


# Recipe by

 Embassy of Japan  
in New Zealand

No.1



## Udon (Serves 2)

### Ingredients

Udon ... 2 portions or dried udon 200 g  
(before cooking)

#### Soup base

- water: 800 ml
- Japanese soup stock (dashi powder): 2 tsp
- Japanese soy sauce: 2 tbsp
- mirin: 1 tbsp
- salt: 1/4 tsp

#### Toppings

- spring onion: 2
- kamaboko (fish cake): 1 piece
- tenkasu (tempura flakes): 4 tbsp
- dried wakame seaweed: 4 g

### Method

#### 1:Preparation

- Slice spring onion into small pieces.
- Cut kamaboko into slices approx. 1cm thick.
- Soak dried wakame in water until rehydrated.

#### 2:Instructions

- Put all soup base ingredients into a pot and bring to a boil.
- In a separate pot, cook udon noodles following the package instructions.
- Place cooked udon into bowls and pour over the hot broth.
- Top with kamaboko, spring onion, and tenkasu. Serve immediately.

### Tips

- Traditional dashi is made from kombu (kelp) and bonito flakes, but instant dashi powder also works well and is still very tasty.
- Fresh or fresh-type udon noodles give the best texture and flavor.
- Reheat the broth so it is piping hot when the noodles are ready.
- This recipe's seasoning is mild, so adjust saltiness to your taste if needed.



## Tempura (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

#### Batter

- plain flour: 100 g
- cold water: 150 ml
- 1 egg yolk

You can also use Tempura mix

#### Filling of your choice

- shrimp: 8 pieces
- sweet potato: 1/2
- green beans: 8
- fresh shiitake mushrooms: 8

#### Tempura dipping sauce (tentsuyu)

- water : 200 ml
- Japanese dashi powder : 5 g
- soy sauce : 50 ml
- mirin : 50 ml

### Method

#### 1. Preparation

- Remove the shells and devein the shrimp.
- Slice the sweet potato into about 5mm thick pieces.
- Remove the stems from the shiitake mushrooms.
- For the tentsuyu, combine all ingredients in a pot, bring to a boil once, and it is ready.

#### 2. Instructions

- Make the batter by mixing cold water and egg yolk in a bowl.
- Add flour and mix gently. It is fine if some lumps remain.
- Heat the oil to 170–180°C.
- Lightly coat the ingredients with flour (not included in the recipe ingredients), dip them into the batter, and deep-fry until golden brown.
- Drain the oil and serve on a plate.

### Tips

- Do not overmix the batter. Overmixing creates gluten, which makes the coating heavy instead of light and crispy.
- Using cold batter helps achieve a lighter, crisp texture.
- Do not overcrowd the pot. Only add enough ingredients so that less than half of the oil surface is covered; otherwise, the oil temperature will drop and the tempura will become soggy.
- Slice root vegetables thinly, so they cook through easily.
- In New Zealand, soya bean oil works best for frying tempura.
- Using a store-bought tempura batter mix is a convenient option for beginners and gives consistent results.
- Oil temperature is the most important factor. If you are not confident, use a thermometer to maintain the right temperature.
- Besides the vegetables listed, seasonal vegetables, seafood, and even chicken breast also work very well for tempura.



## Sushi: Makizushi ( 4 rolls )

### Ingredients

#### Sushi Rice

- rice: 2 cups
- rice vinegar: 60 ml
- sugar: 30 g
- salt: 5 g

#### Filling

- tuna, salmon, or other sashimi-grade fish : 100 g
- cucumber : 1
- Japanese omelette (tamagoyaki) : 100 g
- avocado : 1
- roasted seaweed (nori) : 4 sheets

### Method

#### 1. Preparation

- Cook the rice and prepare the sushi rice by mixing it with rice vinegar, sugar, and salt.
- Allow the sushi rice to cool to room temperature.
- Cut the cucumber, Japanese omelette (tamagoyaki), and avocado into long, thin strips.
- Prepare tezu (hand vinegar) by diluting rice vinegar with water. This will help prevent the rice from sticking to your hands.

