

# The Characteristics and Similarities and Differences of Chinese and Japanese Dietary Culture

Hui Xu <sup>a</sup>, Haizhan Wu <sup>b</sup>, Xiaoyan Li <sup>c</sup>

QingDao HuangHai College, Qingdao 266427, China.

<sup>a</sup>93987301@qq.com, <sup>b</sup>407074406@qq.com, <sup>c</sup>15758127@qq.com

**Abstract.** Since ancient times, China and Japan have had in-depth exchanges in all aspects, especially in the diet. China's extensive and profound dietary culture has had a profound impact on Japanese diet. Under the influence of Chinese culture, Japanese diet combined with local conditions has become its own dietary characteristics. This paper introduces Chinese and Japanese dietary culture from three aspects: Chinese dietary culture, Japanese dietary culture and differences between Chinese and Japanese dietary culture. It is of great significance to further understand Chinese dietary culture.

**Keywords:** Dietary culture; Cultural differences; Cultural connotations.

## 1. Introduction

There are great similarities and differences between Chinese and Japanese dietary culture, which contains rich history and connotation. Japanese dietary culture is formed by the influence of Chinese dietary culture on it and its combination with local conditions and people. Especially in modern times, with the progress of science and technology and the development of the Internet, the distance between China and Japan is getting closer and closer, the communication is more and more frequent, and the influence of each other's culture is more and more. However, due to different geographical locations and social backgrounds, the cultures of their respective countries are also very different, especially the catering culture. From the source of Japanese diet, it originated in China and was accepted by Chinese movie stars.

## 2. The Characteristics of Chinese Dietary Culture

Chinese food culture has a history of more than one million years. From raw food to cooked food, then to natural cooking, until today it has developed to scientific cooking, Chinese food culture has gone through four stages. At present, China has introduced more than 60,000 kinds of dishes and more than 20,000 kinds of industrial food, which has a reputation of "the kingdom of cooking". All kinds of feasts make people salivate. Chinese diet pays attention to color, aroma and taste. Vegetarian diet is the main diet. It pays attention to supplement, especially medicinal diet and nutrition collocation. Meanwhile, Chinese diet pays attention to the harmony of five flavors and the balance of yin and yang. It can be said that Chinese diet is naturally beautiful, refreshing, nutritious, with five flavors in harmony.

In addition to the overall emphasis, Chinese diet also pays special attention to the selection of materials, select good materials, is the basic skill of Chinese chefs, is the first condition to do a good job of dishes, experienced chefs can do a good job of this work. Every dish, from the main ingredients to ingredients and then to accessories, condiments, choice has a lot of exquisite. Generally speaking, the word "refinement" and "meticulousness" are the two words. The connotation of concentrate is that when choosing materials, the variety and origin of materials should be fully considered. In addition, the season and growth period of materials should be considered, and the fresh and fat materials should be required. Detailed refers to the quality of materials, requiring good quality of materials. At the same time, according to the different dishes, the ingredients also need to be processed. China's diet has a wide range of sources and rich varieties. From the sky to the water, it is the source of Chinese diet.

### **3. Characteristics of Japanese Dietary Culture**

The primary feature of Japanese diet is omnivory. Food is the basis of all activities. Omnivorous food is the common character of human beings. It is precisely because of this common character that human beings survived from ancient times. Japanese diet culture is also dominated by omnivorous food. As early as the rope age, Japanese diet had a very clear division of labor. Men fished and women picked fruit. This fruit refers to nuts. With the beginning of rice cultivation in Japan, the dietary structure of Japan has changed, but the characteristics of omnivory remain unchanged, and with the development of society, their food is more and more abundant. After the Second World War, the height of the Japanese has been greatly improved, which is also related to Japanese omnivores, food is more abundant, and in the diet of both. The characteristics of omnivorous food in Japan are also related to the influence of Chinese Yin and Yang thought on Japanese diet culture. omnivorous food has guaranteed the balance of Yin and Yang.

The second characteristic of Japanese diet is raw and fresh. Darwin once said that turning raw food into cooked food is of great significance to mankind. However, the Japanese do not think so. Japanese diet culture believes that fresh food is the most nutritious, and only when food is the most nutritious, can it get the most nutrition. Therefore, Japanese food likes to eat raw, including vegetables, fish, meat and so on. Japanese dietary culture believes that fresh food must be eaten raw, and what can be eaten must be fresh. This is also in line with the view of modern medicine, freshness is conducive to health. The Japanese have long been aware of this, from the "Wanye Ji" in the food season is a good demonstration of the physical.

