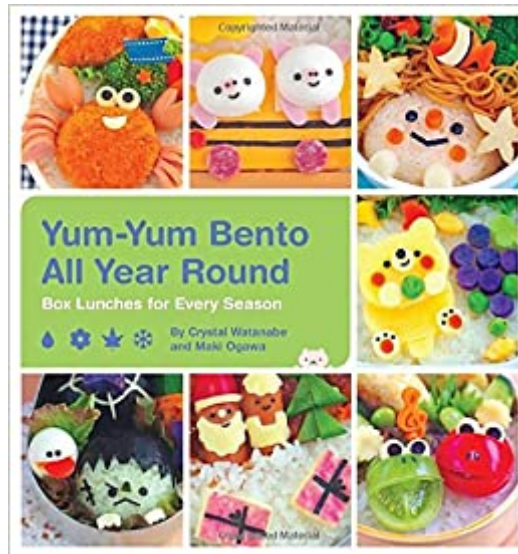




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Yum-Yum Bento All Year Round: Box Lunches For Every Season



Synopsis

Yum-Yum Bento is back with 52 more easy seasonal-themed bento lunches. From the depths of winter to the height of summer, a beautiful lunch can brighten any day. Japanese bento boxes are portable and pretty meals packed with healthy portions and plenty of cheer. And they're outrageously cute! With Yum-Yum Bento All Year Round, you'll fall in love with 52 tasty, in-season lunches. Spring into make-ahead action with packing tips, tutorials, side dish recipes, and more. From summer Sunshine Smiles to Christmas Gingerbread Friends, there's a bento just perfect for your lunchbox today. Selections from the Table of Contents: Springtime Fun: Easter Chicks Dainty Daffodils Green Pea Brothers Summertime Splash: Rainbow Sushi Cheerful Crab Seashell Fun Fall Frenzy: A Pear Anywhere Fried Rice Jack-o-Lantern Pumpkin Twins Winter Wonderland: Tomato Santas Rudolph the Red-Nosed Bagel Penguin Elves

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Customer Reviews

I've always doubted my ability to put together a cute bento lunch because it looks so complicated, but Crystal and Maki make it easy by breaking everything down step-by-step. And did I mention the ideas in this book are absolutely adorable? Because they are! —Kiersten Frase, founding editor of Oh My Veggies
A thoroughly kitchen cook friendly instructional guide to making bento boxed lunches that are suited to each season of the year. Yum-Yum Bento All Year Round is the perfect addition to any personal, family, or community library cookbook collection. —Midwest

Book Review – These two Bento-Box aficionados have raised the bar for this lunch box art form another notch. Small, healthy portions, dressed up and packed for portability, these small lunch boxes are a source of delight for young and old alike. – Anna Jedrzewski, *Retailing Insight*

CRYSTAL WATANABE (aka Pikko) started making bento boxes for herself as a way to eat small healthy portions. She enjoyed it so much that she now shares her hobby with bento fans worldwide. She lives in Hawaii with her husband and two children. MAKI OGAWA (aka Luckysundae) is a Japanese mom who loves to make cute bento boxes for her two young boys, her husband, and herself. She shares her creations on her blog *Cute Obento*.

I chose this book because my elderly mother has dementia, and I was told she will probably need finger food as she progresses. Bento style food looks like fun and there are many options for perfectly sized finger foods. The book may be designed for children's lunch boxes, but it will also be fun for a couple of old ladies! The recipes feature a lot of rice and vegetables prepared in attractive ways that are almost too cute to eat. Almost all of the recipes include meat. I read reviews of their previous cookbook and noticed a lot of complaints about high usage of processed meats, such as hot dogs and spam. Most of the meat recipes in this new cookbook are made with fresh meat. There are about a dozen recipes that call for cocktail weenies, hot dogs, and sausage. For the most part, the recipes include natural meats. Even the colored rice is tinted with natural ingredients such as finely grated carrots or mashed purple potatoes. I was worried there would be hard to find ingredients in the recipes, but was happy to see that almost every ingredient listed is easily available at my local supermarket. The only ingredient I won't be able to find is quail eggs, which is a shame because they are featured in so many cute variations! Darling little lady bugs, flowers, and chicks. I ordered a variety of cutters, and Mom helped me make a few recipes. She had so much fun! We don't eat a lot of meat, but it was easy to make substitutions. For example, we made the mummies on page 92 and used sticks of leftover glazed tofu instead of cocktail sausages. We didn't put them in bento boxes, but we served them with broccoli florets and carrots which were easy to pick up. Practicing with Mom now has been a good experience for both of us. Learning how to make meals fun and easy to eat will be helpful later if or when the need arises.

This is a gem of a book. It is cheerful, creative and well laid out as a how-to. It makes you want to put more effort into your food. Such wonderful upbeat and charming bento ideas. I was bedazzled. My only warning is that the scale of many of these ideas relies upon access to quail

eggs. I guess you could use a radish or a cheese ball but quail eggs are not readily available in my region. You could certainly fall in love with these creations and not be able to duplicate them. We checked with 3 grocery stores in the area and only one was a "maybe" about special ordering them. That shape is so important to so many of the recipes that it helps to be aware of item availability going in. Other than that, delightful book.

Ok, I don't mean to make fun re: the obsessive part, but you've got to admit, only people with, um..., some time on their hands can make these amazing and "precious" food art projects for their loved ones (or themselves) for lunch. I purchased book one of this series years ago, and I actually attempted to make one of the projects to feed my then 6 and 8 yos lunch. After feeling pride and relief for my mostly successful work product (hotdogs that looked like little octopuses in a soup- if you cut legs into 1/2 a hotdog and boil, the legs curl up), my youngest refused to eat them and started to cry because his older sister ate several of the creatures and "killed" them. .. Well, that ended that.... I tried one more time to make cute chicks w rice about a month later, but they refused to eat them and played with them instead. oh well. I saw this second book, and really couldn't help myself. I have to say, my kids are older now, and I'm way too tired to be making fanciful lunch creatures in general, but I just really love these books and the creative art. I have these in my "library" and occasionally look at the pictures for fun. They actually make good coffee table books. Maybe one day I will feel extremely ambitious and get a "nori punch" - or a 1/8-inch hole punch to make those little seaweed eyes and start decorating!

Oh, the bento lunch ideas in this book are just so kawaii (cute)! Chock full of wonderfully colorful pictures and easy to follow directions, you'll have a very happy child if you use this book. The ingredients are kid friendly (very rice dependent) and so cheerfully cute. If you live in a rural area, you may have a problem finding some of the ingredients (i.e. quail eggs) and you'll want a few tools like colorful picks and cutters with fun shapes. However, if you don't have all that, I wouldn't worry. There are enough recipes that don't call for those and you can always improvise if you need to. If you have a reluctant eater, this book can help and it definitely can make a school lunch a lot more fun! An absolutely wonderful book!

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