

*Plenty of
Recipes*

2011

Gochiso

Ultimate Japanese Gourmet Magazine

COLORFUL CHIRASHIZUSHI

*A New Breed of Murasaki-imo
Everyone Is Talking About:*

PURPLE SWEET ROAD

Get a Lot of Energy from Sprouts! **KAIWARE DAIKON** / Desserts Packed with **CATECHIN**
Let's Cook **KAKIAGE** with Seasonal Vegetables! / Nijiya's Special Series: **SAUCE, FLOUR**
From the Fields of an Organic Farm: **SATSUMA-IMO, MOLOKHIA**
FRESH TUNA / ONIGIRI / MOLOKHIA / SHOYU IKURA / MOZUKUSU



Molokhia

Sticky, Slippery Power
of the Summer

2



Nijiya Farm From the Fields of an Organic Farm Molokhia 4

Get a Lot of Energy from Sprouts! Kaiware Daikon 6

Mozukusu — Vinegared mozuku seaweed 8

Fresh Tuna That Really Tastes Different 10

Story of Nori Dried Laver Seaweed 14

Onigiri — Rice balls 16

Nijiya Farm From the Fields of an Organic Farm Satsuma-imo ... 18

Purple Sweet Road — Murasaki-imo 22

Desserts Packed with Catechin 24

Shirasu and Chirimen — Boiled and Dried Whitebait .. 26

Colorful Chirashizushi 30

Let's Cook Kakiage with Seasonal Vegetables! 32

Oba — Japanese aromatic vegetable 34

Nijiya's "Pork-kun" 36

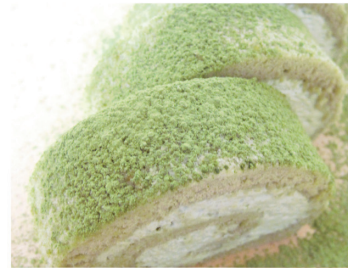
Shoyu Ikura — Salmon Roe Marinated in Soy Sauce .. 38

Nijiya's Special Sauce Series 40

Six Great Flour Products from Nijiya 42

Nijiya's Sushi & Bento 46

Nijiya Private Brand 48



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Opening our first store in San Diego back in 1986, we at NIJIYA Market have come a long way to prove not only that we can provide the best in high quality foods, but to provide the whole concept of LIVING. Our services do not stop at the exit of our stores. They actually begin the moment the customer purchases our food and sets in on their kitchen counter. We care about the outcome of the dinner they prepare, the taste and freshness, and how healthy it all adds up to.

At the present time, we have twelve stores, a full bakery and full confectionery factory, fish and meat center, and newly formed coffee and pastry restaurant.

Our parent company, JINON Corp. is an enterprise that encompasses an ORGANIC FARM that produces wholly grown organic vegetable of different varieties.

Molokhia

Molokhia is a vegetable that has been widely eaten in Egypt and India, among other regions, since ancient times. Molokhia means “vegetable of kings” in Arabic. It’s believed to have been given that name because it’s so nutritious that it even cured the diseases of the kings.

True to its legacy of sustaining the health of kings, molokhia offers a great variety of outstanding nutrients such as vitamin B1, vitamin B2, vitamin B12, vitamin C, vitamin E, beta carotene, calcium, iron, dietary fiber, potassium and mucin. We especially want to look closely at the fact that molokhia contains a large amount of the sticky, slippery ingredient, mucin, which is rarely found in leafy green vegetables. Molokhia gets even more sticky and slippery when it’s boiled or chopped. Mucin is a polysaccharide consisting of sugars and proteins that helps with protein digestion and protects the mucous membranes of

the digestive system. Mucin thus prevents indigestion and loss of appetite. Mucin prevents stomach problems caused by fatigue due to summer heat. Molokhia has received a lot of attention in recent years due to its high nutritive value, and is processed for use in breads, noodles, drinks and many other products.

Molokhia, a plant native to Egypt, is grown mainly in the Middle East and northeastern Africa. Growers throughout Japan started producing it about 20 years ago. Today it’s a popular vegetable that can be purchased at any grocery store. During the summer months, when leafy greens are harder to come by, molokhia provides a good source of nutrients and other ingredients that help ease fatigue due to summer heat.

Like other leafy green vegetables, molokhia can be boiled and seasoned for use in delicious side dishes, cooked in



soups, stir-fried, or deep-fried as tempura. Because the proteolytic enzyme (enzymes that help you digest proteins) and vitamin C in mucin are vulnerable to heat, you might want to cook molokhia quickly over heat or eat it fresh by chopping and mixing it with tororo (grated *yamaimo/nagaimo* [Japanese mountain yam]) or *natto* (fermented beans). On the other hand, the beta carotene in molokhia is more easily absorbed by the body when it’s heated or mixed in oil. Molokhia has no strong flavor and decreases in volume when cooked over heat. Use a hearty serving of this vegetable in a variety of dishes, and stay healthy as you get through the hot summer!

Hearty Vegetable Suigyoza (Boiled Dumplings) with Molokhia

The sticky molokhia helps to bind the dumpling filling perfectly. When you’ve had enough of the fried dumplings, boil the dumplings in broth and add more molokhia!

Ingredients (24 dumplings)

about 6 stalks molokhia	1/2 teaspoon soy sauce
2 leaves cabbage	1 teaspoon sesame oil
2 stalks garlic chives	1/2 tablespoon flour
4 inches <i>negi</i> (Japanese leek)	1/4 teaspoon sugar
1 <i>shiitake</i> mushroom	1 teaspoon salt
1/2 clove ginger	Pinch of pepper
1/2 clove garlic	
4 oz. minced pork	
24 dumpling wrappers	

[How to Cook Dumplings]

1. Slice the cabbage into small pieces, and place in a strainer. Sprinkle with salt and mix. Slice the other vegetables into small pieces, and place in a bowl. (Use the molokhia stems, too.)
2. When the cabbage is wilted, squeeze out the water and add the cabbage to the bowl of vegetables. Add the minced pork and seasonings, and mix well until the meat becomes sticky.
3. Spoon the necessary amount of the filling into the dumpling wrapper, and encase it. (Place the filling at the center of the wrapper and then fold the wrapper over it. Dab a small amount of water along the edge on one side of the half-folded wrapper. Tuck the filling around the edges by folding over the other side



of the wrapper. (unmoistened side and pressing it down onto the moistened side.)
* You can fry some of the dumplings and boil the rest.

[How to Boil Dumplings]

1. Put an appropriate amount (depending on how many dumplings you cook) of dashi soup stock (bonito, kelp, or other broth) in a pan. Place the pan over medium heat. Add dumplings, cover and boil for about 5 minutes.
2. After dumplings are cooked, add molokhia leaves and remove from heat. Serve with soy sauce and vinegar or *ponzu* (citrus accented, seasoned soy sauce).

Chinese-Style Egg Drop Soup with Molokhia

This is a thickened, easy-to-eat, hearty soup with lots of veggies. Molokhia is vulnerable to heat, so add it last to preserve its vivid green color.



Ingredients (Serves 2)

about 3 stalks molokhia leaves
1/4 onion
2 *shiitake* mushrooms
1/4 carrot
about 4 inches *naganegi* (Japanese leek)
1/2 clove garlic
1/2 clove ginger
1/2 egg
2 teaspoons sesame oil
1-2/3 cups chicken broth (or bouillon cubes dissolved in the specified amount of water)
1/2 teaspoon oyster sauce
1 teaspoon soy sauce
Pinch of salt and pepper
1/2 tablespoon *katakuriko* starch

[Cooking Directions]

1. Remove the molokhia leaves from the stems. Cut the onion in half and slice it thinly. Slice the *shiitake* mushrooms into 1/4 inch slices and thinly slice the carrot. Chop *naganegi*, garlic, and ginger into small pieces.
2. Add sesame oil to a pan and place over low heat. Stir fry the *naganegi*, garlic, and ginger until they start to release their aromas, and then raise the heat to medium. Add the onion and carrot, and stir fry.
3. Once the vegetables become tender, add chicken broth and *shiitake* mushrooms and cook for 10 minutes with the lid on.
4. Season with oyster sauce, soy sauce, salt, and pepper. Mix the *katakuriko* starch with 1/2 tablespoon water, and pour into the pan. Add the molokhia leaves and quickly pour the beaten egg into the soup.

Quick Sunomono (Vinegared Dish) of Molokhia and Onion

The sourness of this sunomono is so subtle that even people who aren't crazy about vinegared dishes will enjoy it. Just marinate for a hearty serving of molokhia and onion from this quick sunomono.



Ingredients (Serves 2)

about 5 stalks molokhia leaves
1/2 onion
1-2/3 cups water
2-1/2 tablespoons vinegar
Katsuobushi (dried, shaved bonito) (to taste)
Soy sauce (to taste)

[Cooking Directions]

1. Remove the molokhia leaves from the stems. Slice large leaves into halves. Slice onion thinly, rinse with water in a colander, and soak in water (the amount of water used here is not included in the list of ingredients) for about 5 minutes.
2. Lightly drain onion. Place water and vinegar in a bowl. Add the molokhia leaves and onion and marinate for about 20 minutes.
3. Squeeze the water/vinegar mixture from the marinated vegetables (prepared in Step 2), and top with *katsuobushi*. Top with soy sauce and serve.

Cold Potage of Molokhia and Couscous

Give molokhia vichyssoise a fun texture by adding couscous! This is a nutritious cold soup that's easy to eat on a hot summer day, even when you don't have an appetite.



Ingredients (Serves 2)

about 5 stalks molokhia leaves
1/4 onion
1 potato
1 1/4 cups chicken broth (or bouillon cubes dissolved in the specified amount of water)
1/2 cup milk
1 tablespoon uncooked couscous
0.2 oz. butter
Pinch of salt and pepper

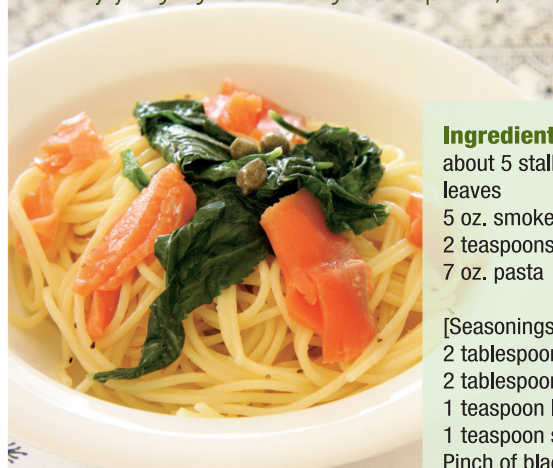
[Cooking Directions]

1. Remove molokhia leaves from the stems. Slice the onion and potato thinly. Soak the potato in water. Add 1-1/2 tablespoons of hot water to the couscous, and allow it to swell.
2. Remove the excess water from the potato. Place butter in a pan. Add the onion and potato in that order, and stir fry until tender. Add chicken broth and cook uncovered for 10 minutes.
3. Remove the pan from the heat. Add the molokhia leaves, reserving two leaves for use as a topping. Allow the pan to cool until tepid by placing the bottom of the pan in a bowl of water. Pour the soup into a blender and blend for one minute.
4. After blending the soup, pour it back into the pan and cook over low heat. Add milk, and season with salt and pepper. Once the soup starts to bubble along the edges, remove pan from heat. Allow the soup to cool until tepid. Pour the soup into a container and place in the refrigerator to chill. Top with couscous and the molokhia leaves before serving.

Pasta with Molokhia and Smoked Salmon

This is a quick pasta recipe--just mix and eat. You can also use capellini and eat it cold!

This easy yet gorgeous dish is great for parties, too.



Ingredients (Serves 2)

about 5 stalks molokhia leaves
5 oz. smoked salmon
2 teaspoons capers
7 oz. pasta

[Seasonings]

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon salt
Pinch of black pepper

[Cooking Directions]

1. Remove the molokhia leaves from the stems. Cut the smoked salmon into bite-size pieces.
2. Add pasta to a pot of salted boiling water (the salt used here isn't included in the list of ingredients). While pasta boils, place all the seasonings in a large bowl and mix together to make a sauce.
3. Add the molokhia leaves to the pot just before the pasta is done, and then remove from heat. Use a strainer to drain the pasta and molokhia, and place them in a bowl. Add salmon and capers, and mix together.



Molokhia (*Jew's Mallow*)

Molokhia (Jew's Mallow): A Summer Vegetable

Japan is located at the northernmost limit of the subtropical climate zone. However, among the vegetables grown in this country, many summer varieties originate in the tropical zone.

These tropical plants include rice, which is the staple food of the Japanese people, as well as ginger, eggplant, cucumber, bitter melon, and sprouts. Tropical plants are characterized by their preference for hot weather, their needs for humidity and water, and their extremely rapid growth. Among these summer vegetables, molokhia was recently introduced to Japan as an imported product. It has become an extremely popular vegetable, widely accepted by the people of this country.

Molokhia is a native plant of Egypt and other areas around the Mediterranean Sea. It has high nutritive value, a sticky, slippery texture, and a delicious flavor that is beyond description. Molokhia is such a famous vegetable that its name appears in many ancient records from the Middle East. The soup made with this vegetable is called “king’s soup,” because molokhia means “vegetable of kings” in Arabic.

Ken Noguchi, a mountaineer who became the youngest climber to reach the summits of the tallest mountains on seven continents and who is well known for his cleanup activities on Mount Everest, once said, “Molokhia soup brings back to me the taste of my mom’s home cooking.” That made me wonder, “Why on earth molokhia soup?” When I learned that his mother is Egyptian and that he spent his childhood in Egypt, it explained everything. And somehow, this story

made me feel closer to this vegetable.

