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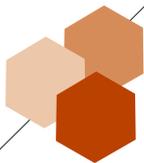


THE JAPANESE TABLE

Japanese Fusion Cuisine: Bread and Sweets

by Yo Maenobo

*Our Feature series has traced the path of wayo setchu,
the fusion of elements from both Japanese and Western cuisines.
This final installment considers certain bread and sweets that were created from
the union of Japanese and Western confectionery.*



Japanese Fusion Cuisine: Bread and Sweets

The Rise of Bread in Japan

The introduction of Western cuisine to Japan in the mid-nineteenth century was naturally accompanied by the arrival of bread. In 1906, only a year after the Russo-Japanese War, two landmark instructional booklets for making bread were published, each only a little over 20 pages. One was produced by a famous Western-style restaurant and hotel in Tokyo's Tsukiji district; the other was titled *Instructions of the Master of Kimuraya*.

This "Master of Kimuraya" was actually the third-generation owner of a bakery that had been established in Tokyo in 1869, just following the Meiji Restoration. The bakery, Kimuraya, was best known not for English-style bread, or French bread, or even German-style bread, but for its invention of *anpan*, a soft bread made of *sakadane*, a rice-cultured yeast traditionally used in the fermentation of sake, which was filled with a sweet bean paste called *an*. *An* refers to *azuki-an*, a paste made from boiled azuki beans sweetened with sugar that is used extensively in traditional Japanese confectionery. Then and now, the term "*pan*," a loan word derived from the Portuguese *pão*, has been used as the Japanese word for "bread."

Kimuraya's genius lay not just in inventing

sakadane-raised bread, but in wrapping it around a core of traditional flavor: the *an*. The bun was topped with a salt-preserved cherry blossom, a decoration originally used only for *anpan* made for the Imperial Household. This treat enjoyed overwhelming popularity at the time, and set in motion a beloved tradition that continues to this day.

Kimuraya began selling its *anpan* in 1874, and in this classic example of *wayo setchu*, the basic inspiration was not the cream puff, which is filled



Anpan topped with a salt-preserved cherry blossom

with custard after baking, but rather of the traditional Japanese *manju*, which is made by wrapping the filling with an outer layer of dough. The cherry blossom garnish has the same effect as the bit of partially dried soybean miso topping on a *manju*, as both impart a touch of salty flavor.

Sweet Fusions

Azuki beans are an essential part of the *wafu* (Japanese-style) palate. "*Aisu*" in Japanese usually refers to "ice cream," but *ogura-aisu*

takes its name from a special kind of azuki bean paste called *ogura-an*—a type of *an* made with smooth bean paste mixed with whole azuki beans boiled in sweet syrup. *Ogura-aisu* was originally a mix of azuki beans and cornstarch, which was then frozen without adding any dairy products. Still another *wayo setchu* invention devised following World War II is "cream *anmitsu*," first made by adding Western-style ice cream to *anmitsu*, which is a traditional sweet that consists of boiled dried red peas and cubes of *kanten* gelatin (agar-agar) topped with *an*, brown sugar syrup and fruit such as dried apricots.

The creation of green tea-flavored soft ice cream represents



Illustration of the Kimuraya bakery located in Tokyo's Ginza district, ca.1874. (Courtesy Kimuraya Sohonten Ltd.)



Cream *anmitsu* is eaten with brown sugar syrup.



Green tea *kasutera* (castilla cake)

an interesting reversal of the *wayo setchu* notion, wherein a Japanese ingredient was incorporated into a Western dessert, and this immensely popular flavor is a perfect example of fusion. Green tea, like azuki, has become a leading element in the evolution of *wafu* fusion, as seen in green tea parfaits, green tea chocolates, green tea *kasutera* (castilla), green tea cream puffs, green tea latte, and more.

In 1983, the launch of a variety of *wayo setchu* products such as *aisu monaka* stirred up a kind of “*wafu* boom.” Inspired by *monaka*, a sweet consisting of *azuki-an* filling sandwiched between traditional Japanese wafers made of glutinous rice flour, *aisu monaka* is filled instead with ice cream. Whereas

anpan was created by replacing the outer layer of *manju* with bread, in the case of *aisu monaka*, the Japanese-style filling was replaced with Western-style ice cream.

