

The background is a rich, textured collage of Japanese culinary elements. At 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. Below them are fresh green scallions and a bundle of dried, golden-brown rice stalks. On the right side, there are several bright orange citrus fruits, likely daidai (citrus), and a black plate with a piece of salmon topped with green herbs. In the lower right, a wooden bowl is filled with white rice, with a pair of wooden chopsticks resting on top. At the bottom, there is a variety of fresh seafood, including several pieces of nigiri sushi (salmon and tuna), a whole cooked crab, and a platter of assorted sashimi including mushrooms, green onions, and other seafood. The entire scene is set against a dark, vertically-grained wooden background.

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A Taste of Japan

The 3 'R's to good eating –
Restaurants,
Reviews & Recipes

4-page pullout



LIVE JAPAN

Oden is something you want to eat during the cold winter. You can readily eat oden at a Japanese restaurant or a pub. It is a meal of boiling things like chopped radish and eggs, or tasty chikuwa fish cakes in a soy sauce or kombu soup stock for a long time to gain flavor. The ingredients inside oden are called “odentane.”

History

Oden originated back to dengaku, that is the meal of cutting tofu into rectangles and eating with miso on top. The popular way of putting “o” at the beginning of every word the court



Oden

Photos courtesy of Live Japan

ladies used inside the Imperial Court in the Heian period and dengaku were mixed together and it became the name “oden.”

Differences in areas

Mainly in eastern Japan people use the concentrated taste of soy sauce to cook oden so the color of the soup looks darker and in western Japan, people use the light taste of soy sauce



Dengaku

to cook oden so the color of the soup looks paler. In Kyushu or Okinawa, a richer taste is popular and the soup has the flavor of chicken or flying fish. In Kyoto, a delicate taste is popular and the soup has the flavor of shaved dried mackerel and kelp.

Convenience store oden

Convenience stores sell oden from autumn until spring. Lawson, one of the biggest convenience stores, uses a base soup of katsuobushi (dried bonito flakes) from Yaizu and kelp from Hokkaido. For the Chubu region they add a flavor of muroaji-bushi (horse mackerel flakes). And for the Kyushu region, they add a flavor of beef, chicken and flying fish. There are different kinds of flavors depending on the area.

A unique canned oden

You can even buy oden from some vending machines. The ingredients inside are almost the same as regular oden, but the odentane are not anything fragile like tofu. It can be preserved for a long time and can be used as emergency food in case of a disaster.

cooking oden Isekai Izakaya Nobu-style

LIVE JAPAN

Welcome to the first of a series of articles spotlighting select Japanese recipes from the new anime series, Isekai Izakaya Nobu! Whether you’re a fan already or have just stumbled upon the show, one thing is for sure: the dishes of gourmet anime Isekai Izakaya ~Koto Aitheria no Izakaya Nobu~ look absolutely amazing! Japanese star chef Ryuta Kijima created simple recipes based on the food served at Izakaya Nobu itself, for you to cook in your own kitchen at home. (Even if you’re not a giant anime fan, you’re still bound to enjoy these authentic Japanese foods!)

Today, we’re savoring the main dish of the first episode “Potatoes in Oden.” As the name suggests, oden is the star of Nobu’s menu this time! It’s a one-pot dish that is an iconic Japanese winter food recipe and features plenty of ingredients: eggs, daikon, potatoes, and more delights!

During the cold months, Japanese convenience stores sell oden as bowls of different sizes or as individual ingredients, making it a much-beloved snack or meal all throughout Japan. Now, let’s start cooking!



Isekai Izakaya Nobu
- Behind the scenes
of studio sunrise
and discovering
how anime comes
to life



Photos courtesy of Live Japan

Side: Japanese oden-style potato salad

At Isekai Izakaya Nobu, potatoes are a rather big topic in the first episode. That’s why Chef Kijima has come up with a special oden-style potato salad! Quickly made, this yummy side dish adds a fun, Japanese kick to your meal!

Yield

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients

- 2 Oden potatoes (*2)
- 1/4 Onion
- Fukujinzuke (as much as you like) (*3)
- 1 tablespoon French dressing
- 2 tablespoons Mayonnaise
- Coarsely-ground black pepper (a pinch)

Preparation

- 1) Thinly slice the onion vertically, wash with water, dry, and add French dressing. Let it marinate for 5 minutes.
- 2) Add hot potatoes to the onion and crush them with a fork. Let it cool for a bit.
- 3) Add mayonnaise and fukujinzuke. Mix well.
- 4) Itadakimasu!

*2 Chef Kijima uses oden-boiled potatoes. Buy or make them the same way as the daikon described above.

*3 Fukujinzuke are pickled vegetables, a popular Japanese condiment. If you cannot find them in the Asian supermarket of your choice, you can make them yourself. Cut vegetables of your choice (commonly used: daikon, cucumber, eggplant, Lotus root, and so on. Feel free to add “less exotic” veggies such as carrots, white turnip, and ginger.) Boil them in a sauce made of sugar, soy sauce, mirin, sake, and rice vinegar and then cool in the refrigerator.

