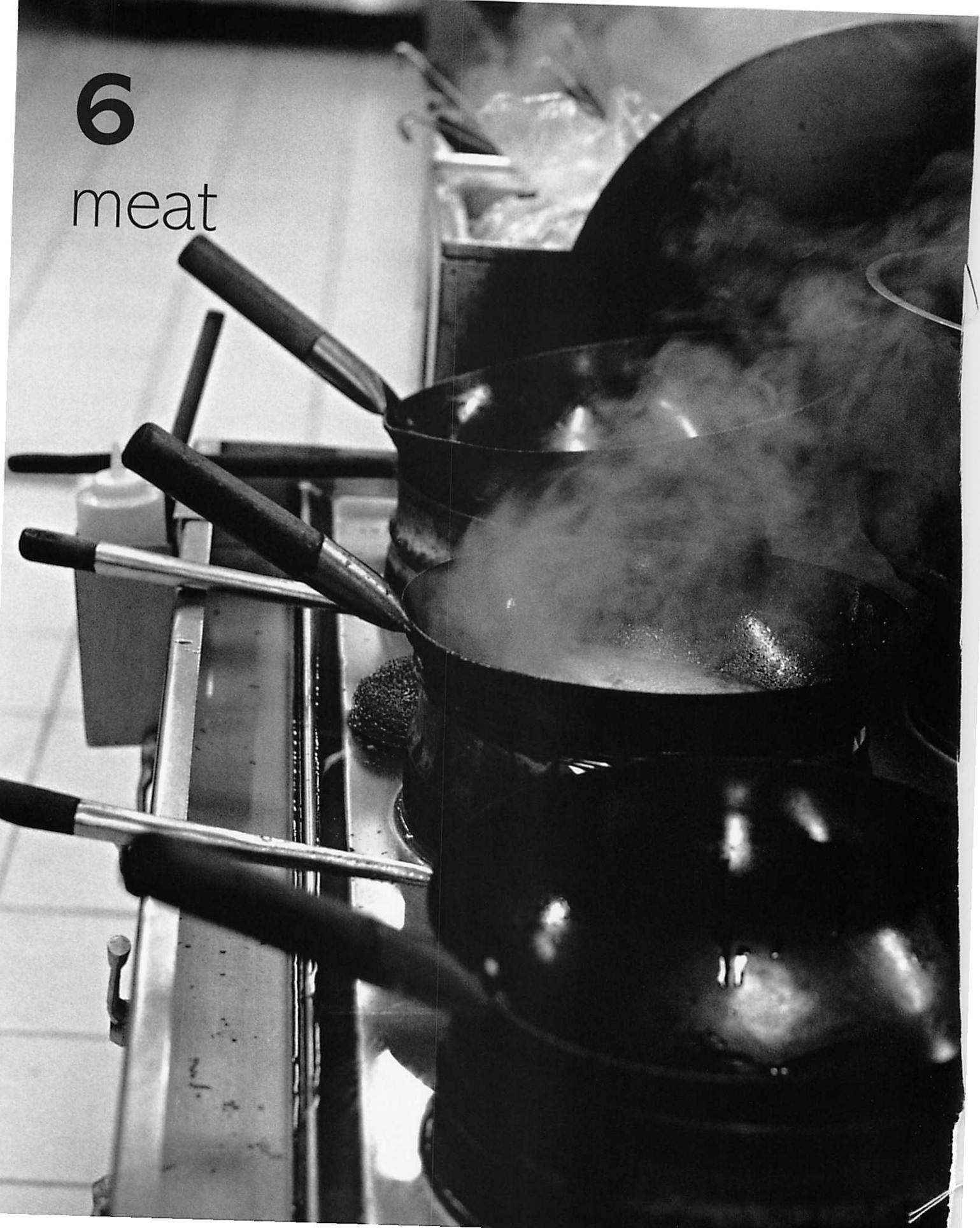
Turn over, brush with extra marinade, and broil for another 3–4 minutes or until the skin is well blistered and golden.

Divide the rice between 2 plates, top with a fillet of mackerel each, and serve with a portion of pickles.

We don't stand on ceremony in the restaurants. You cannot book a table, no smoking is allowed, and your order is keyed into a hand-held computer. That way you get to sit down quickly and your food can arrive in moments. It is designed to be easy and accessible.

6

meat



At the heart of wagamama lies a culinary holy trinity: a bowl of noodles, the soup or broth base, and a topping. When founder Alan Yau was working on the original scheme for the first restaurant in Streatham Street in London's Bloomsbury, it was essentially this dish—eaten at noodle stalls throughout the Far East but particularly in Tokyo—he saw as the core of the menu. It has remained there ever since.

In Tokyo these stalls are very simple affairs: a bench and a few pots holding the hot stock, the noodles, and the various toppings. Good food prepared fast—exactly what many of us want at home. Unlike many so-called fast-food restaurants, the huge benefit of this way of cooking is that the quality is high and it remains healthy. At wagamama, we spend a great deal of time and attention finding prime ingredients and doing as little to them as possible. We might marinate meat to enhance its flavor, but apart from that, the inherent qualities of the dish come from the other ingredients added—a little chile, perhaps, lemongrass, red peppers, or finely sliced scallion.

When you try these recipes at home, the time for marinating the meat may be short, but don't let that put you off. Half an hour will make a substantial difference. The dish won't taste quite the same, or have the same depth of flavor, but it will still be delicious.

You might be surprised to see just how little meat is used in the following recipes. This is very much in keeping with the whole noodle philosophy and not that far from the Italian view on meat in pasta dishes: a little goes a long way. With our increasing awareness of the need for healthier eating, the idea of less, but better quality, is central to our thinking.

Quality and consistency are what wagamama is all about. As we have expanded, consistency has come to play a major role—it has to. Driving that knowledge back into the company is aimed at one key target: maintaining and improving quality. This same attention to detail is carried through in these recipes. Restaurant recipes (we call them specs) seldom automatically transfer to a domestic setting, so we have developed and tested each one in a domestic kitchen to ensure they work properly.

Kaizen is the Japanese word for gradual, ongoing, and simple improvements. In essence, it means you do things, learn things, then you do more things. Never standing still may be a more straightforward explanation but that suggests a random approach. Cooking is so much about confidence, and that can only be attained by doing, learning, and then moving on.

Although the list of ingredients in some of these recipes may seem long, many of them will be—or can be—already in stock. A bowl of noodles today, *teppanyaki* tomorrow.

shichimi spiced duck ramen

noodle soup with spring greens

- 2 x 5-ounce boneless duck breasts (skin on)
- 2 teaspoons *shichimi* (see page 15)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 9 ounces *ramen* noodles
- 4 cups vegetable stock (see page 18)
- 2 handfuls of roughly chopped bok choy or baby spinach
- 4 scallions, trimmed and finely sliced, for garnishing

Prepare the duck by lightly scoring the skin. Mix the *shichimi*, salt, and sugar together in a shallow dish and lay the duck breasts in the marinade, skin-side down. Put a plate on top and weigh it down with something heavy—say a couple of unopened cans of baked beans. Place the weighted duck in the fridge and marinate for 1 hour or if possible, overnight.

To cook the duck, preheat a grill pan or frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes until hot and almost smoking. Cook the duck, skin-side down, for 5 minutes, then turn it over and cook on the other side for 3 minutes or until cooked. Set aside to rest for 5 minutes.

To serve, cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain and divide between 2 bowls. In a large saucepan, bring the vegetable stock to a boil, add the bok choy and cook for 1 minute, then ladle it over the noodles. Check the seasoning. Thinly slice the duck at a slight angle and place on top, along with the scallions.



Far left: The recipes in this book contain a lot of chopping and a sharp knife is essential. You can spend a great deal of money on one (pricey kitchen stores), or not very much at all (ethnic supermarkets and simply replace often), depending upon your budget. Left: Noodles ready to go. Cooking them ahead of finally composing the dish really does make life a lot easier.





chili beef ramen

with bean sprouts, red onion, and lime

- 5 ounces bean sprouts
- 9 ounces *ramen* noodles
- 12 ounces sirloin steak, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick, in the piece
- a little vegetable oil
- a little teriyaki sauce, for brushing
- 4 cups chicken or vegetable stock (see page 17)
- 2 tablespoons chili *ramen* sauce (see page 23)
- 4 scallions, trimmed and sliced
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and sliced lengthwise
- ½ red onion, peeled and very thinly sliced
- 1 lime, quartered
- 6 sprigs of cilantro

Blanch the bean sprouts in a large pot of boiling water for 10 seconds. Drain, reserving the water, and refresh in cold running water. Cook the noodles in the reserved boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain thoroughly and refresh under cold running water.

Heat a grill pan or frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes until hot and almost smoking. Lightly rub the steak with oil, then cook for 2 minutes on each side until medium rare. Remove from the pan, brush with the teriyaki sauce, and keep it warm while it rests for 3–4 minutes. Slice on the diagonal.

Divide the noodles between 2 bowls. In a saucepan, heat the stock, stir in the chili *ramen* sauce, then ladle it over the noodles. Top with the beef, bean sprouts, scallions, chile, red onion, 2 lime quarters, and the cilantro.



It's in the bowl. Ramen continues to be one of our top sellers, a complete meal in one: fast and nutritious; simple food at its best.

Chiles are one of those ingredients about which people tend to feel strongly. Love them or hate them, what is wonderful is how easy it is to include them or leave them out. In the restaurants, we tend to use them sparingly—people can always ask for more or add chili sauce if they want that extra kick. But at home, you can do what you want.

pork and beef cabbage rolls

with scallion, chile, and soy sauce

- 8 large Chinese (napa) cabbage outer leaves
 - salt and black pepper
 - 1/4 cup lean ground pork
 - 1/4 cup lean ground beef
 - 1 small onion, peeled and chopped
 - 4 scallions, trimmed and chopped
 - 1 green chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely chopped
 - 1/3 cup cooked Japanese rice
 - 4 toothpicks
- for the stock
- 1 tablespoon *mirin* (see page 14)
 - 2 1/2 cups *dashi*, made with *dashi no moto* (see page 14)
 - 1 tablespoon light soy sauce
 - 1 tablespoon sake

Cook the cabbage leaves in a large pot of lightly salted boiling water for 3 minutes. Drain and lay flat on a clean dishtowel to cool. Cut a triangle out of the thickest end of the stems (you can leave some stem) and discard. In a large bowl, combine the ground pork and beef, onion, scallions, and chile. Lightly season with salt and black pepper, then add the cooked rice and mix to bind everything together.

Overlap 2 cabbage leaves on a cutting board, place a quarter of the meat filling in the center, and fold up the leaves to form a wrap. Secure with a toothpick. Prepare three other wraps in the same way.

Bring the *mirin*, *dashi*, soy sauce, sake, and a pinch of salt to a boil, then lower the heat to a simmer. Add the cabbage rolls and cover with a lid. Simmer for 40 minutes or until the meat is cooked. To serve, lift out of the stock, remove the toothpicks, and slice in half. Place in 2 serving bowls and ladle some of the stock over them.

These wraps also make fantastic canapés. You can make the stuffed rolls in advance but stop before you cook them because the cabbage tends to discolor an hour or so after it is cooked.



pork belly hot pot

with mixed vegetables, sake, and miso

- 2 ounces *konnyaku*, (see page 14), optional
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 5 ounces belly pork, cut into thin strips (alternatively use bacon)
- 1 red onion, peeled and sliced
- 4 ounces *daikon* (mooli), peeled and shredded
- 2 carrots, peeled and grated
- 4 ounces sweet potato, peeled and julienned
- 4 shiitake mushrooms
- 8 baby corn cobs, cut in half lengthwise
- 1 3/4 cups *dashi*, made with *dashi no moto* (see page 14)
- 1 tablespoon sake
- 1 1/2 tablespoons *miso* paste (see page 19)

If using *konnyaku*, place in a small pan and cover with water. Bring to a boil over medium heat, then drain and let cool. Roughly chop the *konnyaku*.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking and add the vegetable oil. Add the pork and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add the vegetables and stir-fry for another minute. Pour in the *dashi* and sake, bring to a boil, and simmer for 10 minutes.

