

SUSHI MASTERS

“A professional chef sushi competition series”
*General Information & Entry Criteria for the
2009 SushiMasters Regional Competitions*

Background

In 2005, the California Rice Commission introduced this event, since California is the only state that produces the sushi-quality *premium medium grain rice* used in every sushi restaurant in the country. California is the ideal host for an event that honors the arrival of sushi in the United States.

Invitation to Chefs

On behalf of the California Rice Commission, we would like to invite qualified chefs to enter 2009 SushiMasters regionals. These regional sushi competitions are in development in cities like Washington D.C., Florida, and a major city in California.

Overall winning regional chefs will win a spot to compete at the 2009 SushiMasters Finals in Los Angeles. Winners of the 2009 SushiMasters Finals are eligible for up to \$5,000 in cash prizes and recognition for their excellence and mastery of their trade.

What is SushiMasters?

SushiMasters is a premier event in its fourth year in California and is expanding to Washington D.C., and Florida area. This event brings together the fine traditions of Japanese sushi and cuisine, and the modern innovations that continue to inspire a new generation of sushi chefs and mainstream dining.

The main event is the live sushi making competition between various regions top sushi chefs, while benefiting area charities, where area partners exist. This event attracts top leaders from the foodservice industry, state and local officials, and media representing both food and trade.

In addition, the competitions will continue to honor the contribution of Japanese culture. Your participation in this event is a tribute to their powerful influence on the cuisine and diversity across the country, and particularly in California.

Chef Entry Criteria:

Interested chefs must have the following criteria:

- 1) Must be a professional chef with a minimum of 3 years of experience in sushi preparation at an established restaurant; experienced head or assistant head chef preferred but not required.
- 2) Chef must currently own or work in a restaurant located in California, Washington D.C./Maryland, and Florida, within their geographical region (see regional breakout, Page 5)
- 3) Provide a letter of support from a professional sushi chef such as an employer, mentor or colleague.

- 4) **Chef-owners** of restaurants in business over 5 years are exempt from providing letters, but should provide a reference.
- 5) Proper completion of all entry forms, ingredient list/recipes and photo* of recipe entries, by due date indicated.

*Photographs will be mandatory and do not have to be professionally done. Recipes should be final upon submission. **CHEFS MUST BE ABLE TO MAKE BOTH CATEGORY ENTRIES WITHIN A 30-45 MINUTE TIME LIMIT, THIS EXCLUDES PRE-MADE SAUCES.** Incomplete entries will be disqualified. Please read rules & criteria summary carefully. Photographs will not be returned.

Competition Categories:

The competition will test an accomplished sushi chef's overall sushi making skills. This year's competition will include the following categories:

Category	Description
Morikomi Plate	Traditional sushi combination plate that represents various sushi styles like nigiri, maki, or other regional styles. This display should exhibit your skills in traditional sushi making.
Signature Roll	An original creation unique to your style and restaurant. This display should exhibit your ability in taking sushi to a modern level and test your knowledge in fusing the old and the new.

Regional Awards for Competition Categories:

All competition category entries will be eligible to win an award based on judging of skill and category description/requirements.

Grand Prize	Description	Award
1) 2009 SushiMaster for the region	Best of Show/Finalist (1 winner per region/1-2 winners in California, TBD by regional partners) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest combined number of votes for a chef's Morikomi Plate and Signature Roll entries 	Overall regional winners will win a spot to continue to SM 2009 Final <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$1,000 cash prize and a Crystal Trophy
2) Morikomi Plate	Judge Style Focus: Best Traditional Style (see category descriptions)	
Chef Awards	Overall Skill Description	Prize
Gold Medal	Exceptional	\$500
Silver Medal	Very Good	\$250
Bronze Medal	Good	Balance of chefs who do not place in

		Gold or Silver – no cash award
3) Signature Roll	Judge Style Focus: Best Modern Style (see category descriptions)	
Chef Awards	Overall Skill Description	Prize
Gold Medal	Exceptional	\$500
Silver Medal	Very Good	\$250
Bronze Medal	Good	Balance of chefs who do not place in Gold or Silver – no cash award

In essence, chefs will have the opportunity to win a medal in each category, the regional title/crystal cup, and associated cash prizes.

In addition, each regional competitor will receive exposure through publicity announcements through their regional media outlets and our sushimasters.com website regional page section.

Regional Geography Descriptions:

Below is a listing of competition locations and chef entry coverage areas.

