

The Hawai'i Book of **RICE**

When I was young, I loved spending time in Popo's kitchen. As she sliced, seasoned, stirred and sautéed, a pot of rice invariably would be steaming on the stove, emitting a wonderful fragrance of its own. Popo never used a rice cooker, and I marveled at how, with just a glance, she could tell exactly how much water was needed to make perfect rice—soft, fluffy grains that clung lightly to each other, like friends sharing an umbrella in a rainstorm.

Rice was one of the first solid foods I ate as an infant. As kids, my two brothers, sister and I snacked on sushi, homemade puffed rice cookies and Tomoe Ame candy, wrapped in edible rice paper that instantly melted in our mouths. We played games with “bean bags” that Mom made from scraps of fabric and uncooked rice. One of my first household chores was cooking rice for dinner—three cups every night for our family of six. I'd vigorously wash and rinse the tiny kernels several times, until the water, milky at first, ran clear. Before pressing the rice cooker's “on” button, I made sure the water was at the 3½-cup mark. Even at the tender age of eight, I knew how important it was for the rice to be cooked just right—sticky, not mushy.

For me, the smell of steaming rice is a panacea. No matter how bad a day I might have had, when I'm home and I inhale that familiar comforting scent, the sadness, worry or disappointment I'm feeling dissipates. One whiff reminds me I'm in a safe place. I'm loved. Life is again in balance.

“Give me rice and gravy; I'll be happy eating just rice and gravy,” my father often said. He came from humble means, the eldest of seven children of a tailor and a seamstress. Whenever my siblings and I complained about our wardrobes or what we were having for dinner, he was quick to remind us that he wore clothes made from rice bags when he was growing up in Waialua, and that many a night he had nothing to eat but rice and gravy.

This book celebrates rice and the many ways it touches our lives in Hawai'i. A Japanese proverb goes, “Cultivate a rice field rather than write poetry.” Rice nourishes us; draws us together; and binds us as a community, culture and 'ohana.

— Cheryl Chee Tsutsumi
author, *The Hawai'i Book of Rice*

Rice makes the world go round—or if not the world, certainly the Hawaii Foodbank. In our warehouse, a day without rice is rare. We distribute tons of rice each year, and when donations of rice don't keep up with demand, we purchase containers of rice to make sure our supply meets our clients' needs.

Hawai'i's culture revolves in many ways around its food, and rice plays a big part in that. In the Islands, people eat rice with just about everything, including spaghetti! Sushi, musubi (rice balls), mochi (rice cakes) and arare (rice crackers) are popular treats. Mainland-bound college students pack rice cookers along with their winter clothes. And if they don't, a rice cooker is usually at the top of their shopping list.

“Rice is nice” and “Have a rice day” are common sentiments in our islands. Each year, the Hawaii Foodbank provides rice and a wide variety of other food to more than 183,000 islanders in need. We receive a percentage from each purchase of *The Hawai'i Book of Rice*, which helps us feed Hawai'i's hungry.

Thank you for your support of the book and the Hawaii Foodbank!

Mahalo nui loa,
the Board, Staff and Volunteers
of the Hawaii Foodbank



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Creamy Korean-Style Musubi

Kent ompson

I really like the mayonnaise-rice combination. One day, as I was experimenting with a new musubi (rice ball) recipe, it occurred to me that a cream cheese-rice pairing would be even better, especially spiced up with kim chee. Taste this musubi and I think you'll agree I was right!

- 3 c. uncooked rice
- 3 c. water
- 1 12-oz. can Spam
- Kent's Kalbi Sauce (recipe follows)
- 1 8-oz. block cream cheese, softened
- 4 c. drained won bok kim chee
- 5-6 sheets nori (dried seaweed), cut in halves

Kent's Kalbi Sauce

- ½ c. shoyu
- ¼ c. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- ¾ tsp. minced garlic
- Thai sweet chili sauce to taste
- sesame oil to taste

Combine ingredients and stir well to dissolve sugar.

Cook rice in the 3 cups water. Cut Spam into 10 to 12 slices. Fry Spam slices until browned on both sides. Add Kent's Kalbi Sauce a little at a time. Continue to cook Spam until nicely caramelized on both sides. Remove from heat. Stir cream cheese into warm rice and mix well. Chop 2 cups of the kim chee and add to rice; reserve the remaining 2 cups. Press a generous scoop of the rice mixture into a musubi mold. Top with a layer of the reserved kim chee and a slice of Spam. Press down, then remove from mold and wrap in nori. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Makes 10 to 12 musubi.

