

# Trends in Japan

## Lifestyle

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.

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# Japanese Fermented Foods

## The Essence of Japanese Taste



A variety of miso aged and fermented in barrels (Photo: AFLO)



People of Yagisawa Shoten, determined to rebuild the company



*Misoshiru*, or miso soup, a traditional Japanese soup dish with various ingredients seasoned with miso paste (Photo: AFLO)



Yagisawa Shoten shopfront before the 2011 earthquake. The quake and tsunami damaged and washed away the company's building and storehouse.



Soy sauce is an essential condiment for sashimi and other Japanese dishes. (Photo: AFLO)

Used from ancient times in Japan, fermented foods provide an abundance of benefits, and it is not just their health and preservation attributes—they have become a core aspect of the subtlety, savoriness and depth of Japanese cuisine.

Soy sauce production in a traditional operation. A skilled worker stirs the mash to help create ideal fermentation. (Cooperation: Yagisawa Shoten, Co., Ltd.)



## Japan's Little Drinking Districts Offer a Taste of Nostalgia

Japan's small, urban side-street pubs and bars are experiencing a new boom, as young people are flocking to them for camaraderie, conversation and relaxation.



Popular with the younger set, the Ebisu Yokocho is relatively new, but its atmosphere offers the nostalgic charm of days gone by.



Filled with pubs specializing exclusively in seafood, the Shinagawa Gyokai Center offers customers the delight of savoring fresh fruit of the sea (left).



At the Omoide Yokocho in Tokyo's Shinjuku district, a typical yokocho in Japan, *motsuni* stew is cooked up in big pots.



Above: Along with *motsuni*, *yakitori* is a standard menu item in yokocho establishments.  
Below: Smoke from grilling the *yakitori* flows outside the pubs and lures in customers.



Shibuya Niku Yokocho, also popular with young women.



# Gentle Yet Effective

## Japanese-style Cold Remedies

Colds have plagued humankind since time immemorial, and every culture has produced its own traditional remedies. In Japan, people rely on various concoctions of vegetables and herbs—and even sake—to relieve troublesome cold symptoms.



Potherbs like *daikon* (above), *negi* (middle) and ginger (below) are said to be good remedies for colds.



Effective to ease coughs and soar throats, *kinkan* conserve also tastes good.  
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Left: To make a "*negi* compress," grill some pieces of *negi* lightly until wilted and put them in a cloth to wrap around one's neck.

Right: For early cold signs, have some eggnog made with Japanese sake and sleep well.



"*Daikon syrup*" for soar throats, served straight up or diluted with hot water as desired.

## Ways to Endure the Winter Cold



Above: Often made of materials such as rubber and polyethylene, hot water bottles have seen a revival in popularity.  
Below: A variety of cute coverings are available. (Cooperation: Cuse Berry)



*Kotatsu*, the traditional winter warm-up item, are now coordinated with stylish coverings to suit modern lifestyles. (Cooperation: MUJI Yurakucho Store, Ryohin Keikaku Co., Ltd.)

From ancient times, many areas of Japan have experienced long, cold winters— climactic conditions that have inspired a whole array of innovative countermeasures to help fight off the incessant chill of the season.



Yutapon, a gel-type hot water bag that can be heated with a microwave oven to maintain comfortable warmth (Cooperation: Hakugen)



Left: A gown-like "wearable blanket," which saves energy and provides warmth throughout the night (Cooperation: Nishikawa Sangyo Co., Ltd.)



Right: Electric lap warmer (Cooperation: Kodan Co., Ltd.)



The warm and yet thin HEATTECH innerwear series for women. The series led the boom in the functional, heat-retaining underwear. (Cooperation: UNIQLO, Fast Retailing Co., Ltd.)



Disposable heat pads that attach to clothes are convenient. (Cooperation: Hakugen)