

Cooking the Japanese Way by Reiko Weston c2002

"Scattered" Sushi Rice / Chirashi-zushi

In addition to the traditional sweets eaten on Hina Matsuri (Girls' Day), chirashi-zushi has become a popular dish for girls and their friends to share at their doll-viewing tea parties.

2 c. short-grain white rice,
uncooked
2 1/3 c. water
4 1/2 tbsp. rice vinegar
1/2 tbsp. sugar
1/2 tbsp. salt
vegetable oil
4 dried shiitake mushrooms
1 1/2 c. warm water
1 small carrot, peeled and cut into
thin sticks
1 1/2 tbsp. soy sauce
1 1/2 tbsp. sugar
3 tbsp. lemon juice
10 oz. canned crabmeat, or frozen
crab, thawed
1/2 c. green peas, fresh or frozen
2 eggs
1/2 tsp. sugar
pinch of salt

1. Wash rice in a pan with cold water until water is clear. Drain and place rice in a covered heavy pot or saucepan with 2 1/3 c. water. Soak for 1 hour.
2. Bring rice and water to a boil. Lower heat and simmer until water is absorbed (about 25 minutes). Turn off heat and let sit for 10 minutes. Remove rice from pot and place in a large serving bowl.
3. While rice is cooking, mix rice vinegar, sugar, and salt in a small bowl until sugar and salt dissolve. Sprinkle mixture over rice and gently fold it into the rice with a wooden spoon or spatula. Leave to cool.
4. Soak shiitake in 1 1/2 c. warm water for 30 minutes. Remove from water and set water aside. Cut off mushroom stems and squeeze mushrooms dry. Cut into thin shreds.

Can garnish with avocado and
nori (cut into small pieces).

5. In a small saucepan, combine $\frac{1}{2}$ c. of mushroom-soaking liquid, soy sauce, $1\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp. sugar, mushrooms, and carrot sticks. Cover and bring to a boil. Remove lid and simmer for 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, drain, and set aside.
6. Sprinkle lemon juice over crabmeat and let sit for 5 minutes. Squeeze extra liquid out of crabmeat, break into small pieces, and set aside.
7. Boil green peas until they are tender. Remove from heat, drain, and set aside.
8. Beat eggs with $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. sugar and pinch of salt. Heat a frying pan lightly coated with vegetable oil and pour in half of egg mixture, tilting pan to make a thin omelet. Fry over low heat for 30 seconds or until surface of omelet is dry. Carefully remove omelet with a spatula and place on a cutting board. Repeat with remaining mixture. When omelets are cool enough to handle, cut into thin strips.
9. With a wooden spoon or spatula, fold about half of the mushrooms, carrot, peas, and crabmeat into the rice. Scatter the remainder, along with omelet strips, on top and serve at room temperature.

**This festive dish is easy to adapt to your personal tastes. Omit the eggs and the crabmeat to create a tasty vegetarian entrée. Or, you can add almost any veggie you like to the mix—be creative!*

Preparation time: $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 hours

Cooking time: 1 hour

Serves 4 to 6