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Fresh Manila Clam and Hāmākua Mushrooms Takikomi Gohan

Hiroshi Fukui, Executive Chef, Hiroshi Eurasion Tapas

- 1 lb. fresh Manila clams
- 4 c. water
- ¼ c. mirin
- ¼ c. usukuchi soy sauce (light-colored shoyu with a milder flavor than regular shoyu)
- 3 c. rice, washed and well drained
- ½ c. eryngii (king oyster) mushrooms from Hāmākua Mushrooms*, thinly sliced
- 10 shiso (leaves of the beefsteak plant), chiffonade
- ¼ c. minced yamagobo (Japanese pickled burdock root)
- 1 Tbsp. toasted white sesame seeds

* Big Island-based Hāmākua Mushrooms produces several varieties of gourmet mushrooms. Eryngii is suggested for this dish, but other types (shiitake, shimeji, maitake and nameko) can be used.

Wash clams well under cold water; drain well. Put clams into a pot with the water and bring to a boil. When clams have opened, remove from heat and pour stock through a strainer. Set the clam stock aside. When clams are cool, remove clam meat from the shells; discard shells. Put 3 cups of the reserved clam stock into a bowl. Add mirin and soy sauce and mix well. Put rice into a rice cooker and add the clam stock mixture and the mushrooms; cook. As soon as the rice cooker turns to the Warm setting, indicating the rice has been cooked, quickly add the clam meat and let the mixture continue to steam for another 20 minutes. When the rice is ready, mix well. Serve in rice bowls and sprinkle with shiso, yamagobo and toasted white sesame seeds. Serve immediately.
Serves 6.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Dawn Sakamoto, (808) 534-7170 or dawn@bookshawaii.net

Rice is Nice: New Book Celebrates Hawai'i's Favorite Food

From musubi and two-scoop plate lunches to high-end cuisine, rice is a rich tradition in the Islands. *The Hawai'i Book of Rice: Tales, Trivia and 101 Great Recipes* celebrates rice and the many ways it touches our lives in Hawai'i. Author Cheryl Chee Tsutsumi offers a loving look at the Aloha State's staple food in this 200-page full-color book. Anyone who's ever snacked on a SPAM® musubi, pounded mochi or had to "go home, cook rice" as a child will eat up the book's 101 "rice-ipes," rice history, legends and lore.

Tsutsumi's family has had a long history with rice: her maternal great-grandfather farmed rice in Hulē'ia, Kaua'i, for more than 30 years. The book got its start as she delved into her rice-farming roots for a family history and is dedicated to her father, who often said, "Give me rice and gravy; I'll be happy eating just rice and gravy." Tsutsumi's own sentiments regarding rice are no doubt echoed in the minds of countless Islanders: "The smell of steaming rice is a panacea. No matter how bad a day I might have had, when I'm home and I inhale that familiar comforting scent, the sadness, worry or disappointment I'm feeling dissipates."

A portion of sales from *The Hawai'i Book of Rice* goes to the Hawaii Foodbank to aid the organization in feeding over 183,000 people each year. The Hawaii Foodbank distributes nearly 11.3 million pounds of food annually – several tons of it comprised of rice – to 250 member agencies as well as food banks on the Big Island, Maui and Kaua'i.

Cheryl Chee Tsutsumi is an award-winning travel journalist who has covered Hawai'i, Asia and the South Pacific for numerous local and Mainland publications. She is the author of 12 books about Hawai'i. *The Hawai'i Book of Rice* is her third title for Watermark Publishing.

The Hawai'i Book of Rice: Tales, Trivia and 101 Great Recipes (ISBN 978-1-9356900-9-2) will be available starting in mid-May for \$15.95 at bookstores, online booksellers or direct from the publisher at www.bookshawaii.net.

Watermark Publishing is a Honolulu, Hawaii, book publisher. Established in 1999, the company has produced a number of award-winning books, specializing in titles that celebrate Hawai'i's unique, "mixed plate" culture. Contact Watermark Publishing, 1088 Bishop St., Suite 310, Honolulu, HI 96813; (808) 587-7766; toll-free (866) 900-BOOK; fax (808) 521-3461; sales@bookshawaii.net.

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1088 Bishop Street, Suite 310
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. 808.587.7766
Fax 808.521.3461
www.bookshawaii.net