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## Internal Google News

## The Art of Ramen



*This is the first article in a new series on Moma focusing on the often quirky culture within the Google offices world wide. For those of us not traveling around world, this series will be a way to find out more about your*

*fellow international Googlers from the comfort of your desk.*

*We would love submissions of ideas or stories about what makes your office a unique place to work. Please email [Christine Knight](#).*

*We'll start our journey in Tokyo, Japan, with lovers of a particular kind of Japanese noodle.*

*[Ramen](#) is a Japanese dish of noodles served in broth, dating back to the late 17th century. Now one of Japan's most popular dishes, these once-humble noodles have incited some Googlers in Tokyo to start a quest to find the best ramen.*

*Tokyo noodle-lover [Masa Kawashima](#) is one such Googler on the hunt for the perfect bowl. We had the chance to ask him about the intricacies of eating ramen and the Ramen Club (one of many [clubs](#) in the Tokyo office).*

***Christine Knight: How did the club start?***

**Masa Kawashima:** I lived in Los Angeles for seven-and-a-half years and came back to Japan last year. I love ramen and Japan is a ramen heaven. Since I had been away for so long I had no idea about the trends in ramen, like where to find the great Ramen restaurants. Then, I heard about Yuichi Omata, who is a ramen master at Google Japan. I sit at his feet to get instructions. We both discussed our mutual love of ramen and decided to make a ramen club to enjoy ramen together.

***CK: How often do you go out for ramen?***

**MK:** Bi-weekly. But members are free to go out to eat ramen anytime and share their reports with members. We walk around not only Shibuya (where [Google Japan](#) is) but also sometimes ride trains to enjoy Shinjuku and Ebisu Ramen restaurants.

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**CK: How many members do you have?**

**MK:** We have 47 members (approximately one-fifth of Japan Googlers, making it one of the biggest clubs in Google Japan).

**CK: What makes a truly great ramen noodle dish?**

**MK:** Ramen is an art. What makes truly great art? Passion, skill, time, audience (customers) and continuous effort and talent. When you eat truly great ramen, you cry, and right after the crying, can not stop smiling.

**CK: How many restaurants have you tried?**

**MK:** So far, as club activity, [12 great restaurants](#) mainly in Shibuya.

**CK: Are there any really great ones you've found that you go back to frequently?**

**MK:** Of course. In the Shibuya area, Musashi, Ichiran, and Suzuran would be the ones.

**CK: Why Ramen?**

**MK:** Ramen is an art. Ramen can move the heart. Ramen is not a rich man's food. From kids to elders, everyone enjoys Ramen. Ramen originated in China and has evolved in Japan, so it has a lot of different styles in each region and tons of variations, including mixing with western cultures in recent times.

Imagine all the people living with ramen and enjoying, smiling, crying from eating ramen together. You may say that I am a dreamer but I am not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will be as one by ramen.

**CK: Anything else you want to tell Googlers about the Ramen Club?**

**MK:** We are enjoying it seriously and [recording our achievement](#) on My Maps. We also welcome guests to Tokyo. [Dennis Hwang](#), the Google doodler, cried when he enjoyed ramen with us.



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