



Sushi and Sashimi Cookbook

EASY RECIPES
FOR MAKING SUSHI AT HOME



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Introduction

Today, sushi and sashimi are enjoyed around the globe, and in the United States the delectable cuisine continues to grow in popularity. Americans eat a lot of Japanese food, but very few prepare it themselves. You might be perfectly comfortable eating sushi and sashimi at your favorite Japanese restaurant, but cook it at home? To many Americans, Japanese cooking seems mysterious and inaccessible.

The secret to successful cooking is choosing the freshest ingredients, using flavorings and mastering the basic techniques. This book includes basic recipes, explains ingredients that you may be unfamiliar with and shows through step-by-step pictures how to roll sushi cut sashimi and make crispy tempura.

Many Japanese ingredients are now available in supermarkets or health food stores or ordered online.



Chapter 1: Useful Sushi Tools and Utensils

There are few tools unique to the Japanese kitchen that doesn't have a more-than-adequate, readily available Western substitute. That's great news as you

should be able to prepare virtually every recipe with what you already have on hand.

That said, we all know that there are times when the right tool can make a job easier. Below is a list of everyday tools found in almost all Japanese home kitchens. If you wish to add any of these to your kitchen arsenal.

Bamboo rolling mat (makisu)

The simple rolling mat used for making sushi rolls is made of thin strips of bamboo woven with cotton string. After you have used the mat, scrub it down with a brush and dry it thoroughly, otherwise it may become moldy. For easier cleaning, wrap the mat in plastic wrap and discard the plastic after use. It is best to buy an all-purpose mat measuring 12*12 in (30*30 cm), but smaller ones are also available. When making sushi, the mat must be dry.

Bowl with lid

A large bowl with a lid is needed for holding the cooked sushi rice once it has been prepared, to keep it warm. An insulated bowl is ideal.

Chopsticks (Saibashi or Ryoribashi)

The chopsticks used for cooking are two to three times longer than chopsticks used for eating. Cooking chopsticks are extremely useful implements, once you have mastered the technique, as they enable you to manipulate food using only one hand.

Fan (Uchiwa)

An uchiwa is a flat fan made of paper or silk stretched over light bamboo ribs, and is traditionally used for cooling and separating the sushi rice. While it is delightful to own an uchiwa, a piece of heavy paper or cardboard will do the job just as well.

Fish scaler

When cleaning and preparing fish at home, it is easiest to use a scaler, available from a fish market. Simply draw it up the body of the fish, working from tail to head. Do not use the back of a cleaver as a substitute, as you run the risk of bruising the fish.

Mixing bowls

You will need several mixing bowls. Stainless steel ones are recommended.

Mortar and pestle (suribachi and surikogi)

Japanese mortars have a textured grooved pattern on an unglazed interior. This works like the surface of a grater when struck with a pestle. Japanese mortars are easier to use than conventional, smooth-surfaced mortars. Use the tip of a bamboo skewer to clean the grooves.

Plates for sushi

When serving sushi, you need a set of plates that are as flat as possible. If the rim of a serving plate is curved or ridged, the presentation of the sushi will not be as attractive and they will probably fall over.

Rice-cooling tub (hangiri)

The broad, wooden hangiri, generally made of cypress, and with low sides, is designed specifically for cooling sushi rice. This gives the rice the ideal texture and gloss, but a non-metallic flat-bottomed bowl can be used instead. The bigger the bowl the better, as you will then be able to stir and separate the rice grains properly.

If you are using a hangiri, wash after use, dry it carefully, then wrap it in a cloth and store it face downward in a cool, dry place.

Rice maker

An electric or gas rice maker is highly recommended for cooking rice, as it will control the temperature and cooking time to give perfect rice every time. Otherwise, use a heavy pot with a tight-fitting lid.

Rice paddle (shamoji)

This flat paddle is made of wood or plastic, and is often supplied with rice cooker. Because it is flat, it can slice through rice when mixing it without squashing the grains.

Sushi molds

Usually wood or plastic for home use, and available in different shapes and size. Dip molds in water with a splash of rice vinegar to stop sushi rice sticking to mold.

Tempura pan (tempura nabe)

A tempura pan has fairly straight sides, and is approximately 4 inches deep. It has a removable wire-mesh draining rack attached to the pan, which keeps

the cooked tempura warm and allows the oil to drain. A wok can also be used (some woks also have draining racks).

Omelet pan (Tamago-yaki-nabe or tamago-yaki-ki)

A rolled egg is a very common dish often served as sushi or found decorating *o-bento* (lunch boxes). It is also thinly sliced and served as a garnish. To make, beaten egg is cooked just until set and then gently rolled into a log. A normal skillet will get the job done, but this pan helps achieve that perfectly shaped roll. The best omelet pans are made of heavy copper, lined with tin.

Chapter 2: Essential Sushi

Ingredients

Popular fruits and vegetables

Always consider the various fruits and vegetables you plan on adding to your recipe. Ripe tropical fruits, for example, provide a delicious sweetness to your sushi, along with a colorful garnishment for a fanciful presentation. Don't forget the traditional garden vegetables you have around the kitchen, as well as specialty vegetables like enoki mushrooms, pickled ginger, or seaweed, which you will probably have to purchase especially for the occasion. Without question, fruits and vegetables create unique flavors that you and your guests will enjoy.

- Tropical Fruits

Tropical fruits add color and sweetness to a variety of sushi items as well as making a fanciful garnish. Some of the popular fruits include: bananas, mangos, and papayas. Use these fruits (make sure they're ripe) as garnishment and in such rolls as the Tokyo Roll and the Tropical Roll.

- Garden Vegetables

Similar to fruit, fresh vegetables add color, crunch, and excitement to a number of sushi dishes. The veggies you will likely use most are:

Cucumber (English or Japanese)

The English variety works well, especially when slicing the cucumber to make the Cucumber Salad Roll. However, the Japanese cucumber is a great alternative. This long, slender cucumber has a thin, delicious skin, very little seeds, and doesn't hold much water so your rolls won't get waterlogged. Cucumbers are a popular vegetable in sushi and will be used for such dishes as the popular California Roll, Caterpillar Roll, Cucumber Roll, Cucumber Salad Roll, Eel Roll, Futomaki Roll, Indian Roll, Local Roll, Montecito Roll, Moonlight Roll, Philadelphia Roll, Pink Paradise Roll, Rainbow Roll,

Salmon Skin Roll, Shrimp Tempura Roll, Snake Roll, Spider Roll, Torpedo Roll, and Vegetable Roll, along with Hawaiian Poke, Salmon Skin Salad, and Spicy Jellyfish Salad.

Asparagus

Asparagus is another vegetable finding its way into many sushi dishes. Since asparagus tends to be quite long, spears for sushi are often cut to about four inches in length the perfect size to tuck inside a roll. Prepare asparagus by either steaming it or dipping it in tempura batter and deepfrying it for added crunch. You'll find asparagus as an attractive ingredient in the Dragon Roll, Moonshine Roll, Pink Paradise Roll, Samurai Roll, Sun Rise Roll, Stuffed Calamari Roll, Vegetable Crunchy Roll, and as an accompaniment to the Japanese Sea Bass dish.

Avocado

Technically a fruit, the avocado rivals the cucumber for most appearances in sushi rolls and side dishes. Often sliced thin before being placed inside various rolls, the soft, creamy texture of the avocado is a nice compliment to the other, more firm, ingredients.

- Other Popular Veggies

Really, you and your guests decide what everyone likes and dislikes, and you can easily substitute fruits and vegetables for others, particularly when preparing the Vegetable Roll or the Vegetable Crunchy Roll.

Vegetables you might want to keep in the crisper and include in the recipes are: broccoli, cabbage, endive, jalapeno peppers, Maui onions, shiitake mushrooms, tomatoes, and zucchini.

Japanese Specialty Vegetables

Now that you have purchased the necessary fruits and vegetables at your local supermarket, you might have to do a little digging for the Japanese staples that are a must when making sushi and sashimi. The Internet is a fantastic resource to shop online for the perishable essentials. If you live in an area that has an Asian or Japanese market, that is an even better place to shop.

The specialty items you will want to acquire are:

Daikon Radish Sprouts (*Kaiware*)

These sprouts with their sharp, peppery taste are extremely popular in Japanese cuisine. You'll use these sprouts as garnish, in sauces like Chili Daikon, and tucked inside many of the sushi rolls. Before using the sprouts, simply wash and pat them dry with a paper towel, then remove what you need with a sharp knife.

Enoki Mushrooms

Also called velvet shanks or golden needle mushrooms, enoki are fruity in flavor with a crisp texture. They make an attractive and delicious garnish for the Japanese Sea Bass recipe. When purchasing fresh enoki mushrooms, select those with firm, white, and shiny caps.

Pickled Gobo Root (a.k.a. Mountain Burdock or Yamagobo)

This long, slender root resembles a skinny carrot. Buy them whole and often pickled and packed in sealed plastic. You'll use this crisp orange vegetable in such recipes as the Gobo Roll, Futomaki Roll, Salmon Skin Roll, Salmon Skin Salad, and the Vegetable Roll.

Pickled Ginger (*Amazu Shoga* or *Gari*)

A major player in the sushi world, pickled ginger can be found beside virtually every sushi dish and is an important garnishment. Not only does eating the tart ginger cleanse your palate and refresh your taste buds, but experts believe it also aids in destroying harmful parasites that may be present in raw fish.

Scallions (Green onions)

Finely sliced is how you'll find scallions used in various sushi dishes. Not only do scallions make a colorful accoutrement, but their crisp mild taste also adds the perfect essence to sauces like Ponzu or makes a topping for halibut, monkfish liver, and shrimp sashimi.

Seaweed (*Wakame*)

Wakame is thin, stringy seaweed, deep green in color, and quite popular in such recipes as Hawaiian Poke, Ocean Salad Roll, and Salmon Skin Salad. While nori, the seaweed used for rolling sushi, is usually sold dried in sheets, you can find *wakame* either dried or fresh, in a refrigerated and sealed package. Whenever possible, buy fresh it's much better tasting. If you have to settle for dry, add water to rehydrate the seaweed and bring it back to life.

Shiso Leaf (*Ooba*)

Used as both a garnishment and active ingredient, shiso leaves are as attractive as they are delicious. Although they take on an herb-laden flavor similar to basil, shiso is actually from the mint family. When purchasing this aromatic leaf, look for fresh shiso leaves that are bright green in color.

Three additional items you should store in the refrigerator prior to preparing sushi and sashimi are:

Quail Eggs

Small and bite-size, fresh quail eggs add a splash of color and interest to such creations as the eyes in Big Eyes Sushi and the sun-yellow topping for

salmon roe sushi, uni sushi, and the artistic uni shooter.

Tofu (Soybean Curd)

This is one item you should be able to find at your local market as tofu is now known across the country. Tofu is sold in various packaging, from sealed in water to vacuum-packed. Like canned tuna, tofu packed in water is best and should be eaten right away. When it comes to texture, select the regular or firm tofu, which you will need for making the delectable sea bass dish in.

Tofu, Deep-Fried (*Abura Age*)

Deep-fried tofu is a unique item with a sweet, moist texture. It is sold fresh in packages and serves as a delicious container for the rice in the Inari recipe.

The Bottled and Dry Goods

Fortunately for home sushi chefs, a fair amount of ingredients does not need to be purchased fresh from the market because many of these items take the form of bottled liquids and dried goods. So, let's run down the list of bottled and dry ingredients you'll need for the recipes. We'll divide these items between your local grocer and an Asian or Japanese specialty market. And do not worry about making an extra trip. More than likely you'll use these ingredients in other dishes you prepare, so it's a good idea to stock up and refer to your pantry when Japanese cuisine comes calling:

Cooked Squash (*Kanpyo*)

Kanpyo is an ingredient used in traditional Japanese cuisine. You'll find it in the Futomaki Roll.

Dried Fish Flakes (*Katsuobushi*)

These shavings from the Bonita make an excellent topping for the Futomaki Roll and Salmon Skin Salad.

Dried Seaweed (*Nori*)

An essential ingredient when crafting sushi rolls, nori is a layer of seaweed that has been dried and pressed into sheets. The best-tasting nori is dark green, and the size you should select is seven inches by eight inches although all recipes in this book call for cutting the sheet in half. If possible, purchase roasted nori, but if unavailable, simply roast the nori yourself by baking the sheet in a preheated 350°F oven for about one minute.

Dried Shiitake Mushrooms

Fresh mushrooms are more desirable but not always in season. With dried shiitakes, simply soak them in cold water (not hot) to rehydrate prior to use. I feature shiitakes in the Futomaki Roll and Japanese Sea Bass recipes.

Flour

Always have some all-purpose flour on hand. When it comes to tempura

recipes, you'll be dusting most ingredients in flour before battering and deep-frying.

Hot Chili Sauce

This bottled variety is an essential for any recipe that needs a kick, such as Shrimp Sushi or the savory Dragon Roll. Huy Fong Foods produces a tasty sauce.

Oil

Like flour, oil will be an essential ingredient when deep-frying tempurastyle. For searing seafood, such as tuna, try sesame oil for a distinctive flavor.

Ponzu Sauce

Nothing beats the real thing, but if you have to buy bottled, there are a few brands on the market.

Rice

There is no such thing as Japanese cuisine without rice or sushi for that matter. To prepare premium, sticky rice with authentic taste and texture to use in various sushi and sushi rolls, always buy a high-quality Japanese short- or medium grain white rice like koshihikari.

Rice Noodles

The principal ingredients of these noodles are rice flour and water. I prefer these noodles when garnishing larger dishes, such as the Stuffed Calamari Roll or Tiger Eye.

Rice Vinegar

This is the secret ingredient that gives prepared sushi rice its clean, crisp flavor. Mitsukan Gold makes a high-quality product.

Sake

Sake is the celebrated Japanese alcoholic beverage made from rice. Always have a bottle of high-quality sake on hand for your sushi dinner parties. A tip worth noting: sake is often served warm or hot to disguise cheap sake, premium sake is always serve chilled.

Sesame Seeds

Other than nori and sushi rice, this is probably the third most popular ingredient in sushi making, so buy plenty, preferably the toasted variety. In certain recipes, like the Spider Roll, I call for black sesame seeds because they are more attractive and nuttier in flavor.

Soybean Paper

Some sushi rolls use soybean paper, a prettier and milder alternative to the traditional nori. Pressed from soybeans, these edible papers add dazzling

color to such dishes as the Moonshine Roll and Pink Paradise Roll.

Soy Sauce

Originating in China and introduced to Japan centuries ago, this sauce, made from soybeans, roasted grain, water, and salt, is a staple in sushi and sashimi dining. With more than half a dozen kinds on the market, stick with the regular or standard naturally brewed soy sauce rather than other varieties. The Lite or with less salt is equally delicious.

Tempura Batter Mix

Although you can make it from scratch, many Asian and Japanese markets carry quick and delicious batters in boxed form. Keep a few on hand, as various tempura foods are showcased inside sushi rolls.

Wasabi

Wasabi can be purchased raw or in a manufactured paste form (a combination of food coloring, horseradish, and mustard). Like pickled ginger, wasabi is often served with sushi or sashimi and often accompanies soy sauce. A dry, powdered form is also available, but the premade paste is much more convenient in today's kitchen.

Fish and seafood

For health, taste and beauty buy the freshest fish possible for making sashimi and sushi. If you can, go to the fish markets and always buy fish and seafood in season. Most fish can be eaten raw, but it is best to use fish that are commonly used in sashimi and sushi. Fish and seafood should be kept refrigerated until needed.

Selecting whole fish

Whenever possible, buy fish whole and fillet them at home. You can then be sure that the meat is fresh. Use the following guidelines to ensure that fish are fresh:

- Check that eyes are plump, clear and bright. Avoid fish with cloudy pupils.
- The gills should be bright pink-red and look moist. If fish is not fresh, the gills are black-red.
- Overall, the coloring of the fish should be bright or lustrous.
- Stroke the fish to ensure that the fish is firm and elastic. Stale fish are less elastic and may feel sticky.
- The fish should have a "clean" smell; avoid ones that have a strong fishy odor.
- Mackerel should have a pointed shape to their stomachs, and the tail on both mackerel and bonito should be upright. A drooping tail shows that a fish is not fresh.

Selecting portions of fish

With bigger fish, it may be uneconomical to buy a whole fish, so buy fillets and smaller cuts. When buying only a portion of a fish, use the following guidelines:

- Fillets should be moist and have a good color.
- White fish should look almost transparent.
- Cut tuna flesh should have distinct stripes in it around the belly and be clear red without stripes in other parts.
- The head end of fish is more tender than the tail end.
- With most fish, the back is the most delicious part. Tuna and swordfish are exceptions, in that the tender, fatty belly area is most sought-after.

Selecting seafood

- When buying shrimp, if they are alive, they should be active and of good color. If they are no longer alive, check that the stripes are distinct: they should not be blurred together.
- Touch the tentacles of squid and check that the suckers are still active. The skin around the eyes should be clear blue.
- Sea urchins should be yellow or orange, firm and not slimy.
- Live shellfish are best. When you gently open the shell, it should close by itself.

Selecting fish

To guarantee the freshness of fish, find a fish store known for having sashimi-quality fish. To determine the freshness of whole fish, make sure fish has bloodless, sparkling, crystal clear eyes, bright pink gills and skin with a vivid color, a pleasant sea smell, and flesh that is firm and resilient to the touch. Most saltwater fish can be eaten as sushi, if using fresh-water fish; it should be filleted and sliced, then placed in iced water immediately to tighten the texture of the flesh. Alternatively, freshwater fish can be served in citrus vinaigrette.

After purchasing fish, refrigerate as soon as possible, if you have time, clean fish and fillet to maintain its freshness. Store in refrigerator no longer than two days.

• Fin Fish

Fin fish means exactly that: fish with fins. The following are the common fin fish served as sushi and sashimi. When transforming into a Japanese chef, the most important rule to remember is to buy fresh. If your favorite fish did not arrive from sea to store in several days, choose another species that did.

Albacore (Shiro maguro)

Albacore is a medium-size tuna inhabiting the world's temperate, subtropical,

and tropical waters. Distinguished by its long, graceful pectoral fins, the albacore is the only “white meat” tuna. Its flesh ranges from rose to pale peach in color, and its flavor is rich but not overbearing. Because albacore meat is soft, difficult to handle, and quickly changes color, some sushi chefs choose not to serve this species.

Freshwater Eel (*Unagi*)

The freshwater eel or Japanese eel is actually a fish that dwells in shallow waters and spends its time hiding in caverns. The eel’s elongated body is a sushi bar favorite because it is all meat with little waste. Often prepared and broiled, eel meat is high in protein, vitamin A, calcium, cholesterol, and saturated fat.

Flying Fish Roe (*Tobiko*)

This highly prized roe comes from the flying fish, a marine species with unusually large fins which enable it to escape predators by taking short gliding flights through the air. The fish’s orange or red colored eggs are small, crunchy, and often used to enhance the flavor, texture, and presentation of many sushi dishes. It is typically found on the inside, outside, or as a topping of sushi rolls.

Halibut (*Hirame*)

Halibut is the largest of all flatfish. They live in both the North Pacific and the North Atlantic oceans and spend their time camouflaged on the ocean bottom waiting for prey. A highly regarded food fish, smaller-size halibut are preferred for sushi due to their moist white meat and mild flavor.

Mackerel (*Saba*)

The mackerel is a slim, cylindrical shape fish found in all tropical and temperate seas. They are often harvested for their meat, which is typically very oily. In Japan, mackerel are farm-raised and specifically prepared for sushi and sashimi. Because the meat can spoil quickly, mackerel is the only common salt-cured sushi.

Sea Bream, a.k.a. Red Snapper (*Tai*)

Bream is a general term for a number of species of freshwater and marine fish that tend to be narrow with deep bodies. Also called red snapper in sushi kitchens, bream is some of the best-tasting and most nutritious of all white-meat fish. Because of its popularity, bream is now cultivated in man-made ponds and waterbeds; however, bream caught in the ocean tends to have better taste.

Salmon (*Sake*)

Salmon are robust, deep-bodied silvery fish, which are anadromous: they live in the sea and enter freshwater to spawn. Since salmon are part freshwater

fish, they can be susceptible to parasites and should be cured by salting prior to consumption. Larger salmon are generally used for sushi and sashimi due to their higher fat/oil content.

Salmon Roe (*Ikura*)

The large and bright orange salmon eggs are often harvested from wild salmon from Alaskan and Canadian waters. After harvest, the roe is processed and cured, allowing its briny flavor to shine through. Salmon roe is a popular topping, filling, and garnishment for sushi.

Smelt Roe (*Masago*)

Masago is the roe from the smelt fish, a small anadromous species like the salmon that runs in large schools along the coastline during its spawning migration. The smelt family consists of some sixteen species whose eggs are highly prized. Smelt roe is often found in sushi and sashimi where the bright color and mild flavor of the tiny eggs enhance the dish.

Tuna (*Maguro*)

This tuna, the yellow fin tuna, is an open-water fish found in warm oceans except the Mediterranean. Its sashimi-grade meat is deep red and often sold as succulent loins, cut from the tail end of the loin first, with no bones. In Hawaii, the tuna's red meat is called ahi. In Japan, it is maguro. Fattier yellow fin tuna is often preferred delicious by itself as sashimi or prepared in sushi rolls.

Tuna Belly, Fatty (*Toro*)

In Japan, tuna is graded and priced according to fat content, and the fattiest part of the fish is the most prized. Often the most expensive item on a sushi menu, toro is the section you want. Toro is cut from the tuna's belly and may be pink and somewhat opaque. Many sushi chefs identify toro as either chutoro, which is moderately fat, or otoro, which indicates the highest fat content.

Yellowtail (*Hamachi*)

Yellowtail is the common name for a number of species of amberjack sleek migratory fish similar to the tunas. But do not confuse yellowtail with yellow fin tuna, two completely different species. Much consumed yellowtail is wild-caught, but amberjack is now being farm-raised for sushi and sashimi.

• Shellfish

Shellfish is a generic term used to describe various nonfin fish, so we've decided to group the shrimp, prawn, and the most popular crab species in this category. Unlike most fin-fish, shellfish, particularly crab, are often delivered to the market live or cooked.

Shrimp & Prawns (*Ebi*)

Shrimp and prawns (very large shrimp) are long-bodied crustaceans that thrive on ocean floors around the world. Judging from the enormous amount consumed each year, shrimp and prawns remain America's most popular shellfish. Their meaty texture, lack of bones, and ready-to-eat convenience contribute to their popularity. Shrimp and prawns prepared for sushi are always a customer favorite and are found in many sushi rolls.

Snow Crab (*Kani*)

Snow Crab, also called opilio or tanner crab, is a large spider-like crab commonly taken from the icy waters of Alaska's Bering Sea. Noted for its sweet, delicate flavor, snow-white meat, and tender texture, snow crab is ideal for sushi rolls.

Soft Shell Crab (*Kani*)

Soft shell crabs are actually blue crabs and sometimes Mangrove crabs in parts of Asia. These crabs are harvested during their molting stage when they shed their hard-exterior shell. This allows for the entire crab to be consumed. Fried quickly until crisp, soft shell crabs are popular by themselves or prepared in sushi rolls.

King Crab (*Kani*)

King Crabs are characterized by their massive size, long spidery legs, spiny exteriors, and reoccurring appearance on Discovery Channel's *The Deadliest Catch*. Often harvested from Alaskan waters, king crabs are prized for their immense sweet meat, which is cleaned and cooked before reaching the market.

• Mollusks & Others

Mollusks are often grouped under the shellfish category, but we've given these marine edibles their own section. A mollusk, for those who are unfamiliar, is a term used for various clams, mussels, squid, and octopus. Although some are freshwater species, the majority of mollusks consumed are of the saltwater variety.

Abalone (*Awabi*)

Abalone is a large marine snail with a beautiful mother-of-pearl shell and a large muscular foot for attaching itself to rocky surfaces. The foot is one of the best tasting seafood's. The rich opaque meat is removed from the shell, cleaned and rinsed, and sliced into portions. Because of the depletion of wild populations, farm-raised abalone is now the choice for this luxury seafood.

Cockle (*Torigai*)

The cockle is the common name for bivalve (two-shell) mollusks with distinct rounded shells that are heart-shaped and feature strongly pronounced ribs. The purple-gray color of the cockle's edible part a characteristic feature as well as its taste and unique texture makes cockles a popular delicacy in sushi bars and restaurants.

Oyster (*Kaki*)

Oysters are large mollusks with rough, fluted shells and a creamy-white flesh that has a unique dusky flavor. Oysters grow wild wherever they can find firm footing to support their weight. Aqua culturists also grow them on strings or nets to relieve the pressure on wild populations. Oysters often get their specific tastes from the areas in which they grow and are commonly sold under these place names.

Jellyfish (*Kurage*)

The blue jellyfish and the cannonball jellyfish both possessing large bells and stinging tentacles are two species of edible jellyfish which drift in massive numbers during summer months. Following harvest, jellyfish are immediately cleaned, salted, and dried in multiple stages to remove moisture. Jellyfish is a highly regarded delicacy in Japan where over 40 percent of jellyfish production is consumed.

Octopus (*Tako*)

An octopus is a highly mobile predator, which uses its eight suction cup arms and a jet propulsion to dart across the bottom of the sea and capture prey, typically at night. Small octopus are cooked and blanched to ensure a white firm meat with sweet, mild flavor. Sliced tentacles are perfect for sashimi while the tentacle end pieces work well in sushi rolls.

Scallop (*Hotategai*)

Scallops have two round shells held together by a small hinge and a large adductor muscle, which is the edible part of the scallop. Scallop meat should always be ivory or cream-colored and a bit sticky to the touch. The large sea scallop, known as the giant scallop or King of Scallops, is the preferred species for sushi.

Sea Urchin (*Uni*)

A relative of the starfish, sea urchins are spiny, hard-shelled animals that live on rocky seafloors where they use their long spines for moving and protection. Urchins are harvested for their roe, or uni, which appear as five yellow-orange strips arranged in a star-shaped pattern. Known for its sweet flavor and delicate texture, uni is sold according to freshness, color, shape, firmness, and taste and can command quite a price.

Squid (*Ika*)

Squid are voracious-eating cephalopods with a cigar-shaped body, two triangular fins, eight arms, and two feeding tentacles. After harvest, squid are brought on shore, pumped into totes, and a portion of their prized white meat is processed for sushi or sashimi. Squid meat is noted for its tender texture and sweet, mild flavor.

Surf Clam (*Hokkigai*)

Surf clams are large triangular-shape clams. They can grow up to six inches long and live in the surf zone, where the waves break. The adductor muscle of this clam is a delicious treat when formed into sushi and wrapped with a thin piece of roasted seaweed (nori). Surf clam is also popular sashimi seafood.

• Cutting Fish for Sushi

For both methods of cutting, use the entirety of your knife blade to make long even cuts. (You never want to use a sawing motion when cutting fish). Place the base of your knife at the cutting point and use one motion to pull the knife through the fish in one long motion. Your knife should travel from “heel to toe” for each slice of fish you cut. Angle your fish rather than your knife. It is much easier to make a clean cut when your knife travels in one direction. Your knife should travel through the fish in a straight vertical line. To achieve this, position the fish on the cutting board at an angle. Slices of fish for nigiri and sashimi differ according to the sushi chef (almost all cuts of fish are measured by finger lengths). Slices of fish are cut into “two by fours.” In sushi lingo, this represents approximately 2 fingers wide and 4 fingers in length.

The Angle Cut Method

Angle cutting works best for portions of fish that are cut into fillets. (The exceptions are arctic char and salmon.) First cut the fillet in half down the center, following the natural line of the fish. Take one half and position it at an approximate 45° angle on your cutting board. Lay your knife blade vertically against the fish to be sure that the grain of the fish runs against the blade of the knife. If this is not the case, flip the fish fillet over. To cut, place the base of the knife blade near the bottom of the fish fillet and cut away a small piece. This should start an angle on the fillet. Continue making cuts across the fish about ¼ inch (6 mm) thick or more as desired. The slices will be diamond-like in shape.

For arctic char and salmon, position the fish fillets so that the grain of the fish runs perfectly perpendicular to the bottom of the cutting board. Use your knife to make straight cuts across the fish. The slices will be rectangular.



