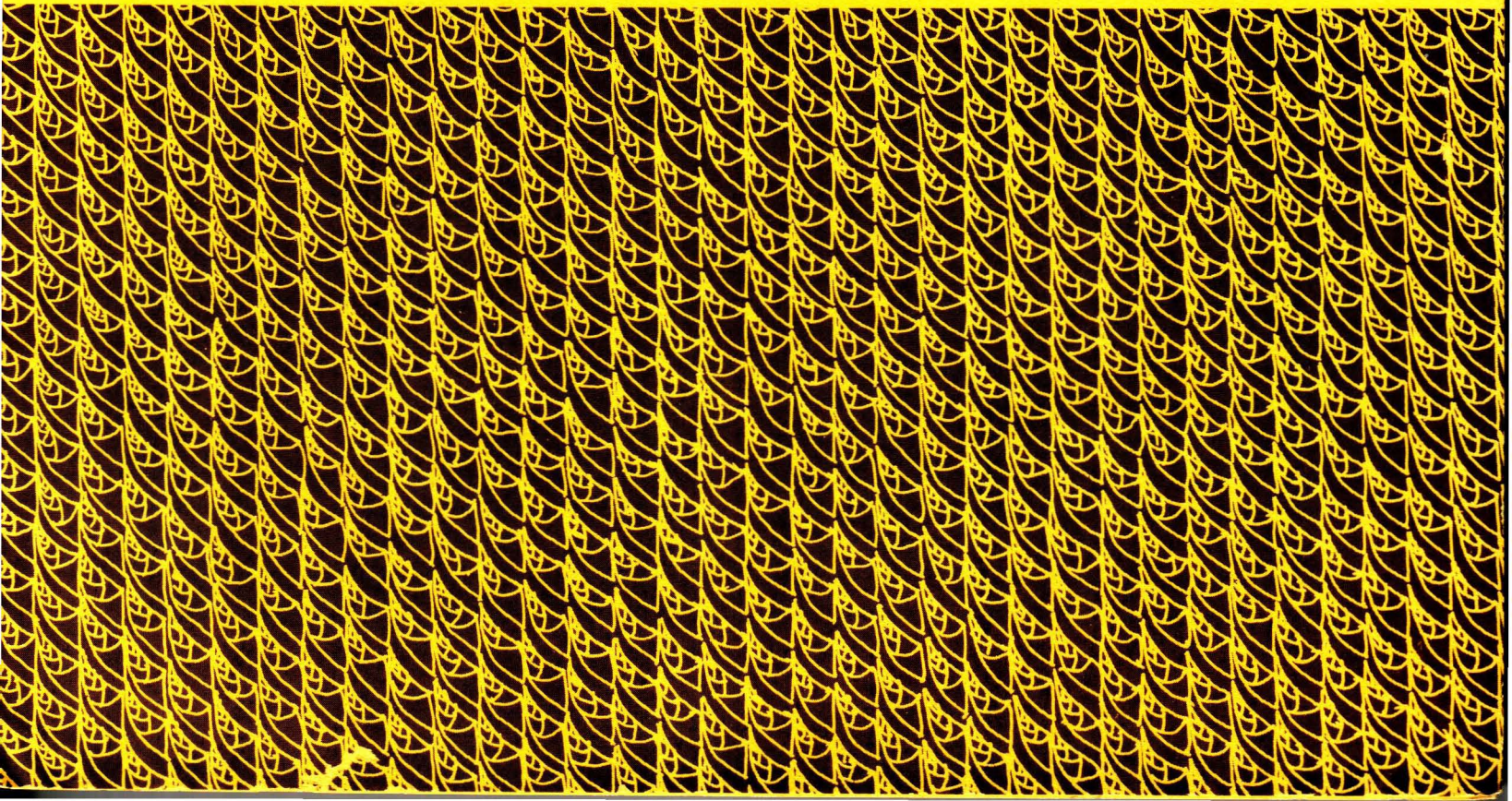
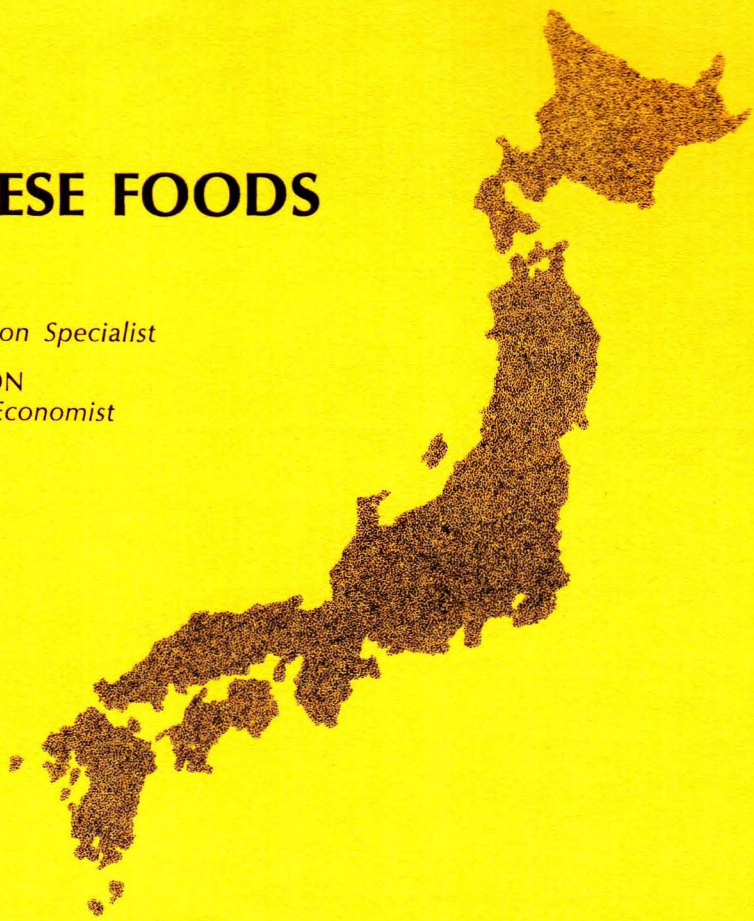


