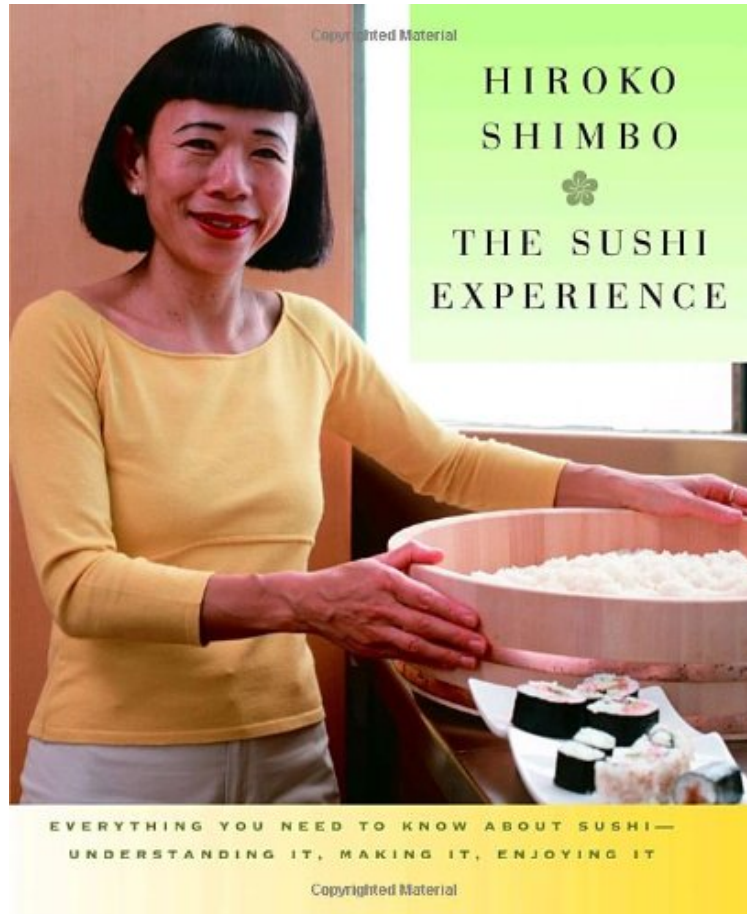


(Ebook free) The Sushi Experience

The Sushi Experience

Hiroko Shimbo

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#1136448 in Books Knopf 2006-10-17 2006-10-17Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 10.24 x 1.04 x 8.44l, 2.84 #File Name: 1400042089304 pagesThe Sushi ExperienceSushiShimbo, Hiroko ShimboThe Sushi Experience [Hardcover] [Oct 17, 2006] Shimbo, Hiroko ... | File size: 56.Mb

Hiroko Shimbo : The Sushi Experience before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sushi Experience:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wow...very impressed...Very happy I purchased this.....By BarefootdogYou want to make Sushi?....What you need to know (and more) is in this book.....really does cover what most home cooks would ever want to know about Sushi...If I had space for only a single book about making Sushi this would be a perfectly legitimate choice.Comprehensive blend of back ground, tools, ingredients, technique and recipes....I am so happy it's more than a picture book.The Sushi Experience was published 8 years ago in 2006. It has stood the "test of time" and is still considered a very good text on the subject.I would recommend you buy with confidence...BTY I bought another copy (in the mail now) for my daughter.....and the price is great....I didn't have to pay retail.....so I'm a happy guy....0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Robbie Clarkvery

good book got it in the time frame or quicker0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Book!By David PhillipsWe like sushi and I wanted to get more ideas for variety, etc. Book provides plenty of that and more. Talks about the history of sushi, the techniques, etc. Does a great job of putting it into a Western perspective. Recommend this book to anyone.

