

Handing down Japanese food culture to future generations

Chicken Breast Dishes selected as Japan's Dish of the Year 2017!

Gurunavi Research Institute (GRI: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo; Hisao Taki, president and representative director), which conducts a variety of surveys and research efforts on food-related themes, has announced that **Chicken Breast Dishes** is chosen as its "Japan's Dish of the Year"2017, designating food that serves as a symbol of the times and reflects the state of Japanese society.

Japan's Dish of the Year 2017 「Chicken Breast Dishes」



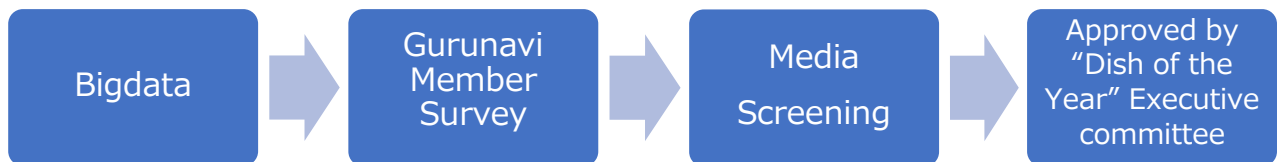
【Reasons for selection】

- In addition to a general Japanese tendency to prefer breast meat, there are additional trends of an aging population and an increase in health-conscious diners cutting down on excessive fat and sugar consumption while also aiming for appropriate protein intake. This has sparked interest in breast meat, with its high protein and low fat content. At the same time, consumers have become broadly aware that breast meat is rich in the fatigue-fighting antioxidants anserin and carnosine (imidazole dipeptide).
- Although the low fat content of breast meat has left it with a reputation for cooking up hard and dry, the past few years have seen the development of techniques that render it tender and juicy, such as low-heat vacuum cooking and fermented marinades using koji fungus and salt. This year in particular has seen an increase in demand for new-style salad entrees that combine abundant vegetables and fruit with meats. Chicken breast meat has come into widespread use in such dishes.

In addition to being topical, Japan's Dish of the Year should also reflect changes in society and serve as a symbol of the times so that it can be a record of food culture to hand down to posterity. Gurunavi Research Institute have held annual Dish of the Year event since 2014 with the aim of exemplifying the current state of Japanese society and preserves the best of Japan's food culture as part of humanity's shared heritage.

"Japan's Dish of the Year 2017" selection has been processed by identifying the most noteworthy dishes of the year among the 61 million monthly unique users that visit the Gurunavi website operated by Gurunavi Inc., as well as the results of a survey of the 15.47 million Gurunavi members. Media personnel helped select six nominated dishes based on three criteria. The dish must be: 1) a subject of popular discussion and interest, 2) deeply reflective of the year's societal trends, and 3) worthy of being preserved and handed down to future generations. From these nominees, "Chicken Breast Dishes" was chosen as the "Japan's Dish of the Year 2017".

■ Process



■ Sponsorships

Sponsorship : Gurunavi Institute, Japan's Dish of the Year Executive Committee
Co-sponsorship: Gurunavi, Inc
Endorsement: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Runner Up

「Highly Carbonated Drinks」

Beverages carbonated with high volumes of CO₂ gas.



【Reasons for selection】

•Carbonated beverage production volume has risen steadily since 2007, and the increase in demand for carbonated water in particular has soared, achieving a roughly sevenfold increase in the past decade. Amid an overseas boom in the popularity of lemon sour and highballs, many restaurants and bars in Japan have caught on, and introduced carbonation to their alcoholic drink offerings. (Source: the Japan Soft Drink Association: "Soft Drink Statistics")

•The powerful stimulation that strong carbonation provides, and the pleasing sensation in the throat as it goes down, have set a new standard, leading to expectations that these beverages will break out of the restaurant and bar food service market and expand into general household consumption.

Booming Award**「Cheese *Dak-galbi*
(Spicy Stir-fried Chicken)」**

This dish begins with *dak-galbi*, a Korean dish made from chicken and vegetables stir-fried in a sauce made with a sweet-and-spicy *Kochujang* chili paste base. Cheese is then blended in on the stovetop.

**【Reasons for selection】**

- Cheese *Dak-galbi* made its way onto the menus of Korean restaurants in Japan after the innovation of mixing cheese into *dak-galbi* enjoyed a boom in popularity in South Korea. Images of the creamy, stringy cheese were posted and spread over SNS websites, exciting lovers of Korean food culture and drawing long lines of customers outside of restaurants for days on end.
- The popularity of cheese cuisine has led to an uptrend in searches by users of the Gurunavi website using terms for dishes involving the enjoyment of melted cheese, such as “raclette cheese” and “cheese fondue.” Numbers of searches by users of the site for “Cheese *Dak-galbi*” in particular have soared by 1,500 percent.

Nominee**「Japanese Tea Sweets」**

Japanese desserts whose ingredients include Western-style confections and *matcha*, *hojicha* or other Japanese teas.

【Reasons for selection】

- A number of new items have been offered, using the traditional Japanese association of *matcha* powdered green tea with spring, and brown *hojicha* tea with autumn. Chocolate confections, ice creams, parfaits and latte drinks have drawn particular interest. *Hojicha* has a special appeal because of its low caffeine content and mellow flavor profile.
- Since sweets have served as the conduit for this trend, it has enabled a broad range of age groups to reacquaint themselves with the homegrown traditional appeal of Japanese teas. In this way, this new trend holds out hope for a revival of Japanese tea culture among the Japanese themselves.



Nominee 「Insta-Worthy Sandwiches」

Sandwiches that present a vividly colored, photo-worthy sliced cross-section

【Reasons for selection】

•Amid the growing popularity of dishes designed for a visual presentation worthy of posting to SNS websites, the appealing sandwich cross-section has emerged as a vividly colorful popular artform unto itself, replete with its own popular Instagram hashtags. The result has been a surge in sandwiches specially designed to present a photogenic cross-section.

•Beyond the conventional ham and lettuce, photogenic sandwiches include vegetables chosen for photographic appeal. Popular items have ranged widely, including the thick omelette sandwich, and the seasonal fruit sandwich with lavish, in season fruits.

**Nominee 「Next Generation Sake」**

New Japanese sake styles in which brewers innovate with ingredients, production methods and labeling

【Reasons for selection】

•The value of sake exports grew by an annual rate of 11% in 2016 to about ¥15.6 billion, as export volumes set a new record high for the seventh straight year. Amid a worldwide boom in Japanese cuisine, the glamour of the finest Japanese sakes, and the ample flavor palette of sake are becoming increasingly widely known overseas. (Source: Finance Ministry, Trade Statistics of Japan, "Table of Statistical Trends by Product")

•Innovations by individual sake breweries have attracted increasing numbers of fans, mainly among female consumers, both in Japan and abroad. This has led to a trend in which it is considered stylish to enjoy sake in varied settings and modes, such as in bars and using wine glasses.



At Gurunavi Inc., our aim is to further the development of food culture through the application of Big Data and food research and education. Through GRI, we hope to contribute to even greater development of superb Japanese food culture through public education on Japan's Dish of the Year and its prominent positioning, making it known not just in Japan but worldwide.

※Screening cooperation: 126 members of 100 media organizations of 66 media companies.



※ Japan's Dish of the Year is certified by the beyond 2020 program.