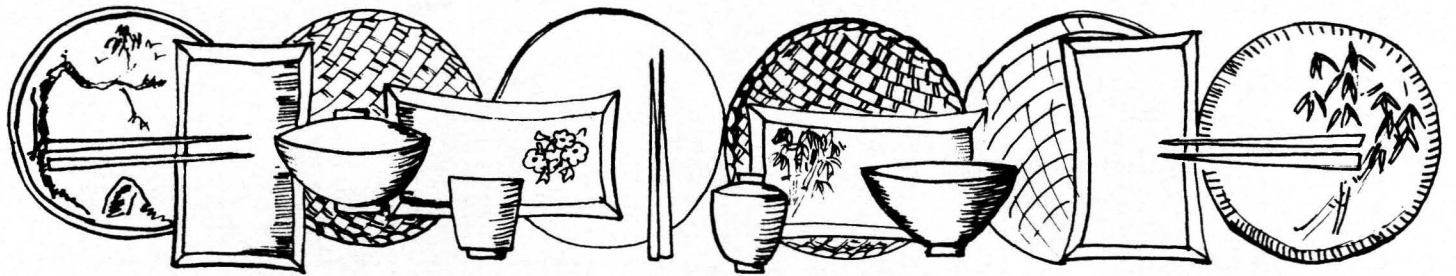


ABOUT JAPANESE FOODS

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THE NATURAL beauty of Japan, with its four distinct seasons and its charming scenery, has given the Japanese people a unique personality that, in turn, has produced a distinct type of cooking and food. The country's long history of isolation makes its foods and their preparation different from that of other nations. The discerning visitor will note that the food served in Japan exhibits the people's love of simplicity and of delicate plainness.

