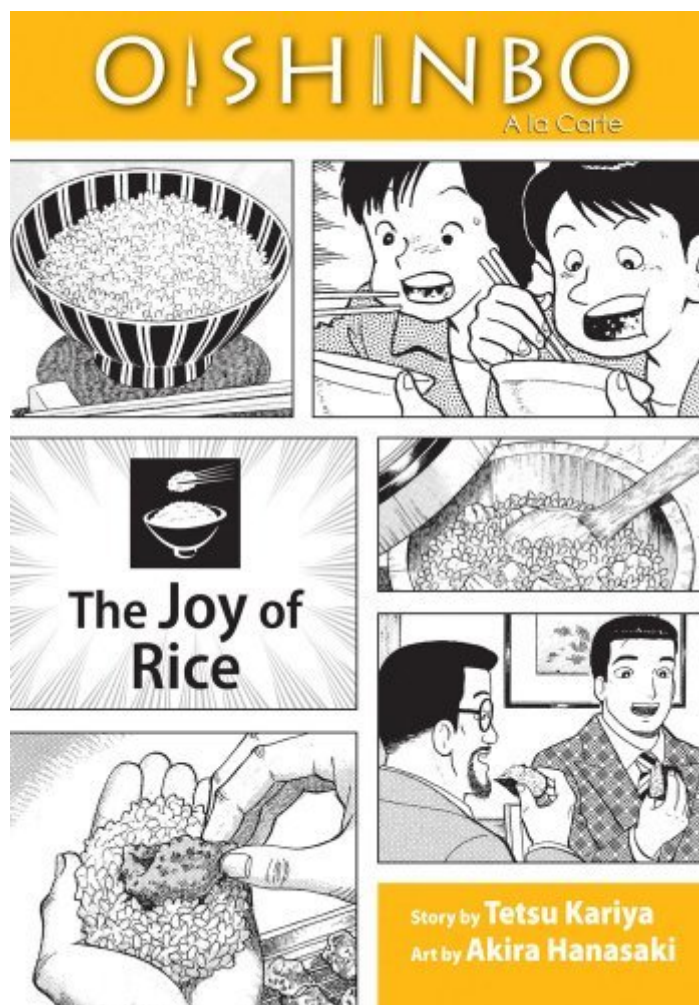


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Oishinbo: The Joy Of Rice, Vol. 6: A La Carte



Synopsis

In this volume of Oishinbo, Yamaoka and company look into the single most essential food in Japanese cuisine: rice. Cultivated for millennia, a staple meal in itself and the basis of countless other dishes, rice is an important component not only of the Japanese kitchen but also of Japanese culture. When Yamaoka is asked by TÅ•zai's head chef for help in coming up with a new rice dish, what starts out as a simple culinary request rapidly grows into a disquisition into the past, present and future of Japan's food culture.

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Customer Reviews

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.

"The Joy of Rice" is another volume in Tetsuya Kariya's 'Oishinbo' comic book series that explores the fine details of a particular area of Japanese cuisine. This particular volume examines everything you'd care to know about Japanese 'sticky' rice and then some. Over the course of 250+ pages readers will take an exhaustive journey through such topics as Brown Rice vs. White Rice, the history of rice cultivation in Japan, etiquette in eating rice and a detailed peek into rice-centric dishes (rice balls, simmered rice dishes, etc). As in other volumes in this series there is a storyline and character story but this serves as fluff to spoon feed the detailed info-tainment content to readers. All in all makes for a breezy read while educating the reader at the same time.

Great Manga for lovers of Japanese food. The entire series is wonderful. I wish they would translate more stories to English.

not the complete story, but it really helps with explaining a lot of Japanese food and culture.

Great story, interesting recipes, good knowledge about Japanese culture. I do recommend!

I was introduced to this series by a friend. I've enjoyed what has been published to date. Although not extensive, enough to learn the basics and leads me to inquire more about Japanese cuisine and its history.

The long running manga "Oishinbo" (which means "The Gourmet") is a popular best-selling manga series published by Shogakukan which has been ongoing since 1983. The series have sold 1.2 million copies per volume annually and have sold more than 100 million volumes as of Jan. 2009. Written by Tetsu Kariya and art by Akira Hanasaki, the series has won multiple awards and has had a successful anime TV series run from 1988 through 1992. And now the series is being released in the United States from Viz Media through their Viz Signature. Because there have been so many volumes, Viz has selected chapters from the popular manga and will separate each volume release by cuisine topic. So far the following manga have been released: * Oishinbo A la Carte - The making of food, beverages and utensils * Oishinbo - Sake * Oishinbo A la Carte - Ramen & Gyoza * Oishinbo A la Carte - Fish, Sushi and Sashimi * Oishinbo A la Carte - Vegetables "Oishinbo" revolves around the employees of the newspaper Tozai News with its employees commissioned to create the "Ultimate Menu", a model meal that embodies the pinnacle of Japanese cuisine. Both Shiro Yamaoka and Yuko Kurita are in charge of the project and throughout each chapter, the

series is broken down to several types of dishes or food related items and how each dish is created. Meanwhile, his father, who Shiro has had an estranged relationship for years after his mother's death, the world renown founder and director of prestigious Gourmet Club and Japanese pottery creator, Kaibara Yuzan heads the "Supreme Menu" for a rival newspaper. So, both Shiro and his father are known to butt heads many times. With Kaibara looking at his son as a person with a lacking knowledge of cuisine but Shiro, never to stand down against his father, proving that he knows more than his father thinks. For this latest volume of "OISHINBO A la Carte", the stories are broken up in chapters that relate to rice. Here is a spoiler-less summary of each chapter:

