

# An English Guide To

# Udon

Sanuki

うどん

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Kagawa Prefecture in Japan, also known as "Udon Prefecture," is the udon capital of the world. Kagawa's udon, called Sanuki udon, is cheap, fast and tastes amazing. When you step into an authentic Sanuki udon shop for the first time, however, you might find yourself a little overwhelmed. The large variety of choices and the process of ordering can be daunting even for a Japanese person from a different prefecture. This official English guide to Sanuki udon will help any lost traveler make sense of it all.

## Udon Anatomy 101

### Green Onions

Green onions highlight the delicate balance of udon's simple ingredients.

### Udon Noodles

Thick wheat noodles with a firm and chewy texture are the heart of the dish. No two udon shops have the same noodles.

### Dashi

Dashi means broth. Soup for udon is usually called "kakejiru" or "tsuyu" in Japanese, but in Kagawa it's all called "dashi."

### Bowl

Usually in three sizes, the bowl is the hemispherical vessel containing the udon.

### Assembly

Combine the ingredients and start the udon experience.

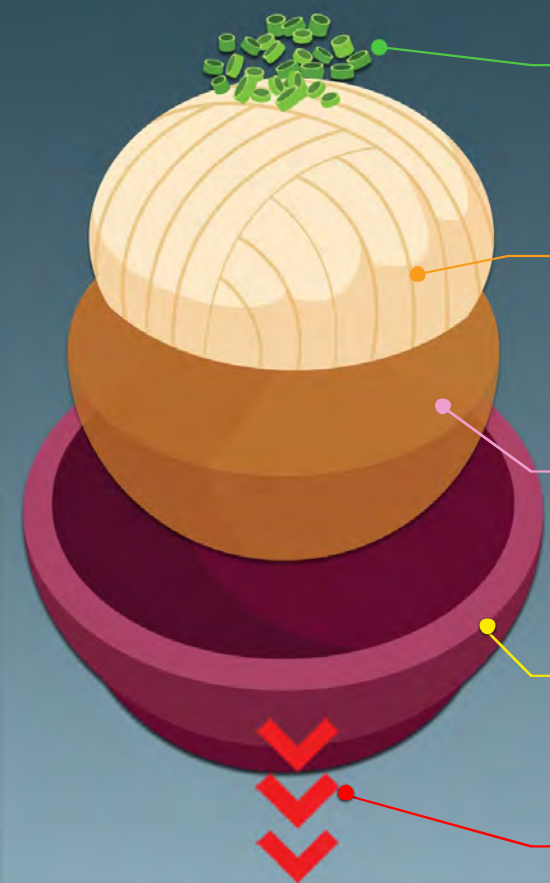


## Udon Prefecture

Kagawa Prefecture, formerly called Sanuki, is Japan's smallest prefecture and has the most udon shops per capita. Some even say there are more udon shops than traffic lights.

There are varying stories about the origin of Sanuki udon. One legend says it was introduced by Kukai, a Sanuki native Buddhist monk, after traveling abroad. Others say udon became popular after the introduction of flour in the 13th century.

One thing is certain: Kagawa has the best udon in the world, and you haven't had true udon until you've had Sanuki udon.



**Chikuwa**  
(fish cake)



**Geso**  
(squid tentacles)



**Ebi**  
(shrimp)



**Kakiage**  
(veggies)



**Tamago**  
(egg)



**Kisu**  
(smelt fish)



## Tempura (てんぷら)

These are popular kinds of tempura available at Sanuki udon shops!



# Popular Kinds of Udon

## Kaké Udon (かけ)

This is the simplest kind of Sanuki udon. Connoisseurs of udon eat kake udon to judge the quality of a shop.

**H**



### Ontama Bukkaké (温玉ぶっかけ)

Ontama (hot spring egg) bukkake is topped with a lightly boiled egg which has a soft, silky white and a firm, creamy yolk.



### Kamatama Udon (釜玉)

The udon is served straight from the kama (boiling pot) without dashi. You then mix in raw egg and dashi soy sauce. Don't add too much soy sauce!



### Wakamé Udon (わかめ)

Kake udon topped with wakame (a kind of seaweed).



### Kamaagé Udon (釜あげ)

Udon and water are taken straight from the kama (boiling pot). The udon is dipped in a small cup of strong dashi.



### Bukkaké Udon (ぶっかけ)

Similar to kake udon, but usually has less dashi with a stronger flavor. Often topped with lemon.



### Shippoku Udon (しっぽく)

An autumn and winter favorite, shippoku is loaded with delicious seasonal vegetables cooked in the dashi and poured over the udon.



### Niku Udon (肉)

Kake udon topped with sliced beef.



### Zaru Udon (ざる)

Zaru (sieve) udon is chilled udon served on a bamboo sieve. The udon is dipped in a small cup of strong dashi.



### Kitsuné Udon (きつね)

Kitsune (fox) udon is kake udon served with a large, thin piece of fried tofu, the fox's favorite food.

## Ordering Udon The Basics

Udon shops range from regular restaurants to self-service style shops where you heat your own noodles and pour your own dashi. The best way to understand how to order is to watch other customers, but this guide will help you with the basics.

### 1 Choose your UDON

First, choose the kind of udon. Also choose hot or cold (when available).

**H** Hot = atatakai  
**C** Cold = tsumetai



### 2 Choose your SIZE

There are usually three sizes.

**小** Small=shou  
**中** Medium=chu  
**大** Large=dai



### 3 Choose your TEMPURA

Tempura is standard in most udon shops. Grab a plate and snag some savory sides!



### 4 Choose your TOPPINGS

There's a topping station where you can load up on more green onions, tempura bits, ginger, and more!



### 5 Say THANKS

Before and after every meal in Japan people say the following:

**Itadakimasu**  
(before the meal)  
**Gochisousama deshita**  
(after the meal)



## For The Best Udon

## Sanuki udon is the best!



Use special flour "Sanuki No Yume 2009"



Knead with feet for extra firmness



Boil 10 - 15 min. in the kama



Rinse the udon for even firmer noodles



Reheat udon before serving



Use iriko fish for best dashi



Visit Kagawa Prefecture!

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for more information about Kagawa and Sanuki Udon, please visit: [www.sbs-english.com](http://www.sbs-english.com)

