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# A Taste of Okinawa

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

**4-page pullout**



## Tasty food, great drinks, fun events at Sidelines

Established in 2012, Sidelines is a family-owned, upscale Sports Bar & Grill. Our menu offers delicious homemade Classic American Food, Vegan dishes, Kid's options and fantastic Weekly Specials. Try our Fish & Chips and Creamy Homemade Cheesecake, both undoubtedly the Best in Okinawa. Join us for Trivia Tuesday, Wednesday's Humpday Super-Specials, Thursday's Darts Tournament, Friday's Happy Hour, Weekend Bottomless Mimosas & to watch Live Sporting Events on our 20 indoor & outdoor TV's! You'll enjoy unrivalled Service, Full Bar, ample outdoor seating, and a fabulous Ocean View from our Upstairs Bar! Visit us soon and join the Sidelines Family!

RESTAURANT INFO

# A Taste of Okinawa



## Stone-oven-baked pizza, pasta, spare ribs and more

Have you heard of Pizzeria MARINO, renowned for our delicious cuisine in Okinawa? At Pizzeria MARINO, you can savor a wide variety of dishes, including stone-oven-baked pizzas, pasta, cheese fondue, and spare ribs. Our freshly baked pizzas are a must-try, offering a unique and irresistible flavor that you won't find anywhere else. Treat yourself to one of our set menus and choose your favorite pizza and pasta combination for an unforgettable dining experience. At Pizzeria MARINO, we're here to give you a taste of home that will leave your tastes begging for more. We can't wait to serve you!

Gushikawa  
Main City  
Branch



Naha  
Main Place  
Branch



Urasoe  
West Coast  
Parco City  
Branch



RESTAURANT INFO

# WHAT TO EAT IN OKINAWA: The Hawaii of Japan

BY HUI SUM PING, BYFOOD

What comes to mind when you think about what to eat in Okinawa? You might think about a staple food like goya champuru or tender boneless pork ribs or belly. Maybe taco rice even springs to mind.

Okinawan culture differs from that of mainland Japan, and this extends to Okinawan cuisine, too! Most of the local dishes in Japan’s southernmost prefecture are quite different from other traditional Japanese dishes due to Okinawa’s location and historical background.

Okinawa Prefecture consists of more than 150 islands in the East China Sea, between Taiwan and Japan’s Honshu island. Thanks to the tropical climate, vast beaches, and coral reefs, as well as the Ryukyu Kingdom’s history, there are lots of delicious Okinawan food to enjoy during each of the four seasons, from hot food to cold desserts. Due to its unique climate, the cuisine of the Okinawa Prefecture of Japan is distinct from the Japanese cuisine of mainland Japan. The longevity of the Okinawan people is often attributed to the island’s food, as Okinawan dietary habits have traditionally skewed toward vegetables and seafood products.

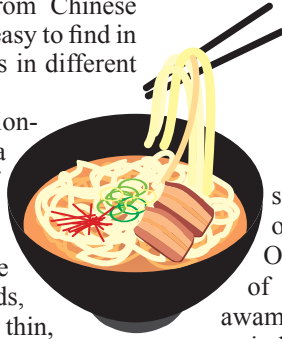
Let’s dive into some of the local food and explore what traditional Okinawan cuisine is all about.



## 1 Okinawa Soba

A staple of Okinawan cuisine, Okinawa soba, also known as Okinawa ramen, is a kind of noodle that is generally thick like udon and slightly twisted. It is a local specialty dish of Okinawa Prefecture that uses noodles made in a process derived from Chinese noodle-making. It is easy to find in most local restaurants in different areas of Okinawa.

There are also regional styles of this soba dish. For example, if you order this Okinawan dish on Ishigaki Island and the other Yaeyama Islands, you’ll find they have thin, straight noodles. The Okinawa ramen of the Yaeyama Islands is called Yaeyama soba. The buckwheat noodles of Miyako Island are also thin and flat without any shrinkage and are called Miyako soba because of the unique characteristics of the ingredients and the way they are arranged.



## 2 Rafute

Rafute (braised “pork cubes”) is another local dish of Okinawa Prefecture. It is made with skin-on pork belly stewed in soy sauce and brown sugar.

