

## Independent, locally owned and operated!

www.lamorindaweekly.com 925-377-0977

Published June 24th, 2009

## Kirin Sushi Opens in Moraga

By Rosylyn Aragones Stenzel



Sushi Sam uses a torch to demonstrate Tataki, meaning grilled on the surface. This brings out the flavor in the fish being cooked on the outside and raw on the inside Photo Rosylyn Aragones Stenzel

New to the restaurant scene in Moraga is Kirin Sushi located near the Rheem Theatre in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center. Kirin Sushi opened on May 28th, and the name Kirin is in reference to the Kirin dragon, a mythical creature symbolizing prosperity in Asian culture. Sam Xu or better known as "Sushi Sam" is owner and solo sushi chef. Sushi Sam brings with him over 25 years of experience in making sushi. Originally from Hong Kong, he trained in Japan to become a sushi chef. After working in New York, he came to the Bay Area in 1991 and began working as a consultant helping to set up sushi restaurants, most recently in Mountain View and Palo Alto. After helping start up a Moraga restaurant, Sushi Sam decided to open up his own sushi restaurant in Moraga. When asked why he chose Moraga he says, "The location is good, nice neighborhoods, and people are so friendly." He marvels that many have stopped by to welcome him as he was setting up his restaurant.

Besides sushi, Kirin Sushi offers a variety of traditional Japanese dishes including entrgs such as Beef Teriyaki, Chicken Katsu, Udon (noodles) and Shrimp Tempura plus a long list of appetizers. Also there is a good selection of Japanese wine, beer and Sake. But there is no question that sushi is the specialty of the house. Kirin Sushi is different than most sushi restaurants in that Japanese

Fusion Sushi is featured, blending new and traditional ideas in making and creating sushi. Sushi Sam insists on the best quality and takes freshness very seriously. He buys only top grade; the best, freshest fish and seafood. It is delivered almost every day to his restaurant. In addition he goes to San Francisco to shop the markets and to find inspiration. He looks at what is fresh and decides on what the daily special will be. One way for customers to be sure to get the best of the day, advises Sushi Sam, is to try an Omakase meal. Omakase means trust or more specifically, to put the dining experience in the hands of the sushi chef who personally selects everything from the appetizer to the entrg to the dessert.

When asked if he enjoys making sushi, Sushi Sam speaks as an artist, "Making sushi is where my ideas can find life, and I can be creative."

Kirin Sushi is located at 356 Park Street in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center in Moraga. They're open for lunch, Tuesday - Saturday, 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. and for dinner, Tuesday - Sunday, 4:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. For more information call 925/376-2872 or visit www.kirinsushi.us.

Reach the reporter at: <a href="mailto:info@lamorindaweekly.com">info@lamorindaweekly.com</a>

Copyright (a) Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA