

Noodle Rolls

Noodle rolls require a delicate hand but are not difficult to make. When patiently and skillfully prepared, the reward is a beautiful, elegant, and tasty main dish. For variety, add other ingredients with the noodles to fill the rolls. Strips of fried tempeh or seitan, sauerkraut, blanched scallion greens, radish sprouts, and toasted and ground sesame seeds are excellent filling choices.

Cook noodles according to the directions on the package. Rinse under cold running water or in a cold water bath until cool enough to handle, then drain thoroughly. Once drained, neatly arrange noodles on a clean, dry towel. Spread them out in even lines from left to right.

Toast nori (or use pre-toasted sushi nori). Place one sheet of nori, toasted side down, on a sushi mat, small towel, or counter. Lay one quarter of the noodles side by side across the nori. (There should be 1/2 inch of uncovered nori at the bottom and the top.) Roll up nori as firmly as possible. Let the roll rest on its seam. Repeat with remaining sheets of nori and noodles.

Using a sharp knife (and cleaning the blade after each cut), carefully slice rolls in half, then cut each half into 3 equal pieces.

Make dipping sauce by combining shoyu, water or stock, and mirin in a small bowl. Place in small individual saucers. Add one drop of water at a time to wasabi, and mix until it forms a thick paste.

Preparation List:

Serves 4

- 8 ounces uncooked thin soba or whole wheat somen
- 4 sheets nori
- 1 to 1 & 1/2 teaspoons wasabi powder (Japanese horseradish)

DIPPING SAUCE:

- 1 1/2 tablespoons shoyu
- 1 1/2 tablespoons water or soup stock
- 1 1/2 teaspoons mirin (optional)

To serve, place noodle roll pieces, cut side up, on a platter along with mound of wasabi paste. Add wasabi to individual bowls of dipping sauce. Wasabi is strong-flavored, so begin by adding a small amount to sauce, then add more depending on individual taste.