

cooking classics  
japan

A STEP-BY-STEP COOKBOOK



catherina hosoi

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# introduction

Japanese cuisine is very popular particularly with people who enjoy healthy yet delicious meals. In Japanese homes, mothers usually prepare meals based on traditional cooking styles with some influence from Western or Chinese cuisines. These Western and Chinese-influenced dishes are called *yofu* and *chuka* respectively.

A typical Japanese meal would include a rice (*gohan*) or noodle (*men-rui*) dish served with meat or seafood. These meals would come served with side dishes such as salads or simmered dishes consisting of vegetables, tofu, various kinds of seaweed, pickles and soup. You will often find four to five dishes laid out on a table. These dishes can also be packed into bento boxes to be brought to the office or school.

Other than the three main meals of the day, the Japanese are known to enjoy snacks or desserts in the afternoons. Known as *san-ji-no-oyatsu* or teatime, traditional snacks such as glutinous rice balls (*dango*) coated with sweet soy sauce and chilled jelly with fruit (*anmitsu*) are served together with tea. These days, you will also find Western-style sweets such as ice cream, pastries and cakes served at teatime.



When it comes to cooking at home, most households would have the basic ingredients stocked in the kitchen. These seasonings and sauces are the foundations of most Japanese dishes. They are Japanese soy sauce (shoyu), soy bean paste (miso), sweetened rice wine (mirin) and rice wine (sake). Various kinds of seaweed are usually used in home cooking too as Japan is surrounded by the sea. The most commonly used variety is kelp (konbu), which forms the basis for cooking stock called dashi, which is used to prepare miso soups, noodle broths and simmered dishes.

Thanks to the increased popularity of Japanese cuisine, Japanese ingredients are easy to find even outside of Japan. I have also ensured that the recipes included in this cookbook use products and ingredients which are widely and easily available.

While it is easy to find popular Japanese dishes at restaurants, there is a whole repertoire of Japanese home-style cooking not well-known outside of the country. These dishes are well-loved by Japanese families and I have included them in this cookbook to introduce you to the wide variety of Japanese classics. With step-by-step photographs and an easy-to-follow format, I hope this book helps you discover the joy of Japanese cooking at home. *Ganbatte!*





# cooking techniques

## deep-frying

Introduced to Japan in the 1500s by the Portuguese, deep-frying has become a widely-accepted cooking method in Japan. Coating seafood, meats and vegetables in a light batter and cooking them in hot oil ensures that the shape and flavours of the ingredients are retained. The most common types of batter used in Japanese cooking include breadcrumbs (*panko*) and plain (all-purpose) flour. Some Japanese dishes are deep-fried with just a light coating of potato starch, as in the case of cooking Japanese-style deep-fried chicken (*karaage*). Other classic dishes that are deep-fried include tempura and *tonkatsu*.

## grilling

Grilling can be done over charcoal fire or gas. Seafood and meats are often marinated before grilling, then basted with the marinade as the seafood or meat cooks. The most basic type of marinade, called teriyaki, is made with Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*), mirin and sugar. Grilling can also be done in a frying pan using just a small amount of oil. This cooking method is healthy yet the results are highly flavourful. One of the more popular Japanese foods cooked this way is grilled chicken parts cooked over charcoal (*yakitori*).





## one-pot cooking

*Nabemono* refers to Japanese food cooked in small pots made of clay or cast iron. A popular *nabemono* dish is thinly-sliced beef in sweet broth (*sukiyaki*). This cooking technique is also used to prepare stews and soups such as braised beef and potatoes (*nikujaga*) and Kagoshima-style soup *satsuma jiru*.

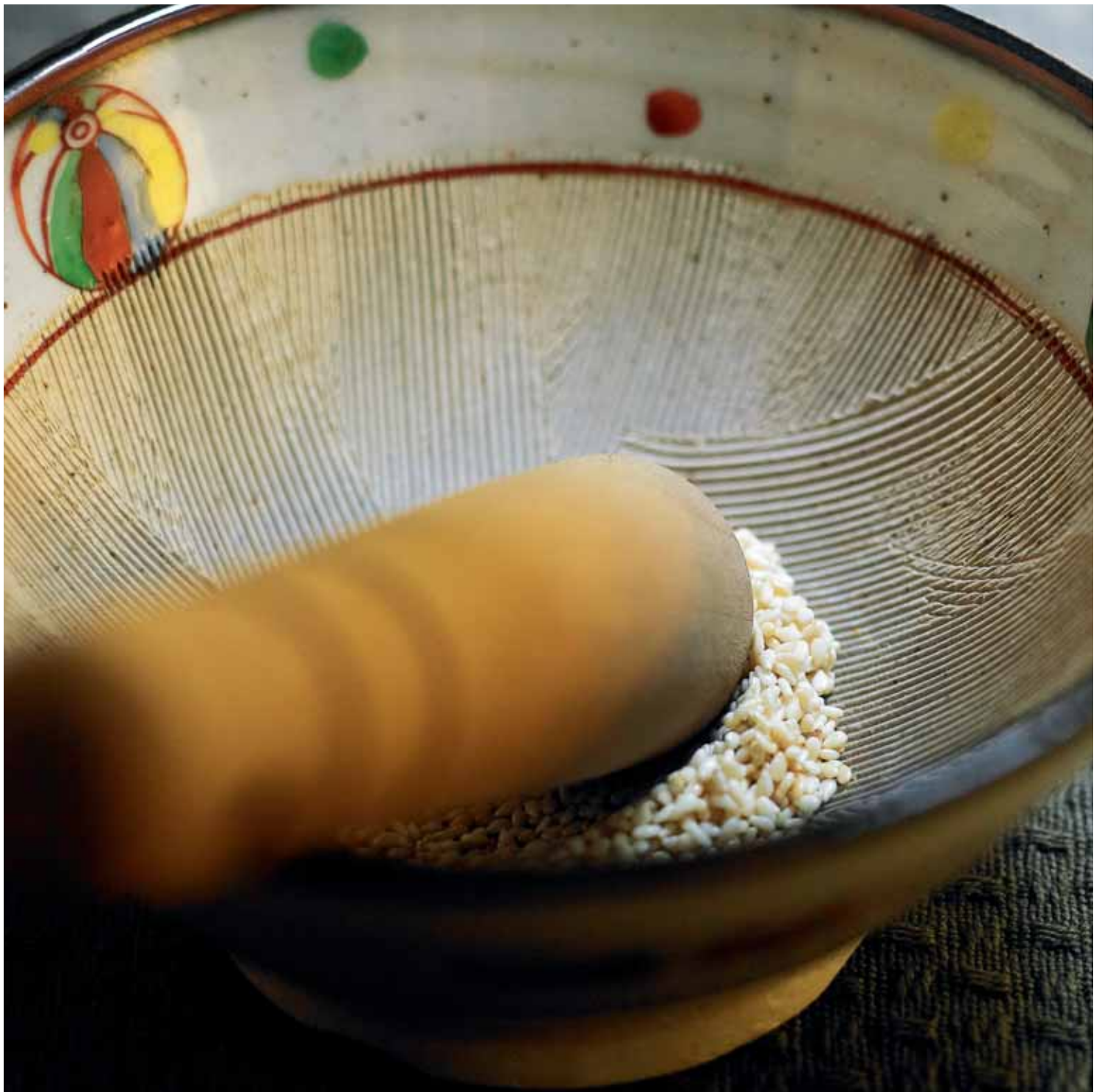
## pickling

Called *tsukemono* in Japanese, pickling involves immersing ingredients in a solution of salt and vinegar. Vegetables and fruit are sometimes left to ferment overnight in a mixture of soy sauce, miso, vinegar and rice bran (*nukazuke*) before pickling.

## simmering

*Nimono* refers to a popular cooking method where ingredients such as seafood, meats, vegetables and tofu are simmered in a flavourful broth. *Nimono* is favoured by Japanese home cooks as only a small amount of oil is used. The broth for simmering is often made up of salt, soy sauce, mirin, sugar and dashi (basic soup stock).





Japanese cooking techniques typically consist of steaming, simmering, grilling, stir-frying and deep-frying.



## steaming

Called *mushimono*, steaming in Japanese cuisine is usually reserved for cooking seafood, tofu and vegetable dishes. One of Japan's most popular dishes, steamed egg custard (chawanmushi) is cooked this way. Steaming can be done in small bowls for individual portions or in a large platter.

## stir-frying

While not really a traditional Japanese cooking method, stir-frying (*itamemono*) has become common in Japan thanks to Chinese-style dishes that have become popular in recent years. Stir-frying ensures that the colour and flavour of the ingredients are retained.

A popular stir-fried dish, *chanpuru*, which originated in Okinawa, has become widely popular throughout Japan.



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# lotus root pickle renkon no tsukemono

This is an easy pickled dish to go with rice or noodles. **Serves 4**



**Lotus root** 1

**Japanese rice vinegar** 2 Tbsp mixed with  
500 ml (16 fl oz / 2 cups) water

**Red chillies** to garnish, seeded and sliced

## Pickling liquid

**Japanese rice vinegar** 125 ml  
(4 fl oz / 1/2 cup)

**Water** 375 ml (12 fl oz / 1 1/2 cups)

**Sugar** 4 Tbsp

**Salt** 3/4 tsp



- 1 Use the back of a knife to peel lotus root. Cut into thin slices. To prevent lotus root from turning brown after cutting, immediately soak in vinegar mixture. Drain before cooking.
- 2 Combine all the ingredients for the pickling liquid in a small pot and bring to the boil. Add lotus root and lower heat. Simmer for 3–5 minutes.
- 3 Transfer lotus root and liquid to a bowl to cool. Store in an airtight jar for up to 1 week. Garnish with sliced red chillies to serve.







# warm cabbage salad kyabetsu no on sarada

Serve this light and refreshing salad with rice and a meat dish for a complete meal, or add it to your bento box! **Serves 4**

**Salt** 1 tsp

**Japanese cucumber** 1

**Cabbage** 4–6 leaves, shredded

**Bonito flakes** 1 Tbsp

**Japanese fish cakes (*chikuwa*)** 3

## Dressing

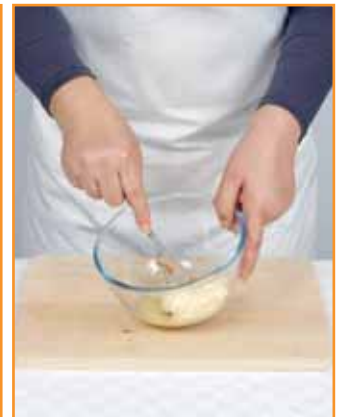
**Soy bean paste (miso)** 1½ Tbsp

**Japanese mayonnaise** 3 Tbsp

**Sake** 1 Tbsp

**Ginger juice** 1 tsp

- 1 Spread salt on a chopping board and roll the cucumber over the salt to season. Cut into thin rounds.
- 2 Bring a pot of water to the boil and briefly scald cabbage for a few seconds. Immediately plunge cabbage into a bowl of iced water. Drain well.
- 3 Return water to the boil and scald Japanese fish cakes for about 30 seconds. Drain well and cut into 0.5-cm (¼-in) slices.
- 4 In a small bowl, combine all the ingredients for the dressing and mix well.
- 5 Put cucumber, cabbage and fish cakes in a large bowl and pour dressing over. Toss to mix well. Sprinkle bonito flakes on top. Serve immediately.



