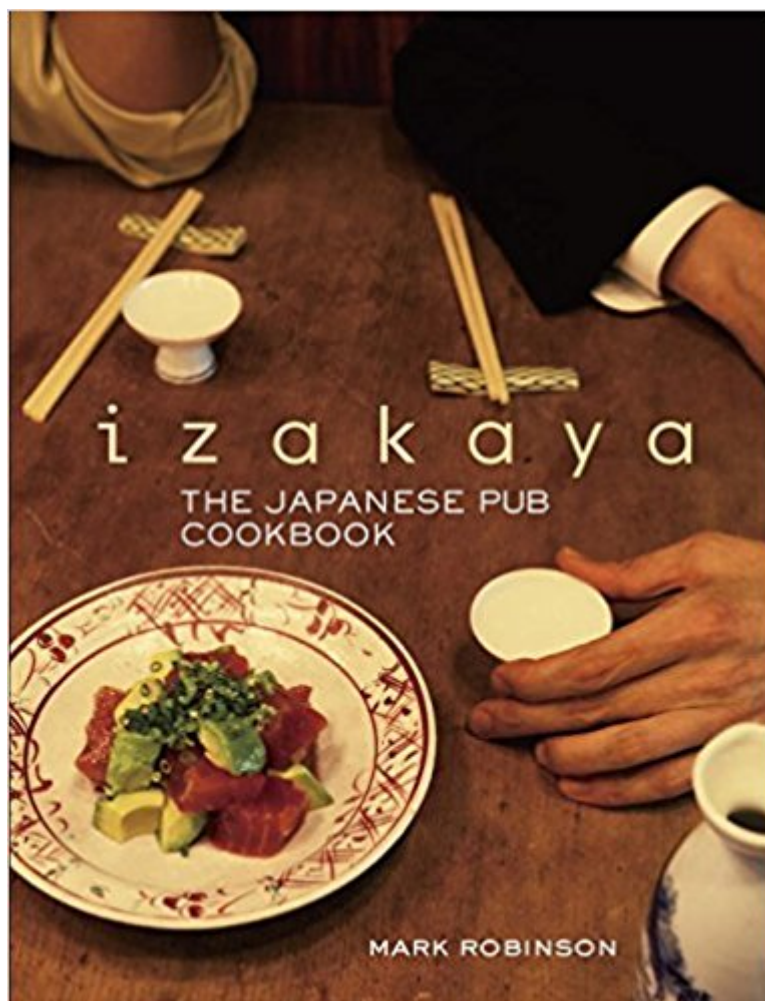


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# Izakaya: The Japanese Pub Cookbook



## Synopsis

Japanese pubs, called izakaya, are attracting growing attention in Japan and overseas. As a matter of fact, a recent article in The New York Times claimed that the izakaya is "starting to shove the sushi bar off its pedestal." While Japan has many guidebooks and cookbooks, this is the first publication in English to delve into every aspect of a unique and vital cornerstone of Japanese food culture. A venue for socializing and an increasingly innovative culinary influence, the izakaya serves mouth-watering and inexpensive small-plate cooking, along with free-flowing drinks. Readers of this essential book will be guided through the different styles of establishments and recipes that make izakaya such relaxing and appealing destinations. At the same time, they will learn to cook many delicious standards and specialties, and discover how to "design" a meal as the evening progresses. Eight Tokyo pubs are introduced, ranging from those that serve the traditional Japanese "comfort foods" such as yakitori (barbequed chicken), to those offering highly innovative creations. Some of them have long histories; some are more recent players on the scene. All are quite familiar to the author, who has chosen them for the variety they represent: from the most venerated downtown pub to the new-style standing bar with French-influenced menu. Mark Robinson includes knowledgeable text on the social and cultural etiquette of visiting izakaya, so the book can be used as a guide to entering the potentially daunting world of the pub. Besides the 60 detailed recipes, he also offers descriptions of Japanese ingredients and spices, a guide to the wide varieties of sake and other alcoholic drinks that are served, "how-to" advice on menu ordering, and much more. For the home chef, the hungry gourmet, the food professional, this is more than a cookbook. It is a unique peek at an important and exciting dining and cultural phenomenon.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Izakaya - the Japanese Pub Cookbook celebrates unlikely foodie haunts and their cuisine, combining shochu-soaked anecdotes and pen portraits of izakaya chefs with recipes for their tasty snacks and appetizers." *•Reuters* "delightful" *Robinson's* book is more a paean to the vibrant and complicated izakaya culture than a definitive cooking guide but the recipes, more than 60 of them, are the sort you wish more neighborhood restaurant chefs in New York would read." *•The New York Times Book Review* "Izakaya profiles several popular restaurants that offer affordable eclectic fare." *•USA Today* "A unique work, recommended for most collections." *•Library Journal (Starred review)*

