

# Q&A

This month's Halal Kitchen by Yvonne Maffei addresses sushi and pork belly substitutes.



*I've read that mirin cooking wine is used to make sushi. Is it halal? They say the alcohol content evaporates right away while cooking. Also, in the first place, is sushi halal?*

Mirin is a sweet rice wine commonly used in Japanese cooking. I prefer not to use any alcohol in my cooking, even in miniscule amounts, as it does not completely cook off even after long periods of cooking time. As a halal substitute, you could use a high quality white grape juice instead, as its sweetness mirrors the sweetness of mirin without the alcohol. As far as sushi being halal, so long as there is no pork or alcohol or any other impermissible or doubtful ingredients in it, there shouldn't be any issues with it. For those who don't eat shellfish, they would have to inquire about the type of fish used, as shrimp is a common ingredient in sushi wraps.

**What is a good halal substitute for pork belly?**

Pork belly is fatty and typically sweet in flavor. A good halal substitute for this dish is to choose another type of meat that is also high in fat (the good kind), keeping it moist and quite tasty. Choose from birds

like duck or goose prepared as "bacon" as well as grass-fed beef bacon, all of which are genuinely good substitutes, especially when sourced locally and organically. From there, you can follow a recipe by replacing your halal substitutes for the pork suggested.

**Do you have any cooking-related questions for Sister Yvonne? Email her on [info@myhalalkitchen.com](mailto:info@myhalalkitchen.com) with 'SISTERS Column Q&A' in the subject line.**