

◆先輩からのアドバイス◆

HOW TO BE VEGETARIAN IN JAPAN

How can a vegetarian or a vegan person, when going to Japan, respect his diet? The answer is rather complex, firstly because the person to whom you will ask for a "niku nashi" dish, that means without meat, if the dish you order requires products of animal origin will look at you surprised, and secondly because, often, variations on the menus are not even considered.

Most of the Japanese cuisine is based on the use of "dashi", that is a broth made with flakes of tuna which is the basis of many dishes even when the presence of meat or fish is not evident (for example, it can be in the okonomiyaki batter, in the sauce in which soba or tempura are soaked, etc.). For this reason we must remember to ask whether this broth is used at the time of ordering; you will perhaps make the cook worry; maybe they won't understand why you asked or maybe they could refuse to change the menu because it's not possible, but not for their bad will. Often, however, it may happen that, if you ask for a "niku nashi" cooking dish, which literally means, in fact, without meat, you are brought dishes that contain fish, which is not considered meat. Think that even in soy burgers, which in Japan are not designed for vegetarians, but simply to eat less meat there is also a few grams of chicken.

Tofu is a great solution it is cheap to find at the supermarket and easy to find at restaurants.

Also, you can always buy imported fruit, salads or cheeses and cook whatever you prefer at your house, being vegetarian in Japan is easier if you eat at home rather than outside.

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