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2023-24

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STARTS JAN. 23

YOUR VOTE COUNTS!



STARS AND STRIPES
BEST OF THE PACIFIC
2023-24

A new year is upon us, and it's time once again to turn your attention to the yearly tradition unlike any other – Best of the Pacific voting season!

For the past 22 years, our annual Best of the Pacific magazine has been the authority on the best places YOU need to go in the Pacific. How do we know? Because you told us so!

You've made your voices heard over the years, and in turn, informed fellow members of the military community like yourselves of the Pacific's best attractions, restaurants, festivals, Sunday brunch, getaways and more.

Have a favorite coffee shop serving up delicious cups of joe you want to share? Or is there an off-base dentist you tell all your friends about? We want to know what you like and most importantly, why you like it so much.

Voting is quick, easy and you just might get your name in the magazine! Take a few minutes and vote for all your favorites at bestofpacific.stripes.com. And if you do, you may qualify to win a \$300, \$200 or one of four \$50 Amazon gift cards.

Thanks to your input every year we're able to make Stars and Stripes community products to help you enjoy your stay in the Pacific. That's what we're all about. As we are fond of saying, our papers, websites and magazines "are about you, for you, and in some cases, by you."

The votes keep rolling in year after year and it's all thanks to you! We had a great turnout in 2022, and we expect nothing short of a record number of votes in 2023. Vote and share so even more of you can experience the best the Pacific has to offer!

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Enjoy organic food cooked to near perfection at We Are the Farm in Tokyo

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JUAN KING,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: September 29, 2022

My family went searching recently for an organic dining option in central Tokyo.

Our quest brought us to We Are The Farm, an all-organic restaurant with a peculiar name, considering its metropolitan location. The 8-year-old eatery in the tony, laid-back Azabujuban neighborhood lists an all-organic menu, from veggies to beef, chicken and even beverages.

We Are The Farm sources its produce from pesticide-free farms with open-field cultivation.

Although some studies show little nutritional difference between conventionally grown and organic foods, more than 94 million Americans shopped for organic foods

in 2020, according to U.S. Census data and the Simmons National Consumer Survey. In the U.S., the organic share of total food sales grew from 3% in 2008 to 6% in 2020, according to Statista.com.

We arrived in Azabujuban after a 12-minute taxi ride from the Hiroo neighborhood in Shibuya and walked a short distance to the narrow side street where the restaurant is located.

Inside, we found a café with rustic décor. Small, wooden tables and chairs were equally spaced, with a table for larger groups, a counter with stools and private dining areas. The restaurant seats about 50 and two employees handled traffic on the day we arrived.

I first searched out the beverages. From several organic juices

and teas on the menu, I picked a beet-and-guava smoothie. The taste was so energizing that I had two of them.

After starting off with an appetizing omakase salad, I settled on a main dish of Teppanyaki chicken breast grilled at a low-temperature and served with a mustard sauce and a side of garlic rice.

The vegetable gratin was another great addition. It consisted of several fresh vegetables, including mushrooms, topped with a slightly crisp but creamy mozzarella cheese.

We also recommend the rich and tasty sekai ichi tomato, half of a sundried tomato with fresh cheese melted over the top and basil and kale pesto drizzled around the sides.

EXCLUSIVE NEWS FROM:

STARS AND STRIPES

www.stripes.com

What to know

LOCATION: 3-10-4 Re-Flat 1F, Motoazabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo. Google plus code is MP4J+RX.

DIRECTIONS: A 5-minute walk from Azabujuban Station.

TIME: Monday through Saturday: 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. for lunch; 5 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. for dinner. Sunday: 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. for lunch; 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. for dinner.

PRICES: Main dishes cost up to about \$24. Credit cards accepted.

DRESS: Casual

INFORMATION: 050-5269-7817.

You can reserve a spot for dine-in or order online and pick up if you are in the area. Online: wearethefarm-azabu.com; allfarm.co.jp



picky palate, with just the right amount of crunch. My son enjoyed a slice of Japanese wagyu black, a special lean beef.

Outside of regular meals, We Are The Farm also offers full-course meals with some all-you-can-eat options, like the weekday farm course, that also comes with all-you-can-drink for two hours.

The dinner portions filled us up, so we skipped some alluring desserts.

Because organic food is usually more expensive than conventional food due to its processing and lower production, you can expect to spend a decent sum of money at the "farm."

My family's tab came to 8,210 yen, or about \$60, including sides and drinks, but it was worth it to get cleaner food options. I gave the meal five stars and let the chef know that everything was near perfection.



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12 Top Japan places to enjoy winter

LIVE JAPAN

Winter is a beautiful time to visit Japan. There are many beautiful winter destinations to choose from. From enjoying gorgeous winter scenery to fun winter activities, to places serving specialty winter cuisine, you can find something for your trip. This article will help you decide on the best winter destinations to visit in Japan.

Why should you visit Japan in winter?

Japan is often well-known for its spring and fall seasons. However, the cold winter season is no less of a great time to visit the breathtaking country. Japan has a variety of experiences that are unique to winter! For example, during winter, there are beautiful illuminations. Cities and towns are decorated in lights from around November till February.

The surreal scenes the cold nights and snow create are a view you can only see during winter. There are also a variety of snow festivals, with extravagant displays of statues and objects made of snow and ice, winter activities you can enjoy with your family and friends, and also warm your body up at an onsen after a long cold day. The scenery and the contrast between cold and hot is a very relaxing onsen experience unique to winter in Japan.

Here is a quick list of some of the most recommended winter destinations to help narrow down your options.

Tips for an exciting winter adventure!

One of the pros of traveling during winter is that it is considered off-season. While the holiday season (Christmas and New Year) tends to be busy with the locals, tourist-wise, many decide not to travel during the cold months. This means you will be able to enjoy all of these exciting destinations without the worry of overcrowding, making these destinations well worth your time.

Take advantage of various transport passes to make the most of your exciting winter adventure. Most prefectures and/or regions will have some form of a pass, which will often allow you to take as many rides as you like within a day. In many instances, if you show these passes, they usually give you a discount on entrance fees to famous tourist spots.

In particular, when traveling to Japan, if you are able, the Japan Rail Pass is very convenient as it allows you to ride JR trains and buses. They have an extensive transport network throughout the country, and it is beneficial when you want to access various destinations efficiently, as this rail pass also covers the Shinkansen.

