

# ramen noodles

**N**early 50 years later, the directions remain impossibly simple — boil water, cook for three minutes, add flavor pouch, stir, eat.

As anyone who has ever been a poor college student, a lazy bachelor or just a plain bad cook knows, we speak of Ramen Noodles. But for all the folks who take a yearly dive into either the packet form or the bowl form of the noodles, only a few know the name of Momofuku Ando, who died Jan. 5 at the age of 96.

Ando, you see, invented the cost-conscious culinary delicacy, and his story deserves to be told. In 1948 Ando was tossed into a Japanese jail for tax evasion, though he said he gave the unreported money to students for scholarships — how ironic, since they would later become a large part of his empire. After two years in the clink, Ando tried and tried to become successful in business.

In post-war Japan, food shortages were a major problem, and Ando, seeing endless lines at noodle stands, wanted to find a way to get more food to more people. After failure upon failure, Ando eventually figured out — in a backyard workshop in 1958 — that flash-frying noodles with palm oil could make a quick, easy, and, eventually, super cheap meal. Of course, he didn't

THE NEAR-MIRACLE MEAL  
SUSTAINS BILLIONS EACH YEAR  
AND PROVES EVERYBODY LOVES  
RAMEN **BY MARK LUCE**

know that the invention would lead to a company that darn near printed its own money — a profit of \$317 million last year — nor to a sprawling museum dedicated to instant noodles in Ikeda City, Japan.

Not one to rest on said laurels, in 1972 Ando took those noodles and squeezed them into a Styrofoam cup, making an already simple-to-make meal even easier with Cup Noodles. And with that invention, foreign sales boomed.

While I do sometimes have a palate that craves foie gras, fine steak and finer scotch, I can honestly say that I always enjoy Ramen — even back in the cashless days when I ate it out of necessity rather than desire.

My dear aunt, I'm sure partially as a joke and partially looking out for my survival, gave me the cookbook, "101 Ways to Cook Ramen Noodles," when I moved into my own apartment. I was less than thrilled, thinking it a gag on my perpetual poorness — until I actu-



ally tried a recipe that called for dicing up celery with the noodles. The crunch of the celery coupled with the pliability of the Ramen created a moment of ying-yang enlightenment. Then I tried sprinkles of carrots (cheap), scallions (cheaper) and soy sauce (really cheap).

Even though I don't have to eat Ramen anymore, I still make sure to keep a few packages around — mostly for when my dearest Jen is gone. She can't figure out why I always drain the broth (I want noodles, not soup), nor will she layer in Wasabi for tangy Ramen. But when forced to fend for myself, I inevitably return that which comforts — a turkey sandwich and a bowl of steaming noodles.

Thank you, Mr. Ando, for that simple pleasure.

*Mark Luce lives in Kansas City, Mo., where his newest favorite Ramen flavor is creamy chicken.*

**GOLFDOM** (ISSN 1526-4270) is published monthly (12 issues per year) by Questex Media Group, Inc., 306 W Michigan Street, Suite 200, Duluth, MN 55802. Corporate office: 275 Grove St., Suite 2-130, Newton, MA 02466. Accounting, Advertising, Production and Circulation offices: 306 W. Michigan St., Suite 200 Duluth, MN 55802-1610. Subscription rates: One year \$39 (U.S. and possessions), \$59 (Canada and Mexico) and \$89 (all other countries). Air expedited service is available in countries outside the U.S. and Canada for an additional \$75 per year. Current issue single copies (prepaid only) \$5 (U.S. and possessions), \$7 (Canada and Mexico) and \$8 (all other countries). Back issues (if available, prepaid only) \$10 (U.S. and possessions), \$14 (Canada and Mexico) and \$16 (all other countries); add \$6.50 per order shipping and handling for both current and back issue purchases. Periodicals postage paid at Duluth MN 55806 and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to GOLFDOM, P.O. Box 5057, Brentwood, TN 37024-5057. Canadian G.S.T. Number: 840033278RT0001, Publications Mail Agreement number 40017597. Printed in the U.S.A.

Copyright 2007 by Questex Media Group, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use, or the internal or personal use of specific clients, is granted by Questex Media for libraries and other users registered with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Dr., Danvers, MA 01923, phone 978-750-8400, fax 978-750-4470. Call for copying beyond that permitted by Sections 107 or 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law. For those not registered with the CCC, send permission request to questexpermissions@reprintbuyer.com or 800-494-9051, ext 100.

