

## Published September 16th, 2009 Fuz Opens in Lafayette By Sophie Braccini



Fuz team (left to right): Chef/owner Stephen Dill, partner Max Karasani, and chef Jake Barnes Photo Sophie Braccini

Stephen Dill is happy; he is living his dream, opening his first restaurant with the French/Japanese flavor that he's created as a result of years of culinary experience. "The French create subtle flavors and have mastered the art of making sauces to a science; the Japanese take fish cutting to a surgery level. They go well together." For the past 14 years Dill was a Sushi Chef in San Francisco. He has traveled, practicing and learning, all over the world. The result is an innovative menu that offers both meat and fish entrees such as chili-lime chicken saut•and firecracker grilled Alaska salmon, along with innovative sushi rolls such as "Don't Ask" that has soft shell crab with avocado in the inside and hamachi, avocado, tobiko, green onion and spicy mayo on the outside. Dill says he chose Lafayette to open his first business, with partner Max Korasani, because of the peaceful atmosphere of the town. "I've known this community for some time," he said, "it is family oriented, sophisticated and very friendly." Dill reports having a very good experience dealing with the city, county and police to set up shop.

"Everyone was most helpful and every time I needed advice, someone was ready to support me," he states. Now Dill and Korasani's job is to please the new community they wish to serve. Dill pays close attention to his ingredients and makes sure that the fish he buys is wild when in season, and has been harvested young enough to minimize the mercury content. Korasani highlights the happy hour drink deals, starting at 3:00p.m., and other offerings at the full sports bar.

The restaurant opened on August 28. "We are still in a phase of soft opening," says Dill, the grand opening will take place at the end of September."

At the same time, Dill will start another interesting feature of the business: a 6-week series of cooking lessons that will take participants all over the world. "We want to show people how to cook healthy and tasty meals in half an hour," explains Dill. The course will cost \$500 and is open to adults and motivated teens. After completing the six classes to become "Fuz certified," students will have the opportunity to spend a day cooking with either Stephen Dill at the sushi bar or with Jake Barnes, the young chef in the traditional kitchen. For details go to http://www.fuzrestaurant.com/.

Fuz is located at 3707 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette; phone 299-9930.

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

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