The scientific name for molokhia is *Corchorus olitorius*. It’s an annual plant of the family Tiliaceae. It is also known as “Jew’s mallow” and “Egyptian spinach,” among other names. It is called “Shimatsunaso” in Japanese. Shimatsunaso is also known as Koma in Bangladesh and is used to make jute fiber. Stems that have grown to their full height of about six feet are retted to collect fibers. The cylindrical seed of a fully grown Koma plant is four inches long and 3/16 inch thick. It’s too hard to cut through. Moreover, because the seeds contain steroids and other harmful substances, they cannot be used as food for either humans or animals. Therefore, the seeds of fully grown Koma plants are basically useless.

The facts about Koma seeds have somehow been exaggerated, and some say, as if it were true, that the seeds of molokhia are harmful and should not be eaten. However, the soft, small flowers and seeds of molokhia that is grown for human consumption have no negative effect on the body.

Pursuing a Molokhia Growing Opportunity in Southern California

I somehow assumed that the weather in Southern California would be good for molokhia, and I started growing it. However, my first attempts weren’t very successful.

So, I decided to visit a farmer in Okinawa, Japan, who has been growing molokhia for quite some time and to ask him questions.

I was surprised to find that molokhia was being grown in a greenhouse despite the hot weather of Okinawa and that the greenhouse even had a light fixture

similar to the one used to grow chrysanthemums. The farmer told me that it was also important to control humidity during the hot summer months, provide heating during the cold winter months, take measures to battle pests and diseases, to prevent the soil from becoming too acidic, and to maintain a minimum temperature of 70°F throughout the year.

According to the farmer, consumers expect molokhia growers in Okinawa to cultivate and sell the vegetable throughout the year, because Okinawa is located at the southernmost edge of Japan. However, even in the warm climate of Okinawa it is hard to grow molokhia during the winter, and the growers have a number of issues to resolve.

It seems that molokhia can be grown organically during, and only during, the summer without using difficult growing techniques.

In Southern California, I used compost and other fertilizers to improve the soil. By growing molokhia in a greenhouse even during the summer, I am now able to enjoy successful harvests.

Growth of Molokhia

Molokhia stops growing when the temperature falls below 70°F. Even if it gets cold only at night, the molokhia simply stops growing. It’s quite troublesome. So, to ensure reliable cultivation it is best to grow molokhia in a greenhouse where the temperature can be controlled. Around April, I begin to plant seeds in the sprouting room. I put about three seeds in each seed tray. The seeds begin to sprout in about three days. I thin the seedlings to leave the strongest one in each tray. The seedlings are allowed to grow to approximately 2 inches tall. I transplant





them to greenhouse soil in three weeks.

I decided to grow seedlings in seed trays because, if the seeds are sewn directly into the ground, the seedlings will be eaten by cabbage moth larvae as soon as they sprout. If the seedlings are transplanted to greenhouse soil when they are too small, they will be quickly eaten by cabbage moth larvae. This vegetable must taste really good to the bugs, too.

Because molokhia grown for food reaches a height of about three feet, its seedlings are planted about 20 inches apart when they are transplanted. Molokhia is first harvested in about six weeks. I begin by harvesting the leaves and stems by cutting the stems at a point about six inches from the stem tip (terminal bud). Lateral buds grow within another week. I harvest those, too. Then, I wait another week for more lateral buds to grow, and I harvest them. That way, I am able to harvest continuously. During the peak of the season, I can harvest as many as 15 to 25 buds from a single plant.

If I neglect harvesting and allow the terminal bud to grow, the plant will decide, based on the mechanism of “plant growth hormones,” that its terminal bud and lateral buds have grown sufficiently. Then, the plant will stop the growth of its leaves and stem and get ready to bloom. To improve quality and increase the harvest, I must continue harvesting the new buds.

In the northern hemisphere, daylight hours decrease after the summer solstice in late June. Molokhia is a short-day plant, so in autumn it starts to grow longer and gets

ready to bloom and produce seeds. To prevent that from happening, I must continue harvesting the terminal buds. Nevertheless, when September comes and daylight hours become so reduced that it’s noticeable even to humans, molokhia gives up on growing and gets ready to bloom and produce seeds before its terminal and lateral buds get long enough to harvest. If this happens, the harvest will drop drastically.

Artificial Light Culture

I started to use artificial light to maintain a good harvest even during the autumn months. Artificial light culture is a method of growing plants by making use of a plant characteristic that allows the leaves to sense the length of daylight hours and determine when the plant should produce flowers. Long-day plants get ready to produce flowers in the spring when daylight becomes longer, while short-day plants prepare to bloom in the autumn when daylight becomes shorter. If daylight hours are extended by using artificial light at night, long-day plants grow more quickly and short-day plants wait longer to bloom.

Artificial light culture is used for ornamental plants (whose growers want to produce flowers in every season), poinsettia which need to be grown mainly for the Christmas season, and Oba (green perilla), which growers don’t want to bloom all year, among others.

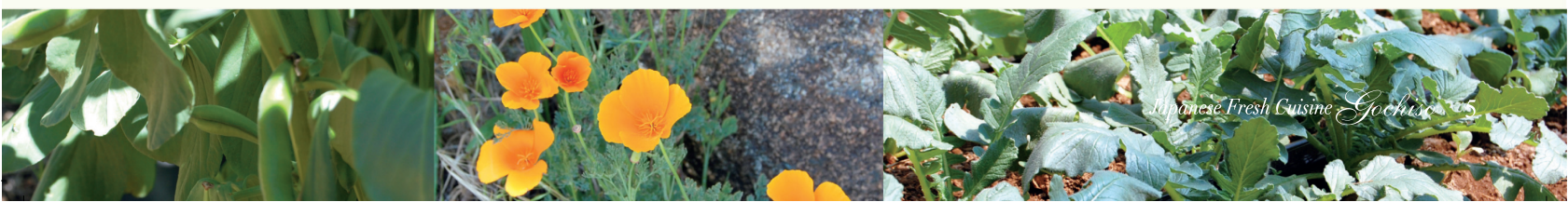
Because molokhia is a short-day plant that produces flowers in autumn, I start

using artificial light during darkness after the summer solstice, when daylight becomes shorter. I can delay the blooming of the flowers by using artificial light for two hours nightly from solstice until August and for four hours nightly in September. Still, once October arrives, the molokhia uses up its base fertilizer, and even in the greenhouse the temperature cannot be maintained at 70°F or above at night. That’s when molokhia begins to bloom, despite the wishes of its grower, and gets ready to produce the next generation. When that happens, growers have to accept that it’s really the end of the molokhia season.

Nutritive Value of Molokhia

Molokhia is first and foremost characterized by its sticky, slippery texture and outstanding nutritional value, which is comparable to that of medicinal plants. The sticky, slippery ingredient of molokhia is mucin, which consists of proteins and polysaccharides. Mucin helps with protein digestion and protects the stomach and intestines, thus preventing fatigue due to summer heat.

Molokhia is rich in a variety of vitamins and minerals. Its polyphenol antioxidant protects the body against harmful free radicals. Beta carotene and vitamin C help increase the body’s immune system. Vitamin B transforms body fat into energy. Calcium prevents osteoporosis. You are looking at a recipe for a nutritional supplement! Molokhia is a vegetable that truly showcases the amazing power of Mother Nature.



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Get a Lot of Energy
from Sprouts!

Kaiware Daikon

(radish sprouts)

regular agricultural fields. Still, there is no need to worry about the use of pesticides, so you only have to rinse these radish sprouts lightly before eating them.

Because plants generate huge amounts of energy during germination, sprouts are packed with naturally produced nutrients. They provide perfect nutrition. Kaiware daikon is rich in vitamins and minerals. In particular, it contains an amazing amount of beta carotene. Vitamin A helps mucous membranes function properly, stopping the advancement of the common cold and other viruses that might attach to cells lining the mucous membranes. These daikon sprouts are also rich in vitamin Bs (vitamins B1, B2, and B6) and vitamin C, which are ideal for relief from fatigue. These ingredients will help keep your skin healthy, too. Kaiware daikon can be eaten raw, so you can ingest all the soluble vitamin Bs. Radish sprouts are high in melatonin, vitamin C and K, iron and food fiber.

The pungency you feel on the tongue when eating kaiware daikon is unique to the daikon radish, which contains isothiocyanate. This ingredient provides detoxifying, anti-oxidant, and disinfecting effects. These effects are magnified the more you chew on kaiware. You can also expect this radish sprout to increase your appetite.

Some may have the impression that kaiware daikon is grown only in Japan,

but these radish sprouts are also cultivated in the United States. California sprout production facility, Fuji Natural Foods, where bean sprouts, kaiware daikon and other sprouts are grown. The grower told me that 30 years ago he looked for land with abundant, high-quality underground water, built a facility in Ontario, California, and began sprout production. Because kaiware daikon is grown hydroponically, there is no need for pesticides and chemical fertilizers. However, the growers must use great care to control insects and bacteria.

Flow of Kaiware Daikon Production



The daikon radish seeds delivered to the production facility are inspected.



Only seeds that have passed inspection are taken to the sterilization room.



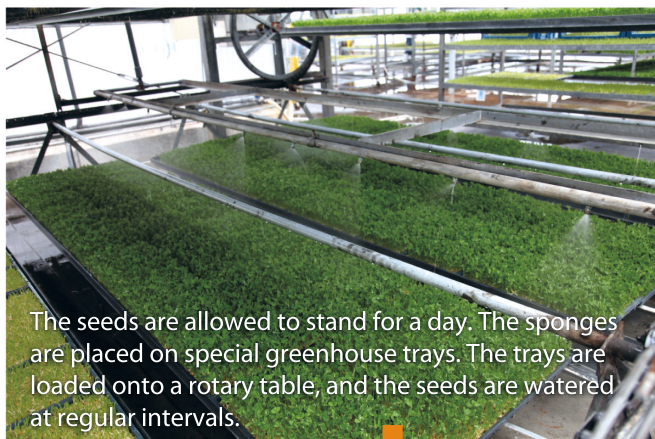
After sterilization, the seeds are washed with water three times and allowed to swell.



The seeds are planted in special sponges.

Kaiware daikon is the Japanese name for new shoots of the Japanese radish. Daikon (Japanese radish) has long been grown in Japan. It's believed that the Japanese began eating kaiware daikon in the Heian period(794–1185). Kaiware daikon used to be considered a luxury food because it was cultivated by hand planting each radish. These radish sprouts became more widely used after commercial hydroponics was successfully developed in the early 1960s. It quickly became a familiar vegetable, appearing on the dinner tables of general households. This vegetable has a unique pungent flavor and provides detoxifying and disinfecting effects. Kaiware daikon is essential in Japanese cuisine as a garnish to sashimi and an addition to makimono (sushi rolls) and salads.

Kaiware daikon led the way in the introduction of sprouts as a food ingredient. Daikon radish sprouts are usually grown hydroponically. Because the daikon radish seed uses only its own nutrients to germinate, kaiware daikon is grown without added chemicals. Kaiware daikon cannot be labeled as an organic vegetable because it isn't grown in



The seeds are allowed to stand for a day. The sponges are placed on special greenhouse trays. The trays are loaded onto a rotary table, and the seeds are watered at regular intervals.



The constant-temperature water, drawn from 100 feet underground, is used to control seasonal changes in temperature and humidity in the greenhouse.



The kaiware daikon grows in about six or seven days. The radish sprouts are then packaged at the facility for shipment.

Because kaiware daikon is shipped with its roots anchored in the sponge, it continues to grow even on the store shelf as long as it is exposed to light. Therefore, the radish sprouts are allowed to grow to about half the desired height before they're shipped to the East Coast or other distant locations. By the time the sprouts reach the store shelves, they have grown to just about the right height.

When you store kaiware daikon at home, you should keep it upright, because the radish sprouts always grow upward. If the sprout package is stored on its side, the sprouts will start to grow into a strange shape. You should store kaiware daikon in the original package in the refrigerator and consume it as soon as possible.

Tips

Choose kaiware daikon with darker green leaves and firm, crisp stems that extend straight out.

To use kaiware daikon, cut off and remove the sponge at the roots of the sprouts and rinse the seed shells from the roots with running water. Soak the sprouts in ice water to make them crisp, and then drain the water and wipe well. If the kaiware daikon you bought is rather short, you can leave it at normal temperature for a day. The sprouts will grow with surprising speed.



Double Radish Salad

Ingredients (Serves 2)

- 1 package kaiware daikon
- 2 oz. kiriboshi daikon (dried, shredded daikon radish)

<Salad Dressing>

- 3 to 4 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon kurozu (black vinegar)
- Pinch of salt and pepper



Cooking Directions

1. Allow kiriboshi daikon (dried radish) to reconstitute in water, squeeze the water from it and cut into bite-size lengths.
2. Wash kaiware daikon (radish sprouts) with water, and cut into bite-size lengths.
3. Blend all the salad dressing ingredients. Mix in the dried radish and radish sprouts with the dressing.



Temaki Zushi (Sushi Hand Roll) with Kaiware Daikon

Ingredients (Serves 4)

- 1 packages kaiware daikon
- Ikura (salmon roe), shrimp, sashimi and your choice of ingredients
- Nori (seaweed) for sushi hand roll (as much as needed)
- 4 servings sushi rice (vinegared rice)

Cooking Directions

Place the sushi meshi (vinegared rice) on top of the nori (seaweed), add plenty of kaiware daikon and your choice of other ingredients, and roll the nori. Add your choice of ingredients, including cheese and tamago-yaki (Japanese omelette), and enjoy!



Mozukusu

(vinegared mozuku seaweed)

Sunomono (general term for vinegared dishes) has the effect of easing fatigue and reviving the appetite. Sunomono with “mozuku” seaweed is known for its great nutritional value. Eating mozuku daily helps you maintain health and strength and prevent disease.

