

Hyotan

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New Year Period

JAPANESE SUPER BEAN

Part 3 MISO & SHOYU

ABURA-AGE 油揚げ

NATTO 納豆

MISO 味噌

SHOYU 醤油

SOYBEAN

TONYU 豆乳

OKARA おから

TOFU 豆腐

YUBA 湯葉

MISO

There are two origins of miso. One is as follows: about 1st Century B.C. when the former inhabitants of the Japanese Islands started to manufacture salt, they made "kokubishio (a preserving agent)" by fermenting



grains such as rice, wheat, and beans to preserve salt. The other origin is as follows: "Hishio" and "Kuki" (fermented foods including salt and soy beans) which were made in ancient China, were introduced from the Korean peninsula to Japan in the Yamato era. It is from these two sources that miso is thought to have originated. According to the Chinese ancient writing "Shurai", many kinds of "Hishio" were manufactured in about 700 B.C. the Shu period.

Both views are considered correct. In the Nara era, (7th Century A.D. to 8th Century A.D.) the period when fermented foods were increasingly being produced, "Hishio" was made from various kinds of grains and it was called "Misho". Miso and soy sauce were the same things. In the Kamakura era (13th Century A.D.), earthenware mortars were used and people began to make miso soup. This custom was started by buddist



monk who came to Japan from China. But miso was too expensive for ordinary citizens. They ate tsubu miso, crushed soy bean paste, as it was, uncooked. Miso soup became popular in the Muromachi era (14th Century to 15th Century AD), when the production of soy beans increased. People made miso by themselves at home. After that, the style of a "simple meal of rice, soup, and a single dish" was established as the basic Japanese eating habit.

As a seasoning, many kinds of recipes using miso have



been created and are continually being developed. One of the typical examples is miso ramen, Chinese noodles in a miso broth, which is now very popular. Miso is mainly made from soy beans nowadays. There are many types and they are specific to local areas. Some of the famous ones are Shinshu miso, Sendai miso, Echigo miso, Saikyo miso, and Haccho miso. Miso is made in the following way: steam or cook soy beans and mash them. Add rice koji, or wheat koji and salt, and pack them into containers for a half year to one year. The first process (steaming the soy beans, add koji, salt then packing them) is known as "Shikomi". The following process is "Jukusei maturing".

There are two miso manufacturers in Hitachi, Sano Miso Manufacturing in Kawajiri and Uchiyama Miso Manufacturing in Mizuki. The latter uses domestically produced soybeans. This shop was established in 1872. It has a history of more than 130 years. The owner is the sixth generation operator of the shop. In a nationwide miso contest, the best prize went to the home made miso of this shop. The owner runs a store "Mizuki no sho" on the other side of Izumigamori on Route 245.

Shoyu (soy sauce)

The origin of shoyu in Japan is assumed to be "fermented corn" (穀醬 in Chinese) called "hishio" (in Japanese) which was introduced from China in the Tang era (the 7th - 8th century), and later in 1254 Kakushin, a Zen priest, who had been to China in the Sung era, introduced into Japan an improved process for making



miso having been developed at the Keizanji temple. They continued to work out the process and finally found that they could use the liquid leached out of the miso, which stood at the bottom of a miso container, as a seasoning. That was the beginning of "tamari shoyu". It is said that shoyu was first used as a separate seasoning from mishiho or hishio described in the miso article above in the Muromachi era (the 14th - 15th century) and that the birthplace of it was Yuasa Town in Wakayama Prefecture.

The miso industry was first developed in the Kansai region in Japan, and then in the Kanto region. Mr. Ichirobei Iida started to make shoyu at Noda in Chiba

Prefecture in 1561. In 17th century, shoyu production was also started in Choshi. At present, Kikkoman Co. originated at Noda has made inroads into the American continent and shoyu is now one of the most famous seasonings around the world.