# wakame seaweed and silver bait side dish

## wakame chirimen jako

Wakame seaweed has a subtle sweetness that lends a nice contrast to the saltiness of the silver bait used in this side dish. **Serves 4**



**Wakame seaweed** 60 g (2 oz)

**White sesame seeds** 2 tsp

**Sesame oil** 1 Tbsp

**Dried silver bait (*chirimen jako*)** 45 g  
(1½ oz), soaked in water for  
15 minutes and drained

**Sake** 2 tsp

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 2 tsp

- 1 Rinse wakame seaweed in water to remove excess salt. Drain well and cut into 4-cm (1½-in) lengths.
- 2 Toast white sesame seeds in a non-stick frying pan without adding oil. Remove from heat once sesame seeds are brown and fragrant.
- 3 Heat sesame oil in a frying pan and cook silver bait until fragrant. Add wakame seaweed and toss well.
- 4 Add sake and soy sauce and toss well. Transfer to a bowl and sprinkle with toasted white sesame seeds. Serve immediately.









# burdock salad gomoku kimpira

This quick and easy stir-fry features crunchy vegetables and healthy devil's tongue jelly for a light yet satisfying accompaniment to any meal. **Serves 5**

**Japanese fish cakes (*chikuwa*)**

5, about 150 g (5½ oz)

**Carrot** 120 g (4½ oz), peeled

**French beans** 150 g (5½ oz),  
ends trimmed

**Shredded devil's tongue jelly (*shirataki*)**

1 packet, about 200 g (7 oz)

**Sesame oil** 2 Tbsp

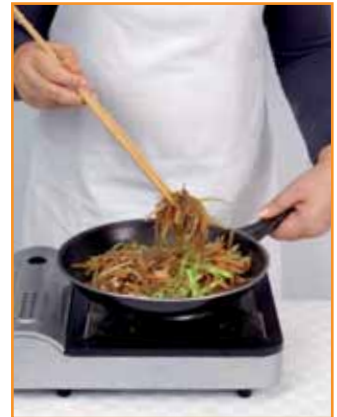
**Burdock (*gobo*)** 100 g (3½ oz),  
peeled and cut into thin strips

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 2 Tbsp

**Sugar** 2 Tbsp

**Sake** 2 Tbsp

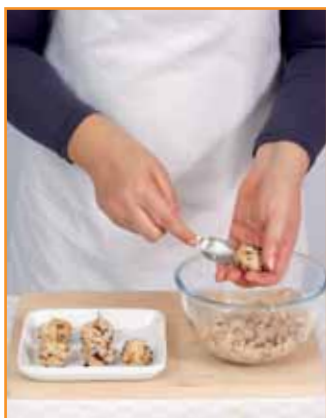
- 1 Slice Japanese fish cakes lengthwise into 5-cm (2-in) long strips. Cut carrot and French beans into 5-cm (2-in) strips.
- 2 Boil a pot of water and briefly scald shredded devil's tongue jelly for 30 seconds to remove any impurities. Rinse under running water and drain well using kitchen towels. Cut into 10-cm (4-in) strips.
- 3 Heat sesame oil in a wok and sauté burdock, carrot, French beans and devil's tongue jelly for 2 minutes. Cover and simmer for another 2 minutes.
- 4 Add Japanese fish cakes, soy sauce, sugar and sake. Toss well and cook until liquid is evaporated. Dish out and serve.





# lotus root balls renkon no otoshi age

This vegetarian side dish makes a great snack to serve between meals or at a party. **Serves 5**



**Lotus roots** 2, about 200 g (7 oz) each

**Green shishito peppers** 8

**Dried black fungus** 5 g (1/6 oz), soaked in water to soften, drained and cut into thin strips

**Carrot** 2-cm (1-in), peeled and cut into thin strips

**Potato starch** 4 Tbsp

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 2 tsp + more to serve on the side

**Mirin** 2 tsp

**Salt** to taste

**Ground white pepper** to taste

**Cooking oil** for deep-frying

**Grated white radish (daikon)** as desired

- 1 Peel lotus roots and grate finely. Drain well by squeezing with your hands.
- 2 To prevent green shishito peppers from splattering when deep-frying, use a knife to cut slits on the sides. Set aside.
- 3 In a large mixing bowl, combine lotus roots, black fungus, carrot, potato starch, soy sauce, mirin, salt and pepper. Mix well to combine. Using a teaspoon, scoop out 2 tsp of lotus root mixture and roll into ping pong-size balls. Repeat until mixture is used up.
- 4 Heat oil for deep-frying and cook lotus root balls until golden brown. Drain well on kitchen towels.
- 5 Reheat oil and deep-fry green shishito peppers for about 30 seconds. Drain well.
- 6 Serve lotus root balls with green shishito peppers and grated white radish drizzled with some soy sauce.







# chilled salad aspic sarada kanten

The unusual combination of salad in a jelly form makes it perfect to pack in a bento box or serve as an appetiser. **Serves 4**

**Cabbage** 70 g (2½ oz), shredded

**Carrot** 25 g (1 oz), peeled  
and cut into thin strips

**Japanese cucumber** 1, cut into  
thin strips

**Hard-boiled eggs** 2

**Japanese mayonnaise** 2 Tbsp

**Canned mandarin oranges** ⅓ can  
(from 312 g / 11 oz can),  
membranes removed

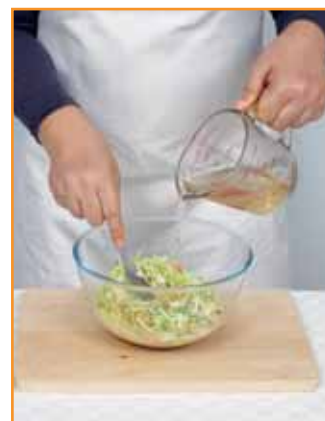
**Japanese agar-agar powder (*kanten*)**  
1 packet, about 4 g (⅓ oz)

**Sugar** 100 g (3½ oz)

**Water** 250 ml (8 fl oz / 1 cup)

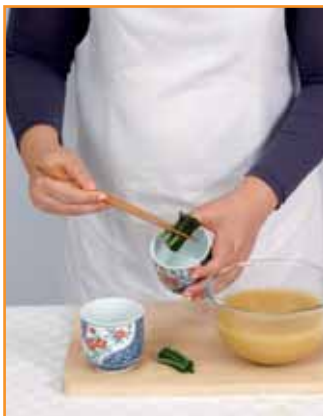
**Shisho leaves** to garnish

- 1 Soak cabbage, carrot and cucumber in iced water to prevent them from getting soggy.
- 2 Shell eggs and separate egg whites from the yolks. Roughly chop egg whites and pass egg yolks through a fine sieve to make a smooth paste.
- 3 Combine cabbage, carrot, cucumber, egg whites and mandarin oranges in a large bowl. Add mayonnaise and stir well to combine.
- 4 In a pot, add water and Japanese agar-agar powder and bring to the boil. Stir well. Add sugar and stir to dissolve. Leave to cool.
- 5 Pour agar-agar into the vegetable mixture and mix gently. Pour this into a wet jelly mould and leave in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.
- 6 To serve, carefully remove aspic from mould and cut into wedges. Garnish with egg yolks and shisho leaves.



# steamed egg custard chawanmushi

A Japanese classic, this egg custard never fails to impress yet it is surprisingly easy to whip up! **Serves 5**



**Spinach** 200 g (7 oz)

**Lemon rind** from  $\frac{1}{2}$  lemon

**Eggs** 3

**Dashi stock** (see page 113)

562.5 ml (18 $\frac{3}{4}$  fl oz / 2 $\frac{3}{4}$  cups)

**Japanese light soy sauce**

(*usukuchi shoyu*)  $\frac{1}{2}$  Tbsp

**Mirin**  $\frac{1}{2}$  Tbsp

**Salt**  $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp

**Sake** 1 Tbsp

**Carrot** 5 slices, peeled and cut into a floral pattern

**Japanese fish cake (*kamaboko*)** 5 slices

- 1 Boil water in a steamer. In a separate pot, boil water and briefly scald spinach for 30 seconds. Immediately plunge into a bowl of iced water to stop the cooking process. Drain spinach by rolling with a sushi mat. Cut spinach into 5-cm (2-in) lengths.
- 2 Peel lemon and remove bitter white part from rind using a sharp knife. Cut lemon rind into long thin strips and fold decoratively. Set aside.
- 3 In a mixing bowl, whisk eggs and add dashi stock, soy sauce, mirin, salt and sake. Continue to whisk well. Pass mixture through a fine sieve to remove any lumps.
- 4 Place a small bundle of parboiled spinach in the bottom of small heatproof bowls or teacups. Divide egg mixture among the bowls or teacups and place in prepared steamer. Steam for 3 minutes, covered, or until top layer of custard is set. Turn off heat and place a slice of carrot and Japanese fish cake on top of each custard. Cover steamer with lid, leaving a small gap and steam for another 2 minutes over medium heat.
- 5 Turn off heat and place lemon rind on custard. Replace lid, leaving a small gap and steam for another 1 minute. Turn off heat and leave for 5 minutes before removing custard from steamer. Serve immediately.

**Note:** For a variation on this dish, add prawns, chicken, fish or ginkgo nuts.









# tofu pizza abura yakidofu

Dressed with colourful vegetables and served with a dipping sauce, this pan-fried tofu is sure to please all members of the family. **Serves 5**

**Firm tofu (*momen* tofu)** 2 blocks, about 300 g (11 oz) each

**Prawns (shrimps)** 5, shelled, deveined and thinly sliced

**Red, green and yellow capsicums (bell peppers)** ½ each, seeded and cut into thin strips

**Carrot** 1, small, peeled and cut into thin strips

**Potato** 1, peeled and cut into thin strips

**Dried shiitake mushrooms** 4, small, soaked in water, drained and cut into thin strips

**Egg white** from 1 egg

**Potato starch** 1 Tbsp

**Cooking oil** for shallow-frying

## Seasoning

**Salt** ¼ tsp

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 1 tsp

**Mirin** ½ Tbsp

**Sake** ½ Tbsp

## Dipping sauce

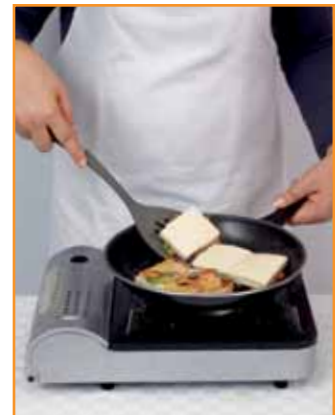
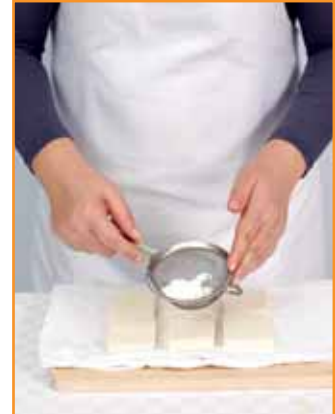
**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 3 Tbsp

**Lemon juice** 2 tsp

**Chilli oil** a few drops

**Chopped spring onions (scallions)** 2 Tbsp

- 1 Cut each block of tofu into 2 lengthwise, then slice each piece horizontally in half. Wrap with a clean cloth and leave for 10 minutes to remove excess water.
- 2 Combine ingredients for seasoning in a bowl and stir to mix well. Add prawns, capsicums, carrot and potato and mix well. Leave to marinate for 10 minutes. Add egg white and potato starch and mix well.
- 3 Dust one side of tofu with potato starch and top each piece with some prawn and vegetable mixture.
- 4 Heat oil in a non-stick frying pan and cook tofu with topping side down for 2–3 minutes. Flip tofu over and cook for another 2 minutes. Remove and drain well on kitchen towels. Serve tofu with dipping sauce.