Consider Okinawa, which produces and consumes more mozuku than any other prefecture in Japan. It is well-known that the people of Okinawa have one of the longest life expectancies in the world.

In this issue we take a look at “mozukusu,” or vinegared mozuku seaweed, which is easy to prepare.

Origin

In shallow subtropical waters, wild hosomozuku seaweed grows by attaching itself to other seaweeds; hence the name “mozuku,” which literally means “attach to seaweed” in Japanese.

Okinawa is the primary producer of mozuku. Comprised of many mozuku farms, Okinawa currently accounts for 95% of all mozuku consumed in Japan,



No need for seasonings! Simply mix with mozukusu!

The following are some of the ingredients that go well with mozukusu. You can sprinkle sesame or shichimi (red pepper powder with seven kinds of spices) on top. It's so easy!

Please try with these ingredients:

Japanese cucumber, mitsuba (Japanese honewort), mioga (Japanese ginger), yuzu orange, oba (green perilla) leaves, nagaimo (Chinese yam), wakame seaweed, onion, ginger, okura, tomato, spinach, cabbage, shirasu (boiled whitebait), chirimen (boiled and dried whitebait), squid, octopus

of which 90% is produced by farming. Farmed mozuku has a slightly different texture than wild mozuku. However, it is harvested in the same sea rich in minerals and other nutrients: thus, farmed mozuku offers the same nutritional value as wild mozuku.

Full of nutrients

Mozukusu products sold in supermarkets are mixtures of mozuku with either sanbaizu (a mixture of roughly equal parts of vinegar, soy sauce and sugar or mirin), tosaizu (Tosa vinegar), kurozu (black vinegar), or other vinegar sauce packed in ready-to-eat plastic containers.

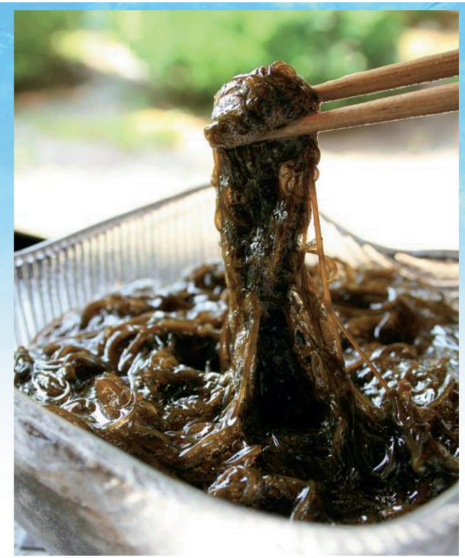
Like konbu (kelp), wakame seaweed, and other seaweeds, mozuku is also a rich source of dietary fiber. However, mozuku offers an additional health benefit that comes from the substance known to give all seaweeds their distinctive sliminess.

What makes mozuku slimy is a water-soluble dietary fiber (polysaccharide) called fucoidan. Mozuku contains more fucoidan than any other seaweed, and in recent years it has drawn attention as a health-promoting food with the power to prevent various diseases.



Mozuku somen noodles

Boil a bundle of somen noodles and rinse in ice water. Mix equal parts of mozukusu and ready-made somen dipping sauce (undiluted). Place noodles in the sauce mixture. Add shredded nagaimo and chopped Japanese green onion to taste.



Mozuku also contains ample amounts of fatty acids, carotenoids, amino acids, vitamins, calcium, iron, and other minerals beneficial to our health.

What is particularly beneficial about mozukusu is that it combines all the nutrients of mozuku with the health benefits of vinegar. Vinegar breaks down lactic acid, which is a known cause of fatigue, and promotes the digestion and absorption of food.

How to eat

You can eat mozuku as is, but a little arrangement can transform it into a delicious appetizer that accentuates your meal.



Mozuku salads – Just toss with vegetables!

Add chopped tomato, Japanese cucumber, oba (perilla) leaves, lettuce, and other vegetables of your choice and toss with mozukusu. Add a dash of sesame oil to finish.

Choicest, All-Natural Cooking Ingredient from Nijiya

“Fresh Tuna That Really Tastes Different”

It is one of the distinctive Japanese cultural traditions to eat fresh, raw fish as sashimi, and tuna is one of our favorite sashimi fish. People of all ages, from children to adults, love tuna. No one will object to giving tuna the status of “king of fish.” Tuna is a stable fixture not only on sashimi plates but also on sushi plates. Indeed, the Japanese cannot live without tuna. Thanks to the sushi boom, tuna has become a familiar fish for people around the world. Everyone’s favorite fish actually comes in many different varieties and from many different regions. Nijiya Market is working constantly to offer the tastiest tuna to our customers. In this issue, we will talk about our fresh tuna and the reason it tastes different from ordinary tuna.

Nijiya’s tuna is delicious!

Did you know that fresh tuna is air-freighted from various parts of the world and sold fresh in the U.S.? It’s true. The U.S. is one of those lucky countries where you can buy fresh tuna. Everyone knows that tuna is best eaten fresh! No frozen counterpart can beat fresh tuna in taste, color, or texture. You can find the choicest fresh tuna every day at Nijiya Market. We see more and more frozen tuna at supermarkets nowadays, but Nijiya stubbornly refuses to carry frozen tuna. Tuna is the star in our seafood section, and no frozen fish deserves this coveted title! At Nijiya, we know all our customers want to enjoy fresh, delicious tuna, which is why we travel all the way to Hawaii in search of tuna!

Auctioned in Hawaii

A majority of the tuna caught in Hawaii is auctioned. Just like those at Tsukiji, the Tokyo Metropolitan Central Wholesale Market, which is often shown on TV, fish auctions are held in Hawaii daily (except Sundays). Normally in fish

auctions, bidders bid the prices higher and the bidder that bids the highest price gets the fish. However, the opposite is true at Hawaii’s fish auctions. To be specific, the initial price is the highest and bidders bid the prices lower the bidder whose price holds gets the fish. Once an auction starts, the place becomes a battleground of professionals with discerning eyes. This tense, fast-paced, blink-your-eye-and-you-lose kind of battle is quite a spectacle. In the industry, tuna from Hawaii is known for its stable quality and is very popular. More than a few restaurants advertise their use of Hawaiian tuna. After witnessing real fish auctions, we realized that the reputation of Hawaiian tuna’s quality is maintained by the expert eyes of these professionals.



Purchased directly and shipped fresh!

Nijiya Market purchases tuna directly from Hawaii. By eliminating the middleman, we reduce transportation time to receive fresher fish. Tuna that has been auctioned in the morning is air-freighted overnight and delivered to Nijiya stores through dedicated channels. We also receive the latest information from our broker each day.

A trusting relationship between us and our suppliers is very important in ensuring the safety and security of the food we sell. Nijiya’s buyers unstintingly spend time traveling to producing regions and talking to suppliers in search of better products.

Tuna from Hawaii is very popular, and the fish that meets three important requirements of freshness, taste and color is mouth-watering to say the least! Nijiya strongly recommends Hawaiian tuna. Look for the “Hawaiian Tuna” label at our store today, and try this succulent tuna for yourself.

How people in Hawaii eat tuna

In Hawaii, tuna is called “ahi.” Ahi is a favorite fish for Hawaiians of all generations, from young to old. Poki is a popular Hawaiian dish. It’s a simple recipe where tuna cubes are tossed with seaweed, Hawaiian salt, sesame oil, etc. Hawaiians also love a glass of beer with poki.

Types of tuna

Tuna from Hawaii can be generally classified into two types: mebachi maguro and kihada maguro. The English name for mebachi maguro is “big-eye tuna.” This tuna has particularly large eyes, as well as darker skin than kihada maguro and a strong taste. Mebachi maguro is ideal for sashimi and zuke (marinated fish). Called “yellow-fin tuna” in English, kihada maguro got its name from the yellow color of its dorsal and caudal fins. The flesh is clear dark pink and is less fatty. This tuna is very delicious and has a uniquely refreshing taste.



Nutritional value

Tuna is very high in nutritional value. It’s a rich source of protein and contains lots of omega-3 highly saturated fatty acid, iron, potassium, and other minerals. The red flesh is high in protein and low in fat and calories, which makes tuna a perfect food for those who are trying to lose weight. Tuna is also loaded with vitamin B, pantothenic acid, and other nutrients growing children need.

Zuke Don (Marinated tuna bowl)

Ingredients (Serves 2)

2 servings of cooked rice, still steaming
2 servings of tuna (sashimi grade, red flesh)

<Marinade>

3 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons sake
1 tablespoon mirin
wasabi (to taste)

<Toppings as desired>

Nori (dried seaweed), white sesame, and chopped green onion (each to taste)

Cooking Directions

1. Put all the seasonings into a pot and bring to a boil on medium heat. Allow to cool.
2. Slice the tuna into sashimi-size pieces and marinate for 10 to 15 minutes in the seasoned soy sauce. Scoop steaming rice into a bowl and place the marinated tuna and nori on top. Sprinkle white sesame and chopped green onion as desired.



Simple Tuna Tataki (Seared Tuna)

Ingredients (Serves 4)

1 fillet of tuna (sashimi grade)
Chopped green onion (to taste)
1 tablespoon sesame oil

<Sauce>

3 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon mirin (Japanese sweet cooking rice wine)

Wasabi (to taste)

Cooking Directions

1. Put soy sauce and mirin into a heat-resistant bowl, and heat in a microwave for approx. 30 seconds. Let the mixture cool, and then add and dissolve wasabi (to taste).
2. Heat a frying pan and add the sesame oil. When the oil is hot, add the tuna and sear each side. When each side turns brown, immediately take the fish out of the pan and slice it into bite-size pieces.
3. Place the sliced tuna on a serving plate, sprinkle with a generous amount of chopped green onion, and pour the sauce on.



Cooking Directions

1. Cut the tuna into cubes, add <A>, and mix in the chopped green onion.
2. Peel the avocados. Cut them into cubes, and sprinkle with fresh lemon juice.
3. Place the cooked rice in a bowl and top with tuna and avocado. Add wasabi as desired.



Tuna & Pressed Barley Salad

Ingredients (Serves 4)

5oz. tuna (sashimi grade)
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
3oz. pressed barley
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 oz. mizuna (Japanese pot herb mustard)
2 oz. carrot
2 oz. celery
pine nuts (to taste)

<Dressing>

10 oba (perilla) leaves
4 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 teaspoon garlic (grated)
2 teaspoons plum vinegar
2 teaspoons apple vinegar
1/4 teaspoon salt
Pepper (to taste)

Cooking Directions

1. Salt and pepper the tuna.
2. Heat the olive oil in a pan and cook the tuna in until the surface is brown. Cut the tuna into 1-inch cubes and refrigerate.
3. Boil the pressed barley in salt water and drain off the excess water.
4. Cut mizuna into 2-inch lengths, and julienne the carrot and celery into the same length.
5. Mince the oba leaves and pound in a mortar (suribachi). Add the olive oil, salt, grated garlic, plum vinegar, apple vinegar and pepper, and mix well. (To save time, you can use an electric mixer instead of the suribachi)
6. Mix the pressed barley and seasoned oba in a bowl. Add the mizuna, carrot, and celery.
7. Spread onto a serving plate. Place tuna on top, and sprinkle with pine nuts.



Poki Don (Poki bowl)

Ingredients (Serves 4)

10 oz. tuna (sashimi grade, red flesh)
Cooked rice (as appropriate)
2 avocados
Chopped green onion (to taste)
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
Wasabi (grated green horse radish) (to taste)

<A>

1-1/2 tablespoons soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 tablespoon chili oil
1 tablespoon salad oil
1 tablespoon roasted sesame (white)



Story of Nori

(Dried Laver Seaweed)

How Delicious Nori Is Produced

Nori (dried laver seaweed) is an essential ingredient of Japanese food. It appears almost daily at the dinner table in the form of rice balls, sushi rolls, and seasoned powder sprinkled over rice. Dubbed the “sea vegetable,” nori is a healthy food containing vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, iron, and calcium, among other nutrients. When we examine the history of nori, we find in the Taiho Code (ancient Japanese law) that approximately 30 types of seaweed were presented to the Imperial Court as taxes in kind (cho) in 710. Among the various types of seaweed, nori was considered a delicacy. Currently, nori is produced by seaweed farming, which became popular during the Edo period. All Japanese know nori, but not many of us understand how it’s produced. So, we visited a U.S. nori factory that specializes in traditional nori making and learned many interesting stories.

Nori in Japan

Nori is farmed in Pacific coastal regions, particularly in the Setouchi and Kyushu regions of Japan. Total production of nori amounts to approximately 10 billion sheets a year. Nori is a black sheet of dried laver characterized by its crispness and seaweed flavor. It’s frequently used in Japanese food. Nori is available throughout the year, but the nori harvesting period is from November to March. This is when nori is “in season.” The nori harvested in December is called “shin-nori (new seaweed)” and is characterized by its softness and rich aroma.

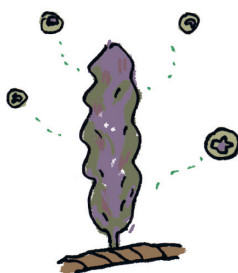
How Nori is Produced

In the Edo period, when nori farming began, farmers didn’t understand the lifecycle of their product and

depended solely on the experience and sixth sense of fishermen. Accordingly, production was unstable. In the Showa period, Dr. Kathleen Drew-Baker in the U.K. uncovered the lifecycle of nori and contributed to the development of reliable nori farming. As time went by, nori production became automated and is today a stable farming business.

Primary Processes

1. Carpospores are released from nori harvested during the previous year.

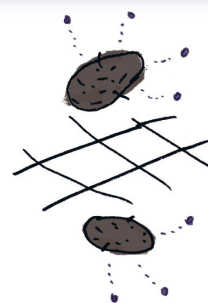


2. These carpospores are attached to oyster shells and allowed to germinate.



3. Carpospores then reach the filiform state and grow by dissolving calcareous material. As a result, the oyster shell becomes darker in color.

