

Grocery gives tips on home preparation of sushi

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gently through the rice to prevent mashing the individual grains, adding the vinegar seasoning slowly. Continue this motion with the spatula with one hand and fan the rice with the other hand. If this is not possible, use an electric fan or have someone else fan the rice nearby or point a hairdryer, set on cool air. Meanwhile, constantly turn the rice, using a cutting and holding motion, until the rice is cool. This firms the surface of the grains and gives them a glossy finish. Cover the rice with a damp cloth, and keep it at room temperature. Serves 4.

HOSOMAKI

2 cups vinegared rice
1 ounce kampyo (dried gourd shavings)
5 sheets nori (dried seaweed)
salt
rice vinegar
sugar
soy sauce

Prepare the vinegared rice, put aside. Cut the kampyo strips in 3 pieces. Rub with salt, rinse in water. Cook in enough boiling water until soft. Drain. Squeeze out the water. Fill a pan with the kampyo and add 2-3 tablespoons water, 5 tablespoons sugar and 3 tablespoons soy sauce. Cook until the liquid is absorbed.

Toast 2 nori sheets together over low heat. Turn off the heat when the color of the nori becomes greenish. Do not over-toast. Cut in half crosswise — the piece will measure approximately 7 by 4 inches.

Place nori on the surface of a sudare (bamboo rolling mat), so the longest length will be crosswise. Moisten hands with tea (vinegar/water solution of 1 cup water, 2 tablespoons rice vinegar and 1 teaspoon salt). Make a ball of a ½ cup prepared vinegared rice. Place this mound on the nori. Spread out carefully, leaving about ½ inch of the nori exposed on the end farthest away from you.

Make a hollow groove in the center so you can place 3 pieces of cooked kampyo lengthwise. Dampen

exposed strip of nori with vinegared water solution. Lift the front of the sudare closest to your body. Roll the hosomaki with the sudare, pressing down on the nori portion firmly and finally it will stick to itself when completely rolled. Shape the roll ends so no rice will fall out. If you can let it rest a minute or two, all the better. Moisten a sharp knife with vinegared water. The ideal manner of cutting is in half and then wipe the knife and place the two rolls together. Cut the two rolls together again in half to result in four pieces.

Variations for filling:

Tekka Maki (rolled hosomaki with tuna)

Use a strip of fresh tuna cut ¼ inch square lengthwise. Serve with wasabi (Japanese horseradish).

Kappa Maki (rolled hosomaki with cucumber)

Rub cucumber with salt. Rinse with water. Cut cucumber into spears lengthwise. Sprinkle toasted white sesame seeds to give good flavor.

AVOCADO/CRAB CALIFORNIA ROLL

In California, since the advent of sushi bars, there has been an interesting development in sushi. Chefs use sliced, ripe avocado, along with crab legs, to form a delectable "California Roll." The oil content and smooth texture of the avocado is similar to tuna, and is delicious when combined with crab.

There are quite a few adaptations of this idea:

• Toast nori sheet, cut in quarters and place on your hand. Vinegared rice is placed thereon. In the

center a slice of avocado and a crab leg meat portion are aligned with a sprinkle of toasted white sesame seeds. This is rolled like a fat cigar.

• Another version is to place the toasted nori sheet cut in quarters on the sudare (bamboo rolling mat). The avocado slice is placed thereon along with the crabmeat. This is rolled at the point with the nori surrounding the ingredients. Then the vinegared rice is formed by hand around the nori to produce a nigiri-sushi-type oval. This is in turn rolled in toasted white sesame seeds.

• A favorite method is to make it buffet-style. The avocado slices are sprinkled with lemon juice to prevent oxidation and lined up with crab portions and a small dish of toasted sesame seeds. The ingredients are arranged on a serving platter. A bowl of vinegared rice is then made up into small balls, ready to be picked up by the guests. The toasted nori is cut into quarters and stacked close by. And the star of the show is a bunch of fresh green shiso (beetsteak plant of the mint family) leaves, ready to be included in the combination. Prepare your own temaki-sushi. Dip in soy sauce to eat.