During the Ryukyu Dynasty, the Chinese pork dish “Tong Po Lo” was introduced to the Ryukyu kings, who loved it so much that it became one of their court dishes.

One of the characteristics of the dish is the use of awamori (an alcoholic beverage indigenous and unique to Okinawa) in the cooking process.

One recommended Okinawan restaurant where you can try this dish is Yuunangii (ゆうなんぎい) located in Naha.



Yuunangii Map



## 3 Goya Chanpuru

Goya chanpuru (also spelled goya “champuru”) is another specialty dish in Okinawan cuisine, a stir-fry of bitter melon slices, usually with pork and tofu.

Okinawan bitter melon (“goya”) is known as the “king of summer vegetables” and is a staple food in Okinawa that’s rich in vitamins. It is said that one of the reasons why many people in Okinawa live long lives is because they often eat bitter melon, a traditional food in Okinawan cuisine. You can find this Okinawa bitter melon dish easily in most local restaurants in Okinawa.

Check out Goya: 3 Easy Japanese Bitter Melon Recipes for Summer to learn how to cook goya chanpuru and other bitter melon dishes!



Goya chanpuru recipe



## 4 Ishigaki Beef

When it comes to Okinawa’s specialty dishes, Ishigaki beef should be a must-try dish on your list. Ishigaki Island is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Okinawa Prefecture and boasts Ishigaki beef, a brand of beef raised in the warm and natural environment unique to Ishigaki Island.

Ishigaki beef refers to pure Japanese black cattle that have been produced and raised in the Yaeyama area with a certificate of registration and production history. The cattle must have been fattened and managed in the Yaeyama area for approximately 20 months or more after birth.

See our post on Ishigaki Island for Okinawan restaurant recommendations, including places to try Ishigaki beef and things to do!



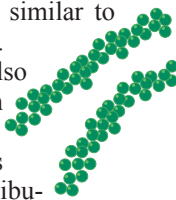
Ishigaki Island



## 5 Umibudo

Umibudo means “sea grapes” in Japanese. In Okinawa Prefecture, it has been eaten for a long time and is sometimes called “green caviar” because of its shape. Umibudo is eaten raw, dipped in soy sauce and vinegar as a sauce, and gives puchi puchi popping sensation similar to ikura (salmon roe).

Umibudo is also used as a garnish for sashimi. It is also eaten as umibudo-don (umibudo rice bowl) on a bed of rice topped with sanbaisu vinegar, or as umibudo soba (buckwheat noodles) without seasoning. If marinated in a seasoning solution for a long time, the umibudo beads will shrivel up.



## 6 Taco Rice

Among all of Okinawa’s specialty dishes, the flavors of this one may already be familiar to you. Taco rice is an Okinawan dish consisting of rice topped with typical taco ingredients from the Mexican-American style dish, served with a tomato-based salsa. It was first created in 1984 in Kanatake Town, Okinawa Prefecture. It has become a popular dish in the prefecture and has been used in school lunches since the 1990s.

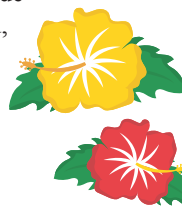
The rice is with minced meat or dry curry in the way it is eaten. It is usually served with a tomato-based red salsa, but sometimes tomato ketchup is used in place of salsa at popular restaurants and bento shops.



## 7 Mimiga

Mimiga (pig’s ear) is an Okinawan dish made from seasoned, thinly cut pig’s ears. The pig’s ears are boiled or steamed and cut into strips.

Mimiga is eaten as a vinegared dish, often with sauces such as ponzu, vinegared miso, peanut miso, or just salt. It is characterized by the crunchy texture of the cartilage, similar to that of hardened jellyfish. It is high in collagen and is considered beneficial for health and beauty. When mimiga is eaten cold, it is often called mimiga sashimi. The texture is crunchy and chewy.