4. Conchosporos are produced within filiforms.



5. And start splitting as the water temperature drops. Eventually the spores are released, and attach to nets. (This is called seeding.)

6. Buds (seedlings) of nori are grown. Post farming or float farming is used, depending on the shape of the beach. Post farming: This method is used on a shallow beach, where the Ariake-Sea



method is used to produce soft nori. Float method: Nets are floated over the sea in the Seto-Inland-Sea method to produce hard nori.



7. Nets are spread. As the nori buds grow, the stack of 25 to 30 nets is gradually spread into reduced stacks of 20 nets, 15 nets, 10 nets, 5 nets, and so on, and eventually a series of single nets cover the surface of the water where the nori will be grown.



8. Harvesting

Once the nets are spread, nori grows to about 8 inches in size in half a month or so, and the harvesting period begins. Newly harvested nori commands a high value as Akime Hatsutsumi (the first harvest of the season). Generally, nori becomes harder in the second harvest, third harvest and so on.



9. Landed nori is placed in an agitation tank, washed in fresh water, and placed in a machine to remove any foreign matter.

10. The nori is thinly sliced and adjusted to the proper concentration with water, and then poured onto a nori-sudare (bamboo sheet) for shaping (into a size of 7.5 x 8.25 inches). The shaped nori is dewatered and dried, and then it's checked again by a foreign-matter detector. In recent years the entire process, from harvesting to drying, has become automated.



11. Nori is inspected and sorted into different grades.

Secondary processes

1. Wholesalers buy nori at auction. They then bake the nori carefully sheet by sheet on a factory line.

2. The baked nori sheets are processed according to the type of the final product and are then packaged. That nori eventually appears on our dinner tables.



SIMPLE QUESTIONS ABOUT NORI

Q: Nori varies significantly in price, depending on the type. How are the grades determined?

A: Nori is classified into 40 grades or so by professional inspectors based on the color, flavor, taste and shape, according to the harvesting period. In general, it is said that nori harvested earlier is softer, and that a year with many rainy days produces better nori.

Q: Does nori go bad? What are the visible signs?

A: Basically, nori doesn't go bad, but you shouldn't eat nori if it's purple in color or, has an odd smell or taste. You can boil down old nori with soy sauce. (Recipe: Tear the nori into pieces, mix in soy sauce and sake at a ratio of 4:1, and boil until the proper consistency is achieved.)

Q: How does one keep/store nori?

A: You don't want nori to become soggy, so be sure to put it in a sealable plastic bag with a zipper, etc., remove air, and keep it in the refrigerator. This way, nori will be kept in a good shape for a year or so. Of course, it is recommended that you eat nori as soon as possible once it's unpacked.

Q: Should we use different types of nori for different recipes?

A: Expensive nori doesn't necessarily taste better. For example, you should use soft nori harvested early for hand-rolled sushi and rice balls, which are eaten quickly. For sushi rolls and rice balls in lunch boxes that aren't eaten immediately, or for ramen noodle condiments of, etc., harder nori harvested late is more suitable.



Nori (Seaweed) Salad

Ingredients (Serves 4)

- 1 head of lettuce
- 2 sheets of baked nori
- Sesame oil (to taste)
- Soy sauce (to taste)



Cooking Directions:

1. Tear the lettuce by hand, wash and dry it.
2. Tear the nori by hand, over the lettuce, into appropriate sizes.
3. Drizzle sesame oil and soy sauce to taste, and then toss the lettuce, nori and seasonings.



Onigiri (rice balls)

Introducing a new “no hard-pressing” onigiri series wrapped in soft nori (dried laver seaweed)!

Using Nijiya’s organic rice, which retains its flavor even when eaten cold, these onigiri come with a variety of fillings. Of course, every piece is carefully made by hand.



Yukari

Tori-soboro

Unagi



Bakudan

Nozawana

Teriyaki chicken

Karaage-mayo



Takana

BBQ beef

Mentai-mayo

So that “our customers may enjoy as many choices as possible,” we’ve selected the best ingredients among the favorite accompaniments to onigiri, such as unagi (eel), mentai-mayo (cod roe with mayonnaise), takana (mustard greens), teriyaki chicken, BBQ beef, karaage-mayo (fried chicken with mayonnaise), tori-soboro (seasoned ground chicken), yukari

(plocamium), nozawana (turnip greens) and buta-kimchi (pork with kimchi). If you can’t pick just one, choose “Bakudan,” which contains a combination of four ingredients.

Bring onigiri with you on your next trip to the beach, the mountains, or a theme park. Or, with onigiri, you can enjoy a different lunch special every day!

Let's make onigiri

that stays soft and tasty even when eaten cold!



1. Put a sheet of onigiri nori (cut a whole nori sheet in half) on a cutting board, and create a mound of cooked rice (about 3.5 oz) over the top half of the nori.



2. Wet your fingers and shape the rice into a triangle with a gentle touch. You can also make it into an egg shape if desired.



3. Create a hole in the center of the rice with your fingers.



4. Fill the hole with your favorite ingredient.



5. Fold over the bottom half of the nori to cover the rice.



6. Fold the excess length of the nori over the rice at the top.



7. Fold nori below along both sides of the triangle.



8. Your onigiri is complete. Put it in a plastic bag or clear wrap.

Because you didn't squeeze hard to shape the rice, the nori may get slightly wet and wrinkled on the onigiri. But never mind how it looks. We guarantee your onigiri will never turn hard and will stay delicious even when eaten cold. Try it yourself!



Satsuma-imo (Sweet Potato)

Just as everyone has his or her likes and dislikes, the crops that are suitable for each farm vary depending on the condition of the fields and the climate of the area.

Rainbow Valley is an agricultural region producing potted flowers, cut flowers, plant nurseries, avocados, persimmons, grapes, etc. Its avocado farms are particularly abundant. Rainbow Valley is so well known for avocado farming that the local section of Freeway 15 is called the “Avocado Highway.” It is probably because the climate and soil in this region are perfect for avocados.

When starting a Japanese vegetable farm in the U.S., an important early step to take is to find the vegetables the soil and climate of the farm are suited for. “Satsuma-imo,” or sweet potato, is constantly rated high on the list of promising crops in many farming test cases.

Origins

Satsuma-imo originated in Mexico.

In 1947, the non-powered raft “Kon-Tiki,” made of reeds and other materials available in ancient times, sailed from South America to Polynesia over a period of 101 days as part of a scientific expedition. The result confirmed the existence of an ancient trade route from the Latin American continent to Asia. It is said that the satsuma-imo was brought to Asia along this route.

Another theory is that the satsuma-imo was brought back to Europe by Columbus after he discovered America in 1492, and then found its way to the Middle East, China, Asia and finally to Japan.

Whichever route it may have taken, the satsuma-imo was brought to Japan

from Southeast Asia and then spread to the Chugoku, Okinawa, Kagoshima and Kanto regions.

What validates this passage is the different name this potato is called in each region: “kara-imo” (Kara refers to Tang, or the Chinese dynasty) in Okinawa, “ryukyu-imo” (Ryukyu refers to Okinawa) or “kansho” in Kagoshima and “satsuma-imo” (Satsuma refers to Kagoshima) on the main island of Japan.

The farming of satsuma-imo began in the Kanto region during the Edo period. Satsuma-imo saved the Japanese people during many famines, and many excellent varieties were born from repeated cross-breeding. Looking back on the history of satsuma-imo, it’s easy to see why we Japanese have a special feeling toward this crop.

In the U.S., satsuma-imo farmers are concentrated in Livingston, California, an area blessed with the sandy soil suitable for growing satsuma-imo. The satsuma-imo, having traveled around the world, was improved through cross-breeding in Japan, and this cross-bred satsuma-imo from Japan was brought back to the American continent where it was first born.

Satsuma-imo (sweet potato) and yam are the major crops in Livingston. You would be surprised to know how much yam is consumed in the U.S.

Farming

Satsuma-imo farming starts in January, when seed potatoes are planted. Despite the warm climate of California, it is relatively cold in January. Accordingly, trenches are dug in a greenhouse for extra protection. The seedlings are planted side by side, and light soil mixed with sawdust is then placed on top.

If the ambient environment is kept at the appropriate humidity and temperature, the seed potatoes will sprout in about a month. Growth is slow, however, because the temperature is still low. To prevent freezing, satsuma-imo should never be exposed to subzero temperatures: ideally the temperature should be kept at 68°F or above.

In May, the sprouts of the seed potatoes reached a sufficient size, and the top vines are cut at around the sixth node from the tip to collect the seedlings to be planted in the field. When the top vines are trimmed, sprouts will grow from the sides in about a week, so these are also collected. Over a one-month period, approximately 200 seedlings can be collected for planting from just one seed potato.

Soil that drains well and contains a lot of potassium but less nitrogen is good for satsuma-imo fields. If the soil’s nitrogen content is about the same as that of a normal vegetable field, satsuma-imo vines will grow but will not yield any satsuma-imo. This is a phenomenon called “tsuruboke.” Some even say that the fewer nutrients the field has, the better it is for satsuma-imo farming.

In Japan, satsuma-imo is planted before the June rainy season. Ideally, the rainy season will set in several days after planting and it will start raining. Ample water and nitrogen fertilizer allow the leaves and stems to grow. Under the strong summer sun, the leaves synthesize starch which is then stored underground in the roots and used to grow the satsuma-imo. During the dry days of autumn, the satsuma-imo becomes dehydrated and its sugar content increases. When the leaves start to dry out, the harvesting season has arrived.





Because the climate in California is similar to that of Mexico, where the satsuma-imo was born, California is suitable for growing this crop. Unlike Japan, California has no rainy season and the absolute rainfalls are less. To compensate for this drawback, ample water is used during the planting period to provide the ideal conditions for growing satsuma-imo.

The first step in making a satsuma-imo field is to create ridges 12 inches in height. An appropriate amount of nitrogen fertilizer is then applied to grow satsuma-imo leaves and vines: specifically, two cups of chicken manure fermented for three years is sprinkled over every seedling.

Next, T-tapes are installed for irrigation, and black mulch is placed on top. Approximately two weeks after the start of watering, microorganisms in the organic fertilizer become active and spread throughout the soil. The preparation for planting is now complete.

Planting starts in earnest at the end of May through June. Seedlings are planted on the ridges at 12-inch intervals, to the depth of the third node, and watered liberally every day. If seedlings that were drooping become straight, planting has been successful. All that's needed is to give plenty of water for two months until the leaves grow, and each seedling will produce a total of five satsuma-imo: two at each node and another at the top.

Satsuma-imo leaves are a favorite of deer. Once the vines grow, deer will start eating them, little by little daily, from the edge of the field. Naturally, foraging animals don't stay and eat all their food in

one place. Probably because of the survival instinct, and to conserve the food supply, they travel from place to place eating various kinds of foods in small amounts.

If nothing is done, 30% of the vines may be destroyed. We were almost ready to give up and accept this as a sort of tax on organic farming, but one day when I saw deer eat the alfalfa we had planted to improve the soil, an idea suddenly came to me. The following year, we planted alfalfa seeds around the satsuma-imo farm. Do you know what happened? My prediction was correct: The deer ignored the satsuma-imo leaves and ate only the alfalfa.

The fourth round of weeding is finished in August, at which time the satsuma-imo vines have grown to cover the entire field. Now we can start reducing the water supply. Watering is gradually decreased from two hours a day to about two days a week. The multitude of satsuma-imo leaves synthesize starch from sunlight, carbon dioxide, and water through a process called carbon assimilation, which sends the starch to the roots in order to grow tasty satsuma-imo.

In the month of October, there is no watering for about four weeks, after which the satsuma-imo crop is harvested. The starch turns into sugar and is concentrated over the four-week period, making the satsuma-imo sweet and delicious.

As satsuma-imo is harvested, half-eaten roots may be found. Gophers may have had their meals here. Gophers are a natural enemy of farmers because of the many underground tunnels they create. However, the amount of damage our organic farm suffers due to gophers is only

2%, so they can be forgiven with a smile.

Two types of organic satsuma-imo are grown at Nijiya Farm. One is "kintoki-imo," and the other is "murasaki-imo." Both are grown in ways that allow the potatoes to demonstrate the characteristics of their respective varieties. We take pride in the rich, mellow-tasting satsuma-imo that only we produce.

Kintoki

Known as "Koukei-kintoki," this variety is mainly suited for yaki-imo (baked sweet potatoes). It's the same as the "Naruto-kintoki", which is the most popular variety in Japan. Its purple skin, tasty yellow flesh, just the right level of sweetness, fluffy texture, and distinctive aroma of the chlorogenic acid polyphenol (antioxidant), all make this the best satsuma-imo.

We are confident that the "Kintoki," grown at Nijiya Farm under conditions close to its birthplace, is the best satsuma-imo surpassing even that of those grown in Japan due to the climate, soil, agrochemical-free organic farming, sophisticated farming technology and so on.

Murasaki-imo

Known as "purple sweet," this variety resembles Kintoki on the outside, but its flesh has a beautiful purple color. This color comes from anthocyanin, which is a type of polyphenol rich in nutritional value. Murasaki-imo is very tasty when baked or steamed, and its beautiful natural purple color is also ideal for baking cookies and cakes.



A New Breed of Murasaki-imo Everyone Is Talking About: “Purple Sweet Road”

At Nijiya, you find satsuma-imo shipped directly from Nijiya Farm. As you cut into the deliciously purple skin of this satsuma-imo, you find that the meat is also a beautiful purple color. The vivid purple color is due to B carotene and anthocyanin pigment, which is a type of polyphenol. It sounds good for the body, doesn't it?

