A Taste of Japan
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**A Taste of Japan**

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Japanese dishes you didn’t know about!

The famous Land of the Rising Sun is known for so many things, it’s hard to even mention them all: culture, history, pop culture, manga, anime, cosplaying, fashion, architecture... the list could go on and on. A big component of this host of things for which Japan is world famous is food. No matter where you’re from, or whether you’ve ever visited this country, chances are you’ve stumped upon more than a few Japanese food restaurants.

Many of us know of sushi and sashimi, or ramen. Yet Japanese food culture is much richer than that. If you’re among those who like to experience food, when you travel to another country, then, unless you’re already an expert, you’ll need some guidance to navigate through the sea of restaurants and dishes this country has to offer.

The ingredients are fried in lard and a soup of chicken and pig bones is later added. The result is a robust and satisfying taste that is rarely the same. In fact, not only can different versions of this dish be found in many countries in Asia, but also within Japan. This creates a variety of unique styles and flavors that will keep you wanting for more!

Gyutan is a wonderful beef variation of the popular pork-based tonkatsu (which we also recommend you try), this is a dish of deep-fried beef that is usually served with cabbage, barley rice, miso soup, potato salad, and pickles.

The preparation makes for a tender and crunchy texture, and for a very flavorful but not overwhelming taste. You won’t find this dish as easily as it’s pork counterpart, but if you do, you’ll be happy!

Gyutan literally means cow tongue and yaki means grilled. This is exactly what the dish is, grilled cow tongue. You can usually find this dish in yakiniku restaurants, served with salt, or different sauces (usually a lemon drenched scallion. The meat is thin, tasty and tender.

The dish originated in Sendai where the owner of a yakitori restaurant opened a new one, in 1948, which served gyutan. Since then the dish spread all over the country like wildfire. Try it and you’ll know exactly why.

This dish may look like ramen at first sight (and you could say it belongs to same group of dishes) but it’s different and unique. If you want to taste something really traditional, don’t miss out on this dish.

Champon is originally from Nagasaki as it first appeared there in a Chinese restaurant during the Meiji era (1868-1912). Unlike the many different kinds of ramen, its noodles (specifically made for this dish) are boiled in the soup itself, instead of being added at a later time.

A great seasonal dish, Champon’s ingredients vary slightly depending on the season (pork, seafood, vegetables, or any combination of these).

For those of you looking not only for an amazing dish, but also for a thrilling experience, fugu is the dish to try!

The fugu is a pufferfish which is yes, delicious, but it can also be lethal due to the presence of a toxin in some parts of its body. Fugu is usually served as sashimi, or in certain kinds of Japanese nabe hot pots.

Depending on your country of origin, this dish may appear, at glance, too atypical, but bear with us and keep reading.

As soon as you set foot into Japan, you’ll start seeing the typical Japanese style fried foods (Karaage). Karaage usually refers to chicken, but it can be found as a variety of meats, or seafood.

The meat or fish are lightly coated with wheat flour or potato starch and deep fried in oil. Sometimes the ingredients are marinated prior to the coating. It’s usually served with a slice of lemon on the side, but you can enjoy it with or without it.

The chicken variety is especially common to stumble upon, in restaurants, street-food carts, izakaya, convenience stores (and pretty much anywhere else). Karaage is cheap, tasty and fast. Only downside? So good, it’s addictive!
This dish, known also as kushiyaki is crunchy deep-fried skewered meat, fish, or vegetables. The eustomy refers to its preparation with kushi referring to the skewers that are used and katsu meaning the deep frying of a cutlet of meat.

Some of the more interesting kinds are the ones prepared with bamboo shoots, lotus root, cartilage (nankotsu), and gizzard (sunagimo). All of them though, are certainly worth tasting.

On top of the different ingredients that can be used, there are also several geographical varieties, such as Osaka, Tokyo (serving also pork rib kushikatsu), where the meat is prepared slightly differently and dressed with brown sauce; Nagoya is famous for its doten (a rich miso based dish with beef tendons, intestines, and vegetables). Here you can order Kushikatsu with this staple dish. The region also uses different sauces and batter.

