

- **Meals taken with oryoki do not include aromatics (onions, garlic, leeks or shallots).** Traditionally, they're considered stimulants, which is problematic for food designed to support zazen. Practically, they get into the setsu tips and wiping cloths and linger for the rest of the sesshin. The use of ginger, pepper and other spices is fine.
- **Meals taken with oryoki do not include anything oily.** The sets are washed at the table and only with hot water, which will not dissolve oil and instead merely spreads it all over everything including the cloths. A film of oil also makes the bowls slippery and increases the chances that a bowl of hot water or soup will end up in someone's lap. Think carefully before serving salad dressing, fried or buttery foods, or greasy melted cheese. Oil comes from a number of sources.
- **Whatever is served must be edible with the bowls and utensils contained in the oryoki set.** Participants don't have the option to cut items with a knife and fork, so food must be bite sized or divideable with chopsticks. They must also be easily containable in the bowl for which they're intended; otherwise drips and spills on clothing or the table are inevitable.
- **Make sure everything served is edible.** Remove seeds, skins, wrappers, toothpicks or anything participants can't eat. If that's impossible, with umeboshi for instance, be sure to send out small dishes to be send down the rows so that participants can discreetly discard inedibles before washing and rewrapping bowls.

- Breakfast includes three to four dishes, lunch includes three dishes, and dinner includes only two. In general, the first bowl is grain or pasta, the second is protein and the third is produce (cooked, pickled or raw). The fourth "dish" in the morning can be a condiment for the first bowl, like gomashio, brown sugar, nori flakes, etc. The first bowl is not used at dinner; food is taken only in bowls two and three. Thus there is no first bowl food at dinner.

Things to prepare

- First bowl food plus serving utensil and trivet
- Second bowl food plus serving utensil and trivet
- Third bowl food in one serving bowl for each four participants plus serving utensils
- Condiment (if served with breakfast) in one serving dish for each four participants plus serving utensils
- Two damp table wiping cloths on small plates
- At lunch, two small plates and spoons for collecting food offerings
- One small kettle of hot water for each four participants plus hot pad
- One small water collection bowl for each four participants
- Two small dishes for collecting inedibles, if necessary