1 Position the fish at a 45 degree angle. Make ¼ inch (6 mm) vertical cuts across.



1 Position the block of fish horizontally.

2 Begin with the heel of the knife.



3 Make ¼ inch (6 mm) cuts across the fish.

The Block Cut Method

Block cutting works best for portions of fish such as tuna and white tuna. Convenient blocks called *saku* can often be purchased. To cut your own *saku*, cut blocks from the loins that are approximately 3 inches (7.5 cm) wide and ¾ inch (2 cm) in thickness. Cut slices from *saku* by positioning the block horizontally on your cutting board. Use the “heel to toe” method to make straight cuts across the block that is about ¼ inch (6 mm) thick.

Chapter 3: How to Cook Sushi Rice

The first-and most important-step in sushi making is preparing the rice. Unlike conventional rice, sushi rice must be light and fluffy yet sticky so you can shape and form it. Too many home cooks, this is easier said than done, and dozens of recipes out there can get you even more confused. But don't panic. We will walk you step-by-step through perfecting the ideal rice.

• Traditional Sushi Rice

If you want to have the Sushi rice that you only get at top Sushi restaurants

here is a recipe that discloses “Top Secrets” from Japanese Sushi chef and expert. Even if you see that this recipe varies from most sushi rice recipes out there just follow it to a bone and you will be proud of the results. True, it is more time consuming to prepare and has its tricks but this is for those who want to go all out with their rice.

Ingredients:

Yields: about 4 cups of cooked rice

2 cups of water (preferably bottled water)

2 cups of Japanese short grain white rice (do not purchase the pre washed rice for this recipe)

Kombu (4 x 6 inch dried seaweed)

For rice seasoning:

1/2 teaspoon salt.

4 tablespoons plain Japanese Rice Vinegar (do not use seasoned rice vinegar).

Sake (optional great when added).

4 tablespoons Sugar.

Supplies.

Hangiri (a Japanese mixing bowl great for mixing and cooling sushi rice).

Method of Preparation:

1. Use a heavy non-stick pot with a good lid for to make the rice.
2. Place the 2 cups of rice in a mixing bowl and fill the bowl almost to the top with water. Then use your hand and gently swirl the rice around to remove the starchiness from it.
3. After a few swirls the water will turn white drain the water and use a sieve to not lose any rice place the rice back in the mixing bowl and repeat this process at least five to six times. The final rinse of the rice should render clear water.
4. Allow the rice to sit in the sieve for about 10 minutes or so before continuing with the next step.
5. Place the rice in the heavy non-stick pot and add in the 2 cups of bottled water minus 2 tablespoons which you will replace with 2 tablespoons of Sake. (Hard or soft tap water, or sulfur well water can affect the essential taste of sushi rice which is why you use bottled water).
6. Take the Kombu and lightly wipe it off and place it in the rice.
7. Place the pot with the rice aside to soak for about 20 minutes this is so the rice turns very “white”, the results are that the rice will have a better texture and will be shinier.
8. Turn on the heat to high and bring the rice to a boil as soon as it starts boiling put the lid on and reduce the heat to low. Cook for 15 minutes and then turn off the heat.

9. Once you have turned off the heat (Do not take off the lid to check you rice at all during this time) let the rice sit and steam for the next 20 minutes.

10. Remove the lid and use a wooden rice paddle to fluff the rice lightly. Cover with lid again and go to prepare the rice seasoning.

11. To make the rice seasoning: use a small sauce pan and place the 4 tablespoons of rice vinegar, the 4 tablespoons of sugar and mix. You can place the small saucepan over low heat for about 10 to 20 seconds to help dissolve the sugar into the vinegar but it must be done with extreme care as to not over heat the vinegar (over heating can alter the taste of the vinegar), as soon as it is heated pour it into a small mixing bowl and mix it a bit more. 12. You may start mixing the rice seasoning together while the rice is steaming, and periodically mix it to help the sugar dissolve well and so when the rice is ready so will your rice seasoning be ready as well.

13. To combine rice with rice seasoning: Take the Hangiri, while your rice is steaming (if you are not able to get a Hangiri use a good wooden bowl) and fill it with cold water and a splash of rice vinegar. (This helps the bowl to get cold and prevents the rice from sticking to it).

14. When the rice and rice seasoning is ready, empty out the water from Hangiri or Wooden bowl (do not dry bowl leave damp), remove the Kombu from the rice (do not mind if the Kombu left a brownish stain) and pour the rice in the Hangiri or bowl.

15. If by any chance rice has stuck to the bottom of your pot do not scrape out the stuck rice because this rice tends to be crispier and harder and is not suitable for sushi rice.

16. Use a wooden spoon and gently spread the rice around and carefully go pouring the rice seasoning all over the rice.

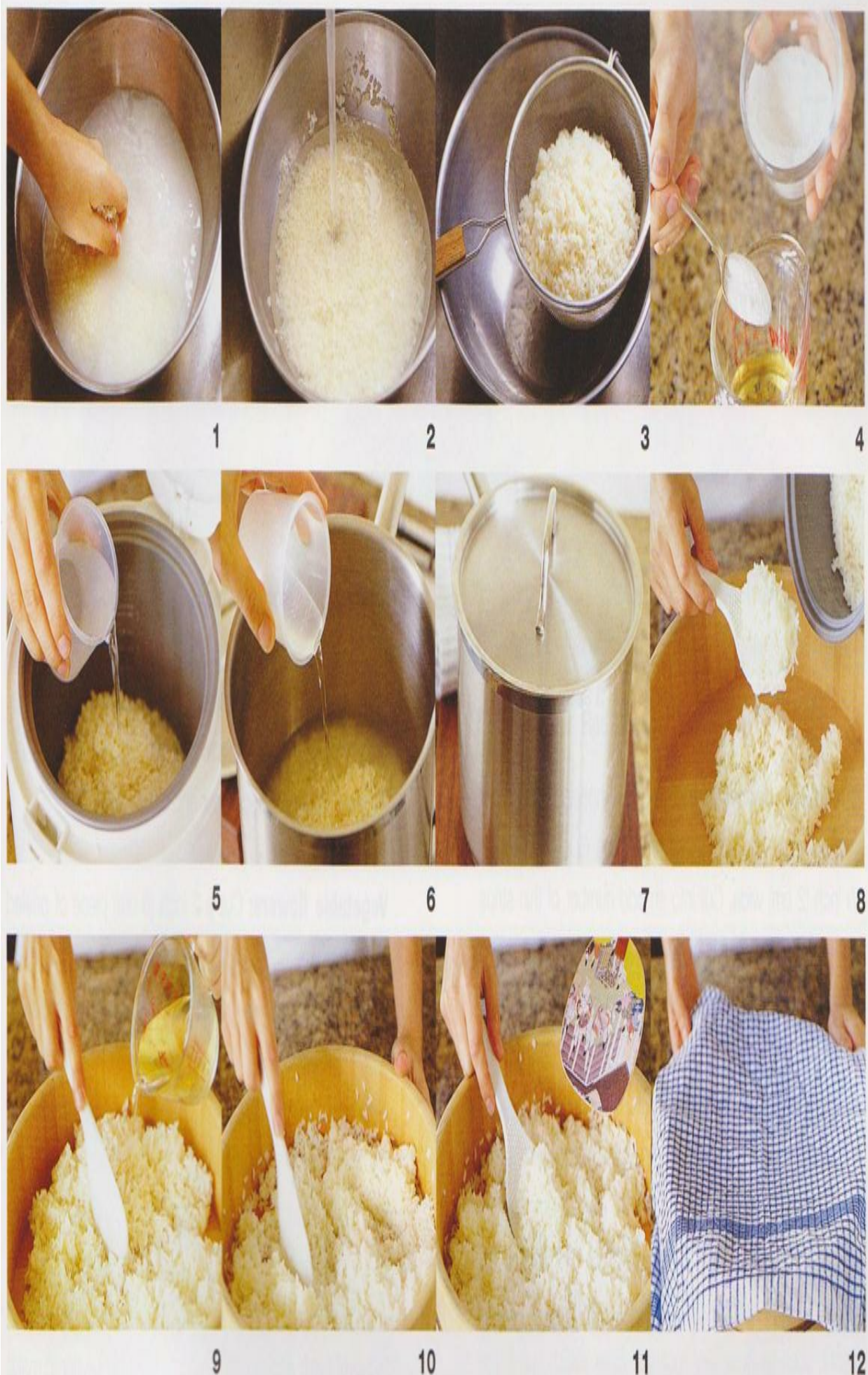
17. Take a hand fan or piece of cardboard (or point an electric fan) and gently cool the rice while you continue to mix in the rice seasoning, use a side to side cutting motion with the edge of the wooden spoon as you mix the rice. All the rice should stay well coated.

18. This procedure helps the liquid of the seasoning evaporate faster while you thoroughly mix it in and also helps the rice by shiny, have a good consistency sticky but not to mushy. It is a bit tricky to do but you'll get the hang of it with practice.

19. Allow the sushi rice to come down to room temperature before making your sushi.

20. While the sushi is cooling over the hangiri or wooden bowl with a damp clean kitchen cloth or tea towel to prevent the rice from drying out when you start making the sushi.

21. Give yourself a pat on the back you have made a pros' sushi rice.



• **Brown Sushi Rice**

Although white rice is a staple in Japan, brown rice called “genmai” is enjoyed as well. Some of the recipes in this book take advantage of genmai’s darker color and extra flavor by using it instead of white rice as the basis of

sushi. Brown rice tends to be harder and less sticky than the white variety, but this method gives you rice that is easy to work with and that has a classic sushi mouth feel.

To make Brown Sushi Rice, use a brown variety of Japanese or California short-grain rice and follow the same recipe as for Basic Sushi Rice but with some key differences. Soak the rice for at least 1 hour instead of 30 minutes and instead of cooking the rice in an ordinary pot or rice cooker, use a pressure cooker, following the instructions that came with your particular model.

1 cup (about 200 g) uncooked brown short-grain rice

1 1/4 cups plus 1 tablespoon (325 ml) hot water

1/8 teaspoon salt

1 quantity Sushi Dressing Sauce (opposite)

Rinse, soak and drain the brown rice according to the directions for Basic Sushi Rice, but soak the rice for 1 to 2 hours rather than 30 minutes. Then, combine the rice with the hot water and salt in a pressure cooker, cover and bring to a boil. When the pressure indicator rises and steam begins to come out, reduce the heat to low and cook for 20 minutes. Finally, turn off the heat and let the pressure cooker stand until the indicator shows that it is safe to open. Once the rice is cooked, prepare it as sushi rice using the sushi dressing sauce.

Time 1 hour

Makes 1 standard quantity (about 2 1/2 cups/400 g)

• Multi-Grain Sushi Rice

Using a variety of grains creates a dense, pleasantly textured medium for sushi. The addition of grits, a Southern breakfast staple, helps to hold all the grains in place. This rice is best used in sushi rolls that feature the seaweed on the outside.

Prep Time: 20 minutes Cook Time: 40 minutes Makes about 3 cups (1/2 kg)

1/2 cup (100 g) long-grain brown rice 1/4 cup (50 g) black, red or white quinoa

1/4 cup (50 g) pearly barley

2 tablespoons grits

2 cups (500 ml) water

2/3 cup (160 ml) rice vinegar

1/3 cup (80 ml) raw honey or sorghum syrup 1 tablespoon unrefined sugar

2 1/2 teaspoons coarse sea salt

Toss the brown rice, quinoa, barley and grits into the well of your rice cooker and mix well. Cover with the 2 cups of water. Start the rice cooker and cook for exactly 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the dressing. Stir together the rice vinegar, honey or sorghum, sugar, and salt in a small non-metal bowl. Whisk vigorously until

most of the sugar and salt have dissolved, about 2 minutes. Set the mixture aside.

When the grains have finished cooking, transfer them to a large glass bowl or casserole dish. Using a plastic or wooden spoon, toss the dressing and grains together. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before using.



• Quinoa Sushi “Rice”

Red, white, or black quinoa can be used for this recipe. For a pretty presentation, use a combination of all three. This rice is best used for sushi rolls that feature the seaweed on the outside.

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 40 minutes

Makes about 6½ cups (1½ kg)

2½ cups (500 g) quinoa

2½ cups (625 ml) water, minus 3 tablespoons

⅔ cup (160 ml) rice vinegar

⅓ cup (80 ml) raw honey or sorghum syrup

1 tablespoon unrefined sugar

2½ teaspoons coarse sea salt

Place the quinoa in a fine-mesh strainer and rinse it with cool water. Transfer the washed quinoa and measured water to a rice cooker. Once the rice cooker is started, cook for exactly 40 minutes. Most likely the cooker will indicate that the quinoa is done before 40 minutes have elapsed, but be patient. Do not lift the lid or stop the process before the time is up. While the quinoa cooks, prepare the dressing. Combine the rice vinegar, honey or sorghum, sugar and

salt in a small non-metal bowl. Whisk vigorously until the sugar and salt are mostly dissolved, about 2 minutes. Set the mixture aside.

Spoon the steamed quinoa onto a large, flat cutting board. Drizzle $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80 ml) of the dressing over the rice. Toss gently. Add the remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (80 ml) of the dressing and toss well.

Spread the quinoa into a thin layer and allow to cool for 10 minutes. Gently turn over and let cool for 5 minutes more.

Place the quinoa in a large non-metal bowl or container and cover with a damp lint-free dishcloth until ready to use. Use within 4 hours.

• **Sushi Rice Dressing**

Nothing about this super-potent dressing should tempt you to eat it on its own. Yet, when added to rice, it produces delicious and perfectly seasoned rice. Double the recipe and use what's left over as a base for marinated vegetable salads or save it for your next sushi adventure.

Prep Time: 5 minutes

Makes about 1 cup (250 ml)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (185 ml) rice vinegar $\frac{1}{3}$ cup (70 g) unrefined sugar, finely ground 3 teaspoons sea salt.

Mix together the rice vinegar, unrefined sugar, and sea salt in a small non-metal bowl. Whisk vigorously for about 2 minutes or until the sugar and sea salts are mostly dissolved. Set aside until ready to use. If making a double batch, store the remainder tightly covered in the refrigerator for up to six weeks. Allow dressing to reach room temperature before use.

Chapter 4: Sauces, dressing & marinades

I am always amazed at the variety of sauces and condiments that can be produced with the same few ingredients. While many of the sauces and condiments presented can be purchased, it is worth the minimal time investment to create your own. Most of the ingredients needed you will already have in your sushi ready pantry and the end result will be much tastier.

• **Sweet Chili Sauce**

Bottled versions of this sauce can be found on most grocers' shelves, but the homemade version is much better. It only takes a few minutes and small amounts of ingredients you most likely already have on hand.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES
MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUPS (375 ML)

1 cup (250 ml) pineapple juice
½ cup (125 ml) rice vinegar
¼ cup (50 g) sugar
3 teaspoons garlic chili sauce
½ teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger root 1 teaspoon cornstarch (cornflour)
dissolved in 1 teaspoon water
¼ teaspoon salt

1 Heat the pineapple juice, rice vinegar, and sugar in a medium saucepan over moderately high heat. Stir until the sugar dissolves and mixture begins to boil.

2 Adjust the temperature so that the mixture stays at a low boil. Add the garlic chili sauce and ginger. Stir well.

3 Whisk in the cornstarch mixture and allow the mixture to boil for 5 minutes or until the mixture no longer appears cloudy.

4 Remove from the heat and stir in the salt. The sauce will thicken as it cools. Allow it to cool completely before use. Store the sauce tightly covered in the refrigerator until ready to use.

• Tempura Sauce Ponzu Sauce

Vegetarians can use vegetable stock instead of the dashi.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES
MAKES ABOUT ¾ CUP (185 ML)

½ cup (125 ml) dashi
2 tablespoons mirin
2 tablespoons soy sauce

Stir all of the ingredients together. Refrigerate the sauce until ready for use. Before serving, heat the sauce, and serve warm.

• Gyoza Dipping Sauce

This can be spiced up with some additional chili flakes.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES
MAKES a LITTLE OVER 1½ CUP (125 ML)

½ cup (125 ml) soy sauce
4 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon finely minced green onions (scallions) 1 teaspoon sesame seeds,
toasted.

Stir all the ingredients together in a medium bowl. Keep covered at room temperature until ready to use.

• Ponzu Sauce

You can easily buy bottled Ponzu in any supermarket these days, but homemade Ponzu is so much better. The use of a mixture of citrus fruit juices is essential. Using just lemons, for example, will result in a lemonade flavored sauce. Ponzu deepens in flavor as it ages and has a 3-month shelf life.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

MATURATION TIME: 24 HOURS MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS (500 ML) 1 cup (250 ml) soy sauce

4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

4 tablespoons fresh white grapefruit juice ½ cup (125 ml) fresh lime juice 4 tablespoons rice vinegar

2 tablespoons mirin

2 tablespoons dried bonito flakes (*katsuobushi*), optional

1 Stir all of the ingredients together in a medium-sized plastic or glass container. Be sure to add any fruit pulp to the container. Cover tightly and place in a cool, dark place for 24 hours.

2 After 24 hours, strain the mixture through a fine mesh strainer. Or to use the sauce sooner, allow the mixture to set for about 10 minutes before straining. Store the Ponzu Sauce in the refrigerator. Bring it to room temperature before using.

• Peanut Sauce

Creamy peanut butter transforms quickly into a flavorful sauce with just a few simple ingredients. Not only is it a great dip for certain types of sushi rolls, any leftovers can be used as a salad dressing or dip for fresh veggies.

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 5 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES

MAKES ABOUT 1¼ CUPS (300 ML)

4 tablespoons rice vinegar

4 tablespoons mirin

4 tablespoons water

½ cup (100 g) peanut butter Juice of 1 lime

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger root

1 teaspoon minced garlic

3 tablespoons soy sauce

Bring the rice vinegar, mirin, and water to a boil in a small saucepan. Place

the peanut butter in a small bowl and pour the hot rice vinegar mixture over it. Add the lime juice, fresh ginger root, garlic, and soy sauce. Stir the mixture well and let it cool. Allow the flavors to settle for at least 10 minutes before use. Store the sauce in the refrigerator. If the sauce becomes too thick, stir in 1 tablespoon of warm water at a time until the desired consistency is achieved.

• Sesame Noodle Dressing

It also makes a great marinade for grilled vegetables and grilled chicken.

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUP (125 ML)

4 tablespoons sesame paste (tahini)

4 tablespoons Ponzu Sauce (page 27)

1 tablespoon dark sesame oil

1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger root ½ teaspoon minced garlic

2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions) 1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds.

Stir together all of the ingredients in a small, non-metal bowl. Cover and refrigerate for 10 minutes before using to allow the flavors to settle.

• Sweetened Soy Syrup

Commercially bottled eel sauce is, as it sounds, a sauce made with eel.

Making your own reduction is easy. It's also a great substitute for vegetarians. The sugar, jaggery, can be found in most Asian grocery stores.

If it is unavailable, look for cones of piloncillo in the Mexican section of your supermarket. In a pinch, substitute maple syrup, palm sugar, or light brown sugar for the jaggery or piloncillo.

COOK TIME: 25 MINUTES

MAKES ABOUT 2¼ CUPS (565 ML)

1 lb (500 g) brown jaggery or piloncillo, chopped (or light brown sugar) 2

cups (500 ml) low sodium vegetable stock or dashi ¼ cup (65 ml) sake ¾ cup (185 ml) soy sauce.

1 Place the jaggery or piloncillo and vegetable stock in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Stir to dissolve the chunks. Add the sake to the saucepan. Allow the mixture to simmer for about 15 minutes or until it has reduced by about ¼ cup (65 ml). Stir in the soy sauce and allow it to simmer for 10 minutes. Do not let the mixture reach a boil.

2 Cool the sauce completely before using. (Sauce will thicken as it cools.) Cover and refrigerate until it's ready to use.

• Spicy Mayonnaise

This is perhaps the most popular sauce for sushi.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

MAKES A LITTLE OVER 1 CUP (250 ML)

1 cup (250 ml) mayonnaise
3 teaspoons garlic chili sauce
2 teaspoons Sriracha chili sauce
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
¼ teaspoon ground red pepper (cayenne) Pinch of salt

Place all the ingredients in a small bowl. Stir together until well incorporated. Cover and refrigerate until ready for use.

• **Anchovy Mayonnaise**

You'll be surprised that, despite the anchovies, it doesn't taste fishy.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

MAKES A LITTLE OVER 1 CUP (250 ML)

1 cup (250 ml) mayonnaise
4 tablespoons anchovy paste
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon finely minced garlic Salt to taste

Place the mayonnaise, anchovy paste, lemon juice, and garlic in a small bowl. Mix well. If desired, stir in salt to taste. Cover and refrigerate until use.

• **Wasabi Mayonnaise**

Adding too much wasabi powder to this mayonnaise results in an undesired grainy texture. Instead, rely on the kick this sauce delivers as a subtle aftertaste.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

MAKES A LITTLE OVER 1 CUP (250 ML)

2 tablespoons wasabi powder
3 tablespoons water
1 cup (250 ml) mayonnaise ½ teaspoon soy sauce
Pinch of salt

Stir together the wasabi powder and water in a small sauce dish. Place the mayonnaise in a small bowl and spoon in the wasabi mixture. Add the soy sauce and a pinch of salt. Mix well. Cover and refrigerate until you're ready to use it.

• **Dashi Stock**

This can be made in minutes, resist the urge to let it boil for too long or it will

become bitter.

PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 5 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 5 MINUTES

MAKES ABOUT 2½ CUPS (750 ML)

One 2 x 2 in (5 x 5 cm) piece kelp (*konbu*) 2½ cups (625 ml) water ½ cup (15 g) dried bonito flakes (*katsuobushi*)

Wipe both sides of the kelp with a damp cloth. Add the kelp and water to a small pot and bring almost to a boil over medium heat. Remove the pot from the heat and discard the kelp. Stir in the bonito flakes. Allow the flakes to set in the pot undisturbed until they sink to the bottom. Strain the stock through cheesecloth, discarding the flakes.

• **Hondashi Instant Soup Powder Method**

Bring 2½ cups (625 ml) of water to a boil in a small pot. Remove the pot from the heat and stir in 1¼ teaspoons of hondashi powder. Allow to set for 5 minutes before using. For best results, use the stock the day it is prepared.



Chapter 5: Thin Rolls (Hoso Maki)

Thin sushi rolls present the perfect opportunity to exercise restraint. Each roll is made with the fewest ingredients possible sometimes a single ingredient. Though slivers of herbs, chopped nuts, or the slightest smear of sauce can be

added, the temptation to stuff just one more filling inside must be avoided. Giving in can result in nori that refuses to seal at the seams or bursts open in undesired places.

It may take a few tries to master the technique. At their best, thin rolls will feature perfectly centered fillings lined in absolute evenly cut pieces. (Ordering these at your local sushi bar is one of the secret tests you can use to assess a sushi chef's skills.) But don't be dismayed if you end up with slightly off centered fillings in staggered lengths. The simplicity of the flavors will still shine through. With practice, the fillings will find their way towards the center and your cuts will even out.

For best results, serve the rolls shortly after making them. The nori on the outside tends to get chewy after setting. If you need to prepare and aren't serving rolls for more than 30 minutes, substitute soy paper for the nori.

• Making Thin Rolls

Refer to the photo on page 87. Arrange a bamboo rolling mat so that the slats run parallel to the work surface. Begin with a sheet of 4 x 7 inch (10 x 18 cm) nori. Place the nori on the mat, making sure that the long end is parallel to the bottom of the mat. The rough side of the nori should face upwards.

1 Dip your fingertips in cool water. Spread about ½ cup (100 g) of prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom ¾ of the nori. (The amount of rice needed tends to lessen with practice.)

2 Arrange fillings in a thin line that extends to both edges of the nori. For best results, use no more than two substantial fillings such as vegetables or seafood with one light filling such as sesame seeds or chopped herbs.

3 Wet your fingertips again. Place your thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom edge of the mat so that the nori fits just over the fillings. Do not allow the edge of the bamboo rolling mat to get stuck inside the fold.

4 Gently lift the edge of the mat. (You should be able to see a strip of nori that is not covered with rice.) Continue rolling until the seam is on the bottom of the roll. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers on the sides.

5 Remove the completed roll from the mat. There may be a small flap of nori that is not completely sealed. Do not wet with water to seal. Simply allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes.

6 Dip the tip of a very sharp knife into a small bowl of water. Tap the knife heel on cutting the surface so that the water runs down the length of the blade. Cut the roll into 6 pieces using a swift, sawing motion, re-dipping the knife tip as needed.

• Basil Plum Rolls *Umejiso Maki*

When I worked as a sushi chef in Memphis, TN, we used to call these “Now and Later Rolls.” Every Southerner is familiar with the slender packs of sweet and sour taffy candies offered in multiple artificial fruit flavors. Something about the sweetness of shiso paired with the pickled plum paste is very reminiscent of the grape-flavored candies. Ironically, the color is almost identical, too.

RICE PREP: UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP:** 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 sheets nori or soy paper (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

4 teaspoons pickled plum paste (umeboshi)

4 large shiso (perilla) or basil leaves

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place 1 sheet of the nori rough side facing upwards horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet your fingertips in water. Spread about ½ cup (100 g) of prepared Sushi Rice in a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the nori.

3 Smear 1 teaspoon of the pickled plum paste across center of the rice. Tear 1 shiso leaf into fourths lengthwise and lay the pieces on top of the pickled plum paste.

4 Dip your fingertips in the water again. Place your thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori fits just over the fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

5 Lift the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

6 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board and repeat the steps to complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Serve immediately with soy sauce for dipping.

VARIATION

• Fresh and Spicy Rolls

No proper Southern belle would be caught without a jar of hot pepper jelly in the pantry. This deep-South treat can be found in most grocery stores or

gourmet food markets.

1 Begin assembly of the rolls as directed. For each of the rolls, substitute 1 teaspoon hot pepper jelly for the pickled plum paste and two 4-inch (10 cm) lengths of fresh coriander leaves for the shiso leaves. Cut rolls as directed. Serve immediately.

• Butternut Squash Rolls

Butternut squash is quite versatile. The creamy, sweet flesh is a natural in sweet applications, yet holds its own in savory and spicy preparations. Crystallized ginger will add some crunch, but add some finely chopped toasted pumpkin seeds if you desire more texture contrast.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 30 MINUTES MAKES 6 ROLLS (36 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 oz (250 g) butternut squash, peeled and deseeded

2½ cups (625 ml) vegetable stock

2 garlic cloves

One 1 in (1.25 cm) length fresh ginger, unpeeled

¼ cup (65 ml) soy sauce

Ground red pepper (cayenne) to taste

6 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/ 10 x 18 cm)

3 teaspoons finely chopped crystallized ginger

3 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Cut the butternut squash into 12 strips about 4 x ½ inch (10 x 1.25 cm) and set aside. Combine the vegetable stock, garlic clove, and fresh ginger in a small pot. Bring to a rapid boil over high heat. Reduce to a simmer and add soy sauce. Place the squash onto a wire basket or strainer and lower into the simmering liquid. Allow the squash to simmer until it is soft but not mushy, about 7 minutes. Lift the basket from the simmering liquid sprinkle the ground red pepper over the squash. Set the pieces aside to cool completely.

3 Place 1 sheet of the nori rough side facing upwards horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet your fingertips in water. Spread about ½ cup (100 g) prepared Sushi Rice in a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the nori.

4 Lay 2 of the squash strips across the center of the rice. It is okay if the ends overlap some in the center. Sprinkle ½ teaspoon of the crystallized ginger over the top.

5 Dip your fingertips in water again. Place your thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori fits just over the

fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

6 Lift away the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board and repeat steps to complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Arrange the pieces on a serving tray and drizzle with the Sweetened Soy Syrup. Serve immediately.

• Avocado Maki Rolls

Larger slices of avocado can be used worry free when using soy paper as the wrapper. Soy paper has just enough flexibility to reach over generous portions and prevent the avocado from smooshing out over the sides while maintaining a good, tight hold during the rolling process. For best results, be sure to use a ripe, fragrant avocado that doesn't give too much when gently squeezed.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 sheets soy paper (4 x 7 in/ 10 x 18 cm)

1 just ripe avocado, peeled, deseeded, and quartered

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Lay 1 sheet of the soy paper on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet your fingertips and spread ½ cup (100 g) prepared Sushi Rice in a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the soy paper.

