

Shiso Spicy Tuna Tempura (aka Dragon Scales)

<http://userealbutter.com/2012/10/10/shiso-spicy-tuna-tempura-recipe/>

inspired by The Lobar in Crested Butte, Colorado

8 oz. sashimi grade tuna (*maguro*)

1-2 tbsps mayonnaise

sriracha to taste

~24 shiso leaves, washed and patted dry

1/4 cup masago or tobiko (capelin or flying fish roe), optional for the raw version

tempura batter

1 cup ice water

1 large egg, beaten

1 cup flour

1/8 tsp baking soda

tempura dipping sauce

1 cup dashi stock

1/4 cup mirin

1/4 cup soy sauce

1/2 tbsp sugar

Make the spicy tuna filling: Chop the raw tuna and stir in 1-2 tablespoons of mayonnaise until desired consistency. Add sriracha sauce to taste (make this as spicy or unspicy as you like).

Make the tempura batter: Combine the ice water and the beaten egg in a medium bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the flour and baking soda until blended. Pour the dry mix into the wet ingredients and stir together. It's okay if it is lumpy. Store the batter in the refrigerator until you are ready to use it.

Make the tempura dipping sauce: Place all ingredients in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Remove from heat and set aside.

Frying and assembly: There are two ways to make this. The first way is to have the spicy tuna raw. The second way is to have the spicy tuna cooked. Either way, heat two inches of vegetable oil in a deep saucepan to 350°F.

First way (raw tuna): Dip a shiso leaf in the tempura batter so it is completely coated. I find it helps maintain the shape of the leaf if you hold it by the tip (not the stem) and lower it into the hot oil. Repeat with a few more leaves, but don't crowd them in the pan. When the batter turns a light golden color, flip the leaves and fry until the other side is golden in color. This takes less than a minute. Remove the shiso leaves from the oil and set on paper towels or a cooling rack to drain. When all of the leaves are done, take one leaf and spread a tablespoon of spicy tuna filling on it. Spread a 1/2 teaspoon of fish roe on the tuna (optional). Sandwich the filling with a second tempura shiso leaf.

Serve with tempura dipping sauce. Sprinkle togarashi (Japanese chili pepper condiment) over the appetizers before serving (optional).

Second way (cooked tuna): Drop a tablespoon of the spicy tuna in the center of a shiso leaf. Sandwich the tuna with a second shiso leaf. Holding the sandwich by the stems, carefully dip the entire thing into the tempura batter, making sure it is entirely coated. Gently lower it into the hot oil and let fry until light golden in color. Flip and fry another 20-30 seconds. Remove to a paper towel or a cooling rack to drain. Repeat for the rest of the shiso leaves. Serve with tempura dipping sauce. Optional: Sprinkle togarashi (Japanese chili pepper condiment) over the appetizers before serving. Makes approximately 12 (depends on how many leaves you have, how big they are, and how much tuna you use for each pair).