Remove 2 tablespoons of stock from the wok and blend with the *miso* paste to dissolve it. Pour the mixture back into the wok and cook for another minute. Divide between 2 bowls.

*Fast and friendly service...
Delicious food... And the
waiters are a gorgeous
bunch of blokes, too!*

Anjin, Norway



roasted honey pork ramen

with seasonal greens, bamboo shoots, and barbecue sauce

Steaming broth, sweetened roasted pork, and lots of interesting greens to complete one of our popular specials. This dish is particularly sought after in the colder months, when big, gutsy flavors are required.

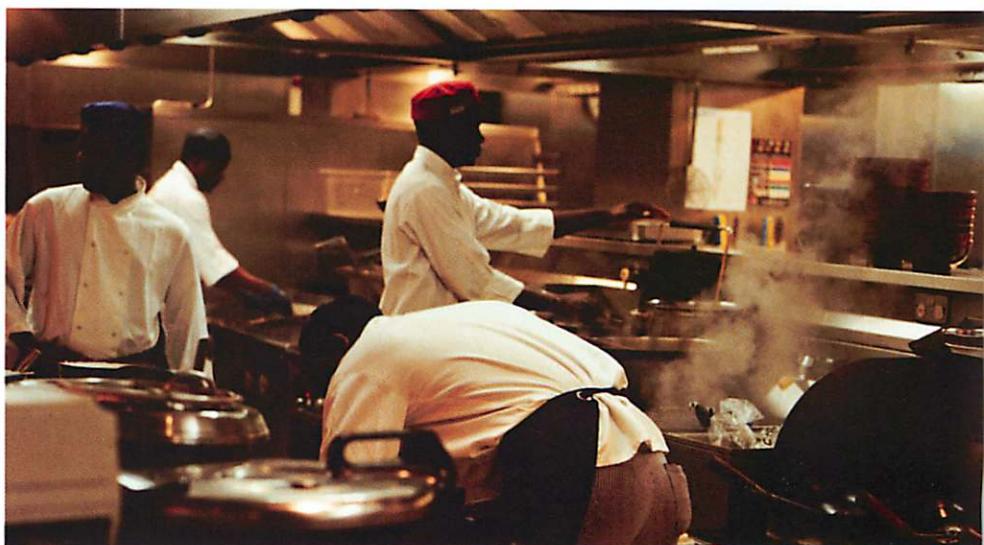
- 10 ounces pork fillet
- 2 tablespoons barbecue sauce (see page 29)
- 2 teaspoons honey
- 10 ounces *ramen* noodles
- 4 cups seasoned chicken stock (see page 17)
- 4 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths
- 2 handfuls of roughly chopped seasonal greens
- 12 pieces *menma* (canned bamboo shoots), drained

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Put the pork in a roasting tray, add the barbecue sauce, and toss to coat. Roast for about 30 minutes. After 25 minutes, pour the honey over it and return to the oven for the final 5 minutes. Let it rest for 5 minutes, then slice thinly.

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes until just tender. Drain thoroughly and divide between 2 bowls. In a saucepan, heat the chicken stock until boiling, add the scallions and greens, and cook for 30 seconds.

Ladle it over the noodles. Top with the *menma* and the pork.

When you order, your choice is keyed into an electronic pad, which sends the selection through to the kitchen. This means your food is often being prepared before you have even had time to settle down.







pork char siu men

five-spice roast pork with bok choy and noodles

- 11 ounces pork tenderloin
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 9 ounces *ramen* noodles
- 3 ounces pak choi or baby vegetables
- 4 cups chicken stock (see page 17)
- 12 pieces *menma* (canned bamboo shoots), drained
- 4 scallions, trimmed and chopped
- for the marinade*
- 1 tablespoon *char siu* sauce (see page 14)
- ½ teaspoon Chinese five spice (available from Oriental stores)
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons sake

Put the pork and the marinade ingredients in a plastic freezer bag, seal and massage for a few minutes, then place in the fridge overnight or for as long as possible.

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Heat a heavy frying pan until hot, add the vegetable oil, and put the pork in for 2–3 minutes to seal, rolling it around until golden all over. Transfer to a roasting tray and roast for 50 minutes–1 hour. Remove and let it rest for 5 minutes, then slice on the diagonal.

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain thoroughly and refresh under cold running water.

Steam or boil the bok choy for 1 minute (or vegetables for 5 minutes) until just tender. Put the stock in a pan and bring to a boil. Divide the noodles between 2 bowls and ladle over them the stock. Top with the slices of pork and bok choy, *menma*, and scallions.

tonkatsu

golden bread-crumbed pork with chile, daikon, and snow peas

The *katsu* dishes are popular sellers on the menu: it's something about those crispy bread crumbs. The recipe for *tonkatsu* comes from the Amsterdam wagamama where it has proved a popular dish from the day it appeared as a special.

2 carrots, peeled and cut into matchsticks
2 ounces *daikon* (mooli), peeled and cut into matchsticks
1 ounce snow peas, thinly sliced on the diagonal
8 scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced on the diagonal
1 green chile, trimmed, seeded, and sliced lengthwise
handful of bean sprouts, well rinsed
2 x 5-ounce pork loin steaks
flour, for dusting
1 egg, beaten
generous handful of *panko* bread crumbs (see page 15)
1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 handfuls of salad greens
1 tablespoon tomato ketchup
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

Put the carrots, *daikon*, snow peas, scallions, chile, and bean sprouts in iced water for 1 hour to crisp up. Drain thoroughly.

Place the pork between 2 sheets of plastic wrap and pound it with a rolling pin until only 1/4-inch thick. Put the flour in one bowl, the egg in another, and the bread crumbs in a third. Dip the pork first in the flour, then in the egg, and finally in the crumbs. Press gently to coat well.

Heat a heavy frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes until hot and almost smoking and then add the oil. Add the pork and cook for 3 minutes on each side until golden. Drain the pork on paper towel and cut into 1/2-inch strips.

Divide between 2 plates, along with the drained vegetables, and arrange the salad greens alongside. Combine the ketchup and Worcestershire sauce and pour it around the pork.

lamb kare lomen

marinated lamb with soba noodles, cilantro, and teriyaki dipping sauce

7 ounces lamb fillet cutlets

2 garlic cloves, peeled, chopped, and mashed with a little salt

1/4 cup vegetable oil

7 fluid ounces (a scant cup) *kare lomen* sauce (see page 38)

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon sugar

1/2 teaspoon *dashi no moto* (see page 14)

7 fluid ounces (a scant cup) coconut milk

9 ounces thin white *somen* noodles

handful of bean sprouts

small bunch of cilantro (coriander leaves), roughly chopped

3 ounces cucumber, peeled and cut into matchsticks

for serving

1 tablespoon barbecue sauce (see page 29)

1 tablespoon teriyaki sauce, homemade (see page 28) or store-bought

2 lime wedges

Combine the lamb and garlic, toss well, and set aside.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking and add the vegetable oil. Pour in the *kare lomen* sauce and simmer for 15 minutes, or until the sauce takes on a deep, dark red color and gives off a sweet, rounded aroma. Add a cup of water and bring to a boil, whisking all the time. Season with salt, sugar, and *dashi no moto*. Add the coconut milk and simmer for 5 minutes.

Preheat the broiler. Broil the lamb for 3 minutes, turn over, and repeat on the other side until cooked. Set aside in a warm place to rest.

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain thoroughly, then divide between 2 bowls.

Spoon the hot *kare lomen* sauce over them and add the bean sprouts, cilantro, and cucumber. Top with the lamb, spoon over a little of the barbecue sauce and teriyaki sauce over it, and serve with the lime wedges.





zasai beef gohan

stir-fried beef with red pepper, mushrooms, oyster sauce, and rice

1 cup rice
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
5 ounces rump or sirloin steak, cut on the diagonal
into thin strips
2 garlic cloves, peeled and mashed with a little salt
handful of snow peas, thinly sliced
4 scallions, trimmed and sliced
½ red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into thin strips
8 baby corn, sliced
6 shiitake mushrooms, sliced
1 tablespoon *shaoshing* wine (see page 15)
pinch of salt
1 teaspoon white sugar
2 tablespoons light soy sauce
1 tablespoon oyster sauce
½ teaspoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon sesame oil
3 tablespoons *zasai* chili sauce (see page 36)

Cook the rice in a large pot of boiling water and drain. Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking and add the vegetable oil. When it's hot, add the beef and garlic and stir-fry for 30 seconds. Then add the vegetables, wine, salt, sugar, soy sauce, oyster sauce, and 1/3 cup water.

Mix the cornstarch with 2 tablespoons of water and stir into the sauce. Bring to a boil, then stir in the sesame oil.

Divide the rice between 2 plates and top with the beef and vegetables, and the *zasai* chili sauce.

Simple food places a great deal of emphasis on finding the best ingredients: the freshest vegetables, well-aged meat, and mouth-watering sauces made alongside the main dish. Attention to detail drives all of what we do and this is equally important in a domestic kitchen.

7

vegetable main dishes



On display in all wagamama kitchens is a chart simply headed "How To Cut." It lists all the vegetables we use and explains how to cut them. This level of detail is important for two reasons. First, as a restaurant group we must ensure consistency at a high standard. Second, how a dish looks is as essential to the Japanese as how it tastes and smells. Vision is, after all, one of our senses. So our team learns how to cut to ensure variety in a dish. Thus a pepper is cut in one of three ways—into chunks, sticks, or juliennes (matchsticks); a scallion is either thinly sliced or long-sliced; a carrot is shredded or cut into round slices.

There is, of course, another constraining factor: all the ingredients in the restaurant dishes (and in recipes here) can be eaten with chopsticks. That means they need to be cut into bite-sized and while this requirement limits the presentation, it also provides an enormously rewarding challenge.

Finding good vegetables is no easy task and at wagamama we face the same problems as the home cook, albeit on a different scale. We insist on the freshest bok choy, scallions, and salad greens. We go to great lengths to ensure our onions deliver punch without bitterness. We continuously strive to find cucumbers with crunch, carrots with bite, and mushrooms with flavor.

It is impossible to discuss vegetables in Japanese cooking and not raise the subject of tofu, an ingredient people in the West have been slow to adopt. Tofu is rich in protein, the main reason for its popularity in countries where protein sources were scarce (in Japan, for example, the eating of meat is relatively recent).

Put simply, tofu is the milk of soybeans, which is coagulated to make it solid—bean curd. It doesn't have a great deal of taste itself, but it readily absorbs the flavors of other stronger-tasting ingredients. In this it is not that different from modern chicken, which is quite mild-tasting and is often "improved" by being cooked with more strongly flavored ingredients.

the organic question Customers often ask about the relative merits of organic. Our answer remains the same: you must taste and judge for yourselves. In our experience, organic can sometimes be better, but it is not a universal truth. Rather than pinning our flag to the organic mast we prefer to go in search of what is best. That way we can ensure we deliver the maximum flavor and texture on the plate or in the bowl.

moyashi soba

stir-fried vegetables with sesame oil and soy sauce

- 9 ounces whole-wheat ramen noodles**
- 4 cups vegetable stock (see page 18)**
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed**
- 2 large zucchinis, cut on the diagonal into 1/4-inch thick slices**
- 2 small leeks, trimmed and finely sliced**
- 15 button mushrooms, finely sliced**
- 14 sugarsnap peas**
- handful of bean sprouts**
- 8 x 1-inch cubes of firm tofu**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 teaspoons sugar**
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce**
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil**
- 4 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1-inch-long slices**

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain, refresh under cold running water, and divide between 2 bowls. Bring the stock to a boil using the same pan and ladle it over the noodles.

