



STARS  AND STRIPES[®]

A Taste of Okinawa

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

4-page pullout

Golden kumquat dish symbol of money, good fortune

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,
STRIPE OKINAWA

Among many lucky foods associated with the New Year celebration, kumquat can be a big draw because it is meant to bring in luck of money.

In Japan, this tiny citrus fruit is called kinkan and forms part of the Osechi Ryori because the name in kanji is either “金柑” or “金冠”, which means “gold tangerine” and “gold crown” respectively. In China, where the fruit originated, its name is “金桔 (jin jie)”, meaning “wealth” and “good luck”, according to the Japan Weather Association.

Besides the prospect of more wealth, kumquats are delicious and delicately sweet! They can be eaten raw but for the New Year, we have it in kanroni, which stews kumquat with sugar and mirin sweet cooking rice wine. The cooking process brings up a distinct sweetness and fruitiness with a marmalade-like consistency.

Commonly called kinkan-no-kanroni, stewed kinkan is a regular menu item for the New Year's meal. Try the recipe below, adapted from the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union. With just a few simple steps to follow, this would arguably be one of the easiest Japanese New Year foods that you can make on your own.

The only daunting part of the entire recipe is removing the seeds. However, for 30 pieces of kinkan, I was able to complete this task in 10 minutes by making small slits on the delicate skin and using a toothpick to pry out the seeds with a little patience.

From start to finish, it took me about 90 minutes. Though it is a bit longer than I usually spend on cooking, the end result was totally worth it. The heavenly scent of the kinkan, sugar and mirin will entice you to give it a little taste, but just be careful not to burn yourself.

Another good pointer to know is that this can be cooked in a big batch and stored much like you would marmalade or jelly. Refrigerated in a jar or airtight container, the kanroni will last about six months to a year.

So, add this sweet dish to your New Year's lineup and see if it brings you good luck and wealth!

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Kinkan-no-kanroni (stewed kumquat)

*For a family of four, this recipe should be enough for a few servings per person.

INGREDIENTS

- Kinkan (kumquat) 30 pieces
- Water 450cc
- Sugar 135cc
- Mirin (sweet cooking rice wine) 22.5cc

RECIPE

1. Rinse and wash off kinkan with water.
2. Put kinkan in a deep pot with water and place over high heat. (Make sure there's enough water to cover the kinkan. Stop heating just before the water is boiled.)
3. Drain water and take kinkan out of the pan. Let them cool.
4. Once cool enough to hold, remove the seeds. Do this by making about six vertical slits on each kinkan with a kitchen knife and

using a toothpick to bring the seeds up and out. Be sure to remove stem ends as well.

5. Heat 450cc of water, 135cc of sugar, 22.5cc of Mirin (sweet cooking rice wine) in a deep pan on a medium-high heat for a few minutes.

6. Add kinkan to the mixture and slowly heat it on a medium heat, until the tangerine starts to glisten and soften.

7. Serve on small plates cold (you can also enjoy this dish warm if you let it cool a little after cooking). Bon appetite and good luck in the New Year!



Try gobou-no-nikumaki for a lucky new year

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHOJI KUDAKA,
STRIPE OKINAWA

In Japan, every New Year we eat a variety of foods which form part of the Osechi Ryori (or New Year's foods) meant to bring us good luck, health and happiness. Goubou-no-nikumaki, a rolled slice of beef with burdock root at the center, is one of the popular dishes in the Osechi lineup.

Burdock is a reminder of the grain harvest because it's black and elongated appearance resembles the Japanese crane, which comes flying when a rich harvest is gathered. The rolled dish includes burdock because it is eaten with the hope that happiness will last long like burdock grows.

Depending on where you're celebrating the New Year, burdock and meat rolls have a different name. On the mainland, it's called yawatamaki, after Yawata City in Kyoto Pref. On Okinawa, not only is its name different – it's called Gunbomachi – but, so is its secondary ingredient – pork instead of beef.

Just recently, I had a chance to try the Okinawan version following a recipe I found in an old cookbook at home. I happened to also have carrots on hand, so I modified the recipe to include them. The recipe was simple enough even for a first-timer like me. The only challenge was peeling the skins of the burdock

roots, but once the prep work was done, the rest of the cooking went smoothly.

As the rolls simmered in a broth of sugar, cooking sake and mirin sweet cooking rice wine, the delicious scent spread throughout the kitchen. I couldn't resist giving one a try before they were fully cooked. One bite and the savory juices exploded over my taste buds. The well-seasoned and tender ingredients were delectable — no wonder this is also a popular item for kids' bento boxes year-round. This is a great option or those easing into Japanese cuisine, plus the veggies and pork or beef are a good source of nutrients.

Cornbread, peas, soba, mochi and beans are also popular ingredients used in New Year's dishes. But, make sure to include some burdock, carrots and pork or beef for good health and good luck in the new year!

