

Title:

Bluefin Tuna In Danger

Word Count:

570

Summary:

The sushi craze is bigger than ever in America right now, with new sushi joints popping up all over the place. Yes, sushi is quite "in." Of course I realize this isn't news to anyone, as at this point it might even be on the verge of "out." But, irregardless of your opinion of sushi, it may not be around for too much longer. Or, at least, sushi as we know it.

You see, America's growing interest (along with China's and Russia's) in the artful Japanese creation has led to a ...

Keywords:

sushi, bluefin tuna, Japan, tuna

Article Body:

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You see, America's growing interest (along with China's and Russia's) in the artful Japanese creation has led to a shortage of the most common ingredient used in sushi: bluefin tuna. Not only are bluefin tuna fisheries already being depleted by their original and most frequent consumer (Japan, of course) but global demand for the raw fish is adding quite the insult to injury.

What's ironic about the situation is that the spreading of culinary traditions across the globe is usually seen as a form of flattery and an extension of cultural influence, but for Japan and its economy, the global sushi "trend" has been nothing short of a detriment. The NYTimes article that reports on Japan's crisis analogizes that tuna in Japan is as important as steak in America.

Imagine America without steak! Even if you don't like red meat, there is no doubt that steak is a sun around which the American economy's planets revolve (but of course, we have multiple "suns.") I mean really, what would America do?

Well, actually, chef Gordon Ramsay has recommended horse meat as a healthier and better tasting steak substitute. America is fortunate enough to not have to resort to any backups (yet), but even if that weren't the case, Japan may beat us in the horse races (pun entirely intended).

Yes, you guessed it! Horse meat is Japan's backup plan!

To keep the sushi economy alive, some Japanese chefs have decided to use raw horse meat or deer to make their sushi. Forgive me if I'm wrong, but the thought of this in America would likely turn stomachs away from sushi for good (and maybe that is their intention!) But in Japan, both raw horse meat and deer are considered delicacies for natives. They just haven't been placed inside a jacket of seaweed and rice before (not that maki is the only way to enjoy sushi.)

So, a thought on globalization, if you're still reading:

Do we want to continue spreading our culinary traditions? Often food, no matter where you come from, is based on local resources, which means that sharing the traditions with the rest of the world seems to mean sharing the resources too. At some point, you'd think, a country would have to be selfish, because people in other parts of the world may not appreciate or need a food the way that country does. In fact, one person's food adventure is another person's staple, so where does the boundary lie?

I'm not naive as I realize that my comments and thoughts are entirely based on my being American. I know I come from the melting pot world where I'm fortunate enough to have food influences from all around the world readily available to me. And further, I know that this isn't the case in the rest of the world.

Run for the hills horses! You're next!