



Japan

Japan, pronounced in Japanese as “Nippon” or “Nihon”, is a Pacific Ocean island nation off the coast of mainland Asia. It is comprised of approximately 6,900 islands. The most prominent and populous islands are Honshu, Hokkaido, Shikoku and Kyushu, making up 97% of the country. Within these islands, there are 47 prefectures with a total population of 127 million (11th in the world).



Culture

Early Japanese culture was heavily influenced by China. During the Edo era, Japan exercised a strict isolationist policy, closing its doors to all relationships with the outside world. This cultivated a distinct Japanese culture. After the fall of that era in 1868, Japan reversed this practice, adopting cultural practices from all over the world and mixing them with what was established during the Edo era. Over the years,

Western culture has influenced all aspects of Japanese culture including art, lifestyle and food.



Japanese cuisine

Encompasses the regional and traditional foods of Japan, which have developed through centuries of political, economic, and social changes. The traditional cuisine of Japan is based on rice with miso soup and other dishes; there is an emphasis on seasonal ingredients. Side dishes often consist of fish, pickled vegetables, and vegetables cooked in broth. Seafood is common, often grilled, but also served raw as sashimi or in sushi. Seafood and vegetables are also deep-fried in a light batter, as tempura. Apart from rice, staples include noodles, such as soba and udon. Japan also has many simmered dishes such as fish products in broth called oden, or beef in sukiyaki and nikujaga.



Historically influenced by Chinese cuisine, Japanese cuisine has also opened up to influence from Western cuisines in the modern era. Dishes inspired by foreign food—in particular Chinese food—like ramen and gyōza, as well as foods like spaghetti, curry, and hamburgers have become adopted with variants for Japanese tastes and ingredients. Traditionally, the Japanese shunned meat due to Buddhism, but with the

modernization of Japan in the 1880s, meat-based dishes such as tonkatsu and yakiniku have become common. Japanese cuisine, particularly sushi, has become popular throughout the world.



What is the Secret of Making Tempura?

Tempura recipe



Tempura is one of the popular Japanese dishes. If you are going to a Japanese restaurant, you have probably ordered it many times.

I guess many people think tempura is quite difficult to cook, especially to make crispy batter. But you can make Tempura batter just from ingredients in your pantry. Tempura is very good for parties, because of the tasty colourful looking, it is easy to pick and you can chose any tempura sauce depending on individual taste. In addition, it needs very quick cooking time. Some of the sea food tempura just needs to fry for half a minute. Also, you can use tempura for Tempura Udon (wheat noodles), Tempura Soba (buckwheat noodles), Tempura Sushi and Tempura Don (sweet sauce tempura on rice).

Tempura ingredients:

Plain flour: 100g (1Cup) *

Egg: 1

Cold water: 200cc (1Cup) *

Baking Soda: 1 tea spoon

Potato Starch: 2 table spoon

Your choice of vegetables, sea foods and mushrooms such as potato, sweet potato, aubergine (eggplant), zucchini (courgette), onion, capsicum (paprika), pumpkin, green beans, carrot, okura, asparagus, prawn, white fish and squid.

Oil (Natan oil, sunflower, corn or canola oil)

*1cup =200cc

Make Tempura batter

Mix Plain flour, baking soda and potato starch together. And then sift mixed flour as preparation.

Crack an egg into the bowl and beat it roughly. Add the cold water and mix them.

Put 1/3 mixed flour in to egg mixture and gently mix. Long cooking chop sticks are the best utensil for mixing tempura batter. If you do not have them, use a fork instead.

Then add an additional 1/3 flour and mix.

And finally add the last 1/3 flour and mix.

Important: Lumps in the flour is completely fine. Do not mix it too much as you will get a lot of gluten which makes it heavy and un-crispy tempura batter.

Ramen



Method

1. Mix 700ml chicken stock, 3 halved garlic cloves, 4 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce, a sliced thumb-sized piece of ginger, ½ tsp Chinese five spice, pinch of chilli powder and 300ml water in a stockpot or large saucepan, bring to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 5 mins.
 2. Taste the stock – add 1 tsp white sugar or a little more soy sauce to make it sweeter or saltier to your liking.
 3. Cook 375g ramen noodles following the pack instructions, then drain and set aside.
 4. Slice 400g cooked pork or chicken, fry in 2 tsp sesame oil until just starting to brown, then set aside.
 5. Divide the noodles between four bowls. Top each with a quarter of the meat, 25g spinach, 1 tbsp sweetcorn and two boiled egg halves each.
 6. Strain the stock into a clean pan, then bring to the boil once again.
 7. Divide the stock between the bowls, then sprinkle over 1 shredded nori sheet, sliced spring onions or shallots and a sprinkle of sesame seeds. Allow the spinach to wilt slightly before serving.
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Dorayaki



Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 3/4 cup milk
- Anko (sweet red bean paste)

Instructions

1. Mix flour and baking soda in a bowl.
2. In another bowl, whisk eggs, sugar, and honey together. Add milk and mix well.
3. Stir dry ingredients into egg mixture, and whisk until batter becomes smooth.
4. Heat non-stick frying pan with a small amount of oil and wipe excess oil well. At medium low heat, drop 1/8 of a cup of batter onto the pan, like a pancake. Cook about 2 minutes until the surface of the pancake has a lot of bubbles and the edges become dry. Flip over and cook 1 more minute.
5. Transfer to a plate and cover with a wet paper towel.
6. Take one cake and place a heaping tablespoon of Anko and cover with another cake. Wrap it with plastic and press with hands. Pinch to seal the edges of the pancakes together.

Masaharu Morimoto

Morimoto received practical training in sushi and traditional Kaiseki cuisine in Hiroshima, and opened his own restaurant in that city in 1980. Influenced by Western cooking styles, he decided to sell his restaurant in 1985 to travel around the United States. His travels further influenced his fusion style of cuisine. He established himself in New York City and worked in some of Manhattan's prestigious restaurants, including the dining area for Sony Corporation's executive staff and visiting VIPs, the Sony Club, where he was executive chef, and at the exclusive Japanese restaurant Nobu, where he was head chef. In July 2010, he opened a Napa Valley location of his flagship *Morimoto* restaurant, followed in October 2010 by a Waikiki, Hawaii location, and a Maui location in October 2013. Morimoto Waikiki closed in December 2016. In 2018 the chef announced two new ventures for the neighborhood, branches of his *Morimoto Asia* and *Momosan* chains.

