

Outside of the Box: Creative Concoctions With Resobox



Here at Ace, we are perpetually inspired by the creativity of the people we work with. The healthy, delectable products we distribute never cease to amaze us and we are continually impressed by the new ways that our NYC restaurant and café customers find to use these items. We recently sat down for a chat with Takashi Ikezawa, founder of [Resobox](#), a Japanese art gallery and café which also offers night classes in areas of Japanese culture such as martial arts, ink painting, and dance in Long Island City, Queens. Ikezawa first partnered up with Ace when the café was launched two years ago and we were excited to hear that they have been using [Eden Foods'](#) organic soymilk, which Ace distributes, in many of their recipes.

Can you tell us about the origins of Resobox?

2.5 years ago I started Resobox, featuring Japanese culture and art. Queens is a very diverse area and I thought that the people living around here would accept Japanese culture. I wanted to cover as much of Japanese culture as possible and we wanted to introduce our Japanese food to Queens so I opened the small café inside the gallery. Some people think this is a café, some people think this is an art gallery.

Why is organic/natural food important to your company?

Of course our mission is to introduce Japanese culture to the neighborhood and Japanese people have always embraced organic and natural food. The coexistence between nature and human beings is an important aspect of our culture...it's in our nature.

Why did you decide to use [Eden's soymilk](#) in your recipes?

Eden's soymilk doesn't have a distinctive smell so even people who don't like soymilk love this and some people even don't realize that it is soymilk. I tasted many brands of soymilk before I started the café and ended up using this because it is organic and naturally sweet. Also, our space is not that big and there isn't much room for refrigerated foods so soymilk is perfect for us. Everything about it is perfect for us.

Have you received positive feedback from your customers ?

Yes, definitely. We never sell the soymilk by itself—we always mix it with something else in our recipes and people love that. Some people even didn't notice that it is soymilk. If we say, "We use soymilk" some people are like, "I don't like the smell" or whatever. But I always say, "Please taste it first" and the Eden soymilk is totally different, it's like cow's milk. And, of course, everyone likes healthy food.

I always talk about the positive effects of soymilk, which has monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids in it and can inhibit the transport of cholesterol into your bloodstream. [It also can] inhibit the intestinal absorption of fat, which helps with weight loss. And it also contains lots of fiber. We want to introduce not only Japanese culture but also healthier eating culture to the community.

Which of your recipes use Eden's soymilk?

One of the [menu](#) items that we recommend to people is Japanese potage with soymilk and miso; we use Eden's soymilk, sweet corn, miso and edamame. It was one of our café manager's ideas and it is one of our best products in the café. Nobody would think of it, but miso and soy are perfectly matched and I think that it does not exist anywhere else in the world, including Japan. Also, miso and soymilk both are soy-based foods, so the soup is perfect for vegetarian and vegan people. With the cold weather, it's a soup that makes you feel relaxed. Plus, Japanese edamame is becoming popular in NY and people love it. We also offer a soy latte with matcha imported from Japan. There are lots of cafés in Japan that sell matcha lattes but in New York I have never seen it before. Our Japanese Thai tea uses the soymilk, too.

Who tends to eat in the café?

Our target is mainly "working people" as well as people who are living around here, of course. Weekdays, lunch time, people usually buy takeout and eat it in their office. I don't like that. I want them to get out of their office and have healthier food in a healthier environment, instead of eating in front of their computer. So I hope that people are coming to our space to have a healthy lunch surrounded by beautiful artwork.

Is there a particular aspect of Japanese culture that you would like to introduce to Queens but have not yet found a way to do so?

Yes...we would like to provide everything we have with Japanese hospitality called *Omotenashi*. We are welcoming to everyone who enters our space even though they may not be familiar with Japanese culture. We want them to come and talk to our staff...because culture is not a thing, but people. Some people might think this minor culture, Japanese culture, is far from their interests which is one of the biggest reasons why they don't show up to our space. But we...are welcoming to everyone regardless of their sex, age, nationality, or any kind of differences that we have. So I personally want to share this mindset with the neighborhood. Serving food is just one of the tools to mingle with people. And once we can share ideas, we want to collaborate with them so we can be more confident as a member of the neighborhood.

Special thank you to Resobox and Takashi Ikezawa!

If you're interested in buying Eden Foods' delicious organic soymilk, featured above, email Ace at orders@acenatural or call us at (718) 784-6000.

Images: Courtesy of Resobox

Be Sociable, Share!