Called “Purple Sweet Road,” this particular murasaki-imo (meaning “purple potato” in Japanese) is a new breed of potato registered in 2006. A cross between Naruto-kintoki and murasaki-imo, Purple Sweet Road combines the taste of Kintoki and the nutritional value of murasaki-imo. The

pretty purple color is one secret of the popularity of Purple Sweet Road, but this potato is liked by many because it's delicious when baked, steamed, or cooked in various recipes.

The anthocyanin contained in Purple Sweet Road helps maintain our health. A type of polyphenol, anthocyanin is a purple pigment found in large quantities in blueberries, prunes, strawberries, etc. Anthocyanin is known for its powerful anti-oxidant action and is very effective in improving liver function and keeping us healthy. The anti-oxidant action of anthocyanin is even powerful enough to remove free radicals. In addition to anthocyanin, Purple Sweet Road contains



nutrients such as B carotene, vitamin B1, vitamin C, potassium, and magnesium. Because its skin contains beneficial polyphenols and is highly nutritious, we recommend that you eat our organic Purple Sweet Road with the skin.

At Nijiya Farm, the Purple Sweet Road begins shipment in the autumn. Get ready to be amused with the delicious Purple Sweet Road on your plate. It was grown right next to our popular organic satsuma-imo, “Kintoki”!

Recipes for Purple Sweet Road

Tips on cooking: To keep the potato sweet, avoid heating the potato quickly. Instead, bake or steam it over a long period so that the enzyme that converts starch into sugar fully demonstrates its function. If you're using a microwave, wrap the potato in a wet paper towel and cover with clear wrap (keep both sides open), and cook slowly on a low power setting. The cooked potato can be eaten as is, or it can be pureed and used in various recipes. However, if your recipe uses baking powder or other alkaline ingredient you must add fresh lemon juice or another acid to prevent the color from changing to green. Combine Purple Sweet Road with vinegar or mayonnaise to enjoy the natural purplish-pinkish color of this tasty potato.

Purple Sweet Road Yokan (sweet jelly)

Ingredients (Serves about 5)

Approx. 14 oz. Purple Sweet Road / 3/4 cup water / 1/2 teaspoon gelatin powder / 2 oz. sugar / Pinch of salt / 1 tablespoon milk

Cooking Directions

1. Peel the Purple Sweet Road by removing more skin than usual, and place in water for 20 minutes. Put the Purple Sweet Road in a pan, add just enough water to cover the potato, and cook until soft.
2. Discard water and puree the potato while still hot.
3. Put the water and gelatin powder in a pan, and mix them over medium heat until the powder dissolves. Boil the mixture for 1 minute, and then add the sugar, salt, and milk. Remove from heat and mix until the sugar dissolves.
4. Add the gelatin mixture to the potato little by little, and mix well.
5. Pour the mixture into a container moistened with water, and flatten the top surface.
6. Chill the container in a refrigerator. When the jelly is firm, remove it from the container and cut into pieces of the desired size.



Purple Sweet Road Soup

Ingredients (Serves 5 to 6)

7 oz. Purple Sweet Road
1 onion
1 oz. butter
Roasted garlic (to taste)
3/4 cup water
1 cup milk
1 teaspoon additive-free powder soup stock
3 tablespoons cooked rice (may be cold)



Cooking Directions

1. Peel the Purple Sweet Road and slice it into pieces 1/2 inch wide. Cut the onion in half and slice it against the grain.
2. Melt the butter in a pan. Cook the onion and Purple Sweet Road slowly over medium heat.
3. Add the roasted garlic and water and bring to a boil. Add the powder soup stock.
4. Add the rice, mix well and cook for about 3 minutes.
5. When the mixture reaches an appropriate thickness and consistency, add the milk while mixing, let cool, and process the mixture in a food processor or a mixer.
6. Transfer the mixture back into the pan and heat it over medium to low heat. Add salt and pepper to taste. Pour the soup into a cup and sprinkle with grated cheese to taste.



Wait. Here's one more tip!
"Pink Vichyssoise": Squeeze 1/2 lemon and add the juice to the soup. When the citric acid in lemon comes in contact with the anthocyanin in Purple Sweet Road, it's magic! Enjoy the beautiful pink color, and also the delicious taste. Serve chilled.



Purple Sweet Road Rice

Ingredients (Serves 4)

16oz. uncooked rice
4 oz. Purple Sweet Road
Salt and vinegar to taste

Cooking Directions

1. Wash the rice and soak in water.
2. Just before you start cooking the rice, add diced Purple Sweet Road, salt, and vinegar. (By adding salt and vinegar, the beautiful color of murasaki-imo will remain intact. A little salt also adds an accent to the taste.)
3. When the Purple Sweet Road rice is done, mix the potato well with the rice.

Purple Sweet Road Salad

Ingredients (Serves 4)

7 oz. Purple Sweet Road
Mayonnaise, salt and pepper (to taste)

Cooking Directions:

1. Cut the Purple Sweet Road into bite-size pieces and soak in water for a while. Heat in a microwave until soft.
2. While the potatoes are still hot, mix in mayonnaise, salt and pepper to taste. For an attractive finish, crush the potatoes slightly but allow them to keep their shape.



Purple Sweet Road Pudding

Ingredients (8 pudding molds)

7 oz. Purple Sweet Road
1-1/2 oz. sugar
2 eggs
1 oz. butter
3/4 cup milk
1/4 cup fresh cream

Cooking Directions

1. Cook the Purple Sweet Road until soft (by boiling or in a microwave on low heat setting).
2. Puree the potato while still hot. Put water in an ovenproof to approx. 1/2 inch in depth, place in the oven and preheat the oven to 320°F (160°C).
3. Mix the butter, sugar and beaten eggs into the pureed Purple Sweet Road. Mix in the milk and fresh cream.
4. Pour the mixture into a mold and bake for 30 minutes. (Garnish with caramel source or whipped cream as desired.)



Desserts Packed with Catechin

Catechin is found in green tea. This bitter ingredient is known to provide a variety of benefits to the body. Here are some delicious dessert recipes that will help you easily get the catechin you need.



Roll Cake with Green Tea Powder

Here's a recipe for the roll cake everyone loves!

Approx. 24 x 16 inch baking sheet	Cream Filling
6 eggs (large)	1 3/5 cup heavy whipping cream
4.2 oz. granulated sugar	1.4 oz. granulated sugar
3.5 oz. soft flour	2 teaspoons Catechin Green Tea Powder
1/5 cup olive oil	
1/6 cup milk	
1 tablespoon Catechin Green Tea Powder	

= Cooking Directions =

1. Put the eggs and sugar in a bowl, place the bowl in hot water and mix until the mixture reaches body temperature. Once the mixture is warmed, whip with a hand-held mixer or a whisk until it foams well.
2. Sift the flour and green tea powder together. Mix them gently into the sugar and egg mixture. Mix in the olive oil and milk.
3. Place parchment paper on the baking sheet. Pour the dough flat onto the pan and bake at 350°F in the oven for about eight minutes.
4. While the cake cools, mix whipping cream, sugar, and green tea powder in a bowl and with a hand-held mixer or a whisk until firm.
5. Spread the cream filling over the baked cake, and roll up the cake from back to front.

Green Tea Yokan (Sweet Jelly) and Fruit Salad

This healthy dessert is prepared with no animal products.

Ingredients (Serves about 6)

1 cup water
0.7 oz. granulated sugar
1/2 teaspoon kanten (agar) powder
1 teaspoon Catechin Green Tea Powder
Olive oil (to taste)

Fruit(s) of your choice, such as strawberries, pineapple, apples and kiwi
Herb(s) of your choice, such as mint and rosemary

= Cooking Directions =

1. Place sugar, kanten (agar) powder and green tea powder in a bowl, and mix lightly.
2. Add water a little bit at a time and work into the mixture until there are no lumps.
3. Pour the mixture into a pan, and bring to a boil while mixing.



4. Strain the mixture through a sieve. Pour it into a flat container and allow it to harden in the refrigerator.
5. Cut the hardened yokan jelly into cubes. Serve on a plate with your favorite fruits and herbs, and pour olive oil over the top just as you would pour salad dressing.



Our recommendation is the Chirancha catechin green tea powder from Kagoshima. This tea powder is made by grinding tea leaves into powder, because more catechin is found in the leaves. With this green tea powder, you can add a beautiful natural color to a variety of homemade desserts. You can, of course, make a cup of tea using the powder and enjoy its lush aroma and delicious flavor.



Marshmallows with Green Tea Powder

You can make your favorite flavored marshmallows. Try making them at home!

Ingredients (Serves about 5)

8.8 oz. sugar
 1/3 cup water
 2 tablespoons gelatin powder
 3 egg whites
 1 tablespoon Catechin Green Tea Powder
 3.5 oz. cornstarch
 2 teaspoons Catechin Green Tea Powder

= Cooking Directions =

1. Bloom the gelatin in ice water until it's completely soft, then squeeze the gelatin well to remove excess water.
2. Place sugar and water in a pan, and bring the mixture to a boil over high heat.
3. While doing the above, beat egg whites until they thicken slightly.
4. Keep the boiled mixture (in Step 2) on

the heat and wait until it cooks down well. Add the gelatin (prepared in Step 1) and mix well.

5. While quickly beating the egg whites (prepared in Step 3), mix and add the hot mixture (prepared in Step 4) slowly.
6. Beat the mixture (prepared in Step 5) until it's stiff; continue beating until it cools down.
7. Once the mixture (prepared in Step 6) cools down, pour it into a flat mold and leave it at room temperature until it hardens. Cut into desired shapes and sprinkle cornstarch and green tea powder over the marshmallows.

Yatsuhashi Sweets with Green Tea Powder

With this recipe, you can make these famous souvenir sweets at home.

Ingredients (Serves 4)

2 oz. Shiratamako (glutinous rice flour)
 2/5 cup water
 3 oz. Johakuto sugar
 3.5 oz. Joshinko (non-glutinous rice flour)
 2 teaspoons Catechin Green Tea Powder
 1 can tsubuan (chunky sweet bean paste) (ready-made)
 Catechin Green Tea Powder (to dust the surface)
 Katakuriko starch (to dust the surface)

= Cooking Directions =

1. Add the water to Shiratamako, and work into the flour until there are no lumps. Add Joshinko, Johakuto sugar, and green tea powder.
2. Place a cake mold or other container in a steamer, and place a damp cloth over the container. Pour the dough into the container and steam over high heat for approximately 20 minutes.
3. Remove the steamed dough in the cloth and knead until it holds together. Handle with care, because the dough is very hot.
4. Combine the green tea powder and starch, and spread the mixture on a countertop to dust the surface of the dough. Place the dough on top of the powder mixture and roll it into a thin sheet with a pastry roller. Cut the sheet into approximately 3 x 3 inch squares.
5. Roll the tsubuan into small balls. Place a ball on top of each square of dough and wrap.



Panna Cotta with Green Tea Powder

You can make this matcha (finely milled green tea) flavored panna cotta easily at home.



Ingredients (Serves about 5)

4/5 cup heavy whipping cream
 1/3 cup milk
 1.4 oz. granulated sugar
 1 teaspoon gelatin powder
 1 teaspoon Catechin Green Tea Powder

= Cooking Directions =

1. Bloom the gelatin in ice water until it's completely soft, then squeeze the gelatin well to remove excess water.
2. Place all the other ingredients in a pan and bring to a boil. Add the gelatin and mix well.
3. Strain the mixture, and let it cool until you can handle it. Pour into the desired mold and allow it to harden in the refrigerator.



Kei Hasegawa

A blog called "K's Kitchen in California" features a variety of sweets and desserts that can be easily made at home. The blog is being updated for a new project. The author is currently making her mark as a pastry chef at a restaurant in Los Angeles.

Nijiya's Carefully Selected, Wild Harvested Seafood: Shirasu and Chirimen (Boiled and Dried Whitebait)

Shirasu (boiled whitebait) is a must ingredient in Japanese food because the calcium and protein in small fish benefit our bodies, which require 600 to 800 mg of calcium every day.

You can enjoy shirasu just by combining it with daikon oroshi (grated Japanese radish) over rice! Wild harvested shirasu is eaten by adults and children alike throughout the year. It's an essential part of our daily diet, and it's everyone's favorite.

What's the Difference Between Shirasu and Chirimen?

Shirasu refers to small whitefish, specifically boiled young katakuchi-iwashi (Japanese anchovy), ma-iwashi (Japanese sardine) and urume-iwashi (round herring). Dried shirasu is called "chirimen" because it resembles the chirimen crepe fabric made by a traditional Japanese tie-dye method.

Shirasu is given different names in different parts of Japan. It is called "kama-age" and "shirasu-boshi" in the Kanto region of Japan and "chirimen-jako" in the Kansai region.

Nijiya's Commitment

Nijiya Market is committed to ensuring the quality of the shirasu and chirimen (boiled and dried whitebait) sold in our stores. We value the unique umami (savoriness) and flavor of shirasu, and use only premium whitebait harvested in Japan. Nijiya's healthful shirasu and chirimen are prepared without the use of additives or other chemical ingredients. We recommend "Kama-age Shirasu," which is available at our stores. Kama-age Shirasu is made by bringing freshly harvested whitebait to a boil and quickly draining it. It tastes great with ponzu (citrus based, seasoned soy sauce). You have to try it!

Eat Shirasu and Be Healthy!

It has been reported that the only nutrition the average Japanese is lacking today is calcium. Nijiya's shirasu and chirimen (boiled and dried whitebait) are wild harvested seafoods rich in calcium.

Eating shirasu with vinegar, umeboshi (pickled plum), or citrus fruit helps transform calcium into a form that can be readily absorbed by the body. Taking



Shirasu (boiled whitebait)



Chirimen (dried whitebait)

calcium with vitamin D and K encourages calcium digestion.