Lastly, do not forget to eat the multiple specialties of each region. If you are a seafood lover, winter is the season perfect for a range of seafood, including oysters and crab. These delicacies are particularly tasty during the winter season. Other than seafood, during winter, dishes such as a hot pot or a bowl of ramen are great to soothe your tired body and taste the unique flavors of each region. Make sure to enjoy both the event at the destination but also the local foods and winter specialties at the various prefectures to make the most of traveling during winter in Japan!

1 Shirohige Waterfall

Waterfall resembles a white beard



Shirohige Waterfall is located 600 meters above sea level and is known for the water flowing in between the rocks, which resembles a white beard, hence the name “shirohige” (translating to white beard). During winter, most of the rivers freeze, including white beard; the flowing water creates a dreamlike scene. The frozen waterfall is lit at night, adding to the fabulous view.

Shirohige Waterfall is a 30-minute bus ride from JR Biei Station. You can also enjoy this area on a day trip tour from Sapporo as well.

Shirahige Waterfalls
Address: Shirogane, Biei-cho, Kamikawa-gun, Hokkaido
Nagashima Station: Biei Station Furano Line 30 minutes by bus
Phone Number: 0166-94-3025
Station Kawaguchiko Line (Fujikyuko) 1 minute on foot



7 Mt. Fuji

Take in Japan's most iconic mountain



In winter, you can enjoy stunning clear views of Japan’s iconic 3776-meter-tall mountain from many areas. But to really soak it all in, you’ll want to head to Lake Kawaguchi.

One of the famed “Fuji Five Lakes,” this area affords incredible views of Japan’s majestic mountain. Also in the area is Arakurayama Sengen Park, home to the iconic five-story pagoda that’s widely considered one of Japan’s best landmarks. Toward the southeast is Oshino Hakkai, a popular scenic spot with ponds and stunning Mt. Fuji views. You

Getting to the Lake Kawaguchi area via bus or train is easy, and we recommend staying overnight to enjoy a memorable experience: sunrise over Mt. Fuji. If you are considering a day trip, however, several tours are available. Some include options to tour the area or even head to the Gotemba Premium Outlets to enjoy some shopping. Any way you get there, visiting in winter also means there is a higher chance of seeing Mt. Fuji due to the cold and clean air, and you can see it beautifully covered in white snow!

Lake Kawaguchiko
Address: Fujikawaguchiko-machi, Minamitsuru-gun, Yamanashi
Nagashima Station: Kawaguchiko



2 Sapporo Snow Festival

Enjoy stunning snow and ice sculptures



The Sapporo Snow Festival is one of Japan’s most popular winter events. It is held over one week in February in Sapporo, Hokkaido. People from all over Japan head to Hokkaido to enjoy the stunning snow and ice sculpture displays. Before the pandemic, it attracted around two million visitors every year.

The festival has three areas: the Odori Park site, the Susukino site, and the Tsudome site. Each area has different-sized sculptures, with the Odori Park site featuring some of the largest snow sculptures lit up daily. The Susukino site typically features around 100 ice sculptures, and the Tsudome site, which is slightly less central, is an area where you can play in the snow. The sites offer activities such as snow slides, snow rafting, and more snow sculptures to admire.

The Odori and Susukino sites are located in central Sapporo and can be accessed either on foot (around 20 min.) or via the Namboku Subway Line (around 10 min.) from Sapporo Station. The Tsudome Site is slightly harder to access but can be accessed using a shuttle bus or a 15-minute walk from Sakaemachi Station, 10 minutes on the Toho subway line from Sapporo Station.

Sapporo Snow Festival
Address: Various places in Sapporo city, Hokkaido
Nearest Station: Odori Station Namboku Line / Tozai Line / Toho Line
Phone Number: 011-281-6400



8 Jigokudani Snow Monkey Park

Go on a one-day trip to see bathing monkeys!



When you think of winter in Japan, the image of the snow monkey relaxing in the onsen may have been a photo you have seen already!

Jigokudani Yaen-koen is located in the northern part of Nagano Prefecture. Because of the steep slopes of the valley and steam coming off the hot springs below, this area became known as “Jigokudani” - “Hell Valley.”

The numerous wild Japanese macaques (or “snow monkeys”) have called this area home for ages. And today, you can enjoy watching the adorable snow monkeys soaking in the hot springs, surrounded by snow!

While you can make it on your own to the Jigokudani Monkey Park, given the park’s location, it is convenient to join a tour. The tour below showcases some of the exciting areas of Nagano, including the iconic monkeys bathing in the onsen.

Jigokudani Monkey Park
Address: 6845 Yamanouchi-machi, Shimotakai-gun, Nagano

3 Shiretoko Drift Ice

A spectacular and unique sight



Shiretoko is a peninsula located in Hokkaido, and its abundance of natural beauty has become a World Heritage Site. The town of Okhotsk experiences a beautiful winter (Shiretoko Ryūho) during winter.

This beautiful sight can only be seen in early February and March. In order to see the magical view, the Shiretoko Ryūho is a must-see, and allows visitors to enjoy both the drift ice, and exciting illuminations.

If you’re staying in the area, the ryokans offer warm onsens from which you can view the drifting ice. You can also rent a dry suit and enjoy an exciting snow activity!

The easiest way to get here is by taking a bus named “Eagle Liner,” which runs from Sapporo Station. The night bus will take you to Utoro Town in Shiretoko in the morning. The Shiretoko via train is somewhat difficult as it involves around a 4-hour train ride to Kushiro, then another 2 hours to Shiretoko via the Semmo Line to Shiretoko-Shari Station. If you would take a bus from Shiretoko, you would take a bus from Shiretoko to the Utoro Hot Spring area.

Shiretoko National Park
Address: Rausu-cho, Nemuro-gun, Hokkaido
and Shari-cho, Shari-gun
Nagashima Station: Shiretoko-Shari Station
Senmo Main Line
Phone Number: 015-432-7500

9 Icicles of Misotsuchi

Magical art-like scenery



This magical world created by nature is a short train ride away from Tokyo. The icicles grow to around 30 meters in height and are formed by the heavy rain and the Misotsuchi River. This view can only be seen from January till mid-February, as it is the best time of the year. The illumination of the icicles is a sight to see.


