

# McDonald's Japan's first-ever rice burgers are here, and we try them before they go on sale

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**We weren't sure if a bacon cheese rice burger was a good idea, and now we know if our fears were justified**

Earlier this week, McDonald's Japan piqued our interest with a mysterious tweet about wanting to eat rice. Then the very next day, it got our stomachs growling by announcing the first-ever McDonald's Japan rice burgers, which replace the sandwiches' buns with lightly grilled discs of rice.



There was, however a problem: the rice burgers don't go on sale until February, but we wanted to eat them *immediately*. Luckily, thanks to our connections in the burger world, we were able to secure a spot at a pre-launch press conference where we got to try the rice burgers before they go on sale to the general public.

Appearing at the event were comedy duo Nights and rugby player Fumiaki Tanaka, but we were there to eat burgers, not gaze at stars. Before long, though, McDonald's representatives served us the trio of sandwiches we'd come to taste.



Each rice burger is made with 100-percent Japanese rice, but the **Gohan Teriyaki** (*gohan* being the Japanese word for "rice") is the most "Japanese!" option of all, and was also our personal favorite out of the bunch. McDonald's wisely decided against using a super-sweet glaze, and instead has put together a teriyaki

with a touch of citrus flavor to it, which compliments the beef patty and rice so wonderfully that eating the Gohan Teriyaki isn't a quirky novelty, it's something we could see people ordering for years to come.



But even with that auspicious start, we were a little worried about the Gohan Bacon Lettuce Burger. Smoky bacon and melty cheddar cheese work great in a regular hamburger, but isn't pairing them with rice a serious mismatch? It only took one bite to change our minds, though. While we'd never have thought to put this combination together on our own, having all those seemingly different ingredients hit your taste buds at the same time is immensely satisfying, and a far more harmonious symphony of sensations than we'd ever have imagined.



Finally, we came to the **Gohan Chicken Filet O'**, with a chicken cutlet, lettuce, and aurora sauce. Honestly, this was our east favorite out of the three, primarily because the crisp texture of the chicken keeps it from really mixing with the other elements as you chew. It's still a very tasty sandwich, just not on the same level as the Gohan Teriyaki and Gohan Bacon Lettuce Burger, in our opinion. That said, one "good" and two "excellents" is a very impressive showing by McDonald's Japan. Unfortunately, we weren't allowed to take any extras with us on our way home from the press conference, but thankfully the McDonald's rice burgers will be rolling out nationwide on February 5, when they're officially added to the "Yoru Mac" ("Nighttime McDonald's") menu that branches start serving at 5 p.m. Right now, they're scheduled to be sold until mid-May, but if enough people show a willingness to ditch buns for rice, we wouldn't be surprised if the rice burgers eventually earn permanent spots on McDonald's menu.

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