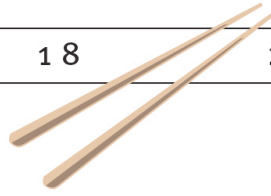


# SUSHI MASTERS

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## **Tickets Now on Sale for 2006 SushiMasters California State Sushi Competition** *California Rice Commission hosts eight top sushi chefs in live sushi competition at Memorial Auditorium*

(Sacramento, CA) – The California Rice Commission has announced that tickets for the 2006 SushiMasters California State Sushi Competition are now on sale. The event will be held Monday, September 18, 2006 at the Memorial Auditorium in Sacramento.

Tickets are available at [sushimasters.com](http://sushimasters.com), [tickets.com](http://tickets.com), the Sacramento Convention Center Box Office and Raley's/Bel Air stores. The event is expected to sell out early.

The price of tickets for the fast-paced evening event are \$50, plus a minimal service charge for online orders. The ticket price includes entry to the live sushi-rolling competition among eight of California's top sushi chefs, catered food – including sushi rolled by Zen Toro of Sacramento – a wine and beer bar, and sake-tasting provided by two Northern California sake companies. Adding to the excitement of the evening, taiko drumming, a traditional sake-barrel breaking ceremony, and a 'mini-sushi competition' between members of the state legislature and local elected officials, and emceed by Chef Taro Arai, Sacramento's local celebrity sushi chef and owner of Mikuni Japanese Restaurant and Sushi Bar. The program concludes with award presentations in the three competitive categories and the overall winner who will be named the SushiMaster 2006. The chefs are competing for a \$5,000 purse, crystal vase and 45-lbs. of super-premium short grain California rice.

There will also be an award presentation and retrospective of internationally-acclaimed Chef Nobu Matsuhisa. Known to the world as "Nobu," Chef Nobu Matsuhisa is the recipient of the California rice industry's 2006 Culinary Innovator Award. Nobu is known for his imaginative sushi-based dishes, and is widely regarded as the driving force behind the evolution of sushi and its booming popularity. Raised in Japan, he is a classically-trained sushi chef known for his innovative talent for incorporating international flavors and regional ingredients into his restaurant menus in Los Angeles, Aspen, Las Vegas and New York, and internationally in

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London, Tokyo and Milan. Nobu uses California rice in all thirteen of his restaurants.

The eight finalists – hailing from Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego and San Francisco – were announced in mid-July. A list of the finalists and additional information about the event are available at [www.sushimasters.com](http://www.sushimasters.com). Media inquiries and requests for media passes to the event should be directed to Beth Horan at [bhoran@calrice.org](mailto:bhoran@calrice.org).

SushiMasters celebrates sushi cuisine – from traditional styles to more innovative creations – and features California rice, which is used in every piece of sushi made in the United States. SushiMasters 2006 sponsors include: CALAG LLC, California Sea Urchin Commission, Dow, Geikkeikan Sake USA, JFC International, Hitomebore – Nishimoto Trading Co. LTD, Japanese Restaurant News, Kikkoman International, Kirin Brewery of America LLC, Kleinfelder, North American Food Dist. Co. Inc., Mutual Trading Co. Inc., Page Design Inc., Port of Oakland, Raley's/BelAir, Sacramento Magazine, Syngenta and Takara Sake USA.

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*The California Rice Commission represents the entire California rice industry, the largest producer of medium grain japonica rice, the variety of rice found in every piece of sushi served in the United States today. For chefs and foodservice professionals, the California rice industry provides high-quality rice used in sushi and a variety of international cuisines. For more information about the California rice industry visit the website at [www.calrice.org](http://www.calrice.org).*