The icicles of Misotsuchi can be seen by taking the Seibu Ikebukuro Line from Ikebukuro to Hanno Station and then transferring to the Chichibu Line to Mitsumineguchi Station. You will need to either take a bus or a train to the icicles of Misotsuchi. Be sure to check the official website for dates and details.

Icicles of Misotsuchi
Address: 4066 Otaki, Chichibu, Saitama

4

Dirase Gorge

Tour through this beautiful winter valley



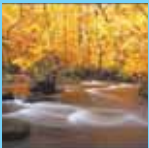
The breathtaking Oirase Gorge is filled with frozen waterfalls, rows of stunning icicles, and mountains covered in pure white snow. This beautiful scenery has even been designated as a Special Place of Scenic Beauty. Take advantage of a Winter Bus Tour, like one offered by Towada Travel, so you can fully enjoy the views without worrying about driving in the winter climate.

Oirase River

Address: Oirase Keiryu building, Towada-shi, Aomori larger section of a village Okuse character Tochikubo 183

Nagashima Station: Shichinohe-towada Station Tohoku Shinkansen / Hokkaido Shinkansen


Phone Number: 0176-74-1233



10

Shirakawago

Take in this real-life winter wonderland



Shirakawago is well-known for its farmhouses with steep roofs. These buildings were specially made to combat the large amount of snow the region receives yearly. With around one to two meters of snow, during winter, Shirakawago turns into a real-life winter wonderland.

The locals often plan special illumination events from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to add to the already magical atmosphere of the Shirakawago. In 2023, illuminations are scheduled for the following dates (all of which are Sundays):

January 15, 22, 29 February 5, 12, 19

From Kanazawa Station, there is a highway bus visitors can take, which will take around 90 minutes. Note that the last bus which can access Shirakawago departs before the light-up starts.

For safety reasons and to help avoid overcrowding, the number of visitors allowed into the village is limited. All visitors must get an advance reservation to visit during the light-up events.

To enjoy the illuminations, there are three ways of visiting:


1. Joining a bus tour. Several tour companies offer tours from Takayama and Kanazawa. Reservations would need to be made directly with the tour operators. (There is also a tour available at the link below.)
2. Stay overnight. There is a limited number of rooms available and many local lodgings held a lottery system in previous years. It's important to book accommodations early for availability. (For 2023, note that all accommodations are fully booked for the illumination period.)
3. Visit by car. This involves registering for a parking space as well. Details on this and on tours can be found on the Shirakawago Tourist Association website.

Shirakawago
Address: 1086 Ogimachi, Shirakawa, Ono District, Gifu

5

Zao Juhyo Festival

Famous snow monsters on Mount Zao




These startling figures, known as the “snow monsters,” are called “juhyo” in Japanese and can be seen on the summit of Mount Zao, in Yamagata. These spooky shapes are actually trees that have been swallowed whole by the snow, creating the image of scary monsters.

You will find these monsters lit up during the Zao Juhyo Festival, held around early January till early March. Make sure to dress warmly when visiting this incredibly popular destination, as the weather tends to be harsh at the top of the mountain.

To reach Zao Onsen, close to where the snow creatures are, you must take a bus from Yamagata Station. The ride is around 40 minutes. Once you have reached Zao Onsen, take two ropeways to reach Jizo Summit Station.

Zao Juhyo (Snow Monsters)
Address: Zao Onsen, Yamagata City, Yamagata
Nearest Station: Yamagata Station Ou Line / Yamagata Line / Yamagata Shinkansen
37 minutes by bus
Phone Number: 023-694-9518



11

Ginzan Onsen

Transported back 100 years to Taisho Era




Ginzan Onsen is a very popular hot springs town in Japan, and its iconic wooden structures, many originally constructed around the 1920s and 1930s, are visited by crowds of tourists every year. The atmosphere will leave you breathless and feel like you have taken a step back in time.

Along the beautiful Ginzan River are multiple traditional Japanese ryokan inns. Stroll along the snowy footpaths and then warm your body up at one of the authentic hot springs. While it makes a great day trip, staying overnight in Ginzan Onsen lets you have the whole snowglobe fantasy to yourself! Because of the area's popularity, be sure to book accommodations well in advance (and make sure they include meals, as the number of restaurants is very limited).

To get to Ginzan Onsen, it is a 40-minute bus ride from Oishida Station. Getting to Oishida Station from Tokyo is around a three-hour Shinkansen ride.


Ginzan Onsen
Address: Yamagata Large Ginzan Shinhata, Obanazawa City, Yamagata
Nagashima Station: Oishida Station Ou Line / Yamagata Shinkansen
Phone Number: 0237-28-3933



6

Izu Shaboten Zoo

Watch adorable capybaras in hot springs



Izu Shaboten Zoo is home to beautiful botanical gardens and animal attractions. But visit during winter, and you're in for a treat! Home to Japan's first-ever capybara onsen, Izu Shaboten Zoo is a must for families. You can admire these adorable creatures taking a bath in the hot springs - a treat only during the winter months. There is also a petting area where you can touch the capybaras and other animals.


Izu Shaboten Zoo is around two and a half hours by train and bus from Tokyo Station.

Izu Shaboten Zoo
Address: 1317-13 Futo, Itō, Shizuoka

12

Nabana no Sato


Visit one of Japan's famous illuminations



A garden of flowers and light, Nabana no Sato is a very famous winter illumination site with over 5.8 million LEDs lighting up the spectacular garden of flowers. The LEDs light up the dark, cold winter nights and create romantic images among the sea of flowers. They even have an open-air hot spring foot bath, restaurants, and shops where visitors can stop and warm themselves up or take a short break.

Nabana no Sato is around a 35-minute trip from Nagoya Station. It takes around 25 minutes to reach Nagashima Station, and then there is a direct bus from Nagashima Station to Nabana no Sato, which takes around 10 minutes. From Osaka, it is a 2-hour train ride from Namba Station to Nagashima Station.

