



Shingiko Goma-ae/Japanese Chrysanthemum Tofu Spread Wrap

The chrysanthemum flower is revered in Japanese culture, a symbol of long life, and for the royalty of the imperial family—it is pictured on Japan's Imperial Seal. One of the five ancient sacred festivals is national chrysanthemum day.

Big bunch of chrysanthemum leaves, tough stems cut off
3 tablespoons (about) white sesame seeds (or, if already toasted, omit this step from the recipe).
2 oz soft tofu
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1 teaspoon soy sauce
Salt to taste
Sugar to taste—about 1/2-1 teaspoons
About 1-2 tablespoons peanut butter/almond butter/Chinese sesame paste
Seaweed snacks, for wrapping around the mixture, sandwich-like

1. Cut the chrysanthemums into bite sized pieces and blanch for no more than 30 seconds. Remove from the hot water, place in ice water, let cool, then drain and pat/blot dry. Set aside.
2. Toast the sesame seeds until lightly golden, then allow to cool for a few minutes. Place in the suribachi, and coarsely crush the seeds until they form a sort of meal texture.
3. Crush/puree/mash the chrysanthemum leaves with the soft tofu, and sesame seeds, and when it forms a fluffy paste, add the sesame oil, soy sauce, salt and sugar, then work in the nut butter/sesame paste of choice.
4. Serve in a small bowl with a stack of crisp seaweed wafers as dippers.