

Japanese food to get UNESCO status

27th October, 2013



The United Nations is going to put traditional Japanese food on its list of important world cuisines. It will be the fifth time for UNESCO to give a country's or region's food its

cultural heritage status. French, Mediterranean, Mexican and Turkish food are already on the list. Traditional Japanese food is called 'Washoku'. It is very famous for its variety. It ranges from sushi (raw fish on rice) to ramen noodles, tempura and *sukiyaki*. Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs said it wants to put all of its food on the list, not just one or two famous dishes. The agency said Japanese food is special because of its artistic presentation. It also uses unique ingredients. Many dishes are important because they celebrate the four seasons.

'Washoku' is very healthy and has a good balance of minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates and protein. It is one of the reasons why Japanese people live for so long. It also helps to keep obesity levels low. The cuisine is also important as different meals throughout the year help to bring families and communities together. Food plays an important role in many ceremonies that mark seasonal traditions. The menu for New Year's celebrations, rice-planting events and harvest festivals are all very different. Japan's government said food helps Japanese people keep a strong sense of culture. It also said 'Washoku' is closely "associated with an essential spirit of respect for nature."

Sources: *Japan Times* / *Japan News* / *Wall Street Journal*

Writing

Compare and contrast the cuisine of your country to another country's food.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

United Nations / world cuisines / heritage / variety / sushi / artistic / four seasons / healthy / balance / carbohydrates / obesity / communities / traditions / respect

True / False

- The U.N. will give modern Japanese food a special prize. T / F
- Five other cuisines are already on the UNESCO list. T / F
- Japan doesn't want only sushi and *sukiyaki* to be on the U.N. list. T / F
- A cultural agency said Japanese food is presented in an artistic way. T / F
- The Japanese diet is well balanced and good for a long life. T / F
- Japanese cuisine helps keep communities apart. T / F
- Rice-planting food and New Year's food are the same in Japan. T / F
- 'Washoku' is connected with a respect for nature. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. important | a. meals |
| 2. cuisine | b. linked |
| 3. heritage | c. special |
| 4. dishes | d. all around |
| 5. unique | e. significant |
| 6. healthy | f. necessary |
| 7. throughout | g. good for you |
| 8. role | h. cooking |
| 9. associated | i. part |
| 10. essential | j. tradition |

Discussion – Student A

- Should everyone eat Japanese food to live longer and be slimmer?
- What meals bring families and communities together in your culture?
- What seasonal food do you love in your country?
- What's your favourite restaurant (and why)?
- How proud are you of your country's cuisine?
- What special food do you eat at the New Year?
- Would you like to be able to cook / prepare Japanese food?
- What questions would you like to ask a Japanese food expert?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. its list of important | a. live for so long |
| 2. cultural heritage | b. of minerals |
| 3. raw | c. celebrate the four seasons |
| 4. not just one or | d. communities together |
| 5. Many dishes are important because they | e. status |
| 6. a good balance | f. strong sense of culture |
| 7. reasons why Japanese people | g. world cuisines |
| 8. help to bring families and | h. for nature |
| 9. helps Japanese people keep a | i. fish on rice |
| 10. an essential spirit of respect | j. two famous dishes |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of Japanese food?
- What famous Japanese dishes do you know?
- Should Japanese food be on UNESCO's list?
- What other world cuisine should be on UNESCO's list?
- What do you think of raw fish and raw meat?
- How important is it to present food artistically?
- Is food that is artistic tastier?
- Which is better, sushi or noodles?

Spelling

- litritnoada Japanese food
- cultural rthaegie status
- It is very famous for its tveriya
- special because of its iicstrta presentation
- It also uses neiquu ingredients
- they tarecele the four seasons
- and has a good balance of risnlmae, vitamins...
- helps to keep tbiyeos levels low
- The uneicsi is also important
- Food plays an important role in many ionserceem
- rice-planting events and harvest estislvfa
- an essential spirit of strpeec for nature

Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. j	4. a	5. c
6. g	7. d	8. i	9. b	10. f

Role Play

Role A – Japanese

You think Japanese food is the best in the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their cuisines. Also, tell the others that French cuisine is the worst tasting food in the world (and why).

Role B – American

You think American food is the best in the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their cuisines. Also, tell the others that Indian food is the worst tasting food in the world (and why).

Role C – Indian

You think Indian food is the best in the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their cuisines. Also, tell the others that Japanese food is the worst tasting food in the world (and why).

Role D – French

You think French cuisine is the best in the world. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their cuisines. Also, tell the others that American food is the worst tasting food in the world (and why).

Speaking – The tastiest food

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the tastiest cuisine at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| • Japanese | • Indian |
| • French | • Chinese |
| • American | • Italian |
| • Mexican | • Thai |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.