## 8 Sata Andagi

Sata andagi (Okinawan donuts) is a type of deep-fried sweet from Okinawa Prefecture. It is a spherical fried doughnut made of sweet batter. It is considered to be a good luck snack and is served at weddings and other celebrations. Because of the sugar content, the small size of the air bubbles in the crumb, and the density of the dough, it is a confection that is satisfying and filling, with a crunchy surface.

In addition to being made at home, sata andagi are also sold at tempura stores, on street corners, and in markets, especially in Okinawa shopping streets such as Ishigaki City Public Market. When sold in stores, the type made with refined sugar is called “white” and those made with brown sugar is called “black.”



## 9 Okinawa Pineapple Ice Cream / Hyouka

Okinawa is famous for pineapples, so there are a lot of pineapple products to try. The pineapple-flavored ice cream or hyouka (ice) are both worth a try. Especially in summer, these pineapple treats are suitable for cooling off in Okinawa’s hot weather.

In traditional Okinawan cuisine, you can taste different flavors such as bitter, sweet, and salty; and enjoy a variety of textures, from popping umibudo to crunchy mimiga. If you are thinking about what to eat in Okinawa, mark down these Okinawan dishes so you can try them while exploring Japan’s southernmost island!



Experience Okinawan culture through food! Browse food experiences in Okinawa and check out our YouTube channel to follow along on our food adventures in Japan!



Food experiences in Okinawa

YouTube channel



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!



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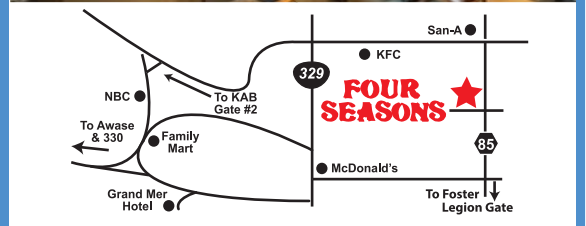
## Four Seasons will dazzle you in Awase & Urasoe

Four Seasons Teppanyaki Steak House in Awase and Urasoe will not only dazzle you, but also tingle your taste buds! Watch as our talented chefs slice, dice and cook up your entrees right at your table. It's more than a meal, It's a special event! Our restaurant is the perfect place to relax, unwind and simply enjoy some foodie fun with your family, friends or that special someone. If you haven't had the pleasure of enjoying Japanese teppanyaki, come in for a visit! We promise that you won't be disappointed, so what are you waiting for? Reservations recommended.

**Four Seasons Urasoe**  
 2-4-5 Iso, Urasoe City  
 TEL: (098)877-0429 / Open Hours: 11:00-



**Four Seasons Awase**  
 Renewal open! 4-12-13 Awase, Okinawa City  
 TEL: (098)937-0029 / Open Hours: 11:00-



<p><b>Lunch</b> Hours: 11:00- </p> <p><b>Lunch Steak Set ¥1,980-</b></p>	<p><b>Dinner</b> Hours: 17:00- </p> <p><b>Dinner Steak Set ¥2,640-</b></p>
<p>Seafood &amp; other menus are widely available. All sets come with soup, salad, bread or rice, tea or coffee.</p>	

**RESTAURANT INFO**

**Four Seasons Okinawa City**  
 3-1-25 Sonda, Okinawa City / TEL (098)933-5731

**Four Seasons Mihama**  
 2-5-2 Chatan, Mihama Town / TEL (098)926-1329

# A Taste of Okinawa



## Tasty Thai cuisine will tingle your taste buds

Enjoy authentic Thai cuisine made with organic ingredients at Benjarong! From Spicy Grilled Beef Salad "Nam Tok" and Pad Thai with Shrimp, to Soft-Shell Crab Fried with Original Sauce and Fresh Spring Rolls, our tasty Thai food will tingle your taste buds! We use primarily Okinawan vegetables and organic ingredients whenever possible, focusing on health and local production. Vegetarian meals and herb-free options are also available. We welcome solo diners and families with children, and offer a lunch menu, kids' menu and takeout menu. We have 4 counter seats, 50 table seats, 4 terrace seats and 7 parking spots available.

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 Open all year round  
 Lunch 11:30-L.O. 14:30  
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Google Maps

**TEL 098-988-8751**

**RESTAURANT INFO**

