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Oishinbo: Å La Carte, Vol. 2: Sake



Synopsis

R to L (Japanese Style)As part of the celebrations for its 100th anniversary, the publishers of the Tozai News have decided to commission the creation of the 'Ultimate Menu,' a model meal embodying the pinnacle of Japanese cuisine. This all-important task has been entrusted to journalist Shiro Yamaoka, an inveterate cynic who possesses no initiative, but does have an incredibly refined palate and an encyclopedic knowledge of food.Each volume of Oishinbo follows Yamaoka and his colleagues through another adventure on their quest for the Ultimate Menu. Now, the best stories from the hundred-plus volume series have been selected and compiled into A la Carte editions, arranged by subject.In this volume, the focus shifts from food to drink--specifically, to sake. For centuries different types of sake have played the same roles in Japan as wine and beer have in the West, from inexpensive everyday drink to refined single-batch rarities. Above all, sake has been enjoyed as an accompaniment to a meal, and after a revelatory moment at a local pub, Yamaoka decides that drink pairings must be an integral part of the Ultimate Menu. So which foods go best with which drinks? Sit down, pour yourself a glass, and read on!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Manga writer and essayist extraordinaire Tetsu Kariya graduated from prestigious Tokyo University. Kariya was employed with a major advertising agency before making his debut as a manga writer in 1974 when he teamed up with legendary manga artist Ryoichi Ikegami to create Otoko Gumi (Male Gang). The worlds of food and manga were forever changed in 1983 when Kariya, together with artist Akira Hanasaki, created the immensely popular and critically acclaimed Oishinbo.

I somehow thought I would learn more about Japanese food and drink from this volume, one of several compiling the episodes in a long-running serial. But the info is doled out in tiny tidbits, and the underlying plot becomes repetitive and tedious, as is inevitable when a serial is reassembled into a book. After a while you just don't care anymore about the tension between the young reporter hero and his father or his bosses, even if it does involve fine food and sake. Oh well.

Love this series. I wish more of the series would get translated to English. Although this is probably the most incongruent of the books in the English translations it is still worth reading. Although labeled as a Sake volume the book lacks unity and meanders away from Sake as its core topic. If you are interested in reading Oishinbo I would not start with this volume but this still has interesting information.

Even though this series is written in the manga style, I learn something new about the history of Japanese cuisine with every volume. There are even 1 or 2 recipes included at the end of each book. Even read in order, the back story of the individual characters is still a bit disjointed and hard to follow. The back stories are not that closely interwoven into the culinary stories, so character development comes in second to food. So, if you are looking for a manga story with food thrown in, try elsewhere. If you want to know more about how the Japanese developed their cuisine and a bit of their food culture, this short series may do just fine.

Fascinating facts about food and customs in Japan. Actually like that it reads right to left.

Pristine conditions

I loved this so much I ordered the entire series. Note these are compilations of various editions translated to English. Full of great info on Japanese Cuisine.

Such a great series!

Luppies from puppies. Puppies love luppies. La la la la la la la la la la la la la la

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