

## Planning a Te-Maki (hand roll) Party

A Te-Maki party is a great way to entertain friends without the stress of a formal dinner. It's fun, easy, out of the ordinary, and delicious.

A wide variety of ingredients can be used. Here is a shopping list to use as a reference. Other ingredients, such as seasoned baked tofu, carrots, and natto can be added or substituted if desired.

The amount you will need to buy will vary according to the number of people you are serving. Figure about 5 nori cones per guest (one cone uses a half sheet of nori).

### Shopping List:

- Sushi nori
- Short-grain white rice
- Wasabi powder
- Avocado
- Radish or sunflower sprouts
- English or pickling cucumbers
- Sushi grade fresh tuna
- Fresh salmon, yellowtail, salmon roe, and/or king crab
- Shoyu (natural soy sauce)
- Brown rice vinegar
- Mirin
- Sake

At a Japanese market, you may be able to find fresh fish in pre-cut slices. It is more expensive than buying the fish by the pound, but you won't have to worry about cutting the fish into even slices.

### Preparation:

**Rice** - Although you can use plain cooked rice, for an authentic Japanese flavor, scoop the cooked rice into a wooden bowl and sprinkle sushi vinegar over it. (For 3 cups of uncooked rice, use 1/3 cup brown rice vinegar, 1 teaspoon sea salt, and 2 tablespoons mirin or 1 tablespoon raw cane sugar. "Cut" the vinegar mixture into the rice with the side of a bamboo rice paddle or wooden spoon. Do not stir it in, or the rice will become gummy.)

**Sake** - Heat the sake in sake flasks by placing the flasks in a pot of water and bringing the water to a boil until the sake is hot, but not too hot to drink.

**Wasabi** - About 10 minutes before you begin eating, in a small cup or custard bowl mix a small amount of water with the wasabi powder to make a paste (about 1 part water

to 2 parts powder). The paste should be thick, not runny. Cover the container, or turn it upside down on the counter and let it sit for 10 minutes to allow the flavor to heighten. (Exposure to air will cause it to lose some of its flavor.)

**Vegetables and fish** - Scrub the cucumbers (peel if skin is thick or waxed) and cut them into long, thin slices. Cut the avocado in half, remove peel and pit, and thinly slice. Arrange cucumber, avocado, sprouts, and thinly sliced fish on platters, with a small bowl or saucer of salmon roe at the center, if desired.

**Sushi Nori** - Fold and cut or carefully tear the nori sheets in half.

Set out the platters of fish and vegetables along with wasabi, rice, nori, shoyu, small saucers for shoyu, hot sake, sake cups, and napkins on the table.

To make Te-maki, place a piece of nori in the palm of your hand, spoon about 3 tablespoons of rice on it, and spread it out. With a small spatula or spoon place a thin streak of wasabi along the center of the rice (not too much - it is strong!). Then select whatever ingredients you wish to use. For example, add a slice of tuna on top of the wasabi and place some sprouts alongside the tuna, or try a combination of crab and avocado. Starting at the lower end of the nori, begin rolling it into a cone shape. Dip the top of the cone into a saucer of shoyu and enjoy!