



Design of the Umami Café

“The design of the café is inspired by its specific place at the crest of the hill. As with the pilgrimages to such renowned mountainside temples as Kiyomizu-dera in Kyoto, this structure hovers above and greets those on the approaching path. For those arriving, it is a shelter to catch one's breath and anticipate the gardens ahead. For those finishing their journey, it is an opportunity to reflect with all senses.”

– Kengo Kuma, Architect



Café photo by Jeremy Bittermann



Umami Café

BY AJINOMOTO CO.



The Tea Experience

For centuries, green tea has been treasured throughout Asia for its healthful, restorative qualities. In Japan, Zen priests drank green tea to keep themselves awake through long hours of meditation. In the 16th century a man named Sen no Rikyu, influenced by the study of Zen, envisioned a path to enlightenment through the simple act of sharing a bowl of tea among friends in the pursuit of peace and harmony—a practice he called *wabi-cha*. For Rikyu, making tea while mindfully engaging all the senses was to have a complete Zen experience. We are pleased to have you share a moment of quiet joy with us and experience the spirit of Japanese culture through a bowl of tea.



Tea Sets

We've paired traditional teas with Japanese delights. A great place to start.



Matcha & Kuri Yokan

\$14

A fine powder of shade-grown leaves whisked into a savory, grassy tea; candied chestnuts in sweet adzuki bean jelly.

Contains: tree nuts



Ochazuke

\$12

Hojicha tea poured over a multigrain rice blend, shiitake mushrooms, hijiki and nori seaweed, a touch of wasabi and sesame. Additional tea steepings available upon request.

Contains: soy, wheat, fish



Genmaicha & Manju

\$11

Sencha with roasted rice and a touch of matcha powder, nutty and earthy; baked confection filled with sweet white bean paste. Additional tea steepings available upon request.

Contains: wheat, soy, eggs, milk



Matcha & Chocolate Mochi Ice Cream

\$12

Jade-green matcha; chocolate ice cream in sweet rice dough.

Contains: milk



Sencha & Castella

\$12

Quintessential Japanese green tea, subtle umami and young spring leaves; light, honeyed sponge cake popular in the Nagasaki region. Additional tea steepings available upon request.

Contains: egg, wheat



Hojicha & Chikara

\$11

Green tea roasted at high temperature, toasty, caramel notes, low caffeine; hearty fruit and nut cake.

Additional tea steepings available upon request.

Contains: nuts, tree nuts, eggs, milk

Umami: The Fifth Taste

Western chefs have historically focused on four basic taste profiles – sweet, sour, salty, and bitter. Yet in many parts of East Asia, an additional flavor has entered the culinary lexicon: *umami*. This fifth taste is savory, complex, and wholly distinct. Umami is imparted by glutamate, a type of amino acid which occurs naturally in many foods. Obvious sources include meat, fish, and vegetables, but you also find umami in less expected foods like dairy products or even tea. As the taste itself is subtle, many people don't recognize umami when they encounter it. However, this fifth taste creates harmony among the other four and plays an important role in making food taste delicious.



Yakitori Chicken Fried Rice \$10

Sweet and savory flavors of traditional street food: yakitori chicken, carrots, edamame, peas, red pepper.

Contains: wheat, soy



Takikomi Gohan Fried Rice \$9

Vegan Japanese rice mixed with edamame, carrots, hijiki seaweed, thinly sliced tofu.

Contains: wheat, soy



Hojicha & Takikomi Gohan or Yakitori

Roasted green tea, paired with yakitori chicken (\$14) or takikomi gohan (\$12) fried rice.

Contains: wheat, soy

Sweets



Matcha & Hojicha Brownies \$8

A pair of green tea brownies: matcha with walnuts, hojicha with hazelnuts.

Contains: tree nuts, wheat, milk, eggs



Matcha Mochi \$8

Sweet bean paste, tender rice dough, matcha powder.

Contains: soy



Fukuwatashi Senbei \$4.5

Soft vanilla buttercream, crispy zig-zag cookies.

