

## Drinking Establishments

### *Bars and Pubs*

Japan has a large variety of drinking establishments. This should not be unexpected in a nation that has some 300 000 drinking places, or about seven times as many as the United States. Most bars or pubs in Japan, however, are tiny, often being able to accommodate only six or eight customers (1982 survey).

Virtually all Japanese drinking establishments serve food, with the exception of the Western-style bars in international hotels. Many types of pubs, particularly robatayaki which serve barbecued foods, have extensive menus and serve substantial amounts of food, including full meals. The Japanese generally eat quite liberally when they go out for a drink, and often decide on their destination by the quality and variety of food that is served.

### *Ryotei*

Ryotei are officially categorized as drinking establishments, but do serve full meals. Ryotei are very expensive establishments used almost exclusively for business purposes. Dining prices per person at a ryotei usually start at \$500 to \$550 (Cdn). Guests are given a private room and are served by specially-trained waitresses. The decor, the food, and the service are of the highest quality.

There are less than half as many ryotei now as there were in 1970, and they are continuing to decline. In many ways, ryotei are a throwback to an earlier age and a different style of life. As a result, they are becoming somewhat outmoded in modern Japan.

### *Coffee Shops*

Coffee shops have developed out of the Japanese tea house tradition and are generally places to meet people, discuss business, or rest and relax.

In addition to coffee, tea and soft drinks, many coffee shops also serve simple meals such as sandwiches, spaghetti, pizza or rice curry. The food is usually inexpensive, but the coffee itself is not, costing between \$3 and \$5 (Cdn) a cup.

Coffee shops grew quite rapidly until 1982, but since then there has been a slight decline in sales. A large number of coffee shops convert very easily in the evenings into bars and some may be turning their businesses more permanently in that direction to escape the current slump.

## Other Food Services

### *Group Cafeterias*

In 1987 there were over 71 000 group cafeterias that served more than 50 daily meals each. These cafeterias can be broken down into three major types:

- **School cafeterias:** Cafeterias for school and pre-school children make up more than 56 per cent of all cafeterias. School cafeterias are more common in Japan than in Canada as most elementary schools and high schools provide free lunches to their students.
- **Company cafeterias:** Many factories and large offices provide one, and sometimes three meals a day for their employees. These meals are subsidized by the company and generally tend to be much less expensive than meals purchased "outside." Company cafeterias make up about one-fifth of all cafeterias.
- **Hospital and other institutional cafeterias:** Similar to Canada, hospitals and institutions for the handicapped, aged, orphaned, etc. house cafeterias for use by residents and staff. Cafeterias in government institutions are heavily subsidized.

Cafeteria meals tend to be rather plain, and rely to a great extent on processed and easy-to-prepare foods. In Japan rice is a major component of these meals and the fare is often similar to that described under "shokudo" above. Cafeterias appear to have reached a plateau and the number of establishments has been rising only very slowly in recent years.

### *Lodging Industry*

Food and beverage sales in the lodging industry make up about 16 per cent of the total food service market. The Japanese lodging industry is characterized by two types of establishments:

- **Japanese inns:** Currently there are about 80 000 Japanese inns and their numbers are slowly declining. Most of these inns provide two full meals a day to guests (breakfast and dinner). Dinner is especially elaborate and usually comprises about a dozen separate dishes in a traditional Japanese style. Inns offer little or no Western food.
- **Western-style hotels:** Hotels are gradually increasing their market share in Japan, and at present there are about 3 700 establishments. Similar to Canada, the international hotels provide quality restaurants and room service, but the smaller establishments likely only have a coffee shop. Hotels generally offer a mixture of Western- and Japanese-style food services.

Food and beverage sales in the lodging industry have been growing at a rate of about five per cent per annum.