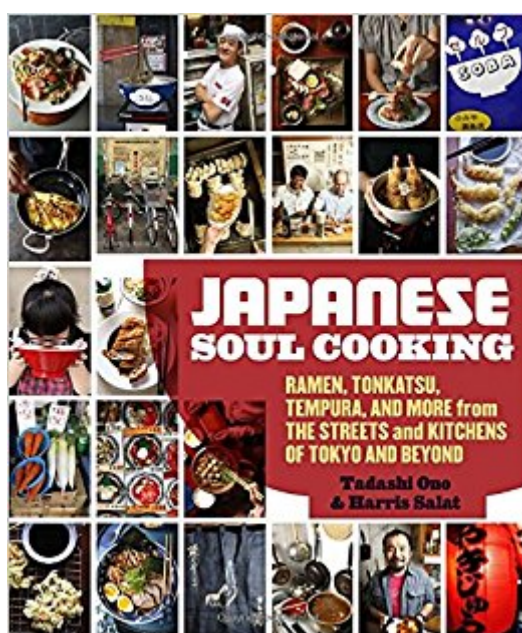


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Japanese Soul Cooking: Ramen, Tonkatsu, Tempura, And More From The Streets And Kitchens Of Tokyo And Beyond



Synopsis

A collection of more than 100 recipes that introduces Japanese comfort food to American home cooks, exploring new ingredients, techniques, and the surprising origins of popular dishes like gyoza and tempura. Move over, sushi. It's time for gyoza, curry, tonkatsu, and furai. These icons of Japanese comfort food cooking are the dishes you'll find in every kitchen and street corner hole-in-the-wall restaurant in Japan—the hearty, flavor-packed dishes that everyone in Japan, from school kids to grandmas, craves. In *Japanese Soul Cooking*, Tadashi Ono and Harris Salat introduce you to this irresistible, homey style of cooking. As you explore the range of exciting, satisfying fare, you may recognize some familiar favorites, including ramen, soba, udon, and tempura. Other, lesser known Japanese classics, such as wafu pasta (spaghetti with bold, fragrant toppings like miso meat sauce), tatsuta-age (fried chicken marinated in garlic, ginger, and other Japanese seasonings), and savory omelets with crabmeat and shiitake mushrooms will instantly become standards in your kitchen as well. With foolproof instructions and step-by-step photographs, you'll soon be knocking out chahan fried rice, mentaiko spaghetti, saikoro steak, and more for friends and family. Ono and Salat's fascinating exploration of the surprising origins and global influences behind popular dishes is accompanied by rich location photography that captures the energy and essence of this food in everyday Japanese life, bringing beloved Japanese comfort food to Western home cooks for the first time.

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“This is the book on Japanese cooking I have been waiting for without knowing it! Tadashi and Harris have compiled a wonderful collection of recipes that veers sharply from the mysterious and lofty world of sushi and kaiseki and lands smack dab in the home kitchen, telling a great story of foreign culinary traditions colliding with traditional Japanese technique along the way.”
•Andy Ricker, chef-owner of Pok Pok “Sushi? Bah! Japanese food is so much more than raw fish, and this book is a joyful (and useful!) exploration of the earthy, fatty, meaty, rib-sticking, lip-smacking fare—the noodles and curries and deep-fried delights—that millions of Japanese depend on every day. I get hungry just thinking about it.”
•Matt Gross, editor, BonAppetit.com “Tadashi Ono and Harris Salat bring to mouthwatering life a fascinating story: how Western influences opened up a nation’s taste buds and created a new Japanese cuisine of modern comfort food classics. Anyone obsessed with a steaming bowl of ramen, light-as-air tempura, or the perfect gyoza will find that there’s all that—and more—right here, just waiting to be cooked and devoured.”
•Joe Yonan, author of [Eat Your Vegetables](#) and food and travel editor of the [Washington Post](#)

Really liked this book for its atypical focus away from the more rarefied aspects of Japanese cuisines (eg - sushi, kaiseki, etc) and instead cataloging 'everyday' Japanese comfort cuisine, the dishes eaten by all strata of the populace from within the cozy confines of their homes to quick, no frills street eateries. If you've spent some time in Japan sampling such fare or have any shred of interest in better understanding the essence of real Japanese cuisine this book is certainly a fantastic starting guide for you. Things I really liked: +Comprehensive and well laid out catalog of Japanese comfort food categories ranging from Curry to Okonomiyaki and the little-known (outside of Japan) but essential aspects of 'Yoshoku' dishes. +Recipes are very well presented with an average difficulty level (ranging from 1-5) at about '2.' Techniques are well explained and the only thing that will really hold back the average home cook is access to certain ingredients and first hand tasting knowledge to serve as your reference basis. +Each of the 13 chapters is organized by specific food type. For example, Chapter 1 = 'Ramen.' Within each chapter is a nice scattering of anecdote and background information about the dishes. These elements were perhaps the most

interesting and entertaining portions of the book.+Whether or not you actually cook any of the recipes, merely by skimming through the book you'll gain a solid understanding of everyday Japanese meals and if you ever make it out there for a visit will have solid knowledge of what various restaurants serve and what people actually eat at home.+Layouts and photographs are well done. Each page is very attractively designed.Could've been better:+While I enjoyed the quality of the photographs my chief complaint is that the book needs more. Approximately 30% of each recipe has an accompanying photograph - too low in my opinion.