In that same year, an ice cream industry trade paper described the “*wafu* boom” as “appropriate to the crossover age” of the eighties. If we think about it though, for over 150 years Japan has been living in a dynamic crossover age of *wayo setchu*. Today, *aisu monaka* has evolved to the point where one can enjoy a green tea ice cream *monaka* that includes an *azuki-an* filling—and so the original *monaka* filling has traveled full circle.

Japan has no patent on cultural crossover. American chefs use soy sauce to bring out the flavor of

steak, and French confectioners travel to Japan to obtain wasabi for making special macarons. Recently, British television presented the idea of using wasabi in plastic tubes to add to dressings—a convenient tip that received enthusiastic viewer response.

Wayo setchu has until now mainly implied the fusion of Japanese and Western cuisines, but today that meaning continues to expand. Japanese cuisine has begun to integrate with culinary traditions from other parts of the world, and it is with high expectations that we await its innovative fusion with other ethnic cuisines. ◆



Aisu monaka with *ogura-aisu* and vanilla ice cream filling

cover

An assortment of Kimuraya’s *anpan*, as sold today. In the center is *anpan* garnished with a salt-preserved cherry blossom; clockwise from upper left are *anpan* with white bean-*an* filling, *uguisu-an* (green pea) filling, poppy-seed topping and *ogura-an* filling.

Author’s profile

Yo Maenobo was born in 1943. He is a specialist in Japanese Intellectual History and the author of many publications and academic papers such as *Meiji Seiyō Ryōri Kigen* (The origin of Western-style dishes in the Meiji era), and *Kindai Nihon Kenkyū*, vols. 24 & 25 (Bulletin of modern Japanese studies), *Fukuo giden*, *mōshikuwa engisuru kosei* (*ken, kon*) (Falsehood: a chronological biography of Fukuzawa Yukichi). His most recent publication is *Mogi-to-Shinsei* (Acculturation in Meiji era Japan).

Japanese Cuisine Around the World



Food Forum is pleased to present this special report by Akira Oshima, former Honorary Executive Chef of two ground-breaking restaurants, Yamazato and Sazanka, both located in the Hotel Okura in Amsterdam. Here, Mr. Oshima recounts his pioneering experiences and success in introducing Japanese cuisine to the Netherlands over 30 years ago.



Chef Akira Oshima

Until the late 1960s in Europe, although several Japanese restaurants operated in London and Paris, none served authentic Japanese cuisine. Prior to the opening of the Hotel Okura in Amsterdam in 1971, there were no Japanese restaurants in Amsterdam. The hotel's Japanese restaurant, Yamazato, began from scratch. At that time, the Dutch rarely ate out and had little or no interest in Japanese cuisine. When I started at Yamazato, I figured we would need at least 10 years for the Dutch people to familiarize themselves with our cuisine.

get confused. So we used the Japanese names: sukiyaki was called sukiyaki, tempura was tempura, and so on. Today, these Japanese names are commonly used and understood throughout Europe.

Authenticity in Amsterdam

My policy from the start was to serve authentic Japanese cuisine in the Netherlands. It's completely misleading and unimaginative to say that one cannot serve authentic Japanese cuisine outside of Japan. We can recreate Japanese flavors with local Dutch ingredients by using seasonings such as soy sauce and miso. If we were to use specially imported Japanese ingredients, then the Dutch couldn't recreate these flavors for themselves. So I always tried to use Dutch ingredients; for example, I made *nitsuke* (fish simmered in soy sauce-based sauce) with sole that could be sourced in the Netherlands, and I included local squid when serving sashimi.

The Dutch Meet Japanese Cuisine

When Yamazato opened in Amsterdam in the early seventies, the sashimi and sushi in particular were very poorly received. Of course fish is eaten in the Netherlands, but the Dutch were more familiar with herring, cod and sole. There was no custom of eating raw tuna, for example. The only dishes the Dutch really felt comfortable with were foods such as yakitori, tempura and sukiyaki—and even sukiyaki met with some resistance: the use of raw eggs put people off. Gradually, though, our teppanyaki restaurant saw increased visits by Dutch families.

