

Students get opportunity to sample choice cuisine

Tickets to the Japanese Student Organization's Sushi Night sell out

By Peter Breaden
Oregon Daily Emerald

Juan-Carlos Valle, Yumi Matsuno and Takuya Kuronuma sit at a table in Riley Hall's lounge. Valle trades one of his tako (octopus on rice) to Kuronuma for a maguro (raw tuna on rice).

The Japanese Student Organization held its second annual Sushi Night last Friday at Riley Hall. The \$4 tickets sold out quickly to 150 people. Most people found it an inexpensive opportunity to try some of Eugene's choice sushi from Shoji's of Eugene.

"That's my favorite," Valle said of the tuna. Valle eats sushi "as often as he can."

The Sushi Night spread is pretty good, Matsuno said.

The event brings together Japanese students and introduces sushi to people who have a limited understanding of Japanese culture, said Ryoko Sanai, JSO president.

"Sushi is our cultural food, and many students miss sushi," JSO member Takeru Yoshida said.

Despite the 350 Japanese students on campus, sometimes people have trouble connecting with each other, she said.

"We have trouble because many students don't care about community," Sanai said. JSO wants to promote Japanese culture, not just its commercial aspects.

JSO had more requests for tickets than it was able to fill, Yoshida said. This year's turnout almost doubled last year's attendance because of advertising, Yoshida said.

"Last year we failed to advertise it," he said. "This year we tried to advertise more and still some students couldn't get tickets."

JSO served nine different types of sushi that come in two different styles — nigiri and rolls.

The nigiri are packed rice with some type of raw seafood on top. The nigiri included tako (octopus), maguro (tuna), ebi (shrimp) and shake (salmon). The maguro and shake are a vibrant red and orange color compared to the pinkish tako and ebi.

The rolls are kelp wrapped around rice and vegetables. For example, the cucumber rolls were exactly what they sounded like, and a little boring compared to futomaki, a veggie roll with more flavor. The California roll was pretty popular, though not in Japan, Matsuno said.

"I'd never heard of it," she said. The word sushi doesn't mean raw fish, according to JSO. Sushi means "vinegared rice," which is a key part of its recipe.

The first record of preserving fish was in China, almost 2000 years ago, when the fish was salted to keep longer. Currently, the fish are treated with vinegar and can only be kept one night.

Sushi is served in a special arrangement that begins with a green tea, odebana. The sushi is served with soy sauce, thin-sliced ginger and the bright green, zesty wasabi.

The quality of Shoji's sushi is close to authentic Japanese sushi, Yoshida said. It is also the best that Eugene has to offer.

"Sushi is an expensive food so we wanted to have sushi at an affordable price," Sanai said.



Catharine Kendall/Emerald

Sushi etiquette

It's OK to eat it with your fingers. For nigiri (rice with raw seafood), don't put murasaki (soy sauce) on rice. Don't ask the price if it's not on the menu

Health effects

Some raw fish can cure cold sores. Squid reduces cholesterol.

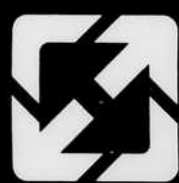
Speaking of sushi

odebana: green tea agari: green tea at the end of the meal
gari: thin-sliced ginger
shari: rice



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Students gather in Riley Hall Friday evening to enjoy sushi (above). Inside the International Hall (left), students line up to get their share of a delicious meal at a low price.



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