

Japanese Premier Products News

March 2011 Issue

"Teriyaki Fish" Tsukudani with Chef Michael Psilakis

at International Restaurant and Foodservice Show 2011



About Products:

TSUKUDANI means fish cooked in soy and sugar. This cuisine originated as a preservation method, developed by the wisdom of fishermen who understood the nutritional value of fish. The sweet and salty taste of Tsukudani goes perfectly with rice and today is indispensable to the Japanese dinner table. People from overseas find the taste similar to teriyaki and often refer to this food as "teriyaki fish."

Since 1924, **HIRAMATSU SEAFOOD COMPANY** has been making traditional Japanese Tsukudani, fish boiled in soy sauce, in Toyohashi City in Aichi Prefecture. Toyohashi is blessed with an abundance of produce from both land and sea, and they have striving each day to ensure that

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the traditional foods of Toyohashi are kept alive in the modern era.

HIRAMATSU SEAFOOD COMPANY uses freshest seafoods and the best ingredients to produce the most flavorful and healthy product possible. Hiramatsu's products received many awards. Recently, in 2010 **AYU KANRONI** received a Grand Gold Medal at the Monde Selection international food competition, which was established in 1961 in Brussels.



AYU is a Japanese fish sometimes referred to as sweetfish. Ayu are in the salmon family and can be found in rivers flowing from Hokkaido down to Kyushu. They are small and grow to just under 8 inches. Ayu are a classic summer food in Japan and considered one of the tastiest of freshwater fish. The Ayu population however, has decreased as suitable habitats for Ayu are being turned into dams.

AYU KANRONI is made from sweet fish and then boiled in soy sauce and sugar and finished with a special sauce. Ayu has been given the name of "sweet fish" because of its sweet flesh and fruit-like aromas, which is enhanced by the addition of soy sauce and other Japanese seasonings.

HIRAMATSU'S AYU are raised in local aquaculture ponds and are delivered alive to Hiramatsu's processing plants when they are in season. The ayu are never frozen in order to produce a product with the best quality. The seasonings are each selected with care and authentically brewed soy sauce.

Newsletter Created by:
La Fuente Services, Inc.
Tel) 718-329-6512
www.la-fuente.us
fuke@la-fuente.us

Photos by Atsushi Tomioka
www.tomistudio.com

CHIRIMEN are baby sardines usually around 1-2 months cooked in soy sauce and sugar. Traditionally eaten with rice, chirimen are known as "Big Calcium", as they are extremely tiny but contain a relatively large amount of calcium. They are often dried or fried and eaten as a snack or used as a seasoning. Both ways of eating sardines, adult or baby, offer antioxidant properties as well as enhance physical energy.

NISHIN is herring, a small oily silver-skinned fish. Nishin is full of Omega-3, Vitamin D, DHA, and EPA. Herring is abundant with cancer-reducing effects and is a common staple in Nordic and Jewish cuisine. It can be pickled or cured. In Japan, nishin is commonly grilled with salt, or in preserved form, tsukudani, nishin is eaten over white rice.

Chef Michael Psilakis



BIOGRAPHY

Known for his traditional and re-inspired Greek

menus, Chef Michael Psilakis is the first generation American in a Greek family. Growing up in Long Island he went on to earn a degree in accounting and finance, but realized his passion for food after serving in a restaurant which he then went on to own, Ecco, in Long Island. It is from there he began to make his mark in the culinary scene.

Chef Psilakis gained his reputation as a rising star chef after opening Onera, a restaurant in the Upper West Side that boasted a menu of reinterpreted Greek classics. The restaurant received glowing reviews and was awarded two stars by The New York Times.

Next, Psilakis teamed up with celebrated restaurateur, Donatella Arpaia, to open Dona. The restaurant was also given two stars by The New York Times, and was named one of Esquire's Best New Restaurant in 2006. The concept of the restaurant was to fuse both their food experiences of being a first generation American by Greek and Italian parents.

Ever challenging himself, Psilakis transformed Onera into Kefi, a more casual and rustic dining experience inspired by the foods he grew up eating.

Psilakis then opened a haute Greek restaurant, Anthos, and earned himself a Michelin star.

In 2010, Chef Psilakis opened his newest venture, Fish Tag, a "seafood parlour" concept that meets a wine bar to a seafood restaurant. The restaurant has received rave reviews since its opening.

ON TSUKUDANI:

When Chef Michael Psilakis first saw Tsukudani he thought it would just be another Asian product that was overly sweet, salty and fishy. But he was surprised to find that he "loved it!"

For Chef Psilakis, this product allowed him to be creative from a culinary perspective, because unlike other products that "pigeon hole you into doing one genre of cooking, I was able to remove that Asian component of it and focus on the fish," he said. The marinade used in Hiramatsu Seafood Company's Tsukudani, is delicate and subtle enough for it to be used in many different ways.

"The product allows you to either rip it open and make it

into almost an instant Asian meal, or if you want to evolve something you have the opportunity," said Chef Psilakis.

Once he tried the wide range of products, Chef Psilakis was faced with the task of choosing which fishes he wanted to use to develop recipes for the Restaurant Show. "I really reflected on the fish from what I know, which is Mediterranean flavors," he said, "but I have an affinity for these fish because in Mediterranean cuisine it is these small oily type fish that dominate."