# devil's tongue jelly bacon rolls

## konnyaku bacon maki

Devil's tongue jelly gives this dish a firm bite, while the bacon gives it a smoky flavour. **Serves 4**



### Devil's tongue jelly (*konnyaku*)

250 g (9 oz)

**Bacon** 6 rashers

**Sesame oil** 2 tsp

**Mayonnaise** to serve

**Seven-spice chilli powder**  
(*shichimi togarashi*) to taste



- 1 Bring a pot of water to the boil and briefly pour hot water over devil's tongue jelly. Rinse in running water and pat dry with kitchen towels. Cut into 6 wedges. Using a sharp knife, score the surface of the devil's tongue jelly.
- 2 Wrap devil's tongue jelly with bacon and secure with toothpicks.
- 3 Heat sesame oil in a non-stick frying pan and cook bacon and devil's tongue jelly until browned. Remove from heat and drain well on kitchen towels.
- 4 Serve with a side of mayonnaise and some seven-spice chilli powder.





# japanese fish cake rolls hanpen norimaki

Children and adults alike will enjoy the fun texture and cheesy flavour of this fish cake roll. **Makes 2 rolls**

**Fish cake roll (*hanpen*)** 1

**Cheddar cheese** 4 slices

**Fish sausages** 2

**Seasoned nori sheets (*ajitsuke*)** 8

**Some bamboo skewers**

- 1 Using a knife, mince fish cake roll finely. Divide into 2 portions.
- 2 Line a sushi mat with parchment paper and arrange 4 nori seaweed sheets on mat to form a large rectangular sheet. Spread with one portion of minced fish cake, making sure to leave a 2-cm (1-in) margin all around.
- 3 Place 2 slices of cheese side by side on minced fish cake, then place a fish sausage in the centre. Using the sushi mat, roll ingredients up to form a tight roll. Twist both ends of the parchment paper to secure roll. Repeat to make another roll.
- 4 Place Japanese fish cake rolls in the microwave and cook on High for 3 minutes. Leave to cool.
- 5 To serve, slice rolls and thread through bamboo skewers.







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# honshimeji mushroom soup sumashi-jiru

This hearty broth is perfect for enjoying on a chilly night. **Serves 4**



**Honshimeji mushrooms** 200 g (7 oz)

**Trefoil (*mitsuba*) leaves** 40 g (1½ oz)

**Dashi stock (see page 113)** 1 litre  
(32 fl oz / 4 cups)

**Salt** a pinch

**Japanese light soy sauce**  
**(*usukuchi shoyu*)** 1 tsp

**Egg** 1, lightly beaten

- 1 Trim root end of honshimeji mushrooms and divide into smaller bundles.
- 2 Cut trefoil leaves into short lengths.
- 3 In a pot, bring dashi stock to the boil. Add mushrooms, salt and soy sauce. Leave to simmer for 5 minutes.
- 4 Pour beaten egg through a sieve into simmering stock and stir to form thin ribbons. Once egg is cooked, remove pot from heat and add trefoil leaves.
- 5 Ladle into serving bowls and serve hot.







# vegetarian soup with japanese yam kenchinjiru

A kind of Japanese temple food, this soup is full of nutritional ingredients. **Serves 4**

**Japanese yam (*nagaimo*)** 300 g (11 oz)

**Devil's tongue jelly (*konnyaku*)** 125 g  
(4½ oz)

**Sesame oil** 2 Tbsp

**Firm tofu (*momen tofu*)** 300 g (11 oz),  
cut into bite-size pieces

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 3 Tbsp

**Burdock (*gobo*)** 125 g (4½ oz),  
peeled and shredded

**Carrot** 60 g (2 oz), peeled and  
cut into thin strips

**Japanese fried fish cakes (*satsumaage*)**

2 pieces, blanched in hot water  
and diced

**Water** 1.75 litres (56 fl oz / 7 cups)

**Instant dashi granules** 2 tsp

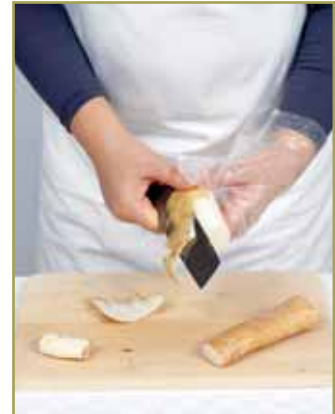
**Japanese leeks (*naga negi*)** ½ stalk,  
cut into short lengths

**Salt** to taste

**Ground white pepper** to taste

**Seven-spice chilli powder (*shichimi  
togarashi*)** a dash

- 1 Carefully remove skin from the Japanese yam by peeling with a sharp knife. Wear kitchen gloves to protect your hands from itching. Cut peeled Japanese yam into half moon shapes. Set aside.
- 2 Pour hot water over devil's tongue jelly to remove strong smell. Cut into bite-size pieces.
- 3 Heat 1 Tbsp sesame oil in non-stick frying pan and sauté tofu for 1–2 minutes until lightly browned. Add 1 Tbsp Japanese soy sauce and toss well. Set aside.
- 4 In a clean frying pan, heat the remaining sesame oil and sauté the devil's tongue jelly, burdock, Japanese yam, carrot and fried fish cakes. Add water and instant dashi granules and bring to the boil. Remove any scum that rises to the surface by skimming with a spoon. Lower heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
- 5 Add tofu, leeks, the remaining soy sauce, salt and pepper. Continue to simmer for 4–5 minutes.
- 6 Dish out into serving bowls and serve with a dash of seven spice chilli powder.



# kagoshima-style soup satsuma jiru

This soup from Satsuma in Kagoshima Prefecture on the southern island of Kyushu is a rich and flavourful broth that is especially good eaten in cold weather. **Serves 5**



**Ginger** 40 g (1½ oz), peeled

**Burdock (*gobo*)** 1, about 5-cm (2-in), peeled

**Japanese rice vinegar** 2 Tbsp, mixed with 125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup) water

**Devil's tongue jelly (*konnyaku*)** 125 g (4½ oz), cut into 1-cm (½-in) pieces

**Water** 1 litre (32 fl oz / 4 cups)

**Instant dashi granules** 1 tsp

**White radish (*daikon*)** 1, about 150 g (5½ oz), peeled and thinly sliced

**Carrot** 1, small, peeled and thinly sliced

**Chicken thigh** 85 g (3 oz), skinned and cut into 1-cm (½-in) pieces

**Soy bean paste (*miso*)** 3–4 Tbsp

**Japanese leek (*naga negi*)** to garnish, green part only, sliced

**Seven-spice chilli powder (*shichimi togarashi*)** to taste

- 1 Grate ginger and squeeze to get 2 tsp juice.
- 2 Cut burdock lengthwise, then slice into thin strips. Soak in vinegar mixture for 5 minutes. Rinse well and set aside.
- 3 Bring a pot of water to the boil and briefly blanch devil's tongue jelly for 30 seconds to remove strong smell. Rinse under running water and drain on kitchen towels. Cut into 1-cm (½-in) cubes.
- 4 Fill a pot with 1 litre (32 fl oz / 4 cups) water and bring to the boil. Add dashi granules, devil's tongue jelly, burdock, white radish, carrot and chicken. Continue to cook for 15 minutes. Remove any scum that rises to the surface by skimming with a spoon.
- 5 Strain soy bean paste into the pot and stir well to dissolve. Add ginger juice and remove from heat.
- 6 Dish out into serving bowls and garnish with leek and seven-spice chilli powder. Serve hot.









# meatball and white radish casserole

## nikudango daikon no nabemono

This simple meatball recipe is great to keep for a rainy day. **Serves 5**

**White radish (daikon)** 400 g  
(14 oz), peeled

**Water** 1.5 litres (48 fl oz / 6 cups)

**Instant dashi granule** 1 tsp

**Sake** 5 Tbsp

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** ½ Tbsp

**Salt** to taste

**Ground white pepper** to taste

**Salted wakame seaweed** 20 g (⅔ oz),  
rinsed, drained and cut into  
short lengths

**Trefoil (*mitsuba*) leaves** 4 stalks

### Meatballs

**Minced chicken** 200 g (7 oz)

**Breadcrumbs** 2 Tbsp

**Ginger juice** 1 tsp

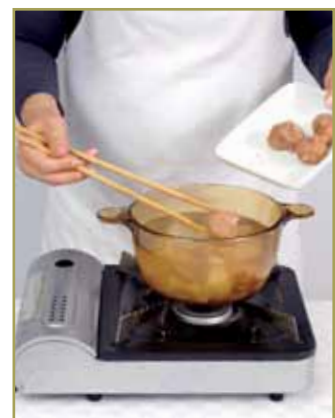
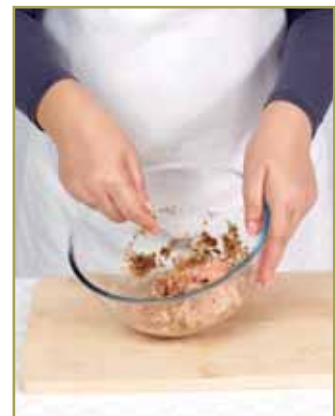
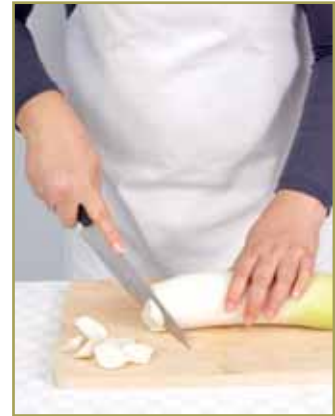
**Sake** 1 tsp

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 1 tsp

**Salt** to taste

**Ground white pepper** to taste

- 1 Roll cut white radish into bite-size pieces.
- 2 Bring water to the boil in a pot and cook white radish for about 15 minutes.
- 3 Meanwhile, make meatballs. Combine all the ingredients for meatballs in a large bowl and mix well. Divide mixture into 10 portions and roll into ping pong-size balls.
- 4 Drop meatballs into pot with radish and cook for 5–7 minutes. Add more water as needed.
- 5 When meatballs start to float to the surface, add sake, soy sauce, salt and pepper. Add wakame seaweed and stir through. Garnish with trefoil leaves. Serve hot.





# fish and seafood

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# asparagus and prawn cutlets asparagusu ebi no korokke

The combination of crunchy asparagus and sweet prawns makes this dish absolutely delicious! **Serves 4**



**Asparagus** 200 g (7 oz),  
cut into short lengths

**Egg** 1, lightly beaten

**Plain (all-purpose) flour** 4 Tbsp

**Salt** ½ tsp

**Ground white pepper** a dash

**Prawns (shrimps)** 350 g (12½ oz),  
peeled, deveined and roughly chopped

**Minced onions** 100 g (3½ oz)

**Dried hijiki seaweed sprouts** 1 tsp,  
soaked in water for 15 minutes  
and drained

**Breadcrumbs** 2 cups

**Vegetable oil** for deep-frying

**Lemon** 1, cut into wedges

**Lettuce leaves** to garnish



1 Remove hard base of asparagus by peeling with a vegetable peeler, then cut into 2-cm (1-in) lengths.

2 Combine egg, flour, salt and pepper in a small bowl and mix well.

3 In a separate bowl, combine asparagus, prawns, onions and dried hijiki seaweed. Add to batter and mix well until mixture becomes sticky. Divide mixture into ping pong-size balls.

4 Pour breadcrumbs onto a flat dish and coat asparagus and prawn balls evenly.

5 Heat oil for deep-frying and deep-fry asparagus and prawn balls until golden brown. Remove from heat and drain well on kitchen towels.

6 Arrange on a serving plate and garnish with lemon wedges and lettuce leaves.



**Note:** Dried hijiki seaweed can be found at Japanese supermarkets. There are two varieties available. Use the shorter hijiki sprouts. To use, soak in water until softened.







