

# Epicurean Episodes



**T**HE DINING DETECTIVES ALWAYS GET EXCITED WHEN A NEW RESTAURANT OPENS IN PETALUMA. We try to wait... but almost always arrive for dinner soon after the grand opening. Hiro's Japanese Restaurant recently opened in the heart of Historic Downtown Petaluma on Petaluma Boulevard North. The owner, Hiro Yamamoto, who recently moved here from Japan, met us at the entrance to his beautiful new restaurant, smiling and excited to see us as if we were old friends.

The decor at Hiro's is fabulous and sophisticated, featuring Japanese sculpture art by Naoki Takenouchi. It was obvious that Hiro had given great attention to detail in the design of the restaurant, which then carried on to a theme of "excitement" for the food.

You can enjoy a Sake Cocktail at the bar and then move on to the Sushi Bar or lovely table dining in the rear of the restaurant. We were escorted to our table by Hiro's daughter, Keiko and we were looking forward to a treat this evening... high grade Japanese cuisine from the Award Winning Executive Chef, Gen Mizoguchi. The restaurant has been very busy since opening day and you could feel the exuberance from the staff. They knew the quality of the dining experience we were about to

enjoy was going to be equal to the "best of Japan." We opted to start out with drinks and looked forward to our evening.

## SAKE COCKTAILS

Each cocktail was delicious, pleasing to the palate and pleasant to the eye. Sake Cosmopolitan This Sake, pineapple and a splash of cranberry drink was shaken and served up.

## White Peach Bellini

This Sake and white peaches drink was blended and served up topped with champagne.

## Sake Lemon Drop

This Sake, fresh lemon and simple syrup drink was shaken and served up.

## Umai Mango Ice

This Sake and mango drink was blended to icy perfection.

## PREMIUM SAKE

Hiro's has over 20 cold and hot Sakes to choose from.

We tried Hananomai-Shizouka served in a glass with a cedar Masu. The Sake is poured at the table. Over pouring, which is captured in the Cedar Masuu (wooden cedar box), displays the generosity of the host. Ours was overflowing.

## WINES

The wine list is very focused and has some excellent choices from around the world. Sonoma and Napa are featured, but one can experience wines from Spain and France as well. We tasted the 2001 Mill Creek, Dry Creek Valley Sauvignon Blanc which

was light and paired well with the Dragon Roll. The 1998 Marques de Caceres Rioja, Spain pairs perfectly with the Salmon Teriyaki.

## APPETIZERS

Teriyaki Chicken Wings lightly glazed with Hiro's Teriyaki Sauce These were large and delicious with the best teriyaki sauce! Wonderful! A perfect way to start your Hiro's Dining Experience.

## SOUP

Miso Soup Always a favorite of ours, this had a terrific consistency and flavor.

## SALADS

Tofu Spinach Salad Extra firm tofu and steamed spinach with ponzu dressing. You'll be glad you tasted this excellent salad.

## MAKIMONO DRAGON ROLL

Shrimp tempura with unagi, avocado and tobiko on the outside, drizzled with sweet unagi sauce This dish had a lovely presentation and a superior taste and freshness. It was Food Art.

## SUSHI & SASHIMI

The truest test of a Japanese restaurant is in the freshness of the Sushi. With the Sushi Bar in the center of the restaurant you know that it is the main attraction here at Hiro's. We tried the Hamachi (yellow tail), Hotate (scallops), Saba (mackerel), Sake (salmon), Toro (tuna belly), and Ama-Ebi (sweet prawn). The superior freshness made all the Sushi and Sashimi delicious.

## ENTREES

Salmon Teriyaki Fresh salmon sautéed with basil, baby dill, shiso, and whole garlic cloves, lightly glazed with Hiro's teriyaki, a lighter reduction sauce. This family recipe includes a special Japanese sugar that brought out the magnificent flavors of the salmon. The sautéed garlic and basil accented the salmon and truly made this a special dish.

## TEMPURA

Assorted fresh vegetables and shrimp, battered and deep fried with beautiful presentation. It is unique to see asparagus, which we love, included in tempura.

## DESSERTS

Vanilla Bean Ice Cream with Chocolate Wontons This was a unique and delicious des-

# THE DINING DETECTIVES

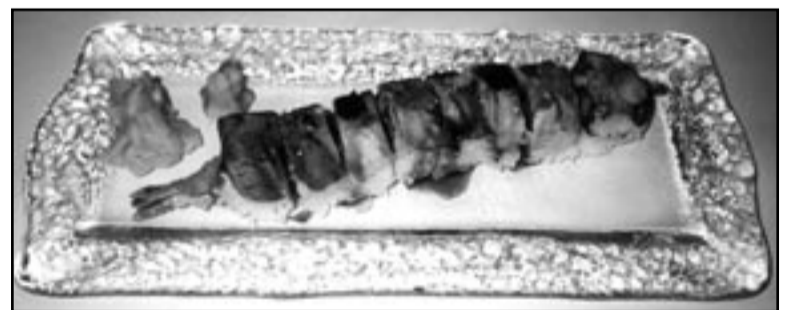
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The won tons were crisp and filled with warm chocolate which oozed out and melded perfectly with the ice cream. Save room for this, you'll be glad you did.

We had a lovely dinner at Hiro's Japanese Restaurant. Hiro Yamamoto has brought the best of Japan to Petaluma! The décor was sophisticated and comfortable, the service was extremely professional and friendly and the cuisine was fresh, fabulous and authentic. If you're looking for a Japanese restaurant

which is definitely a cut above—you will love it at Hiro's. Hiro Yamamoto has a winner in Downtown Petaluma!



Hiro's Makimono Dragon Roll was "Food Art."



Vanilla Bean Ice Cream with Chocolate Wontons—crisp won tons filled with warm chocolate which oozed out and melded perfectly with the ice cream.



HIRO'S JAPANESE RESTAURANT  
107 Petaluma Boulevard No., Petaluma, CA 94952  
www.HirosRestaurant.com  
PHONE: 707-763-2300

LUNCH—Tuesday–Saturday 12 p.m.–2:30 p.m.  
DINNER—Tuesday–Sunday From 5 p.m.

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