The basic materials required in Japanese cooking are white rice; tender fish; vegetables of varied hues; *miso*, a bean paste with a delicate odor; and green tea. The value sought in Japanese cooking is the distinct, special flavors of the various foods used. For example, if you have some fresh fish, you may prepare it without changing its natural and particular flavor, as in *suimono* (clear soups), *yakimono* (broiled foods), *mushimono* (steamed foods), *nimono* (boiled foods), *agemono* (fried foods), or as *sashimi* (sliced raw fish). Even in *namasu*, a dish of raw fish mixed with vegetables and flavored with vinegar, the taste of the fish is not lost.

Vegetables, which are available the year round, may be prepared in the same fashion as *hitashimono* (boiled greens), *nimono* (boiled foods); in miso soup or *tsukemono* (pickles). In such a way one can preserve their original, special flavor. Sometimes vegetables are used in main dishes to add flavor and fragrance.

Soybeans are used very frequently in Japanese cooking, especially in the hilly regions away from the sea where fish is scarce, or in

vegetarian menus prescribed by some Buddhist sects. They are boiled and prepared in various forms. They are made into *tofu* (bean curds), *aburage* (fried tofu), *natto* (steamed and fermented beans), *shoyu* (soy sauce), *miso*, or bean-paste to be used in cakes. Beef, pork, chicken, and eggs are often used to raise the nutritive value and improve the taste of Japanese foods.

Of the various seasonings used, *miso*, *shoyu*, sugar, and vinegar are the most important. *Sake* (Japanese wine), *mirin* (a sweet sake), and *dashi* (soup stock) are also used to give flavor to many dishes. The best *dashi* is made by boiling shavings of *katsuobushi* (dried bonito "fish") or pieces of *konbu* (kelp) in water. Sometimes monosodium glutamate and *shoyu* are used as a substitute. Instead of *dashi*, the housewife may boil *niboshi* (small dried fish) to give flavor to food. Japanese toppings for vegetables may be ground walnuts, sesame seeds, or peanuts. In addition to these, mustard, red pepper, horseradish, Japanese leeks, and the leaves and berries of several native shrubs are frequently used as condiments.

An important and distinctive part of Japanese cuisine is the arrangement of the food to be served and the choice of the various dishes used. A table with a delicious meal served on it reminds one of the beauty of the scenery of Japan, with its many seasonal changes. The dishes have the hues and texture suggestive of the entree. The servings—their arrangement and their colors—form a picture that stimulates the palate. Thus two pleasures of sight and of taste are simultaneously offered.

The typical Japanese meal is a very simple one. The three main meals vary little in menu or from day to day, except for special occasions or feast days.

A Japanese breakfast menu might be rice, miso soup, a pickled vegetable, and tea. However, today, many prefer Western-style breakfasts. The noon meal is similar to the Japanese breakfast. Most often the evening meal is the largest of the day and may consist of a clear soup, one or two meat or fish dishes combined with vegetables, rice, pickles, fruit, and tea. Most Japanese people do not desire dessert or sweets to finish their meal. *Kanten* or sweetened *azuki* (bean paste) may be served at parties or teas but are not considered necessary in daily menu plans.

The meat dish *sukiyaki* got its start in the late 1800's when the Japanese Progressives claimed the right to eat meat. Before that, it had been unlawful in Japan to kill and eat cows or horses, as they were needed to cultivate the land. In essence, *sukiyaki* is a stew, Japanese-style. The meat is cooked in a sweetened soy sauce mixture. Vegetables are added in the order of their required cooking time so as to bring out their optimum flavor and texture. The dish may be cooked at the table and served directly to each diner.

Sukiyaki is often called the "Friendship Food" since it delights so many visitors. Traditionally, the Japanese use a charcoal *hichirin* and fry pan, but our contemporary electric skillet works equally well. Derivation of the word "*sukiyaki*" is interesting. "*Suki*" may mean spade in Japanese. Farmers working in the fields would cook meat on their spades and enjoy its flavor. "*Suki*" also means "to slice thin," and today, the meat and vegetables are sliced this way. "*Yaki*" is the Japanese term "to fry." Thus, we have the term "*sukiyaki*"—meat and vegetables sliced thin and fried.

