We often take for granted the language we speak every day to communicate with others, but language plays a vital role in our food culture: People can express their experiences with food—such as the taste—through a variety of words and expressions. In this light, the questions of how and where taste descriptors are used (and by whom) provide abundant opportunities for linguistic analysis. Furthermore, language users can benefit from examining the language of food from a linguistic perspective in order to understand why certain choices of words and phrases are more appealing to members of a community. Japanese culinary tradition and its language offer a particularly excellent context for a linguistic examination of how food relates to language and people in a culture whose food preparation and presentation has had an enormous influence not only on its own people, but on global food culture as well. Approaching the language of food in Japanese as an integral component of human interaction, this talk gives an overview of how the linguistic analysis of its form and meaning (e.g. loanwords, metaphors, and semantic fields) can contribute to a deeper understanding of the interface of food, language, and society.