

Sweets supplant cheese as popular fondue mainstay

The Yomiuri Shimbun

Cheese fondue is a traditional Swiss hot pot dish that involves dipping bits of food, including bread and vegetables, into a melted cheese mix.

Recently, a fondue variant containing different types of sweet ingredients has become popular among people holding home parties. Chocolate, marshmallows and cotton candy are replacing cheese as the fondue mainstay.

This winter, the Shibuya branch of Tokyu Hands in Tokyo, set up a chocolate fondue specialty corner, selling about 10 varieties of ceramic pots for fondue use. All the pots are 15 centimeters in diameter and come with heating equipment.

Chocolate fondue is made by putting milk and fresh cream into finely cut, melted chocolate heated by candle. The dish is eaten by dipping fondue food cut into small pieces, including strawberries, bananas and bread, into the fondue.

Priced at about 1,500 yen, the pot is a hot seller. A Tokyu Hands spokesman said, "Buyers include families with children as well as young women who purchase the pot as presents."

The spokesman added the fondue pots will be sold until around Valentine's Day.

If marshmallows and milk are combined and heated, the mixture can be enjoyed as a fondue. Kuriyama, a Sanjo, Niigata Prefecture-based firm, sells fondue items and carries recipes on its Web site. According to a company official, melted marshmallows sandwiched between two biscuits is delicious. The guideline is three tablespoons of milk per 50 grams of marshmallows.

The Nagoya-based Royal Industries Co., producer of a household appliance that makes cotton candy, offers the following suggestion for cotton candy fondue.

The machine retails for a pricey 15,750 yen. However, adding commercially available fruit candy and similar types of hard candy, creates a cotton candy to suit one's own taste. The company recommends eating cotton candy together with fruit that have moisture and juiciness, including strawberries and mikan.

It seems there are many ready options to enjoy sweet and warm hot pot at home during this time of year.

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