Nabana no Sato
Address: 270, Nagashimachokomae Urushibata, Kuwana-shi, Mie
Nagashima Station: JR Kansai Main Line
21 minutes on foot
Phone Number: 0594-41-0787





Oceanside Oarai

a family-friendly getaway



STORY AND PHOTOS BY ALEX WILSON,
STARS AND STRIPES
Published: November 3, 2022

Japan may have a reputation for exemplary public transit systems, but small towns such as Oarai in Ibaraki prefecture present the perfect opportunity for a weekend road trip with the family.

Nestled between Lake Hinuma, the Naka River and the Pacific Ocean, Oarai is 9 square miles with a population of approximately 15,000 people. It lacks the hustle and bustle of Tokyo, Yokohama or Kyoto, but holds a wide variety of entertainment for anyone interested in Japanese food, culture and history.

The town's premier attraction is Aqua World, a five-story, 213,000-square-foot aquarium that's home to 68,000 fish and other sea creatures for a total of 580 different species. The aquarium is also home to Japan's largest variety of sharks, with 59 different species on display.

For families more interested in eating fish than looking at them, Oarai boasts a highly popular open-air fish market that's just a 15-minute walk from Aqua World.

At Nakaminato Fish Market, just south of Oarai's main port, visitors may purchase freshly caught fish or try authentic Japanese cuisine such

as sushi or takoyaki.

Traveling farther south along Oarai's coastline, visitors may find the town's most picturesque attraction, a site much older than anything else in town.

Built more than 1,000 years ago, the Oarai Isosaki Shrine is a Shinto temple dedicated to Daikoku-sama, a god of nation-building and prosperity, and Sukunahikona no Mikoto, a god of medicine.

A short walk from the shrine is Oarai's famous Kamiiso no Torii. A traditional Japanese torii, or gate, marks the entrance to a shrine or other sacred site. The Kamiiso no Torii is built on a series of oceanside cliffs. Mornings at the location are awash with photographers, who hope to catch the dramatic scene of the sun rising alongside or within the gate itself.

Oarai is a 1 ½-hour drive from Tokyo or 2 ½ hours from Yokosuka, just the right destination for a weekend getaway or a daytrip.

Without a car, the easiest option is to take the JR East Line from Shinagawa Station to Mito Station, and then transfer to the Kashimarinka Tetsudo Oarai-Kashima line. Oarai's expansive topography makes an ideal setting for a drive, but pedestrians may easily find a bus or taxi. And the small-town scenery makes for a great view while walking too.

wilson.alex@stripes.com
Twitter: @AlexMNWilson

EXCLUSIVE NEWS FROM:
STARS AND STRIPES
www.stripes.com

Oarai's Kamiiso no Torii, a gate erected on coastal rocks, is a popular spot for photographers to catch the sunrise.

The Nakaminato Fish Market is just south of Oarai's main port and features a wide variety of fresh seafood and seafood restaurants.

The small town of Oarai is a well-known fishing village with an open-air seafood market and a large aquarium.

LOCATION: Higashiibaraki district, Ibaraki prefecture (Google coordinates: 36.315730, 140.573809)

DIRECTIONS: Shinagawa Station's JR East Line to Mito Station, Kashimarinka Tetsudo Oarai-Kashima Line to Oarai Station.

COST: Aqua World admission: 2,000 yen (\$13.51) for adults; train fare: 4,220 yen

FOOD: Fresh seafood, sushi, Chinese cuisine, Italian



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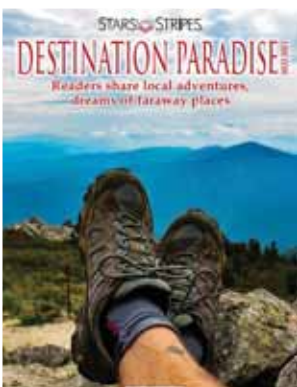
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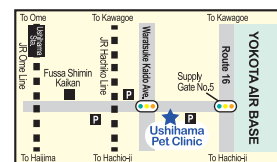
Stripes Sports Trivia

Lions and Tigers and Bears. Oh my, there sure are a lot of NCAA DI colleges that have these animals as their school mascot. All three rank in the top 12 for most commonly used mascots, but none of which is No. 1. Can you name the two animals tied for the most common mascot in Division I college sports?

Answer

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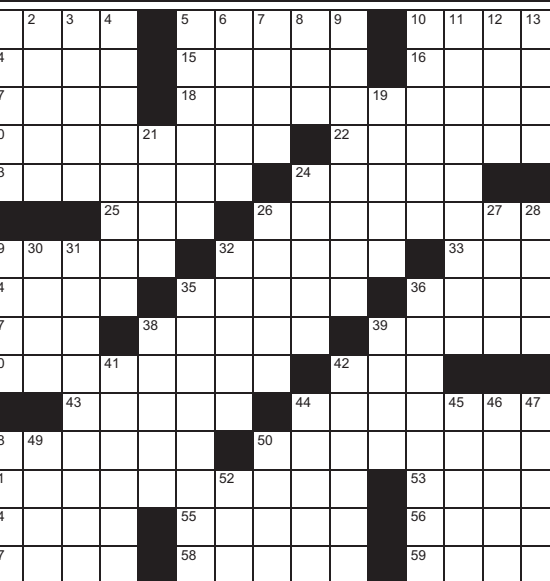
Sat. & Holiday Close at 5pm (Closed Sun.)

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

ACROSS

- 1 Markdown event
- 5 Part of a Flintstone's yell
- 10 Kicker's target
- 14 Reunion bunch
- 15 Text alternative
- 16 Beer buy
- 17 4:1, e.g.
- 18 Monaco casino locale
- 20 New Orleans hoopsters
- 22 Set, as concrete
- 23 Soon, in poetry
- 24 Reef material
- 25 Make sense, with "up"
- 26 Symbol of happiness
- 29 Neighbor of Fiji
- 32 Twelve dozen
- 33 Hide-hair connector
- 34 Wind instrument
- 35 Desist's partner
- 36 Elevated ground
- 37 Man of the cloth, slangily
- 38 Get-up-and-go
- 39 Bit of hardware
- 40 Microscope part
- 42 Luggage attachment
- 43 Numbers game
- 44 Hotel room amenity
- 48 Inner-city neighborhood
- 50 Alabama state flower
- 51 Coast-to-coast
- 53 Hold up
- 54 Certain sax
- 55 Birth-related
- 56 Not being used
- 57 Numerical suffix
- 58 Adversary
- 59 Big name in candy