Commonly used shoyu of rich color and taste, known as "koikuchi shoyu", is made from soybeans (the base of the flavor), wheat (the base of the fragrance), and salt, according to the process classified roughly into the following 3 steps:

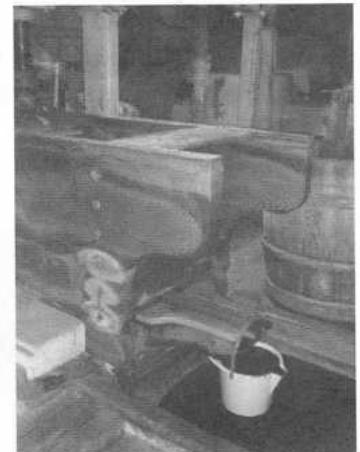
koji making ... steamed soybeans, parched and cracked wheat, and seed koji (ferment) are mixed to yield "shoyu koji" in about 3 days;

preparation ... the shoyu koji mixed with salt water is fermented and matured for 6 months - 1 year or even more to yield "moromi".

finishing the moromi packed in a bag is squeezed taking much time to leach out "ki-joyu" (raw shoyu). The ki-joyu is stood for 3 - 4 days in a clarifying tank for skimming off any oil floating on the top and for removing any sediment at the bottom, and then heated through what is known as "lighting" to yield a final product.

Although miso has often been made in each house to provide for that household until recently, since it can be made relatively easily in each home, shoyu has been

made by people representing each village or purchased from local shoyu makers, since it needs some large scale machinery for its manufacturing. They say there were about 200 shoyu makers in Ibaraki Prefecture just after World War II, but at present there remain only 23 - 24.



In Hitachi City, Uchiyama Shoyu Co. and Tamahime Shoyu Co. are producing shoyu in the Mizuki area. Our reporter visited Tamahime and saw Mr. Zensuke Sato the 5th in a line of family heads, who after retiring from a certain musical instrument maker, succeeded to the job 15 years ago and seems to enjoy himself the best when making shoyu, in spite of some worries when he first started the job. He is very particular about producing shoyu with traditional instruments, and showed me a big old moromi cask and also an old manual squeezer corresponding to the foundation of the company back to 1884.

You can buy Tamahime shoyu at the stand in the Civic Center and also at the shop "Yotteke" recently opened in Ginza Mall. (Reported by Fujimoto)

My first few months in Hitachi

By Alina Chan (New Zealand)

Living overseas...on my own?!? 3 years ago, when I was studying Japanese in my 1st year of University, it was like this. 'Hey, maybe you could go and work in Japan, Alina.' Thinking the idea was ridiculous, I said 'Yeah, right, like that's ever gonna come true...'. Secretly, I wondered if I could. A year later, 'You could work in Japan...You could teach English there...' My reply to that was 'hm... I don't know about working there but I'll definitely go for a holiday.' Then last year, I began to seriously consider working in Japan, as the idea didn't seem impossible. I told everyone about my plans, and kept hoping that I will be accepted to a job in Japan. At that time I was just about to finish my studies at University, and everything after that was uncertain. But things began to happen and here I am in Hitachi, Japan working as an ALT.



Almost 3 months now I have been away from home and things have been going pretty smooth. I'm loving it! I love having my own apartment. If I ever have any problems I have fantastic neighbours (you know who you are!) who I feel I can rely on. Occasionally I do miss home but that's where the telephone comes in really handy. Without it I would probably be miserable. Although, I don't call home as often as you might think. A couple of days ago, I really did wish my family were around. That was when I had a fever and had to take care of myself. That day I attempted my first ever pumpkin soup and took plenty of rest. It wasn't the greatest pumpkin soup (actually it was strange but edible) but I was proud of myself for trying and it kept me well.

Cooking... After weeks in Japan, I never bought any meat to cook on my own. I was just unsure if I knew how to cook meat, which was silly of me, now that I think about it. I never did a lot of cooking when I was living with my family, so maybe that would explain it. Cooking is something I would like to work on in the 2 years that I'm here. Hopefully before I leave Japan, I will be able to prepare a scrumptious meal all on my own. That is my hope anyway. What really becomes of my cooking skills is another story.

Meanwhile, life outside of the apartment, I get to meet many interesting people, people not only from Japan but other parts of the world too. I put my Japanese into practice when I can. I travel around and see places and of course I work hard. The people are very friendly here. One thing I admire about Japanese people is that they are very kind, they always think about you first before they think about themselves. It's great to be in Japan. It's exciting to be living in Hitachi on my own!