From Hiroko Shimbo, the well-known and widely admired authority on Japanese food, here is the most comprehensive, engaging, and instructive book that has ever been written on the fascinating world of sushimdash;the delights of eating it, preparing it, and savoring it in its many forms.Shimbo introduces you first to the history of sushi (it started out as a way of preserving fish) and shows how it has evolved into the phenomenon it is today, relished by food lovers the world over. She then takes you into a typical sushi barmdash;guiding you in all aspects of the experience, from the ordering of sushi and the etiquette of eating it to the appropriate exchange with your sushi chefmdash;all in Japanese, of course (you can tear off this sheet and the one on the back flap to tuck into your pocket so yoursquo;ll have these valuable tips with you the next time you visit a sushi bar).For the home cook there are step-by-step illustrated instructions on how to make sushi rice properly and how to shape the rice around a variety of delicious fillings (primarily of cooked and preserved fish and seafood, omelets, vegetables, and seasonings). There are sauces and accompaniments to complement the sushi meal. A new world will open up as you discover sushi pouches, tossed and arranged sushi salads, sushi for the lunch box, and sushi dolls to make with your children.Now, along with the professional chef, you are ready to tackle raw fish and seafood, and Shimbo gives you all the toolsmdash;what fish to buy, how to be sure that is safe to eat raw, and how to slice it expertly.Itsquo;s all here in this all-encompassing, gloriously illustrated book, along with stories about fishermen, knife makers, tea growers, wasabi farmers, and sake brewers, to inspire American cooks to create, and enjoy, our own perfect sushi.

About the AuthorHiroko Shimbo is a trained sushi chef, restaurant consultant, cooking instructor, and author of *The Japanese Kitchen*, which was a *Food Wine* magazine *ldquo;Best of the Bestrdquo;* winner and an IACP Julia Child Cookbook Award nominee. She has also written for *Saveur* and other magazines. A native of Japan, she lives in New York City.Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.**Master Recipe for Prawn Nigiri-zushi**In this master recipe, I am using only prawns, but try to include one or two more seafood varieties, such as tuna or salmon, to make your nigiri-zushi meal more colorful and flavorful. Although it might be fun to emulate the graceful ballet that the sushi chef performs to make each nigiri-zushi, it is undoubtedly simpler for the home cook, who is not yet practiced in this art, simply to prepare, up to 1 hour before serving, as many rice balls as will be needed.**Ingredients** 3 cups (lightly packed) prepared sushi rice (see recipe below)28 pieces prepared prawns (see recipe below)Wasabi paste**Set up the working counter with sushi rice, prawns (and fish), wasabi, and a bowl of vinegar water.**Dip the tips of the fingers of your right hand in the vinegar water and rub both your hands together to distribute the water over your palms. Remember that too much water makes the sushi rice watery and too little makes it stick to your hands.Following the illustrations, 1. reach into the sushi rice container with your right hand and pick up a small Ping-Pong-ball-size portion of rice (1/2 to 3/4 ounce). If you are a beginner, I recommend that you weigh the rice on a scale until you can eyeball the right amount to pick up. Without squeezing, quickly roll the rice over several times in the tips of your fingers, palm facing down. Transfer the rice to your left hand, placing it along the base of your four fingers. 2. Hold the rice in place with the thumb and index finger of your right hand as you make a depression on the top of the rice with your left thumb. 3. When you lift your thumb, the small depression remains in the center; it will not be visible when the sushi is completed, but it keeps the rice ball light and airy.Place the index and middle finger of your right hand on top of the sushi rice ball and 4. roll the rice toward the tips of your fingers (the depression is down). 5. Slide it back to the original space at the base of the fingers of your left hand. Now you will make two motions simultaneously: 6. Grab the rice ball between the thumb and index finger of your right hand and move your left thumb back and forth across the top of the rice ball, exerting gentle pressure to smooth and flatten it. Do not squeeze the rice or press it down. 7. Continue to shape with the index and middle fingers of your right hand.8. Pick up the sushi rice ball, rotate it 180 degrees clockwise, and return it to the base of the four fingers of your left hand. Repeat the process of grabbing the sides of the rice ball between the thumb and index finger while smoothing the top with the thumb as in step 6. Continue to shape as in step 7. 9. Now you have made a perfect rice ball. Repeat until you have used up all the rice. You should have about 28 rice balls.Now smear a dab of wasabi on top of each rice ball, if called for, and 10. then place the prawn on top pressing it into the rice just enough so that it will adhere. There is nothing difficult about the technique. It just takes a little practice to do it as swiftly and efficiently as your sushi chef does.**NOTE: Making Rice Balls Ahead of Time**Line the rice balls up in a clean plastic container, then cover them with a clean damp towel plus a lid to keep them from drying out. Float the container in a bowl of warm water, changing the water as it cools down. Also, up to half an hour before serving, slice the raw, cooked, or cured seafood you will be using as toppings into the right size. At the last moment, all you have to do is smear a small dab of wasabi, if called for, on top of the rice ball and then put the topping on, pressing down slightly to hold it in place. That's it.nbsp;The History of Sushinbsp;Ancient Sushinbsp;The tale of sushi begins centuries ago. Sushi originated not from a desire for novelty but

from economic need—the need to preserve fish, an important source of protein. The first sushi—freshwater fish salted and pickled in fermenting rice—originated not in Japan but in the rice-growing region of northern Southeast Asia, where the method is still used. That primordial sushi making soon spread to China but disappeared there during the thirteenth century, when the Mongolian nomads who subjugated the country introduced a very different food culture. Before the Chinese abandoned this method of fish pickling, though, their frequent contact with the Japanese brought the practice to my country. No one can say with certainty when sushi crossed the Sea of Japan, but the earliest written references to it appeared in the eighth century AD. Over subsequent centuries, this ancient form of sushi evolved into today's world-famous sushi cuisine. In ancient times, the most common way to preserve fish was to salt it, and this method is still used throughout much of the world. But fish that is salted and dried gets hard as a board, such as bacalao, the salt cod of Europe and America. Using rice as well as salt in hot, humid areas of Asia created a product markedly different in flavor, aroma, and texture. The cooked rice fermented, producing lactic acid, which both aided preservation and imparted a pleasant sharp, tart flavor. (Some scholars believe that the word sushi comes from an older Japanese word meaning "tar" or "acid.") At the same time, the plump, moist rice grains kept the fish tender and moist. But there were drawbacks to this early preservation method. The pickling took at least a year, and when the process was through, the rice was too pasty to eat. It was wiped off the fish and thrown away. This wasted the always valuable rice crop. Primitive sushi making is still practiced in some rural areas of Japan. In Shiga Prefecture, funa-zushi is made from local funa, freshwater carp, which is pickled in rice and salt for a year. Proud locals enjoy watching the reactions of outsiders who taste this delicacy for the first time. Most tourists—and I mean Japanese tourists, not foreigners—are so repelled by the smell of funa-zushi that they shun it without taking a bite. I find that owners of funa-zushi souvenir shops, who sell gift-wrapped boxes of the delicacy to curious out-of-towners, like to exchange stories about their experiences. Some have received angry phone calls from customers: "The sushi was spoiled when I opened it; I had to throw it away! Send me back my money." Locals lament that the world doesn't appreciate the strong smell and distinctive taste of funa-zushi, which they compare to mature Roquefort cheese. One 8-inch funa-zushi, however, can cost eighty dollars, much more than a generous slice of Roquefort cheese. Alas, these die-hard traditionalists are unlikely to succeed in bringing funa-zushi to the world. The Evolution of Sushi By the fourteenth century, sushi began to change. Although agricultural improvements had greatly increased Japanese rice production, rice was still an expensive food, and the Japanese had come to believe that it shouldn't be wasted in preserving fish. So a new sushi evolved, nama nare-zushi, or short-pickled sushi. With the shorter fermentation time, the fish grew only mildly tart, and because the rice didn't disintegrate, it was good to eat along with the fish. By the seventeenth century, the Japanese were producing rice vinegar, and this new product inspired the development of an even faster sushi. Rice vinegar and sake, rice wine, now served as preserving agents in place of lactic-acid fermentation. By the nineteenth century, haya-zushi, quick sushi, had nearly replaced the ancient, slow method of preserving fish in fermenting rice. But soon even haya-zushi was found too slow. It was the beginning of the mercantile age in Japan, and busy artisans and merchants needed a fast lunch; travelers wanted a tasty snack. Inevitably a quickly produced item such as oshi-zushi, pressed sushi, would become the vogue. It was called hako-zushi, boxed sushi, because of the way it was made. Vinegar-flavored rice was laid in a round or square wooden mold about one foot across. Sliced fish was laid over the rice, and a lid that fit inside the mold was pressed on top of the fish and rice. The mold was removed, the sushi was cut into bite-sized pieces, and presto—there was the world's first fast food. As boxed sushi became popular, eggs and vegetables joined fish as toppings for the rice. In the Kansai region around Osaka and Kyoto, this sushi is still popular today. But in Edo—the city now known as Tokyo—even boxed sushi was soon considered too slow. With more than a million residents, Edo was Japan's political and business center and the capital of the powerful Tokugawa shogunate, whose regimes spanned the interval from 1600 to 1868. During this feudal era, when Japan was closed to nearly all foreign trade and influence, the domestic economy flourished, peace reigned, and Japanese culture and arts, including the culinary arts, reached their zenith. Imagine that you had a sushi stand in Edo, then the largest city in the world. You would have served nigiri-zushi or even invented it. You would have cooked the rice, tossed it with salt and sake and vinegar (page 25), and waited for a customer to approach. Upon receiving his order, you would have formed a small rice ball in your hand, carefully laid a slice of fish on top, and immediately handed the ball to the impatient customer standing in front of you. No pressing in a box, no cutting, no waiting. Such a morsel was nigiri-zushi, the ultimate fast food. It was an instant success, and its popularity was contagious. Sushi stands, sushi caterers, and sushi restaurants sprang up like mushrooms on every corner of this busy city. The demand for sushi grew so great and the sellers so greedy that the embarrassed shogun government arrested two hundred sushi chefs for drastically overcharging their customers. In those early days, nigiri-zushi was always topped with cooked or cured fish or shellfish, such as kohada (gizzard shad), maguro (tuna), aji (horse mackerel), miru-gai (gaper clam), anago (conger eel), awabi (abalone), kuruma-ebi (kuruma prawn), or ika (squid). The use of raw fish, the essence of today's sushi, began only after World War II, when the development of high-speed transportation and modern refrigeration and freezing equipment made it possible to transport and store raw fish safely. Early nigiri-zushi was different from today's in another way: it was

