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從「泓」日本料理  
的大廳望出去，能  
靜心欣賞私家瀑布  
和湖景。

A view of Mizumi's  
dining room from  
its private waterfall  
and lagoon.

# 最珍貴的 味覺獎賞

世界上最珍貴的牛肉，甚至比神戶認證的牛肉還要罕有，只能在日本一個常年積雪的海島以及拉斯維加斯的「泓」日本料理的菜單裡找到。

by Larry Olmsted

攝影 PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARBARA KRAFT





# *the* RAREST PRIZE

*Some of the most cherished beef in the world—even scarcer than certified Kobe—can only be found on a single, snowy island in Japan—and on the menu at **Mizumi** in Wynn Las Vegas.*

by **Larry Olmsted**



牛扒迷們公認日本和牛是最好的牛肉，而最優質的品種如此罕有，即使在日本也很難覓到。神戶牛、近江牛、松阪牛這些品種已經非常珍貴，但比起北海道雪花和牛來說，還是相形見绌。永利拉斯維加斯的「泓」日本料理是在北海道地區以外，全世界僅有的四間供應這種珍稀和牛的餐廳之一。

「泓」日本料理的行政總廚Devin Hashimoto多次前往日本探親——最近一次是為祖母慶賀百歲大壽——也是為了探索日本種類繁多的美食。常年積雪的北海道位於日本最北端，常年處於俗稱西伯利亞寒流的北極冬季氣候之下，是1972年札幌冬季奧運會的舉辦地。「和牛大神」Fujio Terauchi飼養優質和牛的農場就在那裡，而Hashimoto是極少數有幸參觀過農場的人。

「Asanuma博士是一位退休的皮膚科醫生，飼養和牛是他的愛好。他滿懷熱情要生產出與最著名的神戶牛肉相媲美、甚至更優質的牛肉。」Hashimoto說：「他聘請了Terauchi，並買下他的農場。農場附近是日本建立的首個鳥類保護區，所以周邊環境一直沒有受到發展破壞。他只飼養第三代或更早的北海道純種黑毛和牛，飼養過程絕不添加任何抗生素，類固醇或荷爾蒙。」這種和牛在日本被稱為「Never Ever Three」（三無添加），這種以最天然的養殖方法生產的牛肉沒有化學物質殘留，但因為成本更昂貴，美國的農場往往很少採用。

日本和牛有四種傳統品種，其中最珍貴的黑毛和種，就是著名的神戶牛和松阪牛所使用的品種。由於北海道氣候寒冷，Asanuma博士養殖的和牛，脂肪的分佈方式更厚實也更獨特。與所有高品質的日本和牛一樣，這些牛肉的脂肪分佈像大理石花紋一樣漂亮，但表面覆蓋著更厚的脂肪層。「Asanuma博士還會在冬天為小牛穿上特別定制的外套。」Hashimoto說：「但其實讓牛肉擁有獨特風味的原因，是他們使用粟米餵飼。北海道特產甜粟米，所以吃粟米的牛產出的牛奶也特別美味，別處的牛奶完全無法與之媲美。因此這裡的雪花和牛味道更鮮甜，但沒有其他和牛品種的肉味那樣濃郁，清爽而不肥膩。」神戶牛的味道過於濃厚而且脂肪含量高，一次只能吃少量，不然就會讓舌頭和味蕾都裹在濃膩的味道裡。而雪花和牛的味道雖然比大多數牛肉都濃郁，但更柔和，所以可以一口接一口地慢慢品嚐。「泓」日本料理是拉斯維加斯唯一供應雪花和牛以及正宗神戶和牛的餐廳，所以最好的品嚐方法是兩種和牛相互比較著吃，盡情享受箇中美味。

Hashimoto說：「Terauchi把畢生精力投入和牛養殖，每個月只宰殺三頭牛，我們餐廳就包下其中一頭。」Asanuma博士在札幌有一家餐廳供應自家牛肉，其餘牛肉則只在全世界其它三間餐廳供應，「泓」日本料理是其中供應量最大的一間。因為產量極少而且飼養過程極費心思，農場只會出口最優質的那部分牛肉。Hashimoto解釋：「「泓」日本料理購入的全部是A5級和牛，而美國入口的大部分牛肉都只是A4級。」A5表示牛肉是在所有評判標準中取得最高分數的最高級質量，而評判標準中最重要的是脂肪分佈的花紋，評分從1到12。「他們供應給我們的牛肉，脂肪分佈評分全部在8或以上，其他日本和牛的評分可能只有7，有時我們能拿到高達10分到12分的雪花和牛，其他地方的進口牛肉幾乎沒有達到這個級別的。」主廚說：「我們在餐桌旁設有展示各種牛肉的「牛肉箱」。拿到評分8分或9分的雪花和牛時，賣相看起來與神戶牛差別不大，但拿到10分到12分的牛肉時，就能看出牛肉的紅色較淺，脂肪分佈的花紋看起來極其漂亮。由於神戶牛仍然是日本牛肉的代名詞，客人很少知道雪花牛肉，我們的員工經

