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Shiro: Wit, Wisdom And Recipes From A Sushi Pioneer



Synopsis

"Shiro Kashiba stands atop any list defining Japanese food in Seattle. He's been called many things--culinary master, fisherman, mushroom forager and nature lover--but first and foremost he's the "Sushi King." His eponymous debut cookbook is no chef-vanity affair, though, but a riveting and imaginative blending of East and West in the quest for high gastronomic art." #151;Shelf Awareness"A fabulous read for sushi lovers or anyone who enjoys a simple memoir filled with both inspiration and perseverance." -Library JournalShiro Kashiba used to walk to the fishing piers of Seattle in the 1960s to retrieve buckets of unwanted salmon roe and pesky Puget Sound octopus from the fishermen. He'd hike the beaches of the Pacific Northwest to gather geoduck before there was a market for the shellfish. Chef Shiro saw treasure where others saw trash. And through this sushi chef's eyes, readers discover the amazing bounty of the Pacific Northwest. In this revealing cookbook/memoir, Chef Shiro recounts his early days in Tokyo washing dishes and sleeping in the backroom of a prestigious Ginza sushi shop, his decision to come to the United States with little more than an introductory letter, and his ultimate success in Seattle. But the story doesn't stop there. While Shiro settles into his role as Seattle's premier sushi chef, he develops a deep appreciation for the local delicacies of his new home. Soon he begins to replace expensive Japanese imports with cheaper and more delicious local delicacies. Goodbye bluefin, hello albacore. Shiro tells fascinating and often humorous stories about the region's offerings: his first encounters with geoduck (some say he was the first to serve it raw), the world's tastiest sea urchin, hunting for matsutake mushrooms in the Cascades, a twelve-course meal of silvery ocean smelt, and much more. Ann Norton provides mouthwatering photographs of Shiro's seasonal recipes.

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Customer Reviews

Shiro: Wit, Wisdom and Recipes from a Sushi Pioneer embodies sushi within the context of American social and historical change resulting from the 1960's to the present day: the struggle to define life in America as a Japanese person, the history of Japanese restaurants in Seattle and the Pacific Northwest, and his concern for the environment, especially the degradation of the natural world due to modernization and population growth in the Pacific Northwest. In addition to adding "author" to his checklist, Kashiba is a teacher and the successful owner of Shiro's Sushi restaurant in Seattle, Washington and the memoir offers detailed insight and advice on running a reputable sushi counter or restaurant. Published in Seattle by Chin Music Press, a small press publisher focusing on Japanese translation, *Shiro: Wit, Wisdom and Recipes from a Sushi Pioneer* is a noteworthy cultural and culinary memoir certain to please fans of Shiro Kashiba as well as those interested in Japanese food and culture for years to come.

A beautiful small coffee table book and a nice quick read, it's nicely designed with beautiful graphics. Shiro tells the story of his apprenticeship in Tokyo, immigration to Seattle, and success as a sushi pioneer in friendly but spare terms befitting of his heritage and trade. Tips and 25 recipes, organized by season, enhance the value and utility of this gem.

I always thought sushi was a staple in Japan, and I was dead wrong. Turns out that a sushi dinner was more of a luxury in Japan until recently, and that the sushi business is more about artistic preparation than cooking. Shiro Kashiba started out as an apprentice in a sushi restaurant right after finishing high school and had to work without pay for years, the kind of apprenticeship that most American kids would turn up their noses at. He had to spend hours sitting on his knees so he could learn to make sushi in the kneeling position; at traditional parties everyone sits on their knees, even the servers. The dynamic of the book is all about his life in Seattle in the 1960's. At the time you could pull fish right out of the bay and they'd be perfectly safe to eat. The salmon, urchins, seaweed, and geoduck were plentiful, and they became free ingredients for his sushi bar in the city. Only Japanese visitors ever ate there, and it wasn't until the 1980's that non-Japanese became interested. Since then he opened bigger sushi bars, and had to add avocados to his creations, which he calls "fusion." Apparently, avocados

aren't used in Japanese sushi. Shiro Kashiba laments the ruin of Seattle's waterways. The pollution means that he can no longer pull the fish, clams, and seaweed straight from the sea, and the geoduck are being plundered. He also discusses how Americans, to his disgust, dunk sushi in soy sauce. That's the wrong way to do it; soy sauce is meant to be dapped on sushi, not immersed, because it will hide the flavor of the fish and the rice.

Delightful, fun, quirky, inspiring, delicious, hilarious, curious, easy read, eye opening, spellbinding, beautiful, impactful, heart warming, splendiferous, lovely. They say I need 20 words to post a review, you however only need three, read this book.

I was gifted this book and once I had picked it up in the morning I could not put it down until I was done with it in the evening. It is not a long book, but it is wonderfully fascinating. Shiro describes sushi and the Pacific Northwest with such passion and conviction that it really makes you fall in love with it all, all over again. This is not a book that is only about sushi, it encompasses everything around sushi and what it means for Shiro. He talks about why he fell in love with sushi, how it was to immigrate to Seattle, the struggles of being a business owner, and what sushi means to him. Shiro is very conscious about sustainability and he explains what that means for sushi and what it should mean for all of us. He includes a few recipes for what he makes in his restaurant as a bit of a bonus to the rest of the book. I live in Seattle and have been to Shiro's many times. This book so wonderfully captures the heart and soul of Shiro. The words and photos in this book are so beautiful that it is impossible for me not to recommend the book. This book is a lot more than sushi, so I think it would be a great read for a lot of people. I have finished the book 3 days ago and have already started lending it out so that more people can read it. I recommend it for the sushi lovers, the pacific northwest lovers, the sustainably minded, and the American dreamers.

If you enjoy eating raw fish wrapped in rice and seaweed and live in the Pacific Northwest, there's a pretty good chance Shiro Kashiba has something to do with that. This is the autobiography of the Tokyo trained Kashiba who settled in Seattle in the sixties and began using local delicacies, and as a result initiated the sushi boom in the region. The book is also filled with recipes, and dozens of truly beautiful and illuminating photographs. The book design itself is stunning and the story, inspirational. The book is truly fascinating and highly recommended.

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