

# A bloom like flowers

[PR]

Many people are aware of traditional Japanese food such as Sushi, Tempura and Teriyaki, but Japanese set menu meals are not so well known. One of the styles of set menu, *Kaiseki*, was born from Japan's unique culture, with each dish able to be enjoyed for its prime ingredients, artistic arrangement of food, as well as the use of elegant dining ware.

*Kaiseki* cuisine consists of many small, beautiful dishes, eaten in a banquet hall, and is regarded as food to enhance the enjoyment of alcohol. It is believed that the roots of *Kaiseki* cuisine lie in the 16th century with the preeminent tea master, Senno Rikyu, who made great contributions to the evolution of the tea ceremony and who produced the menu called *Ichi Ju San Sai* (one soup and three dishes). Senno Rikyu intended this special menu to be served before drinking strong tea to satisfy an empty stomach and thus improve the taste of the tea. While *Ichi Ju San Sai* was predominantly related to the enjoyment of the popular tea ceremony, during the Edo period, from the 17th century to around the middle of the 19th century, it also became associated with the enjoyment of alcohol. In the past, the form and etiquette associated with *Kaiseki* cuisine was not as solemn as other traditional course cuisines, but could instead be enjoyed in more casual gatherings. However, in modern times it is usually available only at upscale Japanese restaurants and the more notable Japanese-style inns.




A common *Tatami* room used for banquets with *Kaiseki* cuisine in Japan.  
Photo: Zen Japanese Restaurant

The number and kind of *Kaiseki* dishes, and the order in which they



Made by the hands of a skilled craftsman, the sumptuous *Kaiseki* cuisine.

are served, varies according to the restaurant. Unlike western course menus, in each course there are at least ten different dishes. These consist of such things as *Shokuzen-shu* (an aperitif), *Sakitsuke* (food served as an accompaniment to an aperitif), *Zensai* (an appetizer), *Sashimi* (sliced raw fish), *Suimono* (a soup), *Nimono* (a boiled dish), *Yakimono* (a grilled dish), *Agemono* (a deep fried dish), *Sunomono* (a vinegared dish), *Gohan* (rice), *Tomewan* (miso soup), *Konomono* (pickled vegetables) and *Mizugashi* (a dessert). These dishes are served in order, one by one. Traditionally, *Kaiseki* dishes mainly comprised things like fish and vegetables – materials that could be obtained from the mountains, rivers and sea – but current ingredients have changed to correspond with modern tastes and also include meat dishes. In *Kaiseki* cuisine, ingredients are not solely flavoured with seasonings, rather, the natural flavours of carefully selected seasonal ingredients are used. Additionally, distinctive serving techniques as well as the use of high-quality crockery demonstrate the true quality of Japanese food. *Kaiseki* cuisine will delight both the eye and the palate as each elaborate and authentic traditional Japanese dish is brought to the table. 

Perth's Zen Japanese Restaurant creates authentic *Kaiseki* cuisine. Main dishes can be selected from such possibilities as Teriyaki dishes, seafood, and *Wagyu Kobe* steak. The highly accomplished chef demonstrates his skill with the demanding *Kaiseki* cuisine.

Information:

**ZEN Japanese Restaurant** 08 9381 4931 [www.zen-perth.com](http://www.zen-perth.com)