STEAK LOVERS PRIZE JAPANESE WAGYU BEEF ABOVE ALL OTHERS, AND THE BEST VARIETIES ARE SO RARE THEY CAN BE HARD TO FIND EVEN IN JAPAN. But while the most famous names, Kobe, Ohmi and Matsusaka, are scarce, Hokkaido Snow Beef makes them seem downright pedestrian by comparison. Mizumi in Wynn Las Vegas is one of only four restaurants in the world outside Hokkaido serving the world's most exclusive meat.

Devin Hashimoto, Mizumi's Executive Chef, has traveled to Japan several times—most recently for his grandmother's 100th birthday, and to explore the nation's varied cuisine. Snowy Hokkaido is Japan's northernmost island, sits in the middle of an arctic weather pattern known as the Siberian Express, and was home to the 1972 Sapporo Winter Olympic Games. Very few outsiders have traveled to the farm where “the Wagyu Meister,” rancher Fujio Terauchi, raises these select cattle, but among those who know beef, it is legendary.

“Dr. Asanuma is a retired dermatologist who has made cattle his hobby, and his passion is to outdo the more famous Kobe beef,” says Hashimoto. “He hired Terauchi and bought this farm, which is surrounded by a bird sanctuary, keeping the whole area undeveloped. He raises only third-generation or older pure Hokkaido-born Kuroge Washu cattle, raised entirely without antibiotics, steroids or hormones.” Known as “Never Ever Three,” this is the most natural way to produce beef with no residual chemicals, but is rarely practiced on U.S. ranches because it is costlier.

There are four historic breeds of Japanese *wagyu*, or cattle, the most prized being the Japanese Black, or Kuroge, used for the more widely known Kobe and Matsusaka beef. But because of the cold weather on Hokkaido, Dr. Asanuma's animals develop a thicker coat and different fat dispersion. Like all high-quality Japanese wagyu, they are extremely well marbled, but a bit more of the fat ends up on the surface for insulation. “He even made special custom jackets for the calves to wear in winter,” says Hashimoto. “But what really makes the meat special is Hokkaido's famous sweet corn, which makes dairy products here excellent—the milk is so amazing, you can't compare it with anything in this country. For the Snow Beef, it makes the beef sweeter and not as intense as other types of wagyu, a really clean taste, less fatty.” Kobe is so rich and high in fat that it can only be consumed in small quantities before it coats the tongue and overwhelms the taste buds, while the slightly milder Snow Beef can be enjoyed longer, bite after delicious bite, though it is still much richer than most beef. Mizumi is the only restaurant in Las Vegas serving it, but it is also the only one serving Snow Beef and authentic imported Kobe, so the most special way to indulge here is to try them side by side.

“Terauchi has devoted his entire life to raising these cattle, and they only slaughter three head each month, and we have committed to taking one of those,” says Hashimoto. Dr. Asanuma owns a restaurant in Sapporo that serves his beef, and the remainder goes to just three other spots around the world, with no one getting as big an allotment as Mizumi. Because so little is produced and it is done so carefully, the farm exports only the very best of its herd. “[Mizumi gets] all A5 grade, whereas a lot of Japanese beef coming to this country is A4,” he explains. A5 is the highest possible grade and means top scores in all subcategories for which beef is judged, the most important being the marbling score, which runs from 1 to 12. “He sends us nothing but marbling score 8 or higher, while other Japanese beef can be 7, but we also sometimes get the very highest, 10 to 12, almost unheard of with other imported beef,” the chef says. “We have this thing we call the ‘beef box’ that we display our meats in tableside, and when we have Snow Beef with a score of 8 or 9, it looks pretty similar to our Kobe, but when we get 10 to 12, it's a lot lighter red, with an amazing ➤



著名的雪花和牛來自於  
第三代或更早的  
北海道純種黑毛和牛。

The famous Snow  
Beef are third-  
generation or older  
pure Hokkaido-born  
Kuroge Washu cattle.



位於北海道的知床五湖，  
獲聯合國教科文組織評選  
為世界自然文化遺產，  
相傳由神的五個指印形成。

The five Shiretoko Goko  
Lakes, a UNESCO World  
Heritage Site in Hokkaido,  
have been described as  
looking like the result of a  
god's five fingerprints.





提前打電話為這一生一次的  
味覺盛宴預訂最好的位  
置吧：「泓」日本料理的  
浮亭餐桌。

Call well in advance to  
enjoy a once-in-a-  
lifetime meal from the  
best seat in the house:  
Mizumi's floating  
pagoda table.



