

# Sushi



## Sushi History

Sushi as we know it today is an edible art form. The itamae (sushi chef) uses the freshest ingredients: fish, rice, shoyu (soy sauce), wasabi (Japanese horseradish), and other seasoning, adds rice, and rolls it neatly in nori (seaweed). The presentation is just as appealing as the taste.

Sushi has a long history, which dates back to second century A.D. in China. It was derived from a method used to preserve fish where placing fish in rice would prevent it from going bad. The rice was later thrown away and the fish was eaten by itself.

Once this concept reached Japan, around seventh century A.D., the Japanese began eating this fish with the rice. Shortly thereafter, a man from Edo (Tokyo), Matsumoto Yoshiichi, began adding rice vinegar and selling this early version of sushi.

Sushi has gone through several upgrades since the early stages.

## Sushi Vocabulary

Now that you're a sushi historian, it's time to learn some sushi vocab;

- **Maki** – Maki is a type of sushi rolled with a bamboo mat.
- **Gunkan** Nigiri – Gunkan means “boat.” The ingredients are held in place on top of the roll in a boat shape.

- **Temaki** – hand rolls. You can generally order sushi as a hand roll or a cut roll. Hand rolls are cone-shaped single servings, whereas cut rolls are smaller and easy to share.
- **Nigiri** – Sliced raw fish over rice. If you don't like nori, you should try nigiri.
- **Sashimi**– Sliced raw fish (no rice).
- **Chirashi** – Assorted fish over rice, served in a bowl.

## Sushi Ingredients

Some of the most popular sushi rolls are the California roll (crab, avocado, and cucumber), Philly roll (salmon, cream cheese, and vegetables), rainbow roll (crab, avocado, cucumber with tuna, yellowtail, and salmon on the outside), caterpillar roll (cucumber, fish cake, crab, avocado), and the dragon roll (cucumber, avocado, eel, and eel sauce).

One of the best things about going out to eat sushi is trying new things. Here are some of the common ingredients you will find on the sushi menu:

- **Hamachi** – Japanese amberjack (a type of yellowtail).
- **Nori** – Seaweed
- **Tako** – Octopus
- **Tamago** – Sweet egg
- **Tobiko** – Often used as a garnish, tobiko are flying fish roe (eggs)
- **Unagi** – Fresh-water eel.
- **Wasabi** – Be careful with this one, this spicy Japanese horseradish will add a kick to your roll.
- **Shoyu** – Soy Sauce

This is just a small sample of many ingredients you can add to sushi.

## 4 Things You Didn't Know About Sushi

- Most people think sushi means raw fish. This is a common misconception. Sushi actually means **rice seasoned with vinegar, sugar, and salt**.
- The knives used by sushi chefs are direct descendants of samurai swords; the blades should be sharpened every day.
- You shouldn't leave your chopsticks sticking up in your bowl. This symbolizes offering food for the dead.
- A sushi chef used to have to complete 10 years of training before he or she could work in a restaurant. Now, because of a much greater demand, a sushi chef can begin working after only two years of training.

# Sushi Vinegar Recipe

## (Mirin)



To make Sushi Rice, you will need to add Sushi Vinegar to your cooked rice.

Why use sushi vinegar? Sushi Vinegar is used to help to hold the shape of the roll, add flavour to complement the fillings or toppings and to help preserve the rice.

So, what exactly is Sushi Vinegar? A standard recipe calls for Rice Vinegar, Sugar and Salt. I used Rice vinegar, Caster Sugar, and Salt flakes. The standard ratio used is 5:3:1 (Vinegar: Sugar: Salt).

## Ingredients

- 240ml Rice vinegar
- 115g Sugar
- 1 & ½ Tsp Salt Flakes (¾ tsp for table salt)

## Method

1. Add the rice vinegar, sugar, salt, and lemon juice together in a saucepan.
2. Bring the mixture almost to a simmer over low heat, but not allow to boil.
3. Stir the mixture until the sugar and salt have dissolved.
4. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely.
5. Store in refrigerator until needed.

