

Urui Meat Roll-Ups

うるいの肉巻き *Urui no Niku Maki*



The clean, almost grassy-like, taste of *urui* accommodates the rich fattiness of pork belly very well. I like to season these rolls with just salt and pepper, though some may appreciate the spiciness of a dab of *yuzu koshō* added at the last moment. These rolls pack easily into *obentō* and are also a welcome nibble with beer, wine or *saké*.

Makes **6 rolls**, each to be cut in half on the diagonal.

12-18 stalks *URUI* (*Hosta sieboldiana*), about 200 grams/7 ounces
6 thin slices (25 cm/10 inches) pork belly, weighting about 170 grams/6 ounces total
1 teaspoon vegetable oil
Salt & pepper OR 1/2 teaspoon *yuzu koshō*



Most *urui* sold in Japan has been hothouse cultivated and come pre-packed having been rinsed and trimmed. If you are sourcing them from a forager quickly rinse (there may be gravely dirt caught between the blades) and towel dry before trimming the roots.

Create rolls by laying out a single strip of pork belly on your board and laying a cluster of *urui* (2 or 3 stalks) on top. Wind the meat smoothly, snugly around the *urui*; place seam side down to rest for a moment before searing.

Heat a skillet over high heat. Add the oil and when shimmering (but not smoking) add the rolls in a single layer, seam side down. Sear, undisturbed for 1 minute or until the meat has begun to color and shrink slightly making the rolls snug bundles.

Sprinkle with salt and pepper and turn the rolls to sear the other surfaces – about 1 minute. Cover the skillet for about 45 seconds (this enables the meat to be cooked throughly).

Remove the lid, raise the heat and sear, jiggling the skillet to allow excess moisture to evaporate.

Let the rolls cool a bit in the skillet before cutting in half on the diagonal. Serve warm or let cool completely.

