



Tuna maki with microgreens and spicy mayo

Red snapper sashimi with spicy radish sauce and Japanese lime

NEW IN TOWN Sashimi, Deluxe

Chef Ting San may have fumbled by naming his new South End sushi place after its Brookline sibling. Oishii Sushi's zealous fans—the raw-fictionados who blithely camp out for hours at the tiny Chestnut Hill spot hoping to snag one of just 13 seats (not a statistics major, clearly, among them)—are in for a shock if they're expecting a chain-style duplicate. Hyper-fresh fish aside, the two restaurants couldn't have less in common—starting with the sign, which Oishii Boston lacks altogether. "We're keeping it secret," Ting says. "Once the neighbors figure out we're here, they will come."

Those who find the place (as you retrace the path between Red Fez and Dunkin' Donuts, it's that frosted-glass door you keep ignoring) will note bigger differences. "You could fit the entire Brookline restaurant inside the foyer," Ting reckons, accurately enough. The foyer leads to a 20-seat lounge—serving wine, beer, and sake—and a dining room with seating for 80. One floor below are two additional seating areas, one reserved for patrons dining omakase (chef's tasting) style. Ting hopes the generous capacity creates an "unrushed" vibe, which he admits isn't the Brookline location's forte: "We created this place because we saw our customers in pain." A stark, minimalist interior of polished concrete and back-lit screens—so ruthlessly modern it makes the

John Hancock look like a cluttered neo-Victorian—is softened only by the occasional shadow box displaying a bamboo plant or lotus blossom.

Oh, and there's food, too. Once again, Ting one-ups Brookline by jettisoning pedestrian items like Alaska rolls, caterpillar maki, and yellowtail-anything (only bluefin tuna here). If the South End is on the cusp of becoming the priciest dining scene in town, Oishii Boston may push it over the top. Specialty maki start at \$11 (for a California roll that substitutes real crab-meat for "krab"), but most are in the \$18–\$25 range, as is the "Innovated Specialty Sashimi" menu, which pairs slices of raw fish with deluxe ingredients like osetra caviar, shaved truffles and fresh wasabi. Full-on entrées like pan-seared sea scallops with morels (\$40), toro don (fatty-tuna slices served on sushi rice, \$45) and grilled Kobe beef (\$60) run considerably higher.

Ting says the steep prices stem not just from luxury cuts of fish and meat, but also from the cost of wrangling rare Japanese ingredients like menegi (baby onion sprouts) and kinome (peppercorn flowers)—items he's managed to procure only recently. "Once, you could see these ingredients only in L.A. or New York," Ting says. "Now you don't have to leave the South End." 1166 Washington St., Boston (617-482-8868). —JH