

Brooklyn's fusion restaurant Shalom Japan strikes 'Shark Tank' deal to bring matzah ball ramen to the masses

Real estate mogul Barbara Corcoran agreed to invest in Sawako Okochi and Aaron Israel's product, with a condition.

By [Jackie Hajdenberg](#) November 14, 2025



Sawako Okochi and Aaron Israel, the husband-and-wife owners of Brooklyn's Shalom Japan restaurant, pitch their matzah ball ramen on ABC's "Shark Tank." (Screenshot via Hulu)

Shalom, investors!

The married couple that runs Brooklyn's popular Jewish-Japanese fusion restaurant Shalom Japan appeared on ABC's business reality show "Shark Tank" on Wednesday night — and struck a verbal deal with real estate mogul Barbara Corcoran that could result in a freezer-aisle version of a signature dish.

Sawako Okochi and Aaron Israel sought \$200,000 and a 20% stake from one of the business reality show's "sharks," or judges, for the at-home version of the matzah ball ramen that has been on Shalom Japan's menu since it opened in Williamsburg in 2013.

Shalom Japan's product is among a [slew of prepared or instant matzah ball soup kits](#) that have hit the market recently, including frozen matzah balls from vaunted kosher brand

Manischewitz. The restaurant's matzah ball ramen kit, which serves two people, sells for \$79.95 for [Goldbelly](#), and includes pouches of matzah ball soup pouches, ramen noodles, scallions and soup mandels. (Customers can add their own seaweed and eggs to taste.) At the restaurant, an order of matzah ball ramen for two people costs \$30; a single-serve order is \$19.

"We appreciate the direct-to-consumer shipping, but we know it's prohibitively expensive," Israel, who grew up in a Jewish family on Long Island, said during the show. "So we'd like for people to be able to buy it in stores. So we've already — we've started talking to some people to optimize the recipe. We know it needs to be tweaked to be more shelf-stable."

Judges Kevin O'Leary, Daymond John, Lori Greiner and Daniel Lubetzky all opted "out" of the offer, citing concerns about rollout challenges. Corcoran, however, agreed to join their business — with a 30% stake and a pivot to selling the soup in food trucks, contingent on the franchise Cousins Maine Lobster, which makes at-home lobster rolls, joining the business to help operate the trucks.



“Our experience on Shark Tank was a great one and working with Barbara and her team has been fantastic!” Israel said in a statement to the New York Jewish Week. “We are still in the process of working on what is next for us.”

In April, another Jewish-owned business appeared on “Shark Tank”: Entrepreneur Ari Siegel, pitched a historical document subscription service, “History by Mail,” [while dressed as a Hasidic version of Abraham Lincoln](#). Siegel, Corcoran, and Lubetzky, [the Jewish founder of KIND Snacks](#), finalized their deal on the Jewish holiday of Tu BiShvat.

Okochi, who hails from Hiroshima, and Israel met in 2011. Two years after their first date at a Chinese restaurant, they opened Shalom Japan with fusion dishes such a lox bowl and sake kasu challah. In 2024, they won the James Beard Award for [their cookbook, “Love Japan”](#); that same year, their Wagyu Pastrami Sando made [the New York Times’ list of 57 sandwiches that define New York City](#).

Corcoran mentioned during the episode that she had been to Shalom Japan twice. “When I was there, everybody was ordering it,” she said of the matzah ball ramen. “Nothing else.”