

Reading and Talking

Cup okonomiyaki by Nissin

Nissin's "Cup Noodle" and "Curry Meshi" are very easy to make. You pour in hot water, wait, and the meal is ready to eat from the cup. On September 1st, Nissin is going to start selling "Cup de Tsukuru Okonomiyaki Set". If you think that you only add hot water, you are wrong. The cup has everything you need to make an "okonomiyaki" pancake, except cabbage and eggs. You should buy and add cabbage and eggs and any other things you like, mix everything together, and fry the mixture. Cup de Tsukuru Okonomiyaki Set is 300 yen.

(104 words)

Do you think Cup de Tsukuru Okonomiyaki Set is going to be popular?

↳ Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--Do you want to buy it? / Have you bought an instant cup ramen recently? / Do you buy instant pasta or spaghetti sauce?)

↳ No, I don't. (--How come you don't think so? / Do you make pancakes at home? / Is there a lot of food in your refrigerator now?)

Do you like "okonomiyaki" savory pancakes?

↳ Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--What's your favorite kind of okonomiyaki? / Have you ever been to an okonomiyaki restaurant in the Kansai area? / Are you good at flipping an okonomiyaki pancake?)

↳ No, I don't. (--How come you don't like them? / Do you like "yakisoba" pan-fried noodles? / Do you like pizza?)

Did you know that September 1 is also Kiwifruit Day in Japan?

↳ Yes, I did. (--Where did you hear about it? / Are you going to eat kiwifruit on September 1? / Do you like kiwifruit?)

↳ No, I didn't. (--Did you eat kiwifruit yesterday? / Which do you like better, green flesh kiwifruit or yellow flesh kiwifruit? / Do you put kiwifruit in salad?)

(August 28, 2020)

More information

Cup okonomiyaki by Nissin

The Nissin company launched “Chicken Ramen,” the world’s first instant noodles, in 1958 (Showa 33). Since then, Nissin has pioneered other easy-to-make food. Its “Cup Noodle” pulled off an amazing feat: the disposable container combined package, cooking utensil and eating vessel into one item. More recently, Nissin introduced “Curry Meshi,” which works the same way: add hot water, wait, and you have a curry and rice meal in a cup.

On September 1, Nissin is going to launch another instant container food. It’s called “Cup de Tsukuru Okonomiyaki Set”. If you imagine that you add hot water to get a ready-to-eat “okonomiyaki” savory pancake, you will be disappointed. Nevertheless, it is still pretty neat. A disposable bowl contains packets of the basic ingredients for making okonomiyaki: batter mix, “agedama” crunchy bits of deep-fried batter, and shaved dried bonito flakes. You provide your own chopped cabbage, eggs and whatever toppings you fancy. Mix them together in the bowl, then pan-fry the mixture.

Cup de Tsukuru Okonomiyaki Set is ¥300, and Cup de Tsukuru Chijimi (Korean pancake) Set is also available for the same price.

(189 words)
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Reading and Talking

What “uni” sea urchins eat

At sushi restaurants, “uni” sea urchin is expensive, but some people don’t like its strong taste and smell. A few years ago, Kazushige Usui, a researcher at the Kanagawa Prefectural Fisheries Technology Center, accidentally found sea urchin with a milder, less strong flavor. Usui’s office is in Miura, which is famous for growing cabbages. He gave cabbage to the sea urchins in a fish farm, and he found that those sea urchins had a milder flavor. Now, sea urchin farms in other parts of Japan are using cabbage and other land plants for sea urchin food.

(104 words)

Did you know about cabbage-fed sea urchin before you read this story?

↳Yes, I did. (--Where did you hear about it? / Do you watch a TV show called “Tetsuwan Dash”? / Do you want to eat cabbage-fed sea urchin?)

↳No, I didn’t. (--Can you imagine what cabbage-fed sea urchin tastes like? / Do you know someone who doesn’t like sea urchin? / Do you buy sea urchin at stores?)

Do you like sea urchin?

↳Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--Have you eaten it recently? / What’s your favorite sea urchin dish? / When you eat sea urchin what drink goes well with it?)

↳No, I don’t. (--How come you don’t like it? / Is there any other seafood that you don’t like? / Can you eat sea vegetables such as wakame and mekabu?)

Is there any food that you really don’t like?

↳Yes, there is. (--What is it? / Anything else? / Do you think you’re a “suki kirai ga ooi” picky eater?)

↳No, there isn’t. (--Do you like blue cheese? / Have you ever eaten “kusaya” fermented fish? / Is there any food that you don’t like so much?)

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More information

What sea urchins eat

“Uni” sea urchin is an expensive delicacy at sushi restaurants, but not everyone likes its strong taste and smell. Several years ago, Kazushige Usui, a researcher at the Kanagawa Prefectural Fisheries Technology Center, accidentally discovered milder tasting sea urchin.

Usui was trying to solve the problem of sea urchins disappearing from Kanagawa’s Sagami Bay. As the sea became warmer, more fish migrated north into Sagami Bay, where they ate the same sea plants that sea urchins eat. As the sea plants decreased, so did the sea urchins. Usui’s solution was to catch and farm the sea urchins. His office is in Miura, which is famous for its cabbages. He tried feeding cabbage to the sea urchins, and he found that they liked it. The cabbage-fed sea urchins also turned out to have a milder flavor. As a result, sea urchin farms in other parts of Japan copied his method.

Experiments with food for farmed sea urchins continue. This summer, a joint research project by Miyagi University and Kyushu University announced that sea urchins could be successfully fed on clover for a milder flavor.

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