Shirasu is rich in calcium and vitamin D, so use ingredients containing vitamin K, such as spinach, komatsuna (Japanese mustard spinach), mizuna (Japanese potherb mustard), shungiku (chrysanthemum leaves), daikon (Japanese radish) and natto (fermented soybeans) to prepare a delicious shirasu dish.

Shirasu is highly nutritious and contains a lot more nutrition than one might expect from such a small fish. It provides an excellent solution to calcium deficiency. Shirasu also contains a lot of DHA (docosahexaenoic acid), so it softens the brain's cell membranes and effectively boosts one's learning ability. Eating delicious shirasu every day will make stronger bones and a healthy body, and it will make your brain work better. Why not start eating shirasu today?

Kama-age Shirasu Don

(rice bowl with boiled whitebait topping)

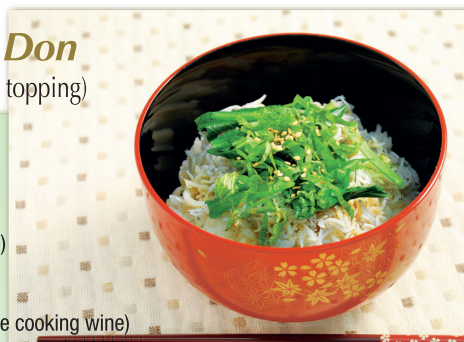
Ingredients (for one bowl)

1 bowl of hot rice (approx. 7 oz.)
Kama-age Shirasu (as needed)
1 oba (green perilla) leaf (Juliened)
Pinch of white sesame seeds
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon mirin (sweet Japanese cooking wine)

Spinach or komatsuna (Japanese mustard spinach) ohitashi (boiled and seasoned with soy sauce and other ingredients) (small portion)

Cooking Directions:

1. Mix the soy sauce and mirin.
2. Place the hot rice in a bowl, and put a hearty serving of Kama-age Shirasu on top.
3. Drizzle the sauce (prepared in Step 1) over the rice (prepared in Step 2), top with the ohitashi, oba and white sesame seeds, and serve.



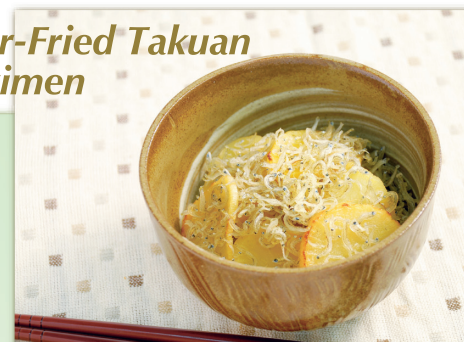
Quick Stir-Fried Takuan with Chirimen

Ingredients (Serves 1)

0.3 oz. chirimen (dried whitebait)
Takuan (pickled Japanese radish), thinly sliced (as needed)
1 teaspoon sesame oil

Cooking Directions:

1. Heat sesame oil in a fry pan, add slices of takuan, and quickly stir fry.
2. Add chirimen-jako (dried whitebait) and mix while stir frying.



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Colorful Chirashizushi

Chirashizushi (vinegared rice with pieces of raw fish and other ingredients arranged on top) is a perfect spring time dish. Vinegar is good for your body, and the colorful ingredient toppings make this a feast for the eyes.

About Chirashizushi

People associate eating chirashizushi with celebratory occasions. For example, chirashizushi is a dish we traditionally eat on Hinamatsuri (Dolls' Festival). There are various theories about the relationship of chirashizushi to Hinamatsuri, but none of them has been proved. One theory is that chirashizushi was created as a healthy dish for girls by placing a variety of nutritious ingredients over rice.

Basic Sushi Rice

Ingredients (Serves 4)

- 2-2/5 cups rice
- 2-2/5 cups water
- 3 tablespoons sake
- 3 x 2 inches konbu (dried kelp)

<Vinegar mixture>

- 5 tablespoons vinegar
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt

Cooking Directions

1. Wash rice and soak in a pot in the specified amount of water for 30 minutes to an hour.
2. Roughly wipe the surface of the konbu and add it, together with sake, to the pot containing the rice and water. Heat the pot and, just before the water starts to boil, remove the konbu. Continue cooking the rice as usual.
3. Combine the ingredients for the vinegar mixture in a small bowl.
4. When rice is done, let sit for about 5 minutes, and then transfer the rice into a large container. Pour vinegar mixture over the rice.
5. Use a rice scoop (shamoji) to mix the rice well. When the vinegar is mixed evenly into the rice, cool the rice by fanning it with a Japanese fan (uchiwa).
6. Mix the rice gently by moving the scoop in a folding motion so that air contacts with the rice grains. Cool until rice no longer emits steam.

Tips

- If you don't proceed to the sushi rice recipes immediately, cover the rice with a wet towel to keep it from drying.
- Sushi rice is best eaten around 2 hours after it's made.
- For greater convenience, use an electric fan to cool the rice.

Strictly speaking, chirashizushi should have ingredients of four colors: blue, red, white and black. The four colors represent the Four Godly Creatures, namely, the Blue Dragon, the Red Chinese Phoenix, the White Tiger, and the Black Tortoise (or Black Warrior). The Four Godly Creatures are believed to govern the four corners of the world. The Blue Dragon looks after the East and Spring,



• • • • • An easy dish with simple ingredients

• • • • • Salmon Chirashi

• • • • • Ingredients (Serves 4)

• • • • • Sushi rice to serve 4

• • • • • <Ingredient to be mixed with rice>

- 3 Japanese cucumbers
- A pinch of salt
- <Salmon flakes>
- 3 slices of salmon fillet
- 3 tablespoons mirin (Japanese sweet cooking rice wine)
- 2 tablespoons sake
- A pinch of salt

• • • • • <Toppings>

- A pinch of black sesame seeds
- 5 oba (green perilla) leaves



Seafood Chirashi
Assorted fresh seafood on the sushi rice.

the Red Chinese Phoenix is in charge of the South and Summer, the White Tiger controls the West and Autumn, and the Black Tortoise is the God of the North and Winter.

Adjusting the Taste of Sushi Rice

Adjust the balance of vinegar and sugar to taste. Generally, when making sushi with raw fish, you should add a little less sugar.

Older recipes often instruct you to first "wash the rice and place it on a bamboo sieve (or strainer)." This is because in olden times rice was refined and stored in different ways and therefore had a hard surface. That's why rice had to be washed and then dried on a bamboo sieve so that the surface would crack and more water would be absorbed. This is not necessary with today's rice.



Cooking Directions

1. Thinly slice the cucumbers. Sprinkle with salt and let stand for a while.
2. Remove the skin from salmon and cook in a pan with mirin, sake and salt. Use a rice scoop to break the fish into flakes as you cook.
3. Squeeze the cucumbers to drain the water. Mix with sushi rice, salmon flakes and sesame seeds.
4. Julienne oba leaves and sprinkle them over the rice mixture.



Enjoy spring to the fullest!

Chirashizushi with Spring Vegetables

Ingredients (Serves 4)

Sushi rice to serve 4

<Ingredient to be mixed with rice>

1 sheet of fried bean curd

<Seasonings>

1 tablespoon sake

2 tablespoons mirin (Japanese sweet cooking rice wine)

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 small boiled bamboo shoot

2/5 cup uncooked green peas

2/5 cup uncooked broad (fava) beans

3.5 oz. boiled sansai (mountain vegetables)

<Toppings>

1/2 bunch mitsuba (Japanese honewort)

0.7 oz. Sakura no shio zuke (salt-pickled cherry flowers)

1/4 cup mominori (roasted shredded seaweed)

Cooking Directions

1. Boil the fried bean curd to remove the oil, slice it thinly, and cook with the sake, mirin and soy sauce until no liquid remains. Let dry.

2. Oil the beans in salt water. Soak the cherry flowers in lukewarm water to remove salt. Slice bamboo shoot and mitsuba (fresh) into bite-size pieces, and drain the mountain vegetables.

3. Mix the sushi rice with fried bean curd slices. Transfer the rice mixture onto a serving plate, and garnish with the toppings.

A staple sushi dish and a home-cooked delicacy, this requires careful preparation but is well worth it!

Gomoku-chirashi

Ingredients (Serves 4)

Sushi rice to serve 4

<Ingredients to be mixed with rice>

4 dried shiitake mushrooms

1/2 burdock

1 carrot

<Seasonings>

2/5 cup dashi soup stock

1 tablespoon sake

1 tablespoon mirin (Japanese sweet cooking rice wine)

1 tablespoon soy sauce

<Toppings>

5.3 oz. shrimp

0.7 oz. snow peas

3.5 oz. lotus root

<Sweet vinegar mixture>

1/5 cup water

1 tablespoon vinegar

1 teaspoon sugar

1 teaspoon mirin

<Thin strips of egg>

1/2 teaspoon corn starch

1/2 tablespoon water

2 eggs

1 teaspoon sugar

Salt (to taste)

Vegetable oil (as needed)

Cooking Directions

To prepare the ingredients to be mixed with rice

1. Soak the dried shiitake mushrooms in lukewarm water, whittle the burdock and soak in vinegar water (add the desired amount of vinegar other than the measured vinegar listed above), and slice the carrot thinly.

2. Julienne the shiitake mushrooms and put them into a pot with the soaking water, add the drained burdock and carrot pieces and seasonings, and boil until no liquid remains.



To prepare the toppings

1. De-shell and de-vein the shrimps, and boil them in salted water (add the desired amount of salt other than the measured salt listed above). If the shrimps are too big, cut them into halves.

2. Boil the snow peas in salted water (add the desired amount of salt other than the measured salt listed above) and slice diagonally.

3. Slice the lotus roots into thin crescent pieces. Boil in salted water (add the desired amount of salt other than the measured salt listed above), and soak in the warmed sweet vinegar mixture.

To prepare the eggs

1. Mix the starch, sugar, and salt in a bowl. Add water to dissolve all the ingredients.

2. Add eggs and beat well.

3. Coat a frying pan with a thin layer of oil and make an egg crepe. Let it cool, and slice into thin strips.

Finish

Mix shiitake mushrooms, burdock and carrot with the sushi rice. Transfer the rice mixture onto a serving plate. Cover with the thin strips of egg, and garnish with the toppings.

A heavenly combination of sauce and sushi rice

Eel & Squid Chirashi



Ingredients (Serves 4)

Sushi rice to serve 4

<Ingredients to be mixed with rice>

1 piece grilled eel

1 tablespoon sake

1 slice sashimi-grade squid

3 oba (green perilla) leaves

1 Japanese cucumber

1 oz. tobiko (flying fish roe)

1 pack kaiware (radish sprouts)

Sliced nori (dried seaweed) (as needed)

<Eel sauce>

3 tablespoons soy sauce

3 tablespoons mirin (Japanese sweet cooking rice wine)

2 tablespoons sugar

Cooking Directions

1. Boil the eel sauce ingredients in a pan, and let cool.

2. Pour sake over eel. Reheat in a broiler, oven, or on a fish grill, etc., and cut into bite-size pieces.

3. Score the sashimi-grade squid. Turn it over and put oba leaves on top. Roll the squid into a cylinder, and cut into thin slices.

4. Julienne the cucumber.

5. Put sushi rice on a serving plate. Sprinkle with cucumber, tobiko, squid, and eel. Pour sauce over the chirashi rice, and garnish with kaiware and nori.



Let's Cook **Kakiage** with **Seasonal Vegetables!**



The real thrill of kakiage (Japanese fritter, a type of tempura) is that crunchy sensation when you bite into the hot, right-out-of-the-oven fritter filled with vegetables and seafood.

The appeal of kakiage is that you can combine a variety of ingredients and deep fry them together. The tasty morsels entertain you with their crusty texture, appetizing aroma, and delicious flavor. The term “kakiage” is said to have come from kakimazeru and ageru, which respectively mean “mix together” and “deep fry” in Japanese. People in the olden times must have enjoyed making kakiage by mixing together ingredients and batter. The basic process of making kakiage is to shape a mixture of ingredients and batter into small pieces and then deep fry them in oil. It is said that a tempura chef has passed the test once he or she learns to make kakiage well, because it is extremely difficult to perfectly adjust the amount and consistency of the batter, the oil temperature, deep-frying time, etc., as well as to choose the right ingredients and skillfully combine them with the batter. Normally it requires a high level of skill and many years of experience to make proper kakiage.

In this issue we'll teach you the tips for making kakiage to help you become an instant tempura chef.

You can make various shapes of kakiage by making the batter and ingredient mixture thick or thin. (Thick pieces are generally more difficult to fry.) The three key points are as follows:

- Bind the ingredients together using the batter.
- Be sure the center is cooked properly, without burning the outside.
- Deep fry to a crunchy texture by keeping an appropriate amount of moisture in the batter.

The batter at the center doesn't directly touch the oil and is only steamed. To facilitate this steaming process, add slightly more egg than you normally would when making batter so that the batter becomes spongy. When egg breaks down due to heat, it generates carbonic acid gas that opens holes in the batter to create a texture like that of a steamed cake. Don't overheat the oil, because if the temperature is too high the batter won't stay together. It will scatter easily and the dispersed pieces will quickly harden. Deep fry the batter slowly at a temperature of about 160°C (320°F).

Now, let's try making thick pieces of kakiage that are generally difficult to make, as mentioned above. You can use any leftover ingredients you have at home, as well as any pantry staples. So, let's get started!