3 Take one avocado quarter and slice it into 3 pieces lengthwise. Place the avocado slices across the center of rice. It is okay if the slices overlap.

4 Dip your fingertips in water again. Place your thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat while grasping the avocado slices with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of soy paper fits just over the fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

5 Lift away the edge of the mat. (The soy paper should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

6 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on cutting board and repeat steps to

complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Serve immediately with soy sauce, pickled ginger and wasabi paste, if desired.

• Tuna and Green Onion Rolls

When you have a great cut of fish, why not showcase it? Here, the first taste to hit your tongue is the delicate tuna unimpeded by nori. A smidgen of rice, a pinch of green onion, and a hint of citrus from the lemon slice garnish are all you need for optimal flavor. Sprinkle a little bit of coarse Hawaiian sea salt over rolls instead of soy sauce or serve Ponzu Sauce.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 10 MINUTES MAKES 2 ROLLS (12 PIECES)

½ cup (100 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 oz (250 g) fresh tuna steak, about 1 in (2.5 cm) thick

1 sheet nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

1 teaspoon black sesame seeds, toasted

Two green onions (scallions), green parts only

1 lemon, cut into 12 thin circles

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Cut the tuna steak into thin slices across the grain. Lay a piece of plastic film wrap on top of the nori. Arrange the tuna slices, slightly overlapping, in a horizontal line using the nori as a guide. Transfer the tuna sheet to a bamboo rolling mat. Spread 4 tablespoons prepared Sushi Rice across the tuna with a spoon, leaving a finger-width space uncovered at the top.

3 Sprinkle ½ teaspoon black sesame seeds over the rice. Place one green onion length in the center of the rice. Using a rolling mat, wrap the tuna snugly around the fillings. Remove roll from the mat and lift away the plastic wrap. Reuse the wrap to prepare another roll.

4 Cut each complete roll into 6 pieces. To serve, place each piece on top of a lemon slice.

• Grilled Lamb Rolls with Mint

Soy sauce makes a quick and easy marinade for meats. Ten minutes is all you need for subtle, flavorful results. Beyond that, the soy sauce can penetrate too much of the flesh and leave you with meat that is too salty. If lamb isn't your thing, grilled beef tenderloin also complements the cucumber and mint for the rolls.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 35 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

½ cup (125 ml) soy sauce

2 teaspoons honey

2 teaspoons mirin (sweet rice wine) or sweet sherry

½ lb (250 g) lamb, ¼ in (6 mm) thick, trimmed of fat

Cooking oil for grilling

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

½ English cucumber or 1 Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into thin matchsticks

4 mint sprigs, leaves removed

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Mix soy sauce, honey, and mirin in a small, non-metal bowl. Add lamb and turn several times to coat. Cover tightly with plastic film wrap and refrigerate for 10 minutes.

3 Remove the lamb from the marinade and pat dry. Brush lightly with cooking oil. Grill over high heat about 9 minutes or until a thermometer inserted registers 160°F (72°C) for medium. Let the lamb cool for 5 minutes before cutting into chopstick width strips.

4 To assemble sushi rolls, place 1 sheet nori rough side facing upwards horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet fingertips and spread prepared Sushi Rice in a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of nori.

5 Place a few cooked lamb strips horizontally across the center of the rice. The lamb should extend the length of the nori. Top with leaves from one mint sprig, followed by ¼ of the cucumber matchsticks.

6 Wet your fingertips again. Slide your thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori fits just over the fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

7 Lift away the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

8 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board and repeat the steps to complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Arrange the pieces on a serving tray and drizzle with the Sweetened Soy Syrup. Serve immediately.

• Mussel and Aparagus Rolls

I've always thought it sad that mussels don't find their way into sushi applications more often. In many continental preparations, they can be as rich

and decadent as a thick slice of flourless chocolate cake. Quite frankly, I find an abundance of them in one dish too much. Since mussels pack such immense flavor in small portions, I find them perfect in thin rolls where a small bite or two can easily afford such a rich, luxuriant ingredient in moderation.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES
MAKES ABOUT 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 tablespoons sake or dry white wine

4 tablespoons water

12 fresh mussels, rinsed and scrubbed

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

1 teaspoon prepared hot mustard paste

4 asparagus spears cut in half lengthwise

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Add the sake and water to a small pot. Heat the liquid to boiling over moderately high heat. Toss in the mussels and cover with a tight fitting lid. Allow the mussels to steam for about 5 minutes or until the shells begin to open. Discard any leftover liquid and mussels that do not open. Remove the mussels from the outer shell. Cut each mussel in half lengthwise.

3 Place 1 sheet of the nori rough side facing upwards horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet your fingertips and spread ½ cup (50 g) prepared Sushi Rice into a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the nori. 4 Smear ¼ teaspoon of the prepared hot mustard paste across the rice. Place 3-4 mussel halves horizontally in the center of the rice. (The mussel halves should extend the length of the nori.) Top with 2 of the asparagus spear halves.

5 Dip your fingertips in water again. Place your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori reaches just over the fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

6 Lift the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board and repeat steps to complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Serve the rolls immediately with soy sauce for dipping.



• Sesame Spinach Maki

Be sure to squeeze out as much excess liquid as possible after cooking the spinach. Liquid left behind can wander past the Sushi Rice during the rolling process making it nearly impossible to achieve a nice, tight seal. And for a refreshing twist, use purple shiso (perilla) flavored rice furikake. Shiso furikake can be found in gourmet supermarkets and Asian grocery stores.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 oz (250 g) fresh spinach leaves

½ cup (125 ml) water

½ teaspoon sesame oil

½ teaspoon rice furikake (page 13)

Pinch of salt

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place the spinach leaves in a small microwave safe bowl. Toss them with the water, sesame oil, rice furikake, and a pinch of salt. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and cook on high for 30 seconds. Remove the spinach and give it a good squeeze to remove the excess liquid.

3 Lay 1 sheet of the nori rough side facing upwards horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet your fingertips and spread ½ cup (100 g) prepared Sushi Rice into a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the nori. 4 Spread ¼ of the

spinach across the center of the rice. Sprinkle ½ teaspoon of sesame seeds over the top.

5 Dip your fingertips in water again. Place your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the spinach with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori reaches just over the fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

6 Lift the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board and repeat steps to complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Serve immediately with Gyoza Dipping Sauce or soy sauce for dipping.



• Roast Pork Rolls with Sweet

Gingered Cherries Leftover roasted pork tenderloin works well for these sushi rolls. Even if the pork was originally seasoned with European style herbs such as basil or thyme, the gingered cherries make a great compliment. If cooking the pork fresh for this recipe, roast at 400°F (200°C) with a couple of generous splashes of soy sauce and ginger ale. Roast the pork until a thermometer inserted reads 160°F (72°C).

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 30 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or

brown Sushi rice.
4 tablespoons soy sauce
4 tablespoons water
2 teaspoons mirin (sweet rice wine) or sherry
¼ in (6 mm) chunk fresh ginger root, uncut
1 teaspoon roughly chopped garlic
2 tablespoons dried cherries
4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/ 10 x 18 cm)
3-4 basil leaves cut into thin strips
6 oz (175 g) pork tenderloin, roasted, cooled and cut into 12 strips

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Combine the soy sauce, water, mirin, fresh ginger root (throw it in whole) and garlic in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil over moderately high heat. Toss in cherries and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and cover tightly with plastic film wrap. Allow to set for at least 10 minutes. Remove cherries from the liquid and pat dry. Chop up the cherries and set them aside.

3 Place 1 sheet of the nori rough side facing upwards horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet your fingertips and spread ½ cup (50 g) prepared Sushi Rice into a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the nori.

4 Spread ¼ of the cut basil across the center of the rice. Add ¼ of the cherries across the center and top with 3 pork tenderloin strips.

5 Dip your fingertips in water again. Place your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori reaches just over the fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

6 Lift the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board and repeat steps to complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Serve the rolls immediately with soy sauce for dipping.

• **Cucumber Thin Rolls *KappaMaki***

Did you know that *kappa* is not the Japanese word for cucumber? It is the name for a mischievous, mythical, turtle-like creature that guards bridges often demanding a toll for safe passage. However, cucumbers are said to be among their favorite prizes, hence the name for this thin roll.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

1 English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into matchstick strips 4 in (10 cm) lengths

1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place 1 sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 g) of Sushi Rice in a thin, even layer across the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.

3 Arrange $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cucumber sticks horizontally in the center of the rice. The cucumber should extend the length of the nori. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of sesame seeds over the rice.

4 Place your thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat while grasping cucumbers with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori fits just over the fillings. Do not allow the edge of the bamboo rolling mat to get stuck inside the fold.

5 Lift the edge of the mat (the nori stays in place). Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape it into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

6 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on cutting board and repeat the steps to complete the remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Serve the rolls with soy sauce for dipping.



VARIATION

• Spicy Peanut Cucumber Rolls

Begin assembling the roll as directed. Squeeze a thin line of Sriracha chili sauce across the rice before topping with cucumbers. Omit sesame seeds and top with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of roasted, chopped peanuts. Roll and cut as directed. Serve with Sweet Chili Sauce or soy sauce for dipping, if desired.



1

Cut cucumber into matchstick strips.



2

Place the nori rough side facing upwards on the bamboo rolling mat.



3

Spread the prepared sushi rice evenly across the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.



4

Sprinkle the sesame seeds in a thin line across the rice.



5

Add the cucumbers.



6

Place thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat and fold the nori over the cucumber.



7

Lift the rolling mat to continue rolling the sushi.



8

When the roll is complete, remove the bamboo rolling mat.

• Halibut and Asparagus Thin Rolls

I'm not sure why, but almonds are a rare find in sushi. Almonds pair well with vinegar-flavored rice, most vegetables and nearly any fish. They also offer a surprise crunch factor without being overwhelming to the other sushi fillings.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

10 oz (280 g) fresh halibut fillet, ½ in (1.25 cm) thick

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

4 tablespoons slivered almonds, toasted

4 asparagus spears cut in half lengthwise

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Cut the halibut into 8 thin strips. Set aside. Place 1 sheet of the nori rough side facing upwards horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Wet your fingertips and spread ½ cup (100 g) prepared Sushi Rice into a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the nori.

3 Place 2 halibut strips horizontally in the center of the rice. (The halibut should extend the length of the nori.) Place 1 tablespoon of slivered almonds across the halibut. Top with 2 of the asparagus spear halves.

4 Dip your fingertips in water again. Place your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori reaches just over the fillings. (Do not allow the edge of the mat to get stuck inside the fold!)

5 Lift the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

6 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board and repeat steps to complete remaining rolls. Cut each roll into 6 pieces using a very sharp knife dipped lightly in water. Serve immediately with soy sauce for dipping.

• Crispy Crab and Cream Cheese Thin Rolls

If you have just a little bit of Sushi Rice that you can't use completely on the day of preparation, this is a great way to use it the next day. Refrigerate leftover rice covered with a damp cloth and plastic film wrap. Use the cold rice to prepare sushi as directed. When the rolls are fried, the rice is restored to a great texture.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 30 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (24 PIECES)

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 recipe basic Tempura batter

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

2 teaspoons cream cheese, softened

2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

4 imitation crab sticks, torn in half lengthwise

½ cup (60 g) potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour)

Oil for frying

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Tempura Batter.

2 Place 1 sheet of the nori, rough side facing up, horizontally on a bamboo rolling mat. Dip your fingertips in water and spread ½ cup (100 g) of prepared Sushi Rice in a thin, even layer across the bottom ¾ of the nori.

3 Spread ½ teaspoon cream cheese across the center of the rice. Sprinkle ½ teaspoon of the green onion over the cream cheese. Top it with 2 pieces of the torn imitation crab stick. The ends can overlap in the center and the edges should extend the full length of the nori.

4 Place your thumbs underneath the bamboo rolling mat while grasping the crab sticks with all other fingertips. Fold the bottom of the mat so that the bottom edge of the nori fits just over the fillings. Do not allow the edge of the bamboo rolling mat to get stuck inside the fold.

5 Lift the edge of the mat. (The nori should stay in place.) Continue rolling until the roll is complete. Gently shape the roll into a rectangle by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides. Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board. Repeat the steps to make 3 more rolls using the remaining nori, Sushi Rice, and fillings. Cut each roll in half with a sharp knife.

6 Add enough oil to a skillet to form a depth of 1 inch (2.5 cm). Heat the oil to 350°F (175°C). Dredge the sushi roll halves in the potato starch before dipping them into the prepared Tempura Batter. Add the sushi roll halves to the hot oil and fry them until golden brown, about 2 minutes per side.

7 Allow the sushi roll halves to drain on a wire rack for 1 minute before slicing them into 3 pieces. Serve the pieces warm with Sweet Chili Sauce for dipping.



1 Spread the prepared sushi rice evenly across the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.



2 Pull the crab stick apart.



3 Layer the fillings evenly across the center of the rice.



4 Cut the prepared sushi roll in half before dredging in potato starch.



5 After frying the sushi roll, cut each half into 3 pieces.



6 Serve the rolls warm with Sweet Chili Sauce.



Chapter 6: Thick Rolls (Futo Maki)

Thick sushi rolls, or futomaki, are perhaps the easiest rolls to prepare at home. The rolling technique can be acceptably cultivated within one or two

eager attempts while a variety of cooked fillings can be used when fresh seafood is unavailable or hard to obtain. Using the nori vertically allows for a large number of fillings that can be easily contained in neat, bite-sized packages. In fact, the hardest part of preparing thick rolls may be deciding when to stop adding fillings. The good news is that even if you get a little carried away, you can still yield good results. Since thick rolls feature the nori on the outside, you'll want to serve them within a few minutes of preparing. After about 10 minutes, the texture of the nori can take a turn for the worse. As moisture from the Sushi Rice as well as the fillings is absorbed, the once crispy nori becomes slick and overly chewy. Soy paper is a suitable substitute for the nori if you prefer a different taste, texture, or color.

• Making Thick Rolls

1 Lay a 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet of nori vertically on a bamboo rolling mat. Make sure the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards.

2 Dip your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.

3 Add the desired fillings horizontally in the middle of the rice, making sure that the fillings are spread evenly and extend to both edges of the nori. For best results, use at least 3 fillings, but no more than 7 fillings.

4 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings, tucking the fillings tightly under the fold. (Do not allow the mat to get stuck inside the roll!)

5 Lift the edge of the mat. Continue rolling until the roll is complete and the seam is facing down. Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers on the sides.

6 Allow the roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes. A loose fold is common with thick rolls, but resist the urge to seal with additional water. The nori will adhere to itself after a couple of minutes. To cut the rolls, dip the blade of a very sharp knife in water. Use a swift sawing motion to cut the roll into 5 pieces. Serve rolls immediately with recommended dipping sauce or with soy, pickled ginger, and wasabi.



1 Place the nori vertically, rough side upwards, on the bamboo rolling mat.



2 Spread the prepared sushi rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.



3 Layer the fillings evenly across the center of the rice.



4 Place your thumbs underneath the rolling mat and fold the nori over the fillings.



5 Continue rolling until the roll is complete and the seam is on the bottom.



6 After sushi roll has rested seam side down for at least 2 minutes, slice it into 5 pieces.

• Sardine Rolls with Tomato Relish

Small, shiny fish are almost always a wise seafood choice. Not only do they pack a lot of flavor, they also tend to be quite high in heart healthy omega-3's. Fish such as sardines also tend to present fewer mercury level risks. And best of all, the price is just right. This recipe specifies the use of the canned variety packed in olive oil, as they are more readily available. If you have access to very fresh sardines, use those instead.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 30 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 small roma tomatoes, blanched and peeled

1 teaspoon fresh lime juice

½ teaspoon minced garlic

½ teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger root

4 tablespoons Ponzu Sauce

Four 4 x 7 in (10 cm x 18 cm) sheet nori

2 tablespoons black flying fish roe (*tobiko*)

One 3.75 oz (100 g) can boneless, skinless sardines packed in olive oil, drained

4 tablespoons wasabi peas, coarsely crushed, optional

4 tablespoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only 1 Japanese omelet cut into thin strips

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and the Japanese Omelet.

2 Cut the tomatoes into tiny cubes. Place them along with the any juices in a small, non-metal bowl. Stir in the lime juice, garlic, fresh ginger root, and Ponzu Sauce. Mix well and cover with plastic wrap. Allow flavors to develop at room temperature for at least 10 minutes.

3 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.

4 Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of the black flying fish roe across the center of the rice. Arrange 2-3 of the sardine fillets on top of the flying fish roe. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of the wasabi peas, if using, and 1 tablespoon of the green onion over the fillings. Top with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Japanese Omelet strips.

5 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck the fillings snugly under the fold.

6 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides. 7 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow each roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes. Use a sharp knife dipped lightly in water to cut each roll into 5 pieces. To serve, arrange pieces flat on a serving platter and top each piece with some of the tomato relish. Serve immediately.



• Spicy Crawfish Thick Rolls

The local flair of the ingredient combined with familiar Southern ingredients served as a topic of conversation as well as familiar entry to the world of sushi for those that were still quite unsure of more exotic seafood. Here, I've adapted that original Southern-style crawfish sushi roll to have a more worldly appeal.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES MAKES 5 ROLLS (25 PIECES)

4 cups (750 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1½ tablespoons Spicy Mayonnaise

1 teaspoon dark sesame oil

½ teaspoon red pepper powder (*togarashi*) or ground red pepper (cayenne)

½ teaspoon salt

½ lb/8 oz (250 g) crawfish tail meat, cooked

1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds

1 tablespoon minced green onions (scallions), green and white parts Five 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets of nori

4 oz (100 g) fresh tilapia or other white fish fillet, cut into 5 thick strips ¼ avocado, peeled, deseeded and cut into 5 wedges

2½ tablespoons black flying fish roe (*tobiko*)

5 celery sticks, 4 in (10 cm) length and approximately chopstick width

1 Japanese omelet Sheet, cut into thin strips

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice, the Spicy Mayonnaise and the Japanese Omelet.

2 Mix the Spicy Mayonnaise, dark sesame oil, red pepper powder (*togarashi*) and salt in a medium bowl. Add the crawfish tail meat and stir well. Mix in

the sesame seed and green onion. Cover and refrigerate until ready for use.

3 Place one sheet of nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.

4 Spread 2 tablespoons of the spicy crawfish mixture across the center of the rice. Nestle one strip of tilapia below the crawfish mixture. Layer 1 avocado slice, $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon black flying fish roe, 1 celery stick and $\frac{1}{5}$ of the Japanese Omelet strips on top.

5 Wet your fingertips and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tightly tuck fillings under the fold.

6 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the roll). Shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow the roll to rest seam side down at least 2 minutes. Cut each roll into 5 pieces with a sharp knife dipped in water. Serve rolls immediately with soy sauce for dipping.



VARIATION

• Spicy Shrimp Rolls

Substitute cooked and chopped shrimp for the crawfish tail meat. Proceed with assembly as directed, substituting English cucumber (Japanese cucumber) lengths for the celery.



1 Prepare the spicy crawfish mixture.



2 Add prepared sushi rice to the nori and add the fillings evenly across the center of the rice.



3 Roll the sushi according to the method for thick sushi rolls. Allow it to rest seam side down for 2 minutes.



4 Cut the sushi roll into 5 pieces.

• Spider Rolls

I have to question who has the better sense of humor sushi chefs or customers? What is it about creepy, crawly things that end up as the names of sushi rolls? In this case, perhaps the customers enjoy the playful side of crispy, fried crab legs that resemble hairy spiders crawling out of the roll. If I had to guess, I think sushi chefs secretly get a kick out of feeding people “spiders” that they willingly eat!

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP:** 35 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 recipe basic Tempura batter (page 41)

4 soft shell crabs, cleaned

Flour for dusting

Oil for frying

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

12 English cucumbers (Japanese cucumbers), deseeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) lengths and chopstick widths

2 tablespoons capelin roe (*masago*)

4 teaspoons finely sliced green onion (scallion), green parts only

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Basic Tempura Batter.

2 Heat 1 inch (2.5 cm) of oil in a medium skillet over high heat. When the oil reaches 350°F (175°C), reduce to moderately high heat to maintain the temperature.

3 Pat the soft shell crabs dry and then dust with flour. Shake away any excess

flour before giving each crab a generous dunk in the Tempura Batter. Fry the crabs in the oil, about 2 at a time, until golden brown (3 minutes per side). Drain on a wire rack and repeat with remaining crabs.

4 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards.

5 Wet your fingertips and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi

Rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori. Lay one of the fried soft shell crabs in the center of the rice. Pull the claws outward so they extend beyond the sides of the nori, like spider legs. Place 3 cucumber sticks below the crab smear $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of the capelin roe across the rice and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the green onion.

6 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck the fillings snugly under the fold.

7 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides

8 Repeat steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow each roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes. To serve, use a sharp knife dipped lightly in water to cut each roll into 5 pieces. Arrange pieces on a serving tray or individual plates prominently displaying the “spider” legs. Serve immediately with soy sauce for dipping.



VARIATION

- **Coconut Soft Shell Crab Rolls**

Add 4 tablespoons of Japanese breadcrumbs (panko) and 4 tablespoons of unsweetened flaked coconut to the Tempura Batter. Dry, dust, and fry the soft shell crabs as directed. When assembling the rolls, omit the capelin roe and add 1 chopstick width strip of mango. Allow the completed rolls to rest seam side down for 2 minutes before cutting into 5 pieces. Serve immediately with Sweet Chili Sauce or Peanut Sauce for dipping.



1 Prepare the tempura soft shell crab and gather the other fillings.



2 Spread the prepared sushi rice evenly across the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.



3 Place the fillings evenly across the center of the rice.



4 Roll the sushi according to the method for thick rolls. Allow the roll to rest seam side for 2 minutes



5 Cut the roll into 5 pieces.

• Pickled Okra Thick Rolls

It is not uncommon to use pickled vegetables such as eggplant, burdock root, and daikon radish as fillings for sushi rolls. In my first days of creating sushi in Starkville, Mississippi recipes for pickled vegetable sushi popped up in nearly every sushi recipe I could find. The challenge was that I could not find them in our local, closet-sized Asian market (much less pronounce them!) I improvised and decided that pickled okra would be my local go-to sushi pickle. Purchase them from your local farmer's market or check supermarkets for commercially jarred ones on the pickle aisle. Many times they can be purchased mild or extra spicy. The choice is yours as both are quite delicious.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori or soy paper

8 green beans, trimmed and blanched

One 4 in (10 cm) length carrot, cut into matchstick strips

8 large pieces of pickled okra
¼ small red bell pepper, cut into matchstick strips
4 teaspoons cream cheese, softened
4 teaspoons corn kernels, blanched
2 teaspoons minced green onion (scallions), green parts only 2 teaspoons
toasted sesame seeds

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about ¾ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom ¾ of the nori.

3 Arrange 2 green beans in the center of the rice. Top with ¼ of the carrot matchsticks and 2 of the pickled okra pieces. Add ¼ of the red bell pepper matchsticks. Smear 1 teaspoon of cream cheese across the rice. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of corn kernels, ½ teaspoon green onions, and ½ teaspoon toasted sesame seeds across the fillings.

4 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck the fillings snugly under the fold.

5 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

6 Repeat steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow each roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes. To serve, use a sharp knife dipped lightly in water to cut each roll into 5 pieces. Serve immediately with Sweet Chili Sauce or soy sauce.

• Spicy Tofu Rolls

The key to success is taking the time to press the tofu before making the spicy mixture. Allow ample time to get rid of excess water and your tofu will gladly take on the flavors offered without releasing liquid during the rolling process. If you are entertaining vegetarian friends, omit the rice furikake or use a variety that does not contain fish products. The spicy tofu mixture can be used as an alternative for recipes containing spicy tuna, cooked shrimp, or cooked lobster.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 30 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

½ cup (100 g) firm tofu, tiny dice

2 tablespoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only
1 tablespoon fresh orange juice
½ teaspoon grated orange zest
1 teaspoon furikake, optional
1 teaspoon dark sesame oil
1 tablespoon garlic chili paste
Salt to taste
Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori
¼ avocado, peeled deseeded and cut into 4 wedges
2 oz (50 g) snow peas, blanched with strings and tips removed
2 oz (50 g) fresh bean sprouts, end trimmed

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place tofu pieces between several layers of paper towels and weigh them down with a heavy bowl. Drain for at least 10 minutes. Add the drained tofu pieces to a medium bowl and mix in the green onion, orange juice, orange zest, rice furikake, dark sesame oil, and garlic chili paste. Taste, then add salt accordingly. Cover and set aside.

3 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about ¾ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom ¾ of the nori.

4 Spread 2½ tablespoons of the spicy tofu mixture across the center of the rice. Place one avocado wedge on top of the spicy tofu. Top with ¼ of the snow peas and ¼ of the bean sprouts. All ingredients should be distributed evenly.

5 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck the fillings snugly under the fold.

6 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow each roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes. To serve, use a sharp knife dipped lightly in water to cut each roll into 5 pieces. Serve immediately with Sweetened Soy Syrup or soy sauce for dipping.

• Soba "Sushi" Rolls

Using buckwheat or soba noodles as the base for these fun rolls technically keeps them from being true sushi. Regardless, the result is quite tasty and is especially good on a crisp autumn day. For best results, purchase the best quality soba noodles you can find. And for a little extra flavor, experiment with flavored varieties like green tea.

SUSHI PREP: 45 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

6 oz dry buckwheat (soba) noodles
Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori
4 tablespoons Sesame noodle Dressing
4 shiitake mushrooms, cut into thin strips
Handful of arugula
2 tablespoons finely grated daikon radish
One 4 in (10 cm) length carrot, cut into matchstick strips ½ small eggplant,
roasted and cut into thin strips
2 tablespoons finely grated daikon radish
2 tablespoons minced green onions (scallions) green part only

1 Bring a large pot of water to a boil over high heat. (Do not salt the water.) Add the buckwheat noodles (soba) to water and stir gently. Boil for about 5 minutes.

Test a noodle it should be cooked through, yet not mushy. Drain and rinse the noodles under cold water. Toss the noodles with the Sesame Noodle Dressing in a non-metal bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least 20 minutes.

2 Place one sheet of the nori on a work surface. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of your work surface and that the rough side is facing upwards. Pat excess moisture away from the marinated noodles before spreading ¼ of them across the nori. Leave about a forefinger width space uncovered at the top and allow the noodles to extend beyond the edges of the nori.

3 Add ¼ of the shiitake mushroom strips across the center of the noodles. Top with ¼ of the arugula, ¼ of the carrot matchsticks and ¼ of the roasted eggplant strips. Smear ½ tablespoon of the daikon radish over the fillings and sprinkle ¼ of the green onion over the top.

4 Slide your thumbs underneath the bottom of the nori and grasp the fillings with all other fingertips. Use your hands to roll the nori into a thick, roll. Place the roll seam side down on a plate and place in the refrigerator. Repeat the steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Each roll should set in the refrigerator for at least 2 minutes before they are sliced into 5 pieces. Serve rolls with soy sauce for dipping.

• Falafel Tortilla Rolls

One of the things I love most about a great bar mitzvah (or bat mitzvah, for that matter!) is the thought and creativity that often goes into their planning. I've always considered it an honor to be asked to create kosher versions of sushi for these events. Never have I minded the mashgiach, a rabbi, or other supervisor versed in kosher law, looking over my shoulder at my every move. After all, even rabbis like to pick up a few good sushimaking tips!

RICE PREP: UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.
½ cup (50 g) Japanese bread crumbs (*panko*)
2 tablespoons olive oil
¼ teaspoon dark sesame oil
1 teaspoon minced garlic
6 sprigs fresh parsley, stems removed and coarsely chopped
4 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds
Pinch of salt
Two 10 in (25 cm) flour tortillas or lavash
4 heaping tablespoons hummus
½ teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon ground cumin
½ cup (100 g) cooked chickpeas, coarsely chopped
One 4 in (10 cm) length carrot, cut into matchstick strips
One English cucumber (Japanese cucumber), deseeded, cut into matchstick strips 4 in (10 cm) length
1 large romaine lettuce leaf, shredded

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Heat ovens to 350°F (175°C). In a small bowl, stir together the Japanese breadcrumbs, olive oil, dark sesame oil, and garlic. Mix well, then place in a thin layer on a baking sheet. Toast in the oven until golden brown or about 5 minutes. Remove from baking tray to prevent further browning and toss with the parsley, sesame seeds, and pinch of salt.