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Devin Hashimoto大廚是  
為數不多參觀過北海道  
「和牛大神」農場的人

Chef Devin Hashimoto  
is one of only a  
handful of chefs to  
have met Hokkaido's  
"Wagyu Meister."

過培訓，會把個中區別講解給客人聽，在視覺上的直觀比較很重要。人們通常認為雪花和牛就是神戶牛，因為油脂花紋看起來差不多，這時候用照片就能充分說明個中區別。」

Hashimoto會在日本之旅中嘗試各種日本美食，為他的季節性菜單加入新的想法。新菜單通常在新季節開始的第一天推出，比如9月21日。「傳統的日本料理內涵極其豐富，從繁複精細的懷石料理到街頭小食，我總是能在其中找到新靈感。但唯獨對於雪花和牛，我不會玩弄烹飪花樣，只會用兩種簡單直接的烹飪方式去處理，因為我想要展示牛肉本身的美味。但我會改變配菜來呼應季節的變換。因此在秋冬季，我使用了大量的根莖類蔬菜，以及蘋果，石榴等等，用爐端燒的方式來燒烤。」這種爐端燒方式在傳統上通常用於烤雞肉串，所使用備長炭在燃燒時能產生高溫而且很少油煙。

雪花和牛在「泓」日本料理作為開胃菜或主菜供應。用於開胃菜時會先稍微炙烤，切成薄片奉上，然後由廚師在客人面前用熱石烤熟。「這樣客人們可以欣賞到生牛肉的美。」菜式份量是2安士的可分享份量。作為主菜的話，可選4、6或8安士的牛扒，煎熟後配以時令配菜奉上。日式牛排通常都是無骨，而且因為味道豐富濃郁，4安士的份量已經足夠一人食，更大的份量則可以大家分享。

Hashimoto還設計了小份量的品嚐菜單，包含每日或每週的特選菜式，還有加入了更多蛋白質菜式的升級版，比如海鮮或鵪鶉，神戶牛或雪花和牛，以鼓勵客人嘗試多些菜式，也是非常實惠的選擇。「相比起單獨點菜，這個品嚐菜單其實更實惠。如果有回頭客之前已經品嚐過這些菜式，可能想要試些不一樣的，我會把肉煎一下配上米飯做成握壽司，或是用爐端燒的方式做串燒。」雪花和牛可能是一生中品嚐一次的味覺盛宴，但你可以用更多方法來享受它的極致美味。

striation of marbling. It's rare for customers to come in knowing about Snow Beef, and our staff is trained to educate them. People always think Snow Beef is Kobe because of the marbling, and in this case a picture is worth a thousand words."

On his trips, Hashimoto tries all kinds of cuisines to come up with new ideas for his seasonal menu, which usually changes right on the first day of the season. "Traditional Japanese food has so many aspects, from intricate kaiseki to street food, and I always bring back influences. But with Snow Beef I don't play around—we serve it two straightforward ways—because I want to showcase the beef itself. But I change the sides to reflect the changing seasons, so in fall and winter I use a lot of root vegetables, apples, pomegranates, , and we cook a lot of them on the *robata* grill." This is a very traditional method of open fire cooking often used for yakitori, which uses *binchotan*, a type of Japanese hardwood charcoal that burns cleanly and at very high temperatures.

At Mizumi, Snow Beef is offered as either a starter or main course. The appetizer is done *tataki* style, raw thin slices presented tableside and then cooked in front of guests on a hot stone, "so they can appreciate the visual of the raw beef." As an entrée, a 4-, 6-, or 8-ounce steak is pan-roasted simply in the kitchen and served with seasonal sides. Japanese steak is always boneless, and because it is so rich, even four ounces is a lot for one person, so the larger portions are usually for splitting.

Hashimoto also creates a tasting menu that varies on a daily or weekly basis, but he always offers the option of upgrading the protein, be it seafood or quail, Kobe or Snow Beef, in order to encourage guests to try it. "You get a good deal on the tasting menu versus à la carte. If we get repeat guests who have had it before, they might want to try it a different way, and I have seared it and served it on rice as *nigiri* sushi, or skewered it and cooked it over the charcoal *robata* grill." Snow Beef may be a once-in-a-lifetime meal, but that doesn't mean you can only have it once. 🍴



## 雪花和牛的 絕配飲品

雪花和牛的味道如此濃郁，大多數食客都會像在經典牛扒餐廳裡的做法一樣，點大杯紅酒來配它。但「泓」日本料理有更獨特的追求，精心設計了一長串的清酒酒單。「某次我們舉辦了一場大型派對，吃了很多和牛也喝了很多清酒，我想大概喝空了八瓶清酒。客人們非常開心。」行政總廚DEVIN HASHIMOTO回憶說。過去兩年來，AARON BAEK這位資深侍酒師對「泓」日本料理的酒單進行了改善，加入了採用日本威士忌、梅子利口酒和清酒製作的特色雞尾酒，還有日本精釀啤酒、SOCHU（日式蒸餾酒）、頂級美國和歐洲葡萄酒，更有超過60多種清酒。