Basic kakiage

Ingredients (Serves 4)

- Basic batter
- 3-1/2 oz. tempura flour
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup ice water
- 3 oz. tempura flour (for coating vegetables)
- ?Basic ingredients
- 14 oz. onion
- 3 oz. carrot
- 1 oz. sakuraebi (small pink shrimp)

Cooking Directions

1. Slice the onion into pieces 0.2 inch wide and the carrot into pieces 0.1 inch wide.
2. Place the water and egg in a bowl and mix well, and then add the 3-1/2oz. tempura flour and mix only roughly. The batter can be slightly lumpy.
3. Put the vegetables into a large bowl and mix with the 3 oz. of flour.
4. Pour the batter over the vegetables and mix well.
5. Heat the oil to 160 °C (320°F) and put a large ladle (otama) into the oil to heat the ladle. (Note: Be careful to avoid being burned.) Take a scoop of the battered vegetables and shape it roughly in the ladle. Sprinkle sakuraebi on top.
6. Place the ladle in the oil so that all the ingredients are covered with the oil, and wait for a while until the shaped fritter separates from the ladle and floats in the oil.
7. Deep fry your kakiage for Approximately 2 minutes on one side.
8. Turn it over and continue to fry for another 30 seconds or so.
9. Drain the excess oil and place the kakiage on a serving plate.



You can change the topping to enjoy many different types of kakiage.
Why not master "basic kakiage" and then try creating your original kakiage variations?

Variation of Kakiage



Squid



Scallop



Asparagus kakiage



Shirasu (whitebait)



Carrot leaves



Mountain vegetables



Fava beans



Snap-pea



Bamboo shoot



Fresh Water Eel

Ingredients (Serves 4)

- 14 oz. onion
- 3 oz. carrot
- 2 oz. asparagus
- 4 servings of basic batter

Cooking Directions

1. Slice the onion into pieces 0.2 inch wide and the carrot into pieces 0.1 inch wide. Peel a one-third portion from the bottom of each asparagus. Slice asparagus diagonally as thinly as possible and then drain.
2. Make the basic batter. (Refer to the "Basic kakiage" recipe above.)
3. Place the vegetables (except for a half portion of the asparagus to be kept for topping) in a large bowl and mix with tempura flour until their surface is coated with the flour.
4. Pour the batter over the asparagus and mix well.
5. Take a scoop of the battered asparagus ingredients with the ladle as in making basic kakiage, and sprinkle the sliced asparagus on top.

Japanese Aromatic Vegetable

Oba green perilla

The food you prepare turns out differently when you use aromatic vegetables. The aromas of aromatic vegetables boost your appetite and help you enjoy the taste of food. Aromatic vegetables often play supporting roles as condiments, but their presence cannot be overlooked. In fact, the nutrition these vegetables provide is as powerful as that of other vegetables used as main ingredients. The world of cooking is experiencing a boom in herbs. To the Japanese, the most familiar herb is Oba (green perilla), a plant of the mint family. Oba is known as one of the Japanese aromatic vegetables. It has a more elegant aroma and a more subtle flavor than Western herbs, and is an essential ingredient in Japanese cooking. Oba goes perfectly with sashimi and sushi.

Shiso (perilla)

Shiso (perilla) is a member of the mint family, which also includes herbs such as basil, mint, rosemary, sage, marjoram, oregano, thyme and lemon balm.

There are several varieties of Shiso: Akajiso (murasaki-shiso, or purple red perilla), Aojiso (green perilla), and Hojiso (ear shiso). Akajiso is often used in umeboshi (pickled plum) and sports drinks.

Aojiso is used in a number of Japanese dishes and as a garnish for sashimi. It is also called Oba. Hojiso refers to the flower buds of Akajiso and is also used as a sashimi garnish.

The outstanding nutritional value of Shiso has been studied in recent years, and Shiso is now used in many medicated energy drinks and health foods. The food industry has developed popular products such as Aojiso salad dressing and Yukari furikake (a condiment for rice).

Oba (green perilla)

The name "Oba" is used only in reference to Aojiso (green perilla). "Oba" was originally a product name used when shipping Aojiso but is now accepted as the generic name.

Oba has a refreshing flavor and unique fragrance. Thanks to its excellent aroma and color, Oba is well known not just as a garnish but also as a healthful food. It's enjoyed in a variety of ways on dinner tables in many homes. Oba plays an outstanding supporting role in Japanese cuisine, as a condiment to Somen noodles, a garnish for sashimi, and as a tempura



~ TIPS ~

Wipe dry each Oba leaf after washing to ensure easy separation of sheds. When shredding Oba (green perilla), it's important to know the direction in which to do it. Place the Oba with the stem horizontal to you, and roll up the leaf and shred.

ingredient.

Oba offers excellent nutrition and has long been valued for its medicinal benefits. Rich in carotene, calcium, vitamin A, vitamin B2, vitamin C and minerals, Oba is a nutritionally perfect vegetable. The main reasons Oba is used as a garnish for sashimi are its disinfectant and antiseptic properties as well as its pleasant aroma. That unique aroma helps boost the appetite because the perillaldehyde contained in Oba promotes the secretion of gastric juice. Perillaldehyde also has an antibacterial effect. So Oba is served with sashimi to help prevent food poisoning. Moreover, beta carotene is believed to be better absorbed when taken with oil. Be creative, and enjoy Oba not just as a condiment but also by deep frying and stir frying it.

Deep-Fried, Ground Chicken Wrapped in Oba



Ingredients (Serves 4)

14 oz. ground chicken, 15 to 20 Oba leaves, 1 clove chopped ginger
1/2 stalk chopped naganegi (Japanese leek)
Pinch of salt and pepper, Pinch of katakuriko (potato starch)
Daikon oroshi (grated Japanese radish) (to taste)
Ponzu (citrus based, seasoned soy sauce) (to taste)

Cooking Directions :

1. Place the ground chicken, chopped ginger, and chopped naganegi in a bowl. Add salt and pepper and mix well.
2. Spread katakuriko on the back of each Oba leaf, add a spoonful of the ground chicken mixture and wrap.
3. Deep fry well over medium heat. Finally, deep fry over high heat to crispy perfection. Serve with daikon oroshi (grated Japanese radish) and ponzu.

Oba Miso (green perilla in bean paste)



Ingredients (Serves 4)

60 Oba leaves
5 tablespoons miso (soybean paste)
3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons mirin (sweet Japanese cooking wine)

Cooking Directions :

1. Chop the Oba into large chunks.
 2. Put miso, sugar, and mirin in a pan and mix while heating the pan.
 3. Add the Oba and cook until the moisture evaporates.
- * The Oba leaves will stick together at first. But as the water evaporates, the Oba will blend evenly with the miso.

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Nijiya's "Pork-kun"

The pork sold by Nijiya Market is from "duBreton" and nicknamed "Pork-kun." You may have noticed this name.

"Breton" is, in a way, the family name of our new line of pork. In 1944, Napoleon and Adrienne Breton, who had managed a farm in Quebec, Canada, decided to establish a business that would meet their vision and strong passion for farming. After years of hard work, Aliments Breton Foods Canada, the company they created, gained an important position in the agrifoods industry in Quebec. Thus "duBreton Pork" was born from the untiring efforts of this husband-and-wife team.

Why is duBreton Pork Different?

Pork-kun is from pigs raised in natural surroundings in Canada with all-natural feeds, including corn, soybean meal, wheat, gluten flour, beans, extruded soybeans and other grains.

Antibiotics and other chemicals

aren't used, and the entire production process from breeding and feeding to meat processing is monitored under strict control measures to ensure safe, healthy pigs.

Additionally, these pigs are regularly examined by veterinarians and are serum-tested every month to ensure that only certified Pork-kun meat is delivered to the consumer.

Eating healthy food in a free, open environment and living a healthy life the pigs behind Pork-kun live a life that would be ideal even for us humans. No wonder the meat is juicy, tender and of high quality. You should try it for yourself!

The Amazing Power of Pork-kun!

Did you know that Pork-kun is a treasure chest of vitamins? It contains several times more vitamin E₁—a source of stamina—than other meat products. The vitamin E₁ in Pork-kun doesn't break down easily when heated and is



absorbed effectively into our bodies. Pork-kun also contains vitamin B₂, which promotes growth; potassium, phosphorous, iodine and other minerals that assist the metabolism; and vitamin E, which is known as an agent that helps keep us young. Don't you like Pork-kun already? It's rich in various nutrients that benefit people of all ages, from children to the elderly.

Nijiya's Recipe Recommendation

Have you ever stood in a supermarket and wondered which part of the pig this cut came from? Recipes, taste and even nutritional value vary, depending on the cut. Nijiya carries the following cuts of pork:

• Pork Tenderloin

This is a popular cut of pork. Only a small portion of the pig qualifies as pork tenderloin, and the tender meat is very delicious. Pork tenderloin is known for its fine texture, leanness, and light taste. This part of pork is rich in vitamin B₁, which is known for its skin-beautifying effects. Pork tenderloin is best eaten as pork cutlet or sautéed.

• Pork Loin

This cut of pork is marbled with fat, and a coarse network of fat, and is characterized by a rich, flavorful taste. The meat is tender, and because the flavor is concentrated in the fat, the more you chew the tastier it becomes. This cut contains a lot of niacin, vitamin B₁, vitamin B₆, etc., so eating pork loin helps promote your metabolism and prevents anemia, etc. Recommended recipes

include pork cutlet, BBQ pork and pork loin ham. You're sure to like its taste, which is different from that of pork tenderloin.

• Pork Loin, thin-sliced

You can enjoy the same pork loin in different ways by slicing it thinly. Because the meat is tender, thin-sliced pork loin is ideal for sautéing with ginger and soy sauce! Thin-sliced pork loin is also great for a family "shabu-shabu" party.

• Pork Belly

This cut of pork comes from the torso of the pig after the pork loin is removed, on the flank side. Pork belly is very fatty and is perfect for kakuni (stewed pork cubes). The fat in this cut of pork is full of delicious flavor. It's also a rich source of vitamin B₁, B₆ and potassium.

You'll love versatile Pork-kun.

Discover delicious Pork-kun recipes!

Everyone's Favorite Dish! Pork Cutlet

Ingredients (Serves 2)

7.8 oz. pork tenderloin
Salt and pepper (to taste)
1 tablespoon flour
1 egg
Bread crumbs (as needed)
Oil (for deep frying) (as needed)

Cooking Directions:

1. Slice pork to desired thickness, and pierce each piece with a fork several times.
2. Apply salt and pepper to both sides of the pork; coat with flour, beaten egg and bread crumbs, in that order. Chill the pork in the refrigerator for a while, so that the batter will bind to the meat.
3. Deep fry the pork in oil that's heated to about 338°F (170°C) until golden brown.

Ingredients (Serves 2)

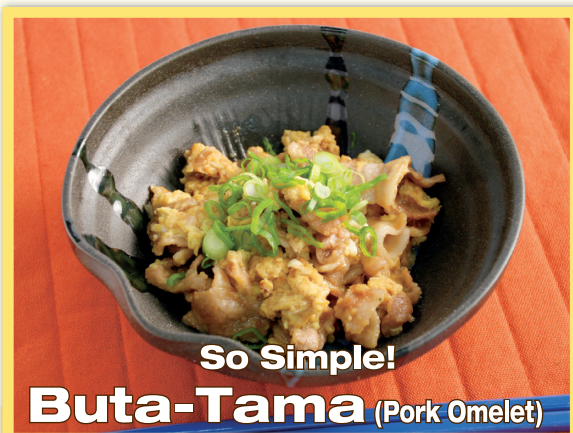
3.5 oz. pork belly
1 bag (about 6 oz.) of moyashi (bean sprouts)
Oil (as needed)
Okonomi sauce (to taste)
Salt and pepper (to taste)

Cooking Directions:

1. Cut the pork belly into bite-size pieces. Rinse clean and drain bean sprouts.
2. Heat oil in a frying pan, add the pork, and season with salt and pepper.
3. When the pork is golden brown, add the bean sprouts and sauté briefly over high heat. Pour in the sauce.



Perfect for those on a diet! Moya-Pork (Moyashi & Pork)



So Simple!

Buta-Tama (Pork Omelet)

Ingredients (Serves 2)

3.5 oz. pork belly
2 eggs
1 stalk green onion (chopped)
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon mirin (Japanese sweet cooking rice wine)
1 tablespoon of grated fresh ginger root
Oil (as needed)

Cooking Directions:

1. Mix the soy sauce, mirin and grated ginger in a bowl, and marinate the pork for approximately 10 minutes.
2. Heat oil in a frying pan, and sauté the marinated pork.
3. Beat the eggs and pour into the pan. Turn off the heat, and allow the egg mixture to finish cooking in the residual heat.
4. Sprinkle with chopped green onion to finish.



Everyone's Favorite! Shoga-Yaki (Pork Sauté with Ginger and Soy Sauce)

Ingredients (Serves 2)

10.6 oz. thinly-sliced
pork loin
1 small onion

<Sauce>

4 tablespoons soy sauce
1 to 1.5 tablespoons honey
1 clove garlic (grated)
1 clove fresh ginger root (grated)
Salt and pepper (to taste)

Cooking Directions:

1. Cut the pork into bite-size pieces, slice onion to about 2 inches thick, mix all ingredients for the sauce and place everything in a plastic bag. Refrigerate for approximately 30 minutes.
2. Sauté the pork, onion and sauce in a frying pan.

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Nijiya's Carefully Selected, Wild Harvested Seafood:

Shoyu Ikura

(Salmon Roe Marinated in Soy Sauce)



Why Does Nijiya's Ikura (Salmon Roe) Taste So Good?

Nijiya Market is proud to offer the choicest raw ikura (salmon roe) from Alaska! Nijiya is committed to offering Alaskan ikura because salmon swim freely in its great wilderness, away from human interference. These wild salmon are full of natural flavor. We are confident in the premium quality of our salmon roe, because the Nijiya staff visits Alaska every year to meet with a local producer and to check the quality of the salmon. Experts process the salmon and carefully choose premium raw salmon eggs, which are marinated to perfection in a special sauce. The freshness of our ikura is totally different from others,

because we buy directly from the local producer. And because our salmon roe is so fresh, the eggs pop pleasantly in the mouth and deliver a nice rush of flavors! Our ikura is the very best you can find.