When talking about Japanese food, we cannot avoid mentioning miso soup. This dish, served in almost any combination of breakfast, lunch, and dinner meals, is truly a staple of Japanese cuisine. Simple and flavorful it’s an amazing side dish to enjoy with the rest of your food.

Once again we see dashi being one of the main ingredients. This stock is mixed with miso (seasoning produced by fermenting soy beans) paste creating the famous soup. Other ingredients are then mixed according to preference. Various ingredients will be served with tofu, scallion, and seaweed. Other items, such as dried seaweed, fish, mushrooms, potatoes, onions, or meat can be added.

Particularly recommended would be on cold days, you can’t leave Japan without trying this evergreen dish!

Nabe means cooking pot. It’s sometimes referred to as nabe-mono (literally things in a cooking pot). The name already tells you everything, it’s not important to know about preparation, but it can’t begin to paint a picture of the immense cold winter days. One can find in Japan. This dish can be found all year round, but it’s ideal during cold months.

Popular both in Japanese nabe restaurants and at home, the dish is prepared by boiling in seasoned or unseasoned water a variety of ingredients: meat, fish, shellfish, vegetables, and tofu.

Nabe is also famous as the favorite dish of Sumo wrestlers. In particular, when talking about sumo nabe, we are referring to “chanko nabe.”

Chanko nabe usually includes meatballs, chicken, vegetables, and noodles. It’s designed to be eaten with more ingredients, in order for the wrestlers to gain weight.

Another notable name in the nabe family is shabu-shabu.

Shabu-shabu’s name springs from the movement one makes when dipping thinly sliced meat into the boiling pot. The dish is served with meat (usually beef and pork), as well as various kinds of tofu. The food is then enjoyed with a sesame dipping sauce or ponzu (a lemon based dressing), or with a mix of both.

Sukiyaki is a variation of shabu-shabu wherein the ingredients are stewed in sweet sauce and then served (according to taste) and enjoyed with a dip of raw egg.

Nabe mono (literally things in a cooking pot) is the most popular soups in Japan. It’s considered as the Japanese frittata, or curry dish. Sukiyaki gives hints at itself (meaning what you like or what you can have more of a Japanese palate than you had thought!

If you’re visiting the country, you’ll see Natto everywhere. One of the many kinds of this staple dish.

Hard to compare to other dishes, okonomiyaki can be considered the Japanese frittata, or pancake.

The etymology of the name itself (meaning what you like or what you can have more of) makes it a little weird for many not Japanese. It is, though, definitely worth trying, as it’s a truly Japanese food.

Natto is often served with rice (there’s also a rolled variety you can easily find in convenience stores and sushi restaurants) and dipped in a deep-fried soy sauce. Alternatively it’s served with a spicy Japanese mustard called karashi.

We will admit that it may be hard to get used to this dish, and it’s a bit of an acquired taste, but we recommend you give natto a shot, as you may find you have more of a Japanese palate than you had thought!

Many other kinds of this dish exist in several areas across Japan (like kushikatsu, okinawa, and more), but if you’re visiting Tokyo, you’ll have to stop by Tsukishima district, famous for both okonomiyaki and monjayaki. The main street of this area has been renamed Monja Street. You will want to visit it to try monjyaki, a dish similar to okonomiyaki, but with a less dense texture and with different ingredients.

Oden is a tasty, light, hot dish, you’d especially enjoy on those cold winter days. This is another variety of one-pot dishes consisting of several ingredients (usually eggs, konjac, fish cakes and daikon) served in a dashi and soy soup.

While some restaurants specialize in the preparation of this dish, you can commonly find oden in many Japanese fast food chains, and in convenience stores.

Oden can be prepared in many different ways (and sometimes even its name is different. In Nagoya, for example, it may be called Kanto-ni). The soups in which the ingredients are boiled are also called on the region.

Oden is a great, cheap, and original dish that will never bore you, especially if you’re traveling through different cities in Japan.