#### 2. Instructions

- Place a sheet of nori on a bamboo sushi mat (makisu).
- Spread the sushi rice evenly over the nori, leaving a small border at the top edge. Moisten your hands with tezu (vinegar water) to prevent the rice from sticking.
- Arrange the fillings in a line near the edge closest to you. Using the bamboo mat, roll the sushi tightly.
- Once rolled, gently press the roll to shape and firm it.
- Wet a sharp knife and cut the roll into approximately 8 equal pieces. Arrange on a serving plate and serve.

### Tips

- To ensure the rice cooks evenly and becomes fluffy without any hard centers, rinse the rice and let it soak in water for about 30 minutes before cooking.
- Because vinegar will be added later, use about 10% less water than usual when cooking the rice.
- Leave about 2 cm of space at the far edge of the nori sheet. This creates a seam that helps seal the roll.
- Japanese short-grain sushi rice is recommended for the best texture.
- Traditionally, tamagoyaki is made using a rectangular Japanese omelette pan. However, a regular round frying pan can also be used—simply make a plain omelette and cut it into strips for the filling.



## Onigiri ( 4 to 5 serving )

### Ingredients

- cooked rice: 2 cups  
(2 cups of uncooked rice measured with rice cooker measuring cup)
- salt : 1/2 tsp
- roasted nori (seaweed) : 2 sheets
- filling of your choice (e.g. salmon flakes, tuna mayonnaise, pickled plum (umeboshi), etc.)

### Method

#### 1.Preparation

- Cook the rice: Let rice sit in the cooker for 30 minutes before cooking for better texture.
- Prepare your chosen filling(s).
- Prepare a bowl of water and the salt for wetting and seasoning your hands when shaping the rice balls.

#### 2.Instructions

- Lightly wet your hands with water and rub a small amount of salt onto your palms.
- Place about 120 g of cooked rice in your hand, make a small indentation in the center, and add your preferred filling.
- Wrap the rice around the filling and gently shape it into a triangle or a ball.
- Wrap with nori (seaweed) and serve.

### Tips

- Use warm rice for easier shaping.
- Don't squeeze too hard; keep it light and soft. You can also use an onigiri mold.
- Don't put too much filling.
- Wrap nori just before eating for better texture.
- Canned tuna is an easy-to-buy and popular filling.
- Use sushi rice (short-grain rice), not jasmine rice.
- If you find it difficult to judge how much salt to use on your hands, you can sprinkle salt directly onto the warm rice before shaping it, adjusting the taste as you go.



## Okonomiyaki ( serve 4 )

### Ingredients

#### Batter

- plain flour: 200 g
- water: 250 ml
- eggs: 2

#### Filling

- cabbage: 400 g
- sliced pork belly: 200 g
- tempura scraps (tenkasu): 30 g
- spring onion: 2

#### Toppings

- okonomiyaki sauce, to taste
- mayonnaise, to taste
- dried bonito flakes (katsuobushi), to taste
- aonori (dried green seaweed), to taste

### Method

#### 1. Preparation

- Shred the cabbage into thin strips, approximately 5 mm wide.
- Slice the spring onions into small rings (thinly sliced).
- Cut the pork belly slices in half to about 15 cm lengths.
- In a bowl, combine the cake flour, water, and eggs, and mix until smooth.

#### 2. Instructions

- Add the cabbage, tempura scraps (tenkasu), and green onions to the batter and gently mix until just combined.
- Heat a frying pan over medium heat and lightly oil it.
- Pour in the batter and spread it into a round shape, about 2–3 cm thick.
- Arrange the pork belly slices on top of the batter.
- Cook for 4–5 minutes until the bottom is browned, then flip.
- Cook for another 4–5 minutes until fully cooked through. Covering the pan with a lid will help it cook evenly inside.
- Top with okonomiyaki sauce, mayonnaise, dried bonito flakes (katsuobushi), and aonori. Serve hot.