3 Cut the flour tortillas or lavash down to the size of four 4 x 7 inch (10 x 18 cm) sheets of nori. Place one sheet of the flour tortilla on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat. Wet your fingertips and spread about ¾ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom ¾ of the tortilla.

4 Stir the hummus together with the ground coriander and ground cumin. Spread 1 heaping tablespoon across the center of the rice. Sprinkle ¼ of the chickpeas over the hummus. Add ¼ of the toasted Japanese breadcrumb mixture over the top. Arrange ¼ of the carrot matchsticks and ¼ of the cucumber matchsticks over the fillings. Top with ¼ of the shredded Romaine lettuce.

5 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the Shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat with the remaining tortilla and fillings. Place each roll seam side down on a cutting board. Use a sharp knife dipped lightly in water to cut each roll into 5 pieces. Serve immediately with tahini if desired.



1 Use the nori as a guide to cut the tortilla to size.



2 Place the cut tortilla vertically on the bamboo rolling mat and spread the sushi rice evenly on the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the tortilla.



3 Spread the hummus mixture evenly across the center of the rice.



4 Layer the remaining fillings evenly over the hummus mixture.



5 Roll the sushi according to the thick roll method. Cut into 5 pieces before serving.



• Quail Egg Tamago Rolls

Quail egg yolks perched delicately on top of completed sushi roll pieces adds an impressive wow factor. When entertaining, jazz them up even more by adding a tiny dab of Wasabi Mayonnaise over the egg yolk. Turn a cooking torch on high and quickly sear the mayonnaise. Searing of the mayonnaise may be done directly on a heat-proof serving platter as transferring pieces afterwards is difficult. Be careful not to sear the platter as it may get very hot and burn your hands.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 20 MINUTES MAKES 2 ROLLS (10 PIECES)

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 Japanese omelet Sheets

Two 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) nori

1 teaspoon pickled plum paste (*umeboshi*)

2 tablespoons capelin roe (*masago*)

4 heaping tablespoons lump crabmeat, picked over

½ cup (100 g) daikon sprouts (*kaiware*) or broccoli sprouts

10 quail egg yolks

2 chives cut into 10 short pieces

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Using a sheet of the nori as a guide cut the Japanese Omelet Sheets into 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) rectangles. Set aside.

3 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about ¾ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom ¾ of the nori.

4 Smear ½ teaspoon of the pickled plum paste across the center of the rice. Top with 1 tablespoon of the capelin roe. Add 2 heaping tablespoons of the lump crabmeat. Arrange ½ of the daikon radish sprouts on top of the crab.

5 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides. Wrap one of the cut Japanese Omelet Sheets snugly around the roll making sure that the seam is on the bottom.

7 Repeat steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Cut each roll into 5 pieces. Arrange pieces on a serving platter and top each piece with 1 quail egg yolk. Carefully balance a chive length against the quail egg yolk. (A pair of tweezers or fine tipped chopsticks makes this easy.) Serve rolls immediately.

• Asparagus and Mushroom Thick Rolls

As a former vegetarian, I have had my share of dishes that feature the “meaty” mushroom as a meat substitute. Since then, it has been my personal rule to refrain from mushrooms as a main component unless absolutely essential. This is one of those instances where mushrooms play a vital, yet balanced role. Shiitake mushrooms can have an overpowering effect, but you’ll find that they balance well with the asparagus and sweet potato. Thin pin-like enoki mushrooms can also be used. Don’t be surprised if meat-lovers enjoy this as equally as veggie lovers.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 tablespoons mirin (sweet rice wine) or sherry

4 tablespoons soy sauce

1 cup (250 ml) water

4 large shiitake mushrooms, wiped and stems cut away

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

8 asparagus spears, blanched

Eight 4 in (10 cm) sweet potato lengths (about finger width), boiled

1 cup (125 g) daikon radish sprouts (kaiware) or broccoli sprouts

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place the mirin, soy sauce, and water in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a near boil. Add the shiitake mushrooms and simmer for 5 minutes. Strain the liquid away and discard. Allow the mushrooms to cool completely before slicing into thin strips.

3 Lay one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.

4 Arrange 2 of the asparagus spears in the center of the rice with the ends overlapping and the points extending beyond the nori. Add 2 of the sweet potato lengths across the center of the rice and top with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the mushroom strips. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ of the sprouts and sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the green onion.

5 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all your other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck the fillings snugly under the fold.

6 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow each roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes before cutting each roll

into 5 pieces. Serve with Sesame Noodle Dressing or soy sauce for dipping.



• Curried Scallop Thick Rolls

There are many varieties of curry available. Japanese style curry can be purchased in flat packages that contain what at first glance looks like bars of chocolate. These flavor packed curry roux blocks possess a subtle flavor that reminds me of fall. Depending on your tastes, you can purchase mild, medium, or hot curry roux. Store opened boxes on your pantry shelf in a closed container.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 35 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

½ cup (125 ml) water 1 tablespoon chopped Japanese-style curry ⅛ small yellow onion, thinly sliced

4 teaspoons Sushi rice Dressing

4 fresh sea scallops, shucked

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

2 slices bacon, cooked and finely chopped

1 carrot, cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

3 Brussels sprouts, thinly shaved

2 teaspoons crystallized ginger, chopped

4 fresh coriander sprigs (cilantro)

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Bring the water to a boil in a saucepan over high heat. Reduce heat to

medium and stir in the curry. Stir well until the curry is completely melted. Allow the mixture to simmer for 2 minutes. A thick paste should remain. Remove from the heat and cool completely.

3 Rinse the onion slices under cold water. Drain well and place them in a small dish. Sprinkle Sushi Rice Dressing over them allowing them to marinate at least 5 minutes. Dice the sea scallops into small pieces. Toss them in the cooled curry paste and set aside.

4 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.

5 Spread $\frac{1}{4}$ of the scallop mixture across the center of the rice. Place a few slivers of marinated onion beneath it. Top with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the bacon pieces, $\frac{1}{4}$ of the carrot matchsticks and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Brussels sprouts slices. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of the crystallized ginger over the roll and top with 1 fresh coriander sprig.

6 Wet your fingertips and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with your other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck the fillings snugly under the fold.

7 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

8 Repeat with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow each roll to rest seam side down at least 2 minutes before cutting each roll into five pieces. Serve immediately.



• Tempura Shrimp Thick Rolls

The combination of crispy, warm tempura is a great match for the coolness of fresh tuna. Grated daikon radish, which is usually incorporated into Tempura Sauce, is added to the roll to temper the sweetness of the shrimp. If you want to have the illusion of extra-large shrimp, keep a teaspoon handy when preparing to fry the shrimp. After the battered shrimp is added to the hot oil, immediately pour 1 tablespoon of Tempura Batter into the oil directly over the length of the shrimp. To create the illusion of extra-large shrimp, drizzle 1 tablespoon of batter into the oil over the length of the shrimp. As the shrimp rises, it will adhere to the puffed batter.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 30 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 recipe basic Tempura batter

8 large raw fresh shrimp, peeled deveined, tails intact

½ cup (30 g) potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour)

Oil for frying

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

2 tablespoons capelin roe (*masago*)

2 tablespoons finely grated daikon radish

4 oz (100 g) fresh tuna, cut into 8 thin strips

2 tablespoons minced green onion (scallions), green parts only

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Tempura Batter.

2 Make 2 shallow scores on the underside of each shrimp. Flip the shrimp over and press each down to flatten and lengthen. Dredge each shrimp in potato or cornstarch.

3 Heat 1 inch (2.5 cm) of oil in a heavy skillet to 350°F (175°C). Dip the shrimp in Tempura Batter before adding to the heated oil. Fry until golden brown, about 2 minutes per side. Drain on a wire rack.

4 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom $\frac{3}{4}$ of the nori.

5 Arrange 2 shrimp in the center of the rice. The tails should stick out over both edges. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon capelin roe across the rice, followed by $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of the daikon radish. Place 2 tuna strips below the shrimp. Sprinkle with $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon green onion and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon toasted sesame seeds.

6 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck the fillings snugly under the fold.

7 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

8 Repeat steps with the remaining nori and fillings. Allow each roll to rest seam side down on a cutting board at least 2 minutes. To serve, use a sharp knife dipped lightly in water to cut each roll into 5 pieces. Serve immediately with Tempura Sauce.



• Fried Oyster Thick Rolls

When I put this on a menu, I like to refer to the oyster by its Japanese moniker, *kaki*. That makes this a *kaki futomaki*. (Isn't that just fun to say?) The first time I presented this as a special; one server thought I was saying "cocky" *futomaki*. In his mind, the roll was so good that he thought I was giving it bragging rights.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS (20 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 teaspoons potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour)

1 egg, beaten

12 fresh oysters, shucked

1 tablespoon rice furikake

½ teaspoon salt

½ cup (80 g) flour

1 cup (50 g) Japanese breadcrumbs (*panko*)

Oil for frying

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

4 tablespoons wasabi Mayonnaise

4 teaspoons minced green onion (scallion), green parts only

One 4 in (10 cm) length English cucumber (Japanese cucumber), deseeded, cut into matchstick strips

8 thin red bell pepper strips

4 tablespoons corn kernels, blanched

1 large romaine lettuce leaf, quartered

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Wasabi Mayonnaise.

2 Heat 1 in (2.5 cm) of oil in a medium skillet over high heat. When the oil reaches 350°F (175°C), reduce to moderately high heat.

3 Place the potato starch or cornstarch on a plate. Roll the oysters in the starch. Place the beaten egg in a medium bowl and add the oysters. In a separate bowl, mix together the rice furikake, salt, flour, and panko. Lift the oysters away from the egg mixture and add them to the flour mixture. Shake the bowl to coat the oysters. Fry the breaded oysters in the prepared oil until golden brown, about 1-1 ½ minutes per side. Drain on a wire rack.

4 Place one sheet of the nori on a bamboo rolling mat. Be sure that the short end is parallel to the bottom of the mat and that the rough side is facing upwards. Wet your fingertips and spread about ¾ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the bottom ¾ of the nori.

5 Smear 1 tablespoon of Wasabi Mayonnaise across the center of the rice. Top with 3 fried oysters, making sure to extend the pieces the entire width of the nori. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the green onion over the oysters, then place ¼ of the cucumber matchsticks and 2 red bell pepper strips below the oysters. Add 1 tablespoon of corn kernels and top with 1 Romaine lettuce piece.

6 Wet your fingertips and slide your thumbs underneath the mat while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the mat just over the fillings and tuck fillings under the fold.

7 Lift the edge of the mat and continue rolling until the roll is complete. (Keep the mat from getting stuck inside the fold during rolling!) Gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on the top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

8 Repeat the steps allowing each roll to rest seam side down for at least 2 minutes. Use a sharp knife dipped in water to cut each roll into 5 pieces and serve with Wasabi Mayonnaise or soy sauce.



Chapter 7: Inside Out Rolls (Ura Maki)

Inside out sushi rolls, *ura maki*, are quite versatile. As the name implies, the rice is outside of the sushi rolls. For the home sushi chef, inside out rolls provide the chance to really get to know your sushi as the use of a bamboo rolling mat is needed only to shape rolls in the end. A sheet of nori is completely coated in prepared Sushi Rice then flipped over. A bit of fearlessness may be needed during the first attempt as it may feel that Sushi Rice will fall off during the flip. Just keep in mind that this rarely happens. If the Sushi Rice will stick to your hands (and it will!), certainly it will stick steadfastly to the nori. Some inside out roll such as the Rainbow Roll or Dragon Roll feature bright toppings draped gracefully over the top. This may appear to be a difficult technique to master, but with a piece of plastic wrap, a very sharp knife and a little patience, you'll be able to create these rolls easily. The key to mastery is to fight the urge to remove the plastic wrap from the sushi roll prematurely. The plastic wrap should stay in place through the cutting process and the last shaping. If you're accustomed to contemporary American style sushi rolls, inside out rolls are perhaps what first come to mind. This family of sushi rolls contains popular favorites such as California, Caterpillar, Rainbow, and Crunchy Shrimp rolls. Another characteristic of these sushi bar all-stars is finishing sauces such as spicy mayo or sweetened soy syrup that add flavor and eliminate the need for soy sauce. In my collection, you'll find a few of the usual suspects as well as a few new creations that incorporate peanuts, tortilla chips, and even butter.

• Tips for Making Inside Out Rolls

1 Cover a bamboo rolling mat with plastic wrap and set aside for later. This roll is constructed by rolling with your hands. Begin with a piece of 4 x 7 inch (10 x 18 cm) nori. Place the nori directly on a cutting board, making sure the long end is parallel to the bottom of the board and that the rough side is facing upwards.

2 Wet your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

3 Flip the nori over so that the rice is face down on the cutting board. Add the desired ingredients horizontally in the middle of the nori, making sure that the ingredients are spread evenly and touch both edges of the nori. For best results, use at least 2 substantial fillings. The maximum number of ingredients should not exceed five.

4 Wet your fingertips again and slide your thumbs underneath nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

5 Continue rolling and tucking until the roll is completed. With the bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

6 Place the seam side of the roll on a cutting board. Dip the tip of a very sharp knife in water, allowing the water to run down the blade then cut into

6-8 pieces using a swift sawing motion.



1 Place the nori horizontally, rough side facing upwards, on your cutting board.



2 Spread the prepared sushi rice evenly across the entire surface of the nori.



3 Sprinkle sesame seeds over the surface of the rice before flipping the nori over.



4 Add fillings to the center of the nori. Use your fingers to begin rolling.



5 Continue using your fingers to roll and tuck until the roll is complete.



6 Place the roll seam side down on the cutting board. Use a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic wrap to shape the roll before cutting.

• Philly Smoked Salmon and Cream Cheese Rolls

Did you know that the ever-popular Philadelphia cream cheese was created in the state of New York? During the time of its creation, Philadelphia was considered the food capital of the US and clever marketers decided to take advantage of that to promote their new style of cheese.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS (32 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

4 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted

4 teaspoons cream cheese, softened

8 chives
8 oz (250 g) smoked salmon or lox
8 asparagus spears, blanched

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

3 Dip your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of sesame seeds evenly over the rice.

4 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Smear 1 teaspoon of cream cheese across center of the nori. Top with 2 chives. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ of the smoked salmon. Lay 2 asparagus spears across the smoked salmon, allowing tips to extend beyond nori edges.

5 Wet your fingertips and slide your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

6 Continue rolling the first fold until the seam is on the bottom. With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat steps using the remaining nori and fillings. Place the rolls seam side down on the cutting board before cutting each into 8 pieces. Serve immediately with soy sauce for dipping.



• Spicy Tuna Rolls

If you have a portion of tuna that is particularly sinewy, spicy tuna is your best option for getting the most for your money. Cut the best parts of the tuna away and dice. Briskly drag a spoon across the surface of the sinewy tuna portion and scrape away the desired flesh. Discard the sinew and mix the scraped tuna with the diced tuna.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 20 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS (32 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 oz (250 g) fresh tuna or fresh albacore tuna, diced

2 teaspoons sliced green onions (scallions), green parts only

2 teaspoons red pepper powder (*togarashi*) or ground red pepper (cayenne)

2 tablespoons garlic chili sauce

2 teaspoons Sriracha chili sauce

½ teaspoon dark sesame oil

1½ tablespoons mayonnaise, optional

½ teaspoon salt, or more to taste

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

4 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

One 4 in (10 cm) length English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into matchsticks

½ avocado, peeled, deseeded, and cut into 12 wedges



1 Prepare the spicy tuna mixture.



2 Cover the nori with the prepared sushi rice.



3 Sprinkle rice furikake over the surface of the rice.



4 Flip the nori over, add the fillings and use your hands to finish the roll. Use a bamboo rolling mat covered with plastic wrap to shape the roll before cutting.

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Mix together the tuna, green onions, red pepper powder (*togarashi*), garlic chili sauce, Sriracha chili sauce, dark sesame oil, and mayonnaise, if using, in a small bowl. Stir in the salt. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use.

3 Place one sheet of the nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on a cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

4 Wet your fingertips and spread $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the sesame seeds evenly over the rice.

5 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Place 3 of the avocado wedges across the nori. (Place the fillings near the bottom of the nori for easier rolling.) Add 2 heaping tablespoons or so of the spicy tuna mixture across avocado. Top with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cucumber matchsticks.

6 Wet your fingertips and slide your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping fillings with all your other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold. 7 Continue rolling until the seam of the roll is on the bottom. With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

8 Repeat steps using the remaining nori and fillings. Place the rolls seam side down on a cutting board. To cut, dip the blade of a very sharp knife in water. Use a swift sawing motion to cut each roll into 6-8 pieces. Serve immediately with soy sauce for dipping.



• **Crunchy Crab Rolls**

To serve rolls as a salad, toss 4 ounces (100 g) of mixed salad greens with a citrus vinaigrette. Divide the salad between two large salad plates. Cut one large tomato into wedges and divide between the plates. Arrange 8 pieces of the sushi rolls on top of the salad plate and serve immediately.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 10 MINUTES

MAKES 2 ROLLS (16 PIECES)

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18cm)

½ cup (80 g) finely crushed tortilla chips

½ avocado, peeled, deseeded, and cut into 6 wedges

2 imitation crab sticks 2 teaspoons cooked corn kernels

2 teaspoons cooked black beans, drained and roughly mashed

1 small romaine lettuce leaf, cut into thin strips

Spicy Mayonnaise or wasabi Mayonnaise to taste

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice, and Spicy Mayonnaise or Wasabi Mayonnaise.

2 Lay one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on a cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

3 Dip your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread ¾ cup (150 g) of prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori. Spread ¼ cup (40 g) crushed tortilla chips evenly over the rice. Gently press the tortilla chips into the rice.

4 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Arrange 3 avocado slices across the nori. (Place the fillings near the bottom for easier rolling.) Tear one imitation crab stick in half lengthwise and place end to end over avocado. Top with 1 teaspoon corn kernels and 1 teaspoon black beans. Add ½ of the cut Romaine lettuce.

5 Wet your fingertips and place thumbs underneath the nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

6 Continue rolling the first fold until the seam is on the bottom. With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Prepare another roll using remaining nori and fillings. Place rolls seam side down on the cutting board before cutting it into 8 pieces. To serve, top with Spicy Mayonnaise or Wasabi Mayonnaise.



1 After spreading the prepared sushi rice evenly over the nori, sprinkle the crushed tortillas across the surface and press gently to adhere.



2 Flip the nori over and add the fillings evenly across the center.



3 Use your fingers to roll the sushi. Before cutting, shape the roll with a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic wrap.



• California Rolls

Sushi expert Trevor Corson reminds us that despite the name, the California roll was not originally created for American tastes. In the early 1970's, early sushi bars in Los Angeles catered mostly to traveling Japanese businessmen. When the fatty belly of blue fin tuna, toro, became scarce, one chef combined crab and avocado to create the feel of tuna belly on the tongue. The name California roll was given to honor the plentiful, local Californian ingredient the avocado.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 10 MINUTES

MAKES 2 ROLLS (16 PIECES)

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

¼ avocado, peeled, deseeded, and cut into 6 slices

1 English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

2 imitation crab sticks

1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted

4 tablespoons capelin roe (*masago*)

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Place one sheet of the nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on a cutting

board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board.

3 Dip your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

4 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Place 3 avocado slices across the nori. (Place the fillings near the bottom for easier rolling.) Top with $\frac{1}{2}$ of the cucumber matchsticks. Tear 1 imitation crab stick in half lengthwise. Place the torn pieces end to end over the cucumber. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of the sesame seeds over the crab.

5 Wet your fingertips and slide your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping fillings with all your other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

6 Continue rolling until the seam of the roll is on the bottom. With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat the steps to complete another roll. Place rolls seam side down on the cutting board before cutting into 8 pieces. Spread the capelin roe evenly across the pieces of sushi with a spoon. Serve immediately with soy sauce for dipping.



• Peanut Shrimp Rolls

Peanuts make an excellent tempura crunchy substitute. They have a similar appearance and provide just the right amount of crunch to the exterior of sushi rolls without the added hassle of frying and straining batter bits. For the best flavor, be sure to use roasted and lightly salted peanuts. Also, take the

extra time to hand chop them. Using a food processor just one second too long can leave you with an undesired peanut paste.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 30 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS (32 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 large shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails intact

One 4 in (10 cm) length English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into matchsticks

3 tablespoons Sushi rice Dressing

1 small lime wedge

½ teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger root

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

4 tablespoons finely chopped roasted peanuts, plus more for garnish ¼ small red bell pepper, cut into matchsticks

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

4 sprigs Thai basil, leaves removed

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and extra Sushi Rice Dressing.

2 Bring a medium pot of water to a rolling boil. Make 2 small incisions across the underside of each shrimp. Turnover and firmly press down to flatten and stretch the shrimp. Boil the shrimp for about 3 minutes, or until just done. Remove from boiling water and place in a bowl of ice water. Remove from the ice water and pat dry just before assembling sushi rolls.

3 Place the English cucumber or Japanese cucumber matchsticks in a small glass bowl or mug. Add the Sushi Rice Dressing. Squeeze the lime wedge over the bowl and add the ginger. Stir well and set aside.

4 Place one sheet of the nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on the cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

5 Dip your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread ¾ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori. Sprinkle the rice with 1 tablespoon of the peanuts.

6 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Place 2 of the boiled shrimp across the nori. (Place the fillings near the bottom for easier rolling.) Top with ¼ of the marinated cucumber matchsticks. Add ¼ of the red bell pepper matchsticks over the cucumber. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the green onion (scallion) across the nori then add ¼ of the Thai basil leaves.

7 Wet your fingertips and place your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping the fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

8 Continue rolling until the seam is on the bottom. With a bamboo rolling

mat covered in plastic wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

9 Repeat the steps using remaining nori and fillings. Place rolls seam side down on the cutting board. To cut, dip the blade of a very sharp knife in water before slicing each roll into 8 pieces. Garnish with additional peanuts and serve with Sweet Chili Sauce.

VARIATION

• Peanut Tuna Rolls

Substitute 2 heaping tablespoons Spicy Tuna mix for shrimp. Assemble and cut the rolls as directed. Serve with Sweet Chili Sauce or soy sauce for dipping.

• Crunchy Shrimp Rolls

Despite the name, the shrimp featured here are not what makes the roll crunchy. Instead, a coating of fried tempura “crunchies” is placed onto the Sushi Rice. The battered bits incorporate a crisp texture without the heaviness of a completely deep-fried roll. To prepare the tempura “crunchies,” heat ½ inch (1.25 cm) of oil in a skillet to 350°F (175°C). Pour 4 tablespoons of Tempura Batter over the tines of a fork into the hot oil. Fry until golden brown. Remove with a strainer and allow draining on paper towels until ready for use.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 40 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (32 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 large fresh shrimp, peeled, deveined tails intact

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

½ avocado, peeled, deseeded and cut into 12 slices

1 English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded, and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

4 tablespoons capelin roe (*masago*)

4 oz (100 g) tuna cut against the grain into 12-16 chopstick width strips

4 tablespoons Tempura “crunchies”

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Heat a medium pot of water to a rolling boil. Make 2 small incisions across the underside of each shrimp. Turnover and firmly press down to flatten and stretch the shrimp. Boil the shrimp for about 3 minutes, or until just done. Remove and place in a bowl of ice water. Remove and pat dry just before assembling sushi rolls.

3 Place one sheet of the nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on a cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. Dip your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

4 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Place 3 avocado slices across the nori. (Place the fillings near the bottom for easier rolling.) Top with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cucumber matchsticks. Lay 2 prepared shrimp over the cucumber end to end, tails extending beyond the nori. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon of capelin roe across the nori and top with 3-4 strips of tuna.

5 Wet your fingertips and slide your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

6 Continue rolling until the seam of the roll is on the bottom. With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat steps to complete another roll. Place the Tempura “Crunchies” on a flat plate and roll each sushi roll in them to coat. Use the bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic wrap to gently press crunchies into the rice. Cut each roll into.

8 pieces. Serve immediately with Wasabi Mayonnaise or soy sauce for dipping.



• Pineapple Spam Rolls

When I began thinking of this roll, I had been reading some oldfashioned,

fund-raising cookbooks. There was a recipe for a holiday ham that called for boiling a ham in ginger ale and canned pineapple chunks. How could I not be fascinated with such a concept?

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES MAKES 2 ROLLS (16 PIECES)

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 tablespoons soy sauce

4 tablespoons ginger ale

1 tablespoon mirin or sweet sherry

¼ cup (50 g) dried pineapple

Two ½ in (1.25 cm) slices Spam

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

2 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

2 teaspoons furikake

2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

2 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Sweetened Soy Syrup.

2 Bring soy sauce and ginger ale to a boil in a small saucepan. Remove from heat. Add mirin or sweet sherry and dried pineapple pieces. Cover with a sheet of plastic film wrap and steep for 10 minutes. Discard liquid and pat pineapple pieces dry before cutting them into thin strips.

3 Heat the vegetable oil over medium-high heat in a skillet. Add the Spam slices and sear sides until dark brown. Drain on clean dish cloths or paper towels. Cut each slice in half lengthwise.

4 Lay one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. With fingertips dipped lightly in cold water, spread ¾ cup (150 g) Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon furikake over the rice.

5 Flip nori over so the rice is facing down. Place 2 slices Spam across the nori. (Place fillings near the bottom to make rolling easier.) Top with ½ of the pineapple strips. Add 1 teaspoon green onions.

6 With damp fingertips, place thumbs underneath nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tuck the fillings under the fold.

7 Continue rolling the first fold until it reaches the top edge of the nori.

8 With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while pressing your thumbs and middle fingers on the sides.

9 Make another roll using remaining nori and fillings. Place rolls seam side down before cutting into 8 pieces. Drizzle Sweetened Soy Syrup over the top.

• The Rainbow Rolls Platter

Many sushi bars use California Rolls as the bases for “specialty” rolls that feature premium ingredients draped gracefully over the top. I’ve never followed this logic. If the outside is premium, I think the inside deserves to match. Take advantage of being able to upgrade your sushi roll fillings beyond imitation crab sticks. Here I’ve used sardines but also try incorporating strips of fresh white tuna, cooked lobster tail meat, or lump crab meat.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 2 ROLLS (16 PIECES)

1½ cups (350 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

4 slices fresh tuna

4 slices fresh arctic char or Salmon

4 slices fresh tilapia or other white fish fillet

6 small sardine fillets, boned and cooked

2 tablespoons capelin roe (*masago*)

One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) matchsticks

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Lay one sheet of nori on cutting board and cover with one sheet of plastic film wrap. (Nori should be parallel to the bottom of a cutting board.) Arrange 6 slices of fish across the center of the nori in the alternating pattern: tuna, arctic char, tilapia, tuna, arctic char, tilapia. Slices should overlap slightly. Make another fish sheet with remaining slices.

3 To assemble rolls, place one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won’t need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

4 With fingertips dipped lightly in cold water, spread ¾ cup (150 g) of prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

5 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Lay 3 sardine fillets across the nori. (Place fillings near the bottom to make rolling easier.) Smear 1 tablespoon of the roe across the sardines. Add ½ cucumber matchsticks.

6 With damp fingertips, place thumbs underneath nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

7 Continue rolling the first fold until it reaches the top edge of the nori.

8 With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the

roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers on the sides. Don't cut the roll just yet!

9 Make another roll using remaining nori and fillings. Place the rolls seam side down on the cutting board. Lay 1 fish sheet (fish side down) on top of each roll. Leave the plastic film wrap in place. Press fish slices to each roll with a bamboo rolling mat. Remove the mat, but leave plastic film wrap in place.

10 Dip the blade of a very sharp knife into some water. Slice through the plastic film wrap and cut each roll into 8 pieces. Take the rolling mat and press the fish to rolls. Remove the plastic film wrap. Arrange pieces on a serving platter.