# breaded black sesame prawn fritters

## ebi furai

Sesame seeds and chopped parsley add a unique flavour and texture to this popular breaded prawn fritters. **Serves 5**

**Large prawns (shrimps)** 20

**Salt** 1 tsp

**Ground white pepper** 1 tsp

**Breadcrumbs** 2 cups

**Black sesame seeds** 60 g (2 oz)

**Chopped parsley** 60 g (2 oz)

**Plain (all-purpose) flour** for coating

**Eggs** 2, lightly beaten

**Vegetable oil** for deep-frying

### Tartar sauce

**Japanese mayonnaise** 125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup)

**Hard-boiled egg yolk** ½, finely chopped

**Chopped pickled gherkins** 1 tsp

**Minced onion** 1 tsp

**Dried parsley** ½ tsp

- 1 Start by preparing tartar sauce. Combine ingredients for tartar sauce in a bowl and mix well. Chill in the refrigerator before serving.
- 2 Peel prawns, leaving tails intact. Make a slit on the underside of prawns to butterfly them and remove veins. Score lightly and season with salt and pepper.
- 3 Combine breadcrumbs, black sesame seeds and parsley in a bowl. Set aside.
- 4 Coat prawns with some flour, then dip into beaten egg and coat with breadcrumb mixture.
- 5 Heat oil for deep-frying and cook prawns until golden brown and crisp. Drain well on kitchen towels. Serve prawns with chilled tartar sauce.



# simmered scallops hotate kai no nimono

Japan is famous for its fresh scallops. This dish is simple to cook yet delicious with the inclusion of basic Japanese seasoning. **Serves 4**



**Asparagus** 12 spears

**Salt** ½ tsp

**Dashi stock (see page 113)** 200 ml  
(7 fl oz)

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 3 Tbsp

**Mirin** 3 Tbsp

**Frozen scallops** 12–16, defrosted

- 1 Remove hard base of asparagus by peeling with a vegetable peeler.
- 2 Boil some water in a frying pan and add salt. Briefly scald asparagus for 20–30 seconds and immediately plunge into a basin of iced water to stop it from cooking further. Drain well and cut into 5-cm (2-in) lengths.
- 3 Bring dashi stock to the boil in a clean frying pan and add soy sauce and mirin. Add scallops and leave to simmer until liquid reduces by half.
- 4 Add asparagus and cook for another 2 minutes.
- 5 Dish out onto serving plates and serve warm with rice.









# savoury pancakes okonomiyaki

You won't need a special *teppan* or hot plate to cook this Japanese pancake. Simply use your regular frying pan! **Serves 4–5**

**Japanese yam (*nagaimo*)** 300 g  
(11 oz), peeled

**Eggs** 4, large

**Dashi stock (see page 113)** 200 ml  
(7 fl oz)

**Plain (all-purpose) flour** 270 g (9<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> oz)

**Thinly sliced pork** 100 g (3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> oz)

**Cabbage leaves** 4, shredded

**Japanese fish cake (*chikuwa*)** 1,  
thinly sliced

**Grated mozzarella** 50 g (2 oz)

**Vegetable oil** 2–3 tsp

***Okonomiyaki* sauce** to taste

**Japanese mayonnaise** to taste

**Bonito flakes** to garnish

**Green seaweed powder (*aonori*)** to taste

**Cornflakes** to garnish

- 1 Grate Japanese yam into a fine paste by grinding it in a *suribachi*. Use a food processor to do this if you do not have a *suribachi*. Set aside.
- 2 Whisk eggs in a large bowl, then gradually whisk in dashi.
- 3 Place flour in another bowl and gradually add egg mixture, mixing slowly until you can draw 'ribbons' in the batter.
- 4 Stir in the Japanese yam paste. Add pork, cabbage, fish cake and mozzarella and mix well.
- 5 Heat a non-stick frying pan or *teppan* and grease with some oil. Add a ladleful of batter and fry until both sides are cooked. Repeat this step until all the batter is used up.
- 6 Brush one side of pancakes with *okonomiyaki* sauce and top with mayonnaise, bonito flakes, green seaweed powder and cornflakes. Serve immediately.



# yanagawa-style simmered eel with burdock

## unagi no yanagawa fu

Eel is a popular item eaten in Japan to beat the summer heat. Yanagawa-style simply means the dish is cooked with a combination of burdock, eggs and dashi stock. Yanagawa is a town near Fukuoka in Kyushu. **Serves 4**



**Burdock (*gobo*)** 200 g (7 oz)

**Japanese rice vinegar** 1 tsp, mixed with  
125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup) water

**Flavoured eel (*kabayaki unagi*)** 400 g  
(14 oz), cut into 2-cm (1-in) pieces

**Eggs** 4, lightly beaten

**Trefoil (*mitsuba*) leaves** 30 g (1 oz),  
cut into 2-cm (1-in) lengths

**Japanese pepper (*sansho*)** a pinch

### Stock

**Dashi stock (see page 113)** 600 ml  
(20⅓ fl oz)

**Japanese light soy sauce (*usukuchi*  
*shoyu*)** 4 Tbsp

**Mirin** 4 Tbsp

**Sake** 1 Tbsp

- 1 Use the back of a knife to shave the skin off the burdock. Cut some straight lines on the burdock and shave burdock into long thin strips. Immediately soak in rice vinegar mixture to prevent it from browning.
- 2 In a large frying pan, add all the ingredients for the stock together with burdock and bring to the boil.
- 3 Add eel and cook for 2 minutes. Pour eggs over eel and scatter trefoil on top. Cover and simmer for 2 minutes.
- 4 Dish out and sprinkle over with Japanese pepper. Serve warm with rice.

**Note:** The traditional way of shaving burdock is to make some long cuts on the root first, then shaving it to get long thin flakes, as if shaving a pencil using a knife.







# hokkaido-style baked salmon

## sake no guratan

The dairy farms in Hokkaido supply Japan with milk and other dairy products. Food from this region is often creamy and comforting like this salmon dish. **Serves 4**

**Salmon fillets** 4, about 100 g  
(3½ oz) each

**Butter** 1 Tbsp

**Hard-boiled egg** 1, peeled and roughly  
chopped

**Creamed corn** 100 g (3½ oz)

**Japanese mayonnaise** 125 ml  
(4 fl oz / ½ cup)

**Minced pickled gherkin** 1 Tbsp

**Chopped parsley** to garnish

### **Marinade**

**Mirin** 4 tsp

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 4 tsp

- 1 Combine ingredients for marinade in a small bowl and stir well. Pour this over salmon and leave to marinate for 15 minutes.
- 2 Heat half the butter in a non-stick frying pan and pan-fry salmon on both sides until cooked through.
- 3 Combine egg, creamed corn, mayonnaise and gherkin in a bowl and mix well.
- 4 Grease a baking dish with the remaining butter and place salmon in the dish. Pour in corn mixture and cook in a preheated oven at 200°C (400°F) for 10 minutes.
- 5 Garnish with parsley and serve immediately.



# wine lees salmon hotpot sake kasu nabe

*Sake kasu* are the lees left over from sake production. It can be used as a pickling agent, a seasoning for cooking and even as a marinade. In Hokkaido, it is common to use wine lees to enhance flavour when preparing hotpots. The Japanese enjoy eating dishes cooked with wine lees as it warms the body. **Serves 4**



**Deep-fried soy puff (*aburaage*)** 1

**White radish (*daikon*)**  $\frac{1}{2}$ , about 85 g (3 oz)

**Dashi stock (see page 113)** 1.5 litres (48 fl oz / 6 cups)

**Wine lees (*sake kasu*)** 160 g ( $5\frac{2}{3}$  oz)

**Carrot** 1, small, peeled and thinly sliced

**Enokitake mushrooms** 200 g (7 oz), base trimmed and divided into small bundles

**Japanese leek (*naga negi*)** 1, white and green parts separated and sliced

**Salted salmon (*shio sake*)** 2 pieces, about 80 g (3 oz) each, cut into 5-cm (2-in) pieces

**White soy bean paste (*shiromiso*)** 4 Tbsp

**Japanese light soy sauce (*usukuchi shoyu*)** 2 tsp

**Trefoil (*mitsuba*) leaves** 4, cut into short lengths

- 1 Bring a pot of water to the boil and pour hot water over deep-fried soy puff. Use a rolling pin to squeeze out excess water from soy puff, then cut it into long broad pieces.
- 2 Peel white radish using a knife and cut into thin slices.
- 3 Bring dashi stock to the boil. Pass wine lees through a sieve and stir well to dissolve in stock. Add white radish, carrot, enokitake mushrooms and white part of leek. Cook for 5–7 minutes.
- 4 Add deep-fried soy puff and salmon and cook until salmon turns light pink. Strain in white soy bean paste and add soy sauce to taste.
- 5 Add green part of leek. Lastly add in trefoil and remove from heat.
- 6 Dish out into serving bowls and serve hot.







# pan-fried salmon with teriyaki sauce

## sake no teriyaki

Although store-bought teriyaki sauce can be found at most supermarkets, the home-made version is easy to whip up. The key ingredient is mirin, which adds a nice aroma. **Serves 4**

**Salmon fillets** 4, about 140 g (5 oz) each

**Cooking oil** 2 Tbsp

### Teriyaki sauce

**Sake** 2 Tbsp

**Mirin** 2 Tbsp

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 3½ Tbsp

**Sugar** 2 Tbsp

- 1 Combine ingredients for teriyaki sauce in a small bowl and mix well. Pour sauce over salmon fillets and leave to marinate for 15 minutes. Turn fillets over and leave to marinate for another 15 minutes.
- 2 Pat fish dry with kitchen towels and set aside on a serving plate. Reserve sauce.
- 3 Heat oil in a non-stick frying pan and cook salmon over medium heat until both sides are cooked. Set aside.
- 4 Pour marinade into the pan and simmer over low heat until sauce thickens.
- 5 Pour sauce over salmon fillets and serve with lotus root pickle (see page 18) if desired.



# white pomfret in japanese sauce

## manakatsuo no nimono

This dish is an example of *nimono*, a Japanese simmered dish where the fresh flavours of ingredients are retained due to the delicate cooking method. **Serves 4–5**



**Umeboshi (pickled plums)** 2, mashed  
**White pomfret** 1, about 400 g (14 oz)  
**Spinach** 250 g (9 oz)

### Stock

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 4 Tbsp  
**Sugar** 4 Tbsp  
**Sake** 125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup)  
**Mirin** 2 Tbsp  
**Water** 500 ml (16 fl oz / 2 cups)  
**Ginger** 5-cm (2-in) knob, peeled and thinly sliced



- 1 Remove pit from the umeboshi and mash into a paste using a knife.
- 2 Clean fish and pat dry. Score both sides of the fish to allow even cooking.
- 3 Put all ingredients for stock together with umeboshi in a pot and bring to the boil.
- 4 Add fish and simmer over medium heat for 10 minutes.
- 5 Meanwhile, bring a separate pot of water to the boil and briefly scald spinach for 20 seconds. Drain and squeeze out water with a sushi mat. Cut into short lengths.
- 6 Dish out fish onto a serving plate and garnish with spinach.







# mackerel simmered in miso sauce

## saba no miso-ni

Ginger and miso go well with the strong flavour of the oily mackerel, making this dish a firm favourite with both the young and old. **Serves 5**

**Mackerel (*saba*)** 1, about 400 g (14 oz),  
deboned and quartered

**Salt** to taste

**Devil's tongue jelly (*konnyaku*)** 400 g  
(14 oz)

**Young ginger** 5-cm (2-in) knob,  
peeled and thinly sliced

**Snow peas or French beans**  
to garnish, blanched

### Stock

**Dashi stock (see page 113)** 375 ml  
(12 fl oz / 1½ cups)

**Mirin** 4 Tbsp

**Soy bean paste (miso)** 4 Tbsp

- 1 Pat dry mackerel with kitchen towels and season with salt.
- 2 Bring a pot of water to the boil and scald devil's tongue jelly for 30 seconds. Drain well. Score both sides of the devil's tongue jelly and cut into cubes.
- 3 Prepare stock. In a frying pan, bring 250 ml (8 fl oz / 1 cup) dashi stock to the boil. Add mirin and stir well to dissolve.
- 4 Add mackerel, devil's tongue jelly and ginger and cook for 2 minutes.
- 5 Meanwhile, dissolve soy bean paste in the remaining dashi stock. Pour this over fish and devil's tongue jelly.
- 6 Make a drop-in lid by folding a sheet of aluminium foil to fit into the pan. Cover items in the pan with the drop-in lid and simmer for 10 minutes or until gravy is almost dry. The lid should float on top of the items in the pan to ensure that heat is evenly distributed when simmering and the fish retains its shape.
- 7 To serve, place a piece of mackerel on a serving dish and arrange a few pieces of devil's tongue jelly around it. Garnish with blanched snow peas or French beans. Serve warm with rice.