Tea to the Japanese means green tea. It is served piping hot and rather weak, but one can consume large amounts of it with relish. Liquids are a necessity with Japanese foods

because of the large amounts of shoyu used in many dishes. This fermented bean sauce can be very salty.

Rice, the staple of the Japanese diet, is eaten plain, hot or cold, white and fluffy. It also is eaten soaked in Japanese tea, in a style known as *chazuke*. Rice is the base for a wide variety of Japanese dishes. It is also the basis for many cakes and sweets, and for the national drink, *sake*.

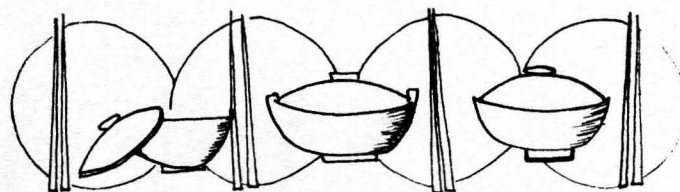
The custom of ancient Japan was to place food on oak-leaves and break off twigs from the forest trees to use as chopsticks. The same spirit is expressed aesthetically at the present time in dishes, both earthenware and lacquer, which are made in the shapes of the things of nature. Dishes are chosen to harmonize with the shape and color of the food put into them. Pottery, porcelain, and colored lacquerware are all used for food service. Always, they are chosen to harmonize with the food, and often are the object of admiration and pleasure.

A modest assortment of kitchen utensils helps the Japanese housewife prepare her meals: A bamboo basket used to hold and drain vegetables; a Japanese strainer made of wood and horsehair; an earthenware mortar with a wooden pestle; a small mat made of fine bamboo strips used to roll sushi; a wooden spatula for serving boiled rice and for stirring soups or liquids; a pair of long chopsticks for use in deep frying; a vegetable grater; and several kitchen knives—one for slicing sashimi, another for cutting vegetables, and a third for cutting fish.

In a general sense, rules of etiquette observed at Japanese meals are the same as those at some foreign meals, but the following points should be noted: (1) When various dishes appear together, the hot things should be eaten first. (2) The lid of lacquer bowls containing hot food is somewhat difficult to remove due to the steam inside, so the bowl must be held firmly with one hand and squeezed, while the lid is taken off with the other and put upside down on the table. (3) Japanese food is usually cut up conveniently for eating, so a knife is not

necessary. (4) Chopsticks are held so that one stick is between the thumb, first and second fingers and can be moved, while the other stick is held steady between the lower thumb and third finger. (5) Some of the dishes are taken up in the right hand, placed in the palm of the left, and the food is picked up with the chopsticks held in the right hand. (6) When the meal is over, all lids must be replaced. (7) Chopsticks are placed across the bowl when a person finishes eating.

There are no fixed guest menus, but in general, three types of meals are served to guests: (1) Various kinds of food are placed in separate dishes and arranged on a small tray or an ordinary table. (2) For special guests the meal is served on a set of two or three little low tables. A wedding meal is often served thus. (3) A regular dinner provided at the Tea Ceremony is a special type of menu and served in a precise order. The menu of a Tea Ceremony is probably the most elaborate of all guest menus.



OSUMASHI
(Basic Clear Soup)

6 servings

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| ¼ cup dried shrimps | ¼ teaspoon monosodium glutamate |
| 4 cups water | Green onion to garnish |
| 1 tablespoon soy sauce | |
| 1 teaspoon salt | |

Place shrimp in cup cold water, bring to a boil, and simmer for 30 to 35 minutes. Strain out shrimp, measure stock, and add enough water to make 4 cups. To this stock add soy sauce, salt, and monosodium glutamate. Reheat to simmer stage and serve. Garnish with green onions.