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Gunbomachi (Okinawan style roll of pork, burdock, and carrot)

*For four people

INGREDIENTS

- (Sliced) Pork loin 600g
- Burdock 220g
- Carrot 450g
- Water 600cc
- Sugar 100cc
- Liquor (cooking sake) 100cc
- Soy sauce 67cc
- Salt (a little)
- Mirin/sweet cooking rice wine (a little)

RECIPE

1. Rinse and wash off burdock, then peel skins. Rinse carrots.
2. Slice burdock and carrots into small pieces. Make sure each piece will match the width of sliced pork.
3. Boil sliced burdock and carrot in hot water for about 3 minutes each.
4. Roll burdock and carrot with one (or two) slice of pork loin. (You can use a toothpick to secure the rolls if necessary)
5. Place the rolls in a deep pan. then add 100cc water to cover the rolls and boil for 5 minutes.
6. After the initial cooking process, add 500cc of water, 100cc of cooking sake, 100cc of sugar, 67cc of soy sauce to the pan. Loosely put a lid on the pot and lower the heat and simmer between 30 minutes to 1 hour.
7. Add soy sauce, mirin/sweet cooking rice wine, and condiment to perfect the flavor to your taste. (You can do this in step No. 6 as well before simmering)
8. Once they're tender, remove them from the pan and slice into bite-sized pieces. Enjoy!





Gen a real gem on Okinawa

Offering authentic Japanese and Okinawan cuisine at a reasonable price, Gen was recognized in Stripes’ Best of the Pacific 2013 as the best restaurant to experience the local culture on Okinawa. Owner and Head Chef Naoki Tsukayama highly recommends the “Fish Garlic Butter Combo,” a popular dish among American customers. Tsukayama and his staff make you feel at home, so stop by and enjoy a delicious meal. Gen is located across from Camp Foster’s fire station. Just look for shi-shi dogs on a traditional Okinawan tile roof outside Foster’s Fire Station Gate.

RESTAURANT INFO



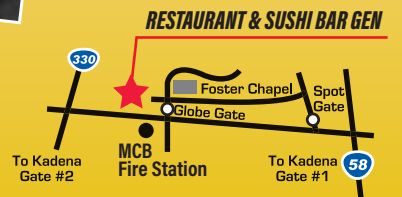
RESTAURANT & SUSHI BAR GEN



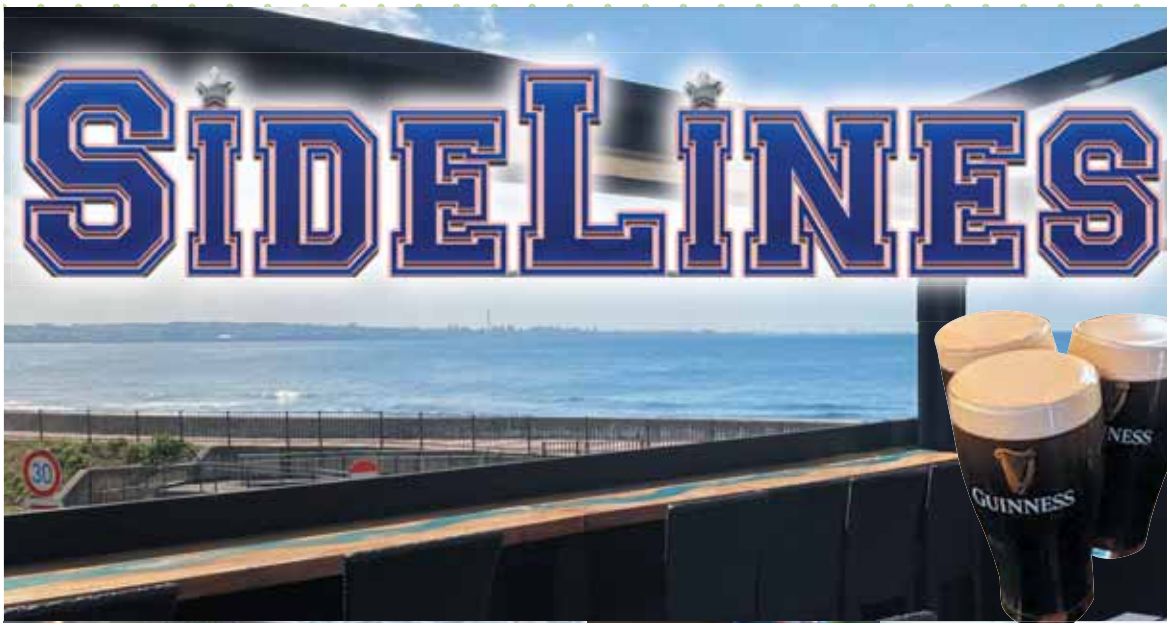
We’re located just outside Camp Foster Globe & Anchor Gate No.3



Open: Thursday through Tuesday
Close: Every Wednesday
Time: 11:00-22:00 (Last order 21:00)
Cash Only (\$/¥)



A Taste of Okinawa



Tasty food, great drinks, fun events at Sidelines

Established in 2012, Sidelines is a family owned, up-scale Sports Bar & Grill. Our menu offers delicious home-made 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



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

A Taste of Okinawa



STEAK HOUSE

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Four Seasons Urasoe

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



Please make a reservation for your party.



Enjoy great teppanyaki just five minutes from Camp Kinser!

Four Seasons Awase

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



Awase branch has 2 parking places.



Lunch
Hours: 11:00-

Lunch Steak Set ¥1,980-

Dinner
Hours: 17:00-

Dinner Steak Set ¥2,640-

Seafood & other menus are widely available. All sets come with soup, salad, bread or rice, tea or coffee.

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



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.

RESTAURANT INFO