The Kokusai Koryu Salon

Do you know that there is a Kokusai Koryu (International Exchange) Salon on 1st floor in the Hitachi Kyoiku (Education) Plaza? This Salon presents information of international exchange in Hitachi and offers the place where people can visit freely.

There is a Bulletin Board at the salon. You can put up events, information and your messages on this board through reception.

Volunteers are waiting for you from Monday to Friday, from 13:00 to 16:00.

Place ➤ 1-6-11, Kamine-cho, Hitachi-shi Tel: 23-9100

Open ➤ Everyday from 9:00 to 21:00 except from December 28th to January 4th.

Hitachi Civic Center Music series 2004

The Concert by Musicians from Hitachi
「Ongaku no Sono」(音楽の園)

When ▶ April 11 (Sun) 14:00~

Where ▶ Hitachi Civic Center

Admission fee ▶ ¥1300~ ¥500



A chorus and the wind music
「Gassho to Kangaku no Shirabe」
(合唱と管楽の調べ)

When ▶ April 18 (Sun) 15:00~

Where ▶ Hitachi Civic Center

Admission fee ▶ ¥1000~ ¥2200

* All tickets are now on sale. Call Hitachi Civic Center (Phone:24-7711)

* There is a baby-sitting service. It costs ¥600 per person. Call Hitachi Civic Center to reserve by at least 2 weeks before each concert.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE CLASSES

NAME	LOCATION	DATE & TIME	Fee	Contact
Sakura	Shichokaku Center	Saturday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	Ms. Ryoko Mori Tel/Fax 53-6663
	Kyoiku Plaza	Thursday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	
Sakura (Kanji)		Friday 10:00-11:30	¥1,000/semester	
Anzu	Shichokaku Center	Tuesday 19:00-20:30	¥300/month & ¥1,500 (text)	Ms. Kyoko Kamada Tel/Fax 33-3399
	Kyoiku Plaza	Friday 13:00-16:00	¥300/month & ¥1,500 (text)	

Movies in March

Theater	Day	Titles (Original Titles)
Cinefesta 1&2 Tel:21-7472	-5	Akai Tsuki [J]
	-5	Gege [J]
	-5	Timeline [E]
	6-	Innocence [J]
	13-	Quill [J]
	-	The Lord of the Rings [J]
Hitachi Central Tel:21-1386	-5	The Lord of the Rings [J]
	6-	Doraemon [J]
Aigakan 1&2 Tel:23-2323	-5	Han Ochi [J]
	-5	Finding Nemo [E]
	-5	Chakushin Ari [J]
	-5	Kisarazu Cat's Eye [J]
	6-	One Piece [J]
	6-	The Lord of the Rings [J]
	13-	Brother Bear [E]
	20-	The Hotel Venus [J]
Theater Isejin Tel:22-1761	-12	Last Samurai[E]
	13-	Paycheck [E]
	-	Master and Commander [E]

[E]: English with Japanese subtitle

[J]: Japanese

Emergency Doctors on Duty

Hitachi uses a system called "TOBAN-I". The doctors in the city take turns standing by for emergency patients from 9:00 to 16:00 on Sundays and national holidays. This system includes surgeons, physicians, pediatricians and dentists.

Be sure to bring your money and health insurance card

Surgeons

Day	Hospital Name	Address	Tel
7	Takayama Seikei Geka Iin	Namekawa-cho	24-5005
14	Kujichinone Byoin	Kuji-cho	52-2119
20	Yamate Byoin	Chikoku-cho	33-2121
21	Hitachiko-Byoin	Kuji-cho	52-3576
28	Kuriyama Seikei Geka Byoin	Hidaka-cho	42-8100

Physicians, Pediatricians and Dentists

Seven days a week: Hitachi Medical Center

(Address: 5-1-1 Higashitaga-cho Tel: 34-2105

Fax: 34-3718 E-mail: webmaster@hitachi-medical.or.jp)

Editor's Note

Thank you for reading the Hyotan. If you'd like to inquire about anything, please send us a letter, fax or e-mail. Any subject is welcomed. We are looking forward to receiving your letters!

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