SUKIYAKI
(Meat with Vegetables)

8 servings

- | | |
|---|---|
| 2 pounds sirloin tip steak cut into ¼-inch diagonal strips, 1½-inches long | 1 can bamboo shoots, sliced thin |
| 2 tablespoons salad oil | 1 can mushrooms, sliced thin |
| ¼ cup sugar | 1 block tofu, cubed |
| ¾ cup soy sauce | 1 bunch watercress, cut in 1½-inch lengths |
| ¼ cup mushroom stock or water | ¼ pound green onions, cut in 1-inch lengths (include tops) |
| 2 medium round onions, sliced | ½ cup sake (rice wine), optional |
| 1 cup celery, 1½-inch strips | |

Heat oil in skillet, add meat, brown lightly. Mix sugar, soy sauce, and mushroom stock. Pour half over the meat and simmer a few minutes. When cooked, push meat to one side of pan and add sliced onions and celery. Cook about 10 minutes; add remaining soy sauce mixture, bamboo shoots, and mushrooms. Cook 3 to 5 minutes. Add tofu and watercress stems, cook 1 minute. Add green onions and watercress leaves, cook 1 minute. If desired, add ½ cup sake. Cook 1 minute, stir mixture well, and serve immediately with hot rice.

**JAPANESE FOODS
MENU**

OSUMASHI
(Basic Clear Soup)

SUKIYAKI
(Meat with Vegetables)

KYURI NAMASU
(Raw Fish-Vegetable Salad in Vinegar)

GOHAN
(Rice)

OCHA
(Green Tea)

KANTEN
(Agar-Agar Gelatin)

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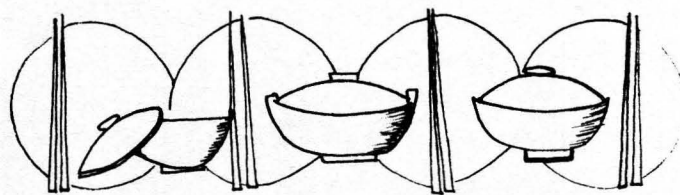
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OSUMASHI
(Basic Clear Soup)

6 servings

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4 cups water	Green onion to garnish
1 tablespoon soy sauce	
1 teaspoon salt	

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SUKIYAKI
(Meat with Vegetables)

8 servings

2 pounds sirloin tip steak cut into ¼-inch diagonal strips, 1½-inches long	1 can bamboo shoots, sliced thin
2 tablespoons salad oil	1 can mushrooms, sliced thin
¼ cup sugar	1 block tofu, cubed
¾ cup soy sauce	1 bunch watercress, cut in 1½-inch lengths
¼ cup mushroom stock or water	¼ pound green onions, cut in 1-inch lengths (include tops)
2 medium round onions, sliced	½ cup sake (rice wine), optional
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KYURI NAMASU

(Cucumber-Raw Fish Salad in Vinegar)

6 to 8 servings

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 2 cucumbers | ½ cup abalone strips, or |
| 3 stalks celery | 5 large shrimps, sliced |
| 1 carrot | to bite size |
| 1 teaspoon salt | |

Halve cucumbers lengthwise. Slice cucumbers and celery into thin, diagonal strips. Peel and shred or grate carrot. Mix vegetables and sprinkle with salt. Let stand 10 to 15 minutes; squeeze brine from vegetables. Add abalone or chopped shrimp. Season with sweet-sour sauce.

TO PREPARE SWEET-SOUR SAUCE:

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 tablespoon sugar | ½ teaspoon monosodium |
| ½ teaspoon salt | glutamate |
| ¼ cup vinegar, white preferred | |

Combine ingredients and pour over vegetables. Serve as side dish in small bowls.