I was a bit intimidated by his first book "Japanese Hot Pots", and less so by his second book "The Japanese Grill", but I did finally get a grip on both of them--and I enjoy using both those cookbooks. So, of course, this one drew my attention. The fact that I find this new "Soul Cooking" personable and approachable, may be because I have become comfortable with many Japanese terms and ingredients because I use his first two books frequently. But I really think it is because Tadashi Ono is a fun guy--and his personality comes shining through in this third book. I think he's finally come into his "own": His own way of teaching, writing and doing.I think he's always been aware of how the Western world influenced Japanese cuisine and culture , from the mid 1800's when foreigners began arriving in Japan, to during and after World War II. But I also think he had to get real comfortable with his place in the scheme of things to write about it. You know, you can't really talk about "soul" and "comfort" until you have a firm handle on what surrounds it. Well, Tadashi has ID'd it beautifully in this book: The book itself is fun and somewhat of a history lesson; the recipes are do-able and they appeal to a "Western" taste, (after all, the dishes were influenced by Western tastes); you can find the ingredients (fairly easily, or with internet help), and the recipes are not complicated.In many cases, you can take short-cuts and buy the condiments needed to pull the dish together, or you can take the advice of Tadashi and make your own with the recipes he has provided. I'm not saying that I will use all the chapters in this book, because I don't do much tempura or other fried foods--my kitchen exhaust system is just not set up for it. But there is some much more in this book that I highly recommend it, both as a great compilation of recipes and as a significant and fascinating history lesson, complete with great pictures.Each chapter focuses on a different dish. You learn how it began (usually as a restaurant offering), then how it grew to become popular in home kitchens. Tadashi takes apart each dish (like tempura, ramen, curry, gyoza, etc.), explains how it came to be, then helps you create it from scratch. He provides all kinds of variations. If you follow through each chapter carefully, by the end of the chapter, you should have a firm handle on how to make it--that is how well Tadashi teaches. As you proceed through the chapters,

you will also find recipes for the sauces and condiments necessary to complete the dish. YOU CAN STOP READING HERE, as I think I've conveyed the fact that this book warrants a five-star rating, but I include more info below in case you are still undecided about the book: To help you with some possibly unfamiliar terms: Most of us know ramen, curry, tempura, soba and udon, and I won't describe those chapters further. But let me try to describe some of the other chapters:--Gyoza are dumplings and you will learn to make several varieties and to cook them by in an easy frying and steaming process. In this chapter you will also find a miso dipping sauce and rayu, a flavored chili oil. You will learn how to freeze them and use them in soup.--The curry chapter is loaded with recipes and contains one called "Battleship Curry" that was served to servicemen on board ship.--Tonkatsu is a deep-fried panko crusted cutlet or ground meat patty.--Furai and Korokke: Furai is deep-fried panko seafood and veggies, and Korokke is a deep-fried "croquette" of chopped up meat, seafood or veggies. This chapter also contains all the sauces to go with these fried foods.--Kara-age is a deep-fry technique imported from China. It differs from tempura in that the food is dredged in flour or potato starch, not the light batter of tempura.--Okonomiyaki: Now we're talkin'! These are pancakes, and I'm really happy to have this chapter firmly in hand and under control and in my repertoire. These pancakes are both light-weight (in their "base" of flour/dashi/cabbage, etc.) and heavy-weight in all the toppings. They are accomplished on a griddle or in a heavy fry pan. (They are a lot of fun!) Yakisoba are included in this chapter. They have a base of ramen noodles.--Donburi: Tadashi calls donburi the "ultimate dish for busy people". It is a one-bowl dish of almost any kind of ingredient heaped on a big bowl of rice and served with miso soup and pickles. A trip through this chapter will leave your mind churning with possibilities.--Itame and Chahan: Itame means stir-fried or sauteed. Chahan is fried rice, Japanese-style.--Yoshoku is Western-style cooking and the recipes in this chapter are Japanese takes on European and American dishes. You will find gratins, potato and macaroni salad, omelets, steak, hamburger, spaghetti and other pasta. So, you can see there are plenty of chapters to spur your imagination. And it is truly interesting to see the Western influence. And one more tidbit of information: It may not matter to you, but it did to me: Joe Yonan, one of my favorite cookbook authors and the food and travel editor of Washington Post recommends this book on its back cover.

This book is superb. Great for the home cook and not loaded with complex time consuming processes. I have the Simply Ramen book which is nice, but the ramen soup base recipes are a bit laborious. I have made them and have the time to do so, but think the Soul Food approach is about as good. I am not a sushi fan so this book is great as it covers street food which I prefer.

I lived in Japan when I was young, back in the 1980s. When I came home I was disappointed with the lack of everyday, common Japanese food. It was all sushi, which is fine, but I missed the yakisoba and okonomiyaki I remember eating at such places as supermarkets in Japan. I also LOVE gyoza. This is a very nicely constructed book. Photos throughout to help, and many recipes that I love.

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