

## Part 3

### TRADITIONAL JAPANESE CUISINE

#### *Chakaiseki ryori*

is one of the three basic styles of traditional Japanese cooking. *Chakaiseki ryori* (the name derives from that of a warmed stone that Buddhist monks placed in the front fold of their garments to ward off hunger pangs) is a meal served during a tea ceremony. The foods are fresh, seasonal, and carefully prepared without decoration. This meal is then followed by the tea ceremony. (Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1993, p. 1538)



#### *Honzen ryori*

is one of the three basic styles of traditional Japanese cooking. *Honzen ryori* is a highly ritualized form of serving food in which prescribed types of food are carefully arranged and served on legged trays (*honzen*). *Honzen ryori* has its main roots in the so-called *gishiki ryori* (ceremonial cooking) of the nobility during the Heian period (794 - 1185). Although today it is seen only occasionally, chiefly at wedding and funeral banquets, its influence on modern Japanese cooking has been considerable. The basic menu of *honzen ryori* consists of one soup and three types of side dishes - for example, *sashimi* (raw seafood), a broiled dish of fowl or fish (*yakimono*), and a simmered dish (*nimono*). This is the minimum fare. Other combinations are 2 soups and 5 or 7 side dishes, or 3 soups and 11 side dishes. The dishes are served simultaneously on a number of trays. The menu is designed carefully to ensure that foods of similar taste are not served. Strict rules of etiquette are followed concerning the eating of the food and drinking of the sake. For example, it is proper to eat a bit of rice before passing from one side dish to the next. (Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1993, p. 561)



#### *Kaiseki ryori*

is one of the three basic styles of Japanese cooking. *Kaiseki ryori* is a type of cuisine served at *sake* parties and developed in its present form as restaurants became popular in Japan in the early 19th century. Although the basic features of *kaiseki ryori* can be traced to the more formal styles of Japanese cooking - *Honzen ryori* and *chakaiseki ryori*



- in *kaiseki ryori* diners are able to enjoy their meal in a relaxed mood, unrestricted by elaborate rules of etiquette. Today this type of cooking can be found in its most complex form at first-class Japanese-style restaurants (*ryotei*). *Sake* is drunk during the meal, and, because the Japanese customarily do not eat rice while drinking *sake*, rice is served at the end. Appetizers (*sakizuke* or *otoshi*), *sashimi* (sliced raw fish; also called *tsukuri*), *suimono* (clear soup), *yakimono* (grilled foods), *mushimono* (steamed foods), *nimono* (simmered foods), and *aemono* (dressed salad-like foods) are served first, followed by *miso* soup, *tsukemono* (pickles), rice, Japanese sweets, and fruit. Tea concludes the meal. The types and order of foods served in *kaiseki ryori* are the basis for the contemporary full-course Japanese meal. (Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1993, p. 714)

## *Osechi ryori*



in Japanese cooking, is an assortment of specialty foods served at New Year's. Originally, during the Heian period (794 - 1185), the term denoted the food served at *sechie*, banquets given by the imperial court to celebrate changes of season.

Today, *osechi ryori* is typically eaten after a celebratory toast with *toso* (spiced *sake*) and accompanied by *zoni* (a soup containing rice cakes and vegetables). The foods, which are prepared in

advance, are highly preservable, thus eliminating the need for cooking during the first three days of the New Year. They are often stored and served in multitiered lacquer boxes known as *jubako*. The dishes served vary from region to region but traditionally include *kuromame* (stewed black soybeans), *kazunoko* (salted herring roe), *tazukuri* (dried sardines cooked in soy sauce), a salad of carrot and white radish (*daikon*) dressed with vinegar, cooked burdock (*gobo*) marinated in vinegar, *kamaboko* (broiled fish paste), *datemaki* (sweet omelet squares), broiled shrimp and sea bream, and vegetables such as lotus root and carrot simmered in seasoned broth.

Traditionally, all dishes were prepared in the home, but today most are also sold ready-made in stores. In addition, new types of food, chiefly Western and Chinese, have been introduced to the repertoire. (Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1993, p. 1167)

## *Shojin ryori*

is a type of vegetarian cooking introduced into Japan together with Buddhism in the 6th century. *Shojin* is a Buddhist term that refers to asceticism in pursuit of enlightenment, and *ryori* means "cooking." In the 13th century, with the advent of the Zen sect of Buddhism, the custom of eating *shojin ryori* spread. Foods derived from soybeans - including tofu - and vegetable oils - including sesame, walnut, and rapeseed - were popularized in Japan as a result of their use in *shojin ryori*. (Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1993, p. 1407)



## Part 4

# BEVERAGES

### *Soft drinks*

With the opening of Japan to foreign influences after the Meiji Restoration (1868), carbonated drinks with names derived from English, such as saida (from cider) and ramune (from lemonade), became popular, as did lactic-acid beverages. At present beverages flavored with cola and various fruits are also sold. The long-favored Calpis (a trade name), made with milk, sweetener, artificial color, and lactic-acid bacteria, has been displaced in popularity by cola drinks. (Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1993, p. 1441)



In addition, a whole host of sports drinks, such as the rather unfortunately named Pocari Sweat, have flooded the soft drink market in recent years. Health drinks, in tiny bottles, are touted to cure maladies like common colds, hangovers and stiff joints.

Melon cream sodas are often found on restaurant menus and consist of a bright green, rather syrupy carbonated drink topped off with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Perhaps more popular than carbonated drinks, however, are the many varieties of canned tea and coffee available at all vending machines and convenience stores.

### *Alcoholic beverages*



grape chuhai  
or raw sugar.

While sake is the traditional drink of Japan, in recent years, the sale of beer has surpassed that of sake. Japanese beer has achieved international recognition for its high quality and crisp flavor. While it continues to remain strongly favored by the young, cocktails and mixed drinks made with shochu are also very popular.

“Shochu is a Japanese distilled liquor made from grain. Shochu is classified into two types, A (ko) and B (otsu); the latter, distilled by the pot-still method, is less severely taxed and is the standard type. A-type shochu uses molasses as its main ingredient, while B-type uses chiefly rice, sweet potatoes, barley, rye, buckwheat, corn, Both use malted rice for fermentation. The alcohol content varies from 40 to 90 proof, depending on the type and where it is produced; it averages 50 proof. Shochu is generally drunk mixed with hot or cold water, or with any of a variety of flavorings.

Shochu is assumed to have been introduced from the Ryukyu Islands (present-day Okinawa). The shochu of that area is called awamori (millet brandy) and first appeared in the Ryukyus in the 15th century. The first written mention of shochu in Japan was in the 16th century. At present, shochu is used only as an alcoholic drink, but until the end of the Edo period (1600-1868) it had an important medical use as a disinfectant.” (Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, 1993, p. 1401)

Excerpts taken from Japan, an Illustrated Encyclopedia, published by Kodansha, 1993.