With these quick and easy recipes, you can bring both the taste and atmosphere of Izakaya Nobu to your own kitchen. And don’t hesitate to enjoy Chef Kijima’s creative creations with a frosty beer!

Japanese oden daikon steak

Often seen in many food anime, daikon radish has recently found its way into Western supermarkets - but how to cook with daikon remains somewhat elusive! We think you’ll agree that when soaked in a hearty oden broth and then fried or grilled, this curious veggie turns into a delectable dish!

Yield

Makes 2 servings

Ingredients

- 2 Oden daikon pieces (*1)
- 2 Green onions
- 1 tablespoon Salad oil
- 10g Butter
- Sauce: 2 teaspoons soy sauce, 2 teaspoons cooking sake, 1 teaspoon mirin

Preparation

- 1) Chop the green onion finely.
- 2) Use a paper towel to soak up extra soup from your daikon pieces. Put them in an oiled, cold frying pan before turning up the heat.
- 3) Flip the daikon once they’re golden brown, put a lid on the pan and fry for another 5 minutes on low heat. Then arrange them on a plate.
- 4) Making the sauce: mix all ingredients for the sauce in the hot pan. Once little bubbles form, add the butter and mix well.
- 5) Pour the sauce over your daikon steak with a spoon. Top with green onions.
- 6) Itadakimasu!

*1 Chef Kijima uses daikon that has already been boiled in an oden soup. If you’re in Japan, you can easily buy the daikon readily made at a convenience store or buy oden soup and make it yourself. If you’re not in Japan, simply make oden soup yourself by using dashi soup stock and seasoning it with soy sauce, sake, and sugar. Bring it to a boil, then put the daikon in and let it simmer for about 15 minutes. Important: the longer the daikon sits in the soup, the better it tastes! If you have time, turn off the heat and let the daikon swim in the soup for an hour or more.





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A TASTE OF JAPAN 4 Replica Food



STORY AND PHOTOS BY REY WATERS,
JAPAN TRAVEL

While on your visit to Japan you will come across many restaurants that present food samples of their offerings. The plastic food looks so real and the details make your mouth water. Go to the top floor of any department store and almost all the restaurants will showcase realistic looking dishes. Many times when dining alone I show the waitress my choice by pointing to the display in the window.

Back in the Showa period a man named Takizo Iwasaki decided to form a company to make replica food. In 1932 he opened a factory in Osaka and it became the largest food display company in Japan.

Originally the sample food was made of wax, but after sitting in the display case for a long period of time during the hot weather their shape changed, so in the 1970's they switched to a durable plastic.

Miwa and I recently booked a class at Iwasaki's "Ganso Shokuhin Sample-ya" company in Tokyo, which holds workshops for making replica food. Today it was Lettuce and Tempura. I chose shrimp and potato for the tempura.

Toyama-san, our instructor, explained to me in English the process we would experience during our class. She also noted that many foreigners join her workshops.

The first and most important step is to heat the water to 42 degrees Celsius (107.6 F). Today we used three colors to make our samples of green, white, and light yellow.

There were a total of 7 students, so the class moved along pretty quickly.

To make the Tempura pieces you need to hold a cup with the liquid 60 cm high and pour slowly into the vat. For

shrimp, pour in a rectangular shape and for the potato pour in a circle. Place the shrimp onto the rectangle and slowly submerge in the water while wrapping the ends. When complete, place in cold water and there you have Shrimp Tempura. It does look real, even the one I made.

The lettuce process was a little more complicated using two colors, however the results were the same. We chose to have ours cut in half showing the realistic inner texture.

Ganso offers several other choices of sample food making at their two Kappabashi locations.

The class was very inexpensive when you consider what the cost would be to purchase the three items we made. Our workshop cost 2160 yen (\$19). The prices vary according to the food you want to make.

I am by no means an artist, but this process will give you a feeling of accomplishment, and even children are welcome to take the class.

Downstairs from the workshop is a retail store where you can purchase items for your home or restaurant. They have two stores in Tokyo and one at the Red Brick Warehouse in Yokohama.

During your visit to Japan this workshop is a nice way to spend a couple of hours while taking home a neat souvenir that you personally made.

For additional information go to their website, or call 0120-81-1839.

The workshops must be done in groups with a limit of 16 per class. Both workshop locations are just minutes walking distance from Tawaramachi Station or Asakusa Station in the Kappabashi-dori area of Tokyo.



A Taste of Japan

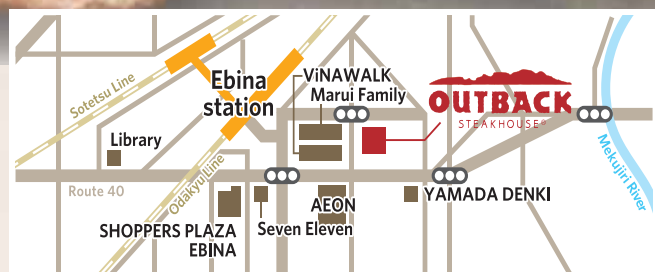
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