Contains: wheat, eggs, milk, soy



Macarons \$6

Delicate meringue-based cookies, smooth chocolate filling.

Contains: tree nuts, eggs, milk

Additional Beverages

Mecha \$5
Mild green tea made from new tea leaf buds and a touch of matcha powder.
Served hot or iced.

Mugicha \$4
Roasted barley, naturally caffeine-free herbal tea.
Served hot or iced.

Mango Juice \$4

Sweets locally sourced from:

Tomoe Horibuchi
Behind the Museum Café
Portland, OR
behindthemuseumcafe.com

Gena Renaud
Yume Confections
Portland, OR
yumeconfections.com

Mio Asaka
Mio's Delectables
Portland, OR
miosdelectables.com

Hiro Horie
OYATSUPAN™ Bakers
Beaverton, OR
oyatsupan.com

Tea Tools



Preparing tea in a traditional Japanese fashion requires an array of special tools. Learn more about some of them below:

1) Kyusu

This teapot is used for brewing teas such as sencha, hojicha, and genmaicha. The lateral handle allows for ergonomic one-handed pouring. Rest your thumb on the lid to keep it in place as you pour your tea.

2) Chawan

Used in the preparation of whisked green tea, the *chawan*, literally “tea bowl”, is admired as a work of art and is a centerpiece of the tea ceremony.

3) Chashaku

One of the traditional tea ceremony tools, this delicate piece of bamboo is used to scoop matcha powder into the *chawan* when preparing the tea.

4) Hishaku

The bamboo ladle is used to scoop hot water from the *kama* (kettle) and gently pour it over the matcha powder in the *chawan*.

5) Matcha

Unlike brewed tea leaves that are discarded after infusion, whole tea leaves are consumed when enjoying a bowl of matcha. This means matcha has more of the leaf’s nutrients, but also more caffeine. The amino acid theanine, also present in the tea leaves, is said to provide a balancing, calming effect.

6) Chasen

This tea whisk is carved from a single piece of bamboo. It is used to briskly whip matcha powder and hot water into a froth.

7) Yuzamashi

The *yuzamashi* is a cooling cup used to brew certain teas to their ideal temperature, providing pure taste without bitterness. Hot water is poured into the *yuzamashi*, then over the leaves in the *kyusu*.

The Ajinomoto Group

Although the umami taste has naturally existed for thousands of years, it was first discovered by Dr. Kikunae Ikeda of the Imperial University of Tokyo in 1908. Through experimentation, Dr. Ikeda found that the umami taste is imparted by glutamate, a type of amino acid which occurs naturally in many foods and provides the distinctive fifth taste. Dr. Ikeda's discovery allowed him to launch the world's first umami seasoning, AJI-NO-MOTO® with businessman Mr. Saburosuke Suzuki II in 1909. In the 110 years since, the Ajinomoto Group has grown into one of Japan's largest and most successful food companies.

The Umami Café was made possible because of an extremely generous donation from Ajinomoto Co., Inc., and Ajinomoto Foods North America, Inc.

Eat Well, Live Well.



Tea by Jugetsudo

Portland Japanese Garden is honored to serve tea from Japanese tea shop Jugetsudo. Over 160 years after its founding, the company's pursuit of the spirit of "Cha-Zen" is as passionate as ever. Through their uncompromising commitment to the highest quality ingredients, Jugetsudo conveys the authentic values and delicate flavors particular to the spirit of Japanese tea.

Jugetsudo teas originate in Kakegawa, Japan. Located in the highlands of Shizuoka near Mount Fuji, several factors make this area excellent for tea production. The temperature variation between day and night, the mountain climate, and the amount of morning dew combine to create the prime conditions for producing Jugetsudo's delicious teas with their unique tastes, aromas, and colors.

Jugetsudo has two tea houses in Japan and one in Paris. The Umami Café at Portland Japanese Garden is the first to offer Jugetsudo tea in the United States.



From the Garden Gift Shop

Want to take your Umami Café experience home? Several of the teas served at the Café are available for purchase at the Garden Gift Shop. Ask your server for details.