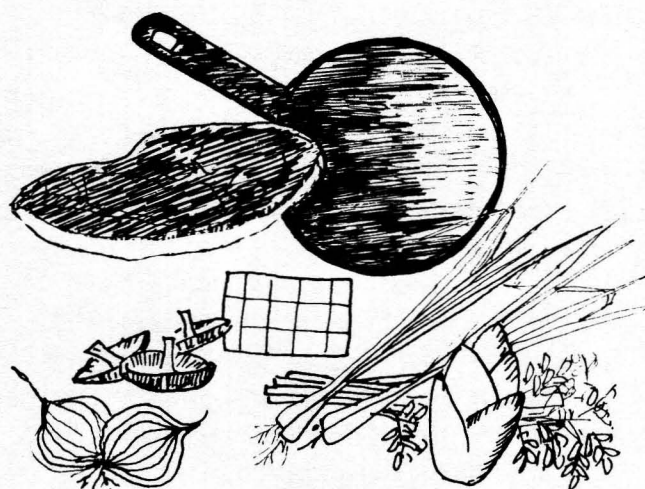
GOHAN

(Rice—Japanese Style)

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| 1 cup rice | 1¼ cups water |
|------------|---------------|

Put rice into cooking pot and rinse lightly to remove any impurities. Drain excess water. **DO NOT RINSE ENRICHED RICE**; this removes the vitamins that have been added! According to the consistency of rice desired, the amount of water may differ; however, the above proportions are most commonly used. The Japanese spread the rice evenly over the bottom of the pot, then add water. Set rice pot on the stove or hichirin and watch carefully during the cooking.* When rice and water are brought to a rolling boil, turn heat to low to reduce boiling and to keep the bubbling water from escaping over the sides of the vessel. After 10 to 15 minutes, reduce heat still lower for an additional 10-minute period, after which turn off the heat. Let the cooked rice stand, lid on pot, for another 10 to 15 minutes. This prevents sticky or gummy rice and ensures the best-flavored results.

*American housewives often prefer the more familiar double boiler, or more recently, all housewives—in the U.S. and in Japan—prefer the electric rice cooker.



KANTEN

(Agar-Agar Gelatin)

64 one-inch pieces

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 2 sticks kanten | ½ teaspoon flavor |
| 3½ cups water | extract—lemon, cinna- |
| 2 cups sugar | mon or vanilla |

Rinse kanten and squeeze dry. Shred into small pieces. Soak kanten in water for 30 minutes. Place on stove and heat until kanten melts. Add sugar and cook 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat, add extract, and strain into an 8-inch square pan. Cool until kanten hardens and cut into desired shapes.

GELATIN-STYLE KANTEN

64 one-inch pieces

- | | |
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| 3 envelopes unflavored gelatin | 3 packages flavored gelatin—cherry, strawberry, raspberry or lime |
| 3 cups cold water | 2 cups boiling water |

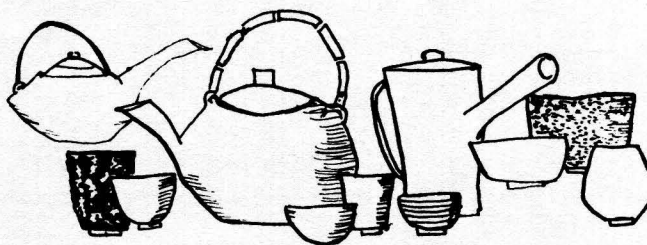
Dissolve unflavored gelatin in 1 cup cold water. Dissolve flavored gelatin in 2 cups boiling water. Combine flavored and unflavored gelatin and add remaining 2 cups cold water. Stir to mix and pour into an 8-inch square pan. Let set in refrigerator until very firm. Cut into desired shapes.

OCHA
(Green Tea)

2 to 5 servings

1 teaspoon green tea per
each cup Freshly boiling water

Green tea is not so simple to prepare as most believe. A Japanese teapot may be just large enough for two or three small cups of tea, or it may be large enough for five or six. In any case, the pot is emptied at each serving to keep the tea from becoming bitter. A scant teaspoon is used for each cup. If the tea is very delicate, the water should be just under boiling; if less delicate, the water may be bubbling vigorously. The tea is put in the pot, the water added, allowed to rest a moment, swirled gently to dampen all the leaves, and then poured. Additional water is not added until more tea is wanted. This preserves the fragrance of the liquid and prevents the tea from becoming bitter.



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