Meanwhile, heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Stir-fry the garlic for 5 seconds, then add all the vegetables and tofu, but not the scallions. Stir-fry for 2–3 minutes until softened. Add the salt, sugar, and soy sauce, then drizzle the sesame oil over it. Divide between the bowls and top with the scallion slices.

noodles are delicious, quick, and easy. They are also a source of complex carbohydrates. *Soba* noodles, made from buckwheat, are particularly healthy, as buckwheat is said to thin the blood and is thought to be one explanation for the low rate of heart disease in Japan. A reason, if one is needed, to slurp away.

rice noodle soup

with grilled tofu steak, miso, and choy sum

- 5 ounces rice noodles
- 2 x 9-ounce blocks firm tofu, cut into 2 steaks
- 2 tablespoons miso paste (see page 19)
- 1/2 teaspoon *shichimi* (see page 15)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- handful of roughly chopped choy sum (see page 14)
- 4 cups miso soup (see page 46) or vegetable stock (see page 18)
- small handful of cilantro (coriander leaves)

Soak the noodles in hot water for 2 minutes, drain, refresh under cold running water, and divide between 2 bowls. Place the tofu steaks between sheets of paper towel, and pat dry. Combine the *miso* paste and *shichimi* and spread it over the top of each steak.

Heat a grill pan until hot and oil lightly with paper towel dipped in vegetable oil. Place the tofu on the grill pan, *miso*-side up, for 6–8 minutes or until the tofu is hot and the bottom is crispy. Remove the steaks and cook the choy sum on the grill pan until just wilted. Bring the *miso* soup or stock to a boil and ladle it over the noodles. Top with the choy sum and grilled tofu. Scatter with cilantro.



yasai chili men

stir-fried chili vegetables with tofu and soba noodles

- 9 ounces soba noodles
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 6 x 3/4-inch cubes, firm tofu
- 6 button mushrooms, sliced
- handful of sugarsnap peas
- 1 zucchini, cut on the diagonal into 1/4-inch slices
- 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 2 tomatoes, quartered
- 1 1/4 cups chili sauce (see page 27)

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Once it's hot, add the tofu and stir-fry for about 5 minutes until golden. Add all the vegetables and stir-fry for 3–4 minutes until they are tender. Pour in the chili sauce and bring to a boil. Divide the noodles between 2 plates and top with the stir-fry.

Shopping for noodles is nothing like as difficult as it once was. Most supermarkets now carry quite a range, although ethnic supermarkets tend to be more extensive both in terms of type and the brands they have. Is there much to tell between each brand? Not a great deal, the best idea is to try a few and find one you like.



ginger chile mushrooms

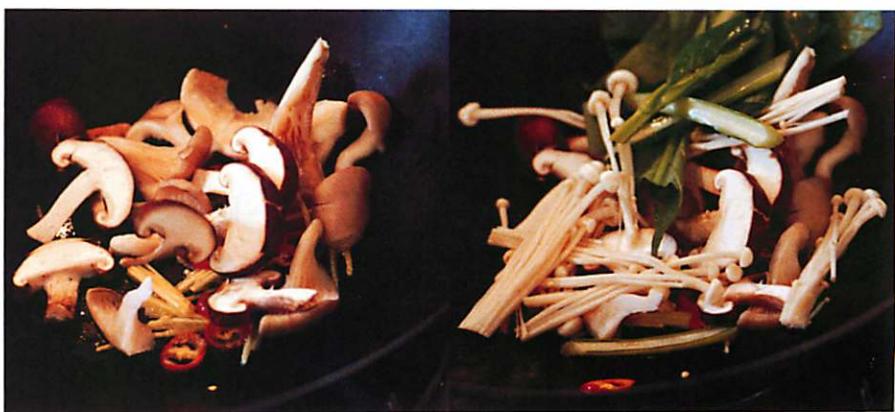
with soba noodles, scallions, and cilantro

- 9 ounces *soba* noodles
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely sliced
- 2 tablespoons peeled and grated fresh ginger root
- 4 oyster mushrooms, cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 4 shiitake mushrooms, cut into 1/2-inch slices
- clump of enoki mushrooms, about the size of your fist, broken up
- handful of roughly chopped choy sum (see page 14)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- generous handful of bean sprouts
- 2 1/2 cups *miso* soup (see page 46)
- 4 scallions, trimmed and sliced
- 2 sprigs of cilantro (coriander leaves)

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain, refresh under cold running water, and divide between 2 bowls. Heat a wok over a medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the sliced red chile and grated ginger and stir-fry for 15–20 seconds, then add the oyster, shiitake, and enoki mushrooms along with the choy sum. Season with salt and sugar, and stir-fry for 2–3 minutes.

Put the bean sprouts on top of the noodles, spoon the mushrooms over them, then ladle over it the hot *miso* soup. Scatter with the scallion slices and cilantro.

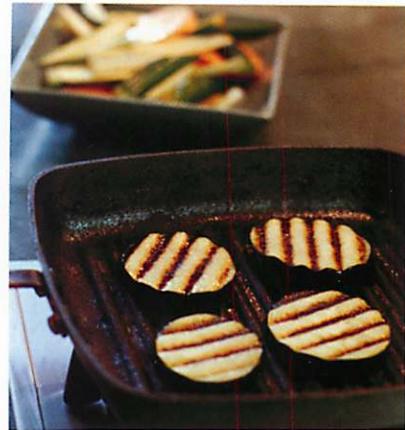
You only stir-fry once, so everything has to be chopped to fit in with the time frame. This can seem a chore when you've been "cooking" for 20 minutes without turning the heat on, but it all happens in a flash at the end.



marinated vegetable ramen

with soy sauce, garlic, and chile

- 1 small eggplant, trimmed and sliced
- vegetable oil
- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and sliced
- 4 medium mushrooms, cut in half
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 4 baby corn, cut in half lengthwise
- 4 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1-inch slices
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely chopped
- 9 ounces whole-wheat *ramen* noodles
- 4 cups vegetable stock (see page 18)



Heat a grill pan until smoking. Brush the eggplant slices with oil. Put all the other vegetables in a large bowl and toss with 3 tablespoons of vegetable oil until everything is coated.

Grill the eggplant first, for 4 minutes on each side, or until tender. Then grill the sweet potato, mushrooms, and zucchini, all of which should take about 2–3 minutes on each side. Finally cook the corn and scallions for 1 minute on each side.

Transfer to a bowl, drizzle the soy sauce over it, add the garlic and chile, and toss, then cover with plastic wrap. (It is important to marinate the vegetables while they are hot so that they absorb the flavors. They will soften up more while cooling.) Set aside to marinate for at least 20 minutes.

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain thoroughly and divide between 2 bowls. Bring the vegetable stock to a boil and check the vegetables; if they are still a little tough, cook in the stock until tender. Ladle the stock and vegetables over the noodles, and serve.

Charbroiled eggplant has a meatiness quite unlike any other vegetable; succulent, full-flavored, and packed with gutsy attitude. Who needs meat when a vegetable can deliver all this?



yasai korroke

vegetable patties with *amai* sauce, mixed greens, and wakame

makes 6 patties

- 1 large potato, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks
- salt and white pepper
- 1/4 cup frozen peas
- 1/4 cup canned corn, drained
- vegetable oil, for deep-frying
- 1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely chopped
- 3–4 tablespoons plain flour
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 heaping cup *panko* bread crumbs (see page 15)
- 2 tablespoons *amai* sauce (see page 22)
- 2 handfuls of salad greens
- 2 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)
- 1/2 red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into thin strips
- 1/4 cup *wakame* (see page 15), soaked in warm water for 5 minutes, drained, and roughly chopped

Put the potato and sweet potato in a pan of boiling salted water and cook for 10–12 minutes until tender. Add the peas for the last 2 minutes. Drain, return to the pan, then crush slightly with a wooden spoon to create a lumpy mash. Stir in the corn.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion and chile over a low heat for 6–8 minutes until soft. Combine the onion and chile with the cooked ingredients in a large bowl, season, and mix evenly. Let it cool, divide into 6 equal portions, and shape into flat patties.

Place the flour in a bowl, the beaten egg in another bowl, and the bread crumbs in a third. Dip each patty first in the flour, then in the egg and finally in the crumbs.

Fill a pan two-thirds full with oil and heat to 350°F, or until a cube of bread added to the oil browns in 30 seconds. Lower in the patties, 3 at a time, and deep-fry for 2–3 minutes until golden brown and crisp. Drain the patties on paper towels and keep warm while you deep-fry the rest.

Arrange the vegetable patties on 2 plates. Heat the *amai* sauce and drizzle it around the plate. Mix the salad greens with the dressing and place on top of the patties. Top with red pepper strips and *wakame*.



Calling these vegetable patties doesn't really do them justice. Light, delicate, and remarkably full-flavored, they deliver quite a punch along with the *amai* sauce.

pumpkin curry

with tofu, brown rice, baby spinach, and coconut ginger sauce

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 small pumpkin, peeled, seeded, and cut into wedges

2 zucchini, cut into small chunks

6 button mushrooms, cut in half

4 baby corn

handful of sugarsnap peas

4 x 1-inch cubes of firm tofu

7 fluid ounces (a scant cup) coconut ginger sauce (see page 25)

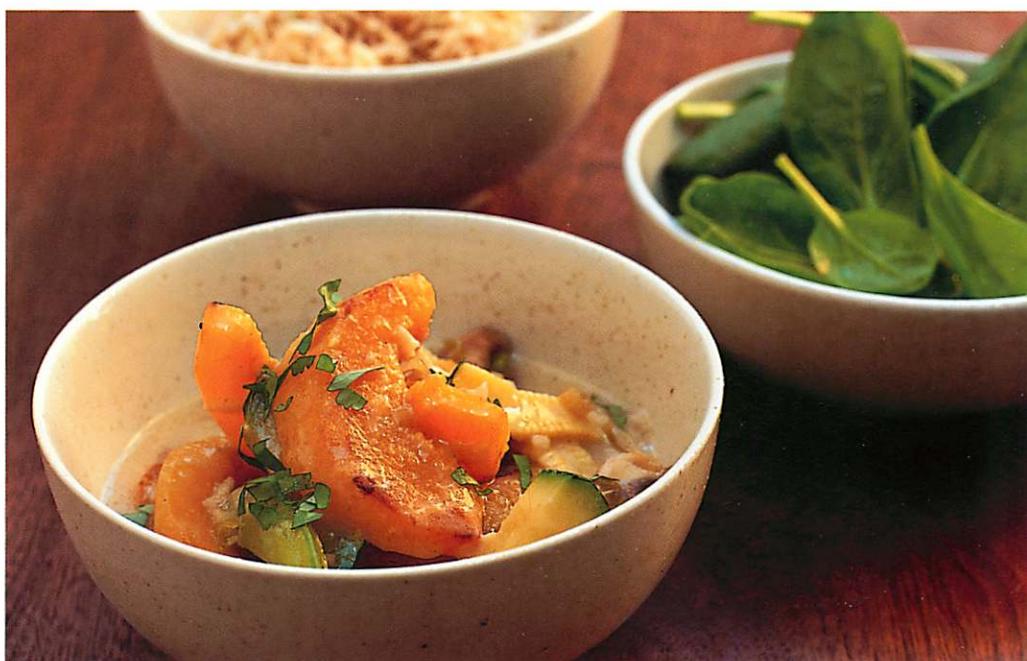
1/2 cup brown rice

2 handfuls of baby spinach

handful of chopped cilantro (coriander leaves)

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the pumpkin, zucchini, mushrooms, baby corn, and sugarsnap peas, and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the tofu and the coconut ginger sauce, season with a little salt, and continue cooking for another 15–20 minutes, or until the pumpkin is tender. Cook the rice according to the instructions on the package. Drain, and divide between 2 plates. Scatter the baby spinach on the plate alongside and on top of the curry. Sprinkle with chopped cilantro.

this recipe comes from the Dublin wagamama where it was introduced as a special. Such was the response, it has kept reappearing as a special ever since. It is full-flavored and gutsy, a winter warmer to cheer you up and one for those summer days that are not quite as sunny as you might have hoped for. The dish takes a little longer to cook than most but the time involves everything simmering away gently so you can put your feet up and relax.







spiced vegetable stir-fry

with chile, soy sauce, miso soup, and lemongrass

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and sliced
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and sliced
- 1 lemongrass stalk, outer leaves removed, and sliced
- 1 red onion, peeled and chopped into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 small leeks, cut on the diagonal into 1-inch lengths
- 12 snow peas
- 10 baby corn, cut in half lengthwise
- handful of bean sprouts
- 4 bok choy, roughly chopped
- pinch of salt
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 9 ounces noodles
- 2 1/2 cups miso soup (see page 46)

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the garlic, chile, and lemongrass and stir-fry for 30 seconds. Add the onion and leeks and stir-fry for another minute. Add the remaining vegetables and season with salt, sugar, and soy sauce. Stir-fry for another 3 minutes until all the vegetables are tender.