The pursuit of beauty in shape is the third major feature of Japanese dietary culture. Japanese dietary culture attaches great importance to "artistry". Especially the name of food is mostly related to natural scenery, such as pine wind, red plum roast, rocky pine, peach hill, peony cake, as well as state shore, rain, snow, geese, and so on. Everyone who has eaten Japanese food knows that besides the delicious food, the name of the food is also pleasant. For example, in Japan, there is a dish called "Sashimi Plate Style". This dish is to put a sliced fish into a large disk. The sashimi is placed on the plate. These sashimi are different from fish in color and quality. At the same time, around the fish, it needs to be decorated with Perilla leaves, which are red and green. This dish is lifelike and artistic conception is vivid. Very beautiful. From the sashimi and other dishes sold on the market, Japanese food culture attaches great importance to the beauty of art and makes people pleasant to the eye.

### **4. Comparison of Chinese and Japanese Dietary Culture**

One of the differences between Chinese and Japanese dietary culture is that Chinese dietary culture focuses on taste while Japanese dietary culture focuses on shape. China pays attention to color, fragrance, taste, shape and utensils, and emphasizes taste and harmony. Chinese dietary culture believes that if the taste is enough, the dish will succeed. Chinese people's attention to food can be regarded as the attention to taste. In ancient times, there was a famous chef named Yiyin, who was very good at flavoring soup. Even because of the good taste, Yiyin became prime minister. Japanese dietary culture pays more attention to shape, that is, the dishes made are good-looking. When it comes to Japanese food, the most famous one is raw fish fillet. The biggest characteristic of raw fish fillet is good knife skill, neat cut and good-looking. It is a dish piled up. But if raw fish fillet is eaten directly, it tastes nothing and must be dipped in other ingredients. This is also the expression that Japanese pay attention to shape but not taste, which is similar to Chinese food. By contrast, the Japanese spend their time putting out beautiful shapes.

The second difference between Chinese and Japanese dietary culture lies in the different food ingredients. Generally speaking, Chinese and Japanese diets are dominated by rice and grain, which is not like meat in Western countries. But there is still a big difference in food between China and Japan. China has a vast territory, so most of the fish eaten by Chinese people are freshwater fish. Statistics show that most of the fish eaten by Chinese people are freshwater fish. And Japan is an island country, with all sides of the sea, so the fish that Japanese eat are all sea fish, mainly raw sea

fish. This is mainly because Japan has less arable land, less developed animal husbandry and less freshwater resources.

The third difference between Chinese and Japanese dietary culture lies in cooking methods. The most typical manifestation is that the Chinese cooking style is full of frying, cooking and cooking samples, while Japan mainly focuses on cooking. China has eight major cuisines, Shandong cuisine, Sichuan cuisine, Hunan cuisine, Jiangsu cuisine, Zhejiang cuisine, Anhui cuisine, Guangdong cuisine and Fujian cuisine. There are four major flavors in Shandong, Sichuan, Guangdong and Huaiyang cuisine. In terms of cooking techniques, there are also non-typical dishes such as "slipping, steaming, steaming, frying, crispy, stewing, stewing, stewing, frying, casserole, drawing silk". Frequently used cooking methods. The Japanese diet is light, either raw or boiled in clear water, so the Japanese diet culture is also called boiling culture.

The fourth point of Chinese and Japanese food culture lies in the different characteristics of dishes. Chinese cuisine pays attention to the processing of food for many times. In the process of processing, food becomes easy to digest, which is very conducive to the absorption of nutrition, reducing some diseases caused by raw eating. When eating Chinese cuisine, it pays attention to taking advantage of the heat, and if the food is cold, it will not be delicious. On the contrary, Japanese cuisine is usually raw and seldom processed, usually dipped in seasoning or slightly processed. Japanese cuisine is mainly "cold cuisine", such as sashimi, raw vegetables and cold rice balls, which are cold. Japanese sometimes make soup for these cold foods, but they are all "warm soup".

The fifth difference between Chinese and Japanese diet lies in the different ways of hospitality. China's hospitality is about large quantities of food, so that the guests are full. Before each invitation, the Chinese people are well prepared, serving a very large amount of food. Moreover, the Chinese are particular about having more than enough, which means they have to have some left over when they eat. It is precisely because of this idea that Chinese people eat a large amount of food, which causes a great burden on the stomach and intestines. On the contrary, the Japanese pay attention to ordering meals in a proper amount, and they are very restrained. They usually have separate meals or individual meals. They only get together to eat big pot meals during the Spring Festival. A person, a tray, a meal is a Japanese meal, usually do not come together to eat, let alone between the dishes.

## **5. Conclusion**

With the development of modern society, China and Japan have further exchanges in food culture. However, from the analysis in this paper, we can see that China pays more attention to the color, aroma and taste of dishes, while Japan pays more attention to the shape, the Chinese eat more cooked food, while the Japanese mainly eat raw and fresh food. This paper analyses the differences between Chinese and Japanese dietary culture from the aspects of cooking methods, ingredients and hospitality, but the analysis is not comprehensive enough. In the future, we can analyze food and cooking methods separately. The analysis results will be beneficial to the development of Chinese dietary culture.

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