



Learn Japanese Pod with Ami and Alex

Podcast 19: How to eat Takoyaki

In this lesson you will learn the following:

- ✓ How to order Takoyaki
- ✓ How to cook and eat Takoyaki
- ✓ Takoyaki related vocabulary and phrases

LEVEL: Upper Beginner

SITUATION: You order takoyaki and ask the staff how to make it.



Introduction

Food is one of our most popular subjects to talk about so in this podcast Ami sensei and I (Alex) introduce you to one of Kansai's most loved street snacks, the honorable Takoyaki.

In this lesson, you'll learn how to order and prepare takoyaki yourself with the correct ingredients and utensils. We also talk about the history of takoyaki, why it became so famous plus our recommendations for the best Takoyaki restaurants in Japan. So get ready for a takoyaki extravaganza!





Vocabulary

Here is a full vocabulary list taken from the podcast

Japanese	Pronunciation	English
ご注文	<i>Gochuumon</i>	Your order
いかがでしょうか	<i>Ikaga deshō</i>	Is it OK? / Are you ready?
たこやき	<i>Takoyaki</i>	Takoyaki (Octopus fry)
お願いします	<i>Onegaishimasu</i>	Please
かしこまりました	<i>Kashikomarimashita</i>	Certainly
すみません	<i>Sumimasen</i>	Excuse me
作り方	<i>Tsukurikata</i>	How to make something
教えて	<i>Oshiete</i>	Teach me
いただけませんか	<i>Itadakemasenka</i>	Would you please?
まず	<i>Mazu</i>	First
その後	<i>Sono ato</i>	After that
その次に	<i>Sono tsugi ni</i>	Next
最後に	<i>Saigo ni</i>	Finally
生地	<i>Kiji</i>	Batter
鉄板	<i>Teppan</i>	Iron pan
入れます	<i>Iremasu</i>	Put in
他	<i>Hoka</i>	Other
好きな	<i>Sukina</i>	Something you like



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具材	<i>Guzai</i>	Ingredients
焼きながら	<i>Yakinagara</i>	While cooking
千枚通し	<i>Senmaidooshi</i>	Long needle like implement for cooking takoyaki
ひっくり返します	<i>Hikkuri kaeshimasu</i>	Turn something over
熱い	<i>Atsui</i>	Hot
気をつけて	<i>Ki o tsukete</i>	Take care
食べてください	<i>Tabete kudasai</i>	Please eat
なるほど	<i>Naruhodo</i>	I see
ありがとうございます	<i>Arigatō gozaimasu</i>	Thank you very much





Main Dialog

A:	ご注文はいかがでしょうか。	<i>Gochuumon wa ikaga deshou ka</i>	Are you ready to order?
B:	たこやきをお願いします。	<i>Takoyaki o onegaishimasu</i>	I'd like takoyaki please.
A:	かしこまりました。	<i>Kashikomarimashita.</i>	Certainly.
B:	あの、すみませんがたこやきの作り方を教えていただけませんか。	<i>Ano, sumimasen ga, takoyaki no tsukurikata o oshiete kudasai.</i>	Um, excuse me but would you mind telling me how to make takoyaki?
A:	まず、生地を鉄板に入れます。	<i>Mazu, kiji o teppan ni iremasu.</i>	First put the batter in the iron pan.
B:	生地を鉄板に入れます。	<i>Kiji o teppan ni iremasu.</i>	Put the batter in the pan.
A:	そのあと、たこを入れます。	<i>Sono ato, tako o iremasu.</i>	After that, put in the octopus.
B:	たこを入れます。	<i>Tako o iremasu.</i>	Put in the octopus.
A:	その次に、他の好きな具材を入れます。	<i>Sono tsugi, hoka no suki na guzai o iremasu.</i>	After that, put in the ingredients you like.
B:	具材を入れます。	<i>Guzai o iremasu.</i>	Put in the ingredients.
A:	最後に焼きながら千枚通しで生地をひっくり返します。	<i>Saigo ni yakinagara senmaitooshi de kiji o hikkuri kaeshimasu.</i>	Finally, while cooking it, turn over the batter with the cooking implement.
B:	生地をひっくり返します。	<i>Kiji o hikkuri kaeshimasu.</i>	Turn over the batter.
A:	熱いので、気をつけて食べてくださいね。	<i>Atusi no de ki o tsukete tabete kudasai.</i>	Please be careful when eating it as it's hot.
B:	なるほど。ありがとうございます。	<i>Naruhodo. Arigatō gozaimasu.</i>	I see. Thank you very much.