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain thoroughly. Heat the *miso* soup in another pan. Divide the vegetables and noodles between 2 bowls and ladle the hot *miso* soup over them.



Previous pages: Happy staff mean happy customers. People, young and old and from all walks of life, enjoy the constant buzz and energy of the restaurants.

You don't need a wok in order to stir fry, but it certainly makes life a lot easier. They are not expensive pieces of kit, particularly if you source one from an ethnic store.

yasai cha han

stir-fried vegetable rice with soy sauce, miso soup, and pickled vegetables

3/4 cup Thai fragrant rice

1/4 cup vegetable oil

14 button mushrooms, quartered

3/4-inch cubes of firm tofu

handful of baby corn

handful of sugarsnap peas

4 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1½-inch lengths

1 teaspoon salt

3 tablespoons light soy sauce

2 eggs, beaten

for serving

miso soup (see page 46)

1/4 cup Oriental pickled (or preserved) vegetables (see page 15)

Cook the rice in a large pan of boiling water until tender. Drain, refresh under cold running water, and set aside.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the mushrooms and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the tofu and continue stir-frying for 3 more minutes, or until lightly colored. Add the corn, sugarsnap peas, and scallions, and stir-fry over medium heat until all the ingredients are warmed through. Add the rice, season with salt and soy sauce, and stir-fry for another 2 minutes.

Add the eggs and stir-fry vigorously until they are just cooked. Divide the stir-fry mixture between 2 bowls. Heat the *miso soup* and serve separately, with the pickled vegetables on the side.

yasai dotenabe

stir-fried vegetables and tofu with ginger, sesame oil, and miso

7 ounces udon noodles
1/4 cup vegetable oil
7 ounces firm tofu, cut into 1-inch cubes
2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
1 tablespoon peeled and grated fresh ginger root
14 chestnut mushrooms, thickly sliced
1/2 red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into strips
1 bok choy, trimmed, washed and quartered
1 small leek, trimmed and cut into strips
1/2 small carrot, peeled and cut into strips
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon sugar
2 teaspoons light soy sauce
2 tablespoons sesame oil
2½ cups miso soup (see page 46)
few sprigs of cilantro (coriander leaves)
12 pieces menma (canned bamboo shoots), drained

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until just tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the tofu and stir-fry for 4–5 minutes until golden. Add the garlic and ginger and stir-fry without letting them color for about 10 seconds. Add the mushrooms, red pepper, bok choy, leek, and carrot, and stir-fry for 3 minutes until tender. Season with the salt, sugar, soy sauce, and sesame oil, and toss well.

Heat the miso soup. Divide the noodles and stir-fry between 2 bowls and ladle the hot soup over them. Top with the cilantro and menma.

yasai yaki soba

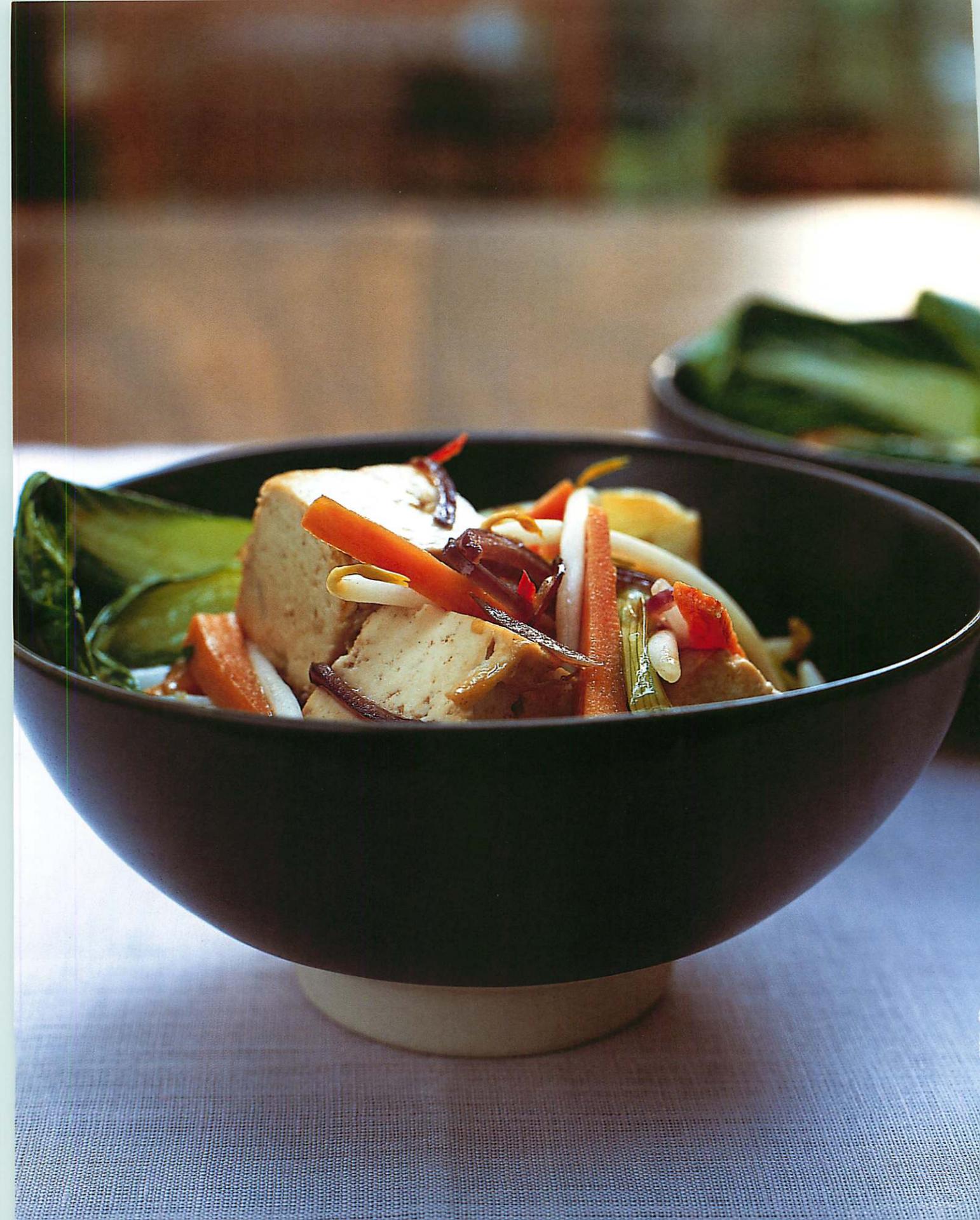
stir-fried vegetables with eggs, soba noodles, and sesame seeds

- 9 ounces soba noodles**
- 2 eggs**
- 1/2 green pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into strips**
- 1/2 red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into strips**
- 1 onion, peeled and thinly sliced**
- 8 scallions, trimmed and sliced**
- 2 ounces button mushrooms, sliced**
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped**
- handful of bean sprouts**
- 2 tablespoons *yaki soba* sauce (see page 32)**
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 2 teaspoons pickled ginger (*gari*, see page 14)**
- 1 tablespoon dried shallots**
- 1/2 teaspoon sesame seeds**
- 2 tablespoons *yasai soba* dressing (see page 39)**

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water. Beat the eggs in a bowl and add all the vegetables and the *yaki soba* sauce.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the egg mixture and the cooked noodles, and stir-fry for 3 minutes. Divide between 2 bowls and top with the pickled ginger, shallots, sesame seeds, and dressing.

noodles are cooked in exactly the same way as pasta: lots of boiling water. But because the noodles are already salted, there is no need to salt the water, just make sure it is properly boiling.



yasai itameru

stir-fried tofu with mixed vegetables, rice noodles, and coconut ginger sauce

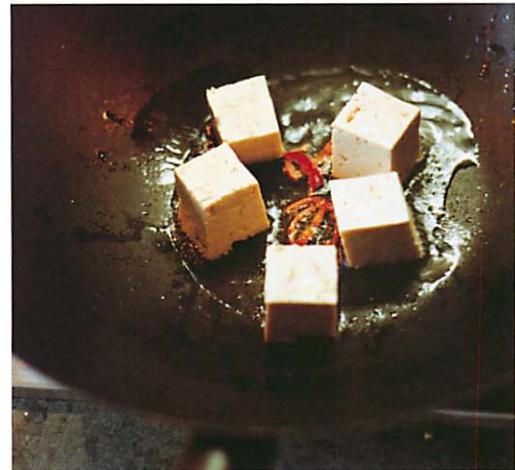
- 5 ounces rice noodles
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon garlic paste (homemade or store-bought)
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely chopped
- 7 ounces firm tofu, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 3 bok choy, cut in half lengthwise
- 1 red onion, peeled and thickly sliced
- 5 scallions, trimmed and cut into 1-inch lengths
- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and cut into matchsticks
- 2 handfuls of bean sprouts
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 9 fluid ounces coconut ginger sauce (see page 25)
- 12 cilantro (coriander leaf) sprigs
- 1 lime, cut into slices

Cook the noodles in a large pot of boiling water for 2–3 minutes or until tender. Drain and refresh under cold running water.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Stir in the garlic paste and red chile, cook for 10 seconds, then add the tofu, bok choy, red onion, scallions, sweet potato, and bean sprouts, and stir-fry for about 5 minutes.

Add the salt, sugar, and soy sauce, and stir-fry for 4–5 minutes until the vegetables are tender. Remove from the heat, drizzle the sesame oil over it, and stir to combine.

In a separate pan, mix the coconut ginger sauce into the noodles and warm them through over a low heat. Divide between 2 plates and top with the stir-fry mixture, cilantro, and lime slices.



For years, people in the West have tended to view tofu as a sort of non-food. Although it lacks much flavor on its own, it is full of protein and is a great team player, liking nothing more than soaking up lots of gutsy flavors.

8

salads



What makes a good salad? For many it is the dressing and for years we have resisted repeated requests to reveal our recipe. No longer: it is given on page 32.

There is, however, rather more to a good salad than the dressing. A salad must provide variety, but it must also have direction, a focus, that ensures it does not become simply a basket for everything.

Popular consensus seems to demand greens of some description. Loosely this means lettuce, but rather more unusual greens—like arugula and mizuna—also come into this category. Varying the greens is one way to change a salad and allow it to evolve—more watercress and corn salad (*mâche*) in winter perhaps; maybe greater use of Bibb (limestone) lettuce in summer.

Some of our salads use noodles and this picks up on the popular Japanese custom of eating cold soba noodles with a soy dipping sauce: comforting food to be enjoyed for its simplicity.

Defining what makes a salad a salad and a dish a dish is no easy task, particularly when you include warm salads. Most are eaten cold, however, and the idea is that all the ingredients are dressed. In Japanese cuisine, dressed salads are called *aemono* and they make up one of the cooking styles used in a meal—the others being deep-fried (*agemono*), grilled (*yakimono*), sautéed (*itammono*), simmered (*nimono*), steamed (*mushimono*), and vinegared (*sunomono*).

How these different techniques are used enables the all-important balance to come into play. Not too much of any one thing, which even in a feast is important. Salads aim to refresh, to provide relief from the more complex and heavier dishes. Yet modern habits have meant they are now almost a meal in themselves.