12 Miso soup

13 Nabe

14 Natto

15 Oden

16 Okonomiyaki

17 Omuraisu

18 Onigiri

19 Ramen

Most people know natto, especially for it’s world famous instant variety, but when in Japan, you’ll be surprised by its amazing taste (definitely not even comparable to its cup counterpart) and huge amount of different choices.

The broth can be based on chicken, pork, beef, fish, vegetables, and flavored with soy sauce, miso, dashi, and many other seasonings. Usually scallion, seaweed, tofu, and bamboo shoots are added, but it’s impossible to list all the different combinations in which this dish can be served.

Not only each region, but even each restaurant can have a different recipe, sometimes creating very original and tasty meals.

The noodles are specifically made for ramen and have a very distinctive texture, being soft but with a bit of a bite.

The most common soup stocks are miso, salt, soy sauce, and curry.

Ramen is probably the most popular staple of this meal at least as much it is just as cold (often eaten). It’s considered to be fast food, and, while some kinds can be served cold, it’s usually hot, and a godsend on cold days.

Who hasn’t seen in anime, movies, videos, or documentaries, the famous Japanese rice ball, the onigiri? While not very common as a menu item in restaurants, this is the king of the on-the-go dishes. You’ll find it Virtually everywhere, at grocery stores and convenience stores.

The onigiri can be a simple rice ball flavored with spices, or it can be filled (and it usually is) with a variety of ingredients from vegetables, to seafood, and more. It’s sometimes wrapped in a sheet of flavored or unflavored nori (seaweed), depending on the region, and on one’s preference.

Many people visiting Japan eat mainly onigiri while sightseeing given its very cheap price (usually around 100 yen) and it’s availability and simplicity.

11 Kushikatsu

10 Onigiri

9 Ramen
If you haven’t tried senbei are a type of Japanese cracker enjoyed for centuries. First made in China via the Tang Dynasty, early senbei were made from potato and were also commonly made by mixing tiny shredded pieces of nori or aonori (powdered seaweed) into the senbei dough before baking.

Since the Edo period, however, senbei made with toasted rice became popularly made with the Kansai region. Senbei are sold at outdoor festivals. There are also artisan makers that still produce everything about senbei available throughout the country.

### Classic Senbei Flavors

#### Shoyu (Soy Sauce) Senbei
The most common flavor of senbei you will find in Japan is shoyu (soy sauce). Made by brushing or dipping the rice crackers in shoyu while toasted over a flame, these tasty snacks have an inviting aroma and a deeply savory flavor.

#### Nori Senbei
To make this kind of senbei, a thin sheet of dried nori (seaweed) is wrapped around toasted rice crackers to give the entire snack a sea-salty taste. Nori seaweed is also commonly made by mixing tiny shredded pieces of nori or aonori (powdered seaweed) into the senbei dough before baking.

#### Kuro Goma Senbei
In place of the usual rice flour dough, the dough used to make kuro goma (black sesame) senbei contains flour and sesame seeds. Kuro goma senbei have a crunchy texture and nutty taste with an appealing speckled surface.

#### Togarashi Senbei
If you like spicy foods, togarashi (red chili pepper) senbei is the snack for you! The rice crackers are toasted the usual way before being thickly coated in red chili pepper powder and flakes. Though a popular snack for spicy snack lovers, this treat is too spicy for many Japanese people.

#### Kuromame Senbei
Kuromame (black soybean) senbei are made from a dough of flour and cooked black beans. The addition of beans tends to make kuromame senbei quite a bit thicker and more filling than other kinds of rice crackers, making this perfect for when you get hungry between meals.

#### Ebi Senbei
Ebi (shrimp) senbei, similarly nicknamed “ebi-sen,” are made by mixing finely minced shrimp into senbei dough before baking. The color of the shrimp adds bright threads of red and pink to the toasted rice cracker when cooked. Quite an addictive snack and perfect for shrimp lovers!

