

# Cook the meal yourself when dining out

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 Yucateca - assorted seafood, including shrimp, white fish, scallops and crab, and vegetables in broth.  
 An essential ingredient with each dish is raw egg, beaten into a froth and used for dipping each bite of food. The raw egg cools the freshly cooked food, making it edible immediately after removing it from the cooking pot.  
 No other seasoning is offered or needed.

Nabemono is a popular way of casual dining in the Orient, according to Shigeru Yamada, owner of Akasaka Yamada, who came to the United States in 1979, managed the Kyoto Japanese Steak House in Detroit, Dearborn and Troy before launching his restaurant last June.

"JAPANESE PEOPLE especially like nabemono during winter time on tatami (straw mats)," Yamada said. His restaurant has three tatami

rooms - enclosed areas featuring privacy and dining on low tables while seated on floor mats. Tatami rooms must be reserved far in advance due to popular demand.  
 Suki Lee places a gas burner in the middle of the table, turns the jet to high and begins heating a trace of oil in the heavy, metal pan. She momentarily disappears, returning with an enormous platter of sukiyaki - raw food arranged into an elaborate floral design.

This medallion of ruffled beef serve as the outline of the flower, encasing a center filled with spigs of chrysanthemum greens that taste surprisingly like spinach) and geometrically arranged carrots, scallions and burdock (a large-leaved plant), sliced thin. There are also black mushrooms and starch noodles that cook transparent.

Using chopsticks, Lee deftly demonstrates nabemono by placing pieces of raw food into the hot pot of

simmering sukiyaki sauce. The food cooks quickly. Lee reserves 1 to 2 individual eating bowls where diners attack it with chopsticks, first dipping each bite into whipped egg and then eating it.  
 And so it goes, amid oohs, aahs and general merriment, until the last morsel is consumed, a messy feast certain to satisfy the chef-diner.

AT CLAMDIGGERS, hot rock cuisine was introduced to area diners last December. "It's the aroma that sells it. That, and seeing it done," Jim McIntyre, who manages Clam-diggers, said of the hot rock sensation. In recent months, interest in and devotion to the cooking method has increased enough so that "people call to reserve their rocks" on weekend nights, according to McIntyre. The hot rock has been enough for 40 diners at one time. Each platter may be reheated for reuse through-

out the evening.  
 The rock, a five-pound slab of polished granite, measures six-by-six inches and is one and one-half inches thick. Each rock requires an initial heating time of several hours. Once served, it retains a 500-degree cooking temperature for about half an hour.

Wearing a black bow tie, waitress Donna Kondrat demonstrates hot rock technique with a flair, enhancing the results.

"You cook it yourself, as much as you want, as long as you want. And then I clean up the mess," she says, applying a dollop of liquid casino butter seasoned with garlic to the granite. The butter sizzles but, curiously, there is no splatter. Nor is there undue heat from the rock.

The rocks are served in specially designed chopsticks with geometric edges, around which food and sauces are artfully arranged. Each platter equates an individualized setup for

cooking and dining.

"ACTUALLY, IT'S thousands of years old," said Terry Moritz, who with his wife Ingrid founded the modernized version of hot rock cooking named New Age, which is now used at Clam-diggers. New Age was started after the couple brainstormed the hot rock idea seven years ago in their native Germany.

"What's new about it is this is healthy and clean," Moritz added, in a phone conversation from California. New Age has FDA (Federal Drug Administration) approval.  
 McIntyre said New Age is endorsed by Weight Watchers because food prepared without casino butter or other cooking oil is low in calories.  
 More important, "Much less food is going back to the kitchen," he said, because diners who are cooking their own food are able to prepare it exactly as they wish.

The preferred entree is a medley of Caribbean lobster, gulf shrimp and tenderloin of beef, served with an assortment of vegetables and fruits, including yellow and green squash, pea pods, pineapple, and carambola - a golden star-shaped citrus fruit that originally hails from China. A fragrant teriyaki-ginger-glass and a snappy red-bell-pepper cream sauce accompany the meal that costs \$22.50 per person.