In the beginning, *maguro* (tuna) was unobtainable in the Netherlands, so I had to fly it in from Spain. At first, the airline refused to transport it, saying the cargo hold would smell of fish. But we negotiated and they finally agreed to fly the tuna to Amsterdam. It was a great experience, and nowadays tuna is flown in regularly.

In introducing Japanese cuisine, I believe it is essential to use Japanese terms for food and ingredients, and so from the start I told our staff to refer to our ingredients and cuisine only by their Japanese names. For instance, daikon should be referred to as “daikon,” not white radish. My reasoning was that “radish” already existed in the Netherlands—and we had to distinguish between them, otherwise people would

The Element of Expertise

At first, only experienced Japanese chefs worked at Yamazato. But from around 1975, I thought that we needed to provide solid basic culinary training to young Japanese cuisine chefs to popularize kaiseki cuisine* in Europe.



Chef Oshima's books on kaiseki cuisine (left) and its recipes.



Nimono, simmered vegetables as served at Yamazato



Yamazato's *himeji saikyo negimaki*, grilled red mullet rolls marinated in *miso*



The chef's *zensai* (appetizers) served in autumn using seasonal ingredients.

So I negotiated with some culinary schools in Tokyo to hire new graduates to work at Yamazato for three-year terms. I wanted them to understand that they could create authentic Japanese cuisine outside of Japan. Although we serve to the Dutch, we make dishes that Japanese would regard as authentic. My hope was that the young chefs who learned at Yamazato might move on to different places throughout the world and introduce authentic Japanese cuisine to those in other countries.

Seasonal Essentials

At Yamazato, we changed our *kaiseki* menus on a monthly basis. Japan enjoys a variety of meat, fish and seasonal vegetables, but geographically speaking, the Netherlands is located farther to the north and it's more difficult to source local ingredients that represent the four seasons. I tried to use them as much as possible: for example, June is the season for white asparagus and herring, November for chestnuts.

In 2002, Yamazato received a Michelin star, and although *kaiseki* had become better known by that time, all

the books about *kaiseki* that were sold in Europe were English translations of Japanese books. I thought there should be a book about *kaiseki* in the local language, written by a chef. So, together with a photographer, we took photos of actual dishes that were served daily at Yamazato. I wrote the Japanese text and Professor Katarzyna Cwiertka of Leiden University translated it into both Dutch and English. My second book is a *kaiseki* recipe book.

Japanese World Cuisine

In 2009, a kitchen called the Taste of Okura was established in the shopping arcade of the hotel, which offers classes on making sushi, *kaiseki* cuisine, *teppanyaki* and French cuisine; I taught sushi and *kaiseki*.

As for Japanese cuisine, the new Japanese fusion that began to emerge in the mid-1990s, as exemplified by restaurants Nobu, Zuma and Roka, has spread around the world. These new dishes have gone far beyond the borders of narrowly defined Japanese cuisine, and while overturning the old-school convictions ("Authentic Japanese

cuisine must be prepared by an authentic Japanese chef!"), fusion dishes are emerging in French cuisine as well. In Europe today, Japanese cuisine is best known through Japanese fusion, sushi and *teppanyaki*.

I think that the emergence of Japanese fusion is a good thing, since it familiarizes people with Japanese food. However, amidst the fusion cuisine and the traditional favorites like *yakitori*, *sukiyaki*, sushi and *tempura*, I do want people to know about *kaiseki*. I want people to know what authentic Japanese cuisine really is, and that when they go to Yamazato, they can be assured that they will experience it.

Yamazato is committed to improving its cuisine and services so that diners in the Netherlands can enjoy *kaiseki* at its absolute best. My personal experience in introducing *kaiseki* cuisine to the Netherlands was invaluable, and I hope that I may continue to help promote Japanese culture through Japanese cuisine. ◆

* Traditional *kaiseki* is Japan's multi-course haute cuisine, whose varied and elegantly prepared dishes are served in a highly refined manner in a specific sequential order.