### Fishy Senbei Varieties

#### Ika Senbei
Ika (squid) senbei, also known as “ika-sen,” are of several kinds of seafood senbei in Japan. There are numerous ways to make Ika-sen including mixing pieces of grilled squid together with a binding agent before baking them flat, or even by baking a whole squid onto a pre-made senbei. Either way, Ika-sen usually retains its squid appearance and with a wonderfully enhanced taste. This snack goes especially well with a cold beer!

#### Ebi Senbei
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Senbei: That Perfect Souvenir (Or On-The-Go Snack!)

The world of senbei has a variety of flavors and types so be sure to keep a look out for those you’ve yet to try. If you’re in Japan and keep an eye out - particularly in the more touristy areas - you’re bound to happen upon an artisan rice cracker shop. Often the shops will even grill a cracker to perfection right in front of your eyes. Be sure to get some of their freshly roasted senbei for a mouthwatering treat!

Regional Senbei Varieties

Nure-Senbei, Chiba
Nure-senbei essentially means “wet rice cracker.” It gets this name from the fact that it’s dipped in soy sauce during the cooking process. This results in a moist and chewy rice cracker quite different from the traditional senbei. This unique senbei is a local specialty of the city of Choshi, which specializes in the production of shoyu.

Mentaiko Senbei, Fukuoka
Mentaiko (spicy cod roe) senbei, A.K.A. “menbei,” comes from the area famous for mentaiko, Fukuoka. The mentaiko is mixed into the senbei dough before it’s toasted to bake the spicy flavor right into the rice cracker.

Kare Senbei, Hokkaido
As a result of a collaboration with a famous curry shop in Sapporo, kare (curry) senbei were born. Though Japanese curry tends to be a bit milder and even sweeter than other types of curry such as Indian or Thai curry, it does have a good blend of spices and aromatics. This curry and senbei combination is a truly special treat.

Other “Un-Cracker-Like” Senbei

Nure-Senbei
Because of its appearance, many may see this as a cookie, but it’s taste is quite unique making a great souvenir for sweets-lovers.

Zarame Senbei
Though a variety of savory rice crackers take a good majority of Japanese senbei culture, here a number of sweet senbei as well. Zarame (granulated sugar) senbei is one such senbei, though its appearance may be similar to that of a cookie, it’s taste is quite unique making a mouthwatering treat.

Kawara Senbei
Kawara (roof tile) senbei get their name from the fact that originals were shaped like the roof tiles on Japanese homes or buildings. Made with flour, sugar, and eggs and more like cookie wafers than rice crackers, these senbei make a great snack to enjoy with coffee or tea. They have since evolved and now come decorated with a variety of designs or messages written in icing.

Hone Senbei
Hone (bone) senbei are made from fish or eel bone. After the fillets have been removed and eaten, the spine bones are deep-fried to a crisp before being seasoned with salt or other seasonings. The rich umami flavor goes especially well with Japanese sake which is why you will often see this snack served at drinking establishments in Japan.

Arare
Arare is another type of rice cracker that’s made like senbei from pounded rice that’s toasted over a flame, but which is much smaller in shape. They get their name from the sound that the sound it makes when roasting them sounds similar to hail (also arare). They come in a variety of shapes such as tiny stars and seed shapes and are often mixed with other ingredients such as wasabi peas. As they are bite-sized, they make a great snack to offer guests you are entertaining in your house.

Senbei Rice Crackers

Senbei: Rice Crackers of Many Flavors

In Japan the world of rice crackers is vast and unique to the culture. The world of senbei has a variety of flavors and types so be sure to keep a look out for those you’ve yet to try. If you’re in Japan and keep an eye out - particularly in the more touristy areas - you’re bound to happen upon an artisan rice cracker shop. Often the shops will even grill a cracker to perfection right in front of your eyes. Be sure to get some of their freshly roasted senbei for a mouthwatering treat!
DISHES: So many flavors to discover!

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20 Robatayaki

Robatayaki (or robata) is a Japanese unique kind of food preparation in which food is grilled on an irori style fire-place (wide, flat, open fire-place) over coal.

