

SALMON ROULADE

My husband and I practically live at the *sushi* bar across the street. We've spent countless hours watching Osamu, the owner and chef, prepare hundreds of pieces of *sushi* and rolls. Although I'm reluctant to make raw fish rolls on my own, knowing full well they'll never be as good as Osamu's, watching him inspired this idea for a smoked salmon roulade.

This is a great make-ahead dish that will help keep your stress level down if you're throwing a big party. I always have a few of these pre-made and standing by in the freezer for times when unexpected guests show up, so you might want to double or triple the recipe once you get the hang of it and store some in the freezer too. When ready to serve, pull one from the freezer, let it thaw for about five minutes. It will still be too cold to eat, but firm enough to slice. By the time you're done slicing them, they'll be nearly thawed and ready to dress and serve.

INGREDIENTS

12 oz. package smoked salmon
1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 cup whipped cream cheese
1 tablespoon lemon or orange zest
1 teaspoon chives
1 scallion, chopped
1 cucumber, sliced in 1/4" pieces□

FOR GARNISH

Red Caviar
Chives, chopped
Sliced avocado (optional)
Everything Bagel Topping□ (optional)

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

1 *sushi* rolling mat or soft placemat

Makes 2 roulades

PREPARATION

Place a sheet of plastic wrap over a *sushi* bamboo mat. Lay out 1/2 of the smoked salmon slices to create an 8 x 8" square of salmon, only overlapping the salmon edges slightly.

In a bowl, combine sour cream, cream cheese, zest, chives & scallion.

Thinly spread a third of the sour cream mixture over the smoked salmon, leaving about a 1/2 inch border of salmon.□

Starting at the bottom, tightly roll up the smoked salmon, as if making a *sushi* roll. Use the plastic to lift and roll, making sure not to let the plastic get caught in the roll itself. Once the roll is complete, place the *sushi* mat over the roll and clamp your hands over it, tightening the roll.

Take a clean piece of plastic wrap and tightly cover the roll. Freeze roll for at least 20 minutes before cutting. (If planning to store for longer, cover wrapped roll with aluminum foil and place in Ziploc freezer bag.)

□Repeat process for 2nd roll.

To serve, slice salmon rolls into 3/8" pieces and place on cucumber slices. Put a dollop of leftover sour cheese mixture on top. Garnish with red caviar and chives.

Or if you want to dress up your Sunday bagels and lox spread, schmear some more cream cheese on half a bagel. Place six to seven slices of roulade on top. Garnish with avocado slices and Everything Bagel topping mix.