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# pan-fried tofu and prawn dumplings

## tofu ebi no gyoza

Originally a Chinese dish, gyoza has become popular across Japan. This particular recipe is made healthier with the addition of silken tofu. **Serves 4–5**



**Cabbage** 300 g (11 oz), roughly chopped

**Salt** ½ Tbsp + ½ tsp

**Silken tofu** 2 blocks, about 300 g (11 oz) each, chopped

**Chopped chives** 100 g (3½ oz)

**Minced pork** 150 g (5⅓ oz)

**Minced prawns (shrimps)** 100 g (3½ oz)

**Dried shiitake mushrooms** 10,  
soaked in warm water to soften  
and chopped

**Minced ginger** 30 g (1 oz)

**Ground white pepper** a dash

**Potato starch** 1½ Tbsp

**Gyoza wrappers** 32

**Water** 2 Tbsp

**Japanese rice vinegar** 1 Tbsp, mixed  
with 125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup) water

### Dipping sauce

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 3 Tbsp

**Japanese rice vinegar** 6 Tbsp

**Chilli oil** 1 Tbsp

**Thinly shredded ginger** as needed

**Chopped spring onions (scallions)**  
to taste

- 1 Start by preparing filling. Sprinkle cabbage with ½ Tbsp salt and leave for 30 minutes. Put cabbage in a muslin bag and drain well by squeezing with your hands.
- 2 Combine cabbage, tofu, chives, pork, prawns, mushrooms, ginger, ½ tsp salt, pepper and potato starch in a large bowl. Mix well and set aside in the freezer for 20 minutes.
- 3 To make dumplings, wet one side of wrapper with some water. Scoop about 2 tsp of filling onto wrapper and bring 2 ends of the wrapper together. Seal by adding some water and pinching the sides.
- 4 Heat some oil in a non-stick frying pan. Place dumplings in rows of 5–6 and pan-fry until browned on one side. Pour vinegar mixture over dumplings and cover pan with a lid. Cook over medium-high heat until liquid has evaporated. Transfer dumplings onto a serving plate.
- 5 Combine all the ingredients for dipping sauce in a bowl. Mix well.
- 6 Serve pan-fried dumplings with dipping sauce on the side.







# pork steak with silver bait in black vinegar sauce

## poku suteki chirimen jako no kuroso ankake

Much like every other aspect of Japanese culture, the food in Japan has adopted influences from other countries as well. This pork steak with silver bait combines Western cooking methods with Japanese flavours. **Serves 4**

**Red capsicum (bell pepper)** 1

**Pork chops** 4 pieces, about 200 g  
(7 oz) each

**Salt** to taste

**Plain (all-purpose) flour** for dusting

**Sesame oil** 1 Tbsp

**Minced garlic** 2 tsp

**Dried silver bait (*chirimen jako*)** 60 g  
(2 oz), rinsed and drained

**Ladies fingers (okra)** 8

### Black vinegar sauce

**Black vinegar** 4 Tbsp

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 2 Tbsp

**Sugar** 2 Tbsp

- 1 Slice capsicum in half and remove core and seeds. Cut into diamond shapes.
- 2 Use a metal meat tenderiser to pound both sides of pork chops. Make a slit on the side of meat to prevent it from shrinking when cooking. Season pork with salt and coat with flour.
- 3 Heat sesame oil in a non-stick frying pan and arrange pork chops in pan. Add minced garlic and cook until fragrant. When pork is half-cooked, add capsicum.
- 4 When pork is almost done, add silver bait and cook until fragrant. Add ladies fingers and fry until cooked through. Dish out.
- 5 Combine ingredients for sauce in a small bowl and stir well to dissolve sugar. Clean the frying pan with a kitchen towel and pour in sauce. Bring sauce to the boil over medium heat. Dish out to a small bowl.
- 6 Serve pork with sauce on the side.



# japanese-style meatloaf waku meatloaf

Known as *yoshoku*, Japanese-style Western food became popular during the Meiji Restoration in the 1800s. **Makes 2 loaves**



**Carrots** 2, peeled

**Hamburger meat** 150 g (5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> oz)

**Minced chicken** 150 g (5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> oz)

**Minced pork** 150 g (5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> oz)

**Dried hijiki seaweed sprouts** 2 Tbsp,  
soaked in water for 15 minutes  
and drained

**Lotus root** 100 g (3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> oz),  
peeled and roughly chopped

**French beans** 15, strings removed  
and diced

**Onion** 1, medium, peeled and  
finely chopped

**Canned ginkgo nuts** 20

**Breadcrumbs** <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup

**Milk** 4 Tbsp

**Egg** 1, lightly beaten

**Cooking oil** for greasing

**Black and white sesame seeds** 1 Tbsp

**Sake** <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Tbsp

**Sugar** 1 tsp

**Sesame oil** 1 tsp

**Salt** <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> tsp

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Tbsp

**Ground white pepper** to taste

## Mayonnaise-tomato sauce

**Japanese mayonnaise** 4 Tbsp

**Tomato ketchup** 3 Tbsp

- 1 Preheat the oven to 200°C (400°F).
- 2 Boil a pot of water and cook carrots until soft, about 5 minutes. Cut carrots into 2.5–3-cm (1–1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-in) logs and trim the edges to form flowers. You can use a vegetable cutter to do this.
- 3 Combine hamburger meat, chicken, pork, dried hijiki seaweed sprouts, lotus root, French beans, onion, ginkgo nuts, breadcrumbs, milk and egg in a large bowl and mix well. Divide into 2 portions.
- 4 Grease a sheet of aluminium foil with a little oil and spread a portion of meat mixture evenly on it. Place carrot logs in the centre and roll minced meat mixture to cover carrot. Twist both ends of the aluminium foil to secure. Repeat this step to make another meatloaf.
- 5 Bake meatloaves for 10 minutes, then lower heat to 180°C (350°F) and bake for another 20 minutes. To check if the meatloaves are cooked, insert a bamboo skewer into the centre. The juice that comes out should be clear. Remove and leave to cool before cutting into serving portions.
- 6 Prepare mayonnaise-tomato sauce. Mix mayonnaise and ketchup.
- 7 Garnish as desired and serve meatloaves with mayonnaise-tomato sauce.

**Note:** Hamburger meat is a mixture of minced pork (30%) and beef (70%). It is available at Japanese supermarkets.









# classic japanese beef stew niku tofu

This is a Japanese version of a beef stew simmered in a seasoning of soy sauce, sugar, mirin and sake. **Serves 4**

## Grilled firm tofu (*yakidofu*)

1 block, about 300 g (11 oz)

**Honshimeji mushrooms** 250 g (9 oz)

**Shredded devil's tongue jelly (*shirataki*)**

300 g (11 oz)

**Thinly sliced beef** 200 g (7 oz)

**Minced onions** 300 g (11 oz)

**Garland chrysanthemum (*tong ho*)**

200 g (7 oz)

**Minced ginger** 10 g ( $\frac{1}{3}$  oz)

## Gravy

**Water** 250 ml (8 fl oz / 1 cup)

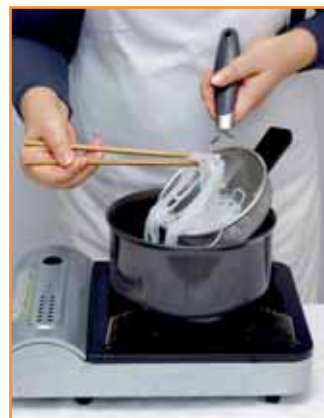
**Sugar** 2 Tbsp

**Mirin** 2 Tbsp

**Sake** 4 Tbsp

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 4 Tbsp

- 1 Cut tofu into 8 pieces. Wrap tofu with a cheesecloth and pat dry.
- 2 Trim hard base from honshimeji mushrooms, then divide into smaller bundles.
- 3 Boil a pot of water and briefly blanch shredded devil's tongue jelly for 30 seconds. Rinse under running tap water and drain well. Cut into 8-cm (3-in) lengths. Set aside.
- 4 Combine ingredients for gravy in a pot and bring to the boil. Add beef and loosen with a pair of chopsticks. Cook until meat changes colour. Remove beef from pot and set aside.
- 5 Add tofu, onions and devil's tongue jelly and cover with a drop-in lid. Bring to the boil. Lower heat and simmer until onions are soft. Add honshimeji mushrooms and cook for 1 minute.
- 6 Return beef to the pot and add garland chrysanthemum. Cook for about 30 seconds and remove from heat. Serve warm with rice.





# rice and noodles

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# japanese fried rice in omelette parcel

## omuraisu

Another example of Japanese fusion cuisine, *omuraisu* is a popular dish found on the menus of many Japanese restaurants. **Serves 4**



**Chicken thigh** 200 g (7 oz),  
cut into bite-size pieces

**Salt** 1 tsp

**Sake** 1 Tbsp

**Butter** 1 Tbsp

**Onion** 1, peeled and chopped

**Cooked Japanese short grain rice**  
600 g (21 oz)

**Tomato ketchup** 4–6 Tbsp + more  
to garnish

**Red capsicum (bell pepper)** 1,  
seeded and chopped

**Ground white pepper** to taste

### Egg crêpe

**Eggs** 6, lightly beaten

**Milk** 1 Tbsp

**Salt** 1 tsp

**Butter** 4 Tbsp

- 1 Season chicken with 1 tsp salt and sake.
- 2 Heat 1 Tbsp butter in a non-stick frying pan and sauté onion until translucent. Add chicken and cook until colour changes.
- 3 Add rice, tomato ketchup, capsicum, salt and pepper to taste. Toss well. Remove from heat and set aside.
- 4 To make egg crêpe, whisk eggs with milk and salt.
- 5 Heat 1 Tbsp butter in the frying pan and pour in a quarter of egg mixture. Spoon a quarter of rice mixture into the centre of egg crêpe. Once egg crêpe is cooked, carefully fold in the sides of egg over the rice. Remove to a serving plate, placing omelette on the folded edges to keep parcel closed. Repeat this process to make 3 more parcels.
- 6 Make a cut on the top of each parcel so rice is exposed. Decorate with tomato ketchup if desired.







# green pea and soy puff rice

## green peasu aburaage gohan

This easy-to-prepare mixed rice dish can be eaten hot on its own or as an accompaniment to meat and seafood dishes. **Serves 5**

**Japanese short grain rice** 360 g  
(12<sup>4</sup>/<sub>5</sub> oz)

**Kelp (*konbu*)** 4-cm (1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-in) piece

**Water** 562.5 ml (18<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> fl oz / 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cups)

**Deep-fried soy puff (*aburaage*)** 1

**Salt** 1 tsp

**Sake** 2 Tbsp

**Honey** 1 tsp

**Green peas** 100 g (3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> oz)

**Red pickled ginger (optional)** 2 Tbsp

- 1 Wash rice and drain well in a colander. Set aside for 30 minutes before cooking.
- 2 Meanwhile, soak kelp in water for 15 minutes. Remove kelp and cut into thin strips. Reserve soaking liquid.
- 3 Bring a pot of water to the boil and briefly scald deep-fried soy puff. Use a rolling pin to squeeze excess water from soy puff, then cut into 1-cm (1/2-in) cubes.
- 4 Transfer rice to a rice cooker and pour in reserved liquid. Add salt, sake and honey. Stir well. Add kelp and deep-fried soy puff. Cook rice according to instructions on the rice cooker.
- 5 When rice is just cooked, add green peas to heat through. Before serving, toss rice with chopsticks. Garnish with red pickled ginger, if desired. Serve warm.