This kind of food is usually found only in specialized restaurants, so you may have to look/ask specifically for it.

The list of food at robata restaurants is everything you can imagine. Make sure you look/ask specifically for it.

21 Soba

Soba is a buckwheat noodle specialty of Japan. It’s extremely popular, and it’s served both in general noodle restaurants and in specialized (often expensive) ones.

It’s also relatively simple to prepare at home, by getting the noodles and the soup in which they are dipped at a grocery store.

Soba can be enjoyed in a cold dip, or in a broth, as noodle soup.

This dish appears in different varieties depending on the season, and the region you’re visiting. Don’t forget to ask for a soba dish, next time you visit a restaurant in Japan!

22 Somen

Somen is the Japanese version of a very popular kind of noodles across Asia. Made out of wheat flour, it’s usually served cold. These very thin noodles are served with a simple cold dipping sauce, or with a sauce flavored with onion, ginger, and moyoga (a different kind of ginger).

This dish is particularly popular in summer, when a dish of somen chilled with ice cubes is all you need to recharge, fill up, cool off, and take a break from the brutal Japanese summer heat.

23 Sushi and sashimi

Of course we all know these dishes, but we can’t avoid mentioning them in this guide. Sushi and sashimi are among the foods at the pinnacle of Japanese staple cuisine.

While very famous worldwide, many fail to understand the variety of cuts, and preparation that can go into preparing this food. Sushi chefs are regarded as artists and most of them have to practice as apprentices for years (and at times decades) before they too can be called sushi and sashimi masters.

This doesn’t mean though that it’s impossible to find good quality sushi or sashimi at a fair price. Japan offers options for all palates and all pockets.

A particularly fun experience is that of the rolling sushi restaurants, in which you order from a small computer at your table and the sushi is delivered directly to you via a rolling mat.

The food is very good, and it’s only 100 yen per dish (these restaurants are usually called 100 yen sushi, or sushibito).

24 Takowasa

Takowasa is raw octopus (tako) served in a wasabi sauce (wasabi). This is one of those Japanese dishes that, depending on your cultural background, may appear weird. Do try it out!

Takowasa is a common appetizer in many restaurants, and especially in izakaya. It’s very popular and for good reason. It’s tasty, unique, and a true symbol of Japanese popular food tradition.

25 Tempura

Tempura are a great dish all year round, especially for those of you who enjoy sharing a few drinks with friends.

Tempura consists of shellfish, fish, chicken, or vegetables covered in a flavorful batter and deep fried until they reach a perfect level of crunchiness.

You can enjoy tempura as is or with dipping sauce. While many restaurants serve this dish, there are several which specialize in it, where you can find a larger choice for an even more amazing dive into traditional Japanese food.

26 Teppanyaki

Teppanyaki is one of the less known (but still delicious) styles of Japanese cooking. Teppan means iron plate and yaki means grilled.

Teppanyaki is a term that encompasses a large variety of dishes, including okonomiyaki, takoyasa, and monjayaki, but it’s usually used to refer to a particular kind of preparation of western-influenced food.

Typical ingredients for teppanyaki are beef, shrimp, vegetables, chicken, and scallops. They are prepared on a hot-plate, usually with soybean oil.

Some of you may be familiar with this kind of cooking, as in the U.S. these restaurants are pretty popular (although known as Hibachi).

If you come to Japan and you want to taste amazing food that epitomizes Japan and the west, you’ll really want to give teppanyaki a shot.

27 Tonkatsu

Tonkatsu is a very popular and easy to find dish of breaded pork cutlet deep fried in vegetable oil.

You can find this cheap, tasty dish in several chain restaurants and in bento boxes in grocery and convenience stores.

You can even make it yourself!

Season the meat with salt and pepper and cover it with flour. Then dip it into beaten egg and add a layer of panko (Japanese flaky bread crumbs). Deep fry, and serve with cabbage, potato salad and some brown sauce or karaori.

Tonkatsu is perfect also for on-the-go sandwiches, making for a great quick meal.