almost three times as large. There is a curious bit of history behind the shrinking of sushi. At the end of World War II, Japan faced a severe rice shortage. The American occupational forces set up a rice-rationing system and decreed that all sushi restaurants must close. Kataro Kurata, a well-known chef at Sushi-ei (a restaurant still operating in the Ginza district of Tokyo), appealed to the staff at general headquarters: "Sushi plays as important a role in Japan's culinary culture," he said, "as the sandwich does in America's." When the appeal reached the highest levels, sushi restaurants were allowed to reopen—on the condition that the chefs use only rationed rice brought in by their customers. And so a standard was set: each cup of raw rice made ten pieces of sushi, including seven nigiri-zushi and three pieces of a traditional thin roll. Although a few heretical restaurants are now supersizing sushi to satisfy the American craving for larger food portions, the postwar prescription is still nearly universally followed. General of the Army Douglas MacArthur himself may have set the size of modern sushi. More Sushi! In the nineteenth century, other kinds of sushi developed: thick and thin rolls (maki-zushi and nori-maki), stuffed tofu pockets (inari-zushi), and sushi rice served in a bowl (chirashi-zushi). Nori-maki and Maki-zushi. Both the thin sushi roll, nori-maki (nori roll), and the thick roll, maki-zushi (sushi roll), first appeared late in the Edo period. The thin roll arose in Edo (now Tokyo) and the thick roll in the Kansai region (Osaka and Kyoto prefectures). Both rolls are made with nori, a sea vegetable known as laver in England and Wales. In Japan, nori is harvested from bays, formed into thin, dark green sheets by a process similar to papermaking, and dried. For nori-maki and maki-zushi, nori is rolled around sushi rice and a filling, and then the roll is sliced into white rounds with a green perimeter and colorful center. Both thin and thick sushi rolls are frequently prepared at home as lunch box fare. The Kansai thick roll, futo-maki, uses a whole sheet of nori plus an added quarter-sheet for strength; traditional fillings include simmered kanpyo gourd, shiitake mushrooms, omelet, and sweet fish flakes. Today's thick rolls may have other ingredients, such as raw fish and tempura shrimp. The Tokyo thin roll, hosotate-maki, uses only a half sheet of nori, and in the early days, kanpyo gourd was the only filling used. Today's thin rolls come in many varieties, including kappa-maki (with cucumber), tekka-maki (with tuna), and oshinko-maki (with pickled daikon). Inari-zushi. This sushi arose near the end of the Edo period as an inexpensive vegetarian snack. Thin sheets of tofu were deep-fried, simmered in a sweet broth, slit open to form a bag, and then packed with a mixture of sushi rice, cooked kanpyo gourd, and kikurage (tree fungus). Inari-zushi was peddled not at nigiri-zushi stands, which occupied the busiest street corners, but at plain stands set up on quiet streets at dusk and marked by flags bearing the image of a fox. In Japanese folk religion, foxes are the mediators between the people and the god of the harvest, Inari-san, who ensures good business. Foxes were believed to love abura-age (fried tofu), which forms the bag that holds the sushi rice. So inari-zushi was a favorite food of all foxes. (How did foxes come to love fried tofu? Please don't ask.) Modern inari-zushi is a little bigger than a matchbox but still only a third to a fourth as large as the old version, which was cut into pieces and eaten with shoyu (soy sauce) laced with wasabi. Today inari-zushi is often prepared by home cooks for lunch or snacks. Chirashi-zushi. Another invention of the late Edo period, this sushi is the easiest to make. The word chirashi, meaning "to scatter" or "to sprinkle," describes the way to make this delightful dish. It requires no special ingredients, just sushi rice and whatever colorful, delicious additions you have on