# dried cherry prawn rice balls

## sakura ebi onigiri

Also known as *omusubi*, these rice balls are popular with young and old alike, and can be enjoyed as a meal or snack. **Makes 2 onigiri**



**Dried cherry prawns (*sakura ebi*)** 2 Tbsp

**Cheddar cheese slices** 2, roughly chopped

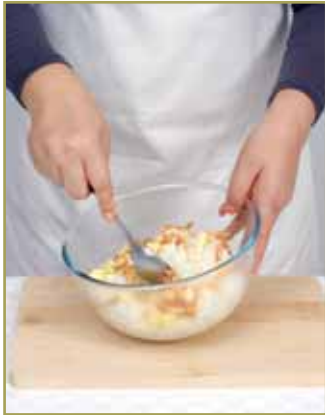
**Cooked Japanese short grain rice** 150 g  
(5½ oz)

**Sesame oil** 1 tsp

**Salt** to taste

**Ground white pepper** to taste

**Seasoned nori sheets (*ajitsuke*) or  
shisho leaves** 2



- 1 Heat dried cherry prawns in a non-stick frying pan for about 2 minutes or until fragrant. Remove from heat.
- 2 Combine prawns, cheese, rice and sesame oil in a large bowl and mix well. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
- 3 Divide rice mixture into 2 portions and shape as desired using a mould or with your hands. Wrap with seaweed or shisho leaf.







# deep-fried oyster rice bowl kaki furai donburi

Deep-fried oysters are normally eaten during winter in Japan as this is when the shellfish is in season. You can use prepared battered oysters available at Japanese supermarkets or prepare them from scratch using this recipe. **Serves 4**

**Eggs** 6

**Plain (all-purpose) flour**  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup

**Japanese breadcrumbs (panko)** 2 cups

**Oysters** 16, shucked

**Vegetable oil** for deep-frying

**Onion** 1, peeled and thinly sliced

**Trefoil (mitsuba)**  $\frac{1}{2}$  bundle, cut into 3-cm ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ -in) lengths

**Cooked Japanese short grain rice**  
4 servings

## Sauce

**Dashi stock (see page 113)** 375 ml  
(12 fl oz /  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups)

**Soy bean paste (miso)** 5 Tbsp

**Mirin** 2 Tbsp

**Sake** 2 Tbsp

**Sugar**  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp

- 1 Whisk 2 eggs in a medium bowl and set aside. Pour flour and breadcrumbs into separate flat dishes. Coat oysters lightly with flour, then dip in beaten egg and coat evenly with breadcrumbs.
- 2 Heat oil for deep-frying in a saucepan and cook oysters until golden brown and crisp. Drain well on kitchen towels.
- 3 Combine ingredients for sauce in a small bowl. Pour sauce into a non-stick frying pan and add onion and oysters. Bring to the boil.
- 4 Beat remaining eggs and add to frying pan. Cover and cook until egg is just lightly cooked. Scatter trefoil over and remove from heat.
- 5 Spoon oyster and egg mixture equally over cooked rice in individual serving bowls and serve.





# deep-fried pork cutlet rice bowl katsudon

*Katsudon* is derived from the words *tonkatsu* (deep-fried pork cutlet) and *donburi* (rice bowl), thus making this all-in-one dish simple to make yet satisfying. **Serves 4**



**Japanese short grain rice** 540 g  
(1 lb 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> oz)

**Water** 812.5 ml (24<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> fl oz / 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cups)

## Tonkatsu

**Pork chops** 4 pieces, about 125 g  
(4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> oz) each

**Salt** 1 tsp

**Ground white pepper** a few dashes

**Plain (all-purpose) flour** for dusting

**Eggs** 2, lightly beaten

**Japanese breadcrumbs (panko)**  
300 g (11 oz)

**Cooking oil** for deep-frying

## Topping (one serving)

**Dashi stock** (see page 113) 125 ml  
(4 fl oz / <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup)

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Tbsp

**Mirin** 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Tbsp

**Sake** 1 Tbsp

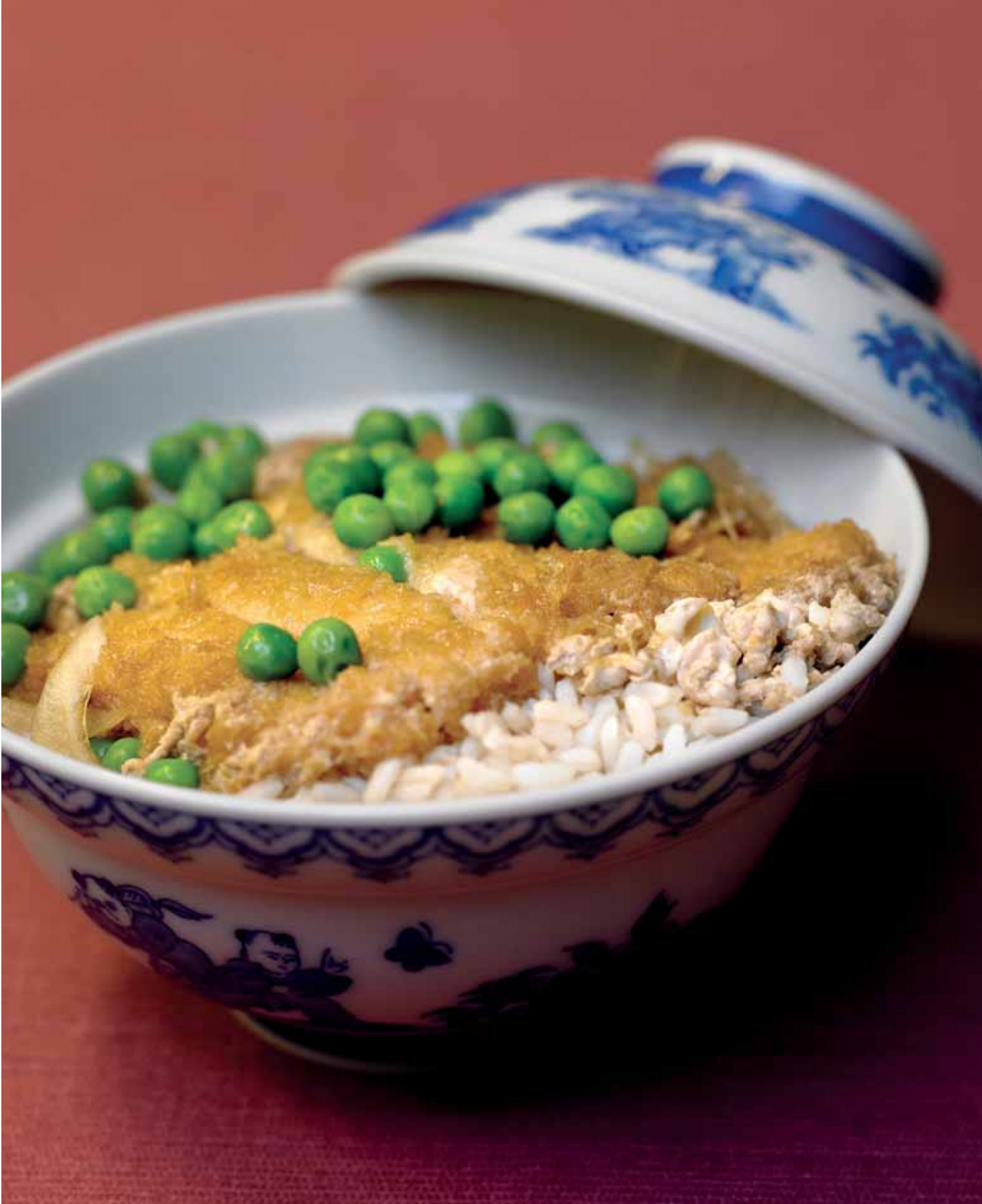
**Onion** <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, peeled and thinly sliced

**Egg white** 1

**Green peas** 2 Tbsp

- 1 Wash rice and drain in a colander. Set aside for 15 minutes before cooking. Transfer to a rice cooker and add water. Cook according to instructions on rice cooker. When rice is cooked, fluff it up with a pair of chopsticks. Set aside.
- 2 To make *tonkatsu*, season pork chops with salt and pepper. Use a metal meat tenderiser to pound both sides of pork chops.
- 3 Dust pork chops with some flour, then dip into beaten egg. Coat pork chops evenly with breadcrumbs.
- 4 Heat oil for deep-frying and deep-fry pork chops until golden brown and crisp. Set aside to cool.
- 5 Prepare each serving individually. Spoon a portion of cooked rice into a serving bowl. Set aside. Cut a pork chop into slices. Set aside. In a small saucepan, bring dashi, soy sauce, mirin and sake to the boil. Add onion and cook until translucent. Add sliced pork chop and egg white. Cover and cook until egg is almost cooked. Add green peas and cook for another 1 minute. Pour mixture over rice in bowl. Repeat to make another 3 servings.
- 6 Serve immediately.







# cold green tea noodles cha soba

Traditionally served during the hot summer months in Japan, this classic dish is such a favourite with locals that it is now enjoyed all-year around. **Serves 2–3**

**Cooking oil** 1 Tbsp

**Dried green tea soba** 200 g (7 oz)

**Chopped spring onions (scallions)**  
2 Tbsp

**Seasoned nori sheets (*ajitsuke*)** 2,  
shredded

**Wasabi** to taste

## Noodle dipping sauce

**Dashi (see page 113)** 375 ml  
(12 fl oz / 1½ cups)

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)** 125 ml  
(4 fl oz / ½ cup)

**Mirin** 125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup)

**Sugar** 2 Tbsp

- 1 Start by preparing noodle dipping sauce. Combine all ingredients for dipping sauce in a small saucepan and bring to the boil. Stir well to dissolve sugar. Chill in the refrigerator before using.
- 2 Bring a pot of water to the boil and add cooking oil. Add soba and cook for 7–8 minutes or until noodles are tender but not mushy. To test if the noodles are cooked, pull and break a strand of noodle. If the core of the noodle is not powdery, the noodle is cooked. Immediately plunge noodles into a basin of iced water to stop the cooking process. Drain well.
- 3 Divide noodles into 2 or 3 portions and place each portion on a serving tray lined with a bamboo mat. Garnish with spring onions and nori. Offer chilled dipping sauce and wasabi in a small bowl on the side.



# cold buckwheat noodles with grated japanese yam tanabata hiyashi soba

In Japan, this cold dish is normally enjoyed during the midsummer festival of Tanabata. Noodles are typically served on festive occasions as it represents longevity. **Serves 2**



**Japanese yam (*nagaimo*)** 10-cm (4-in)

**Salt** as needed

**Ladies fingers (okra)** 1–2

**Dried buckwheat soba** 200 g (7 oz)

**Noodle dipping sauce (*mentsuyu*)**  
(see page 113) 50 ml (1<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> fl oz)

**Hot water** 150 ml (5 fl oz)

**Egg yolks** from 2 eggs

**Seasoned nori sheet (*ajitsuke*)** 1,  
cut into thin strips

**Wasabi** 1/2 tsp



- 1 Grate Japanese yam into a fine paste by grinding it in a *suribachi* (see page 57). Use a food processor to do this if you do not have a *suribachi*. Set aside.
- 2 Sprinkle some salt on a chopping board and roll ladies fingers over salt to remove fine hair.
- 3 Bring a pot of water to the boil and briefly blanch ladies fingers for 30 seconds. Immediately plunge into a basin of iced water to stop it from cooking further. Thinly slice ladies fingers and set aside.
- 4 Bring a pot of water to the boil and cook soba until noodles are tender but not mushy. Plunge noodles into a basin of iced water to stop it from cooking further. Drain well.
- 5 Mix noodle dipping sauce with hot water in a bowl and stir well. Set aside to cool.
- 6 Divide soba into 2 portions and place each portion on a serving tray lined with a bamboo mat. Top with grated Japanese yam. Arrange ladies fingers and a raw egg yolk on top of noodles to signify the moon and stars. Garnish with some nori. Offer noodle dipping sauce and wasabi in a small bowl on the side.







