

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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Report Highlights:

Not cup noodle but cup curry rice and other food trends of Japan are found here.

Japan Food Trends (JFT) communicates Japanese food and lifestyle trends that may help U.S. exporters to generate product and marketing ideas.

General Information:

Nissin now offering microwaveable curry rice in a cup

Japan Today. Sep. 23, 2013

<http://www.japantoday.com/category/food/view/nissin-now-offering-microwavable-curry-rice-in-a-cup>

Nissin Foods, well known for their ever popular Cup Noodle line, has released the new Cup Curry Rice. Though microwaveable curry rice dishes have been available for years, Cup Curry Rice is the first one that does not require the rice and curry to be prepared separately. Just add water and microwave to enjoy delicious beef curry rice. Like their other products, Cup Noodle and Cup Noodle Rice, Cup Curry Rice is perfect for people who are too busy to cook a full meal. Cup Curry Rice is available in mild, regular, and spicy flavors.



Image:
<http://www.japantoday.com/images/size/x/2013/09/cupcurry.png>

Would you drink hot ginger ale from a can? Coca Cola thinks you will

Japan Times. Sep. 8, 2013

<http://www.japantoday.com/category/food/view/would-you-drink-hot-ginger-ale-from-a-can-coca-cola-thinks-you-will>

Seasonal food products are incredibly popular in Japan. Coca Cola has announced a Hot Ginger Ale for Autumn. A new carbonation technology prevents the soda from losing its flavor during the heating process. In addition, Coca Cola has adjusted the recipe to emphasize the ginger and spice flavors. Customers looking for a hot carbonated treat will be able to pick this up starting October, 21st for 120 yen a can.



Image:
<http://www.japantoday.com/images/size/x/2013/09/hot-ginger-ale.jpg>

Anyone for matcha beer?

Japan Today. Aug. 25, 2013

<http://www.japantoday.com/category/food/view/anyone-for-matcha-beer>

There always seems to be a market - albeit sometimes temporary one - for fad beer. Japan is no different. Just months after a tomato flavor beer hit the market came the new matcha flavored beer. Matcha is the slightly bitter powdered green tea mix that is found all over Japan. Bottles of Matcha Beer have been popping up in bars all over Japan, and have become especially popular in Kyoto, especially among women. Fans of the smooth green colored beer claim that the different bitter flavors between matcha and beer complement each other well. Regardless of its taste, it sure looks delicious.



Image:
<http://www.japantoday.com/images/size/x/2013/08/matcha4.jpg>

All-you-can-eat cookies!!! Aunt Stella's cookie buffet opens in Ikebukuro Station

Rocket News 24. Sep. 27, 2013

<http://en.rocketnews24.com/2013/09/27/all-you-can-eat-cookies-aunt-stellas-cookie-buffet-opens-in-ikebukuro-station/>

In what is possibly the best news all year for Tokyo residents, Aunt Stella's cookie buffet has opened up at Ikebukuro Station. That's right, a cookie buffet. Pastries and desserts are very popular in Japan, but this is an all-you-can-eat buffet! As of opening day Aunt Stella's menu already had 100 varieties of cookies, including 15 season flavors available for Autumn. For 880 yen, cookie connoisseurs can spend 60 minutes sampling the large variety of cookies available along with a beverage. Aunt Stella's also offers take out and smaller dessert sets for those who don't



Image: http://sociorocketnewsen.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/stella_00.jpg?w=580&h=850

have the time for an hour long cookie binge.

New Ichinabeya “My Nabe Style” offers hot pot meals for one

Japan Trends. Sep. 24, 2013

<http://www.japantrends.com/ichinabeya-my-nabe-style-nabe-restaurant-single-diner-meals-for-one/>

Restaurants catering to solo diners are a growing trend in Tokyo. Fast-food Gyudon (Beef and rice bowl) favorite Yoshinoya has decided to enter the solo dining market with Ichinabeya (My Nabe Style). Nabe is a traditional Japanese hot pot dish, especially popular during the colder autumn and winter months. Like other solo eateries, Ichinabeya provides young to middle aged workers a place to grab a fast and affordable lunch or dinner. The seating arrangements are placed in a way to make solo diners feel comfortable to be eating by themselves. Yoshinoya is hoping that Ichinabeya will be able to expand to 10 restaurants throughout Japan within 3 years.



Image: <http://www.japantrends.com/japan-trends/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/ichinabeya-nabe->

Could A Cat Café Open Up in Boston?

Boston Magazine. Sep. 26, 2013

<http://www.bostonmagazine.com/news/blog/2013/09/26/cat-cafe-boston-miaou/>

Cat cafes have seen success in Japan. Many landlords in Japan do not allow cats in their apartments. Cat cafes cater to people who need to have some play time with some cuddly felines. The trend might be catching on in the United States. Recent reports of a young entrepreneur in Boston trying to open a cat café have been all over social networking sites for the past few weeks. There are some legal road blocks, as the Boston Board of Health has regulations against allowing animals into eateries. If successful, however, Miaou Boston will be the first cat café to bring the popular trend from Japan to the United States.

Miaou
a boston eatery

Image:

Summary:

In this edition of Japan Food Trends, we took a look at the latest trends and products in the food and beverage industry. First we took a look at instant noodle heavy weight Nissin Foods' entry into the microwaveable curry rice field with Cup Curry Rice, complete with their "just add water and microwave" style that brought them the popularity they now enjoy. We then looked at one of the more interesting entrants into the Fall seasonal market, Hot Ginger Ale from Coca Cola. Just in time for the coming chilly months. The last product we looked at was a new fusion beer called Matcha Beer. Becoming more widely stocked in Japanese bars, especially Kyoto, the blend of the two bitter ingredients is said by fans to be a perfect combination.

Next, we shifted gears to look at a few trends in new eateries, in both Japan and the United States. The first was the mouth watering Aunt Stella's cookie buffet newly opened at Ikebukoro station, adding an indulgent twist to the old dessert pastry shop. The second was Yoshinoya's entry into the solo dining market with Ichinabeya, a nabe restaurant designed especially for the comfort of people eating alone. And finally, we went over the Pacific and across the continental United States to take a look at a Japanese trend taking shape in Boston with Miao Boston, if successful becoming America's first cat café.