Regional Locations	Chef Entry Coverage Areas	2009 SushiMasters Regional Winners*	Event Dates
Washington D.C. National Cherry Blossom Festival	Washington D.C./Maryland • See regional map, page 5	1) 2009 SushiMasters – Capital Region (1 winner)	April 4, 2009
Miami** Japan Week (Tentative)	Florida, • See regional map, page 5	1) 2009 SushiMasters – Florida State (1 winner)	May 15 or 16 th 2009 – TBD
San Diego** Beer & Sake Festival (Tentative)	California • See regional map, page 5	1) 2009 SushiMasters – California State (1-2 winners to be determined by regional partners)	June 25, 2009- TBD
Final	Coverage	Final Competitor Selections	Date
Los Angeles**	Winners from all regional competitions	Overall winning regional chefs will move on to compete	Mid-September, (19 or 20 th , 2009)

*Regional partner support and resources will determine final region designations.

**Partnerships and logistics in progress, dates are only tentative.

Participation Benefits:

Top chefs selected to compete in their **local region** will receive the following benefits:

- Announcements and exposure in your regional media
- Announcement on sushimasters.com – regional page
- Up to **two** additional event passes for family support; additional passes (tickets) may be purchased, based on availability.

Other General Information for Regional Contestants:

- Travel to all competitions is at the contestants expense
- You will be encouraged to bring one assistant at your own expense, their duties will be:
 - Assistants at the competition will serve to assist you in prep work prior to the competition or as a runner if cooked items are needed.
 - Assistants CANNOT make sushi during the competition; that task is only for the competing chef.
- Be prepared to commit to at least 3 hours prior to competition time, to prepare and organize your ingredients and chef area. In the past, chefs arrival began in the early afternoon and competed in the evening
- Competition duration will be a total of 30 - 45 minutes.
- You will have the opportunity to win a medal in each category and the contest: 1) Morikomi, and 2) Signature Roll. Gold and Silver will be one per chef per category per region, with exception of the Bronze medal. Bronze medals will be awarded to balance of chefs that do not place for a Gold or Silver medal per category /per region.
- The 2009 Regional SushiMaster will be awarded to one chef per region in Capital region, Florida, and California.

Competition Judging:

Voting will be conducted by up to 5-7 judges from food, political, and media sectors, with a heavier emphasis on professional chefs in the mainstream/sushi industry versus other sectors.

Judges will vote on each category based on the following criteria:

- 1) **Morikomi Plate** – Traditional Style, Presentation, Originality, Technical Skills
- 2) **Signature Roll** – Modern Style, Presentation, Originality, Technical Skills, and Taste
- 3) **2009 Regional Sushi Master - Best of Show** – Highest combined number of votes for the Morikomi and Signature Roll entries, based on above criteria. A tie breaking procedure will be in place.

Chefs will have an opportunity to win a medal in each category entry. Final judge voting are confidential and will not be disclosed.

Regional Chef Selection Process:

Once entries are received, SushiMasters management and the regional Advisory Panel will review the most qualified entries. This panel will be primarily composed of professional sushi chefs, Executive chefs and professionals involved in this specialized industry.

Regional finalists will be determined on the following criteria:

- 1) Most Creative Entries for the Signature Roll
- 2) Most qualified experience in the industry by region
- 3) Majority vote by Advisory Panel, if more than two qualified entries exist per market

A total of **four - six** local chefs will be selected to compete in each of regional competition. In addition, an alternate should be selected in the event that a regional finalist decides to drop out prior to the regional competition. If a regional competition does not materialize in your area, the Advisory Panel will select a regional winner.

If there are no qualified entries in a particular area, selection will default to areas where most qualified entries are abundant, or will be referred by a restaurant trade association specializing in the trade.

Tool and Ingredient Provisions:

Regional partnerships and resources will determine tool and ingredient provisions. Please refer to your region's entry forms for further information on ingredients, tools and/or materials that chefs will be required to provide, in addition to kitchen and equipment capabilities.

2009 SushiMaster Finals

Overall winning regional chefs will continue to compete at the 2009 SushiMasters Finals in Los Angeles, CA that will be held in the fall of 2009. Currently, we plan on inviting four winning regional chefs to this final. Travel will be at the expense of the contestants. More details will be forthcoming as we secure regional competitions in your area and secure 2009 SushiMasters Finals, date and location.

Thank you for your consideration - *It is our hope to provide you an excellent venue to demonstrate your artistic talents and to recognize your restaurant for the quality sushi it serves.*

Chef Entry Regional Map

Capitol Regional – April 4, 2009

Chefs that work for restaurants in the following area, can apply for the Capitol region competition, in Washington D.C.:

- District of Columbia
- Maryland

Florida Regional – May 15 or 16th, 2009 - TBD

Chefs that work for restaurants in the following area, can apply for the Florida regional competition, in TBD:

- Florida

California Regional – June 25, 2009 - TBD

Chefs that work for restaurants in the following area, can apply for the California regional competition, in TBD:

- California