• Spicy "Dragon" Crawfish or Tuna Rolls

Dragon juice sounds more potent than it truly is. The translucent mystery sauce that drapes the tops of the rolls is a fresh blend of ginger root and jalapeño peppers mixed with pickled plum paste. You'll find that it is more flavorful than spicy hot. The use of a high-powered blender or food processor is a must for the dragon juice. This will ensure that the ginger root is sufficiently puréed rather than stringy and hairy.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES

MAKES 2 ROLLS (16 PIECES)

1½ cups (330 g) prepared Sushi rice

2 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

1 avocado, peeled and seeded

4 heaping tablespoons Spicy crawfish or Spicy Tuna

2 tablespoons black flying fish roe (*tobiko*)

4 oz (100 g) fresh white tuna, cut into 4 strips

One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

2 tablespoons Dragon Juice (see right), or more to taste

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice

2 Lay one sheet of nori on cutting board and cover with one sheet of plastic film wrap. (Nori should be parallel to bottom of cutting board.) Cut ½ of the avocado into very thin slices. Arrange avocado slices across center of nori. Slices should form backwards c's and overlap slightly. Repeat with other half of avocado.

3 To assemble rolls, place one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on a cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

4 With fingertips dipped lightly in cold water, spread ¾ cup (150 g) of Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

5 Flip nori over so that rice is facing down. Spread 2 heaping tablespoons Spicy Crawfish or Spicy Tuna across the nori. (Place fillings near the bottom to make rolling easier.) Smear 1 tablespoon of the roe across the spicy tuna. Lay 2 fresh white tuna pieces on top. Add ½ cucumber matchsticks.

6 With damp fingertips, place your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping the fillings with all your other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

7 Continue rolling the first fold until it reaches the top edge of the nori.

8 With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing thumbs and middle fingers on the sides. Do not cut the roll just yet!

9 Make another roll using the remaining nori and fillings.

10 Place rolls seam side down on the cutting board. Lay 1 avocado sheet (avocado side down) on top of each roll. Leave the plastic film wrap in place. Press avocado slices to each roll with a bamboo rolling mat. Remove the mat, but leave the plastic film wrap in place.

11 Dip the blade of a very sharp knife into water. Slice through the plastic film wrap and cut each roll into 8 pieces. Take the rolling mat and press avocado to rolls. Remove plastic film wrap. Arrange pieces on a serving platter. Drizzle Dragon Juice over the tops of rolls. Serve immediately.

• Dragon Juice

The translucent sauce is a fresh blend of ginger root and jalapeño peppers mixed with pickled umeboshi plum paste.

½ cup (100 g) pickled plum paste (*umeboshi*) ½ cup (120 ml) water
1 jalapeño chili pepper, deseeded and chopped 2 tablespoons minced fresh ginger root Pinch of salt

1 Place all of the ingredients in a blender. Pulse them once or twice before blending the mixture for 30 seconds. Check to ensure that the mixture is

smooth. If small bits of chunks remain, blend the mixture again for 30 seconds. Chill the sauce until ready for use.

• Surf and Turf Rolls

It's hard to go wrong with beef, asparagus, and lobster topped with a butter sauce. Yes, even when it comes to sushi! This decadent sushi roll is nice to pull out when you want to show off a bit. For extra brownie points, arrange completed sushi roll pieces on top of a serving dish that has raised edges to catch any excess butter sauce. Smear a bit of minced garlic across the top of each roll and heat very briefly with a cooking torch. Pour the hot butter sauce over the top of the rolls and serve immediately.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 25 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (32 PIECES)

3 cups (650 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 oz (250 g) beef Tataki 20 very thin slices

4 tablespoons unsalted butter

2 teaspoons Ponzu Sauce (page 27)

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

1 lb (500 g) cooked lobster tail meat

8 asparagus, blanched

8-12 arugula leaves

2 tablespoons finely grated daikon radish

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Beef Tataki.

2 Place one sheet of nori on a cutting board and cover with one sheet of plastic film wrap. (Nori should be parallel to bottom of cutting board.) Arrange 5 Beef Tataki slices across center of nori. Make 3 more sheets with the remaining Beef Tataki.

3 Melt butter in a small saucepan, over medium heat. Continue to cook until the butter begins to brown and smells nutty. Remove from the heat and stir in the Ponzu Sauce. Keep warm until ready for use.

4 Lay one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

5 With fingertips dipped lightly in cold water, spread ¾ cup (150 g) of Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

6 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Lay ¼ of the lobster claw meat across the nori. (Place fillings near the bottom to make rolling easier.) Top with 2 asparagus spears and 2-3 arugula leaves.

7 With damp fingertips, place thumbs underneath nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings,

making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

8 Continue rolling the first fold until it reaches the top edge of the nori.

9 With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers on the sides. Do not cut the rolls just yet.

10 Prepare three more rolls using the remaining ingredients.

11 Place rolls seam side down on the cutting board. Lay 1 Beef Taki sheet (beef side down) on top of each roll. Leave the plastic film wrap in place. Press the beef slices to each roll with a bamboo rolling mat. Remove the mat, but leave the plastic film wrap in place.

12 Dip the blade of a very sharp knife into water. Slice through the plastic film wrap and cut each roll into 8 pieces. Take the rolling mat and press beef to rolls. Remove plastic film wrap. Arrange the pieces on a serving platter. Mound a bit of grated daikon radish on top of each piece. Drizzle warm butter sauce over the rolls.

• **Mango Lobster Rolls**

The mango and cucumber combination are the true star of this roll. While the lobster is delightful, crab, shrimp or fresh white tuna are all great candidates for pairing with the fresh combo.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS (32 PIECES)

3 cups (600 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

½ avocado, peeled, seeded, and cut into 12 slices

8 oz (250 g) cooked lobster tail meat

1 English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, seeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

¼ mango, peeled, deseeded and cut into matchsticks

4 tablespoons black flying fish roe (tobiko), optional

32 fresh coriander leaves (cilantro), pulled from the stem

2 fresh Thai bird's eye chilies or fresh red chilies, cut into 32 very thin slices

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Lay one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

3 Dip your fingertips lightly in cold water and spread ¾ cup (150 g) of Sushi

Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

4 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Arrange 3 avocado slices across the nori. (Placing the fillings near the bottom makes rolling them easier.) Add $\frac{1}{4}$ of the lobster tail meat. Top with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cucumber and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the mango matchsticks.

5 Wet your fingertips and place your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold. 6 Continue rolling the first fold until it reaches the top edge of the nori. With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing your thumbs and middle fingers into the sides.

7 Repeat steps using remaining nori and fillings. Place rolls seam side down on the cutting board before cutting each into 8 pieces.

8 Dip the tops of each piece into the roe, if using. Arrange pieces on a serving platter and top each with 1 fresh coriander leaf and 1 Thai bird's eye chili or fresh red chili slice. Serve with Peanut Sauce (page 27) or soy sauce for dipping.



• Catfish Avocado Rolls

My first apprentice, Kevin Sullivan, made a very interesting observation the first time I showed him how to prepare the plastic wrapped avocado sheets that top these rolls. After he patiently watched me, he replied, “Cool, they’re like avocado cold cut combos.” I was quite confused. “Cold cut combos,” he said again. “You know like the meat sheets Subway uses for sandwiches.” To

this very day, we still refer to our prepared avocado and other prepared inside out roll toppings as “cold cut combos.”

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 20 MINUTES

MAKES 2 ROLLS (16 PIECES)

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 sheets nori (4 x 7 in/10 x 18 cm)

1 avocado, peeled, and seeded

8 slices broiled catfish (page 141)

2 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted

One carrot, cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, deseeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

2 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice, Broiled Catfish, and Sweetened Soy Syrup.

2 Lay one sheet of nori on cutting board and cover with one sheet of plastic film wrap. (Nori should be parallel to bottom of cutting board.) Cut ½ of the avocado into very thin slices. Arrange avocado slices across the center of the nori. Slices should form backwards c's and overlap slightly. Repeat with other half of the avocado.

3 Place Broiled Catfish slices on a piece of aluminum foil and heat in a toaster oven for about 30 seconds to warm. Sprinkle sesame seeds over the pieces.

4 To assemble the rolls, place one sheet of nori, rough side facing upwards, directly on the cutting board. The long end should be parallel to the bottom of the board. (You won't need a bamboo rolling mat until the end.)

5 With fingertips dipped lightly in cold water, spread ¾ cup (150 g) of prepared Sushi Rice evenly over the entire surface of the nori.

6 Flip the nori over so that the rice is facing down. Lay 4 Broiled Catfish slices across the nori. (Place the fillings near the bottom to make rolling easier.) Top with ½ carrots and ½ cucumber matchsticks.

7 With damp fingertips, place your thumbs underneath the nori while grasping fillings with all other fingertips. Roll the bottom of the nori just over the fillings, making sure to tightly tuck the fillings under the fold.

8 Continue rolling the first fold until it reaches the top edge of the nori.

9 With a bamboo rolling mat covered in plastic film wrap, gently shape the roll by pressing your forefingers on top of the mat while simultaneously pressing thumbs and middle fingers on the sides.

10 Make another roll using remaining nori, catfish, carrots, and cucumber.

11 Place the rolls seam side down on the cutting board. Lay 1 avocado sheet (avocado side down) on top of each roll. Leave the plastic film wrap in place. Press avocado slices to each roll with a bamboo rolling mat. Remove the mat, but leave the plastic film wrap in place.

12 Dip the blade of a very sharp knife into water. Slice through the plastic film wrap and cut each roll into 8 pieces. Take the rolling mat and press avocado to rolls. Remove the plastic film wrap. Arrange pieces on a serving platter. Drizzle with Sweetened Soy Syrup.



1 Lay a sheet of plastic wrap over a sheet of nori. Overlap the slices of avocado left to right.



2 Set the plastic sheet aside and cover the nori with the prepared sushi rice.



3 Add the sushi fillings and use your fingers to roll the sushi.



4 Carefully lay the avocado sheet (avocado side down) on top of the sushi roll.



5 Use a bamboo rolling mat to gently press the avocado to the surface of the rice. Do not remove the plastic wrap until the sushi roll has been cut into pieces.



Chapter 8 : Sushi Bowls (Chirashi Sushi)

Sushi in a bowl, or chirashi zushi, is the most diplomatic of the sushi varieties. Whether you enjoy luscious cuts of fresh unadorned seafood or whether you prefer cooked toppings, sushi bowls have something for everyone. Small bowls of perfectly prepared Sushi Rice are topped artfully with vegetables and seafood or sometimes even mixed right into the rice. And the presentation doesn't have to be limited by an actual bowl. Martini glasses hollowed citrus fruit halves and tomatoes all add to the magic of chirashi.

When it comes to decorating the top of the chirashisushi bowl, the term “organized chaos” instantly comes to mind. Toppings appear to be scattered at first glance. Upon careful inspection, you may begin to notice patterns. Preparing chirashi in this manner will be particularly intriguing if you have an artistic eye.

But you don't have to actually scatter the toppings. One of my favorite methods is to group each of the ingredients in “categories” and arrange each group en masse over the top of the bowl. Another acceptable method is to place the prepared Sushi Rice and all of the “toppings” in a bowl. Toss everything together and place your sushi “salad” in a bowl. Either way, sushi bowls are a great make-at-home treat.

• Tips for Sushi Rice Bowl Success

The method for preparing sushi bowls can be as simple or involved as you desire. The arrangement, “scattering” or tossing of the sushi is truly a personal preference.

1 For chirashi that is “scattered,” you’ll want to view all of the toppings and having a bowl with a wide opening makes this possible.

2 Opt for small, Asian style soup bowls when grouping your toppings over Sushi Rice. Leave some room around the walls of the bowls for your ingredients to rest against the sides. It may at first seem a little crowded, but the presentation is more pleasing when the toppings are close and the rice underneath is hidden.

3 When tossing all of the ingredients together like a salad, any type of bowl will work. A clear bowl makes for an excellent presentation as every ingredient can be seen from every angle. It is also acceptable to present it on a plate, salad style.

4 HOLLOWED OUT fruits and vegetables should always add something. It is considered a plus if you can consume the entire “bowl.” Select one that complements the flavors of the other ingredients. If the entire bowl is not edible as in the case of citrus fruits, rely on the fragrance of the bowl’s walls to add flavor. Of course, the look of the container is an admirable trait.

• "Gold and Silver" Sushi Bowls

Fried soft-shell crabs and fresh tilapia are a nice “gold and silver” contrast. The presentation is particularly stunning, too, if the soft-shell crabs are added to the bowl whole. For easy eating, cut the crab into manageable, chopstick friendly bites, and then scatter the pieces over the bowl.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 10 MINUTES MAKES 2 BOWLS

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 prepared tempura soft shell crabs or coconut soft shell crabs

4 oz (125 g) fresh tilapia or other white fish fillet, cut into thin slices ½

English cucumber or Japanese cucumber cut into 4 in (10 cm) matchsticks

2 heaping tablespoons capelin roe (*masago*) or flying fish roe (*tobiko*)

2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only Daikon radish sprouts (*kaiware*) or broccoli sprouts, for garnish

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and tempura or coconut soft shell crabs.

2 Gather 2 small bowls. Wet your fingertips before adding ¾ cup (150 g) of the Sushi Rice to each bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice in each bowl. Place one prepared soft-shell crab over each bowl. Divide the fresh

tilapia strips and the cucumber matchsticks between the bowls. Mound 1 heaping tablespoon of the capelin or flying fish roe on each bowl. Add a 1 teaspoon mound of minced green onions to each bowl.

3 Serve the sushi bowls with Ponzu Sauce.

• "Sweet and Sour" Orange Sushi Cups

Small sweet oranges can be hollowed out and used as fragrant “cups” for Sushi Rice. The presentation is beautiful and the walls of the orange mask a tangy secret. While the Sushi Rice already possesses a tangy quality, the hidden layer of pickled plum paste offers even more of a pleasant puckering effect.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 20 MINUTES MAKES 4 SUSHI “BOWLS”

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 seedless navel oranges

2 teaspoons pickled plum paste (*umeboshi*)

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

4 large shiso (perilla) leaves or basil leaves

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

4 imitation crab sticks, leg style

One 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet of nori

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Cut the oranges in half crosswise. Remove a tiny slice from the bottom of each half so that each one sets flat on the cutting board. Use a spoon to remove the insides from each half. Reserve any juices, pulp, and segments for another use such as Ponzu Sauce

3 Dip your fingertips in water and place about 2 tablespoons of the prepared Sushi Rice inside each orange bowl. (Alternately, use a wooden or plastic spoon dipped in water to add the rice to the bowls.) Smear ½ teaspoon of the pickled plum paste over the rice. Add another 2 tablespoons layer of rice to each of the bowls. Sprinkle ½ teaspoon of the toasted sesame seeds over the rice.

4 Tuck one shiso (perilla) leaf into the corner of each bowl. Mound 1 teaspoon of the green onions in front of the shiso leaves in each bowl. Take the imitation crabsticks and rub them between your palms to shred or use a knife to cut them into shreds. Pile one stick’s worth of crab on top of each bowl.

5 To serve, cut the nori into matchstick shreds with a knife. Top each bowl with some of the nori shreds. Serve with soy sauce, if desired.



• Sesame Tuna Sushi Bowl

Even though simple to prepare, this dish is devastatingly satisfying. For a spicy treat, add 4 heaping tablespoons of Spicy Tuna Mix. Or add a combination of the Sesame Tuna, Spicy Tuna Mix and fresh tuna slices. The contrast of flavors and textures makes for a very happy bowl.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 5 MINUTES

MAKES 1 BOWL

¾ cup (150 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice. Handful of spiral cut daikon radish
6 oz (200 g) Tuna Tataki, cut into ¼ in (6 mm) slices
½ lime, for garnish

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Tuna Tataki.

2 Wet your fingertips before placing the Sushi Rice into a small serving bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice.

3 Mound the shredded daikon into the backside of the bowl. Arrange the tuna slices over the top of the bowl, propping some against the daikon. (If using Spicy Tuna Mix, simply mound the mixture in the center of the bowl.) Cut the lime into thin slices and use the slices to fill in any empty spaces.

4 Serve with Ponzu Sauce



Gently press the prepared sushi rice into the serving bowl. Do not pack the rice.



Place the mound of daikon in the upper left side of the bowl. If desired, prop a sprig of herb for garnish on top of the daikon.



Arrange the tuna tataki slices in two lines; one across the bottom of the bowl and the other down the center. Fill in any empty spots with lime wedges or other garnishes.



• "Stir-Fry" Sushi Bowl

The first version of this I created was a sushi roll I playfully named Crunchy Buddha's Delight. The fillings inside the sushi roll were a take on the Chinese tofu stir-fry dish, Buddha's Delight. It turned out to be a big hit, delighting vegetarians and meat eaters alike. What I discovered was that there never seemed to be enough room inside the roll to neatly pack in all the ingredients. Rather than skimp, the sushi has been re-incarnated into a delightful sushi bowl.

RICE PREP: UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

MAKES 4 BOWLS

1½ cups (300 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 large butter lettuce leaves

½ cup (100 g) roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

4 large shiitake mushrooms, wiped, stems removed and thinly sliced ½ recipe
Spicy Tofu Mix
½ carrot, spiral cut or shredded

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Spicy Tofu Mix.

2 Arrange the butter lettuce leaves on a serving tray. Stir together the prepared Sushi Rice, roasted peanuts, minced green onions, and shiitake mushroom slices in a medium bowl. Divide the mixed rice between the lettuce “bowls.” Gently pack the rice into the lettuce bowl.

3 Divide the Spicy Tofu Mixture between the lettuce bowls. Top each with some of the carrot swirls or shreds. Serve the stir-fry bowls with some Sweetened Soy Syrup, if desired.

• Egg, Goat Cheese and Green Bean Sushi Bowl

Egg, Goat Cheese and Green Bean Sushi Bowl ingredient sushi bowl is simple and delicious. If you want a little more, try adding a seafood protein, such as crab or smoked salmon.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 10 MINUTES MAKES 2 BOWLS

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

10 green beans, blanched and cut unto ½ inch (1.25 cm) lengths

1 Japanese omelet Sheet, cut into shreds

4 tablespoons goat cheese, crumbled

2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Japanese Omelet Sheet.

2 Gather 2 small bowls. Wet your fingertips before adding ¾ cup (150 g) of the Sushi Rice to each bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice in each bowl. Divide the green beans, omelet egg shreds, and the goat cheese between the 2 bowls in an attractive pattern.

3 To serve, sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the green onions on each bowl.

• Scallops and Asparagus Sushi Bowl

This sushi bowl represents one of multiple combinations for toppings. Use your favorite mix of fresh seafood, vegetables, and roe to create a customized masterpiece.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 5 MINUTES MAKES 1 SUSHI BOWL

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

- 1 heaping tablespoon salmon roe (*ikura*)
- 2 fresh sea scallops, shucked, and cut into thin slices
- 4 cherry tomatoes, quartered
- 1 Japanese omelet Sheet
- 4 asparagus spears, blanched and cut into ¼ in (6 mm) lengths
- 3 lime slices, for garnish

Prepare the Sushi Rice and Japanese Omelet Sheet. Wet your fingertips before adding the Sushi Rice to a small serving bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice. Arrange the toppings in an attractive pattern over the top of the bowl. Place the lime slices over the toppings for garnish. Serve with Ponzu Sauce.

• Spicy Lobster Sushi Bowl

The “spicy” in this bowl isn’t the kind that will set your mouth on fire. Rather, it is flavorful. It doesn’t overwhelm or mask the delicate lobster. Ripened strawberry slices in place of the kiwi fruit also work well for this bowl. Or for color, add slices of both fruit.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP:** 5 MINUTES MAKES 2 SUSHI BOWLS

- 1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.
- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger root
- One 8 oz (250 g) steamed lobster tail, shell removed and sliced into medallions
- 1 kiwi fruit, peeled and cut into thin slices
- 2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only
- Handful spiral cut daikon radish
- 2 fresh coriander sprigs (cilantro strips)
- 2 tablespoons Dragon Juice, or more to taste

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Dragon Juice.

2 Wet your fingertips before dividing the Sushi Rice between two small serving bowls. Gently flatten the surface of the rice in each bowl. Use a spoon to spread ½ teaspoon of the grated fresh ginger root over the rice in each bowl.

3 Divide the lobster medallions and the kiwi fruit in half. Alternate one half of the lobster slices with one half of the kiwi fruit slices over rice in one bowl, leaving a small space uncovered. Repeat the pattern in the other bowl. Mound 1 teaspoon of the minced green onions near the front of each bowl. Divide the spiral cut daikon radish between the two bowls, filling the empty space.

4 To serve, prop one fresh coriander sprig in front of the daikon radish in each bowl. Spoon 1 tablespoon of Dragon Juice over the lobster and kiwi fruit in each bowl.

• Ham and Peach Sushi Bowl

Prosciutto and quick-pickled peaches with a subtle kick are the stars of this sushi bowl. To up the heat factor, add a few thin slices of your favorite fresh chili. Select a fragrant peach that still has a bit of bite and texture. An overly ripe fruit will not be nearly as interesting in the final dish.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 35 MINUTES MAKES 4 BOWLS

2 cups prepared (400 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 large peach, seeded and cut into 12 wedges

½ cup (125 ml) Sushi rice dressing

½ teaspoon garlic chili sauce

Splash of dark sesame oil

4 oz (125 g) prosciutto, cut into thin strips

1 bunch watercress, thick stems removed

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and extra Sushi Rice Dressing.

2 Place the peach wedges in a medium bowl. Add the Sushi Rice Dressing, garlic chili sauce, and the dark sesame oil. Give the peaches a good toss in the marinade, before covering. Let the peaches set at room temperature in the marinade for at least 30 minutes and up to 1 hour.

3 Gather 4 small serving bowls. Wet your fingertips before placing ½ cup (100 g) of the prepared Sushi Rice into each bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice. Divide the toppings evenly in an attractive pattern over the top of each bowl, allowing 3 peach slices per serving. (You can drain most of the liquid from the peaches before topping the bowls, but don't pat them dry.)

4 Serve with a fork and soy sauce for dipping, if desired.

• Barbecued Short Ribs Sushi Bowl

Look for boneless short ribs that are thinly cut, such as Korean-style short ribs. If you can't find them at your Asian market, purchase any boneless pork ribs and use a sharp knife to slice them into ¼ inch (6 mm) thick slices.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 45 MINUTES MAKES 4 BOWLS

2 cups (400 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 lb (500 g) boneless pork ribs

2 tablespoons raw sugar or light brown sugar

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

2 tablespoons cooking oil

2 teaspoons soy sauce

½ teaspoon minced garlic

2 tablespoons chopped crystallized ginger

½ avocado, peeled, seeded and cut into thin slices

¼ English cucumber (Japanese cucumber), seeded and cut into matchsticks ¼ cup (60 g) dried mango, cut into thin strips

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Rub the short ribs with the sugar. Mix together the rice vinegar, cooking oil, soy sauce and minced garlic in a medium bowl. Place the ribs in the bowl and turn them several times to coat. Cover them and allow them to marinate for 30 minutes.

3 Heat your broiler to 500°F (260°C). Place the short ribs on a broiler pan or sheet tray. Broil for about 5 minutes per side. Remove the short ribs from the tray and allow them to cool. Cut the short ribs into ½-inch (1.25 cm) chunks. (If the short ribs have bones, you'll want to remove the meat from the bones.)

4 Gather 4 small serving bowls. Wet your fingertips before placing ½ cup (100 g) of the Sushi Rice into each bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice. Sprinkle ½ tablespoon of the chopped crystallized ginger over the rice. Divide the short ribs between the 4 bowls. Arrange ¼ of the avocado slices, cucumber matchsticks, and mango strips in an attractive pattern over the rice bowl. Serve with Sweetened Soy Syrup, if desired.



• Dynamite Scallop Sushi Bowl

At sushi bars, dynamite sushi rolls are usually some variation of California

Rolls topped with mixture of baked seafood and lots of Spicy Mayonnaise. If you're making your own sushi, you probably don't want to hide all of your handy work underneath a glop of seafood salad. Instead, try a dynamite bowl or in this case a dynamite martini glass.

The presentation is more elegant and you can pile as much seafood salad in it as you like. While you can't stick the martini glass under the broiler, the effect will be just as dramatic when you use a cooking torch to sear the top.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 MARTINI “BOWLS”

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only ¼ English cucumber (Japanese cucumber), seeded and diced into small cubes

2 imitation crabsticks, leg style, shredded

8 oz (250 g) fresh bay scallops, shucked, cooked and kept warm

4 heaping tablespoons Spicy Mayonnaise or more to taste

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Spicy Mayonnaise.

2 Gather 4 martini glasses. Place ½ teaspoon of minced green onions in the bottom of each glass. Place the Sushi Rice and diced cucumber in a small bowl. Mix well. Wet your fingertips before dividing the rice and cucumber mix between each glass. Gently flatten the surface of the rice.

3 Divide the shredded crabstick between the glasses. Add ¼ of the warm bay scallops to each glass. Place a heaping tablespoon of Spicy Mayonnaise over the contents of each glass. Use a cooking torch to sear the Spicy Mayonnaise until it is bubbly, about 15 seconds. Sprinkle ½ teaspoon of the toasted sesame seeds over the top of each glass before serving.



1 Place green onions in the bottom of the glass.



2 Toss together the prepared sushi rice and the diced cucumber before adding to the glass.



3 Top the mixed rice with bay scallops and shredded crab stick.



4 Add a tablespoon of Spicy Mayonnaise over the contents.



5 Sear the Spicy Mayonnaise until bubbly with a torch before topping with sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

• Ratatouille Sushi Bowl

Rather than arranging sushi toppings over the top of this bowl, the bowl itself is the main presentation. The would be toppings are mixed right into the Sushi Rice and loaded into the edible bowl. The surprise factor is in the fried onions that are added for crunch. For convenience, purchased fried onions are suggested, but batter and fry your own if you like.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 20 MINUTES MAKES 4 BOWLS

2 cups (400 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 large tomatoes

1 tablespoon minced green onion (scallions), green parts only ½ small

Japanese eggplant, roasted and cut into small cubes
4 tablespoons fried onions
2 tablespoons Sesame noodle Dressing

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Sesame Noodle Dressing.

2 Bring a medium pot of water to a boil over high heat. Add the tomatoes and boil them for 15 seconds. Immediately plunge the tomatoes into a large bowl of ice water to cool. Peel the skins away.

3 Place the Sushi Rice, green onions, eggplant, fried onions, and Sesame Noodle Dressing in a medium bowl and mix well.

4 Cut away the tops of each tomato and scoop out the middles. (Reserve the tomato insides for another use such as Sardine Rolls with Tomato Relish (page 93). Leave a ¼ in (6 mm) thick wall, for best results. Spoon ½ cup (100 g) of the mixed Sushi Rice mixture into each tomato bowl. Use the back of the spoon to gently flatten the rice. Serve the tomato bowls with a fork.

• Crunchy Fried Tofu Sushi Bowl

As much as I love a good crispy element there are days when I just can't be bothered to pull out the skillet. On those "lazy" days, I rely on my oven and Japanese breadcrumbs (*panko*) to create a pleasing crunch factor. With the addition of a little oil and seasoning, baked items like this tofu emerge from the oven "skillet" crisp.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 45 MINUTES MAKES 4 BOWLS

4 cups (800 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

½ 6 oz (175 g) firm tofu

2 tablespoons potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour)

1 large egg white, mixed with 1 teaspoon water

½ cup (50 g) bread crumbs (*panko*)

1 teaspoon dark sesame oil

1 teaspoon cooking oil

½ teaspoon salt

One carrot, cut into 4 in (10 cm) matchsticks

½ avocado cut into thin slices

4 tablespoons corn kernels, cooked

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only One 4 x 7in (10 x 18 cm) sheet nori, cut into thin strips

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Cut the tofu into ¼ inch (6 mm) thick slices. Sandwich the slices between layers of paper towel or clean dish towels and place a heavy bowl on top of them. Allow the tofu slices to drain for at least 10 minutes.