His goal was to show people how accessible the product was, so he chose fish that Americans would find most familiar. "It is challenging for me as a chef to make someone who doesn't understand something, understand or try something new." He wanted to expose to people that Tsukudani can be more than just another Asian product. For Chef Psilakis, "by breaking down the barriers of eating certain ingredients within their genre then you are finally able to explore the beauty of what it can be."

Most guests at the Restaurant Show did not hesitate to try Chef Psilakis' dishes, and everyone exclaimed that it was "extremely delicious," "beautiful," and people were in agreement that "it is not in any way fishy that you would expect."

It seemed that Chef Psilakis' goal was a success. "I wanted to be able to show Americans what the product can become with a few simple steps. I chose fish that were geared towards the American palate and something that I could really evolve into something American's could associate with." Below is what he came up with:

RECIPES: NISHIN and AYU KANRONI

Herring BLT

with Nishin, Chirimen, and Pork Belly

"You cannot get any more American than a BLT. For someone who isn't familiar with Asian products or maybe doesn't like this style of fish, which is very aggressive and oily--I think you are demystifying it a little bit by getting them to try it in a familiar context."

-Chef Michael Psilakis-

Here, herring is paired with pork belly to create an interesting mix that marries Mediterranean and Japanese cuisine in the form of an American Sandwich. Chirimen, baby sardine, are mixed into the yogurt spread to add

another element that evokes the taste of the ocean.



(Serves 6)

2 packages NISHIN Tsukudani (Cured Herring)
1 pint Sundried Tomatoes
5 tbsp Greek Yogurt
4 tbsp chirimen
3 bunches grilled Black Kale
6 slices Grilled Pork Belly
6 tbsp Shishito & Shiso Jam
1 loaf of Country Bread

Grilled Pork Belly:

5 lb. Pork Belly
8 Qaurrts of Pork Stock or water
2 Heads of Preserved Garlic
4 Shallots
3 Leeks
3 inches Ginger
2 Bunches Scallions
3 tbsp Coriander
3 tbsp Indonesian Long Black Peppercorns
2 cup White Wine

Lightly roast all the ingredients together, add spices and deglaze with white wine, add pork belly & stock. Cover and braise at 325F for 2-3 hours, remove from the liquid and place on a sheet tray and press & chill. Then slice into bacon like strips and grill.

Plancha Roasted Shishito Salsa Verde:

30 Shishitos
5 Aji Panca Peppers

1 White Onion
1 Red Onion (Blistered & Pickled)
3 Heads of Garlic (Sliced in half)
1 Bunch of Cilantro
1 Bunch of Shiso

Toss all the vegetables in olive oil and season with salt & pepper, char on a grill or plancha. Rough chop all ingredients and toss with fresh herbs.

Assembly:

-Grill two pieces of bread, spread greek yogurt and Chirimen mixture on one side & and shishito jam on the other side.
-Place tomato on the greek yogurt, then the kale, Herring & pork belly, and finish with the second slice.

**Mediterranean Sushi
with Ayu and Greek Salad**

This dish was used as an amuse bouche at Fish Tag. "It was really perfect because in true Greek salads there is always some sort of pickled sardine. But using this product a really interesting dynamic was created because there is a little bit of smokey and Asian sweetness instead of straight cured sardines," said Chef Psilakis.

This dish was equally as popular as the BLT, but also a colorful feast for the eyes. People commented that it was "very elegant and light."



(Serves 10)

2 packages AYU Kanroni (Cured Sweet Fish)

Sushi Garni :

Cucumber
Pickled Red Pearl Onion
Shishito Pepper
Green Shiso
Feta Cheese
Thassos Olive
Dried Capers
Crispy Garlic

Pickling Liquid:

2 cup Red Wine Vinegar
1/2 cup Water
1/4 cup Meyer Lemon Juice
3 tbsp Sugar
3 tbsp Salt
3 Clove Garlic
2 Shallots, Sliced
2 Cardamom Cloves
4 tbsp Coriander Seeds
4 tbsp Black Peppercorns

- Put all ingredients into a pot and bring to a boil, pour over peeled pearl onions and cover. Let stand for 2-4 hours.
- For the garlic chips, shave garlic paper thin on a mandolin and bring to a boil in milk and strain
- Lightly fry garlic in oil at 300 degrees until they are just crispy, allow to dry on paper towels.

Sushi Rice:

- 3 cup Sushi Rice
- 3 ¼ cup Water
- 1/3 cup Rice Vinegar
- 3 tsp Sugar
- 1 tsp Salt

- Mix vinegar, sugar & salt and warm just to dissolve and set aside
- Rinse rice 2-3 times in cold water, drain rice and put in rice cooker with water and turn on
- Let rice steam for 15 min after cooking, place in a stainless bowel & mix in the vinegar, salt & sugar mixture.

Assembly:

- Roll the sushi rice into small table spoon balls, and form into a even roll.
- Rinse Sweet Fish and pat dry, slice into even rectangles to fit over rice.
- Cut all garni into petit dice, and arrange over the top of Sweet Fish, finish seasoning with lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil.

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