

Japanese culture and America

Often I write about English language study, but this month I will write about something different. This month my topic is Japanese culture, in the rest of the world. However the whole world would take many more pages and much more time than we have so I'm only going to write about North America. I hope the rest of the world will forgive me.

Food:

Many of you already know that Japanese food has grown in popularity in the past few years, but do you know why or how?

Japanese food began growing in popularity in the 1970s starting mainly on the west coast of the United States and Hawaii or where ever large amounts of Japanese Americans lived. At first gained popularity because it was an exciting new foreign dish for adventurous eaters. Eventually it gained a reputation for being healthy due to the fresh ingredients.



A California roll:

Rice, avocado, fake crab,
and cream cheese.

We may call it Japanese food but it has been changed to fit western tastes better. Outside of certain places you may have trouble finding Japanese food that you would be familiar with.

General Culture:

Pop culture is a big topic. So I'll focus on only the biggest events or most influential works.

People often speak about how America is influencing other countries. However cultural exchange is not a one way street. There are well known instances of Japanese artists and culture having large effect on culture in the western countries.

Movies:

Japanese directors have had influenced many American directors, including John Sturges Quentin Tarantino, the Wachowski brothers.



The Magnificent Seven was based on Seven Samurai



Many people don't know but Darth Vader's armor was inspired but samurai armor.



The success of animated movies such as Akira, and Studio Ghibli films helped to revitalize the declining animation industry in America, by showing that adults could also enjoy animation.

Japanese culture has also reached the part of the business culture in the United States. This has mainly been in the form of things like team building activities. In the early 90s many countries were eager to learn from Japan's economic success. In America the most lasting result was "Team building exercises." Many companies realized the value of having their workers feel invested in their company and team. Many companies began to organize company outings and other events that you may already be familiar with. There are no enkais but a company picnics or other parties have become more common.