3 Heat your oven to 375°F (200°C). Dredge the drained tofu slices in the potato starch. Place the slices in the egg white mixture and turn them to coat. Mix together the panko, dark sesame oil, salt, and cooking oil together in a medium bowl. Lightly press some of the panko mixture on each of the tofu slices. Place the slices on a baking sheet covered with parchment paper. Bake for 10 minutes, and then flip the slices over. Bake for another 10 minutes, or until the panko coating is crispy and golden brown. Remove the slices from the oven and allow them to cool slightly.

4 Gather 4 small serving bowls. Wet your fingertips before adding $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the Sushi Rice to each bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice in each bowl. Divide the panko tofu slices between the 4 bowls. (Be sure to leave space for the other toppings!) Add $\frac{1}{4}$ of the carrot matchsticks to each bowl. Place $\frac{1}{4}$ of the avocado slices in each bowl. Mound 1 tablespoon of the corn kernels on top of each bowl.

5 To serve, sprinkle $\frac{1}{4}$ of the nori strips over each bowl. Serve with Sweetened Soy Syrup or soy sauce.

• Fresh Salmon and Avocado Sushi Bowl

Subtle hints such as lime, fresh coriander (cilantro) and jalapeño easily translate into sushi as they are ingredients that transcend the borders of many cuisines. From there, I like to experiment with other “passport” ingredients. Jicama is one of my favorites. When my local supermarket is out of daikon radish, thin shreds of jicama satisfy my craving for crunch.

RICE PREP: UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP:** 20 MINUTES MAKES 2 BOWLS

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

$\frac{1}{4}$ small jicama, peeled and cut into matchsticks

$\frac{1}{2}$ jalapeño chili pepper, seeds removed and coarsely chopped Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lime

4 tablespoons Sushi rice Dressing (page 22)

6 oz (200 g) fresh salmon, cut into slices

$\frac{1}{4}$ avocado, peeled, seeded and cut into thin slices

2 heaping tablespoons salmon roe (*ikura*), optional

2 fresh coriander (cilantro) sprigs, for garnish

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Sushi Rice Dressing.

2 Mix together the jicama matchsticks, chopped jalapeño, lime juice, and Sushi Rice Dressing in a small non-metal bowl. Let the flavors blend for at least 10 minutes. Drain the liquid off the jicama mix.

3 Gather 2 small bowls. Wet your fingertips before adding $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 g) of the Sushi Rice to each bowl. Gently flatten the surface of the rice. Mound $\frac{1}{2}$ of the marinated jicama on top of each bowl. Divide the salmon and avocado slices between the 2 bowls, arranging each in an attractive pattern over the rice. Add 1 heaping tablespoon of salmon roe, if using, to each bowl.

4 To serve, top each bowl with a fresh coriander sprig and Ponzu Sauce. Soy sauce.



Chapter 9: Sushi Hand Rolls (Te maki)

Hand rolls, also known as *te maki*, are the equivalent of fast food or instant gratification sushi. You simply roll, eat, and repeat. There is no need to use a bamboo rolling mat for its preparation. Even knife use is limited. Hand rolls provide the perfect excuse for those who prefer to keep their sushi to themselves and served uncut. And for those that prefer not to get their hands covered in Sushi Rice, a wooden spoon dipped in water can be used to apply the rice directly to the nori.

For the best results with hand rolls, keep these three tips in mind:

- Stack your ingredients on your work surface before making each roll. When you're working with just one hand, this makes it very easy to place the fillings inside your roll.
- Allow your fillings to overhang on the top and bottom of the nori. When the roll is finished the ingredients will be visible from the top and fillings will extend to the bottom where there can often be a void of just seaweed and rice.
- Eat your hand rolls right away. After about five minutes, the seaweed on the outside of the roll becomes tough and chewy making it difficult to take a bite.

Hand rolls are best enjoyed when the seaweed is still crisp.

• Tips for Making Sushi Hand Rolls

1 Align the nori horizontally in your left palm making sure that the rough side of the nori faces up. Dip a wooden spoon or plastic measuring spoon in water before using it to apply 4 teaspoons of prepared sushi vertically on the nori. Cover about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the surface from the left side. If desired, smear a thin line of wasabi paste vertically down the center of the rice.

2 Place your chosen fillings vertically down the center of the rice. Take the bottom left hand corner of the nori and fold it over the ingredients until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. (Be careful not to pull too tightly as this will cause the nori to snap!)

3 Roll the nori downwards forming a tight cone. Secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice. Eat immediately.

4 If you are left-handed, begin with the nori in your right palm. Follow the instructions to adjust for rolling in the right hand.

TIP: If eating a roll of this style is just too much, don't try and cut it into pieces. You'll end up with a loose mess. Instead, incorporate the ingredients for use in a sushi roll that that is designed for cutting. You'll be much happier with the end results.



1 Gather all of the sushi ingredients and arrange them within reach.



2 Spread prepared sushi rice vertically down the left 1/3 of the nori.



3 Add the filling vertically down the center of the rice.



4 Fold the bottom left corner gently over the fillings to the top edge of the nori.



5 Fold the nori downwards to make a cone.



6 Serve the sushi cone immediately.

• Spicy Calamari Hand Rolls

Italian-style fried calamari gets an Eastern makeover with Japanese breadcrumbs and spicy sweet chili sauce. Outside of the hand roll, the prepared squid makes an excellent appetizer. For the creamy, spicy-style sauce that restaurants use, stir 1 tablespoon of Kewpie mayonnaise into 4 tablespoons of Sweet Chili Sauce before tossing with the fried squid pieces.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 20 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 thin fresh calamari rings (2 oz/50 g)

4 tablespoons half and half

4 heaping tablespoons flour

2 heaping tablespoons Japanese bread crumbs (panko)

1 teaspoon rice furikake

Pinch of salt
Oil for frying
4 tablespoons Sweet chili Sauce, plus more for serving
Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori
2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger root
½ avocado, peeled, seeded and cut into 8 slices
4 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted
4 pieces green onions (scallions), white parts trimmed away

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Sweet Chili Sauce.

2 Place the squid in a small bowl with the half and half.

3 Stir together the flour, panko breadcrumbs, furikake, and pinch of salt in a small bowl. Remove the squid from the half and half and toss well with the flour mixture. (It should appear clumpy.) Heat 1 inch (2.5 cm) of oil in a skillet to 350°F (175°C). Fry the battered squid until the batter is golden, about 3 minutes. Drain on paper towels for a few seconds. Transfer the squid to a medium bowl and toss with the Sweet Chili Sauce.

4 Align 1 sheet of nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4 tablespoons of the prepared Sushi Rice on the left ⅓ of the nori. Smear ½ teaspoon of the fresh ginger root over the rice.

5 Place 2 avocado slices in a line down the center of the rice. Top with ¼ of the fried squid. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the sesame seeds and add one green onion piece.

6 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

7 Repeat steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve immediately with additional Sweet Chili Sauce, if desired.



• Broiled Catfish Method

A brief poach in boiling water before broiling provides just the right texture for cutting the catfish into slices. Do not over broil or the fish will become too flaky.

PREP TIME : 5 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 10 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES

10 oz (330 g) or larger fresh catfish fillet, boneless and skinless
Pinch of salt
4 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup, plus more to taste

1 Add 1 inch (2.5 cm) water to a large skillet. Add a pinch of salt and bring a low boil. Add the catfish fillet and boil for 2 minutes. (It may be necessary to use a ladle to spoon some of the water over the back side of the fillet.)

Remove catfish from the water carefully with a spatula and place on a broiler pan covered with lightly oiled aluminum foil.

2 Preheat your broiler. Brush the catfish with the Sweetened Soy Syrup, making sure to cover both sides. Place the pan about 3 inches (7.5 cm) under a broiler. Broil for about 5 minutes or until catfish is just done. Allow the catfish to cool to room temperature. Cut into slices using the angle cut method and drizzle with more Sweetened Soy Syrup to taste.



1

Place the Broiled Catfish slices on aluminum foil and toast until warm.



2

Gather the hand roll ingredients and place them within reach.



3

Cut a finger width vertical flap on the right side of the nori.



4

Spread the prepared sushi rice vertically down the left 1/3 of the nori. Add the fillings.



5

Begin rolling the left side of the nori towards the right in a loose cylinder.



6

Tear away the flap.



7

Tuck one end of the flap into the inside the roll.



8

Complete the cylinder and use a single grain of rice to secure the other end of the flap to the outside of the roll.

• Vegetable Tempura Hand Rolls

Tempura green beans are one of the many vegetables you can use to prepare hand rolls. For variety, try using sugar snap peas, sweet potatoes, broccoli stems, sweet onions, avocado, and even pickled vegetables such as okra. For the best results, lightly blanch vegetables that would normally take more than 2 minutes to cook. Allow any blanched vegetables to cool before battering them.

RICE PREP: UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 recipe basic Tempura batter

Oil for frying

16 green beans, tips and strings removed, blanched

4 tablespoons potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour)

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

4 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

4 teaspoons finely grated daikon radish

1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger root

¼ red bell pepper, cut into matchsticks

4 pieces green onions (scallions), white parts trimmed away

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Basic Tempura Batter.

2 Heat 1 inch (2.5 cm) of oil in a skillet to 350°F (175°C). Dip the green beans in the potato starch and shake away the excess. Swirl the green beans around in the Basic Tempura Batter before adding to the hot oil. (For more crunch, pour 1 tablespoon of Tempura Batter over the top of the oil after adding the green beans.) Fry until the batter is golden brown, about 2 minutes. Drain on a wire rack.

3 Place 1 sheet of the nori across your left palm with rough side facing up. Press 4 tablespoons prepared Sushi Rice on left ⅓ of the nori. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the sesame seeds over the rice. Smear 1 teaspoon of the daikon radish and ¼ teaspoon of the fresh ginger root over the rice.

4 Arrange 4 green beans in a double line down the center of the rice. Top with ¼ of the red bell pepper matchsticks and 1 green onion piece.

5 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

6 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately with Tempura Sauce for dipping.



• Crispy Chicken Skin Hand Rolls

The first time I considered using chicken skin inside of a sushi roll I was creating sushi for a kosher wedding. One side of the family was from the North and the hosting family wanted to showcase some Southern elements into every aspect of the wedding, even the sushi. Since that debut, I've used chicken skin as a sushi element in lieu of crisp salmon skin.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 20 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi Rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

6 oz (175 g) chicken skin, rinsed well and patted dry

Oil for frying

Salt to taste

½ teaspoon red pepper powder (*togarashi*) or ground red pepper (cayenne)

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets soybean paper

4 teaspoons Spicy Mayonnaise

4 teaspoons capelin roe (masago)

4 teaspoons wasabi peas, roughly chopped

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions)

One carrot, cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, seeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

1 large romaine lettuce leaf, cut into thin strips

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Spicy Mayonnaise.

2 Cut the chicken skin into thin strips. Heat ½ inch (1.25 cm) of oil in a

skillet to 350°F (175°C). Fry the chicken skin until very crispy, about 5 minutes. Toss the chicken skin, salt, and red pepper powder together in a small bowl.

3 Lay 1 sheet of the soy paper across your left palm. Press 4 tablespoons of the Sushi Rice on the left ⅓ of the soy paper.

4 Smear 1 teaspoon of the Spicy Mayonnaise down center of the rice. Spread 1 teaspoon of roe on the rice. Layer with 1 teaspoon of wasabi peas and 1 teaspoon of green onions. Add ¼ of the carrot matchsticks, ¼ of the cucumber matchsticks, and ¼ of the cut Romaine. Top with ¼ of the fried chicken skin.

5 Take the bottom left corner of the soybean paper and fold it over the filling until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone.

6 Repeat the steps with the remaining soybean paper, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately.



• Glazed Bacon Hand Rolls

Bacon makes everything taste better, even sushi hand rolls. The smokiness of the bacon combined with the caramel-like flavor of the sweetened soy sauce has enough sweet and salty to satisfy. Give this sushi roll to any of your friends that may still be squeamish about trying sushi and watch them enjoy this hand roll. If you require a little more substance, try adding 1 heaping tablespoon of Spicy Crawfish to your hand rolls.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 10 MINUTES MAKES 4

ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) soy paper or nori

8 strips bacon, cooked

1 Romaine lettuce, cut into thin strips

½ tomato, cut into 8 wedges

¼ avocado, cut into 4 wedges

4 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup, or more to taste

4 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Sweetened Soy Syrup.

2 Place 1 sheet of the soybean paper across your left palm. Press 4 tablespoons Sushi Rice on the left ⅓ of the soybean paper.

3 Arrange 2 strips of bacon down the center of the rice. Top with ¼ of the cut Romaine. Add 2 of the tomato wedges and 1 avocado wedge. Drizzle 1 tablespoon Sweetened Soy Syrup over fillings. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the sesame seeds.

4 Take the bottom left corner of the soybean paper and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the soy paper has been wrapped around the cone.

5 Repeat the steps with the remaining soy paper, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately.



Gather all the sushi ingredients and place them within reach.



Spread the prepared sushi rice vertically down the left $\frac{1}{3}$ of the nori.



Add the lettuce and tomato.



Top with the bacon. Drizzle the Sweetened Soy Syrup over the bacon.



Roll the cone and serve immediately.



• Mackerel Cucumber Hand Rolls

It took the urging of a friend to restore my faith in oily, flavor rich fish such as mackerel. On a trip to San Francisco several years ago, my friend Casson encouraged me to try mackerel and sardines on many occasions. I was pleasantly surprised as my first foray into the world of “fishy” fish was not nearly as great. If you want to explore the world of oily fish without diving head first into sashimi or nigiri, the freshness of the cucumbers as well as the aromatics will help to offset strong flavors. As you adjust, try adding fewer and fewer additional ingredients until you have worked your way up to trying the fish alone.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 10 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 sheets nori, 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm)

2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger root

1 prepared fresh mackerel fillet, cut into about 8 slices

One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, seeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

4 lemon wedges

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Align 1 sheet of nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4 tablespoons of the Sushi Rice on the left ⅓ of the nori. Smear ½ of the teaspoon fresh ginger root over the rice.

3 Smear ½ teaspoon of the fresh ginger root across the rice. Arrange 2 mackerel slices in a line down the center of the rice. Add ¼ of the cucumber matchsticks. Squeeze 1 lemon wedge over the fillings then sprinkle on 1 teaspoon of the green onions.

4 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

5 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately with Ponzu Sauce, if desired.

• Kale Chip Hand Rolls

The first time I heard about kale chips, I was amazed at the number of people that claimed they tasted just like potato chips. Naturally, I hurried out and purchased a bunch of kale to prepare these healthy chips. Despite the fact that they didn't smell anything like my favorite snack as they crisped away in the

oven, I remained hopeful that they would taste the same as potato chips. I discovered that, while tasty, they didn't taste anything like potato chips. The moral of the story is: when life gives you kale chips, you make sushi.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 30 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 small bunch kale, washed and dried

1 tablespoon cooking oil

½ teaspoon red pepper powder (*togarashi*)

Sea salt to taste

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

2 tablespoons crystallized ginger, chopped

½ small tart green apple, peeled and cut into matchsticks

One carrot, cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

4 tablespoons Peanut Sauce, or more to taste

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions)

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Peanut Sauce.

2 Heat an oven to 350°F (175°C). Remove any tough stems and ribs from the kale. Place the kale on a metal baking sheet covered in parchment paper.

Drizzle oil over the top and toss it around with your hands to mix well.

Sprinkle the red pepper powder (*togarashi*) and sea salt on both sides of the kale. Spread the kale into a single, thin layer and bake for 12 minutes,

flipping the kale chips over halfway through. Chips should be light and

crispy. If needed, allow them to bake for 2-3 additional minutes. 3 Align 1

sheet of nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4

tablespoons of the prepared Sushi Rice on the left ⅓ of the nori. Sprinkle ½

tablespoon of the crystallized ginger over the rice.

4 Place ¼ of the kale chips in the center of the rice. Add ¼ of the Granny Smith apple matchsticks and ¼ of the carrot matchsticks. Spoon 1 tablespoon of the Peanut Sauce, or more to taste, over the fillings. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the green onions on top.

5 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

6 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately.

• Arctic Char Hand Rolls

If you like fresh and simple, these hand rolls are for you. The preparation is minimal and simple ingredients serve to showcase the delicate flavor of the

arctic char. Fresh salmon is also a great substitute for the arctic char if you can't find any.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 10 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.
4 sheets 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) nori
4 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted
6 oz (175 g) fresh arctic char, cut into 8 strips (or, alternately, salmon) One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, seeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks
¼ avocado, peeled, seeded and cut into 4 wedges
4 lemon wedges
4 pieces green onions (scallions), white parts trimmed away

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Align 1 sheet of the nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4 tablespoons of prepared Sushi Rice on the left ⅓ of the nori. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the sesame seeds over the rice.

3 Lay 2 arctic char strips in a line down the center of the rice. Top with ¼ of the cucumber matchsticks and 1 avocado slice. Squeeze 1 lemon wedge over the fillings and add one green onion piece.

4 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

5 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately.

• Fresh Tuna Hand Rolls

These fresh rolls can be prepared with yellowfin tuna or albacore tuna. If you want to spice it up try adding ½ teaspoon of Sriracha chili sauce to each roll. Alternately, use Spicy Tuna Mix in place of the fresh, tuna strips.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1 ½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 10 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.
4 sheets nori, 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm)
2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger root
6 oz (175 g) fresh tuna or albacore tuna, cut across the grain into 12 strips
One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, seeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

4 lime wedges
4 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Align 1 sheet of nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4 tablespoons of the Sushi Rice on the left $\frac{1}{3}$ of the nori. Smear $\frac{1}{2}$ of the teaspoon of fresh ginger root over the rice.

3 Arrange 3 fresh tuna strips in a line down the center of the rice. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cucumber matchsticks. Squeeze 1 lime wedge over the fillings then sprinkle on 1 teaspoon of the sesame seeds.

4 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

5 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately.

• Kimchee, Tomato and Anchovy Hand Rolls

Kimchee is not a typical Japanese ingredient, but it is one of my favorite ways to eat cabbage. The Korean-style pickled cabbage is often thought of as being too spicy. While this may be the case occasionally, the level of heat really varies from brand to brand. Garlic is an important kimchee component. The flavor definitely shines through and works well in recipes containing tomatoes, like this hand roll.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 10 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 sheets nori, 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm)

8–12 small canned anchovy fillets, patted dry of any canning liquid

4 strips kimchee or more to taste, coarsely chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ tomato, cut into 8 wedges

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Align 1 sheet of nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4 tablespoons of the Sushi Rice on the left $\frac{1}{3}$ of the nori.

3 Arrange 2-3 anchovy fillets in a line down the center of the rice. Add 1 tablespoon of the kimchee. Place 2 of the tomato wedges over the other fillings.

4 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

5 Repeat steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve immediately



• Fresh Vegetable Hand Rolls

Most people are accustomed to crunchy, creamy, somewhat firm and even soft textures inside sushi rolls. Chewy items tend to be overlooked as ingredients that provide that type of texture tend to be on the more exotic side. Dried fruit adds that chewy and interesting texture to sushi rolls in a familiar way. Here, chewy raisins pair with a crunchy carrot and firm steamed broccoli.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES

MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 tablespoon miso paste

1 teaspoon rice vinegar

1 teaspoon fresh orange juice

½ bunch broccoli, steamed

4 sheets nori, 4 x 7 in (10 cm x 18 cm)

1 carrot, cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks

4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

4 teaspoons raisins

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Stir together the miso paste, rice vinegar, and orange juice in a small bowl. Cut the broccoli into small sections and toss in the miso mixture.

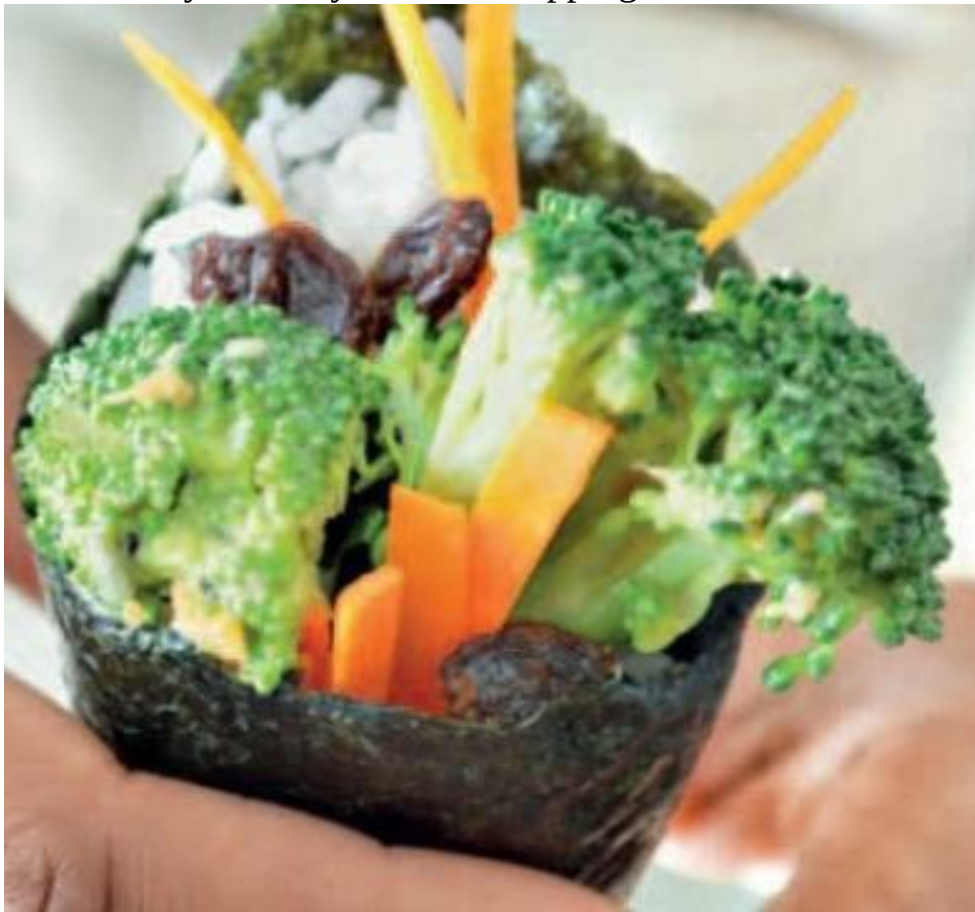
3 Align the nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4

tablespoons of the prepared Sushi Rice on the left $\frac{1}{3}$ of the nori.

4 Place $\frac{1}{4}$ of the broccoli pieces down the center of the rice. Arrange $\frac{1}{4}$ of the carrot matchsticks on the rice. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the green onions and 1 teaspoon of the raisins over the top.

5 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

6 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve the Rolls immediately with soy sauce for dipping.



• Coconut Shrimp Hand Rolls

When using soy sauce as a dipping sauce for hand rolls, things can get a little messy. Some swear by the “pour soy sauce into the cone” method, while others prefer the “dip as you go” method. Peanut sauce serves as a less messy way to enjoy these coconut-kissed delights as the sauce is incorporated right into the cone. No additional soy sauce is needed for dipping.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 HAND ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 large fresh shrimp, peeled and deveined, tails removed

4 tablespoons potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour)

1 large egg 2 tablespoons water

½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon rice furikake
2 heaping tablespoons flaked, unsweetened coconut
4 heaping tablespoons Japanese breadcrumbs (*panko*)
Oil for frying
Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori
4 teaspoons Peanut Sauce
One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, seeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) length matchsticks
½ mango, peeled, seeded, and cut into matchsticks
2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Peanut Sauce.

2 Make 2 small incisions across the under-side of each shrimp. Turn them over and firmly press down to flatten and stretch them. Dredge each shrimp in potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour) and set aside.

3 Stir together the egg, water, salt and furikake (rice seasoning) in a small bowl. Combine the coconut and Japanese breadcrumbs in another small bowl.

4 Heat 1 inch (2.5 cm) of oil in a skillet to 350°F (175°C). Dip each shrimp in the egg mixture, followed by the dry coconut mixture. Add to the hot oil and fry until golden brown, about 2-2 ½ minutes. Drain on a wire rack.

5 Align 1 sheet of the nori in your left palm with rough side facing up. Press 4 teaspoons prepared Sushi Rice on the left ⅓ of the nori.

6 Smear 1 teaspoon Peanut Sauce down the center of the rice. Place 2 of the prepared shrimp on the rice. Top with ¼ of the cucumber matchsticks, ¼ of the mango matchsticks, and ½ teaspoon of the green onions.

7 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around it. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

8 Repeat the steps using the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve immediately.



• Grilled Scallop Hand Rolls

The less you grill the sea scallops, the better. A quick grill on the outside imparts just enough of the smoky flavor to give the rolls a bit of oomph. You'll definitely want to avoid over grilling because it will make the scallops too chewy. If you're not squeamish about texture, you can skip the grilling steps altogether. Simply pat the scallops dry and add salt and lime juice to taste.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 20 MINUTES MAKES 4 ROLLS

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 fresh sea scallops, shucked

2 tablespoons canola oil

¼ teaspoon dark sesame oil

Juice of ½ lime

Salt to taste

Four 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

4 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

4 teaspoons corn kernels, cooked

4 fresh coriander sprigs (cilantro)

¼ red bell pepper, cut into matchsticks

One English cucumber or Japanese cucumber, seeded and cut into 4 in (10 cm) matchsticks

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Pat the sea scallops dry. Mix the canola oil, sesame oil, and lime juice in a small bowl. Add the scallops and stir them to coat evenly. Sprinkle the salt over the scallops. Heat a grill to high and grill the scallops, 1 minute on each side. Cool before cutting each scallop in half.

3 Align the nori across your left palm with the rough side facing up. Press 4 tablespoons of the prepared Sushi Rice on the left $\frac{1}{3}$ of the nori. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon of the sesame seeds over the rice.

4 Place 4 scallop halves down the center of the rice. Spoon 1 teaspoon of the corn kernels down the center of the rice. Add 1 fresh coriander sprig, followed by $\frac{1}{4}$ of the red bell pepper matchsticks and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the cucumber matchsticks.

5 Take the bottom left corner of the nori and fold it over the fillings until it reaches the top point just beyond the rice. Roll the roll downwards forming a tight cone until all the nori has been wrapped around. If desired, secure the loose edge with a single grain of rice.

6 Repeat the steps with the remaining nori, rice, and fillings. Serve the rolls immediately with soy sauce for dipping.

Chapter 10: Nigiri-Sushi: Hand Pressed Sushi

It's easy to understand why nigiri zushi is the crown jewel of sushi types. Imagine colorful cuts of pristine fish draped carefully over hand formed beds of rice or cooked seafood toppings held in place with a nori "seatbelt." Even meats and vegetables can be used to create delicious onebite wonders.

There are several methods when it comes to preparing nigiri zushi. The most important things to remember are that the beds of rice should all be a consistent size and that they should not be packed together too tightly. A variety of different sizes will affect the aesthetic of your presentation. If your hand formed rice beds are wonky, try using a mold. This will ensure a uniform size for all the pieces. But don't pack it firmly. When beds of rice are packed too tightly, they will not be as enjoyable to eat. Like sushi rolls, nigiri-zushi should hold together long enough so that they can make it from the plate to the mouth without falling apart. To aid in this journey, dip in soy sauce with the topping side down rather than using the rice side.

In this chapter you'll discover many creative sushi toppings. With fresh seafood, you can of course make classic, unadorned nigiri zushi of your choice. Vegetable lovers will delight in options such as Avocado and Pomegranate Nigiri while meat lovers would enjoy Beef Tataki Sushi. If you want try something truly unique, try the Smoked Duck Nigiri.

