

Reading and Talking

Big fries; big ice cream

In manga comics, you sometimes see a very high pile of rice in a rice bowl. Lotteria is now using this idea for “Manga-mori Potato.” Lotteria’s “Bucket Potato” french fries are 500 yen. In June at weekends, you can ask for “Ultra Manga-mori Potato”, which is double the fries of Bucket Potato for the same price. In American movies, sad people sometimes eat ice cream at home with a spoon from a big tub. In June, Baskin-Robbins is selling “Super Big Cup”, which has 10 scoops of ice cream, so sad people can now do the same thing in Japan for 3,250 yen.

(108 words)

Which do you want to try, “Manga-mori Potato” or “Super Big Cup”?

↳ I want to try [XXX]. / I want to try both. (--Do you think you can eat it all by yourself? / Have you ever ordered a Megamori gyudon beef bowl?)

↳ I don’t want to try either. (--How come you don’t want to try either? / Have you eaten ice cream recently? / What’s your favorite fried food?)

Have you eaten french fries recently?

↳ Yes, I have. (--Where did you buy them? / How were they? / Do you buy frozen french fries?)

↳ No, I haven’t. (--Do you like french fries? / What’s your favorite potato dish? / Can you make potato croquettes?)

Do you think you have a big appetite or a small appetite?

↳ I think I have [XXX]. / I think I kind of have [XXX]. (--Why do you think so? / Do you have three meals a day? / What do you think about a “fasting diet”? / What do you usually have for lunch? / What’s your favorite food smell?)

(June 5, 2020)

More information

Big fries; big ice cream

A typical exaggeration in manga comics is a bowl that's piled very high with rice. It even has a name: "manga mori" (a manga-style-size serving). Lotteria is currently bringing this fantasy to life with "Manga-mori Potato."

On Lotteria's regular menu is "Bucket Potato," a tub that has the equivalent of four small servings of french fries. Now, at no extra cost, you can ask for more fries to be piled high on top, manga-serving-style: either "Basic" (two more small servings of fries added), "Super" (three more), or "Ultra" (four more, which is double the usual Bucket Potato). Manga-mori Potato is available in June on weekends only. All sizes are just ¥500 (!), and take out is OK. You would probably rather not know the calories in Manga-mori, but if you must calculate, one small serving of fries has 210 calories.

Another cliché, this one from US movies and TV, is for sad characters to take a large tub of ice cream from the freezer, and to eat directly from it with a spoon to cheer themselves up. This month, Baskin-Robbins is selling "Super Big Cup": a tub that contains ten scoops of ice cream, so you can try it at home. (By the way, during this ice cream therapy, you are too sad to care about calories.) Choose up to four different flavors. Super Big Cup is ¥3,250, and it's available until the tubs run out.

(241 words)

(June 5, 2020)

Reading and Talking

The third Sunday of June

Father's Day is the third Sunday in June (June 21st this year). An online gift store asked fathers what present they wanted for Father's Day. The most common answer was alcoholic drinks like beer, wine, and sake. Next was gourmet food, then wallets and handkerchiefs. Actually, the second highest answer was "nothing special." One father said, "Any present is fine because it shows that my child thought of me and tried to find something to make me happy." That means, "It's the thought that counts." (= It is the thought that is important.)

(97 words)

Are you going to do something special for Father's Day this year?

↳ Yes, I am. / Kind of. (--What are you going to do? / How about last Father's Day? / Have you ever given your father a bouquet of flowers?)

↳ No, I'm not. (--Have you ever written a thank-you letter to your mother or father? / Do you sometimes go somewhere with your father or mother?)

Did you do anything special for Mother's Day this year?

↳ Yes, I did. / Kind of. (--What did you do? / Was your mother happy? / Have you given your mother a massage recently?)

↳ No, I didn't. (--Do you know when your mother's or father's birthdays are? / Do you know when Mother's Day is? / Have you ever grown a carnation?)

What is your favorite holiday or special day for celebration?

↳ I like [New Year / Christmas / Valentine's Day / the Doll's Festival / Children's Day / Respect for the Aged Day / Halloween / XXX]. (--Why do you like it? / What's your next favorite holiday or special day for celebration? / What's your least favorite celebration day?)

(June 5, 2020)

More information

The third Sunday of June

Father's Day is the third Sunday in June (June 21 this year). In Japan, Mother's Day (the second Sunday in May) is more important, at least in terms of how much money people spend. According to 2018 data from Nikkei Marketing Journal, Mother's Day was worth 117 billion yen in economic activity, while Father's Day generated just 58 billion yen, exactly half as much. Mother's Day also has a fallback present if you don't know what to give--red carnations--, but there's no such easy choice for Father's Day.

Anny, an online gift store, asked 162 fathers from 40 to 69 years old what present they wanted for Father's Day. The most common answer (27.5 percent) was alcoholic drinks such as beer, wine, and sake, followed by gourmet food (11.9 percent), and wallets and handkerchiefs.

Actually, the second highest answer was "nothing special." This is echoed in a quote from an anonymous father on the gift-information website Best Present Guide: "Any present is fine because it shows that my child thought of me and tried to find something to make me happy." It seems that the old English saying is true: "It's the thought that counts."

(202 words)

(June 5, 2020)