



Rice Bowls with Cucumber, Avocado, and Smoked Fish

Serves 4

- 1 ½ cups short-grain rice (sometimes sold as sushi rice)
- 2 medium cucumbers (5 to 6 ounces each)
- Fine sea salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 Hass avocados, cut into ½-inch dice
- 1 lemon
- One 8-ounce package smoked trout or mackerel
- Toasted sesame seeds or furikake seasoning, for serving
- Sliced chives or scallion greens (optional), for serving

Wash and cook the rice

Short-grain rice can benefit from a good rinse. You can either put it in a bowl, cover it with water, and wash it in several changes of water, until the water is a bit more clear, or put it in a sieve and rinse it well that way.

Either way, be sure to drain it well.

Transfer the washed rice to a medium heavy saucepan with a lid. Cover with 2 cups water (or whatever is recommended on the package) and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot tightly, and cook for 10 minutes (or according to the package instructions). Turn off the heat and let stand for 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, quick-pickle the cucumbers

Thinly slice the cucumbers into rounds, or if they are thick, cut the cucumbers in half lengthwise, then thinly slice into half moons.

In a bowl, toss the cucumbers with 1 teaspoon salt and the sugar and let stand for 10 minutes.

Prep the avocado

Dice the avocado. To do so: Cut the avocado in half lengthwise, then use a spoon to remove the pit. Use the front part of your knife to cut the avocado flesh into lengthwise slices, then cut the avocado halves in half lengthwise through the skin. Peel off the skin, then cut the avocado flesh crosswise.

Transfer the diced avocado to a bowl and toss with 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice and a pinch of salt.

Assemble the rice bowls and serve

Remove the skin from the smoked fish and flake the flesh.

Scoop the rice into bowls. Drain any excess liquid off the cucumbers. Arrange the cucumber, avocado, and smoked fish on top of the rice. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and chives, if using, and serve.

The short version

- Cook the rice.
- Slice the cucumber and toss with 1 teaspoon salt and 1 teaspoon sugar and let stand 10 minutes. (Drain off any excess liquid.)
- Dice the avocado and toss with 2 tablespoons lemon juice and a pinch of salt.
- Flake the fish. Scoop the rice into bowls and top with the fish, cucumber, and avocado. Sprinkle with sesame seeds and chives, if using.

Fun for kids

- Toss the cucumbers with salt and sugar.
- Squeeze the lemon.
- Toss the lemon with avocado.
- Flake the fish.
- Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Swaps

- You could swap the smoked trout or mackerel for hot-smoked salmon or try slabs of smoked or braised tofu.
- Instead of cucumber, use sliced radishes or baby turnips.
- Instead of white rice, use brown rice or any whole grain you like.

Bonus points

- If you've got a bumper crop of tomatoes, dice them and toss with the avocado or add them in their own pile to the bowl.
- If you want to add some heat, serve with chili-garlic sauce.
- For more protein, add a jammy-cooked egg. (Boil in the shell for 8 minutes.) Or add shelled edamame.