

Reading and Talking

“Kani” crab burgers

DomDom Burger is Japan’s oldest burger restaurant chain. The first DomDom opened in Machida, Tokyo in 1970 (Showa 45). Now there are about 30 DomDoms from Tohoku to Kyushu. On September 19th, a new DomDom restaurant opened in Japan’s oldest amusement park, Hanayashiki in Asakusa, Tokyo. To welcome the new restaurant, all DomDoms are selling “Marugoto!! Kani Burger” (Whole Crab Burger). It is a soft-shell crab that is deep fried and put in a burger bun with lettuce, cheese, onion and sweet chili sauce. It costs 990 yen.

(94 words)

Do you want to try DomDom’s Whole Crab Burger? (Yes, I do; No, I don’t.)

Have you ever been to a DomDom Burger restaurant?

↳Yes, I have. (--Which DomDom did you go to? / Do you remember what you ordered? / Do you think DomDom Burger is better than McDonald’s?)

↳No, I haven’t. (--Did you know DomDom Burger? / How many different chain burger restaurants are there near your house? / Do you make burgers at home?)

What’s your favorite chain burger restaurant?

↳I like [McDonald’s / Mos Burger / Burger King / Lotteria / Freshness Burger / Wendy’s / Shake Shack / Kua Aina / XXX]. (-- Why do you like it best? / What’s your next favorite one? / What’s your least favorite chain burger restaurant?)

↳Sorry, I don’t like burgers. (--How come you don’t like them? / Do you like KFC? / Do you like “gyudon” beef bowls?)

Have you ever been to Hanayashiki in Asakusa?

↳Yes, I have. (--When did you go? / What was the best “norimono” ride? / Did you know that Hanayashiki originally opened during the Edo period?)

↳No, I haven’t. (--Do you like roller coasters? / Do you like “obakeyashiki” haunted houses?)

(2 October, 2020)

More Information

Crab burgers

What is Japan's oldest burger restaurant chain? McDonald's? Wrong. Mos Burger, Burger King, First Kitchen, Lotteria? No, no, no and no. It's DomDom Burger, which opened its first store in Machida, Tokyo in 1970 (Showa 45). There are now about 30 DomDom branches from Tohoku to Kyushu, and on September 19, it opened a new store in Japan's oldest amusement park, Hanayashiki in Asakusa, Tokyo.

To celebrate its latest branch, DomDoms across the country brought back a popular item from last year. It's "Marugoto!! Kani Burger" (Whole Crab Burger), which is a soft-shell crab that is deep fried and put in a burger bun with lettuce, cheese, onion and sweet chili sauce. It went on sale on September 19, and even though it costs ¥990, it sold out almost immediately. DomDom promised to restock, and from September 26, a limited number per day was available at all branches.

A soft-shell crab is actually a regular crab that has just shed its hard shell so that it can grow larger. Under the old shell there is a soft new shell that can be eaten together with the sweet meat inside. If that sounds delicious, rush to your nearest DomDom before Whole Crab Burgers sell out for good.

(210 words)

(2 October, 2020)

Reading and Talking

It's sweet potato season

Mini Stop in Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima Prefectures is now selling a special “yaki imo” hot roasted sweet potato. It is Taiwan Mitsuimo (Taiwanese honeyed sweet potato). It has a thinner skin, and the potato is less dry than usual sweet potatoes. A small roasted Taiwan Mitsuimo is 158 yen, and a medium is 198 yen. Starbucks everywhere in Japan now has a seasonal “Daigaku Imo Frappuccino.” There is real “daigakuimo” fried sweet potato with thick, sweet sauce in this drink. A tall size is 590 yen, and you can buy it until late October.

(102 words)

Which do you want to try more, Mini Stop's Taiwan Mitsuimo or Starbucks' Daigaku Imo Frappuccino?

↳ I want to try [XXX]. (--How come? / Do you want to try the other one?)

↳ I want to try both of them. (--What do you think about the prices? / Do you want to have them both at the same time?)

↳ I don't want to try either of them. (--How come?)

Do you like frappuccino drinks at Starbucks?

↳ Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--What's your favorite frappuccino? / Which size do you usually order? / Do you add something to your frappuccino?)

↳ No, I don't. (--What do you drink at Starbucks? / Is there any food that you like at Starbucks? / Do you have a friend who works at Starbucks?)

Have you ever bought a “yaki imo” roasted sweet potato at a convenience store?

↳ Yes, I have. (--Which convenience store? / How much was it? / How was it?)

↳ No, I haven't. (--Have you ever bought one at a supermarket? / Have you ever roasted sweet potatoes in a “takibi” small outdoor fire? / Do you like “satoimo” taros?)

(2 October, 2020)

More Information

It's sweet potato season

This year, the harvest moon shone on October 1, aka Jugoya (the fifteenth evening of the lunar calendar). This moon is sometimes called “Imo meigetsu” (the beautiful taro moon) because this is harvest season for taros and sweet potatoes. If you go to the dessert section in a convenience store, you'll see seasonal desserts with sweet potato, pumpkin, and chestnuts.

If you like “yaki imo” roasted sweet potatoes, and you are lucky enough to live in Iwate, Miyagi or Fukushima Prefecture, Mini Stop might be the place to go. In those prefectures only, the convenience store chain has Taiwan Mitsuimo (Taiwanese honeyed sweet potatoes). This thin-skinned sweet potato contains less fiber and has a bit of a sticky, gooey texture. A small roasted Taiwan Mitsuimo is ¥158, and a medium is ¥198.

More widely available is Starbucks' seasonal “Daigaku Imo Frappuccino.” It is inspired by “daigakuimo” fried sweet potato with thick, sweet sauce, and there is actual blended daigakuimo in the creamy milk base. The whipped cream on top is laced with black sesame seeds and sweet potato syrup. A Daigaku Imo Frappuccino is ¥590 for a tall, and it's available until late October.

(200 words)

(2 October, 2020)