Hotel Okura Amsterdam: Yamazato and Sazanka



Yamazato (left), *Teppanyaki* Restaurant Sazanka (right)
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www.yamazato.nl/en
www.sazanka.nl/en/Home.html



Akira Oshima

Born 1943 in Tokyo. In 1962, Mr. Oshima began his career at the Hotel Okura Tokyo. After training at famous traditional Japanese restaurants Tsuruya and Shinkiraku, in 1971 Oshima was named sous chef of Yamazato restaurant at the Hotel Okura Amsterdam; from 1977 he held the position of Executive Chef at both Yamazato and Sazanka. In 2002, he received a coveted Michelin star for Yamazato. In 2006, he was awarded the Ridder Orde van Oranje Nassau (knighthood) from the Dutch Royal House. From 2010 to 2012, he served as Advisor & Honorary Executive Chef of both Japanese restaurants at the Hotel Okura Amsterdam. In 2012, he received the Minister's Award for Overseas Promotion of Japanese Food from the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for his achievements in promoting Japanese culture through Japanese cuisine.



WALNUT-SOY SAUCE MUFFINS

This muffin recipe is unique in its use of soy sauce, five-spice powder and grated ginger. The umami of the soy sauce blends together with these other two ingredients to create a rich savory taste that will especially appeal to the adult palate.

Makes 12 muffins 269 kcal Protein 3.7 g Fat 12.8 g (per muffin)



◆ Kibito

きび糖

- 240 g cake flour*
- 1/4 t five-spice powder
- 2 t baking powder
- 2 T + 1 t milk
- 2 1/2 t Kikkoman Soy Sauce
- 120 g (a little more than 1/2 C) butter, softened at room temperature
- 60 g (1/4 C + 1 t) granulated sugar
- 120 g (3/4 C + 2 T) kibito (Japanese light brown cane sugar)**
- 2 large eggs
- 1 large ginger knob (about 20 g / .7 oz.), peeled and grated***
- Walnut praline: See recipe below.

1 To make the muffins, preheat oven to 190°C (370°F) and grease muffin pans or cups.

2 Sift together flour, five-spice powder and baking powder, and set aside. In another small bowl, mix milk and soy sauce, and set aside.

3 Place butter in separate bowl and cream until it turns light and fluffy; add granulated sugar and kibito and mix well. Add the eggs one at a time and whisk until the mixture turns white.

4 Add 1/2 of the flour mixture and lightly mix with a spatula. Add grated ginger and fold in the soy sauce-milk mixture.

5 Stir in the remaining flour mixture and gently mix in the chopped praline. Spoon batter into the prepared muffin pans or cups and bake at 190°C (370°F) for 16 to 20 minutes, or until the muffin tops are browned and spring back when touched with a finger.

Walnut Praline

1 Bake 50 g (1.8 oz.) of roughly-chopped walnuts in 160°C (320°F) oven for 10 minutes.

2 Place 40 g (about 3 T) granulated sugar, 1/2 T water and 1/2 t Kikkoman Soy Sauce in a shallow pan over medium-low heat. When bubbles begin to appear around the edges, shake the pan slightly, but do not stir. When bubbles appear evenly throughout the pan, and a slight aroma of soy sauce rises, remove from heat, quickly add walnuts and 5 g (1 t) butter to the pan, then mix. Spread this mixture onto a baking sheet or a non-stick sheet to cool. When cooled, roughly chop up the praline.



Note: For accurate measurements, please weigh all ingredients.

* About 2 C of sifted all-purpose flour may be substituted.

** A scant 5/8 C light brown sugar may be substituted.

*** If fresh ginger is unavailable, a small amount of dried ginger powder may be substituted.

Recipe by Michiko Yamamoto



DORAYAKI



◆ Tsubu-an

Makes 8 206 kcal Protein 5.9 g Fat 2.1 g (per *dorayaki*)

- 120 g cake flour*
- 1 t baking soda
- 1 t water
- 2 large eggs
- 80 g (6 T + 1 t) granulated sugar
- 1/2 T Kikkoman Soy Sauce
- 1 T Kikkoman Manjo Mirin
- 400 g (14 oz.) *tsubu-an*, sweet chunky azuki bean paste**

1 Sift flour and set aside. Mix baking soda and water, set aside.

2 Beat eggs in a bowl and add the sugar. Whisk with an egg beater until the mixture is light and frothy. Add the baking soda and water mixture, the soy sauce and the mirin.