What is Takoyaki?

Takoyaki is a speciality dish from Osaka and is usually eaten as a casual fast food. Imagine golf sized balls of baked dough, crispy on the outside and piping hot in the middle.

What are the basic ingredients of Takoyaki?

The dough is made from water, flour and eggs and you add dashi, salt and soy sauce to taste. It also has slices of tako which is octopus. Yaki means cooked or baked which is why we say Takoyaki. It kind of tastes a little like Okonomiyaki so it's savory with a range of interesting flavors and umami.

How do you cook Takoyaki?

We start with a takoyaki teppan which is a hot plate to cook the batter in. The hot plate has semi spherical indents which you pour the batter into. You basically drown the whole plate in runny takoyaki batter. Then add those slices of tako.

You then sprinkle on other ingredients including benishouga which is pickled red ginger, chopped green onions and tenkasu which are little scraps of tempura.

Then as it starts to cook you use what's called a 千枚通し *Senmaidoshi* to constantly flip over the batter as it turns into little takoyaki balls.

And then finally you garnish it with mayonnaise, Takoyaki sauce which is like Worcestershire sauce, aonori which is green laver and Katsuo bushi which is dried flakes of bonito fish. But there are other flavours too, sometimes they'll add cheese or mochi.

When do you usually eat Takoyaki?

You usually pick them up as a snack from a takoyaki stand on the street. But you can also order them in Izakayas with other food. Some restaurants let you make them yourself using the takoyaki teppan which is fun. But usually you'll get them at a food stall at a matsuri and they usually come in sets of 6 or 8.



Where can you buy Takoyaki?

If you are in Japan, you could buy Takoyaki in almost any city. However, if you want to do it in style, in the home of the Takoyaki, I would recommend the Dotonbori area of Osaka. It's a very popular tourist destination packed with amazing restaurants, Izakayas and bars. It's famous for its huge colourful illuminated signs, entertainment and nightlife.

All the shops run along the Dotonbori canal where it gets its name. So it's great for food and just strolling down the river.

There are hundreds of places where you can get Takoyaki but one place I really like is くれおーる They're actually a chain of restaurants that serve famous Osaka dishes including Okonomiyaki. I would recommend going to the Dotonbori shop as it has seats overlooking the river. It's a little touristy but if you can get a good seat, the view of the river is really nice especially at night. And the Takoyaki themselves are perhaps some of the best I've ever had in Japan. According to the website they supply various hotels with their speciality Takoyaki which isn't surprising because they really are that good.

To get to the Dotonbori area from Osaka station, get on the Midosuji line and get off at Namba. It's then a 5 or 10 minute walk north to the river. And you'll know you're there when you see a giant plastic animated Crab and also the neon Glico man sign on the river next to Ebisu bridge. Anyway check out the link in the show notes and on the website.

What is the history of Takoyaki?

As you probably know, rice, fish and vegetables have been the traditional staple diet of Japan. Takoyaki which is made from flour and water was a relatively new food type in Japan. It has its roots in the 1600s when battered food and other French cuisine started to be eaten in Japan.

Fast forward to the Tokyo earthquake in 1923 which left the kanto area with huge food shortages. The government started experimenting with flour and water to make cheap filling food. It wasn't that popular but it kept people from starving.



Then in 1935 a street vendor in Osaka called Tomokichi Endo started experimenting with flour and water batter with seafood. There was a big cheap supply of octopus which he mixed with the batter to create the first Takoyaki. It took off and became a success. In the years after the 2nd world war, wheat flour was sent to Japan as relief aid. And that's when Takoyaki started to get really famous throughout Japan.

It's another one of those things in Japan that had a foreign influence but then changed into something uniquely Japanese.





Hi, this is Alex, the creator of Learn Japanese Pod. Thanks for downloading these show notes, I hope you find them useful. If you need any help with your Japanese or have any questions or comments please drop me a line at info@learnjapanesepod.com

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Enjoy!

Alex