

Bentou: box/bag meal, occasionally seen tied with hankerchiefs

(O)cha: tea, always served hot and in a variety of colors

Mochi: rice cakes, usually eaten during New Years. (By the way, the Japanese and Chinese believe that there's a rabbit pounding mochi on the moon--does this remind you of anything? :)

(O)nigiri: triangle-shaped rice that may contain a variety of things on the inside, such as red bean paste, and occasionally is wrapped with nori. This is usually the type of food translated as "sandwiches" on Pokemon.

winces **Nori:** dried seaweed, pressed in sheets. Sold as a snack, it comes lightly salted and cut into little packets.

Odango: meat-ball shaped dumplings, usually served 4 or 5 at a time on a stick. (Hence why Usagi is called **odango atama**--"dumpling head". :)

Okonomyaki: Translating roughly to "cooked as you like it", it's the Japanese version of an omlette/pancake/pizza. It can be made in a variety of ways (hence its name), including with vegetables, meat, or seafood. Some restaurants serve "make your own okonomiyaki", where you're given the ingredients and a set of small spatulas to cook over a heated metal plates.

Ramen: Chinese noodles with all sorts of stuff in it, including fish cake. Very popular in Japan, it's considered "fast food", although it can be found both freshly prepared as well as in instant noodle packets.

Sake: rice wine, usually served warmed. It's not very alcoholic, but since it's ingested at about body temperature, the intoxicating effect is considerable.

Soba: buckwheat noodles, served cold. Usually green (from the tea leaves). But there is also a hot version of soba (called "somen") that uses light brown noodles (the color is similiar to khaki)

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Sushi: hand-held rice, generally comes in two versions. The ones you might be able to buy in your local supermarket are probably of the roll variety in which seasoned rice, meat (generally seafood), and vegetables are wrapped in **nori**. The kind you might eat at a Japanese (or possibly Chinese) restaurant is of the second variety, some sort of fish meat (generally raw) on a square of seasoned rice. Both kinds are accompanied by a dallop of **wasabi** and thin slices of ginger.

Tempura: a variety of vegetables dipped in sweetened dough and deep fried.

Tenshin amaguri: chestnuts roasted by frying it in a large pan with sand at the bottom (very, very good, according to a friend who went to Japan).

Wasabi: Japanese mustard, although it tastes more like strong horseradish sauce. Eaten with sushi, especially ones made of raw fish. Definitely not

for the weak of tongue, since it packs a double punch: the spice both stings your taste buds and goes up your nostrils.