• Avocado slices can have lemon juice sprinkled on them and be placed on a regular nigiri-sushi assortment of toppings. Shrimp or scallops would work equally well with avocado. Or you can use avocado as a surprise filler in other types of sushi.

Substitute for crab: A very delicious alternative to expensive crab legs is an imitation crab made from pollack, potato starch, sugar and salt with coloring and crab flavoring. This is a steamed fishcake produced in Japan and sold frozen in America.

NIGIRI-SUSHI (BITE-SIZE SUSHI)

Nigiri-Sushi can be an excellent

hors d'oeuvre or form a whole meal. This type of sushi is a ball of vinegared rice with a topping of fresh raw fish, cooked seafood, roe or a piece of a Japanese omelette. When eating the nigiri-sushi, dip the top portion slightly in soy sauce before placing it in your mouth.

TOPPINGS FOR NIGIRI-SUSHI

Choose your favorite fresh salt water raw fish, shellfish or roe. Here are just a few suggestions: tuna, flounder, conger eel, broiled cod, tuna wrapped in seaweed, fish roe, sebac, cooked shrimp and Japanese omelette.

The fresh raw fish is cut into a block the width of four fingers not counting the thumb. It is sliced 5/16 inch thick at an angle, with 2 triangular pieces on each end. The end pieces are then butterflied to open into a sort of a slice piece.

To Form the Nigiri-Sushi:

Prepare a damp cloth, vinegared rice, the toppings and a vinegar solution (1 cup water, 2 tablespoons rice vinegar, 1 teaspoon salt, combined) for dipping hands. Moisten fingers with the vinegared water. Place fish between the base of the fingers and the second joint of the left hand.

Shape the vinegared rice mixture

into a ball with the right hand dab the horseradish paste on the finger of the right hand. Place searadish on the fish slice, which your left hand.

Place rice oval on fish. Press of rice ball lightly with the thumb the left hand. (Your left fingers be cupped around the sushi). L rice top surface lightly with the index finger.

Press ends of rice ball with right thumb and index finger. Depress top of rice with index finger of right hand again. Turn the ball around with the thumb of left hand and roll sushi into the palm. Topping will be upturned. Shape again. Press the end of rice ball with the left thumb and index finger. Press topping of 1 lightly with two fingers of the hand and once more, mold the edges of the sushi rice portion. Shape should be an elongated oval.

Variation: A simplified method making nigiri-sushi is to damp cloth with vinegar/water solution. Squeeze out excess moisture. The slice of topping, such as fish, on cloth add a dab of wasabi on the slice, and a rice ball on top. On the dampened cloth, and twist form a tight firm ball. Open cloth carefully and unload the nigiri sushi onto your plate, with the portion at the bottom.

Chef Larry finds winning recipes

Here's a few of my favorite selections from the Farmington Community Centers "Good Enough" Cookbook I know you'll enjoy:

ROSIES POTATO SOUP

3 tablespoons butter
¼ cup sliced onions
2 tablespoons flour
3 ½ cups hot milk
¼ cup water
1 pound potatoes, peeled and sliced
¼ cup celery, chopped
½ cup shredded carrots
2 teaspoons salt
dash pepper
½ cup chopped ham, optional
grated cheese and croutons

Saute onions in butter until tender. Add flour and mix well. Add milk and bring to a boil. Simmer potatoes, celery, carrots in water till tender. Add to milky stock. Season with salt and pepper. Stir in ham. Heat to serve, top with grated cheese and croutons, if desired.

NO PEEK STEW

(great for those holiday crock pots)
2 pounds stewing beef, cut into cubes
12 ounces tomato juice
12 ounces beef broth
5 tablespoons instant tapioca
6 carrots, cut up
3 onions, cut up



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1 cup celery, cut up
8 ounces mushrooms, sliced
4 potatoes, sliced
parsley

Place all ingredients in a heavy kettle or crock pot at medium temperature, about 325 degrees. Cover and do not raise the lid for 4 hours. Serves 8-10.



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