In the summer months particularly, customers often have a salad and nothing else; a light and refreshing break from a hectic schedule. There is something very welcoming about a plate of colorful leaves with lots of other elements dotted about. Freshness is everything in a salad; crisp leaves, crunchy bean sprouts, and freshly cooked noodles all dressed with the heady delights of ginger, soy, and sesame, cilantro (coriander leaves), *miso*, and lime juice.

asparagus and green-tea noodle salad

with red pepper, chile, and cilantro

- 2½–3½-inch piece of *daikon* (mooli), peeled
- 1 small carrot, peeled
- 2 ounces *soba* noodles, cooked for 2–3 minutes in 1 cup boiling green tea and refreshed under cold running water
- 3 ounces buckwheat noodles, cooked for 2–3 minutes in boiling water and refreshed under cold running water
- ½ red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into strips
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and sliced
- ¾ ounce *kombu* (see page 14), soaked in cold water, squeezed dry, and cut into thin strips
- 2–3 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)
- salt
- 1 small bunch of asparagus, spears cut in half lengthwise
- 2 handfuls of bean sprouts
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- handful of roughly chopped choy sum (see page 14)
- small bunch of cilantro (coriander leaves), roughly chopped

Shred the *daikon* and carrot. (This is best done with a food mill or in a food processor to give you fine strands.) Place the *daikon* and carrot in a bowl of water with several ice cubes and place in the fridge for 1 hour to crisp up. Drain well, mix together with the noodles, red pepper, red chile, *kombu*, and salad dressing, and season with salt. Divide between 2 plates.

Heat a grill pan until smoking and toss the asparagus and bean sprouts in the oil and a seasoning of salt. Cook on the grill pan for 2–3 minutes, turning occasionally, until lightly charred. Add the choy sum towards the end so that it just wilts. Let it cool, add to the rest of the salad, and top with the cilantro.





grilled tofu steak salad

with noodles, scallions, and sake

9 ounces firm tofu, cut into 2 steaks about 3/4-inch thick,
each steak cut into 6 squares
1/4 cup sake
2 tablespoons light soy sauce
2 teaspoons sesame oil
1 garlic clove, peeled and crushed
1 teaspoon peeled and grated fresh ginger root
salt
4 scallions, sliced at an angle
a little vegetable oil
2 handfuls of salad greens
3 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)
1/4 cucumber, seeds removed and finely shredded
large handful of bean sprouts, blanched for 10 seconds and
refreshed under cold water
1/2 lime, sliced

Place the tofu on a clean lint-free dishtowel, cover with another clean towel, and place 2 cutting boards on top to press lightly. Leave for at least 30 minutes.

Combine the sake, soy sauce, sesame oil, garlic, ginger, and salt to taste in a bowl, then add the tofu. Scatter the scallions over it and let it marinate for 45 minutes, tossing occasionally. Remove the tofu from the marinade, shaking off the scallions, and reserving the excess marinade.

Heat a grill pan until smoking and lightly oil it with some paper towel dipped in vegetable oil. Place the tofu on the grill pan and cook for 2–3 minutes on each side until golden brown, then set aside. In a bowl, toss the salad greens in the salad dressing and place on the side of 2 plates.

Mix together the cucumber and blanched bean sprouts and place alongside the salad greens, topped with the lime slices. Arrange the tofu steaks around the salad and spoon the reserved marinade over them.



Charbroiling is not difficult, but it does require confidence. Move your ingredients too quickly and you will soon discover they have stuck to the surface. Leave them alone for long enough and they have a way of unsticking, as if by magic.

rice noodle salad

with sweet potato, butternut squash, red pepper, and sweet miso

- 1 small sweet potato, peeled and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch chunks
- 1 red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and thinly sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch chunks
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- salt
- 6 ounces dried rice sticks, soaked in boiling water for 5 minutes or until tender
- 1 tablespoon chile and cilantro dressing (see page 22)
- handful of snow peas, sliced on the diagonal
- 4 shiitake mushrooms, sliced
- generous handful of bean sprouts
- 3 tablespoons sweet *miso* dressing (see page 35)
- 2 sprigs of cilantro (coriander leaves)

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Put the sweet potato, red pepper, and butternut squash in a roasting pan, toss with the oil, and season with salt. Roast for 20 minutes or until tender and then let cool.

Put all the ingredients except the cilantro in a large bowl and toss. Pile into 2 bowls and top with the cilantro.





smoked salmon salad

with egg noodles, scallions, and apricots

- 1 1/4 cups green tea
- 5 ounces dried egg noodles
- 2 slices (3 ounces) smoked salmon, cut into 1/8-inch strips
- 1/2 red pepper, seeded and cut into sticks
- 1 small red onion, peeled and thinly sliced
- 6 scallions, trimmed and sliced on the diagonal
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and thinly sliced
- generous handful of bean sprouts
- 6 ready-to-eat dried apricots, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 teaspoons chili sauce (see page 27)
- few sprigs of cilantro (coriander leaves)

Strain the tea into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the noodles, turn off the heat, and leave for 5 minutes or until tender. Drain well, refresh briefly under cold running water, and set aside.

Combine the salmon, red pepper, red onion, scallions, chile, bean sprouts, and dried apricots in a large bowl. Stir the soy sauce and oil through them, add the noodles, and stir again. Divide between 2 plates and top with the chili sauce and cilantro.

Behind the casual, relaxed atmosphere of the restaurants there is a systemized approach aimed at ensuring customers experience the best service consistently. Feedback is encouraged and staff involvement is an integral part of the job. We believe in the whole idea of little improvements often. It allows us to evolve and develop.



salmon salad

charbroiled salmon with zucchini, peppers, cherry tomatoes, and cucumber

Seared salmon is a winner every time; crisp, salty skin, and underneath, rich, full-flavored flesh. Cooking is easy, too, as the fish turns opaque before your very eyes.

- 2 zucchinis, sliced
- a little vegetable oil
- salt
- 2 x 6-ounce salmon fillets
- 6 cherry tomatoes
- 1/2 cucumber, cut into strips
- 1 small carrot, peeled and cut into strips
- 1/2 red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into strips
- 1/2 yellow pepper, trimmed, seeded, and cut into strips
- 6 tablespoons cucumber dressing (see page 26)
- 2 handfuls of mixed salad greens
- small handful of cilantro (coriander leaves)
- 1 lemon, cut into wedges

Heat a grill pan until really hot. Lightly oil the zucchini slices and spread them on the grill pan in a single layer. Cook for 3 minutes on each side without disturbing. Transfer to a bowl and season with salt. Oil the salmon and cook for 4 minutes on each side, starting skin-side down, until opaque right through. Let it cool.

Mix all the vegetables together with half the dressing and divide between 2 plates. Put the salad greens on the side. Top with the salmon and cilantro, and drizzle the rest of the dressing around the plate. Serve with a lemon wedge.



ginger chicken salad

with red pepper, scallions, and lime

Chicken breast is often used in restaurants even though it has a tendency toward dryness. Thigh and leg meat, although darker, tends to be much more succulent and rich and often has more flavor. Both are interchangeable, but I know which one most chefs would favor.

vegetable oil, for deep frying

**7 ounces boneless, skinless chicken thigh
meat, cubed, and marinated overnight in
chile and cilantro dressing (see page 22)**

4 tablespoons cornstarch

2 handfuls of mixed salad leaves

**1/4 cup wagamama salad dressing
(see page 32)**

**4 scallions, trimmed and finely sliced
on the diagonal**

1 red pepper, seeded and cut into matchsticks

1 lime, cut in half



Pour enough oil into a heavy pan to come two thirds of the way up the sides. Place it over a medium heat and heat it until the oil reaches 350°F or until a cube of bread added to the oil browns in 30 seconds.

Remove the chicken from the marinade, shaking off any excess. Put the cornstarch on a plate and dip the chicken in it to coat (or toss both in a plastic bag).

Lower the chicken into the oil and deep-fry for 3–4 minutes or until golden and cooked through.

Divide the salad greens between 2 plates and place the chicken in the center. Pour the dressing over it. Top with the scallions and red pepper, and serve with a lime half.

Deep-frying is about the oil and the temperature. You need fresh, pure vegetable oil and the correct heat. Too cool and whatever you are cooking absorbs the oil. Too hot and the outside cooks before the inside has had a chance to blink.

tamarind chicken salad

with red onion, ginger, and amai sauce

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- 1 red onion, peeled and cut into chunks**
- 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into strips and marinated overnight in chile and cilantro dressing (see page 22)**
- generous handful of bean sprouts**
- 2 handfuls of mixed salad greens**
- 3 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)**
- 1-inch piece of fresh ginger root, peeled and grated**
- 3 tablespoons *amai* sauce (see page 22)**
- ½ cucumber, shredded**
- small handful of roughly chopped cilantro (coriander leaves)**

Heat a wok or large frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the red onion and stir-fry over a low-medium heat for 5 minutes until lightly caramelized.

Increase the heat and add the chicken, stir-fry for 1 minute, and then add the bean sprouts. Stir-fry for 2–3 minutes to finish cooking.

In a bowl, toss the salad greens in the dressing and then divide between 2 plates. Place the chicken stir-fry in the center. In a small bowl or cup, combine the grated ginger and *amai* sauce, spoon it over the chicken, and top with the shredded cucumber and cilantro.

*It may be the ramen dishes you
are famous for, but for me it's the
salads that really get me going!*

Mark, Perth

warm stir-fried chicken salad

marinated chicken with lime, chile, cilantro, and toasted sesame seeds

4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into strips

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

for the marinade

1 teaspoon sesame oil

2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed

2 teaspoons fish sauce (see page 14)

2 teaspoons light soy sauce

juice of 1 lime

2 teaspoons ground cumin

1 large red chile, trimmed and chopped

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds (see below)

for the salad

2 handfuls of mixed salad greens

2 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds (see below)

1 tablespoon chopped cilantro (coriander leaves)

1 lime, cut in half

Put all the ingredients for the marinade except the sesame seeds in a blender and blend until smooth, then stir in the sesame seeds. Put the chicken into a dish, pour the marinade over it, cover with plastic wrap, and marinate for at least 2 hours (overnight if possible) in the fridge.

Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the chicken, stirring constantly so the pieces cook evenly, and stir-fry for 4–5 minutes until caramelized around the edges and cooked through.

In a bowl, mix the salad greens with the dressing. Divide it between 2 plates and scatter the toasted sesame seeds and chopped cilantro over it. Top with the chicken and serve with a lime half on each plate.

to toast sesame seeds, heat a dry frying pan and when hot, add the seeds, tossing the pan so they are evenly colored. Have a plate standing by to tip them onto or they are likely to burn.



spiced chicken salad

with star anise, sake, soy sauce, and red pepper

- 7 ounces boneless, skinless chicken thigh meat,
cut into 1-inch cubes**
 - 1-inch piece of fresh ginger root, peeled and finely grated**
 - 1 lemongrass stalk, outer leaves removed, finely sliced**
 - 2 garlic cloves, peeled, chopped, and mashed with a little salt**
 - 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely chopped**
 - 2 star anise**
 - 2 tablespoons sake**
 - 2 tablespoons light soy sauce**
 - 1/4 cup cornstarch**
 - vegetable oil, for frying**
- for the salad*
- 2 large handfuls of mixed salad leaves**
 - 4 spring onions, trimmed and finely sliced**
 - 1 red pepper, trimmed, seeded, and thinly sliced**
 - 2 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)**
 - juice and zest of 1 lime**

Put the chicken in a dish and scatter the ginger, lemongrass, garlic, chile, star anise, sake, and soy sauce over it. Using your hands, turn everything gently for a few minutes. Cover with plastic wrap and marinate for at least 1 hour, and overnight if possible, in the fridge.

Remove the chicken from the marinade, shaking off any excess. Put the cornstarch in a bowl and dip the chicken in to coat. Heat a large frying pan with 3/4 inch of oil. Add the chicken and pan-fry for 8 minutes, turning occasionally.

