



ハッシュョドビーフ



コチユジヤンチキン



黒酢豚角煮

Konbini

Cult recipes, stories and adventures from Japan's iconic convenience stores



カニマヨ



カルビ丼



フルーツサンド



明太お好み焼き



レモンクリームパスタ



黒糖蒸しパン

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Nikuman

肉まん

Makes 8 buns

1 quantity of chūkaman dough
(page 46), rolled into 8 balls

Filling

2 dried shiitake mushrooms,
rehydrated in warm water
until soft
50 g (1¾ oz) unsmoked bacon,
finely chopped (optional)
½ onion, grated
2.5 cm (1 inch) knob of fresh
ginger, peeled and grated
1 garlic clove, peeled and grated
250 g (9 oz) minced
(ground) pork
1½ teaspoons lard
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon oyster sauce
1 tablespoon shaoxing rice wine
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 teaspoon chicken stock
powder (optional)
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground white pepper

Here's a recipe for the traditional chūkaman pork filling.

**The shiitake and onion add a deep savouriness to the pork,
while the lard and bacon make the filling juicy and rich.**

**If you are feeling particularly Osakan, add a dash of hot
English or Japanese mustard to your bun while eating it.**

1. Drain the liquid from the shiitake mushrooms, then cut them into 5 mm (¼ inch) dice. Place in a bowl with the remaining filling ingredients, keeping them as cold as possible to prevent the lard melting. With gloved hands, mix together until the mixture is homogenous and the liquids have been absorbed into the pork mince.
2. Divide the mixture into eight portions, roll each portion into a ball, then fill and steam the buns as directed on page 46.
3. After steaming, the buns can be cooled and refrigerated for up to 2 days, then reheated for 10 minutes in a steamer, or in a microwave for 1–2 minutes.



Chūkaman

中華まん

Makes 8 buns

For the chūkaman dough

60 ml (¼ cup) warm water
6 g (¼ oz) dried yeast
60 g (2 oz) sugar
300 g (2 cups) flour (see note)
100 ml (3½ fl oz) milk
25 g (1 oz) pork lard
(or vegetable shortening
or oil), at room temperature

As autumn sets in, konbinis start putting up their banners for chūkaman (Chinese-style steamed buns) – also known as nikuman (meat buns), as their original fillings were traditionally steamed pork with onions or leek.

Once found in Chinatown districts such as Yokohama or Osaka’s famed 551 Horai stores (where Osakans call them butaman – pork buns), they were eventually brought into the konbini fold, and – as with all things konbini – have since been stuffed with other fillings: pizzaman (page 52) filled with tomato sauce and melty cheese; special Hokkaido red bean paste and sesame seed buns (page 54); cheese curry buns; and even shrimp, mentaiko and cheese buns. Every konbini chain has their own filling, and just like the konbini hot-box chicken, each has their loyal fans. Below are our recipes for the three most popular ones.

1. In a small jug, mix together the water, yeast and one-quarter of the sugar. Leave for 15 minutes, or until foamy.
2. Sift the flour into a large bowl. Add the yeast mixture and remaining ingredients. Mix until a smooth dough forms, adding more water if the dough is too stiff, then cover and let rest for 1 hour, or until doubled in size.

Filling and steaming the buns

1. Knock the air out of the dough and divide into eight pieces. Shape each portion into a ball, then flatten with the palm of your hand into a disc.
2. Divide your chosen filling (see pages 50–55) into eight portions. Place one portion on each dough disc, then envelop the filling with the dough, pinching the dough closed.
3. Prepare a steamer basket (you may need more than one) by lining it with baking paper, and punching a few holes in the paper to let the steam through.
4. Place the buns in the steamer basket/s, leaving a 3 cm (1¼ inch) gap between each one and the walls of the basket, if possible, as the buns will expand. Let rest for another 15 minutes.
5. Prepare a pot (or two) with boiling water for the steamer basket/s to sit on, then steam the buns for 15 minutes.
6. Carefully take the steamer basket/s off the pot/s. Remove the buns from the basket/s and enjoy warm. The buns can also be chilled, then microwaved for 15–30 seconds to reheat.

Note

Asian grocers usually stock flour specifically made for steamed buns. If you can’t find it, use plain (all-purpose) flour.





Kalbi-don

カルビ丼

Serves 4

400 g (14 oz) beef short ribs
(Korean-style, flanken cut),
separated
2 tablespoons neutral-flavoured oil
4 eggs
warm cooked rice, to serve
4 whole lettuce leaves
4 tablespoons kimchi
1 tablespoon roasted sesame seeds
2 spring onions (scallions),
thinly sliced

Marinade

50 g (1½ oz) grated Asian pear
or daikon
2 cm (¾ inch) knob of fresh
ginger, peeled and
finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 spring onion (scallion),
finely sliced
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon sake
1 tablespoon roasted sesame oil
1 teaspoon tobanjan

Korean dishes are becoming more popular in Japan, and konbinis are tapping into this trend. Kimchi, Korean pickles, Korean fried chicken, kimchi nabe (stew) bases and yukke (Korean beef tartare) are now found everywhere from the aisles to the freezer section.

Kalbi – Korean marinated beef short ribs – is one such dish, a great accompaniment to morioka reimen (page 144) or rice. The marinade is slightly spicy and sweet from the fruit and vegetables used, which also help to tenderise the beef.

Kalbi is most commonly seen in barbecued meat or yakiniku (焼き肉) restaurants where diners grill it themselves over a charcoal or gas grill. This recipe is made in a frying pan, but if you plan on having a barbecue, please try this marinade for that.

To eat, you can use the lettuce leaves as a wrap to encase a little meat, kimchi, rice and egg, or just mix everything together.

1. Put all the marinade ingredients in a blender and process until smooth.
2. Mix the marinade into the beef ribs, then cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 8 hours, or overnight.
3. When ready to cook, drain off the marinade and heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Crack the eggs in and fry, sunny side up, until cooked to your liking. Remove to a plate and keep warm.
4. Add the marinated ribs to the same pan in one layer and cook until browned, then turn over and brown the other side – about 4 minutes in total for boneless ribs, and 6–8 minutes for bone-in ribs.
5. Pile the rice into four serving bowls. Add the lettuce, then the ribs. Place a tablespoon of kimchi in each, then sprinkle with the sesame seeds and spring onion. Finally, top with the fried egg and serve.