The menu has been perfected by chef Craig Common who, after stumbling onto hot rock cooking in California, experimented by preparing such delicacies as pheasant and duck hot rock style and then introducing the technique to Clam-diggers.

Like nabemono, hot rock cookery is messy. But as Kondrat said, the best part is she cleans up.

Nabemono cuisine is also available at the Kyoto Japanese Steak House and Kyoto Sushi in Troy, Dearborn and Detroit.

# Sukiyaki: Japanese meal is cooked in single pot

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 shallow casserole or skillet set over an alcohol burner, charcoal-burning hibachi, or gas table burner does almost as well.

Set the heating unit and its cooking pot in the center of the dining table, and pre-heat, or bring the specified liquid to a boil. Adjust the heat so that the liquid simmers throughout the cooking.

Provide each diner with a plate, a small dish of dipping sauce (where applicable) and chopsticks or a long-handled fork with heatproof handle (such as a fondue fork). Traditionally, each

diner selects his own food from the platter of ingredients and cooks it himself in the simmering cooking liquid.

### SUKIYAKI

Beef and Vegetables Simmered in Soy Sauce and Sake  
 To serve 4  
 1 pound boneless lean beef, pre-cut into 1/2 inch strips  
 8-ounce can shirataki (long no like threads), drained  
 1 whole canned tenenoko (bamboo shoot)  
 1 1/2-inch-long strip of beef fat, folded into a square packet  
 6 scallions, including 3 inches of the

stem, cut into 1/2 inch pieces  
 1 medium-sized yellow onion, peeled and sliced 1/4 inch thick  
 4-6 small white mushrooms, cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices  
 2 carrots, cut into soybean curd, fresh, canned or instant, cut into 1-inch cubes  
 2 ounces Chinese chrysanthemum leaves, watercress or Chinese cabbage

### Sauce

1/4-cup Japanese all-purpose soy sauce  
 3-6 tablespoons sugar  
 1/4-cup sake (rice wine)

Prepare Ahead: 1. Place the beef in your freezer for approximately 30 minutes, or only long enough to stiffen it slightly for easier slicing. Then, using a sharp knife, cut the beef against the grain into slices 1/4 inch thick, and cut the slices in half crosswise.

2. Bring one cup of water to a boil and drop in the shirataki; return to the boil. Drain and cut the noodles into thirds.

3. Scrape the bamboo shoot at the base, cut it in half lengthwise, and slice it thin crosswise. Run cold running water over the slices and drain.  
 4. Arrange the meat, shirataki and vegetables attractively in separate

rows on a large platter.

To cook and serve: If you are using an electric skillet, preheat to 425 degrees. If not, substitute a 10-12-inch skillet set over a table burner and preheat for several minutes.

Hold the folded strip of fat with chopsticks or tongs and rub it over the bottom of the hot skillet. Add 6-8 slices of meat to the skillet, pour in 1/2 cup of soy sauce, and sprinkle the meat with three tablespoons of sugar.

Cook for a minute, stir, and turn the meat over. Push the meat to one side of the skillet. Add approximately 1/4 cup of the scallions, onion, mushrooms, tofu, shirataki, greens and

bamboo shoot in more or less equal amounts, sprinkle them with 1/4 cup sake and cook for an additional four to five minutes.

With chopsticks or long-handled forks (such as fondue forks), transfer the contents of the pan to individual plates and serve.

Continue cooking the remaining sukiyaki batch by batch as described above, checking the temperature of the pan from time to time. If it seems too hot and the food begins to stick or burn, lower the heat or cool the pan more quickly by adding 2 cups of cold water to the sauce.

# Fanciest desserts come easy to baker, to shopper

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 the facility where she worked was closed. A senior specification analyst, Davis had been employed by GM for 19 years.

"It was just time to change careers, and I have always liked to bake," said Davis, who is married and the mother of four grown children.

"This is something I've wanted to do, and it's fun," she said.  
 Davis, who is of Scottish extraction, chose several of her most special recipes. Many, such as her smooth and buttery Scottish shortbread, had been in her family for many years. Others were favorite recipes clipped from magazines.

"My grandma and her sister used to cook from scratch," Davis said. "I just capitalized on it."