28 Udon

Udon can be served hot or cold, depending on the season (and on one’s taste) and it’s prepared in many styles depending on the region you’re visiting.

While the word udon refers to the noodles themselves, there’s no limit to the flavors, soups, and ingredients that can be added. As a matter of fact, challenge yourself to try out as many styles of udon as you can during your visit in Japan, and not only are you going to be satisfied, but also nowhere near the end of the list of possible dishes!

29 Yakimono

This term literally means grilled stuff. Virtually anything can be grilled, but some yaki dishes in Japan are a must-try.

Yakimono means grilled meat. These restaurants are usually not as popular and you can find a number of high-end ones, as well as more budget-friendly ones (many of which offer all-you-can-eat plans).

In yakiniku restaurants you order the meat, or vegetables that you prefer (seasoned or unseasoned). The selection is huge. Then you grill it yourself on a hot plate or grill usually embedded within the table. You can then add sauces such as lemon, bbq, and many others, or simply salt and pepper.

30 Yakitori

Although the word yakitori literally means grilled chicken, this concept encompasses all kinds of skewered meat (and vegetables) prepared in a grill. This is a simple and flavorful dish with a never-ending list of combinations, which can be found in several restaurants (specialized ones as well) and which is especially recommend-ed when visiting a good izakaya, to experience another one of the true Japanese popular dishes.

31 Yakizakana

Being in Japan, we can’t leave out grilled fish.

Yakizakana may not be as popular as sushi outside of Japan, but in this country it’s arguably much more common than raw fish.

Usually a whole fish is grilled and served with side dishes of various vegetables and rice. Try it in specialized restaurants for a fully immersive experience, or in chain restaurants for a tasty, cheap, and fast meal that will keep you going for the several hours of sightseeing ahead of you!

You’re now on the way to be-come a true expert on Japanese food! Yet there’s much more to Japanese cuisine that can be discovered! While visiting this amazing country and taking in all the sights, the fun, and the culture... Don’t forget to eat!
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 Roppongi, Shinagawa Takanawa and Shibuya Ikebukuro locations.

**The Wing Place dishes out food and fun on Yokota**

Looking for delicious chicken wings in a sports bar setting? Then head to The Chicken Place on Yokota's East Side. Serving wings just the way you like it, mild to spicy, we have all the flavors you can imagine, offering 15 different sauces and 8 types of dips to mix and match. Enjoy our family-friendly atmosphere with a dose of sports that will have you coming back for more. For those early birds, get a kick-start on the day with our breakfast specials, 7-10 a.m. Mon.-Fri. Wing it and head on over for some delicious Fun! For more info call 225-9551.
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 then 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 but are a vegetarian. However, sushi doesn’t necessarily mean just fish on rice.

Shiitake mushroom nigiri

Shiitake mushroom nigiri is a rice ball topped with a slice of Shiitake 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 shitake mushrooms makes this vegan sushi an extremely satisfying morsel.

Avocado nigiri

Avocado 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 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 shitake mushrooms makes this vegan sushi an extremely satisfying morsel.

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!

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.

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, 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 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.

Seaweed gunkanmaki

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.

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.

Chirashishushi means “scattered sushi”, and is Japanese dish of sushi rice topped with various ingredients. Takenoko chirashishushi 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.

Nagiri-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.

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.

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.

Shinke maki / Takuan maki

Shinuko 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 sweetish 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

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 gunkan-maki “battleship roll”? is a flavorful and nutrient-rich sushi option for vegans and non-vegetarians 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

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Café offers a taste of American diner

TAK, the owner of CAFE PX, wants military members to have fun and remember their lifestyle in the United States, enjoy their lives and meals by coming to CAFE PX while they are stationed in Japan. He was also a cook at the old Negishi housing “All Hands Club” so he knows how to make great American-style food like BLT, omelets, pizza, burgers, hotdogs, milk shakes and more. He wants to create an American hometown neighborhood diner, style and feel so his customers can relax, eat and enjoy his hospitality.

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