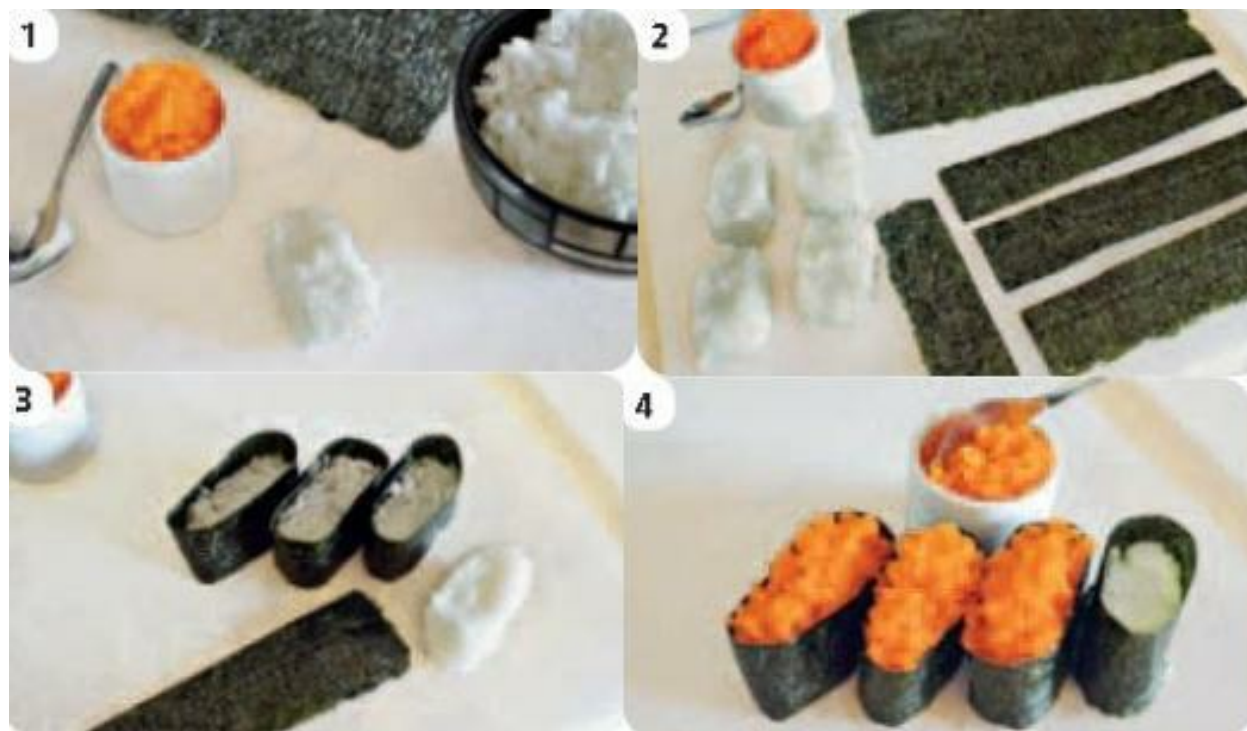
• Making Nigiri Sushi and Gunkan Maki

PREPARING NIGIRI SUSHI

Dip your fingertips lightly in water and splash the water across your palms. Grab a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice or about 2 tablespoons (figure 1). Lightly squeeze the Sushi Rice into a rectangle that is flat on the bottom. It is helpful to use your thumb and forefinger to shape the sides (figure 2). To prepare a piece of nigiri sushi that is topped with slices of fish place the bed of rice flat in your left palm and drape the slice of fish over the rice (figure 3). Grasp the side of the rice with your right thumb and forefinger. Rub your left thumb over the top of the fish to shape (figure 4).

PREPARING GUNKAN MAKI

Place the prepared bed of rice on a flat surface (figure 1). Cut a 4 x 7 inch (10 x 18 cm) sheet of nori into 1½ x 5 inch (4 x 13 cm) strips (figure 2). Wrap one strip of nori, rough side facing in, around the bed of rice to form a wall (figure 3). It may be necessary to use a single grain of rice as “glue” for the edges. Place the desired fillings inside the wall (figure 4).



• Beef Tataki Sushi

You'll experience a little sweet, spicy, salty, and hot all at once with every bite of this variation of Beef Tataki. If you prefer something a little tamer, omit the serrano pepper and fresh ginger root. Instead, substitute sesame seeds and minced green onions (scallions). Or, go for something rich by brushing each piece of beef with Ponzu Sauce and melted unsalted butter.

RICE PREP: UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP:** 15 MINUTES MAKES ABOUT 12 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

½ recipe beef Tataki Platter, cut into 12 slices

2 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup

1 serrano chili pepper, cut into 12 thin slices

½ teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger root

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice, the recipe from Beef Tataki Platter, and the Sweetened Soy Syrup.

2 Dip your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form a neat rectangular bed of rice. Repeat to make 11 more beds of rice.

3 Place one bed of rice flat in your left palm and drape one slice of Beef Tataki over it. Grasp the side of the rice with your right thumb and forefinger. Rub your left thumb over the beef tataki to shape it. Repeat the steps with the remaining Beef Tataki and rice.

4 To serve, arrange the pieces on a serving tray. Brush some of the Sweetened Soy Syrup over the tops of each piece. Place 1 serrano pepper slice in the center of each piece and top it with a tiny amount of the grated fresh ginger root.

• Glazed Eggplant Sushi

Locating the boxes used to prepare pressed sushi can sometimes be difficult. Here's a way to use plastic wrap to make an eggplant-topped sushi.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 20 MINUTES MAKES ABOUT 8 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 small Japanese eggplant

Oil for cooking

1 tablespoon soy sauce

½ teaspoon dark sesame oil

½ teaspoon miso paste

1 teaspoon rice vinegar

1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds

1 teaspoon minced green onions (scallions), green parts only

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Heat an oven to 350°F (175°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Cut the eggplant into ½ inch (1.25 cm) slices. Mix the soy sauce, dark sesame oil, miso paste, and rice vinegar together in a small bowl. Smear both sides of the eggplant slices with the mixture. Lay the pieces flat on the parchment

lined baking sheet. Bake for 7 minutes. Cool the eggplant slices completely.

3 Lay a piece of plastic wrap on top of a bamboo rolling mat. Make a horizontal row across the plastic wrap with the eggplant slices. Wet your fingertips and spread the Sushi Rice over the eggplant. Fold the plastic wrap up around the Sushi Rice. Flip the plastic wrap parcel over so that the rice is on the bottom. Use the bamboo rolling mat to shape the sushi into a rectangle.

4 Dip the blade of a very sharp knife in water. Using a sawing motion, cut through the plastic wrap to cut the sushi into 8 pieces. Carefully remove the plastic wrap.

5 To serve, place the pieces on a serving dish. Sprinkle the sesame seeds and green onions over the pieces.

• Tuna Tataki Nigiri

When very lightly seared, tuna becomes magical. In one bite, you can discover the silky rare interior as well as the crunchy sesame coated exterior that possesses an almost smoky quality.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 20 MINUTES MAKES ABOUT 8 PIECES

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

6 oz (175 g) fresh tuna, cut into a 1 in (2.5 cm) thick block

3 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds

Oil for cooking

One 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet of nori

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

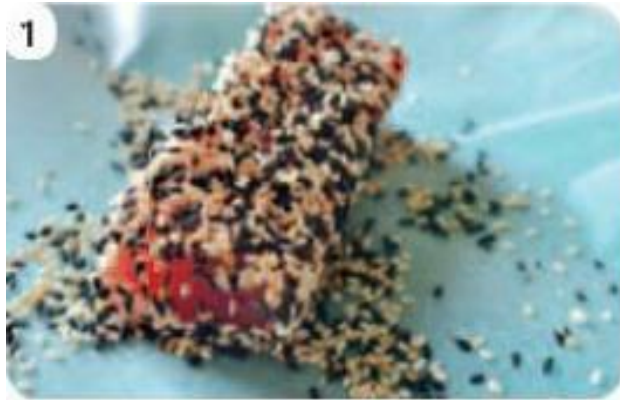
2 Pour the sesame seeds on a plate and lay the tuna block over them. Turn the tuna to coat evenly.

3 Heat enough oil in the bottom of large skillet to completely coat it. Let the oil get hot. (At some point the skillet may start smoking. Some smoke is okay.) Add the coated tuna to the skillet and sear it for about 15-20 seconds per side. Be sure to sear the ends, too. Remove the tuna and allow it to cool for at least 5 minutes.

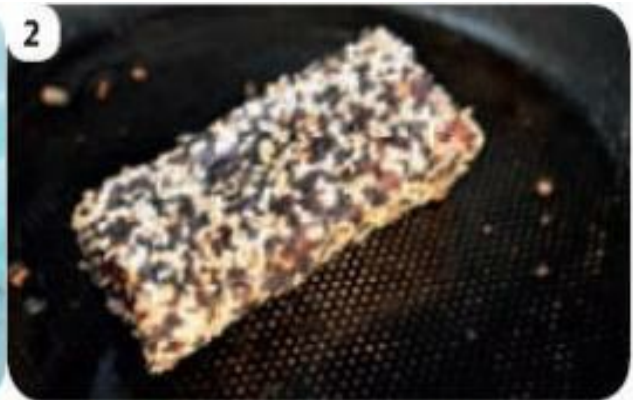
4 Dip your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnutsized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form a neat rectangular bed of rice. Repeat to make 7 more beds of rice.

5 Cut the sheet of nori crosswise into 8 strips. Slice the sesame-crusting tuna crosswise into ¼ inch (6 mm) thick slices. Lay one piece of sesame tuna over each bed of rice. Use the strips of nori to adhere the sesame tuna slices to the rice.

6 To serve, arrange the pieces on a serving dish. Serve immediately with Ponzu Sauce.



1 Coat each side of the tuna, including the edges, with sesame seeds.



2 Briefly sear each side of the tuna for about 15 seconds.



3 Allow the tuna to cool slightly before slicing.

• Arctic Char Nigiri

When cut into paper-thin slices, citrus fruit can be enjoyable as a sushi topping. The juice from the fruit forms a lightly flavored instant “ponzu” in your mouth when combined with a light dip of soy. When opting to use this method, you’ll want to be sure that you can see through the slices. If you can’t, they are too thick and you’ll experience an unpleasant rush of pith. To avoid this, slice cold citrus fruit with a mandolin.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 15 MINUTES MAKES ABOUT 10-12 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

6 oz (175 g) block arctic char, skin removed

1 tablespoon sake, optional

½ lemon wedge, cut into 10-12 paper-thin slices

1 sprig fresh dill weed

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Cut the arctic char using the block cut method into 10-12 slices. Wet your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form a neat rectangular bed of rice. Repeat to make 9-11 more beds of rice.

3 Dip your fingertip in the sake, if using, and brush it across the arctic char. Repeat as necessary to lightly flavor each slice of arctic char. Place one bed of rice flat in your left palm and drape one slice of arctic char over it. Grasp the side of the rice with your right thumb and forefinger. Rub your left thumb over the arctic char to shape. Repeat the steps with the remaining arctic char and rice.

4 To serve, arrange the pieces of sushi on a serving dish. Top each piece with a paper-thin slice of lemon. Tear the dill sprig into pieces to garnish each piece of sushi. Serve with soy sauce if desired.

• Spam Musubi

Getting a really good sear on the Spam is essential. When prepared properly, the browned surface offers a crunch that can't be beat. The simplicity of the Sweetened Soy Syrup and sesame seed topping is quite flavorful, but the Spam is wonderfully complemented by a sprinkle or two of furikake or thinly sliced green onions (scallions.)

RICE PREP: UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP:** 20 MINUTES **MAKES**
12 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

One 12 oz (340 g) can of Spam

Oil for cooking one 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet of nori

4 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup, or more to taste

2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and the Sweetened Soy Syrup.

2 Cut the Spam lengthwise into 6 even slices. Heat enough oil in the bottom of large skillet to completely coat it. Fry the Spam slices until each side is golden brown, about 2-3 minutes per side. Drain the fried slices on paper towels.

3 Wet your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form neat rectangular bed rice. Repeat to make 11 more beds of rice.

4 Cut the sheet of nori crosswise into 12 strips. Cut each piece of fried Spam in half lengthwise. Lay one piece of Spam lengthwise over each bed of rice. Use the strips of nori to adhere the Spam slices to the rice.

5 To serve, arrange the Spam pieces on a serving dish. Drizzle the Sweetened Soy Syrup over the pieces. Sprinkle sesame seeds over the serving tray. Serve with additional Sweetened Soy Syrup, if desired.



• Avocado and Pomegranate Nigiri

One of the things I enjoy about pomegranate molasses is that it has a similar flavor to pickled plum paste, umeboshi. It works just as well with seasoned Sushi Rice. Most notably, it has many applications outside of sushi.

Pomegranate molasses can be used to flavor dips, meat marinades, salad dressings, and dessert sauces. Find it at Mediterranean markets or specialty grocery stores.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS SUSHI PREP: 10 MINUTES MAKES 8 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses

1 teaspoon Ponzu Sauce

½ avocado, cut into 16 thin slices

One 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet of nori

2 teaspoons pomegranate seeds

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Stir together the pomegranate molasses and the Ponzu Sauce in a small bowl.

3 Dip your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form a neat rectangular bed of rice. Repeat to make 7 more beds of rice.

4 Cut 8 strips of desired width crosswise from the sheet of nori. Reserve the remaining nori for another use. Top each bed of rice with 2 avocado slices. Secure them in place with a nori strip “seatbelt.”

5 To serve, arrange the pieces on a serving dish. Spoon some of the pomegranate mixture over each piece and top with a couple of pomegranate seeds.



• Shiitake Nigiri

Shiitake mushrooms are suggested for this recipe because of their delicate fragrance when lightly seared and because they are my favorite variety of mushroom. You can experiment with other mushrooms as sushi toppings, such as enoki or sliced portabella mushrooms. No matter which variety you use, be sure to only lightly cook each one. You want the flavor of the mushroom to shine through without sacrificing the texture.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES

MAKES 8 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

8 small shiitake mushrooms, wiped and stems removed

Oil for cooking

One 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet of nori

2 tablespoons Sesame noodle Dressing

1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Sesame Noodle Dressing.

2 Score the top of each mushroom with a knife. Heat enough oil in the bottom of large skillet to completely coat it. Add the mushrooms and gently cook them to release the fragrance. This should take only a couple of minutes. Remove from the skillet and allow cooling.

3 Dip your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form a neat rectangular bed of rice. Repeat to make 7 more beds of rice.

4 Cut 8 strips of desired width crosswise from the sheet of nori. Reserve the remaining nori for another use. Top each bed of rice with 1 mushroom. For variety, place half of the mushrooms on beds of rice with the undersides

facing up. Secure the mushrooms in place with a nori strip “seatbelt.”

5 To serve, arrange the mushroom sushi pieces on a serving dish. Spoon some of the Sesame Noodle Dressing over each piece and sprinkle with sesame seeds.



• Smoked Salmon, Cream Cheese and Cucumber Stacks

If you’re looking for a way to introduce sushi-shy friends to the cuisine without scaring them away, try these simple stacks. Since nothing is rolled, all of the ingredients can be easily inspected. The familiar cream cheese, cucumber, and salmon should be enough to balance the perhaps less familiar salmon roe. Because of the flavored cream cheese and salty salmon, no dipping sauce is needed for these quaint bites.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 15 MINUTES MAKES ABOUT 12 PIECES

1 cup (200 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

4 tablespoons cream cheese, softened

1 teaspoon wasabi paste

¼ teaspoon lime zest

Two 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheets nori

4 oz (125 g) smoked salmon or lox, thinly sliced

¼ English cucumbers or Japanese cucumber, cut into paper thin slices

1 tablespoon salmon roe

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Mix the cream cheese, wasabi paste, and lime zest together in a small bowl. Cut the nori sheets in half lengthwise. Place two of the pieces on your work surface, rough side facing up, and set the other two aside. Wet your fingertips and spread 4 tablespoons of Sushi Rice across the surface of a nori half. Repeat this for the other nori half. Smear 1 tablespoon of the cream cheese mixture across the rice.

3 Divide the smoked salmon in half. Spread it sandwich-style over the surface of the cream cheese covered nori halves. Push them to the side and retrieve the remaining 2 nori halves. Place them rough side up on your work surface. Wet your fingertips and spread 4 tablespoons of Sushi Rice over each one. Layer the halves, rice side up, over the smoked salmon.

4 Spread 1 tablespoon of the cream cheese mixture over the surface of each rice covered stack. Top each stack with cucumber slices in a slight overlapping pattern. Place a piece of plastic wrap over each stack. Use a bamboo rolling mat to gently press the stacks. Keep the plastic wrap in place and use a sharp knife to cut each stack into slices. Again, use the bamboo rolling mat to gently press the stacks. Remove the plastic wrap.

5 To serve, transfer the piece to a serving dish. Top each piece with some of the Salmon roe.



• **Japanese Omelet Sushi *Tamago Nigiri***

During my sushi training an incredible amount of eggs were sacrificed for student practice. For each *tamagoyaki*, or Japanese omelet, we used 10 eggs. I can still picture those heavy rectangular pans, small bowls with oil saturated

paper towels, long cooking chopsticks and the hope that the next flip would land once again inside the pan, rather than over the side of it! Thanks to Zoren-san and Bobby-san, who cleverly recommended that we bring bacon and ketchup (for *katsuramuki* hashbrowns) to class, most of those misshapen omelets fueled hours of sushi practice. Using this method, you can prepare a nice rolled omelet in a regular skillet. After it cooks, simply trim the edges to maintain the desired rectangular form.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 25 MINUTES

MAKES ABOUT 12 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

5 large eggs

4 tablespoons Dashi Stock, cooled

1 tablespoon sugar

2 tablespoons light colored soy sauce

½ teaspoon salt

Oil for frying

One 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet nori



1 Whisk together the egg mixture.



2 Grease the skillet by dipping a paper towel in oil, and lightly coating the surface



3 Add the first layer of egg mixture.



4 Use chopsticks to gently fold the omelet.



5 Allow the completed omelet to cool in a bamboo rolling mat



6 Cut the cooled tamago into slices and use to make nigiri

VARIATION

• Japanese Omelet Sheets

Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (125 ml) of the egg mixture to the oiled skillet. Tilt the skillet to coat it. When the egg firms, loosen the sides with a pair of chopsticks. Flip the omelet onto a plate. Repeat the steps with the remaining egg mixture. Allow 1 plate per omelet sheet for cooling purposes. After the sheets are cooled, cut them into thin strips.

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Dashi Stock.

2 Whisk the eggs, dashi, sugar, light colored soy sauce, and salt together in a medium bowl. Strain the mixture through a fine strainer to separate any bits of egg that won't mix. Heat a skillet over medium heat. Wad a large paper towel into a ball and dip it in some cooking oil. Use chopsticks or tongs to

rub the paper towel around the skillet. This should add a thin coat of oil to the skillet.

3 Pour about 4 tablespoons of the egg mixture in the skillet. Quickly tilt the skillet so that the egg mixture coats the skillet. When the egg begins to firm, use chopsticks to loosen the edges. Fold the top of the egg down towards the bottom of the skillet. Push the cooked egg back to the top of the skillet. Rub the paper towel in the skillet again. Lift the cooked egg up and pour another 4 tablespoons of mixture in the skillet. Allow the new egg mixture to bond with the cooked egg. When the new mixture firms, fold the egg down and continue repeating the process until all of the mixture has been used.

4 Remove the omelet from the skillet and place it on a bamboo rolling mat. Roll the mat around the omelet to shape it into a rectangle. Use rubber bands to hold the mat in place. Let the omelet cool inside the mat. Remove the omelet and cut it into $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6 mm) thick slices.

5 Wet your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form a neat, rectangular bed of rice. Repeat to make 11 more beds of rice.

6 Cut the sheet of nori crosswise into 12 strips. Top each bed of rice with one of the omelet slices. Use a nori “seatbelt” strip to secure the omelet in place.

7 To serve, arrange the tamago pieces on a serving dish. Serve with soy sauce for dipping, if desired.



• Smoked Tofu Nigiri

When I was in seventh grade, I decided to become a vegetarian. That lifestyle choice extended well into my twenties. Never once during that time did I even attempt to try tofu. Oddly enough, it wasn't until I began eating meat again that I also began eating tofu. Now, I find myself trying to make up for all of those years I missed out by incorporating tofu into everything I can, including sushi.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS

SUSHI PREP: 50 MINUTES

MAKES ABOUT 10 PIECES

1½ cups (300 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

16 oz (500 g) package tofu, drained of package liquid

½ cup (125 ml) Tempura Sauce

One 4 x 7 in (10 x 18 cm) sheet nori

4 tablespoons Sushi rice Dressing

½ teaspoon dark sesame oil

½ teaspoon garlic chili sauce

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice and Tempura Sauce.

2 Place the tofu between several layers of paper towels on a flat surface. Place a bowl and a heavy canned item on top of it. Allow the tofu to drain for at least 15 minutes. While waiting for tofu, place a handful of smoking chips in water to soak.

3 Place the tofu in a small bowl and add the Tempura Sauce. Turn it a few times to coat. Let the tofu marinate for about 10 minutes.

4 Heat your outdoor grill. Wrap the soaked wood chips in aluminum foil. Puncture the aluminum foil several times with a pair of chopsticks. Add the foil packet to the grill. When it starts smoking, place the marinated tofu on the grill racks and close the grill lid. Smoke the tofu for 20 minutes. Remove from the grill and allow it to cool completely.

5 Dip your fingertips in water and splash some across your palms. Squeeze a walnut sized ball of prepared Sushi Rice, about 2 tablespoons, in your hand to form a neat rectangular bed of rice. Repeat to make 9 more beds of rice.

6 Slice the smoked tofu crosswise into ¼ inch (6 mm) thick slices. Cut 8 strips of desired width crosswise from the sheet of nori. Reserve the remaining nori for another use. Top each bed of rice with 1 slice of smoked tofu. Secure the slices in place with a nori strip “seatbelt.”

7 To serve, arrange the smoked sushi pieces on a serving dish. Mix together the Sushi Rice Dressing, dark sesame oil, and the garlic chili sauce in a small dish. Brush some of the mixture over each piece of smoked tofu.

• Garlic Seared Scallop Nigiri

It doesn't take much scallop to make a big impact. Each sea scallop is cut in half, and then butterflied before draping over the bed of Sushi Rice. If your scallops tend to slide off the rice, pat the undersides dry, or use nori "seatbelt" strips to keep them in place.

RICE PREP : UP TO 1½ HOURS **SUSHI PREP**: 10 MINUTES MAKES 4
½ cup (100 g) prepared Traditional Sushi rice, Multi-Grain Sushi Rice or brown Sushi rice.

2 fresh sea scallops, shucked

½ teaspoon minced garlic

Pinch of salt

½ teaspoon dark sesame oil

1 Prepare the Sushi Rice.

2 Wet your fingertips and splash water into your palms. Divide the Sushi Rice into 4 beds of rice.

3 Cut each scallop in half crosswise. Cut each scallop half in the center to butterfly. Do not cut all the way through. Drape each butterflied scallop over the top of each bed of rice.

4 Mix together the garlic, pinch of salt, and dark sesame oil in a small dish. Spread the mixture generously over the surface of each scallop with the back of a spoon. Sear each scallop with a cooking torch to lightly brown the surface. Serve with soy sauce.



Chapter 11: Sashimi

Sashimi is the reason why many people think of sushi as being raw fish. The lack of vinegar-dressed rice exempts it from being sushi, though sashimi is often served along with it. If you've never tried raw seafood or very lightly cooked meats, you might be pleasantly surprised at how flavorful they can be when they are extremely fresh and served with minimal condiments.

Alternately, flavorful condiments can also make a big impact when served with simple, fresh seafood. Either way, there is bound to be a type of sashimi that you will find quite tasty.

• Sashimi Serving Tips

Beautifully presented sashimi can be obtained with a couple of clever garnishing tricks and a little creativity. Traditional sashimi presentation focuses on natural and organic touches to showcase the seasonality of the seafood presented. Such touches can be incorporated simply with the use of decorative leaves and edible flowers. A modern touch can be added by presenting dishes on imaginative plates and other dishes.

• Garnishes

Garnishes for sashimi should be simple. Start by selecting ones that can be used to enhance the final flavor of the dish, such as citrus fruit slices or sprigs of herbs. Edible flowers are excellent for garnishes, too. (figure 1) Be sure to use only organic edible flowers. Shredded carrots or shredded daikon radish can be utilized in a multitude of ways all over the plate (figure 2). Banana leaves are available in large folded sheets and can be cut to size to fit any shape serving dish. Keep in mind that banana leaves are food safe but you don't want to eat them.

• Citrus slices or wedges

Herbs sprigs, such as rosemary, cilantro, thyme Large leaves such as shiso and basil

Edible flowers

A single chive or green onion (scallion) length Shredded carrot or daikon

Fruit such as small berries Condiments as Garnishes

If your sashimi is to be served with a sauce or finishing salt, try incorporating them right onto the dish. Some of the thicker sauces can be drizzled on the plate first and topped with the sashimi or a small pastry brush can be used to “paint” an artful smear of sauce across the dish (figure 3). Squeeze bottles can be used to place purposeful dots of sauce on serving plates. For thin sauces, pour them over slices of sashimi for a pooled effect. This is particularly attractive when the sauce contrasts with the color of the serving dish. Sea salts can be purchased in many colors (figure 4). A sampler of sea salts arranged in a row on tiny spoons looks quite pleasing on a plate. Alternately, a mound of just one color sea salt placed near a citrus wedge or citrus half is both elegant and stately.



1 Sprigs of herbs



2 Shredded daikon and carrots



3 A brush of sauce on a contrasting plate



4 Sampler of sea salts with citrus wedges

• Scallop Carpaccio

When preparing this dish, don't underestimate the importance of the oranges. Mandarin oranges are suggested but they must be fresh. Preserved or canned segments will not do for this dish. If Mandarin oranges are not available, try clementine's instead. Or substitute your favorite variety from the orange family.

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 3-5 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: ABOUT 20 MINUTES

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

1 small potato, peeled

Oil for frying

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon furikake

8 large, fresh sea scallops, shucked

2 Mandarin oranges, peeled, pith removed, and segmented 4 teaspoons minced green onion (scallion), green parts only 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and kept warm 4 tablespoons Ponzu Sauce

1 Turn the potato on spiral shredder to cut it into thin, curly pieces. Place the potato slices in a medium bowl filled with cool water to prevent browning. Heat about 1 inch (2.5 cm) of cooking oil in a small pot and bring to 350°F (175°C) over moderately high heat. Remove the potatoes from the water and pat them dry. Fry the potatoes in the prepared oil until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Remove from the oil with a strainer. Toss with the salt and furikake.

2 Pat the scallops dry. Cut each scallop into 4 thin slices. Arrange 8 scallop slices in a line down the center of a serving plate. Top with ¼ of the Mandarin orange segments and ¼ of the fried potato. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon of the green onion. Repeat the arrangement to create 3 more plates.

3 Drizzle 1 tablespoon of butter and 1 tablespoon of Ponzu Sauce over each plate. Serve immediately.



• Sweet Prawn Sashimi

Crispy fried prawn heads serve not only as a stunning presentation, but also as an enjoyable crunchy treat. Think of them as your accompanying prawn flavored crackers for this dish.

PREP TIME : 20 MINUTES COOK TIME: 7 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 27 MINUTES MAKES 4 SERVINGS

12 fresh sweet jumbo prawns (*ama ebi*) or frozen and thawed, heads intact ½ cup (60 g) potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour) ½ teaspoon red pepper powder (*togarashi*) or ground red pepper (cayenne) Oil for frying 1 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon dark sesame oil

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

1 tablespoon soy sauce

4 teaspoons black flying fish roe (*tobiko*)

4 green onions (scallions), green parts only

4 quail eggs

2 teaspoons wasabi paste

1 Stick your index finger underneath the shell between the body and head of the prawn. Pull the heads away and set them aside. Peel the prawns, leaving the tails intact, if desired. Make a small incision down the top of the body of each prawn and remove the veins. Flip the prawns over and cut a line down each of the undersides until they lay flat. Place the prawns in the refrigerator until they are ready to use.

2 Combine the potato starch and red pepper powder in a medium bowl. Add

the prawn heads and toss to coat. Heat about 1 inch (2.5 cm) of cooking oil in a small pot over moderately high heat to 350°F (175°C). Fry the coated prawn heads until golden and crispy, about 7 minutes. Drain them on paper towels.

3 Arrange 3 prawn bodies flat on a heat-proof serving dish in a half circle pattern. Repeat the pattern to make 3 more plates. Stir together the dark sesame oil, lime juice, and soy sauce in a small bowl. Brush or spoon some of the mix over each prawn. With a kitchen torch, briefly sear each prawn. Top each prawn with $\frac{1}{3}$ teaspoon of the black flying fish roe.

4 Bundle and tie together 3 of the fried prawn heads with 1 green onion. Repeat with the other heads and green onion. Place the bundles inside the half circles on each dish.