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- 2 Cabinet wood
- 3 Gravy server
- 4 Preserved fodder
- 5 Price factor
- 6 Honor thieves
- 7 Prohibits by law
- 8 Drill insert
- 9 Place for a pint
- 10 Egyptian emblem
- 11 Inflexible one
- 12 Emerald
- 13 Vegas light
- 19 "Who?"
- 21 Last part, in music
- 24 Glenn of "101 Dalmatians"
- 26 Atlanta athlete
- 27 Kennedy matriarch
- 28 Shootout shout
- 29 Pulled apart
- 30 Listen to
- 31 Short work of fiction
- 32 State Farm rival

- 35 Drapery fabric
- 36 Kelly of "The Accused"
- 38 "Same here"
- 39 Playing with a full deck
- 41 Magical brew
- 42 Not late
- 44 Address for a lady
- 45 Ice skate part
- 46 Wedding walkway
- 47 Taxi posting
- 48 Pesky insect
- 49 TV skipper Alan
- 50 Quote, as a source
- 52 Blanched

Answers to Previous Crossword:



DID YOU KNOW?



Back in the old days, Okinawans commonly called westerners "Uranda." "Uranda" is the Okinawan way of pronouncing "Oranda," which means "Holland" in Japanese. Uranda means "Dutch." This follows a rule of Okinawan dialect that a word can be converted into the subject of an action by prolonging the last vowel of the word, much just like English converts some verbs into nouns by adding "er" at the end.

Kanji of the week



Juu (ten)

Language Lesson

Cheers!

Kanpai!

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

8	4	7	5	2	9	1	6	3
3	5	2	6	1	8	9	4	7
9	1	6	7	3	4	2	5	8
7	3	1	8	4	2	6	9	5
6	8	4	9	5	1	7	3	2
5	2	9	3	7	6	4	8	1
1	7	8	4	9	5	3	2	6
2	9	5	1	6	3	8	7	4
4	6	3	2	8	7	5	1	9

		4						
	3	1	9	8		6	2	
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9								5
		2			9			
	6							3

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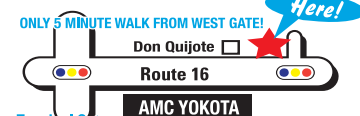


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Enjoy strolling, scenic views at Yokosuka Umikaze Park

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
TAKAHIRO TAKIGUCHI,
STRIPES JAPAN

If you are on or around Yokosuka Naval Base and are looking for a nice park to take in the pleasant sea breeze, then head to Yokosuka Umikaze Park. The spacious seaside park offers gorgeous panoramic views of the Tokyo gulf dotted with vessels and Sarushima Island. Here you can enjoy nice walks, fishing, sports activities and



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Kanagawa
Prefecture

WEBSITE: <https://www.guidoor.jp/en/places/3373>

TEL: 046-826-2899

battery used by the Japanese military until the end of World War II. It is preserved for display. Umikaze Park has a large parking lot and many activities that will have you coming back many times throughout the year.

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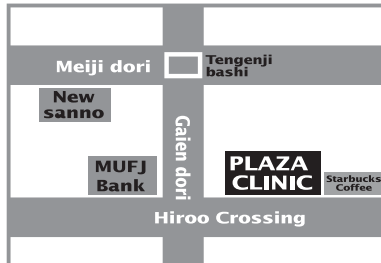
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The background is a rich, textured collage of Japanese culinary elements. In the top left, there are two small dark bowls filled with a light-colored liquid, possibly soy sauce or miso, next to a small dark teapot. To the right, a cluster of bright orange citrus fruits, likely daidai (citrus), is shown. On the left side, there are green scallions and a bundle of dried, light-brown ingredients, possibly shiso or dried seaweed. In the bottom left, there are several pieces of nigiri sushi, including salmon and tuna. In the bottom center, there is a bowl of white rice with wooden chopsticks. In the bottom right, there are pieces of cooked crab and some green leafy vegetables. The entire scene is set against a dark, vertically-grained wooden background.

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RESTAURANT INFO



Chinnuku Jyushii

an Okinawan winter treat

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,
STRIPES JAPAN

If you live on Okinawa, you might have seen a seasoned rice dish called “jyushii.” This Okinawan dish is similar to mainland Japan’s takikomi gohan but features ingredients like fuuchiibaa (artemisia) and chiribira (Chinese chive).

Jyushii is readily available in supermarket bento boxes and convenience store onigiri rice balls, but it also is a staple dish for the obon period in Okinawa. During obon in August, unkee jyushii is served along with other dishes and items used to welcome our ancestors’ spirits.

You’ll find jyushii is a very common dish on the island and though it is easily found at the store, cooking

jyushii at home is pretty common and easy to do.

Depending on how you cook it, you’ll have a porridge-like version called “boro boro jyushii,” or if it has a steamed rice texture, it’s “kufa jyushii.”

During the winter season, chinnuku jyushii, a version of the dish with taro is served. On winter solstice or “Tunjii,” the dish is called Tunjii jyushii.

For the 2022 winter solstice on Dec. 22, I tried my hand at cooking up some chinnuku jyushii to mark the seasonal transition.

To prepare the dish, peeling the taro root skin took some time and effort. Wiping my hands of the taro’s gooey texture was a little annoying,



VIEW VIDEO

but it was worth it because the recipe turned surprisingly well. Not really a fan of jyushii, I still couldn’t stop eating the seasoned rice.

Taro may be something you don’t eat very often, but in Okinawa you’ll find this striped root vegetable at farmer’s markets, especially in the autumn and winter months. It is also noteworthy that “chinnuku” is low-calorie food rich in fiber and kalium, which can help improve your digestion and blood circulation.

So, enjoy this healthy way to keep warm and enjoy the season on Okinawa!