Divide the salad greens between 2 plates and top with the chicken. Scatter the scallions and red pepper around it. Combine the salad dressing with the juice and zest of the lime and drizzle it over the top.

we marinate a lot of meat in the restaurants. This is done by combining the meat and the marinade in a plastic bag and gently massaging it. The same principle works well at home, too. Simply dropping the meat into the marinade is not enough; you have to work the two together to get an exchange of flavors.

beef itameru

marinated beef stir-fry with red onion, dressed salad greens, and amai sauce

- 1 1/2 ounces sirloin steak, trimmed and cut into thin strips
- 2 tablespoons chile and cilantro dressing (see page 22)
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 small red onion, peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 handfuls of bean sprouts
- 2 large handfuls of mixed peppery salad greens
- 2 tablespoons wagamama salad dressing (see page 32)
- 2 teaspoons peeled and grated fresh ginger root
- 3 tablespoons *amai* sauce (see page 22)
- 1/4 cucumber, seeded and cut into thin strips
- small bunch of cilantro (coriander leaves), roughly chopped

Combine the beef and chile and cilantro dressing and toss so the meat is well coated. Cover with plastic wrap and marinate for at least 1 hour, and overnight if possible, in the fridge.

Heat a wok or large, heavy frying pan over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the onion and stir-fry for 2 minutes until soft. Increase the heat to high and cook for 2 more minutes until lightly caramelized. Add the beef and stir-fry for 1–2 minutes or until lightly golden. Tip in the bean sprouts and cook for 2–3 minutes, then remove from the heat.

Place the salad greens in a large bowl and drizzle the salad dressing over them. Toss until all the greens are coated, then divide between 2 plates. Combine the ginger and *amai* sauce. Pile the beef up in the center of the plates and pour the sauce over it. Top with the cucumber and cilantro.

All our kitchens are open plan. The transparency means the chefs get to see how and what customers are eating and customers have full view of all the activity in the kitchen. This is a key part of the wagamama concept and it allows food to be prepared and delivered quickly.





hot beef salad

with chile, crab salad, and soy sauce

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 1 red onion, peeled and cut into half-moon slices**
- 4 ounces broccoli florets or zucchini, cut into bite-sized pieces**
- 9 ounces sirloin or rump steak, cut into thin strips**
- handful of snow peas, thinly sliced lengthwise**
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed**
- 1 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and sliced**
- 1 crabstick, shredded (optional)**
- 5 ounces bean sprouts**
- 1 teaspoon sugar**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 tablespoon light soy sauce**
- 1 lime, cut in half**
- 2 tablespoons fried shallots (available from Oriental stores)**
- 4 sprigs of cilantro (coriander leaves)**

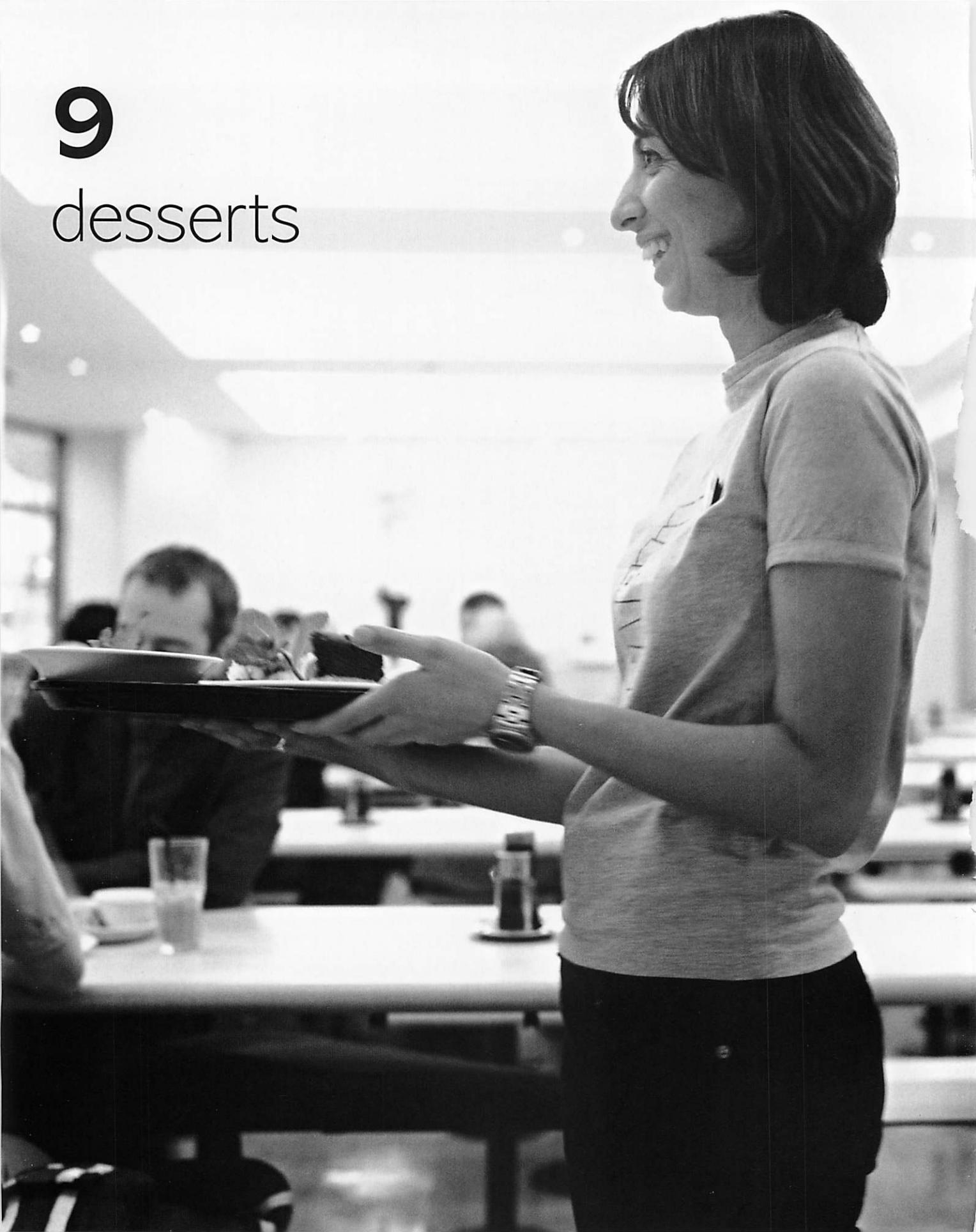
Heat a wok over medium heat for 1–2 minutes or until completely hot and almost smoking, then add the vegetable oil. Add the red onion and broccoli and stir-fry for 2–3 minutes until lightly browned. Add the beef and stir-fry for about 5 minutes until lightly browned. Add the snow peas, garlic, chile, crabstick, and bean sprouts and stir-fry for another 2–3 minutes. Add the sugar, salt, and soy sauce, and toss quickly. Divide between 2 plates, squeeze the juice from the lime over it and sprinkle with the shallots and cilantro.

Your salads have made me completely re-invent what I eat during the summer months. All that color and crunch leaves me feeling totally satisfied. I can hardly bear to look at a sandwich these days!

Helena, Western Australia

9

desserts



Most of these desserts are based on fruit, a reflection in part of the Japanese tendency to end a meal with fruit. There are many reasons for this, not least the long-standing aversion to dairy products and the fact that most Japanese homes do not have an oven, so baking is not a traditional activity.

We also concentrate on fruit as it is a healthy and light option to end a meal. The sense of well-being is central to the whole philosophy of wagamama: eat well and live well. So we charbroil fruit, infuse coconut into the odd creamy concoction—no need to be healthy all the time!—and gently poach pears in sake with spices for extra interest.

We have deliberately kept this chapter short. While confectionary in Japan is a very big—and sweet—part of the national cuisine, the more normal route to finish a meal is with carefully cut fruit, maybe with the benefit of a spice or two for added zest. This is what we do with papaya, for example, but the recipe will work equally well with mango, peaches, and nectarines when they are in season.

As with vegetables, the cutting, in terms of size as well as shape, is a very important part of the preparation. A bowl of whole fruit placed in the middle of the table for dessert is not as tempting to break into as a large plate of fruit which has been cut and fashioned enticingly. This is not to say the fruit display has to be intricate or formal, but a variety of shapes lends interest and if you and your guests are eating with chopsticks, it allows you to have one large plate in the center, and people can then pick as they like.

For those of you who desire something more substantial, we have added in some cooked desserts: fruit *katsu* is one, which is a variety of fruit dipped in bread crumbs and then briefly deep-fried. The green tea drizzle cake is another. Our customers get through an awful lot of green tea and one of our chefs came up with the idea of using this rather unique flavor in a cake. It tastes delicious served with a spoonful of crème fraîche or sour cream.

The perfect partner for these desserts is, of course, ice cream, hardly traditional but tasty nonetheless. Which only goes to reinforce the idea that while wagamama has its origins in Japan, it is quite unique, a combination of numerous different influences and aspects, something which is altogether rather more a sum than a collection of parts. Ice cream, anyone?

lemongrass and chile crème caramel

with sake and star anise

- 1 cup milk**
 - 2 lemongrass stalks, outer leaves removed, slightly bashed**
 - 1 dried red chile**
 - 2 tablespoons sake**
 - 1 cinnamon stick**
 - 1 star anise**
 - 1/4 cup white sugar**
 - 1 egg and 2 yolks**
 - 2 x 5-ounce ramekins or custard cups**
- for the caramel*
- 1/4 cup water**
 - 1/4 cup white sugar**

Put the milk, lemongrass, chile, sake, cinnamon stick, and star anise in a pan and place over a low heat for 15 minutes, without letting it come to a boil. Turn off the heat and let it infuse.

Preheat the oven to 300°F. First prepare the caramel. Put the water and the sugar in a small pan over a very low heat, without letting it boil, until dissolved. Turn up the heat and boil until golden. Carefully pour into the bottom of the ramekins.

Whisk the sugar, egg, and yolks in a mixing bowl until light. Strain the infused milk onto the eggs, mix well, and pour this over the caramel. Place the ramekins in a roasting pan on the middle shelf of the oven, then fill the pan with enough boiling water to reach halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake for 40–45 minutes until set, still with a slight wobble, but not colored. Let them cool completely in the roasting pan. Invert onto 2 plates and serve.

introducing rice to a crème brûlée (right) may seem like sacrilege to some yet the inherent creaminess of the rice works wonders both for flavor and texture. You can play around with other rices too. Italian arborio produces a richer, more rounded result and basmati has its fans.

coconut rice brûlée

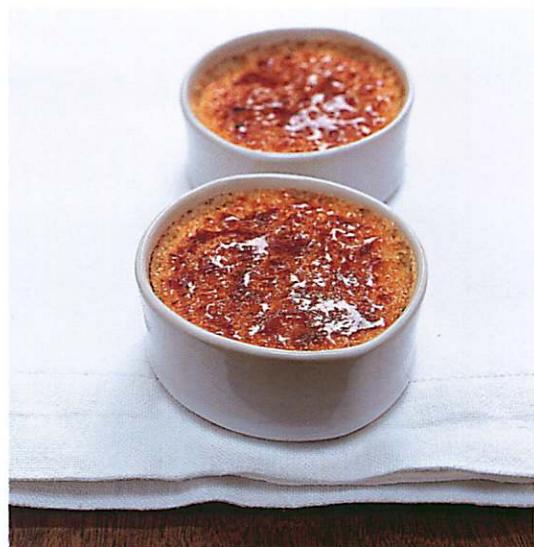
with cinnamon

- 2 tablespoons Japanese rice
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3 egg yolks
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 1 1/2 tablespoons demerara sugar, for glazing
- 2 x 5-ounce ramekins or custard cups

Preheat the oven to 300°F. Put the rice, half the coconut milk, the water, and cinnamon in a pan and bring to a boil. Simmer gently for 15 minutes, covered, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Turn off the heat and let stand, covered, for another 10 minutes until the rice is tender and the liquid has been absorbed. Divide between the 2 ramekins. Whisk the egg yolks with the white sugar until light.