## MAKI (HOSOMAKI) SUSHI RECIPE TUNA & CUCUMBER (Makes 16 pieces)



This recipe is for tuna and cucumber sushi but some ideas for other fillings include:

- Cream cheese and smoked salmon
- Red pepper and Crab stick
- Avocado and spring onion

**Start by gathering your equipment and ingredients.**

### INGREDIENTS:

#### *FOR SUSHI RICE*

- 125g Sushi rice
- 1 & 1/2 Tbsp Sushi vinegar

#### *FILLINGS (OR YOUR CHOICE):*

- 1 cucumber
- 1 Tin of tuna in brine

#### *TEZU (VINEGARED HAND-DIPPING WATER):*

- 60ml water
- 1 Tbsp rice vinegar

#### *EVERYTHING ELSE:*

- 2 sheets of Nori (seaweed) or 4 sheets of ½ Nori (as per demo)
- Soy sauce
- Wasabi (optional)
- Sushi ginger (optional)

### TO PREPARE THE SUSHI RICE

1. Put the rice in a glass bowl and rinse the rice in cold water, stirring as you go with your fingertips, then drain using a sieve. Repeat this process **5 times** until the water becomes clear.
2. Put enough cold water in the bowl to cover the rice and set aside for **20 minutes** (prepare your fillings whilst the rice is soaking).
3. Once **20 minutes has elapsed**, place the rice in a saucepan and pour over an **equal amount** of water to your rice, cover with a lid.
4. Bring the water to the boil and cook on **high** for **5 minutes**, then reduce the heat to **low** and **gently simmer** for a further **20 minutes** until nearly all the water has been absorbed.
5. Transfer the rice to a glass bowl and add **1 & 1/2 tablespoons** of warmed sushi vinegar, stir using the edge of the wooden sushi spoon.
6. Transfer the rice to your cold tray/plate to cool it down.

### TO PREPARE THE FILLINGS

1. Peel the cucumber (if desired) then cut both ends off the cucumber and cut into strips, removing the seed portion with a knife.
2. Open the tuna tin, drain and then scoop the Tuna out of the tin and put into a clean bowl and set-aside until ready to use (ensure all moisture is squashed from the tuna – wet Tuna = wet sushi! and we don't want that).

### TO ROLL SUSHI

Before you start, make your vinegared hand-dipping water (Tezu) by combining **60ml water** and **1 Tbsp rice vinegar** in a small bowl. Applying this water to your hands and tools prevents rice from sticking to them.

1. Lay out your bamboo mat with cling film covering the mat to keep it clean (saves on washing up later).
2. Place 2 strips of the dried seaweed side by side to form a square on the bamboo mat,
3. Make sure that the dried seaweed (nori) has its rough side facing upward (facing you).



4. Evenly spread rice over the nori to 1/2cm thick leaving space at the top and bottom of the nori sheet.
5. Place your chosen ingredients in the centre of your nori (halfway between the top and bottom of the seaweed).
6. Place your thumbs underneath the bamboo mat and lift the edge that is closest to you up and over your filling (in the centre).
7. Curve the rest of your fingers over the bamboo mat and gently press along the length of the "log." This motion presses the rice and the filling together and prevents the roll from being too loose.
8. Pull the edge of the bamboo toward you to fold it underneath your hands (as shown in the picture below), then continue to roll the sushi away from you until you've rolled past the far edge of the seaweed sheet.
9. Place your sushi roll on a chopping board and cut in half using a sharp knife (dipping in knife edge in the Tezu before cutting).
10. Cut each half in half again (to make 4 pieces) then each of those in half again (this should give you 8 in total).
11. Repeat this process for your second sushi roll – this will give you 16 pieces in total.

**Congratulations, you've now mastered the skill of making sushi 😊**



*Serve with soy sauce, wasabi, and pickled ginger*

#### **TO STORE**

Sushi rolls should be consumed right away, but they can be stored in the **refrigerator for up to 24 hours maximum**. Keep them in an airtight container or a plate wrapped tightly with plastic.