### Tips

- To prevent the batter from becoming too watery, do not soak the cabbage in water after cutting.
- For better texture, keep the cabbage slightly crisp and avoid overmixing once all ingredients are added.
- The ideal thickness is 2–3 cm; too thin can make it dry, while too thick may prevent it from cooking through properly.
- Do not press down on the pancake while cooking, as this will release air and reduce its fluffy texture.
- Flip the okonomiyaki only when the edges have set and become firm.
- Avoid high heat, as it may burn the outside while leaving the inside undercooked. If you are not experienced, use low to medium heat and cook slowly for better results.
- After cooking, let it rest for 2–3 minutes so it sets and is easier to cut.

**Note:** Pork belly slices can be purchased at Asian supermarkets.



## Yakitori ( 12 Skewers )

### Ingredients

#### Chicken Thigh Skewers

- chicken thighs: 3
- spring onion: 2
- bamboo skewers: 12

#### Sauce (Tare)

- soy sauce: 100 ml
- mirin: 100 ml
- sugar: 30 g

#### Other

- salt, to taste
- vegetable oil, as needed

### Method

#### 1. Preparation

- Cut the chicken thighs into bite-sized pieces.
- Cut the spring onions into 3 cm lengths.
- Thread the chicken and spring onions alternately onto bamboo skewers.

- Add soy sauce, mirin, and sugar to a saucepan and gently simmer to make the sauce (tare).

#### 2. Instructions

- Heat a frying pan over medium heat and lightly brush the skewers with oil.
- Cook the chicken skewers until browned, then turn them over.
- Once the chicken starts to cook through, brush with the sauce (tare). Continue turning and basting several times until fully cooked and glossy.  
(For the salt version, sprinkle salt after cooking instead of using the sauce.)
- Transfer to a serving plate and serve.

### Tips

- Cut the chicken into even-sized pieces to ensure uniform cooking.
- Place the chicken skin-side outward on the skewer for a crispier finish.
- Avoid moving the skewers too much at the beginning to develop a good sear and flavor.
- When grilling over charcoal, sear over high heat first, then cook through over lower heat for a juicy interior.
- Using a store-bought yakitori sauce is a quick and easy alternative.



## Katsudon ( Serve 4 )

### Ingredients

#### Tonkatsu

- pork loin slices: 4 (about 150g each)
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- All-purpose flour, as needed
- eggs: 2
- Panko breadcrumbs, as needed
- Oil for deep-frying

#### Sauce (Dashi mixture)

- dashi stock: 300 ml
- soy sauce: 60 ml
- mirin: 60 ml
- sugar: 20 g

#### Other

- onion: 1
- eggs: 4
- cooked rice: 4 bowls
- Italian parsley, as needed

### Method

#### 1.Preparation

- Slice the onion thinly.
- Make shallow cuts in the pork (tendon scoring) and season with salt and pepper.
- Coat the pork in flour, then egg, then panko breadcrumbs.
- Mix dashi stock, soy sauce, mirin, and sugar to make the sauce (warishita).

#### 2.Instruction

- Deep-fry the pork cutlets in oil at 170°C until golden, then cut into bite-sized pieces.
- In a frying pan, add the warishita sauce and sliced onion, and simmer over medium heat.
- Once the onion is soft, place the tonkatsu in the pan and pour in beaten eggs. Cook until softly set.
- Serve over bowls of rice.
- Garnish with Italian parsley and serve.

### Tips

- Score the pork to prevent it from curling during frying.
- Keep the oil at around 170°C; too hot will burn the coating before the meat cooks through.
- Cook the onion well to bring out sweetness and allow it to absorb the sauce.
- Cook the egg until just soft-set for the best texture.
- Keep the simmering time short so the cutlet retains some crispness.
- Slightly firmer rice works best as it holds the sauce well.
- Frozen pork schnitzel can be used as a shortcut.
- Traditionally, mitsuba is used, but Italian parsley works well as a substitute in New Zealand.