IZAKAYA: THE JAPANESE PUB COOKBOOK celebrates unlikely foodie haunts and their cuisine, combining shochu-soaked anecdotes and pen portraits of izakaya chefs with recipes for their tasty snacks and appetizers. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

What a wonderful book! Mark Robinson does an excellent job of creating mental images of the sights, sounds, and aromas of the Japanese izakaya -eating/drinking pubs. Typically smaller, locally owned and operated, these restaurant/bars are unique and endearing. Well written with vivid descriptions and beautiful photographs by Masashi Kuma I could almost taste the cuisine and hear the laughter. Having lived and worked in Tokyo and Toyotashi (yes, the home of Toyota) I have been privileged to visit many izakaya. Whether or not you've been to an izakaya in Japan or in the USA or elsewhere I'm sure you will enjoy this book. If you haven't already been, then make plans now. You'll be greeted with a warm welcome. Irasshaimase! (Welcome). In the mean time try the delicious recipes in this book. Create your own izakaya in your kitchen. Kanpai! (Cheers).

First off, this book is beautiful. Great layout, awesome photos of both interiors of pubs and the food. Got this book for ideas about side dishes. We typically arrange our meals around a Japanese plating style and having some variety in the sides is good. This collection of recipes delivers in

spades and several in here have become "go-to" recipes. One thing that I noted was that the flavors tend to be sharp, which I really like. The authors should be congratulated on the way they structured this book. It is arranged as a series of stories about the pubs, their owners, and their recipes. It is well written and entertaining to read (sort of rare in a cook book).

Izakayas are the greatest pubs in the world. But unlike say Irish pubs or German beer halls, they don't follow the same global template. Menus vary widely, and the vibe can range from rowdy blue collar to epicurean ultra-chic. Mark Robinson's achievement here is demystifying the topic (along with recipes, the book covers history, culture, etiquette, and a list of great izakaya to check out) in a way that enhances its magical appeal.

This is one notch above the other Japanese cookbooks I have bought because it is written not by a chef or ghost writer but by an experienced journalist. He really takes you there, to these izakayas. Don't read this book if you're hungry. He gives you maps and subway directions to the few places he reviews in depth in here. I'll definitely be checking out some of these joints! Tried making a few of the recipes. They're simple but if you substitute for American ingredients (even if he says you can) you'll not be successful.

I quite like this book. It's an interesting look into Japanese pub culture and food. The little anecdotes about each izakaya give some context for the recipes, but more importantly, paint a picture of this style of restaurant. The recipes included are concise and the ones I've attempted have been successful. The photography is largely well done, though the way they alternate between color and B&W makes it seem like it was a cost-saving measure, rather than an artistic choice. It is nice that a picture of each finished dish is included, so you get a better feel for the dishes as they are actually served. The dishes have the ring of authenticity, calling for many ingredients that require a visit to a store specializing in Japanese products, though never having been to Japan, I can't really judge. Unfortunately, this book attempts too many things and provides too little depth to really get a feel for any one. For a book about drinking establishments, you'd think they would have lots of information on alcohol. This is not the case, as there are really only three pages on the subject. Similarly, the author writes a few pages on each izakaya, but offers relatively little overview and no real conclusions drawn from this exploration. Ultimately, this is a fun book to have, but not an essential on anyone's cookbook shelf.

Awesome book with lots of detailed pictures. If your big into tapaz/small plates this is the book for you!

The recipes in the book were a little unique. They skipped traditional izakaya staples, things like karakage, tai meshi, buta kakuni, takowasa, takoage. There was also a bit too much story telling for my taste.

nice

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