

Hot Pics from Yokohama, JAPAN Vol.3

Teri Mitchell sharing her private home-coming photos
with Asia Trend Magazine readers

■ By Teri Mitchell

Shabu-shabu (しゃぶしゃぶ) is a Japanese variant of hot pot.

The dish is prepared by submerging a very thin slice of meat or a piece of vegetable in a pot of Dashi (broth) made with Konbu (kelp) and swishing it back and forth several times. (The familiar swishing sound is where the dish got the name. Shabu-shabu roughly translates to "swish-swish".) It's like having a slice of meat swim in the boiling water. Cooked meat and vegetables are usually dipped in Ponzu or Goma sauce before eating with a bowl of steamed white rice.

Shabu-shabu is similar to sukiyaki, which is cooked in a pot on the table. In both dishes, thinly sliced beef or pork is cooked with lots of vegetables. Meat for Shabu-shabu is thinner (paper-thin) than meat for Suki-yaki, and is cooked in boiling water just before you eat each piece unlike Suki-yaki. However, it is starkly different in taste. Shabu-shabu is more savory and less sweet than Suki-yaki. Though it is traditionally considered a winter dish, it is eaten year-round.

On this trip, I went for all-you-can-eat Shabu-shabu with my friends. Shabu-shabu used to be an expensive meal, but thankfully, things changed over years in Japan. All-you-can-eat restaurants are common these days, even for Shabu-shabu! At the restaurant we went to, we could eat as much meat, veggies, noodles, rice and even deserts as we wanted. It was unbelievable.

▶ Thinly sliced beef is most commonly prepared for Shabu-shabu, though modern preparations sometimes use pork, chicken, crab, duck, or lobster. Most often, tender rib eye steak is used, but less tender cuts such as top sirloin are also common. A more expensive meat, such as Wagyu (Japanese breed of cows), may also be used for its enhanced flavor and texture. It is usually served with Tofu, Udon and Harusame noodles, and vegetables including Chinese cabbage (Hakusai), Shiitake and Enokidake mushrooms, chrysanthemum leaves, onions, carrots, and leeks.

We chose soy milk, Dashi and pork for Shabu-shabu. The other soup is for Suki-yaki. The price was only 1980yen (\$17) + tax per person.

横濱

"Shabu Shabu (swish, swish)" and drain it.

Cook meat slices in the pot for 5-10 seconds as you eat with dipping sauce. It's important not to overcook the meat.



▲ Ponzu sauce (left), Goma sauce (middle) and Suki-yaki (right).

Ponzu is soy-sauce based, tangy and refreshing. Mixed with grated radish and chopped green onions, it's fabulous. Goma is sesame-paste based, creamy, mild and aromatic. Both are good, yet I prefer Ponzu.





Traditional tranquil looking interiors. Clean and neat. We could order everything on the computer by ourselves at the table.



◀ A server in Kimono and Hakama. This uniform matches the environment. Hakama are the skirt-like pants that were traditionally worn by Samurai warriors and are worn by some martial artists today. While men's Hakama can be worn on both formal and informal occasions, women rarely wear Hakama except at their graduation ceremonies or as their costumes or uniforms.



Classical style painting of Port of Yokohama, at the entrance of the restaurant.

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Here, I would like to introduce one of the Japan's useful and popular cooking utensils. This is a portable gas stove which is used for Shabu-shabu, Sukiyaki and so on, at home. This is verrrry convenient. You install a can of butane gas in the stove, push down the lever and turn the switch. It's safe and easy. And since it's gas powered, it's cordless! Nothing is in the way on or around your table. Furthermore, you can cook even during power outages.



● Potable Gas Range \$22.99

● Butane Gas \$4.99 (Set of 4)

● Shabu-shabu Pot \$44.99 (26cm)

● These items are available at

● 1st Oriental Supermarket 東方超級市場

● @ 5132 W. Colonial Dr., Orlando, FL 32808 / 407-292-3668.

● Tip: The pot is used mainly for Shabu-shabu. The shape of the pot is quite a smart idea. The heat conducts faster and efficiently. It's safe and not hot when you stretch your arm to reach the pot, because the flame stays in the center.