

Honolulu Star-Bulletin



An affordable way to gorge on Sushi

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By Nadine Kam

There are some things you can do cheap, and some you can't. Fashion can be cheap and fabulous. Sunglasses can be cheap and fun. Teriyaki Beef can be cheap and satisfying. Burgers can be cheap and delicious.

In the same way a Whopper cannot be compared to a burger from Buzz's-Lanikai, one shouldn't compare cheap with expensive sushi. Cheap sushi always seems so cold and sterile.

The fish is about as appetizing as a dehydrated fruit roll-up. Flavor is nil, so you're forced to extract as much as you can from the shoyu and wasabi. And there's always too much rice. If it was rice you really wanted, you might as well have gone home and cooked it.

On the other hand, it's always reassuring to know you won't go broke ordering little pieces of rice. At a typical sushi bar, it's easy to run up an \$80 bill for two, without even ordering drinks. At SushiMan, I tried to run up a bill, and got as high as \$12.95. I was shocked that I had actually saved money.

It's not easy to go for broke, considering a nine-piece nigiri bento runs \$4.99, about half the cost as at a typical sushi bar. A 30-piece family plate is \$9.99, with 18 pieces of vegetable maki, two pieces of egg sushi, two pieces of shrimp, three pieces of ahi, three pieces of squid and two pieces of octopus. And you can feast on a 45-piece nigiri party plate for \$19.99. That's a deal to keep in mind this graduation party season.

As for selections, you can't go wrong with Ahi Nigiri (three pieces for \$1.75). Sure, there's just a sliver of fish, but ahi is so ubiquitous you know the taste by heart.

For a variation, there's the Sushi Man's Choice of Spicy Tuna Roll (\$1.49). Sushi Man's rolls really are cylindrical, not the triangular cones Californians -invented. The Spicy Tuna Roll features plenty of rice wrapped in noni, with a

strip of tuna in the center, painted red with chile sauce. When something's too spicy for the palate, downing rice is recommended. There's the fib provision for when the rice is coated with the spicy stuff.

The California Roll (\$1.49) is decent for those who have adopted surimi as an acceptable standin for fresh crab. But I would stay away from the Salmon Nigiri (\$1.75 for three pieces). It doesn't taste like salmon, but worse, the texture is spongy.

If you want to take a look at the selections, SushiMan has a Web site at <http://sushiman.net> The site offers a brief introduction to the history of sushi, along with descriptions of various sushi styles.

You'll find pictures that will make you hungry, as well as a list of ingredients and suppliers, a most honest thing to do. You'll find that Kikkoman supplies the shoyu, the imitation crab comes from Koha Foods and Hormal (sic) provides the 25-percent-less-sodium Spam for a sort of reverse musubi Spam Roll (99 cents), with the Spam inside, rather than on top of the rice.

One more thing, don't be fooled into thinking this is a full-service restaurant. Although the sparkling white exterior and red canopy make the restaurant look inviting and large, there's only one table inside, and if you decide to eat there, you'll be sitting under an air conditioner blowing cold air at full blast.

Nadine Kam's restaurant reviews run on Thursdays. Reviews are conducted anonymously and paid for by the Star-Bulletin. Star ratings are based on comparisons of similar bud, get sushi restaurants.

Food	★★
Service	★★★
Atmosphere	★★1/2
Value	★★★

★ Prices : Less than \$10 for two.

- ★★★★ - excellent;
- ★★★ - very good,
- ★★ - exceeds expectations,
- ★★ - average;
- ★ - below average.

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SushiMan

Better Quality, Best Price



MENU

Kaimuki / 734-0944

Mon - Sat : 10 AM - 10 PM / Sun : 10 AM - 8 PM

For more information : <http://sushiman.net>

- Information : 73-SUSHI (737-8744)
- Kaimuki / 734-0944
- < Mon - Sat : 10 AM - 10 PM / Sun : 10 AM - 8 PM >
- 3036 Waiialae Ave. Honolulu, HI 96816
- Niu Valley / 377-7733
- < Mon - Sat : 9 AM - 8 PM / Sun : 10:30 AM - 7 PM >
- 3740 Kalaniana'ole Hwy (Times Super), Honolulu, HI 96821
- Royal Kunia / 676-8811
- < 9 AM - 9 PM Everyday >
- 94-615 Kupuohi (Times Super), Waipahu, HI 96797
- Salt Lake / 833-4999
- < 10 AM - 8 PM Everyday >
- 1151 Mapunapuna St. (99 Ranch Market) W - 8, Honolulu, HI 96819
- Kailua / 230-2020
- < 10 AM - 8 PM Everyday >
- 345 Hahani St. (Daiei Kailua), Kailua, HI 96734
- Pearl City / 456-8898
- < 10 AM - 8 PM Everyday >
- 850 Kam Hwy (Daiei Pearl-City), Pearl City, HI 96782
- Mililani / 625-5775
- < 10 AM - 8 PM Everyday >
- 95-221 Kipapa Dr. C-19, Mililani, HI 96789
- Kapiolani / 941-8383
- 1471 Kapiolani Blvd. Honolulu, HI 96814



How to eat the good sushi?