## Got a recipe to contribute?

Readers' recipes will be featured in a cookbook to be published by the Observer & Eccentric. If you've got a recipe to contribute, send it to: Taste Cookbook, the Observer & Eccentric, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

Be sure to include your name, address and phone number.  
 Recipes will be in such categories as appetizers and hors d'oeuvres, soups, salads, main dishes, vegetables, breads and rolls, and desserts.

Pringle's Pastries is in a turn-of-the-century Victorian house, so typical of the Old Village section of Plymouth, several blocks east of the downtown area. The building is blue and white and sports a sign with a red and white bell. It is the Pringle clan identification, according to genealogical studies from Scotland.

Davis said she chose to settle her business in Plymouth because the residents are so enthusiastic.  
 "It's a community that is really interested in supporting the businesses in town," Davis said. "I opened in November and already have some wonderful, loyal customers."

BEFORE OPENING, Davis spent a month perfecting her recipes, giving samples to "anybody who was around, including the workmen" researching the building.

Davis is admittedly fussy. She uses pure flavorings and butter, not margarine.  
 "I can tell the difference," she said.

Frostings are made from scratch and cooked. Only fresh lemon juice is used in Davis' tarts. She does most of the baking herself, and only in quantities which she can sell within a day or so.

"I want to maintain quality," Davis said. "I make my cookies every day, even if I only bake up six or seven."  
 Although Davis hates to turn away

business, she won't be rushed into turning out less than outstanding baked goods.

"Today's market is ready for quality," Davis said.

Tart cake often is made with fine, dry bread crumbs rather than flour. These cakes, which come in many varieties, are rich in eggs and brimming with nuts.

Davis' torte cakes come in chocolate, walnut, pecan and walnut graham flavors, frosted with mocha icing or buttercream. The walnut graham torte pairs a graham cracker cake with finely ground walnuts, fresh whipped cream and a brown sugar topping.

Also available are a Kablusa milk chocolate cheesecake and Grand Mariner cheesecake, with white chocolate filling and a mandarin nut crust. The chocolate mousse pie offers a chocolate cookie crumb crust with chocolate mousse, whipped cream and chocolate ornaments.

THE CAKES, which serve several people, range in price from around \$9 to around \$25 each. Some choices have smaller, less costly versions. Cakes also are available by the slice.  
 "I make a lot of different things that aren't on the menu," Davis said. "People come in on Saturday morning, and they find out what I have."  
 When Davis received a special request for a grasshopper pie she con-

sulted with her mother, retired and living in Florida.

Davis creates bite-sized tarts filled with cream cheese, cherries and tiny chocolate chips. Her black bottom cupcake - dense, deep chocolate surrounding a dollop of cream cheese - is a favorite recipe from a Bon Appetit magazine.

One of the most popular cookies is a walnut cheesecake thumbprint with raspberry filling.

"We also make oatmeal and chocolate chip cookies," Davis said. "That's what the men want. They don't want the fancy cookies."

Dainty bite-sized desserts such as filo baskets - filo dough nestled with cream cheese - are time-consuming. Davis is willing to provide the elegant, tasty miniatures that many cooks would like to serve.

Many of the bite-sized tarts are priced at 75 cents each, reflecting the labor involved.

"Yes, they are very fussy," Davis said. "The filo dough is even thinner than a piece of paper."  
 DAVIS IS supplying fancy desserts to one local hotel-restaurant, and she hopes to expand her wholesale business.

Pringle's Pastries of Old Vil-

lage is at 795 N. Mill, Plymouth. Tuesdays-Saturdays Phone: 452-4220. Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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## cooking calendar

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 Lee Bailey, author of Lee Bailey's "Soup Meals," will make a personal appearance from 2-3 p.m. Saturday, April 8, at Saks Fifth Avenue at Somerset Mall in Troy. There will be tastings of three different soups from his recipe collection, prepared by Chris Angeliante of the Appetizer restaurant.

• **MEAT, POULTRY**  
 To hear the latest food safety information, call the United States Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline: 1-800-535-4555. Professional home economists answer questions about proper handling of meat and poultry, how to tell if it is safe to eat and how to better understand meat and poultry labels.

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