

Accounting for Tastes

Photos by Lucy Birmingham

The "red lanterns" symbolizing *yakitori* shops are white more often than not, but the same variety of savory grilled chicken and other skewered tidbits are available across the counters.



A friendly chef offers grilled shrimp, Japanese style, in Shinjuku's bustling Kabuki-cho area which is packed with restaurants and eateries of every kind.



In the West it's the business lunch. In Japan it's the business dinner. Meetings over dinner and drinks late into the night are common occurrences for most Japanese businessmen. They mean long hours but also stronger business relationships.

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The "stand-up" noodle shop is the best place to get a fast and cheap hot meal. Here, construction workers guzzle a bowl in the usual five minutes.



Looks delicious doesn't it? Well, we all need a splurge now and then, so forget the diet. But wait, they're all tooth-breakers. The Japanese make the most delicious-looking plastic in the world, usually displayed in the front windows of restaurants.



Coffee shops, cafés and the like are very popular as places to meet friends, talk business or just enjoy a good cup of coffee.



In Japanese it's "makudonarudo." But as in most of the world, "McDonald's" is a household word. Fast-food chains are right at home in Japan.