Kudaka.Shoji@Stripes.Com

Ingredients

- ☐ Rice (400 cc)
- ☐ Pork belly (150 g)
- ☐ Taro (200 g, net)
- ☐ Carrot (40 - 50 g)
- ☐ Dried Shiitake Mushroom (2 pieces)
- ☐ Bonito Broth (600 cc)
- ☐ Salt (7.5 cc)
- ☐ Soy Sauce (25 cc)



Recipe

- 1 Boil the pork belly for 20 to 25 minutes.
- 2 Cook dashi (Japanese soup stock) by boiling bonito flakes in hot water. Remove the flakes by pour the broth through a strainer.
- 3 Rinse rice with water and put it in a bowl/basket.
- 4 take the skin off the taros.
- 5 Cut off stems from shiitake mushrooms and slice them into cubes with 5 mm sides (Make sure you rehydrate the dried shiitake mushroom before slicing it).
- 6 Likewise, slice a carrot into cubes with 5 mm sides.
- 7 Do the same with the boiled pork belly.
- 8 Chop taro into the size of your choice.
- 9 Boil the taros until they soften.
- 10 Put the ingredients in a pot and add bonito broth, salt, and soy sauce.
- 11 Heat the mixture over medium heat for 5 minutes, over low heat for 4 minutes, and over high heat for 10 seconds.
- 12 Stop heating and let it sit for 10 minutes.
- 13 Serve it up in bowls and “召し上がれ (Bon appetite)!”





THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DANA KOHUT,
BYFOOD

Everyone loves a good barbecue - delicious meat sizzling on a hot grill, waiting patiently while the smokey goodness tickles your senses as you pair each bite with an array of condiments. Japan is no different in their enjoyment of BBQ. Called yakiniku, this Japanese bbq style is more hands-on and is a food experience everyone should try.



Photo courtesy of dannychoo, Pinterest



What is yakiniku?

So what even is yakiniku? Yakiniku is a Japanese grilling style where bite-sized pieces of meat are cooked over a charcoal grill or electric/gas griddle on mesh or iron plates. Everything is cooked together on the same grill, and rice is often served on the side along with cabbage and other raw vegetables. The fun part about yakiniku is that the meat is served raw and you cook it yourself. Be sure to pay attention though. There have been many times when I've placed a piece of meat on the grill, got distracted, and by the time I remembered, it ended up very... crispy.

Yakiniku is kind of a social activity within a meal as most of the time people go in groups with friends, family, or coworkers and you cook it together. I have many fond memories of being invited to yakiniku bbq parties and leaving them feeling full and happy after great conversation. Since you have to wait a bit for the meat to cook, it gives everyone time to chat and catch up.

In Japan, yakiniku can be eaten at home (using a small yakiniku grill), outdoors (some parks and beaches have dedicated grilling spaces), and of course in restaurants. Japan has no shortage of really good yakiniku restaurants with prices ranging from 1000 yen per person to some fancier places that will set you back a bit more. Wherever you go, you will definitely get your money's worth and probably won't be hungry for a while.

The history

Yakiniku has an interesting history. While it's often compared to the western bbq style, but in the early 20th century, it was more like the Korean bbq style. The style of yakiniku we know today originated in Osaka and Tokyo introduced to the West. It popularized the consumption of offal and meat that would be thrown away back then. Over the years, it evolved more to what we know it as today. Unlike western bbq, it's not often marinated and is cooked in a variety of Japanese bbq sauce, lemon juice, or just plain. It's also used for Korean-style meat like kalbi and bulgog.

Types of meat used

Many different types and cuts of meat are used in yakiniku, though the word meat (niku) is in the name. It can be fish, shellfish, and vegetables.

Beef

- Kalbi, short ribs usually served without the bone and marinated
- Harami, a meat from around the diaphragm, usually quite tender
- Misuji, shoulder meat
- Rosu, beef loin
- Tan, beef tongue

Pork

- Butabara, pork belly, very fatty
- Tontoro, meat from the neck and cheek

Chicken

- Momo, chicken thigh
- Bonjiri, chicken tail



Photo courtesy of Othree, Pinterest



Photo courtesy of Othree, Pinterest

PI-MEAT YAKINIKU

of yakiniku

in Japan. Originally it referred more to Showa era the meaning shifted to some- we know today. In fact, it is said that ted from. Around 1945, Korean immi- his style of restaurant to locals and even and other animal parts that would often ears Japanese people adapted yakiniku like Korean bbq, Japanese bbq meat is bite-sized pieces which are dipped in st simply salted. However, you can find gi in many restaurants.

sed for yakiniku

meat are used for yakiniku, and even he name, yakiniku can also include

Horumon Motsu (Offal)

- Gatsu, pork stomach
- Hachinosu, tripe
- Beef liver
- Hatsu, heart
- Horumon, intestines

Seafood

- Shellfish
- Squid
- Shrimp

Vegetables

- Mushrooms
- Bell pepper
- Pumpkin
- Onion
- Cabbage
- Garlic
- Eggplant
- Bean sprouts

How to eat yakiniku

Once you sit down at a yakiniku restaurant, you'll be presented with quite a few choices. You can order things a la carte in some cases, but the most efficient and cost-effective way is to order a course. How big of a course depends on the number of people in your party, but menus usually state how many people each one feeds. Some places may even offer a tabehoudai aka an all-you-can-eat course.



Before you know it an array of juicy meats and colorful vegetables will be brought out to you, but how do you go about eating it? First, let the grill heat up before you put anything on it. Then choose a few pieces you would like to get started with. Usually, there will be tongs and chopsticks provided to use only for placing the meat on the grill, so be sure to use those instead of the utensils you will be eating with. Everyone has their own method. Personally, I like to place a few thick cuts along with some cuts that will cook a bit quicker so I have an ongoing rotation of different meats ready to eat. You can also place a few vegetables on the grill, but be mindful that some cook quicker than others. The center of the grill is usually the hottest and where things will cook the quickest. The mesh grill will sometimes need to be replaced mid-meal, but just ask the staff and they will bring you a new mesh.

After a while, flip the meat to cook the other side, check on your vegetables, and when you think it's done, take it off the grill and dip it into your sauce of choice before eating it. Some meats, like kalbi or bulgogi, do not need any sauce as they are pre-marinated. For meats like tongue, a bit of salt and some lemon juice is enough to draw out the best flavor. For other meats, a Japanese bbq sauce is ideal - usually a mix of soy sauce, sugar, mirin (rice wine), and maybe some sesame oil and garlic. If you are feeling creative, you can try out your own original combination of meat and sauce - it's up to you!