First of all, good sushi starts from fresh supply of ingredients. This can be done if the selling and receiving of the supply can be made efficiently in a little time in order to keep them fresh. It is understandable to find a good sushi in places where it is known to be crowded because that indicates the smooth rotation of the cycle. Then it may also be understood that stores that have too much menu items might have some trouble containing the supply in the fresh state.

Can sushi keep for a long period of time?

As a general rule of thumb, the answer is no. Sushi is best eaten fresh, insuring that you enjoy the full flavor of the ingredients - especially the fish. It's recommended by local sushi chefs that sushi be consumed immediately, or within two to four hours. However, if you do decide to try and save your sushi, adhere to some of the following guidelines: The first step would be to separate the rice from the fish. Next, since sushi rice is mixed with vinegar, it doesn't pose a problem storing it in a cool place. Just make sure that it's wrapped securely. As for the fish, it is absolutely necessary that it go into the refrigerator; otherwise, it will spoil! Again, be sure to wrap the fish tightly. Although the sushi will be edible the next day, it probably will have lost a lot of its flavor.

What's the difference between fresh sushi and cold sushi?

The basic taste of the sushi comes from its rice. If placed in the refrigerator, even the wrapped rice tends to get dried and eventually lose its favor. Most sushi sold at supermarkets usually needs to be frozen for a long period of time which could effect its freshness.

How to pick out the good ahi?

Ahi is among the fish most known to us. Big portion of sushi is made of ahi. Majority of people examine ahi's color when determining the freshness of the fish, but that can be a dangerous idea. It is important to look at ahi sushi, sashimi sold at the stores. Usually, ahi with too bright red coloring is made so by applying Carbon Monoxide to it. If ahi keeps the same bright color after a couple of hours, then you can be almost 100% sure that it's been exposed to the chemical. Ahi's color is very sensitive to the time change or temperature, and to keep the same color is very close to impossible. Ahi that fades as the time goes is the ahi that hasn't been polluted by the chemical. Even the experts can't depend on the color for the freshness. It's better to depend on the smell instead. If the ahi smells too fishy, then it's safe to say that the ahi is not fresh. (see Honolulu Star-Bulletin 12/5/98 or <http://sushiman.net>)

Why eat Sushi with Gari?

Sushi is known to have their individual taste depending on their ingredients. It is best to taste them all. If eat many kinds of sushi continuously at the same time, the taste tends to get all mixed up. Gari can be useful at the situation like this since it gets rid of the taste of the sushi eaten before and gives room for the next sushi.

What about when the rice smells too much like a vinegar?

It may be obvious for the rice to smell a bit like a vinegar. But if that smell is too strong, then there is a possibility that the rice may be old or that the inferior kind of vinegar was used. Vinegar smell from the rice should be mild.

Do I have to eat sushi with a chopstick?

There is no special ways to eat sushi. If using chopstick is uncomfortable, it's always okay to eat sushi with hands.

Nigiri Bento

Nigiri Bento (9 pcs)	4.99
Lunch Bento (15 pcs)	4.49
Combo Bento (9 pcs)	3.99
Mini Bento (10 pcs)	2.99
Nigiri Mix (6 pcs)	3.49

Maki Mono

Futo Maki (8 pcs)	2.99
Egg Maki (8 pcs)	2.99
California Maki (8 pcs)	2.99
Cal. Maki w/Ebiko (8 pcs)	3.49
Futo Cal Maki (4 pcs+4pcs)	2.99
Inari (5 pcs)	2.49
Combination Maki (7 pcs)	2.99

Nigiri Special (Minimum of 6 pcs)

Ahi Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Ika Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Ebi Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Tako Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Egg Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Salmon Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Unagi Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Ebiko Nigiri (3 pcs)	1.75
Ikura Nigiri (3 pcs)	3.50

Hoso Maki

Tekka Maki (6 pcs)	1.49
Kanpyo Maki (6 pcs)	.99
Shinko Maki (6 pcs)	.99
Cucumber Maki (6 pcs)	.99
Ume Maki (6 pcs)	.99

Hand-Rolls (TeMaki)

Tuna Roll	.99
Spam Roll	.99
Egg Roll	.99
Cucumber Roll	.99
Shinko Roll	.99
Ume Roll	.99
Crab Roll	.99
Ika Roll	1.49
California Roll	1.49
Ebiko Roll	1.49
Ebi Roll	1.49
Salmon Roll	1.49
Tekka Roll	1.49
Unagi Roll	1.49
Spicy Tuna Roll	1.49
Natto Roll	1.49
Vegetable Roll	1.69
Spicy Vege Roll	1.69

Party Plate

Family Plate (30 pcs)	9.99
Dlx. Family Plate (40 pcs)	14.99
Aloha Party Plate (43 pcs)	18.49
Combo Party Plate (48 pcs)	18.99
Maki Party Plate (54 pcs)	16.99
Nigiri Party Plate (45 pcs)	19.99

Others

Miso (Kikkoman)	1.09
Green Tea (Hot)	.49
Gari	.15