

***Shōjin Ryōri* (Temple Cuisine)**

Shōjin ryōri is a type of vegetarian cuisine that is based on the Buddhist precept of *ahimsa*, or nonviolence, which prohibits killing or harming animals. *Shōjin ryōri* was originally introduced to Japan along with Buddhism during the sixth century, and it grew in popularity with the spread of Zen Buddhism during the thirteenth century. Zen Master Dōgen (1200–1253), the founder of the Sōtō school of Zen Buddhism in Japan, played a key role in establishing the cuisine as it is known today.

After arriving in China, Dōgen met the *tenzo* (head cook) of Ayuwang Temple, and he could not comprehend why the monk was troubling himself with cooking instead of focusing on his Zen practice. The monk explained that Dōgen did not yet understand what it meant to wholeheartedly engage in Zen practice. This exchange had a strong influence on Dōgen's views of Buddhist teaching, and he would later write the following in *Tenzo Kyōkun* (Instructions for the Zen Cook): “The job of the *tenzo* is Zen practice itself—to pursue the task at hand with single-minded intent. Furthermore, the act of cooking should be done with the joyful mind (*kishin*) of creation, the nurturing mind (*rōshin*) of a parent feeding their child, and the magnanimous mind (*daishin*) that is tall like a mountain and broad like the ocean, with equal appreciation for every ingredient.”

Cooking and eating with a mindset of deep gratitude and respect for any food is central to *shōjin ryōri*. Although the cuisine is vegetarian as a rule, it is contrary to the precepts given in *Tenzo Kyōkun* for monks to refuse any food—even fish or meat—that they receive as alms. A typical meal uses seasonal produce and soybean-based foods, such as tofu, in place of animal or fish products. Certain particularly pungent vegetables, such as onion, leek, and garlic, are also forbidden, as they are historically thought to stimulate human passions. Similarly, with the exception of salt, sugar, soy sauce, and ginger, spices and seasonings are generally not used in order to bring out the ingredients' natural flavors.

Flavors have great significance in *shōjin ryōri*, and *Tenzo Kyōkun* contains specific rules for how they should be handled. Each meal must harmoniously include the six flavors (*rokumi*) of bitter, sour, sweet, salty, mild, and spicy and must also possess the three virtues (*santoku*) of “light and flexible,” “clean and neat,” and “conscientious and thorough.” In other words, a meal must be balanced between those six flavors, be simple and easy to eat, be prepared hygienically and neatly, and be prepared following the proper methods and procedures. In order to achieve this, a *tenzo* must be thoroughly familiar with the qualities and correct preparation methods of each ingredient.

When *shōjin ryōri* is eaten in a temple setting, monks begin the meal by chanting the Five Contemplations (*Gokan no ge*), which were included in a work by Dōgen titled *Fushuku hanpō* (Principles for Meals):

“We reflect on the effort that brought us this food and consider how it comes to us.

We reflect on our virtue and practice, and whether we are worthy of this offering.

コメントの追加 [u1]: アトキンソン委員優良解説文

■優良解説文選定理由

-精進料理の特徴だけではなく、その意味・意義も説明されている事

-読んで勉強になる事

-英語として非常に自然で、流れる事

We regard it as essential to free ourselves of excesses such as greed.

We regard this food as good medicine to sustain our lives.

For the sake of enlightenment, we now receive this food.”