Heat the cream and the remaining coconut milk in a small pan and whisk into the egg and sugar mixture. Stir to combine, then pour it over the rice. Place the ramekins in a roasting pan on the middle shelf of the oven, then fill the pan with enough boiling water to reach halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake for 45 minutes until almost set (there should still be a slight wobble). Remove from the oven and let them cool completely in the roasting pan. To serve, sprinkle the top with demerara sugar and brûlée it, either using a blow torch or under a very hot broiler, until golden and crispy.

The essence of a good brûlée lies in the just-set custard and a thin crust that yields to a little pressure. The ideal route, although risky, is to up-end the ramekin once you have dusted the sugar so only a fine coating is left. Trouble is, this can lead to custard on the floor!



fresh papaya

with chile, ginger, and lime

8 ounces papaya peeled, seeded, and cut widthwise into

1/4-inch slices

1-inch piece of fresh ginger root, peeled and cut into thin strips

1/2 red chile, trimmed, seeded, and finely chopped

1 lime, quartered, for serving

Arrange the papaya on 2 plates. Scatter the ginger strips and the chopped chile on top. Serve with the lime wedges for squeezing over them.



fruit katsu

golden fruit with ice cream and mint

1 tablespoon *shichimi* flour (see page 19)

1 egg, beaten

5½ cups coconut *panko* bread crumbs (see page 19)

2 x ¼-inch slices of fresh pineapple, peeled and cored

1 banana, peeled and cut into 1½-inch slices

1 apple, peeled, cored, and cut into wedges

vegetable oil, for deep frying

for serving

vanilla ice cream

sprigs of mint

Place the *shichimi* flour in a bowl, the beaten egg in another, and the bread crumbs in a third. Dip the fruit first in the flour, then the egg, and finally the bread crumbs.

Fill a pan one-third full of oil and heat it to 350°F or until a cube of bread added to the oil browns in 30 seconds. Deep-fry the fruit in batches until golden brown. Remove from the oil and drain well on paper towels.

To serve, divide the fruit between 2 bowls and top with a scoop of ice cream and a sprig of fresh mint.

There aren't many restaurants where kids are encouraged to draw all over the placemats! My own two grab the crayons, order cha han or yaki soba and a drink, and settle in. They both seem to pick up on the buzz and the friendliness of the staff. It's become part of their lives and will continue to be for some time probably.



banana katsu

with ice cream, red currants, and mint

- 1 tablespoon flour
 - 1 egg, beaten
 - 3 tablespoons panko bread crumbs
 - 2 large bananas, peeled but left whole
 - vegetable oil, for deep-frying
 - confectioners' sugar, for dusting
 - 4 scoops of vanilla ice cream, for serving
- for decorating*
- few sprigs of red currants
 - sprigs of mint

Place the flour in a bowl, the beaten egg in another, and the bread crumbs in a third. Dip the bananas first in the flour, then in the egg, and finally in the bread crumbs until coated. Pour 2 inches of the vegetable oil in a pan and heat it to 350°F, or until a cube of bread added to the oil browns in 30 seconds.

Deep-fry the bananas for 3–4 minutes or until golden brown. Remove carefully with a slotted spoon, drain on paper towels, and dust with confectioners' sugar.

Divide between 2 plates and serve with the ice cream. Decorate with some red currants and mint.



The bread crumbs are key here—Japanese really are the best—but so, too, is the oil and its temperature. Use a pure vegetable oil every time and ensure it is hot enough or you'll end up absorbing too much of the oil into the bread crumbs.

charbroiled pineapple

and coconut broth

1 3/4 cups canned coconut milk

1/3 cup white sugar

juice of 1 lime and zest of 1/2 lime

2-inch piece of lemongrass stalk, outer leaves removed, sliced

4 x 1/2-inch slices of fresh pineapple, peeled and cored

(or use canned pineapple rings)

Put the coconut milk, two thirds of the sugar, the lime juice and zest, and lemongrass in a heavy pan over medium heat and simmer gently for 5 minutes. Remove and set aside to infuse and cool.

Heat a grill pan over a high heat until almost smoking. Sprinkle the remaining sugar over the pineapple slices. When the pan is hot, cook the pineapple for 1 minute on each side. Strain the broth, reheat gently, pour into 2 bowls, and add the pine-apple rings.

marinated mango

with coconut sherbet

1/2 cup white sugar

1/2 cup water

1 ounce fresh ginger root, peeled and grated

1 star anise

juice and zest of 1 lime

1 ripe mango, peeled, pitted, and cut into 1/4-inch slices

2 scoops of coconut or lime sherbet, for serving

Put the sugar, water, ginger, star anise, lime juice and zest in a pan over medium heat until the sugar is dissolved. Increase the heat and simmer for 15 minutes until fragrant and syrupy, but still clear. Set aside to cool.

When cool, add the sliced mango and let it marinate overnight in the fridge. Fan the slices of mango in a circle in the center of a serving plate, spoon some of the syrup over them, and serve with a scoop of sherbet.

spiced fruit compote

with sake

- 1 cup water**
- 1/2 cup white sugar**
- 2 star anise**
- 1 cinnamon stick**
- 1 dried red chile**
- 2 oranges (you need the zest of 1 and the juice of 2)**
- 1 apple, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
- 1 Chinese pear, peeled, cored and cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
- 12 dried apricots**
- 2 ounces dried banana**
- 2 ounces dried papaya**
- 2 ounces dried mango**
- 12 lychees, peeled, pitted, and cut in half**
- 1/3 cup sake**

Put the water, sugar, star anise, cinnamon, chile, orange juice and zest in a pan. Bring to a boil, cook for 5 minutes, and then lower the heat to a simmer. Add the apple, pear, and all the dried fruit, cover, and simmer for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until tender.

Transfer to a bowl and add the lychees. Heat the sake and, just as it comes to a boil, pour it over the fruits, stir, and serve.

Sake is a complicated subject and, like wine, it varies in quality. Most are delicious, however, and you need to experiment to find those that you prefer. Sake is served both warm and cold, the latter being the preferred route for most westerners when it is often compared to a dry fino sherry.



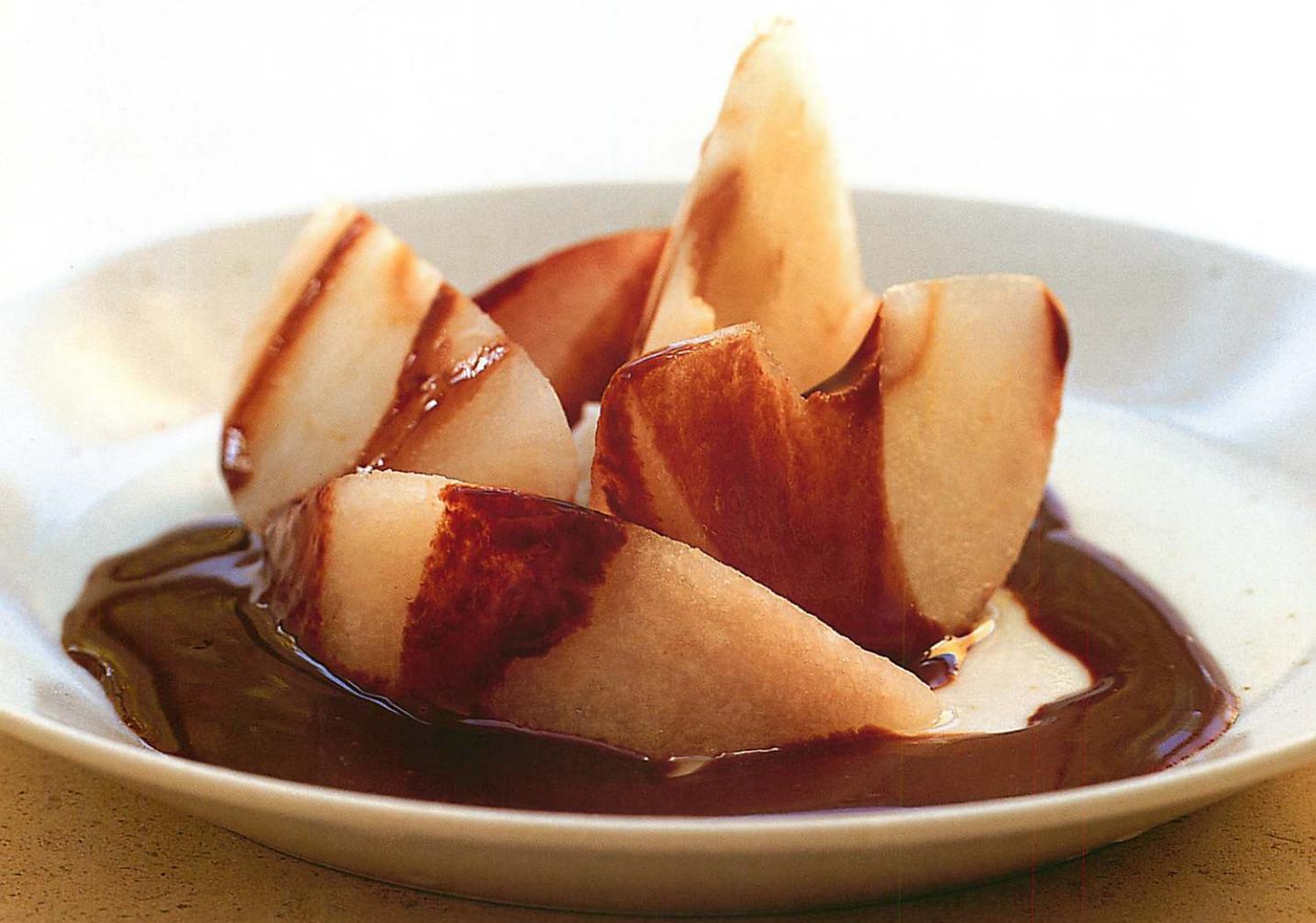
fruit yakitori

with lime syrup

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- juice and zest of 2 limes
- 1/2 pineapple, cut into 1-inch chunks
(or use canned pineapple chunks)
- 2 bananas, cut into 1½-inch pieces
- 3 kiwi fruit, peeled and quartered
- 4 bamboo skewers, soaked in cold water for 2 hours

Put the water, half the sugar, and the lime juice and zest in a small pan. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, and simmer gently for 10–15 minutes or until thick and syrupy. Set aside.

Thread the fruit onto the skewers. Scatter the remaining sugar evenly over them. Heat a grill pan or broiler and cook until the fruit is golden and slightly charred, turning occasionally. Drizzle with the lime syrup.



sake poached pears

with warm chocolate sauce

2½ cups water
½ cup sake
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons white sugar
2 star anise
1 cinnamon stick
juice and zest of 1 lime
2 ripe but firm Chinese pears, peeled
but left whole
for the chocolate sauce
2/3 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter
3 ounces dark chocolate
white sugar, to taste
zest of 1 lime



Put the water, sake, sugar, star anise, cinnamon, lime juice and zest in a small, deep saucepan and bring to a boil. Simmer vigorously for 5 minutes, then lower the heat to a gentle simmer. Add the pears, cover, and simmer for about 45 minutes, or until tender. Remove from the heat and let cool in the liquor.

To make the sauce, place all the ingredients except the lime zest in a small pan and heat gently until melted and smooth. Stir in the lime zest.

To serve, place the cooked pears on a cutting board, cut each one in half, and remove and discard the core. Place in 2 serving bowls and pour the chocolate sauce over them.

The poaching needs to be gentle, the objective being not just to soften the pears, but to infuse them with the spicy delights of star anise and cinnamon. Other spices that work well are cloves and cardamoms but don't be tempted to go overboard, or you'll end up with something rather confused.

the chocolate needs to be of good quality; dark and forbidding but full of complex flavors. There is something about spicy food that makes chocolate seem a popular way to finish.

green tea drizzle cake

with crème fraîche

serves 6–8

3/4 cup all-purpose flour

1/2 ounce green tea powder (optional)

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 cup sugar

4 eggs

1/3 cup (3/4 stick) butter, melted and cooled

crème fraîche (or sour cream), for serving

for the green tea syrup

2 tablespoons green tea leaves

2/3 cup boiling water

2/3 cup caster sugar

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease an 8-inch round cake pan and dust it with flour.