Whether it's expensive or cheap, at a restaurant or at the beach, fire up the grill and give yakiniku a try. It's a hands-on, social dining experience you won't forget!

byFood is a platform for food events in Tokyo, with over 80 experiences to choose from and a fantastic resource for learning about Japan's thriving food culture! What's more, byFood runs a charitable outreach program, the Food for Happiness Project, which donates 10 meals to children in Cambodia for each person who books a food event through our platform!



File photo



LIVE JAPAN

One of the enduring images of Japanese food is of course sushi, which in a way you could call one of the world's first fast-foods! Its roots lay in how fermented rice was great for storing salted fish, and from this tradition of storing fish with rice chefs started serving up fresh fish on rice in the Edo Period (1603-1868). The final perfected version of sushi is believed to have been dreamed up by a chef in 1824 in Ryogoku, Tokyo, and it was popular with riverside workers. Normally served at street stalls, it was certainly

a larger portion of rice and fish than you see today. It was quite a different world to the modern version where sushi is popular in expensive restaurants.

However, regardless of whether you are going to an expensive sushi restaurant or a more modestly priced one, a sushi restaurant isn't going to help if you are hungry but are a vegetarian. However, sushi doesn't necessarily mean just fish on rice. For a visitor to Japan sushi is a major attraction and actually there are many vegetarian and vegan options available. To help make your food tour absolutely perfect we have brought together some of these.

Nigiri-style vegan sushi

Nigiri sushi, where the sushi chef takes a ball of vinegared rice and presses it into the shape of a small log, is one of the most common types of sushi. The sushi chefs can prepare these to exactly the same size and

weight just by touch, without any weighing scales. The fewer touches by the fingers, the fresher the sushi will be, and master chefs can prepare these edible gems in just a few precise moves.

Shiitake mushroom nigiri



Shiitake is a type of mushroom which has a strong and savory taste, and is often dried to be used in flavoring soup stock. When used in sushi, the mushrooms are usually lightly flavored with salt or soy sauce and lightly flamed to enhance the fragrance. The juicy texture and rich taste of shiitake mushrooms makes this vegan sushi an extremely satisfying morsel.

Nasu nigiri



Eggplant in Japanese is nasu and is a common item in restaurant menus because it is so tasty. This is a special sushi that most visitors to Japan miss out on, but which is a must-try for anyone regardless of their dietary requirements. Eggplant sushi is served either grilled, for a melt-in-your-mouth texture, or pickled for a more chewy and tangy flavor. You can even try this as tempura eggplant served with grated ginger, it's very popular and of course delicious!

Avocado nigiri



Avocados have quickly gained popularity in recent years, so much so that prices around the world have started rising—and here in Japan it is also popular in sushi! In nigiri form, the rice comes topped with a slice of avocado, usually lightly seasoned with salt and fastened together with a thin strip of nori seaweed. The mild, creamy flavor of avocado sushi makes it a popular form of vegetarian and vegan sushi.

Tamagoyaki nigiri



You might not think that eggs go naturally together with sushi, but actually they do. Tamagoyaki is a fluffy and slightly sweet omelet popular in Japanese cuisine. Tamagoyaki nigiri is a rice ball topped with a slice of omelet, this is then usually wrapped with a thin slice of seaweed. It is good to clarify if dashi has been added to the omelet, and some restaurants may offer to make the tamagoyaki sushi for you without dashi upon request.

Maki-zushi vegan sushi

Maki-zushi itself isn't a vegan or vegetarian sushi, but when you have control over the ingredients then it can become perfect for anyone, regardless of their dietary requirements. The name literally means rolled sushi: first a large square sheet of seaweed is laid on a bamboo mat, then rice is spread

out over it, and then toppings can be added – these literally can be anything including ingredients mentioned above and below in other sushi. Once it is finished then the mat is rolled up to form a firm sushi roll. This roll has to be cut carefully sideways.

Kappa maki



Kappa maki-cucumber roll-is an easy to find sushi for vegetarians and vegan sushi-eaters, it simply has a slice of cucumber wrapped in a thin roll of rice and seaweed. This is a popular starter or palate cleanser for the regular sushi diner and can be found in all good restaurants and even supermarket aisles.

Shinko maki / Takuan maki



Shinko is a generic term for pickles, and is a popular order for a change in taste and texture. Takuan is a pickled radish, usually bright yellow or brown in color, and has a crunchy texture and somewhat tangy taste. This is a tasty and refreshing vegan sushi option for all.

Kampyo maki



Kampyo, or pickled gourd, is thought to aid digestion, and so is often ordered at the end of the meal. The gourd is pickled brown and has a taste that can be described like a sweet-ish soy sauce.

Ume, cucumber shiso makizushi



The combination of ume (Japanese pickled plum) paste, refreshing shiso (perilla herb) and sweet cucumber is another staple vegan sushi order that serves as a palate cleanser in the middle or to end off the meal.

Other types of vegan & vegetarian Sushi

Natto Temaki



Temaki means “handroll”, and as the name suggests, is rolled by hand. The sushi chef folds a small rectangular sheet of seaweed with vinegared rice and various fillings and, at an over-the-counter sushi restaurant, hands this by hand to the customer. This is not tightly pressed like the maki-zushi and the rice retains a fluffy texture. Natto temaki is a handroll of natto, or fermented soybeans. Natto has a sticky texture so may be a bit messy to eat but it is popular for its taste and health benefits.

Seaweed gunkanmaki



Seaweed gunkan-maki (“battleship roll”) is a flavorful and nutrient-rich sushi option for vegans and non-vegans alike. Wakame or seaweed salad is dressed with soy sauce, mirin, sesame oil, sesame seeds and red chili, then piled on top of sushi rice and secured with a strip of nori seaweed.

Inarizushi



Inarizushi is made of a fried and sweet tofu skin pouch that is filled with vinegared rice and sometimes sesame seeds is sprinkled on the top or mixed in the rice filling. It is often offered to the Gods at shinto shrines, as it is said to be a favorite snack of the fox, the messenger of the gods.

Takenoko chirashizushi



Chirashizushi means “scattered sushi”, and is Japanese dish of sushi rice topped with various ingredients. Takenoko chirashizushi is sushi rice scattered with bamboo shoots (takenoko) that have been simmered in a broth. Takenoko is typically available during the spring season, and when simmered, the bamboo shoot becomes soft, succulent and flavorful. As this broth may contain fish-based dashi, or be topped with bonito flakes (shaved dried fish flakes), if you're vegan or vegetarian, it's best to check.

