



Sexy Sushi Nights



When the only thing fishy is your food — not your date's behavior

By Alison Bailin Batz

Eating sushi is a lot like dating.

"Think about the first time you went out for sushi — and a typical first date," says Stephen Stromberg, executive chef at Sapporo in Scottsdale. "Both take a little courage at first, but the adventure is (usually) well worth it."

So, it makes sense that sushi is a top dining choice for first dates of all ages. But how does one plan the perfect sushi night?

Dare to discover

Sure, California and Las Vegas rolls are staples for many of us. But, why not show your date you are open to new things by stepping outside of the sushi comfort zone?

"Always look for items that are custom to the venue," says Stromberg, whose own menu includes the MT Roll, a salmon soy paper roll invented by, and named after, their own sushi chef, Mikel Tan; along with a signature Scottsdale roll bursting with spicy scallops.

Make it hot, hot, hot!

Not all first dates are created equal — some are certainly hotter than others.

Sushi is the same way.

While adding a dollop of spicy mayo or wasabi to your favorite roll can certainly spice up the date, why not indulge your taste buds, together, in a culinary adventure by really turning up the heat?

"Be her renegade Romeo by ordering your Juliet a roll with jalapeño and spicier versions of standard ingredients like tuna and yellowtail," Stromberg says.

Sapporo carries more than half a dozen hot options, including the Surf'n'Turf roll, which marries crab, filet mignon and tabasco sauce into a mouth-watering menu stand-out. Also popular is the Fuji roll, which is topped with spicy yellowtail, making it as visually hot as it tastes.

Pick pairings with passion

"Innovate while you libate," adds Mike Hanley, bar manager at Sapporo. "Don't settle for a martini simply shaken or stirred — order it frozen and share tastes!"

Frozen Passion Mango Martinis, which are blended with vodka, rum and mango and passion purees and poured atop a raspberry liqueur, and Sapporo Slushes, which are made with vodka, fresh-squeezed juices and simple syrup, are among the most popular drinks for first dates.

Also, choose drinks that are a feast for the eyes as well as the palate.

For example, Sapporo's Purple Dream is layered by ingredient into a glass and brought table-side so the guest can play mixologist, stirring the ingredients together into a perfect purple blend.

One last tip for a sexy sushi night — ditch the chopsticks!

"In Japan, it's customary to use one's hands to eat rather than chopsticks," Stromberg says. "A perfect excuse to feed each other!" **SL**



Sapporo Scottsdale

14344 N. Scottsdale Rd.

(480) 607-1114

sapporoscottsdale.com



Other sushi bars to check out:

Blue Wasabi Sushi & Martini Bar
(480) 315-9800
bluewasabisushi.com

Stingray Sushi
(480) 427-2011
stingraysushi.com

PURE Sushi Bar & Dining
(480) 355-0999
puresushibar.com

Geisha A Go Go
(480) 699-0055
geishaagogo.com

Sushi Brokers
(480) 515-5000
sushibrokersaz.com

RA Sushi
(480) 990-9256
rasushi.com