3 Next, add the flour and whisk in until all lumps are gone and the mixture is smooth. The batter should pour from a spoon in a smooth ribbon. If necessary add a little water. Cover the bowl of batter with plastic wrap and allow to stand for 30 minutes.

4 Heat a non-stick frying pan, then place it over low heat. Scoop 1 T dollops of the batter into the frying pan to make small 8 cm- (3 in.-) diameter circles. When the batter starts to bubble, flip with a spatula and lightly brown the other side. Use all the batter to make 16 small "pancakes."

5 When pancakes are made, place the well-browned, first-baked sides facing downwards. Scoop 50 g (about 3 T) of *tsubu-an* onto one pancake, then top with another pancake. Be sure to have the first-baked sides facing outward.



* A scant 1 C sifted all-purpose flour may be substituted.

** *Tsubu-an* may be substituted with other fillings, including custard cream, whipped cream, sour cream, jam or cheese.

Note: For accurate measurements, please weigh all ingredients.

1 C (U.S. cup) = approx. 240 ml; 1 T = 15 ml; 1 t = 5 ml

Recipe by Kikkoman Corporation



KFE Celebrates 15th Anniversary

Kikkoman Foods Europe B.V. (KFE), headquartered in Hoogezand-Sappemeer, the Netherlands, completed its first production run and shipment in 1997 and is Kikkoman's soy sauce production base in Europe. In October 2012, KFE commemorated its 15th anniversary, and celebrated by hosting a dinner in a private club in The Hague on October 11.

The 15th Anniversary Dinner

The party was attended by over 100 guests, including Their Excellencies Deputy Prime Minister of the Netherlands Maxime Verhagen and Japanese Ambassador to the Netherlands Takashi Koezuka. During the event, congratulatory telegrams from the prime ministers of the two countries were read. The Japanese Prime Minister sent a warm message commending Kikkoman's endeavors to introduce Japanese food culture overseas, as well as congratulating the company for its inroads into international markets. A message from the Dutch Prime Minister offered praise for KFE's role as a bridge between the two nations, and for its many important social contributions to the Netherlands.

The dinner menu was prepared by a famous Dutch chef, and featured several dishes that used Kikkoman products, including Sucreé (sweet soy sauce), a product well-received in Europe. French wine distributed by the Kikkoman Group was also served at the party. This event provided an excellent opportunity for guests to understand more about Kikkoman's global operations.

Kikkoman Chair Established at Leiden University

In commemoration of KFE's 15th anniversary and as part of Kikkoman's social contribution initiatives, Honorary CEO and Chairman Yuzaburo Mogi announced an endowment for the establishment of the Kikkoman Chair for the study of Asia-Europe intercultural dynamics at Leiden University.

Leiden University is the oldest university in the Netherlands, and offers a wide range of studies on Asian culture and Japan; it was the first university in the world to establish a Japanese Studies Department, and therefore has very strong ties to Japan. Kikkoman will provide a total of EU €250,000 over a period of five years to the Chair in order to support studies on human development, with a focus on health management and food safety. KFE has long conducted a broad array of cultural and technical programs and activities aimed at creating a bridge between Japan and the Netherlands. It is hoped that the launch of this new university Chair will contribute to even closer ties



Kikkoman Foods Europe B.V.



Professor P.F.C. van der Heijden, President of Leiden University (left) and Mr. Mogi

between the two countries.

Since its founding, Kikkoman has overseen responsible business activities that meet the confidence and expectations of its stakeholders, based on the principle that companies are public institutions in society. The many commendations received by Kikkoman from both Japan and the Netherlands on the occasion of KFE's 15th anniversary clearly reflect how successful these activities have been. The Kikkoman Group will continue to act as a corporate citizen and strive to evolve as a company of significance within the global community. ◆