How to Enjoy Ikura

The best part of eating ikura is, first and foremost, the popping sensation and the rush of rich flavors across the palate. Ikura is generally divided into two types. The salmon roe with a slightly firmer skin gives a nice popping sensation. When you eat this type of ikura, the eggs pop pleasantly in the mouth and the ikura juice bursts from the egg skin. The other type of salmon roe has a relatively thin

skin. When you eat this type of ikura, the eggs feel nice and sticky and a thick juice of rich flavor spreads throughout the mouth. Ikura with a firm skin is best for Gunkanmaki (battleship-shaped sushi rolls), while ikura with a soft skin is perfect for Ikura-Don (rice bowl topped with salmon roe). Nijiya's Shoyu Ikura (salmon roe) is marinated in a special sauce that gets absorbed into the salmon eggs. This makes the eggs will pop more easily and deliver stronger flavors. Pour as much Shoyu Ikura as you like over freshly cooked rice, and dig in. You'll never get tired of eating Nijiya's original Shoyu Ikura. You have to try it!

Perfect with Rice!

Hearty Ikura-Don

(rice bowl with a generous helping of salmon roe)



Ingredients

10 oz. Shoyu Ikura (salmon roe marinated in soy sauce)
4 bowls of freshly cooked rice
Wasabi (Japanese horseradish) (to taste)
Yakinori (roasted seaweed) (to taste)

Cooking Directions :

Fill the bowls with rice. Top each bowl with 1/4 serving of the Shoyu Ikura and serve with yakinori and wasabi.

Just add ikura (salmon roe) and turn a simple salad into a gorgeous dish!

Daikon Salad (Japanese Radish Salad)

Ingredients

5 oz. daikon (Japanese radish)
1 oz. carrot
3 sashimi-grade scallops
1 oz. Shoyu Ikura
Pinch of white sesame seeds
Oil-free salad dressing (to taste)



Cooking Directions :

1. Slice each scallop horizontally into 4 or 5 evenly thin slices.
2. Julienne the daikon (Japanese radish) and carrot, and toss them with scallop slices.
3. Place salad mixture on a plate, place the ikura (salmon roe) on top and sprinkle with the sesame seeds.
4. Serve with your choice of oil-free salad dressing.

Nijiya's Special Sauce Series

A variety of tasty sauces based on original recipes is available at Nijiya Market. All our sauces are made from organic ingredients without using artificial additives, so they're safe to eat.

Yakiniku (Korean-Style Barbecue) Sauce



Abundant fresh pears are shredded and mixed with additive-free seasonings and organic sugar to make this authentic yakiniku dipping sauce. Pears contain a lot of the enzyme that help promote the digestion of meat dishes. To marinate the meat, mix two parts yakiniku sauce to one part water. Marinate the meat overnight and it will become very tender. Enjoy restaurant-grade yakiniku in the comfort of your own home!

Sukiyaki Sauce



Many sukiyaki lovers may find it too troublesome to make sukiyaki sauce. Some of you may have also tried ready-made sukiyaki sauces and found them to contain MSG. Perhaps they were too salty, too sweet or otherwise not to your liking. Our sukiyaki sauce is the answer. Made from additive-free seasonings and not-too-sweet organic sugar, this sukiyaki sauce complements the main ingredients of sukiyaki by bringing out their delicious flavors.

Sesame Dressing



This gourmet sesame dressing is made by first roasting white sesame seeds to enhance its flavor and then milling it into powder in a food processor. Next, additive-free seasonings and organic sugar are added to the sesame powder, and the mixture is kneaded. Our sesame dressing goes with any salad, but we recommend using it as a dipping sauce for vegetable sticks (carrot, celery, cucumber, etc.). Ready-made salads sold in our deli department come with a packet of this sesame dressing. Our sesame dressing transforms simple salads into delicious dishes that even those who don't like vegetables can enjoy. To make it even better, use organic vegetables!

Thai Dressing



Our Thai dressing uses ample portions of sweet chili sauce and fish sauce, which are two of the most popular sauces used in Thai cuisine. Both these key ingredients are mixed with organic sugar, vinegar, sesame seeds, and sesame oil. This Thai dressing is a perfect accompaniment to any kind of salad, but it goes particularly well with harusame (vermicelli) and other noodle salads.

Six Great Flour Products from Nijiya Taste and Safety Guaranteed!

Hard flour (organic)



Grown for rich flavor and perfect chewiness
Ideal for baking bread
Make your own bread filled with the wholesome goodness of nature.
Made from 100% organically grown wheat

Soft flour (organic)



Doughy soft but doesn't lump together.
For cakes, white sauce, batter for frying and meuniere
Mix with hard flour to make all-purpose flour for noodles and suiton (flour dumplings boiled in soup).
Made without harmful agrochemicals, so you can eat it every day.
Made from 100% organically grown wheat

Tempura flour (organic)



You can make crispy restaurant-quality tempura without the hassle.
Enjoy freshly-fried, steaming tempura in the comfort of your home.
Made from 100% organically grown wheat

Okonomiyaki flour



Making fluffy okonomiyaki has never been this easy.
Made from 100% organically grown wheat and dashi (soup stock) as well.

Takoyaki flour



Enjoy a festival right at home!
Making takoyaki (octopus filled dumplings) has never been easier!
Made from 100% organically grown wheat—a perfect combination with Nijiya's succulent octopus.

Pancake mix



Simply add water, and you can make delicious pancakes in no time.
Also ideal for cupcakes, doughnuts, and pastries
Of course, it's made from 100% organically grown wheat!

Nijiya's Sushi & Bento

Delicious, Healthy, and Fresh! Nijiya's Original Sushi Series

At Nijiya, you can always find a wide selection of everyone's favorite fresh sushi. Nijiya is also one of the few places that offers brown rice sushi, which is popular and known for being especially healthy. We recommend the Vegetable roll and the *Natto* roll for vegetarians. The Spicy Tuna roll and *Sukeroku* (*Inari* and *Futomaki* set) are also always popular choices. In each dish, the sushi vinegar is mixed with the distinctive sweet flavoring of brown rice and draws together different ingredients for an exquisitely smooth and mellow flavoring. Furthermore, the unique texture of brown rice is unlike any other ingredient, and adds an irresistible quality to sushi. Try it once, and we are sure you will become addicted! It's so popular that many of

our customers have become regulars, and some even make special orders.

Our standard selections also have a great reputation for being unique, original, and made with the freshest ingredients. Customers say that they always enjoy picking and choosing from the wide variety of options.

Rolls are made with ingredients such as tuna, shrimp, salmon, and avocado, and standard selections include California Spicy Roll with *Masago*, Spicy Tuna Roll, Shrimp Tempura Roll, Shrimp California Roll, and Salmon Avocado roll. Out of the *nigiri sushi* selections, the standard Tuna, Salmon, and *Hamachi* (yellowtail tuna) are everyone's favorites.

Chirashi Sushi is becoming

increasingly popular as well because a wide variety of toppings can be enjoyed all at once. From *Haru No Hana Chirashi*, Diamond Chirashi, to *Kaisen Chirashi*, each and every selection displays the vast and vivid colors of the sea, which is beautiful, yet natural. The amazingly rich assortment of fresh seafood will stimulate your appetite not only with its high-quality taste but also with its aesthetic and alluring visual presentation.

Every season we change our menu according to the season's freshest, best tasting seafood and we offer exclusive and extravagant seasonal selections. It's a wonderful way to experience the Japanese culture and tradition of enjoying the natural blessings brought to us by the change of the seasons.

Each branch of Nijiya also provides a different assortment of sushi as well. If you're on a trip, or traveling afar, why not stop by other Nijiya locations to try out their original sushi selections!



BROWN RICE
SPICY TUNA ROLL



KAISEN CHIRASHI



BROWN RICE
VEGETABLE ROLL



CALIFORNIA SPICY ROLL
WITH NIGIRI



SHRIMP TEMPURA ROLL



DIAMOND
CHIRASHI

*At participating stores only.

Freshly Made Fresh Everyday! Great Tastes and Countless Choices! Nijiya's Bento Series Guarantees 120% Satisfaction!

From standard selections to those assorted with popular side dishes, you can't ever get enough of the extensive variety of Nijiya's *bentos*.

Items popular in America, such as Tempura and Teriyaki Chicken, are of course available; however you can also casually enjoy a wide variety of other popular and traditional Japanese cuisine including *Shake* (salmon) bento, *Nori* bento, *Tonkatsu* bento, and Grilled Fish bento. We offer a rich and voluminous Deluxe bento series, the Medium bento series (just the right amount for women), and countless varieties of the Rice bowl series. For those who prefer noodles, Spaghetti, *Yakisoba*, and Cold Noodles are also delicious choices; for spicy food lovers there's Curry, *Spicy Mabo Tofu*

bowl, and Spicy Chicken Bowl; and for a light snack on-the-go, pick up some rice balls such as Spam *musubi* and *Ten-musu*. Brown Rice bentos are most certainly recommended, as well as the Sushi and Noodle Combination bentos.

Japanese cuisine has built an incredible reputation for offering delicious, healthy, and gourmet selections that are truly one-of-a-kind. It has broadened and developed its expertise outside the realm of traditional Japanese dishes by incorporating dishes from countries in Asia, Europe, and America. Without changing the fundamental nature of such foreign dishes, the Japanese skillfully rearranged and developed the different tastes to incorporate them into their everyday diet. Just stop by and take

a look at the line-up of bentos at any Nijiya store. You'll be amazed to see the rich variety of choices that display the incredible pliability of Japanese cuisine. Even more than the irresistible tastes and flavors of each dish, the wide variety of choices may be the secret to the increasing popularity of Nijiya's bentos.

The countless numbers of bentos are handmade everyday through the hard work, devotion, and heartfelt care of Nijiya's staff. By providing delicious, healthy, and gourmet bentos, we wish to spread the wonderful qualities of Japanese cuisine to as many people as possible.

Come stop Nijiya today, and make sure to pick up our season's selections!



DX SALMON BENTO



COLD BUCKWHEAT NOODLES (OR UDON) COMBO



TOFU AND BROWN RICE BENTO



SPICY CHICKEN BOWL



DX CHICKEN TERIYAKI BENTO

NIJIYA Private Brand

What is Private Brand?

“Private Brand” products are those purchased in bulk usually by a large retailer from the manufacturer and distributed under the retailer’s name only at specific stores.

Historically, private brand products started appearing more and more around the 1980s, and were typically positioned as lower-priced but inferior in quality compared to national brand products. However, recently many private brand products are being positioned as “premium” brands to compete with national brands because of more freedom and flexibility in pricing and product development, and more control over the products’ quality as well as the inability to reduce the quality gap between them.

There are various benefits of private brand products to everyone in the distribution channel. One of the benefits for the consumers is lower-pricing, which often contributes to consumers switching to private brands from national brands if the quality of private brand products is the same or superior

Nijiya Brand

Nijiya Market is making a daily effort to provide safe, healthy and delicious food products to our customers because we believe that consuming a better quality of food items helps us become healthier in body and mind. As a part of this effort, we have been developing

“Nijiya Brand” products starting with “Nijiya-mai” rice, and we now offer more than 100 varieties of “Nijiya Brand” products at our stores. Our main focus in creating Nijiya Brand products is to develop those that are not only safe, healthy and delicious but are also traceable (knowing the origin) and made with selected or premium ingredients. We set a high standard in product quality, and only the products that have passed our guidelines are available at the stores. Some of our products have taken years to achieve this process, from finding the right ingredients, to developing the products, to being available on our store shelves while many items haven’t made it due to unsatisfactory quality results. Because we are very serious about developing the Nijiya Brand to provide better products for customer satisfaction, we proudly offer Nijiya Brand products.

Nijiya Market offers various private brand products including rice, nori (seaweed), miso (soy bean paste), tofu, soy sauce, soup stock, soy milk, natto (fermented soy bean), eggs, coffee, and so on. One of our popular Nijiya brand products is our rice; Nijiya-mai, Akita Komachi, and Koshihikari rice. Our rice is cultivated by our contracted, organic-certified farm in California to ensure a quality product. Akita Komachi and Koshihikari are premium short grain rice that are well suited for sushi rice. The newest variety of our rice, Koshihikari is

one of the most popular varieties of rice in Japan. Our Koshihikari is very smooth on the tongue, has delightful texture and sweeps the palate with its sweetness, which is an enjoyable experience.

Our nori (seaweed) products are another popular product line at our stores. Nori is typically used to wrap sushi or onigiri while seasoned nori is more likely consumed as a snack or garnish. We offer sushi nori as well as crispy organic sushi nori and kizami nori (shredded seaweed) at affordable prices. Because our organic nori is grown and manufactured by OCIA (Organic Crop Improvement Association), a certified grower and processor in China, our high-quality nori is offered at lower prices than that in Japan. Nori is a good source of rich nutrients. It contains protein, dietary fiber, vitamins, and a great deal of calcium and iron. Because the grade and price of nori are determined by the production site, species, texture, color, crispness and other factors, and because it is also hard to tell or see the differences amongst similar grades of nori, please try our nori product line and discover what you like.

Nijiya Market offers more than 100 Nijiya Brand products, all of which can not be introduced here. If you are concerned about where your food comes from or how it is handled, or if you are health conscious or agree with our belief that consuming a better quality of food items helps us become healthier in body and mind, please try our selected product lines and enjoy our organic products. You will enjoy the real flavor of authentic Japanese cuisine enhanced by the natural and healthy food products of the Nijiya brand. d products of Nijiya brand.

