Trends in Japan

This section covers the latest developments in a wide variety of fields and products in which Japanese innovations often spread to other countries, such as health, leisure, and communication.

Web Japan  http://web-japan.org/
Trends in Japan  http://web-japan.org/trends/
Men in the Teahouse

Tea Ceremony Serves to Soothe Stress

A tea ceremony lesson in progress.

A photo of an ikebana lesson. (C)Ikebana Sessyu-ryu

The tea ceremony, known in Japanese as sado or chanoyu, has been regarded as an art that is largely preferred by women. In a developing trend, however, a growing number of men are stopping by tea ceremony salons on their way home from work. Classes teaching other Japanese arts, such as ikebana (flower arrangement) and traditional musical instruments like the shamisen, are also attracting more male enthusiasts. The overall picture is of men revisiting the artistic traditions that have spiritually supported the Japanese down the ages.
Hotpots for Health and Beauty
Soymilk and Collagen and Tomato Feature in New Varieties of Nabe

No dish is better suited to Japan’s cold winter nights than the nabe, or hotpot. Sitting with friends and family around a simmering pot full of vegetables, fish, and meat has been a favorite wintertime activity of the Japanese for generations. Boiling softens the fibers in the vegetables, making it easier to gobble up large, healthy portions of the nutrients they contain, while the bubbling soup soaks up vitamins and minerals from the meat and fish and is full of nutritious goodness. The combination of piping hot food and lively conversation warms both body and soul and makes the nabe perfect for get-togethers with friends and family.

Collagen nabe.

Tomato nabe. (C) KAGOME CO., LTD.

Soymilk nabe. (C) ikimonoya Corp.
Transforming Trucks

Vehicles Offer a Wide Range of Mobile Services

If you thought that trucks were simply a way to transport goods from one place to another, think again. Innovative trucks have been hitting the roads of Japan recently, sporting trailers that have been converted for use as restaurants, offices, and other purposes. Their mobility gives them the advantage of being able to take their services to customers, rather than the other way around, and they also incur fewer costs compared with operating from brick-and-mortar structures.

The exterior of the sushi bar truck. (C) TME 2009

Inside the sushi bar truck, where sushi is prepared and sold. Diners can also eat inside the truck. (C) TME 2009

The mobile travel agency.

The exterior of a mobile securities brokerage.
B-Grade Cuisine Gets an "A" for Taste

Local Dishes Become National Hits

Home-style dishes previously known only to people in particular regions of Japan are increasingly finding favor nationwide. These "B-grade" local specialties, as they are known, include dishes that were until recently popular within such a narrow geographic area that even people living in the next town had never heard of them. What all B-grade local cuisine has in common is that it is tasty, filling, and reasonably priced. Various events are now being organized to harness these dishes as a means of revitalizing local communities.

- Yokote yakisoba
- Hachinohe senbei-jiru
- Atsugi shirokoro horumon