hand. There are two basic styles of chirashi-zushi. The first is said to have originated in boxed sushi. The story goes like this: A customer went to a stand and ordered boxed sushi. The vendor asked the customer to wait while he removed the sushi from the mold and cut it into bite-sized pieces. Impatient, the customer asked the vendor to stir the sushi in the mold, spoon it out, and serve it immediately. Today this style of chirashi-zushi is made by tossing sushi rice with many chopped or sliced ingredients—nori, cooked vegetables such as shiitake mushrooms or kikurage (tree fungus), seasonal herbs, and julienned omelet. Extra bits of omelet or other ingredients are scattered over the top as a garnish. Edo-mae chirashi-zushi is the Edo, or Tokyo, version of the dish. Instead of tossing the sushi rice with other ingredients, the Edo sushi maker would pack the rice into an individual serving bowl and decorate the top with bits of fish or shellfish, usually cured or cooked. After World War II, the use of raw fish became widespread in this dish. Today both styles of chirashi-zushi remain very popular in Japan, where home cooks make them frequently. Since this sushi is so easy to prepare and so adaptable, it is a natural for American home cooks, too. Today's Sushi in Japan After conveyor-belt restaurants made sushi dining affordable to ordinary people, sushi entrepreneurs found other ways to cut costs. They formed franchises to improve purchasing power. They hired corporate managers, who used company manuals to train young employees in the least labor-intensive ways to produce reasonably good sushi. They brought inexpensive sushi to an even larger public, and in so doing, they threatened the long tradition of owner-operated restaurants staffed by chefs who have completed fifteen-year apprenticeships. The new sushi chains even threatened kaiten-sushi operators, who reacted by throwing off the "cheap sushi" image and upgrading their operations with chic, modern interiors. Kaiten-zushi restaurants brought better-trained chefs back to the sushi bar, so that customers willing to pay more could have freshly made sushi to order and could watch as the chef prepared it. Half-kaiten, half-traditional sushi restaurants are popular in Japan today. Disappearing in Japan, however, is the moderately priced sushi restaurant that catered to neighborhood people and provided home delivery service. When I was a child, my mother would on special occasions phone in a sushi order. The sushi was delivered not in a disposable plastic package but in a red and black lacquered wooden box.

Inside was a colorful assortment of nigiri-zushi and thin rolls, so beautifully arranged that we could proudly set the box in front of the most distinguished guest at a formal dinner. There was no need for a serving plate. The next day, someone from the restaurant would come by to retrieve the lacquerware box. Until I was old enough to accompany my parents to a sushi restaurant, this take-out sushi was the only sushi I knew. Now Japanese families have other, cheaper ways to buy sushi to eat at home. Freshly made, restaurant-quality sushi packed in plastic containers is available in the food section of every department store, supermarket, and specialty food store in Japan. Sushi itself has been changing. New, foreign-born styles—California rolls, tempura rolls, caterpillar rolls, rainbow rolls, and so on—are mingling with the traditional varieties. One hundred and fifty years after the arrival of Admiral Perry's fleet, our country is facing another invasion. Sushi chefs at venerable establishments laugh scornfully at the innovations and deny that they are sushi at all. But younger restaurateurs and chefs, who feel less bound by the old rules, are adopting new sushi creations to please their fashion-conscious customers. And these customers are cheering. Sushi continues to evolve in Japan. Tradition, training, technology, and a welcome breeze of new creativity are together guiding this evolution.