# japanese noodle soup kitsune udon

Literally 'fox noodles', *kitsune* udon is a simple hot noodle soup topped with seasoned soy puffs. The name for this dish came about when village farmers placed deep-fried soy puffs (*aburaage*) at shrines as offerings and foxes came to eat them at night. For added colour and flavour, fish cake and leek are sometimes added to the soup. **Serves 4**

**Deep-fried soy puffs (*aburaage*)** 4

**Frozen udon** 4 slabs, each about 200 g (7 oz), thawed

**Japanese fish cake (*kamaboko*)**  $\frac{1}{2}$ , thinly sliced

**Japanese leek (*naga negi*)**  $\frac{1}{2}$ , thinly sliced

## Broth

**Dashi stock (see page 113)**

2 litres (64 fl oz / 8 cups)

**Sugar** 1 Tbsp

**Salt** a pinch

**Sake** 2 Tbsp

**Mirin** 2 Tbsp

**Japanese soy sauce (*shoyu*)**  
100–120 ml ( $3\frac{1}{3}$ –4 fl oz)

## Soy puff seasoning

**Water** 400 ml ( $13\frac{1}{2}$  fl oz)

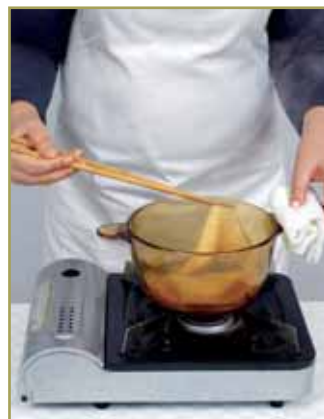
**Instant dashi granule** 1 tsp

**Sugar** 60 g (2 oz)

**Salt** 2 g

**Noodle dipping sauce (*mentsuyu*)**  
(see page 113) 4 Tbsp

- 1 Start by preparing broth. Combine dashi stock, sugar, salt, sake and mirin in a pot and bring to the boil. Add soy sauce. Set aside.
- 2 Bring a pot of water to the boil and briefly blanch deep-fried soy puffs. Use a rolling pin to squeeze out excess water from soy puffs.
- 3 Combine water, instant dashi granules, sugar, salt and noodle dipping sauce for soy puff seasoning in a pot. Add soy puffs and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 minutes. Cut soy puffs into smaller pieces.
- 4 Bring a pot of water to the boil and briefly scald udon, fish cake slices and Japanese leek separately.
- 5 Divide noodles among 4 individual serving bowls and arrange fish cake slices, flavoured soy puffs and leek on top. Ladle broth over and serve immediately.





# cold sesame noodles with vegetables

## yasai no goma-dare udon

This version of cold noodles features a topping made from Japanese yam, cucumber, deep-fried soy puffs and sesame sauce. **Serves 4**



**Deep-fried soy puffs (*aburaage*)** 2

**Japanese yam (*nagaimo*)** 300 g  
(11 oz), peeled

**Cooking oil** 1 Tbsp

**Dried udon** 400 g (14 oz)

**Japanese cucumbers** 2, thinly sliced

**Hard-boiled eggs** 2, halved

**Red pickled ginger (optional)** to garnish

### Sesame sauce

**White sesame paste** 5 Tbsp

**Toasted white sesame seeds** 8 tsp

**Japanese light soy sauce (*usukuchi*  
*shoyu*)** 125 ml (4 fl oz /  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup)

**Sugar** 50 g ( $1\frac{2}{3}$  oz)

**Sake** 1 Tbsp

- 1 To make sesame sauce, combine white sesame paste, toasted white sesame seeds, soy sauce, sugar and sake in *suribachi* and grind until smooth. Use a food processor to do this if you do not have a *suribachi*. Set aside.
- 2 Bring a pot of water to the boil and blanch deep-fried soy puffs for 30 seconds. Use a rolling pin to squeeze out excess water from soy puffs.
- 3 Heat a non-stick frying pan and toast deep-fried soy puffs until slightly burnt. Cut into thin slices.
- 4 Cut Japanese yam into thin slices. Soak in a bowl of water for about 10 minutes.
- 5 Bring another pot of water to the boil and add oil. Cook udon for 5–7 minutes or until noodles are tender. Rinse with tap water and drain well.
- 6 Transfer noodles to a large bowl and pour sesame sauce over. Toss to coat noodles well. Arrange noodles in a serving dish and top with Japanese yam, cucumber, deep-fried soy puffs and eggs. Garnish with red pickled ginger, if desired. Serve immediately.







# japanese fried noodles yaki udon

Udon is a thick, wheat noodle that is normally served in soups. However, this versatile noodle can also be stir-fried. Here, it makes a quick and hearty dish. **Serves 4**

**Frozen udon** 4 slabs, each about 200 g (7 oz)

**Sliced pork** 200 g (7 oz)

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 1–2 Tbsp

**Cooking oil** 1 Tbsp

**Minced garlic**  $\frac{1}{2}$  Tbsp

**Honshimeji mushrooms** 200 g (7 oz), hard base trimmed and divided into small bundles

**Cabbage** 200 g (7 oz), shredded

**Bean sprouts** 200 g (7 oz)

**Pickled red ginger (*beni shoga*)** 2 Tbsp

**Deep-fried flour batter (*tenkasu*) (optional)** 2 Tbsp

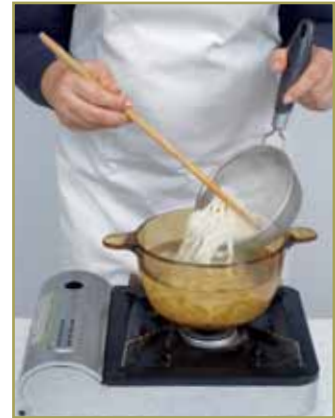
**Chilli powder (*ichimi togarashi*)** to taste

**Ponzu sauce** 250 ml (8 fl oz / 1 cup)

**Green seaweed powder (*aonori*)** to taste

**Seasoned nori sheet (*ajitsuke*)** 1, cut into thin strips

- 1 Bring a pot of water to the boil and blanch frozen udon for 30 seconds. Drain well.
- 2 Season pork with soy sauce.
- 3 Heat oil in an electric teppan or a non-stick wok and stir-fry garlic until fragrant. Add seasoned pork slices and sauté until pork changes colour. Add honshimeji mushrooms, cabbage, bean sprouts, half the pickled red ginger, deep-fried flour batter, chilli powder and udon. Toss well to combine.
- 4 Pour in ponzu sauce and continue to toss well. Sprinkle over some green seaweed powder, nori strips and the remaining pickled red ginger.
- 5 Dish out and serve immediately.









# desserts

grilled rice cakes with red beans 104

glutinous rice flour dumplings and  
shredded jelly with red bean paste 107

green tea jelly with red beans 108

plum wine jelly 111

# grilled rice cakes with red beans zenzai

In Japan, this popular traditional sweet is typically eaten for afternoon tea, known as *san-ji no-oyatsu*, which literally means 3 o'clock teatime. **Serves 5**



## Japanese red beans (*azuki*)

300 g (11 oz)

**Water** as needed

**Sugar** 200 g (7 oz)

## Japanese rice cakes (*kirimochi*) 5

- 1 Start preparations a day ahead. Wash red beans and soak in water overnight.
- 2 On the day of cooking, drain red beans and place in a large pot. Add enough water to cover red beans and bring to the boil. Drain water. Repeat this process another time.
- 3 Add enough water to cover red beans again and bring to the boil. Lower heat and leave to simmer for 30 minutes. Drain red beans and reserve liquid.
- 4 In a separate pot, add red beans, sugar and half the reserved liquid. Bring to the boil and cook over low heat until liquid is reduced by half.
- 5 Meanwhile, grill rice cakes until puffy and brown.
- 6 To serve, arrange rice cakes on a serving plate and top with red bean paste.

**Note:** To cut down on the preparation time, you can also use ready-made sweetened red beans available from Japanese supermarkets.







# glutinous rice flour dumplings and shredded jelly with red bean paste

## matcha dango tokoroten no anko ankake

These Japanese dumplings are often enjoyed with green tea as an afternoon snack. They can be served as is or grilled, then drizzled with sweetened soy sauce. **Serves 4**

**Glutinous rice flour** 100 g (3½ oz)

**Water** 5½ Tbsp

**Green tea powder** ½–1 tsp

**Store-bought shredded jelly (*tokoroten*)**

250 g (9 oz)

**Red bean paste (see page 104)** 8 Tbsp

**Some ice cubes** to serve

- 1 In a bowl, combine glutinous rice flour and water to form dough. Divide dough into 2 portions and mix green tea powder into one portion.
- 2 Roll both portions of dough into logs and cut into small pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, then flatten slightly with your fingers.
- 3 Bring a pot of water to the boil and lower dumplings in to cook. The dumplings are cooked when they float to the surface. Remove with a slotted spoon and immediately plunge into a basin of iced water. Drain before serving.
- 4 To serve, spoon some shredded jelly and ice cubes into individual serving bowls. Top with some dumplings and red bean paste.



# green tea jelly with red beans anmitsu

*Anmitsu* is the name for Japanese desserts made of jelly and red bean paste. Cafés in Japan typically serve this dessert with fresh fruit and a side of brown sugar syrup. **Serves 5**



**Japanese agar-agar powder (*kanten*)** 2 tsp

**Sugar** 40 g (1½ oz)

**Green tea powder** 1–2 tsp

**Water** 400 ml (13½ fl oz)

**Shaved ice** to serve

**Red bean paste (see page 104)**

8–10 Tbsp

**Maraschino cherries (optional)** 5

- 1 Combine agar-agar powder, sugar, green tea powder and water in a pot and bring to the boil. Stir well to dissolve sugar.
- 2 Dip a jelly mould into water to moisten it, then pour agar-agar mixture into mould. Leave mould in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes for agar-agar to set.
- 3 Unmould green tea jelly and cut it into small cubes.
- 4 Spoon some shaved ice into individual serving cups and top with green tea jelly and red bean paste. Garnish with maraschino cherries if desired.









# plum wine jelly umeshu kanten

This light and refreshing dessert can also be served as a snack. **Serves 5**

**Water** 1 litre (32 fl oz / 4 cups)

**Japanese agar-agar powder (*kanten*)**  
12 g ( $\frac{2}{5}$  oz)

**Sugar** 180 g (6 $\frac{1}{2}$  oz)

**Egg whites** from 2 eggs

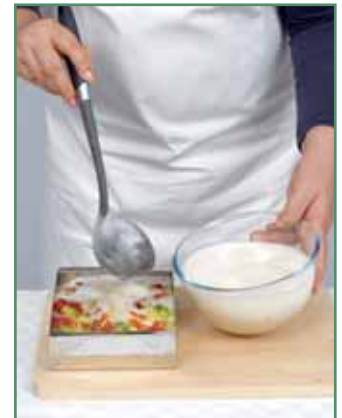
**Japanese plum wine** 4 Tbsp

**Kiwi**  $\frac{1}{2}$ , peeled and sliced

**Pineapple slices** 4, sliced

**Glazed cherries** 8, halved

- 1 Combine water and agar-agar powder in a pot and bring to the boil. Add sugar and stir well to dissolve. Remove from heat.
- 2 In a mixing bowl, whisk egg whites until stiff peaks form. Pour in the agar-agar mixture and stir gently to combine, then add plum wine.
- 3 Dip a jelly mould into water to moisten it, then pour half the agar-agar mixture into mould. Arrange half the kiwi, pineapple and cherries in the mould, then leave agar-agar mixture to cool to room temperature.
- 4 When the agar-agar has cooled, pour in the remaining agar-agar mixture and add the remaining fruit. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or until agar-agar is set.
- 5 Unmould agar-agar and slice. Serve chilled.





