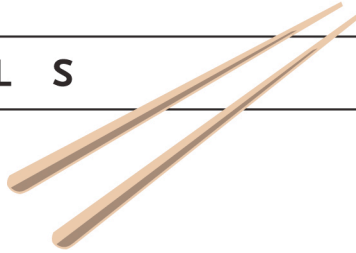


SUSHI MASTERS

F I N A L S

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Who's the Best Sushi Chef in California? Six Chef Finalists to Compete in SushiMasters Competition

Sacramento, Calif. --- In the early 1960s, a few small Japanese restaurants in the Little Tokyo neighborhood of Los Angeles added sushi – a long treasured part of Japan's culture - to their menus and paved the way for the sushi phenomenon sweeping American dining today.

In an effort to identify and honor the best sushi chefs in the state, challenge their mastery of sushi art and style, and celebrate sushi as part of the modern dining experience, the California Rice Commission will present the SushiMasters Finals competition on June 10th, 2008, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., at the Sacramento Convention Center.

Six of California's best sushi chefs – chosen from regional competitions throughout the state – will compete in a live, fast-paced competition where they will roll, slice and prepare a variety of dishes for the coveted title of SushiMaster and other cash awards.

The 2008 finalists include:

Chef Koji Ogawa, Sakura Chaya (formally with the Japanese Kitchen), Fresno

Chef Billy Ngo, KRU Restaurant, Sacramento

Chef Tomaharu Nakamura, Sanraku Four Seasons, San Francisco

Chef Akifusa Tonai, Kyo-ya Restaurant, San Francisco

Chef Takuya Matsuda, Sushi Bar Nippon, San Diego

Chef Aung Soe, Geisha House, Hollywood

One of California's premiere celebrations of Japanese cuisine and culture, the SushiMasters competition will also feature a reception-style sampling of sushi and sake, as well as cultural entertainment.

The event takes place in the Sacramento Valley, the heart of California's rice industry. In fact, every piece of sushi in the United States is made from California rice – a premium medium-grain variety found only in the Sacramento Valley.

To purchase tickets and for additional event information, please visit www.sushimasters.com.

For media inquiries and event passes, please contact Jim Morris of the California Rice Commission at (916) 387-2264 or jmorris@calrice.org.

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