Be sure to try vegan & vegetarian sushi for a healthy and nourishing meal

Sushi will always have the enduring image of being fish on rice; so many people will automatically think that they will just have to miss out on sushi when they visit Japan. However, sushi isn't just fish as it can be made with other ingredients which can be found on restaurant menus through the year.

Japan is a very seasonal country, for example there are cherry blossom flavored foods during hanami, and vegetarian sushi can be seasonal too – which allows you to try different sushi throughout the year which other fish eaters will miss out on! When you look at the menu if you look very closely you will

find sushi that you can eat, and if there is something you want but don't want bonito used in the sauce or to have flake toppings, then just ask. There are so many different sushi joints in Tokyo, and across Japan, so it is worth having a browse online to see what is on the menu for each one.





It tastes as **good** as it sounds

Beginning with an Eric Clapton guitar, Hard Rock Cafe owns the world's greatest collection of music memorabilia, which is displayed at its locations around the globe. For fans of music, great food and good times, Hard Rock is the go-to restaurant to get that authentic American diner-inspired cuisine wrapped in a unique musical experience. So, it's time to strike up the band! Events, like great music, are born to inspire others. At Hard Rock Cafe, we pride ourselves on delivering an exceptional experience with a rock 'n' roll twist for each and every one of our guests.

RESTAURANT INFO



A Taste of Japan

MIDTOWN BBQ
steak + smokehouse

the real smoke.

M BBQ

3 Locations
TOKYO
YOKOHAMA
NAGOYA

www.midtown-bbq.com
TAKEOUT & DELIVERY AVAILABLE
english speaking staff all the time
- LOCALLY OWNED AND OPERATED -



Fantastic food! Delicious drinks! **Super** service!

Steak & Smokehouse originated in Nagoya in 2014. We added a second location in 2019 in Yokohama, and our newest location in downtown Tokyo opened in the spring of 2022. Our philosophy is simple: delicious food, great drinks, and gracious hospitality. We pride ourselves on making virtually everything on our menu in-house, from our Original BBQ rubs and sauces to our handmade desserts. Come try our famous A5 Wagyu Brisket. And don't worry, we always have enough food to feed a platoon! We look forward to seeing you soon! Find out more about Steak & Smokehouse at: www.midtown-bbq.com

RESTAURANT INFO



Tasty hot dogs, creamy gelato

Jack & Betty food truck offers a variety of mouth-watering hot dogs served on local fresh baked buns that will leave your stomach grumbling for more. Our eight original homemade hotdogs are popular with the military community and all lovers of hot dogs. And, don't forget dessert! Try our creamy homemade, naturally flavored and additive-free gelato, a perfect ending to a delicious meal. Find Jack & Betty food truck at the Sky Plaza Misawa parking lot and Jack & Betty II inside the Misawa Science & Aviation Museum. Come on over for a taste of home you've been missing!



Coney Dog
Carolina Dog
Chicago Dog
Slaw Dog

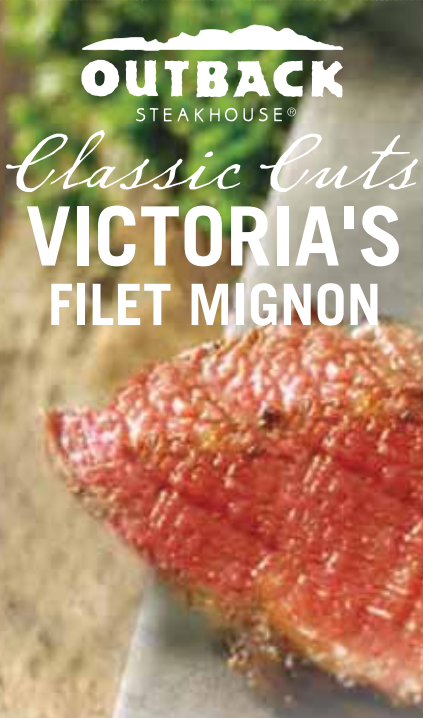
The Big 4 dogs are hot!

Jack & Betty II is in business in AVIATION&SCIENCE MUSEUM, AOMORI.
Open Hour: Weekday 11:00-16:00 Sat, Sun & Holiday 10:00-16:30
158 Kitayama, Misawa-shi, Aomori-ken, 033-0022

Festival Food Truck at Sky Plaza



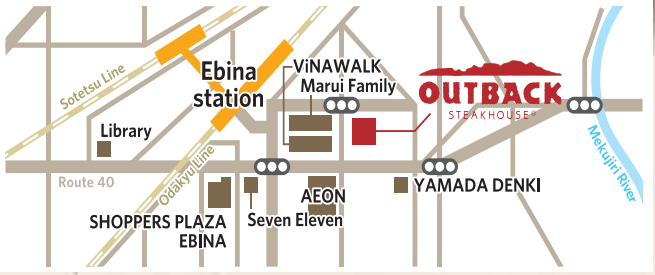
A Taste of Japan



Ebina Tel. 046-292-4286

3 minutes walk from "Ebina" station of Odakyu Line and Sotetsu Line

VINAWALK 6-Bankan 1F, 1-18-1, Chuo, Ebina-shi, Kanagawa-ken



Shibuya Tel.03-5459-7751	Shinagawa Takanawa Tel.03-5798-3501	Shinagawa Konan Tel.03-6718-2761	Ikebukuro Tel.03-5928-1391	Makuhari Tel.043-213-3256	Maihama Tel.047-700-9031
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www.outbacksteakhouse.co.jp/en



A Steak experience crafted just for you!

Outback Steakhouse starts fresh every day to create the flavors that our mates crave most. Our signature steaks are seasoned, hand-carved to order and grilled to perfection. Our specialty is Slow-Roasted Prime Rib offered during weekend dinnertime. But there's so much more to enjoy, including our famous Blooming Onions. So, come and enjoy our authentic American food and let us make you feel at home. Or, get your food to go and enjoy it relaxing at home. Even easier, order through Uber Eats, with delivery available from our Shinagawa Takanawa and Shibuya Ikebukuro locations.

RESTAURANT INFO