

# The Differences in Eating Culture in Japan

Robert Fox  
Australia

Even though I always cooked in Australia, I do not like cooking in Japan. Because every weekday since I was a junior high school student, I had martial arts practice, so when I returned my family had already finished eating. So, I learned how to cook a lot of dishes because I made my own dinner, but I cannot cook these dishes in Japan. The grocery stores in Australia and the grocery stores in Japan are very different, so it is hard to shop.

I use a lot of spices and herbs when cooking in Australia. Spices and herbs are more expensive in Japan than Australia. I am unable to find many spices and herbs that I usually use. Sauces are frequently used in Japan, and groceries have many sauces. Sauces make it more difficult to cook because I do not know all the flavours of the sauces, and you cannot easily control the flavour in the food as you can with herbs and spices, because the sauces balance is pre-decided. On the other hand, if you can learn Japanese sauces, you can easily make delicious Japanese cuisine quickly and easily.

The dining etiquette in Japan is difficult. The dining etiquette of Australia and the etiquette of Japanese dining are reversed. I was very surprised when I first went to a Japanese restaurant. The first time, I got a towel from a clerk. "What reason is there for this towel?" I thought. Maybe he thought that my face was dirty. I thought maybe I should wipe the table with this towel. And the next man loudly ate udon while having a plate in his hand. Making loud sounds and holding dishes in your hand Australia is a violation of dining etiquette. Then, when I used the chopstick rest for the first time, it was strange feeling. In Australia, your cutlery should never touch the table.

I was surprised when I ate at the restaurant for the first time, so I decided to investigate the proper Japanese courtesy to eat. I made a lot of mistakes. When eating, my chopsticks stood in the rice. Since I was in a wrong shape, I was told it reminded them of a funeral. In Japan, one should always eat all the food, it will feel like a waste if one does not eat it all. But in Australia, when you eat it all you will insult your host. To eat everything will send a message to the host saying "I want more food." Recently I have often been going to my Japanese friend's house, so I would like to make a good impression with new knowledge.