5 Crack the quail eggs near the top, keeping the bottom of the shells intact. Remove the eggs and discard the whites. Rinse the shells with warm water before replacing the yolks. Place a $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon mound of wasabi paste near the front of each dish. Nestle 1 of the prepared quail eggshells into the wasabi paste to stand up. Serve immediately with Gyoza Dipping Sauce.



• Poké Trio

This Hawaiian delight is pronounced with 2 syllables as in pohkay. It is a delicious way to enjoy seafood. The poké is prepared by tossing soy sauce, sesame oil, and onions with chunks of seafood. *Ogo*, a type of seaweed, is also added in the mixture to give it a delicate ocean flavor. If *ogo* is unavailable, stir 1 tablespoon of rice seasoning (furikake) into each poke variety.

PREP TIME : 20 MINUTES

CHILL: 1 HOUR

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

6 oz (175 g) fresh salmon, diced
6 oz (175 g) lump crabmeat
6 oz (175 g) fresh white tuna, diced
¼ large sweet onion, minced
3 tablespoons minced, green onions (scallions), green parts only
4 tablespoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons sesame oil
2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger root
½ cup (25 g) *ogo*, chopped
Pinch of sea salt
1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds
1 small tomato, diced
2 teaspoons toasted macadamia nuts, roughly chopped
Rice crackers for serving, optional

1 Place the salmon, lump crabmeat, and white tuna in separate, small, nonmetal bowls. Stir together the sweet onion, green onions, soy sauce, sesame oil, fresh ginger root, and *ogo* in a medium bowl. Divide the mixture between the 3 bowls of seafood.

2 For the salmon poké, add a pinch of sea salt and 1 teaspoon of toasted sesame seeds. For the crab poké, stir the diced tomato into the mixture. For the white tuna poké, stir the 2 teaspoons of macadamia nuts into the bowl. Cover each poké and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Serve each poké chilled with rice crackers, if desired.

• Halibut with Lemon and Matcha Salt

Here is a perfect example of why you shouldn't immediately reach for the soy sauce bottle when serving sashimi. The delicate flavor of the halibut is enhanced with a simple squeeze of lemon and a sprinkle of green tea flavored salt.

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES MAKES 1 SASHIMI PLATTER

8 oz (225 g) fresh halibut, angle cut into several slices
1 lemon
3 teaspoons coarse sea salt
½ teaspoon green tea powder (*matcha*)

1 Arrange the halibut slices on a serving dish. (If the dish is round, place the slices in a circle. For a rectangular or oblong dish, place the slices in a row down the center.) Cut the lemon in half crosswise and cut away enough of the ends so that the lemon halves set flat. Stack the lemon halves and place them on the serving dish.

2 Mix the sea salt and green tea powder together in a small dish. Place the green tea salt in a mound on the serving dish or place it in a small dish to present on the side. To serve the sashimi, squeeze the lemon halves over the halibut. Sprinkle the green tea salt over pieces to taste.

• Beef Tataki Platter

Beef tataki makes an excellent party appetizer. The beef can be arranged flat on a large serving tray, sprinkled with the toppings and served with a mound of crispy chips in the center. Or you can make a grab-and-go presentation by individually rolling up the slices of beef and placing 1 slice on the chip. Here, crispy taro root chips are suggested, but wonton wrappers cut in half and fried until golden brown make simple, delicious serving chips.

PREP TIME : 35 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 18 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: ABOUT 53 MINUTES MAKES 6–8 SERVINGS

1 lb (500 g) high quality beef tenderloin, trimmed of fat 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar

1 cup (250 ml) soy sauce

4 tablespoons mirin (sweet rice wine) or sweet sherry 1 tablespoon rice vinegar

½ lb (225 g) taro root, peeled

Oil for frying, plus 2 tablespoons

1 teaspoon salt

3 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted

4 teaspoons finely grated daikon radish

4 teaspoons finely grated ginger

4 teaspoons finely minced green onions (scallions), green parts only



1

Prepare the condiments: finely grated daikon, sliced green onions and finely grated ginger.



2

Slice the beef across the grain into very thin $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3 mm) slices.



3

To serve, place beef on prepared chips and top with condiments.

1 Rub the beef on all sides with the dark brown sugar. Mix the soy sauce, mirin, and rice vinegar in a medium glass bowl. Add the beef to the bowl and turn it several times to coat all the sides in the marinade. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 20 minutes, flipping the beef after 10 minutes.

2 Slice the taro root on a mandoline into thin, chip-like slices. Heat about 1 inch (2.5 cm) of oil in a small pot to 350°F (175°C) over moderately high heat. Fry the taro root slices until light brown and crispy, about 1½-2 minutes. Remove them from the oil with a fry strainer and allow the chips to drain on a wire rack.

3 Remove the beef from the marinade and pat it dry with a clean kitchen

towel. Discard the marinade. Fill a bowl large enough to completely submerge the beef with ice and water. Set it aside. Heat a skillet over high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of cooking oil and swirl to coat the skillet. Sear each side of the beef until lightly browned, about 1½-2 minutes per side. When all sides, including the ends, have been seared, remove the beef and plunge it into the prepared ice bath until cooled.

4 Remove the beef from the ice bath and pat dry. Slice the beef across the grain into ¼-inch (3 mm) slices. Lightly tap each piece a few times with the blade of the knife to score, being careful not to cut all the way through.

5 Arrange the slices on a serving platter. Pile the taro root chips in the center of the platter. Sprinkle the sesame seeds over the top. Mound the daikon radish, ginger and green onions in separate piles on a small serving dish to present on the side. Serve with Ponzu Sauce.

VARIATION

• Lemongrass Beef

Add 1 stalk of fresh lemongrass, chopped, and 1 teaspoon of grated ginger to the marinade. Omit the fried taro root and cut ½ of an English cucumber (Japanese cucumber) into matchsticks. Cook the beef as directed above and follow directions for cutting. To serve, roll each slice of beef around a few of the cucumber matchsticks. Arrange the beef rolls on a serving platter. Omit daikon, ginger, and Ponzu Sauce. Sprinkle with 4 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only and serve with Peanut Sauce.

• Sashimi Salad

The first time I prepared a meal for sushi expert Trevor Corson, I decided to play a nod to *The Iron Chef* television show, as he had recently appeared on the show as a judge. I painstakingly prepared a lovely beet sorbet to accompany a salmon sashimi. Unfortunately, I did not take down notes as I prepared the sorbet and I can't duplicate the sorbet exactly as it was that day. Since then, I make sure to have a pencil and sheet of paper handy whenever inspiration strikes. This sashimi salad has many of the flavors I incorporated into that original dish, if not a bit deconstructed. Salmon of course can be substituted for the arctic char.

PREP TIME : 15 MINUTES COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES MAKES 2 SMALL SALAD BOWLS

2 small beets

4 tablespoons chopped, toasted hazelnuts

1 cup (50 g) mixed baby salad greens

6 oz (175 g) fresh arctic char, cut into thin slices 4 green onions (scallions), sliced, green parts only Handful shredded daikon radish

Pecorino romano, for shaving

Ponzu ginger Dressing, to taste

1 Add enough water to cover the beets in a medium pot. Bring the water to a boil over high heat and cook the beets for about 30 minutes. The beets are done when a fork easily pierces through the skin. Remove the beets from water and cool for about 5 minutes before rubbing the skins away with a kitchen towel. Cool the beets completely. Slice the beets very thinly on a mandoline and set aside.

2 To assemble the salad, drizzle some of the prepared dressing over the beet slices and toss well. Divide the beets between 2 plates, placing them in an overlapping arrangement to cover the bottom of the plate. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of the toasted hazelnuts over each plate. Mound half of the salad greens over the beets. Roll the arctic char slices into small rolls and divide between the 2 plates. Sprinkle the green onion slices evenly over the 2 plates. Use a vegetable peeler to shave some of the Pecorino Romano over each salad.



• Oyster San Ten Mori

When counting in Japanese, *san* is 3. Here it indicates that 3 presentations will appear on one plate. One of the oysters is served on the half shell with a seared mayonnaise topping. Oyster number 2 is topped with warm spicy lime butter. It is like having a sip of decadent soup. The final oyster is a shot of salty flavored sake topped with creamy egg yolk.

PREP TIME: 20 MINUTES

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

12 oysters, on the half shell

Rock salt, for garnish

SEARED MAYO TOPPING

4 tablespoons Spicy Mayonnaise

4 teaspoons capeline roe (masago)

SRIRACHA BUTTER SAUCE

2 teaspoons minced shallot
4 teaspoons unsalted butter, melted
4 teaspoons Sriracha
Juice of ½ lime

SHOOTERS

4 quail egg yolks
1 teaspoon minced green onions
¾ cup (185 ml) sake
4 tablespoons Ponzu Sauce
Lime wedges, for garnishing

1 Remove 4 oysters from the shells and set aside. Gather 4 serving dishes and cover each with a thick layer of rock salt. Arrange 2 oysters on the half shell on each dish. Nestle a large shot glass or stem less martini glass into the rock salt. Add one of the remaining 4 oysters to each glass.

2 For the seared mayonnaise topped oysters, place 1 heaping tablespoon of Spicy Mayonnaise over 1 oyster on the half shell. Sear the mayonnaise with a cooking torch until bubbly. Top with 1 teaspoon of the capelin roe. Repeat these steps with one oyster on the half shell for each serving dish.

3 For the Sriracha butter sauce-topped oysters, add ½ teaspoon of the minced shallot to the remaining oyster on the half shells. Stir together the unsalted butter, Sriracha, and lime juice in a small dish. Pour ¼ of the mixture over each of the shallot topped oysters.

4 For the oyster shooter, top each of the oysters in shot glasses with 1 quail egg yolk. Add ½ teaspoon green onions to each glass. Pour 1½ oz (45 ml) sake and 1 tablespoon of Ponzu Sauce into each glass. Garnish each serving dish with lime wedges and serve immediately.



• Tuna Sashimi with Jalapeno Granita

The spicy cool Jalapeño Granita, or flavored ice, must be frozen overnight. Sashimi to scoop up some of the granita. White tuna is my first choice in this preparation, though yellowfin tuna also is quite delicious, too. For a pretty presentation, serve both varieties of tuna together. **FREEZE: 8 HOURS OR OVERNIGHT MAKES 4 SERVINGS**

JALAPEÑO GRANITA

1 cup (250 ml) water
2/3 cup (125 g) sugar
1 jalapeño chili pepper
1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger root
2 large shiso leaves
12 oz (350 g) block fresh white tuna or yellow fin tuna 1 lemon, sliced into very thin slices

1 To prepare the granita, bring the water to a boil in a small sauce pan. Add the sugar and stir until it just dissolves. Allow the mixture to cool slightly before pouring into a blender. Cut the jalapeño into rough chunks and add to the blender. Toss in the ginger root and 2 shiso leaves. Blend until the mixture is frothy. Strain through a fine mesh strainer and discard the solids when you're done. Pour the liquid into a shallow, metal pan and put it in the freezer until solid.

2 Sear the outside of the white tuna with a cooking torch or in a skillet over moderately high heat (if using yellow fin don't sear). Cool slightly, then cut the tuna into slices about 1/4 inch (6 mm) thick.

3 To serve, remove the Jalapeño Granita from the freezer. Use a fork to scrape or chip the frozen mass. Spoon several tablespoons of the granita into a martini glass. Arrange 4 slices of the seared tuna over the granita, placing a lemon slice in the center.

• Melon Sashimi

Melons come in a multitude of varieties. Peruse the produce section of your local Asian market or specialty grocery store for more exotic varieties. Farmers' markets are also an excellent source for melons. Sniff out ripe, delicious melons for the best results. A ripe melon should smell slightly aromatic. A very strong aroma may indicate an over ripe melon. The exception to the smell test is watermelons. Their thick skins prevent any smells from permeating through. For watermelons, select ones that appear symmetrical and are free of blemishes and soft spots.

MAKES 4 SERVINGS

1/2 lb (250 g) of assorted melon, cut into 1/2 in (1.25 cm) cubes 1/2 cup (125 ml) sake
1/2 teaspoon wasabi powder
4 tablespoons Sweetened Soy Syrup

1 cup (50 g) daikon sprouts (kaiware), optional Sea salt to taste 1 Place the

melon cubes in a small bowl. Whisk the sake and wasabi powder together in another bowl. Pour the mixture over the melon cubes and allow the melons to soak for 10 minutes. Drain the liquid from the melons.

2 To serve the sashimi, gather 4 small serving dishes. Dip a small pastry brush in the Sweetened Soy Syrup and swipe one stroke of sauce across each serving dish. Repeat this for the remaining serving dishes. Divide the melon cubes into 4 portions and arrange several melon cubes across the Sweetened Soy Syrup. Top the melon cubes with the daikon sprouts, if using, Sprinkle Sea salt over each plate and serve immediately.

• **Tilapia and Shrimp Ceviche Sashimi**

Citrus juice and vinegar “cook” the tilapia in this version of ceviche. During the marinating process, the texture of the tilapia becomes somewhat firm as if it were cooked, though no actual heat is used. A communal bowl is described for presentation, but the ceviche can also be served as individual portions. Rub the rims of martini glasses with a lime wedge and dip it in coarse salt before filling each glass with the ceviche.

PREP TIME : 5 MINUTES CHILL: 1 HOUR
MAKES ABOUT 4-6 SERVINGS

8 oz (250 g) fresh tilapia or other white fish fillet, diced into small cubes 8 oz (250 g) cooked shrimp, tails removed, cut into small chunks 4 tablespoons Sushi rice Dressing
1 cup (250 g) tiny diced pineapple cubes
Juice of 1 lime
1 small jalapeño chili pepper, seeds removed, finely chopped ½ teaspoon minced garlic
¼ small red bell pepper, tiny dice
4 teaspoons minced green onion (scallions), green parts only 4 sprigs fresh coriander leaves (cilantro), chopped Plantain chips, for serving Combine the tilapia and shrimp in a medium non-metal bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and stir well. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving. To serve, offer plantain chips on the side for use as edible spoons.



• Heirloom Tomato Sashimi

A stroll through your local farmers' market during tomato season can be just as exciting as strolling down the aisles of a fresh seafood market. Tomatoes vary in colors, flavors, and sizes and each variety of tomato looks more delicious than the last. This simple sashimi is great way to enjoy the bounty of tomatoes available.

PREP TIME : 10 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 5 MINUTES

MAKES 2 SERVINGS

4 tablespoons rice vinegar

1 teaspoon sugar

3 large heirloom tomatoes

1 lemon cut in half

1 cup (50 g) shredded daikon, optional

2 teaspoons sea salt

¼ teaspoon green tea powder (matcha)

1 Stir together the rice vinegar and sugar in a small pot. Bring nearly to a boil, and then reduce the heat to maintain a simmer. Simmer it until the liquid has reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool completely.

2 Core the tomatoes, and then cut them into ¼ inch (6 mm) slices. Divide the tomatoes between 2 serving plates. Drizzle reduced vinegar over tomatoes. Place 1 lemon half on the side of each plate. Place ½ half of the daikon, if using, on the top of each plate. Combine the sea salt and green tea powder.

Divide it between two small dishes. To enjoy, squeeze the lemon over the tomatoes. Sprinkle to taste with the green tea flavored salt.



• Paper Thin Tilapia Sashimi

A platter with a tiny pattern is a great way to show off the thin cuts of this sashimi. Or try a monochromatic approach by using a solid white dish. The thin cut tilapia slices will appear almost ghost-like as the Thai basil leaves offer only hints of where the fish is hidden.

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES

MAKES 1 SASHIMI PLATTER

8 oz (250 g) fresh tilapia or other white fish fillet About 15 small Thai basil leaves

½ English cucumber (Japanese cucumber), shredded

½ cup (125 ml) Dragon Juice

Lemon slices for garnishing

1 Cut tilapia into very thin slices. using the Angle Cut Method. Place 1 Thai basil leaf on the underside of each slice of tilapia. Arrange the slices of tilapia on a patterned serving dish. (The pattern should show through the fish.)

2 Toss the shredded cucumber and ½ of the Dragon Juice together in a small bowl.

Mound the cucumbers over the center of the sashimi. Spoon the remaining sauce over the tilapia. Garnish the dish with lemon wedges. Serve with soy sauce for dipping, if desired.

• Tuna and Avocado Tartar

To prevent discoloration of the tuna and avocado, mix the two elements of the tartar just minutes before serving. White tuna, particularly Hawaiian tombo, is an excellent match for the flavors, too.

PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES **MAKES ABOUT 4 SERVINGS**

8 oz (250 g) fresh ahi tuna, chopped
2 teaspoons minced green onions (scallions), green parts only ½ teaspoon
dark sesame oil
4 tablespoons Ponzu Sauce
1 large lemon wedge
½ avocado, peeled, seeded, and cut into small cubes Pinch of salt

1 large shiso (perilla) leaf or basil leaf, cut into thin strips ½ English
cucumbers (Japanese cucumber), cut into ¼ in (6 mm) slices 1 Place the tuna
in a small non-metal bowl. Add the green onions, dark sesame oil, and Ponzu
Sauce. Mix the ingredients well. In another small bowl, squeeze the lemon
wedge over the avocado cubes. Add a pinch of salt and the cut shiso. Stir
well.

2 Position a 4-inch (10 cm) square mold on the serving plate. Press ½ of the
tuna mixture into the mold, followed by ½ of the avocado mixture. Repeat
the layers and carefully unmold the tartar. Serve the tartar with the cucumber
slices.

• Mixed Sashimi Platter

Use this colorful assembly of seafood as a mere guideline for your own
sashimi arrangements. Any of the seafood can be substituted to accommodate
your tastes. Additions are welcome, too as long as your plate is large enough
to hold it all!

PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES MAKES 1 SASHIMI PLATTER

One large handful shredded daikon radish, for garnishing One 2 x 7 in (5 x 18
cm) piece banana leaf (or any other large leaf), for garnishing 1 English
cucumber (Japanese cucumber), cut into a 4 in (10 cm) length 1 teaspoon
salmon roe (*ikura*) 3 pieces sea urchin roe (*uni*) 4
oz (100 g) fresh salmon, cut into thin slices
4 oz (100 g) fresh white tuna, cut into thin slices 4 oz (100 g) fresh ahi tuna,
cut into thin slices

2 fresh sea scallops, shucked, each cut into 3 slices ½ lemon, for garnishing
Wasabi paste, for garnishing
Pickled ginger, for garnishing

1 Mound the handful of shredded daikon radish at the top left corner of a
serving dish. Make a fold in the banana leaf about 4 inches (10 cm) from the
bottom. Prop the leaf against the mounded daikon radish.
2 Cut the English cucumber in half lengthwise. Lay one half; cut side down,
on the serving dish to the right of the banana leaf. Use a small melon baller to
make a hole in the center (skin side up) of the other cucumber half. Fill the
hole with salmon roe before propping it against the far left side of the
positioned cucumber. Drape the sea urchin roe pieces over the exposed
cucumber. Drape the salmon slices over the exposed cucumber.

3 Lay the white tuna slices in a row, overlapping each other. Start from one end and roll the pieces into a loose spiral. Place the spiral on its end in front of the positioned cucumber slices. With a pair of chopsticks or your fingers, gently pull on the ends of the white tuna to make a flower.

4 Arrange the ahi tuna slices in a diagonal line. Prop them against the base of the banana leaf lawn chair. Stack the sea scallop slices on top of each other and place them on the serving dish between the ahi tuna slices and the cucumber slices. The scallop pieces should “climb” the banana leaf.

5 Garnish the plate with the lemon half, wasabi paste, and pickled ginger. Serve with Ponzu Sauce.

Chapter 12: Appetizers

To make sushi a complete meal, you’ll need a few additions to the sushi menu. A quick salad, some easy dumplings or perhaps even a platter of crisp tempura vegetables could serve as a delicious first course. Of course, appetizers can also serve as a well-deserved treat for home sushi chefs to nibble as they diligently work on preparing the much-anticipated sushi.

For convenience, appetizers such as the Quick Cucumber Salad or the Sesame Soba Salad can be made completely in advance. The Chicken Dumplings, Fragrant Herb and Mushroom Spring Rolls, and Japanese-style Crab Cakes can be prepared up to the stage just before cooking. Simply store them in the refrigerator up to 1 full day in advance and finish the final cooking phase about 30-45 minutes before serving. For groups, serve each appetizer on a platter rather than individual serving plates.

• Grilled Yakitori Skewers

There are so many flavorful parts of a chicken beyond the breasts such as the wings, thighs, skins, gizzards, livers, and more. Each one possesses such a unique texture and flavor, that I can rarely pick just one as a favorite.

Having a selection of different parts heightens the grilled skewers experience. The thigh skewers emerge tender and juicy, while the skins are salty and crunchy. And the gizzards? They have a smoky flavor with a texture that is both chewy and crunchy.

PREP TIME : 15 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 15 MINUTES

TOTAL TIME: 30 MINUTES

MAKES ABOUT TWENTY-FOUR 4-INCH (10 CM) SKEWERS

2 bunches of green onions (scallions), green and white parts ½ lb (250 g)
chicken gizzards

1 lb (550 g) chicken thighs, boned, skins reserved ¾ cup (185 ml) soy sauce

4 tablespoons rice vinegar

3 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons honey

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 Soak twenty-four 4-inch (10 cm) skewers in water for at least 1 hour. Slice the green onions into 1-inch (2.5 cm) lengths. Skewer the chicken. Slice the green onions into 1-inch (2.5 cm) lengths. Skewer the chicken 10 skewers. Place in a flat glass container, such as a casserole dish, and refrigerate.

2 Pat the chicken skins dry. Cut into ½-inch (1.25 cm) wide strips. Weave the skins onto skewers, making sure to leave open spaces for the skins to cook. Place in the container with the skewered chicken gizzards.

3 Cut the chicken thighs into 1-inch (2.5 cm) pieces. Skewer the meat alternately with the green onion slices. Add thigh skewers into the container with the other skewers. Keep refrigerated until they are ready to use.

4 To make the sauce, combine the soy sauce, rice vinegar, sugar, and honey in a small saucepan. Heat over medium heat, stirring constantly to dissolve the sugar. Do not allow the mixture to boil. Remove from the heat and cool.

5 Heat a grill to 400°F (200°C). Toss the skewers into the vegetable oil to get a light covering. Divide the sauce in half; reserve one half for the finished skewers. Add the skewers to the hot grill and spoon on some of the sauce. Flip them after 4 minutes. Spoon the skewers with sauce again. Skewers should be fully cooked after about 8-10 minutes.

6 Remove from the grill and pour the reserved sauce over the hot skewers. Serve immediately.

• Quick Cucumber Salad

Sushi Rice Dressing has just enough tang, sweetness, and saltiness to elevate nearly any vegetable into a delicious marinated salad. If you're feeling adventurous, try adding thin slices of other vegetables and fruits in with the cucumbers. Daikon radish, carrots, broccoli stems, and under ripe mango pair quite well. Add a teaspoon or two of garlic chili paste if you like a kick of spice in your salads.

PREP TIME : 5 MINUTES MARINATE: 10 MINUTES TOTAL TIME: 15 MINUTES MAKES 4 SERVINGS

2 English cucumbers or 6 Japanese cucumbers, thinly sliced

¾ cup (185 ml) Sushi rice Dressing

1 teaspoon sesame oil

1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted

In a small, non-metal mixing bowl, toss all the ingredients together. Allow flavors to develop for 10 minutes at room temperature. Serve at room temperature or refrigerate up to 2 days. To serve, divide the salad between 4 small shallow bowls.

• Crunchy Light Tempura Vegetables

Chances are you already have the necessary ingredients in your pantry to make Tempura Batter. This light version will produce a very thin batter. When the vegetables are coated in this batter, they will fry up quite light and crisp as well as reveal subtle hints of what tasty bite is inside.

PREP TIME : 5 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 1½ MINUTES PER PIECE MAKES 4-6 APPETIZER PORTIONS

1 recipe basic Tempura batter

½ cup (60 g) potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour) oil for frying

1 avocado, peeled, deseeded and cut into 8 wedges

½ small onion, peeled and cut into ¼ in (6 mm) slices (use a toothpick to hold slices together.)

1 carrot, cut into chopstick width sticks

8 shiitake mushrooms, wiped, stems removed and scored

1 red bell pepper, cut into ¼ in (6 mm) strips

6 shiso leaves or large basil leaves

1 Prepare Basic Tempura Batter.

2 Heat 2 inches (5 cm) of oil in a skillet or wok over high heat to 350°F (175°C). Reduce heat to maintain temperature.

3 Dredge the prepared vegetables in the potato starch. Shake away the excess then dip a few pieces at a time in the prepared batter. Gently slide into the hot oil. Drizzle a teaspoon or so of batter over each piece as they begin to float towards the top. Fry until they are golden brown, about 1 ½ minutes.

4 Remove from the oil with a slotted spoon and drain on a wire rack. Before adding a new batch to the hot oil, remove small batter pieces with a mesh fry strainer. (These can be drained on paper towels and reserved for recipes requiring tempura crunchies such as Crunchy Shrimp Rolls, page 116.) Repeat these steps with the remaining vegetables.

5 Arrange pieces on 1 large serving platter or divide among 4-6 small appetizer plates. Serve warm with Tempura Sauce or coarse sea salt and lemon wedges.



• Basic Tempura Batter

No salt or seasoning is added to this basic, three ingredient Tempura Batter. Rather than function as a thick, flavorful coat-all, it maintains the purpose of a delicate enhancement. Use it creating a lace-like crust on the outside of thin sushi rolls or just about whatever you fancy.

PREP TIME : 5 MINUTES

COOK TIME: 1½ MINUTE PER PIECE

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS (475 ML)

1 cup (150 g) all-purpose flour

1 large egg

¾ cup (185 ml) water, plus 2-3 ice cubes

½ cup (60 g) potato starch or cornstarch (cornflour) Oil for frying

1 Place the flour in a medium bowl and form an indentation in the center. Add the water, egg, and ice cubes to the indentation. Beat the water and eggs well with a pair of chopsticks, and then gradually mix in the flour. Mix lightly until the batter comes together. Do not over-mix. The batter should be thin and lumpy.

2 Keep batter covered and refrigerated until ready for use. Batter may be prepared up to 15 minutes in advance.

3 To prepare tempura, heat at least 2 inches of oil in a skillet or wok to 350°F (175°C). Reduce the heat as needed to maintain the proper temperature. Dredge items for tempura into potato starch. Shake away any excess potato starch before dipping into the cold Tempura Batter. Gently

slide the pieces into the hot oil. If desired, drizzle a teaspoon or so of Tempura Batter over the tops of each piece as they float to the top. Fry pieces until they are golden brown, about 1½ minutes.

4 Remove the pieces from the oil with a slotted spoon and drain on a wire rack. Before adding the next batch, be sure to skim the oil with a wire mesh strainer to remove any loose Tempura Batter pieces.



• Salad with Ginger Dressing

If you're looking for a more refined version of the typical iceberg salad drowned in brownish pink dressing, this recipe is a great alternative. Here, a zip of citrus combines with ginger making lovely vinaigrette. Additionally, the salad itself has a couple of unexpected yet delightful surprises.

PREP TIME : 10 MINUTES

MAKES 4 SMALL SALAD BOWLS

4½ cups (300 g) mixed baby salad greens, washed 1 carrot, shredded
2 large eggs, soft boiled, peeled and cooled 4 tablespoons wasabi peas,
coarsely crushed **PONZU GINGER DRESSING**

½ cup (80 ml) Ponzu Sauce

1½ tablespoons honey

2 teaspoons rice vinegar

2 tablespoons finely grated fresh ginger root ½ teaspoon minced garlic

1 cup (250 ml) oil

Pinch of ground white pepper

1 Toss the salad greens and carrot together in a large bowl. Divide between 4 salad plates. Cut the eggs in half and place one piece on each plate. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon of wasabi peas on each plate.

2 To make the Ponzu Ginger Dressing, mix Ponzu Sauce, honey, rice

vinegar, fresh ginger root, and garlic in a small glass bowl. Pour the oil in a slow, steady stream into the bowl, whisking vigorously. Add a pinch of white pepper and whisk again.

3 Pour desired amount of dressing over each salad and serve immediately.



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