Home-Cooked Food in Japan and America
By Moeko Otsuchi

Japanese home-cooked food sometimes features taros and fried pork flavored with salad, pickles, Japanese radishes, carrots, rice, and miso soup.

When you think about Japanese food, what food comes to mind? Maybe sushi, ramen, or miso soup. However, Japanese people rarely eat sushi every day; we make sushi on special occasions. Japanese home-cooked food includes rice, just like other Asian countries, miso soup, a main dish, and two or three side dishes.

In Japan, the best menu has at least three colors of vegetables. We put food in the right dish or bowl. We consider the color of food and dishes to show contrast. If the food is eaten with sauce, the dishes must be small, deep bowls. So, the Japanese cupboard has many shapes and colors of dishes.

After moving to Chicago, I had some opportunities to eat dinner with American families. They prepared a lot of food, and it was very delicious. I thought some of the food was dry and some was cooked with too much sauce. Also, Americans serve food on one plate. I think it is reasonable to eat and easy to clean dishes, but honestly, I was looking for more variety. While Japanese people love sushi and ramen, we usually try to eat a balanced menu at home. Would you like to try real Japanese home-cooked food?
Travel and Culture: From Spain and Turkey— to Coffee

“I am proud to share my country, Spain, with you. In Granada, flamenco music plays a huge role in the town’s culture. The Alhambra (see photo above) is an important architectural wonder. Iberico ham is a tasty tradition, and many special dishes, served with wine, reflect the cultural diversity of Granada, Spain,” says BIR student Cristina Fernandez.

“Belly dancing is a phenomenon in Turkey,” says Ersin Akin, a BIR student writer. “Every action has a story. This dancing is indispensable for all kinds of events—parties, anniversaries, and weddings. People see the dancers wearing veils, and the dancers may remove them and use them as part of the dance. This dance is based on folkloric dances from the Middle East. Some dances combine steps and moves from Turkey, India, Africa, and America.”

How Many Cups of Coffee Do You Drink?

“I was curious to know about coffee habits, so I distributed a survey to BIR staff and students,” says Moeko Otsuchi. “I collected 25 responses. Seventy-six percent of respondents like coffee. ‘It makes me awake in the morning!’ they say. Most people drink one or two cups a day, but two people drink five to seven cups a day. It helps us wake up and relax with the pleasant aroma. Some people buy coffee and make it at home. I am a coffee person and a tea person, so I am going to survey tea drinking next time.”

Opinions expressed are those of the writers, not BIR Training Center.
New Accelerated Language Program

By Moeko Otsuchi and Yi Pei Chien

BIR’s new Accelerated English Language Program for international students is a blended package of ESL courses in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that enhance language abilities. “The program features extended classes and tutoring without while keeping tuition rates affordable,” says Tigran Muradyan, BIR’s international marketing manager.

The program is approximately 25 hours per week. It is different from existing classes that feature each term only one skill, such as reading. In addition to classwork, students also have the option of attending several hours of one-on-one assistance from a tutor. “If you have passion to study English quickly, this program will dramatically help you,” he says. Depending on student interest and needs, flexible schedules are available. In addition, “Covering more material each day, the program will build student confidence and make language learning more affordable,” he says.

For more information, BIR students should contact their student relations specialists.

ESL student enrollment is growing at BIR Training Center campuses.

Issues’ Roundup: Student Dreams and More Ideas

“I prefer to work after finishing my bachelor’s degree. I believe experiences are important. If I start to work, I will care for myself and have more responsibility. I think it is best to work and to find my dream and destination.” —Pimmada Sriladaamornrut

“Saudi Arabia is famous because it has oil. Saudi society and social networking with family are important. Popular sports are soccer and camel and horse racing. These traditional sports show the country’s culture.” —Nisrin Alsaiari

“Amazon is better than competitor sites because it offers cheaper items, and you can find so much more variety.” —Ersin Akin
BIR Students Find Career Path:  
New Stream Workshops Feature  
Computerized Manufacturing and Robotics

By Yi Pei Chien

In the 21st century, computer-aided manufacturing is an integral part of the manufacturing process. BIR Training Center is offering three stream workshops in this field: Recreational 3D Printing (Loop Campus), Introduction to Robotics and Automation, and Introduction to Computerized Manufacturing (Devon Campus).

Instructor Kelly Quinn says that these workshops “accelerate students to gain some exposure to technical vocabulary and develop some basic technical skills. They also boost technical tools and processes in the computerized manufacturing industry. So, students will know key concepts and vocabulary used in the field.”

Quinn says, “Most of my students are very interested in technology, and they really appreciate the opportunity to study some topics that are more varied than some of their other courses.”

Website Review:  www.ufc.com

“This website, www.ufc.com, features fighting as a sport. It is the official website of the Ultimate Fighting Championship, with interesting visuals on the front page to catch the viewer’s eye. The design is consistent, clean, and easy to read. There are good graphics that are fast-loading, and the colors of the images go together nicely. I did not find any typos or broken links, just well-written information. Overall, this is a good site with great design and excellent content.”

—Hamed Ansari