



kitchen kids

Just imagine making your own bread and crepes, cakes and chocolate, ice cream and sushi rolls. "Cooking toys" that help kids make real treats and meals like these are selling like hot cakes in Japan, especially among young girls.

It all started in July 2007, when toymaker Bandai launched Norimaki Makki, a sushi roll maker that helps little fingers make real sushi with ease. The toy became a huge hit, selling 150,000 units in its first year. A new, more sophisticated addition to

the series called Futomaki Makki lets children make sushi rolls in three different sizes. By incorporating very thinly-rolled sushi into thicker rolls, children can make snacks featuring a whole range of designs, including animals such as pigs and cats as well as hearts and flowers.

In September 2008 Megahouse Corporation launched its Petit Cake Buffet, which lets kids create their own cupcakes in a few simple steps: make batter from ready-made pancake mix, pop it into cups,

HOW TO MAKE A SPECIAL SUSHI ROLL:



Place ingredients on the sheet and turn the handle. Insert the *nori* (seaweed sheet) and turn the handle again to make a thin roll.



Place this roll into the heart mold to make a heart-shaped sushi log.



Put rice around the heart-shaped log to create a thick sushi roll.



Enjoy your "heart roll"!

FACING: A box lunch prepared with the Futomaki Makki sushi roll maker. Kids love thick sushi roles featuring shapes such as flowers, hearts and bears.

BELOW: Petit Cake Buffet helps you create cute cupcakes decorated with cream.



and heat in a microwave. Use the separately-sold Funwari Whip Creamer to decorate the cakes with whipped cream and you have treats fit for hosting a tea party.

Other popular cooking toys from big-name manufacturers include Konepan, a Megahouse bread maker for baking cream buns and animal-shaped loaves in your own oven; Takara Tomy's Gigapurin for whipping up a giant custard pudding to feed 20; and the Kururin Ice Kurin ice cream maker from Sega Toys—just put all the ingredients in and turn the handle for 15 minutes to get real ice cream.

Cooking toys help parents and children enjoy making real snacks and meals together. Given the attention recently being paid to food safety, what better way for kids to learn about food?