Sift the flour, green tea powder (if using), and baking powder into a large bowl. Put the sugar and eggs into a large heatproof bowl over a pan of barely simmering water. Using an electric beater, beat the sugar and eggs for 2–3 minutes until the mixture triples in volume, lightens in color, and is the consistency of lightly whipped cream.

Sift the flour mixture into the sugar and eggs, and drizzle the melted butter down the side of the bowl, then gently fold in until incorporated. The batter should not be beaten or overworked. Pour into the prepared pan. Bake on the bottom shelf of the oven for 30–35 minutes, or until the cake is golden and firm to the touch and coming away from the side of the pan. A skewer inserted into the center should come out clean.

While the cake is cooking, make the green tea syrup. Stir the green tea leaves into the boiling water and let stand for 2–3 minutes to create a strong infusion. Strain the tea into a small pan with the sugar and set it over a very low heat until the sugar has completely dissolved. Increase the heat and boil rapidly for 5 minutes until you have a light syrup. Remove 3–4 tablespoons of the syrup and set aside to cool. Keep the rest of the syrup warm while the cake is cooking.

As soon as the cake is baked, remove from the oven but leave in the pan for a few minutes to cool slightly. Skewer the cake surface and drizzle the warm syrup slowly and evenly over the top of the cake. Let it cool completely in the pan. Mix the cooled reserved syrup with the crème fraîche, then cover and chill.

Remove the cake from the pan and peel away the greaseproof paper. Serve with a spoonful of green-tea-spiked crème fraîche.



10 juices and drinks



nama

Beverages on the wagamama menu are diverse and varied. We serve lots of raw juices—both fruit and vegetable—as well as beer, wine, soft drinks, and, of course, tea. The tea is green, the color a result of the leaves being steamed before they are dried, which prevents them turning black.

We make a lot of our juices, as much for their flavor as for their healthy attributes. All are refreshing, some (like the carrot juice) are spiced with a little ginger, while others are left plain and natural, like the fruit juice blend of apple, orange, and passionfruit.

To make these juices, you do need a dedicated juicer. These vary quite a lot in price and it may be worth considering a cheaper model while you experiment to see how frequently you come to use one. The quantities here are for one large or two small glasses.

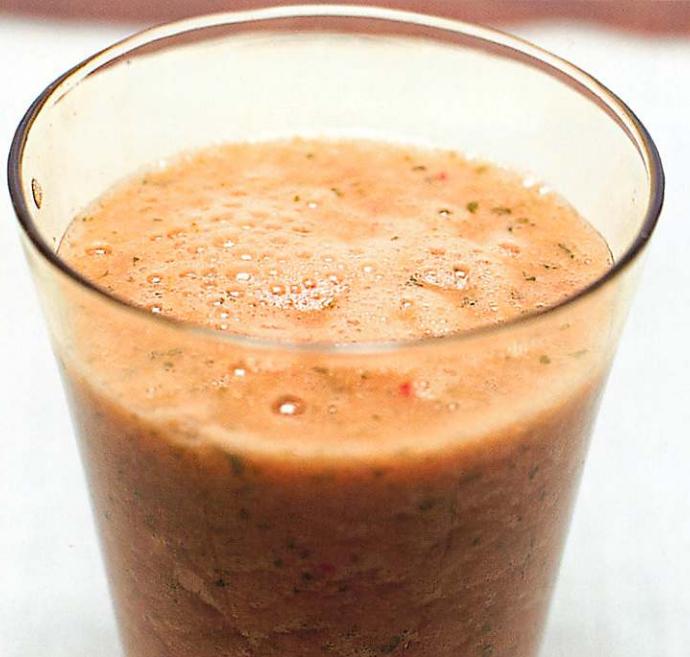
Many diners in the restaurants start with a fresh juice and then move on to tea, but a great number also have a soft drink or beer.

Most of our beers are from the East. They tend to have an alcohol rating around the 5 percent mark, which ensures a strength of character sufficient to cope with the food. A lower-alcohol beer can be drowned out by the strong flavors of the food and this is also true of softer beers, like pale ales.

Wines are chosen to complement the food, so the whites tend to be dry and crisp or quite full-flavored and fragrant to stand up to the spicing. On the red front, light and fruity works best—anything too tannic tends to clash with the spices. Sake is also popular and highlights the need for a wine with quite a distinct flavor, so leave the delicate bottles for another time.

Green tea is probably the most traditional of all the drinks we serve. This is a large subject and not something that can be covered in enough detail here. Suffice to say that there are a number of different grades of green tea and a great deal of ceremony associated with drinking it.

What is best to drink with the dishes in this book is purely a matter of preference. And while the idea of not drinking when eating can seem odd, given the amount written about pairing food with suitable beverages, it is a route well worth trying. Consider a bowl of wagamama ramen by itself and then sit and relax over a cup of green tea. The world can seem a better place.



pineapple and watermelon juice

6 ounces pineapple, peeled, cored, and cut into cubes
6 ounces watermelon flesh
small handful of cilantro, including stalks
½ red chile, trimmed, seeded, and cut in half
¼ cup orange juice

Push all the ingredients through a juicer, stir, and pour into 2 glasses.

raw juice

We wondered how the raw juice would be received when we first put it on the menu. Its name seems almost too healthy, but it has walked out the door from the first day it went on sale.

1 apple, peeled, cored, and cut in half
1 scant cup orange juice
1 tomato, cored
2-inch piece of cucumber, roughly chopped
4 medium carrots, peeled and finely chopped

Push all the ingredients through a juicer, stir, and pour into 2 glasses.

Above left: pineapple and watermelon juice.
Above right: raw juice.

apple and cranberry juice

A good juicer tends to generate a rather attractive froth, which sits on the top of the juice much like milk on a cappuccino. The staff have competitions to see how perfect they can make the froth.

6 apples, peeled, cored, and cut in half

1 cup cranberries

Push the apples and cranberries through a juicer and pour into 2 glasses.

carrot juice

2-inch piece of fresh ginger root, peeled and roughly chopped

6 medium carrots, peeled and finely sliced

Push the ingredients through a juicer and pour into 2 glasses.

*Below left: apple and
cranberry juice.
Below right: carrot juice.*



apple and orange juice

4 apples, peeled, cored, and cut in half

1 cup orange juice

Push the apples through a juicer, combine with the orange juice, and pour into 2 glasses.

apple, carrot, and watercress

4 apples, peeled, cored, and cut in half

2 handfuls of watercress, washed

4 medium carrots, peeled and finely chopped

Push the apples, then the watercress, and finally the carrots through a juicer and pour into 2 glasses.

apple, passionfruit, and orange juice

1 passionfruit

4 apples, peeled, cored, and cut in half

1 cup orange juice

Cut the passionfruit in half, scoop out the seeds and pulp, and push it with the apples through a juicer. Combine with the orange juice and pour into 2 glasses.

apple, carrot, and celery juice

4 medium carrots, peeled and finely chopped

2 celery stalks, finely sliced

3 apples, peeled, cored, and cut in half

Push all the ingredients through a juicer and pour into 2 glasses.



apple, celery, and mint juice

6 apples, peeled, cored, and cut in half

2 sprigs of mint (including stalks), roughly chopped

2 celery stalks, finely sliced

Push all the ingredients through a juicer and pour into 2 glasses.

Sales of juices have rocketed in recent years. It used to be tea, beer, soft drinks, and then wine, but now juices top the list. Customers say they like the flavor and the healthy aspect and undoubtedly you tend to feel rather pleased with yourself after drinking something packed so full of goodness.

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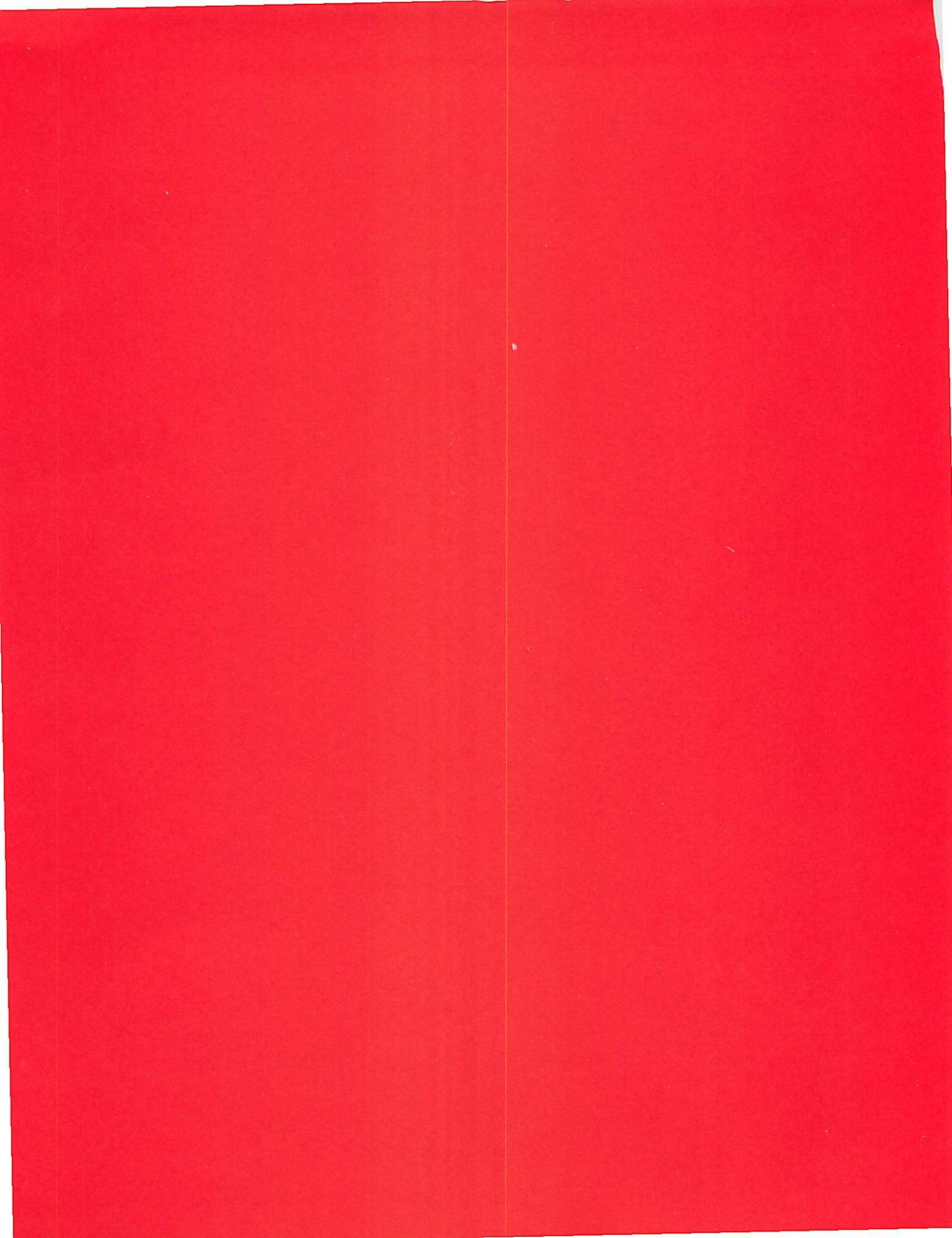
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positive eating + positive living

- ★ wagamama redefined the idea of fast food. From its first site behind the British Museum in London in the early nineties, it now has restaurants in Dublin, Amsterdam and as far as Sydney and has shown the way of the noodle to countless people in search of speedily cooked nutritious food at low prices.
- ★ This cookbook reveals how easy it is to enjoy the unique wagamama experience at home. Modeled on the 200-year-old ramen stalls of Japan, wagamama provides a wide range of Japanese-inspired dishes based around noodles, rice and fresh, quality ingredients. Many favorites from the menu are featured as well as a host of newly created dishes, from mouthwatering appetizers and salads to hearty noodle soups and stir-fries plus a range of exotic juices and desserts.
- ★ Hugo Arnold is the author of six books and won a Glenfiddich food award in 2001 for his innovative writing.

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