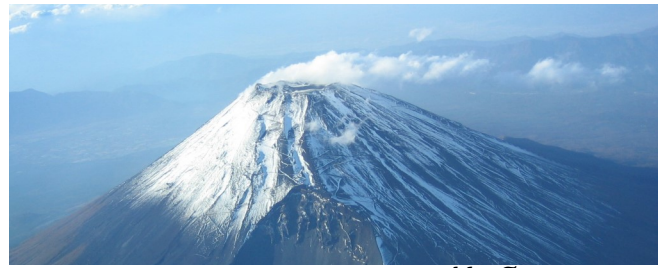


JAPAN

For the Busy Moms



Mt Fuji

Welcome to Japan!

Have you ever dreamt of traveling to Japan?

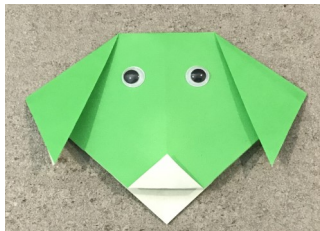
Japan is located to the East of the continent of Asia and is made up of five islands: Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku and Okinawa. Tokyo is the capital of Japan. If you are going to fly from Chicago, IL, to Toyko, you can expect to be on an airplane for about 13 hours! Over 126 million people live in Japan. The

name of the currency used is the Japanese yen and the national language is Japanese. Can you count to three in Japanese? Answer: There are two different ways to count, but the most commonly known is: Ichi, Ni, San.

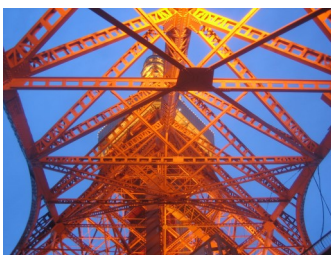


Imperial Palace

Origami Craft



Origami is the art of paper folding often associated with the Japanese culture. There are dozens of websites dedicated to origami. One of my favorite is www.origami-resource-center.com. The origami designs on this website are easy for younger children to make. The origami dog pictured above takes about 5 minutes to make. Kids can add the google eyes or they can draw them on the face. If you don't have origami paper, any kind of thin paper will work just as well!



Tokyo Tower



Sapporo Ice Festival

Family Activities

Do you have a hill in your backyard or nearby park? Do you have stairs at your house? Do you have a balcony or deck you can sit on? If not, can you step up onto a kitchen chair, couch, or ladder? Younger kids may enjoy stacking couch pillows to make their own Mt. Fuji. Anything you can find to play the role of Mt. Fuji will work. Pack a picnic lunch, "climb" Mt. Fuji and spend some time eating your picnic lunch as you look out over the landscape, wherever that may be. In order to plan your climb, I'd recommend watching a video (there are plenty available online) of climbing Mt. Fuji. For younger children, try watching a video on the Shinkansen high speed train and then use any existing train sets you may have to build your own high speed train.

Meal Plan

Traditional Japanese foods include: Sushi, Tempura—battered and fried seafood or vegetables, Yakitori—bite size cuts of chicken grilled on a skewer (a great choice for a kid's menu item), Soba—noodles made from buckwheat flour, Sashimi—raw fish without rice, and Miso Soup.

If you like seafood, then sushi or shashimi paired with miso soup are good options for dinner on your day of virtually traveling to Japan.

If you prefer the excitement of a Japanese Hibachi grill meal instead, you can bring that experience home! A simple hibachi meal consists of steak (or chicken) with steamed or fried rice and mixed vegetables as sides. See recipe. Try to provide a funny show for your kids while cooking! Can you flip an egg with a spoon and catch it in a pan?! Purchase chopsticks in advance for even more fun!

At-Home Hibachi Meal



Ingredients (Makes 4 Servings)

Main course

2 x 12 oz Sirloin Steaks
Salt
Pepper
1 teaspoon olive oil
Olive oil cooking spray

Fried Rice side dish

1 Cup uncooked White Rice
1 Egg
1/4 cup diced carrot
2 teaspoons olive oil
Olive oil cooking spray

Mixed Vegetable side dish

1 cup sliced carrots
1 cup chopped broccoli
1 cup sliced mushrooms
1/2 cup chopped celery
1 teaspoon olive oil



Tip: If you have picky eaters, you can use the oven to make some chicken nuggets while adding the steak to the oven when ready. Prepare chicken nuggets according to the package directions.

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Take the steak out of the refrigerator and allow to come to room temperature.
3. Prepare 1 cup (or more if desired) of rice according to package instructions. The time to cook the rice varies based on the brand, but it may take up to 40 minutes.
4. Cut up vegetables—carrots, broccoli, mushrooms, celery—or any others you choose or substitute. Season with salt and pepper if desired. Dice an additional 1/4 cup of carrots and set aside (for fried rice preparation) in a small bowl.
5. Heat 1 tsp of olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Pat the steak dry and season with salt and pepper on both sides. Add the steak to the pan and cook for 3-4 minutes per side. Place a piece of aluminum foil on a baking pan and lightly spray with olive oil cooking spray. Transfer the steak to the baking sheet and place in the oven. Cook for 6-8 minutes or until done as desired.
6. Heat 1 tsp of olive oil in a pan on stove. Place vegetables in the pan and cook over medium heat for 8-10 minutes or until tender.
7. Once steak is finished cooking to your desire, remove from oven and allow to rest for 5 minutes. Then, thinly slice against the grain into strips.
8. When rice is finished cooking, scramble one egg in a small bowl, spray frying pan with olive oil cooking spray, and add the egg to the frying pan to cook. Add diced carrots. Cook for 1 minute. Add rice to frying pan and stir with egg and carrots for 1-2 minutes. *Only use the amount of rice you'd like to make into fried rice. Set aside plain white rice in the portion you desire prior to making the fried rice.

WORD SEARCH



Shinkansen

Yakitori

Okinawa

Origami

Island

Kyoto

Tokyo

Soba

Sushi

Rice

Fuji

Yen