1. Recipe: Scallop Rice - Featured in one of the stories of this volume, a recipe featuring photos (in color) of how to prepare scallop rice.
2. FIRST COURSE - A Remarkable Mediocrity - An earlier story featuring Kyogoku Mantaro (The wealthy businessman), as Tozai news tries to get the millionaire to lend his Renoir for the Impressionist Art Exhibition through food but accidentally offending him. Can Yamaoka win him back?
3. SECOND COURSE - Brown Rice vs. White Rice (Part One) - A group of the judo women's team must incorporate brown rice into their diet but they dislike it.
4. SECOND COURSE - Brown Rice vs. White Rice (Part Two) - Yamaoka must show Takeko Miyamoto, supervisor of the Buiku Women's College Judo Team of why their version of brown rice is not good.
5. THIRD COURSE - LIVE RICE - Yamaoka try to help Arakawa-san how to cook rice (using a rice mill) to please her boyfriend's mother.
6. FOURTH COURSE - Companions of Rice - Yamaoka must convince the deputy prime minister why they should not import rice to Japan.
7. FIFTH COURSE - The Matsutake Rice of the Sea - Mantaro has a bet with his friend/rival on who can cook the best Matsutake rice but something bad happens to his friend.
8. Oishinbo Day-by-Day - Tetsuya Kariya talks about the act of eating rice and comparisons of Japan, Chinese and South Korea when it comes to eating certain food with rice.
9. SIXTH COURSE - No Mixing - Tozai News chef and employees want to include mixed rice into the menu but the publisher Oharo Daizo is against it.
10. SEVENTH COURSE - The Season for Oysters - Yamaoka must prove to his boss why oysters are better in the Summer and also learning of scallops with rice.
11. EIGHTH COURSE - Rice Ball Match (Part One) - The Ultimate Menu (Tozai News) challenges the Supreme Menu (Teito Times) in a rice ball competition.
12. EIGHTH COURSE - Rice Ball Match (Part Two) - The Ultimate Menu (Tozai News) showcases their rice ball recipes to the judges.
13. EIGHTH COURSE - Rice Ball Match (Part Three) - The Supreme Menu (Teito Times) showcases their rice ball to the judges.

Also, included at the end of the main chapters is a "Notes on the Text" which explains certain panels and meaning of certain Japanese words.

JUDGMENT CALL: I absolutely love "OISHINBO A la Carte". Any fans of Japanese cuisine can also read this manga and just be amazed of how enjoyable, how

witty, how smart each story is written. Not only are the readers engrossed by the characters, especially the rivalry between Shiro and his father Kaibara Yuzan, you really learn about the Japanese perspective of cuisine and also preparation. With "OISHINBO A la Carte - The Joy of Rice", this latest volume is quite interesting as in previous volumes, there was more focus on competitions between Tozai News (Ultimate Menu) versus Teito Times (Supreme Menu). But in this volume, with rice being so important in the Japanese diet, there is more focus on the history of rice in Japan and its importance. We get to learn about Yamaoka and Japanese who worry about importation of rice, we learn about the differences between short-grain and long-grain rice and also how the environment is hurting certain ingredients that Japanese loved with rice but is now becoming rare in today's society. The latest volume of "Oishinbo A la Carte" was once again enjoyable. Just to remind everyone that because the manga series has been around since 1983, there was just no way the complete series could be released in the US. So, Viz Media chose to separate each volume based on a food item/ingredient or beverage. So, you do miss out on the romantic storyline but nevertheless, the focus is on the food and for the most part, each volume is informative, educational and also very enjoyable to read. Overall, each volume of "OISHINBO A la Carte" has been magnificent and this latest volume is just as enjoyable as the previous releases. Highly recommended!

I stumbled upon Oishinbo in the neighborhood comic bookstore. The first two Oishinbo volumes I purchased were the Sashimi volume and the Vegetable volume. I liked them so much that I started collecting them all. They are not only fun to read, but they are also very informative. Plus, it makes me really understand Japanese food which makes it even more enjoyable when I eat it. The Oishinbo Rice volume is the newest of the series and my current favorite. I grew up eating rice regularly, but it never occurred to me how much you can do with rice. Maybe it's because I can't cook, but I was really impressed with all the recipes and all the explanations for the rice dishes created in this volume. This is my favorite volume of the series so far, it left me hungry after every story... but it was worth it.

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