# basic recipes

## dashi stock

Makes about 1.25 litres (40 fl oz / 5 cups)

**Water** 1.25 litres (40 fl oz / 5 cups)

**Kelp (konbu)** 1 piece, about 4 x 10-cm (1½ x 4-in)

**Bonito flakes** 1 cup, loosely packed

- 1 Fill a clean and grease-free pot with 1 litre (32 fl oz / 4 cups) water and soak kelp for 30 minutes.
- 2 Bring the pot of water and kelp to the boil. Once boiling, remove kelp. Lower heat and add the remaining 250 ml (8 fl oz / 1 cup) water to cool. Add in bonito flakes and bring to the boil.
- 3 When stock comes to the boil, remove from heat immediately. Allow bonito flakes to sink to the bottom of the pot before straining stock. Use as required.

**Note:** Allowing the bonito flakes to sink to the bottom of the pot will ensure that there is ample time for the bonito flakes to release its flavour.

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## noodle dipping sauce mentsuyu

Makes about 625 ml (20 fl oz / 2½ cups)

**Dashi stock (see previous above)** 375 ml (12 fl oz / 1½ cups)

**Japanese soy sauce (shoyu)** 125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup)

**Mirin** 125 ml (4 fl oz / ½ cup)

**Sugar** 2 Tbsp

- 1 Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to the boil. Stir well to dissolve sugar.
- 2 Leave sauce to cool to room temperature before pouring into a clean airtight jar. Store refrigerated. This sauce will keep for up to 1 week.

# glossary



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## 1. Bonito flakes (*katsuobushi*)

Usually sold vacuum-packed, these delicate flakes are shaved from smoked bonito. Bonito flakes are used in a variety of Japanese dishes and it is one of the basic ingredients for dashi stock. It is also often used as a garnish. Store in resealable bags in the refrigerator.

## 2. Burdock (*gobo*)

This root vegetable is high in fibre and nutrients. In Japan, burdock used in simmered dishes and soups. As it is a root, it can be a little muddy, so scrub thoroughly with a brush and scrape away the skin with the back of a knife before using. After cutting, soak it in a basin of water with a few drops of vinegar to prevent it from turning brown.

## 3. Deep-fried soy puffs (*aburaage*)

Rectangular in shape and flat, deep-fried soy puffs are a highly versatile ingredient. It can be used in stir-fries, simmered dishes and soups. It is also popularly used as a pocket for stuffing rice for a dish known as *inari zushi*.

## 4. Deep-fried flour batter (*tenkasu*)

These bits of deep-fried flour batter can be used to thicken dishes or to add flavour to dishes. It is available at Japanese supermarkets. Add it to fried noodles, Japanese-style savoury pancakes (*okonomiyaki*) or casserole dishes (*nabemono*).

## 5. Devil's tongue jelly (*konnyaku*)

Made from the arum root, devil's tongue jelly is available in blocks or shredded. The latter is known as *shirataki*. Seaweed is sometimes added for colour and flavour; otherwise devil's tongue jelly is white in colour. Before using, briefly blanch in boiling water to remove any strong smell. It contains no calories and is believed to help remove toxins in the digestive system.

## 6. Dried cherry prawns (shrimps) (*sakura ebi*)

This small crustacean measures between 1 cm and 3 cm ( $\frac{1}{2}$  in and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in). It is fished from the Suruga Bay in Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan. It is often used as topping for *okonomiyaki*, but is also fried in batter to make *kakiage tempura*. As it is sweet, it is also used to season one-pot rice dishes.





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### 7. Dried silver bait

Known as *chirimen jako* in Japanese, dried silver bait is high in calcium and the Japanese typically mix it with vegetables or seaweed and serve it as a side dish or sprinkle it on top of a bowl of rice as garnish.

### 8. Fish paste cakes (*chikuwa*, *kamaboko*, *naruto*, *hanpen*)

Available at most Japanese supermarkets, fish paste cakes come in a variety of forms and colours. Known collectively as *surimi*, the different types are known by different names and are often made of different types of fish for use in different dishes. They can be added to soups, noodle dishes and simmered dishes. *Chikuwa* (top left) resembles bamboo, *naruto* (top right) features a

bright pink swirl in the centre and *kamaboko* (bottom left) is a cured *surimi* made from various types of white fish. An unusual version of fish paste cake is *hanpen* (bottom right), which is made from shark meat.

### 9. Green shishito peppers

These Japanese peppers resemble green chillies and are not spicy. Shishito peppers are usually cooked whole. Before cooking, make some slits on the peppers to prevent the oil from splattering.

### 10. Japanese ladies fingers

Known as *okura* in Japanese, these ladies fingers have fine hair on the skin which can be removed by rolling gently on a chopping board sprinkled with salt. They can be eaten raw, lightly scalded in boiling water or deep-fried.

### 11. Japanese mayonnaise

Japanese mayonnaise is sweeter than its Western counterpart. In Japanese cooking, it is often mixed with hard-boiled eggs to make a rich egg filling for sandwiches.

### 12. Japanese red beans (*azuki*)

Red beans are a favourite ingredient in Japanese desserts although this highly nutritious ingredient can be used in savoury dishes as well. In particular, it is used in a rice dish known as *osekihan*, which is served on auspicious occasions.



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### 13. Japanese rice cake (mochi)

These soft and chewy rice flour cakes are often served in a soup called *ozoni* to mark auspicious occasions such as the New Year. In Japan, mochi is also grilled until soft and sticky, then topped with sweet red beans or soy sauce and sold as a snack.

### 14. Japanese yam (*nagaimo*)

Also known as long yam, this root vegetable is often grated into a smooth paste before adding to dishes. It is typically used raw in rice and fish dishes or cooked in soups. Be careful when handling Japanese yam as the sap may cause your hands to itch.

### 15. Kelp (konbu)

Kelp is an essential ingredient used in making dashi stock, which forms the base of many Japanese dishes. It is rich in iodine and glutamic acid, which gives dishes it is used in the umami flavour. Kelp is easily available from Japanese supermarkets.

### 16. Lotus root (*renkon*)

Lotus roots have a smooth, waxy texture and crunchy, ivory-coloured flesh. When cooked, the starch within the root is released, bringing out a natural sweetness and nutty flavour. Choose roots that are firm, with smooth, unblemished skin.

### 17. Noodles (soba, udon)

The two types of soba noodles (top) typically used in Japanese cooking are green tea soba and buckwheat soba. Both types can be used in hot and cold dishes. Udon (bottom) is a thick wheat flour noodle. The thickness of the noodle may vary. Udon is available in dried and frozen forms.

### 18. Seaweed (nori)

Nori seaweed is popularly used to wrap sushi and onigiri. You can find seasoned (*ajitsuke*) and unseasoned nori seaweed at most supermarkets.



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### 19. Seaweed (hijiki)

Hijiki seaweed is high in iron. It is easily available from Japanese supermarkets. Hijiki seaweed is available in two varieties—short sprouts or longer strands. To use, soak in water until softened.

### 20. Sesame paste

There are two kinds of sesame pastes available at Japanese supermarkets—those made from black sesame and those made from white sesame. In these recipes, we use only white sesame paste (pictured). This versatile paste is often used as a base for dipping sauces and salad dressings.

### 21. Soy Bean Paste (miso)

There are different types of soy bean paste available. White miso is typically used as dipping sauce for *shabu-shabu*, while brown miso paste is typically used for making miso soup. The dark brown version, known as *akadashi* miso, is used for cooking in simmered dishes.

### 22. Tofu

Tofu is a good source of soy protein. There are many different types of tofu used in Japanese cooking. Silken tofu (*kinu tofu*) is very soft and is often used in soups. Firm tofu or cotton tofu (*momen tofu*), pictured, has a firm texture and is often simmered or pan-fried.

### 23. Trefoil (*mitsuba*)

These fragrant leaves have a clean and refreshing flavour. In Japanese cooking, they are typically used as garnish to enhance the flavour of dishes.

### 24. White radish (daikon) sprouts (*kaiware daikon*)

These tiny sprouts are typically used in Japanese cooking as garnish. They are occasionally included in salads to add a strong, pungent flavour.



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# weights and measures

Quantities for this book are given in Metric, Imperial and American (spoon) measures. Standard spoon and cup measurements used are: 1 tsp = 5 ml, 1 Tbsp = 15 ml, 1 cup = 250 ml. All measures are level unless otherwise stated.

## LIQUID AND VOLUME MEASURES

Metric	Imperial	American
5 ml	$\frac{1}{6}$ fl oz	1 teaspoon
10 ml	$\frac{1}{3}$ fl oz	1 dessertspoon
15 ml	$\frac{1}{2}$ fl oz	1 tablespoon
60 ml	2 fl oz	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup (4 tablespoons)
85 ml	$2\frac{1}{2}$ fl oz	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup
90 ml	3 fl oz	$\frac{3}{8}$ cup (6 tablespoons)
125 ml	4 fl oz	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
180 ml	6 fl oz	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
250 ml	8 fl oz	1 cup
300 ml	10 fl oz ( $\frac{1}{2}$ pint)	$1\frac{1}{4}$ cups
375 ml	12 fl oz	$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups
435 ml	14 fl oz	$1\frac{3}{4}$ cups
500 ml	16 fl oz	2 cups
625 ml	20 fl oz (1 pint)	$2\frac{1}{2}$ cups
750 ml	24 fl oz ( $1\frac{1}{5}$ pints)	3 cups
1 litre	32 fl oz ( $1\frac{3}{5}$ pints)	4 cups
1.25 litres	40 fl oz (2 pints)	5 cups
1.5 litres	48 fl oz ( $2\frac{2}{5}$ pints)	6 cups
2.5 litres	80 fl oz (4 pints)	10 cups

## DRY MEASURES

Metric	Imperial
30 grams	1 ounce
45 grams	$1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces
55 grams	2 ounces
70 grams	$2\frac{1}{2}$ ounces
85 grams	3 ounces
100 grams	$3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces
110 grams	4 ounces
125 grams	$4\frac{1}{2}$ ounces
140 grams	5 ounces
280 grams	10 ounces
450 grams	16 ounces (1 pound)
500 grams	1 pound, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces
700 grams	$1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds
800 grams	$1\frac{3}{4}$ pounds
1 kilogram	2 pounds, 3 ounces
1.5 kilograms	3 pounds, $4\frac{1}{2}$ ounces
2 kilograms	4 pounds, 6 ounces

## OVEN TEMPERATURE

	°C	°F	Gas Regulo
Very slow	120	250	1
Slow	150	300	2
Moderately slow	160	325	3
Moderate	180	350	4
Moderately hot	190/200	370/400	5/6
Hot	210/220	410/440	6/7
Very hot	230	450	8
Super hot	250/290	475/550	9/10

## LENGTH

Metric	Imperial
0.5 cm	$\frac{1}{4}$ inch
1 cm	$\frac{1}{2}$ inch
1.5 cm	$\frac{3}{4}$ inch
2.5 cm	1 inch

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