

Asian/Thai dining appeals to all palates

by Charles Marcanetti



Let me explain – technically any fish served with vinegared rice is sushi, but that type of sushi served in rectangular slices – or round – is nigiri. I recommend, without authority, an article at allaboutsushiguide.com/types-of-sushi.html for those of you who are really curious.



There are three Asian/sushi restaurants that I eat in regularly. They actually triangulate our readership area and depending where I am when the desire strikes, that's where I go. This month, having just realized that it's been years that I am a customer and I never reviewed them, I am singing the praises of Japango, located north of Hillsboro on the west side of 441. It's been around for a long time, which should indicate how good it is. It is also sexy in its décor, and has an exceptionally wide variety of styles and choices of fish, poultry, and meat specialties, cooked, lightly cooked, and raw.

Most "sushi" eateries are simple, small, and aimed at serving fresh fish in an old country-style diner-like atmosphere. For me, as in Japan, that's the way it should be. Except at Japango they tweaked the philosophy just a bit. It is a "real" restaurant. It is smartly laid out in soft lighting, mellow colors, and encourages a slower dining experience, one where we sit and savor our dishes. Of course, when you try to guide your clientele toward a relaxed atmosphere you run the risk of having poor service. Not at Japango. They have the service timed to coordinate with each table's rate of eating; a perfectly timed dining choreography.

None of this would mean a thing if the food was lousy. Japango's fish is fresh, cut to the exact size called for (sashimi is cut thinner than nigiri and nigiri is the better name for what most of us call "sushi").

Another wonderful treat at Japango is that they have an extensive menu. Some sushi restaurants add some meat and poultry dishes to satisfy the few remaining people who scrunch up their faces at the sound of sushi. At Japango, you'll find a full Asian/Thai menu and a fairly wide array of Vegan dishes. So, even if your newly converted vegetarian college student son, daughter, or grandchild waxes endlessly about the dangers of this food or that food, even they will not go hungry (don't send me letters complaining about my insensitivity – I was that person).

While I have sampled much of the menu I have not had each and every item. But, I have had some of each the Japanese, Thai, Sushi, Wok, raw, cooked, and even vegetarian. I have never been disappointed. I feel confident that you will be happy when you visit and return time after time.

However, I feel compelled to tell you about some of my favorites.

The Ultimate Sea Bass Roll – made with shrimp, mango, masago, scallion, asparagus, and enclosed in soy wrap with avocado and grilled miso seabass on top with miso butter, eel sauce, red and green tobiko – is outstanding. The Japango Lobster Bomb – made with tempura lobster, scallions, asparagus, ginger, fish eggs, rolled in seaweed, and topped with jumbo prawn with spicy mayo, eel sauce, and further accompanied by tempura lobster in a shell with spicy wasabi – is equally good.

Sometimes, when I am feasting on raw fish I miss the "chewing" sensation so I

order a Soft Shell Eel Roll – made with soft shell crab, volcano shrimp, and ginger wrapped in soy paper topped with avocado, eel, and eel sauce. The soft-shell crab allows me to crunch a little and my palate is sated.

If you enjoy more than miso soup (I love miso soup) you must try the Shrimp and Lobster Wonton Soup – made with homemade shrimp and lobster gyoza in chicken stock, topped with shredded bok choy. It is wonderful.

Are you still looking for warm, cooked food? OK. The Black Bean Basil Sea Bass – made with red pepper, green pepper, onion, jalapeno chili with black bean basil sauce, or the Garlic Lobster – served with two lobster tails, snow peas, mushroom, carrots, baby corn, celery sautéed with garlic sauce, and accompanied with jasmine rice – will each knock your socks off.



They serve only premium hot sake and, as usual, I cannot get enough. I never drive when I visit Japango.

I conclude by telling you that Japango is a sushi and Asian restaurant, suitable for a fine dining experience but lending itself, as well, to a lighter lunch or evening dinner. Bring your guests, your family, and friends. It's fun, fine dining in a well-lighted, happy environment. 🍣