BAEK原本是傳統的葡萄酒侍酒師，在韓國的一間葡萄酒學院學習，但是當他到澳大利亞轉行去做壽司和清酒餐廳時，職業生涯從此轉變了方向。「我學到了很多關於清酒的知識，有一個朋友是澳大利亞唯一釀造清酒的人，所以我還學到了很多關於清酒製作的知識。」這激發了他前往日本學習高級課程的決心，並取得了專業證書。永利公司的葡萄酒執行總監MARK THOMAS聘請了BAEK，他表示：“AARON非常謙虛好學。全世界只有不到200人完成了這個高級課程。”

「我希望讓選酒的過程更簡單，讓客人更輕鬆地嘗試和享受清酒。我會問他們喜歡喝什麼樣的葡萄酒，並用近似的術語來描述葡萄酒和清酒。我加入「泓」日本料理之後，把清酒按等級分列在酒單裡：JUNMAISHU（以米和水釀成的清酒），JUNMAI GINGO（以精細打磨的米釀成的清酒），JUNMAI DAIGINJO（以極度精細打磨的優質大米釀成的精釀清酒），在每個類別中，他為不同級別的清酒加上口味和內容的詳細描述，包括米的打磨程度，比重和酸度等等。還有15種清酒以杯裝或玻璃瓶供應，品種包括有未過濾（霧狀）、溫酒和梅子清酒，還有四式“侍酒師清酒之旅”系列，分別包括了三種清酒和不同的主題。

他最近沉迷於研究季節性短暫供應的清酒。他說：「這些清酒只供應兩三個月，在美國很難買到，我非常高興能夠在「泓」日本料理推出，這對於客人來說將是新鮮體驗。」至於與雪花和牛配對的清酒？他說：「如果客人想喝紅葡萄酒，我會推荐一支味道濃郁的加州紅酒，BARBARESCO或AMARONE。但是，我也可以為他們挑選一款味道濃郁的清酒，與和牛同樣是絕配。」



Mizumi's Snow Beef is best served unadorned and with an equally rare sake.

「泓」日本料理的雪花和牛與樸素簡單的烹飪手法是絕配，配上風味樸拙的清酒更佳。

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## WHAT TO DRINK WITH SNOW BEEF

BECAUSE SNOW BEEF IS SO RICH, most diners order the same big red wines they would at classic steakhouses, but some get caught up in the spirit of Mizumi and instead turn to the restaurant's lengthy and well curated sake list. "We had a big party the other day that had a lot of Japanese beef and a lot of Japanese sake—I think there were eight empty bottles. They had a good time," recalls Executive Chef Devin Hashimoto. For the past two years, Aaron Baek, a certified sake sommelier, has overseen and improved Mizumi's beverage program, which includes signature cocktails made with Japanese whiskey, plum liqueur and sake; Japanese craft beers; *sochu* (a traditional Japanese distilled spirit); top-shelf American and European wines; and more than 60 types of sake.

Baek began as a traditional sommelier, studying at a wine academy in Korea, but his career changed gears when he moved to Australia to take a job in a sushi and sake specialty restaurant. "I learned a lot about sake, and I had a friend who was brewing one of the only sakes in Australia, so I learned a lot about how it is made." That inspired him to move to Japan to take an advanced course, which he describes as a certificate. "Aaron is very modest," says Mark Thomas, Wynn's Corporate Executive Director of Wine, who hired Baek. "Less than 200 people in the entire world have completed that course."

"I try to make it easier for people to try and enjoy sake by simplifying things. I ask them what kinds of wine they like to drink and use the same terminology to describe wine and sake. Since I joined Mizumi, I divided the sake program by grades: Junmaishu (pure sake made from just rice and water), Junmai Gingo (pure sake made from highly polished rice) and Junmai Daiginjo (craft-made pure sake from very highly polished rice)." In each section, he has added detailed written descriptions of the meaning and flavors of each grade, and for each sake includes rice polishing levels, specific gravity and acidity specifications. There are also 15 sakes served by the glass or carafe, specialty styles such as unfiltered (cloudy), warm and plum sakes, and four "Sommelier Sake Flights," each with three samples and a different theme.

His latest fascination is short-lived seasonal sakes. "They last only two or three months and are very hard to get in this country, and I am very excited to be introducing them at Mizumi, where they will be new for many of my customers," he says. As for pairing with Snow Beef? "When people want red wine, I recommend a full-bodied California, Barbaresco or Amarone. But I can also pick you a very rich and full-style sake that will be perfect."



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