

AS SEEN IN  
the

# Parklander

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## Saito's JAPANESE



Lately, many sushi restaurants have added hibachi to their menus, and many hibachi restaurants have added sushi. No one can blame the restaurateurs for trying to maximize business, especially in this economy. The problem is that it's difficult to do both well.

As it turns out, Saito's Japanese Steakhouse has found the formula. It does both, masterfully, deliciously and without affectation in either category. Why then does it advertise itself as a steakhouse and not emphasize sushi? I have no idea. And, what's more, it doesn't matter. What does matter is that this eatery is well worth your visit and all your visits to come. It is located at the new, upscale and sexy Promenade Mall located at the southwest intersection of Lyons Road and Wile's Road in Coconut Creek (954-582-9888). The mall itself is laid out like an old, small town, where store after store invited guests in with creative window designs, and walking around was easy, safe and fun.

Saito's is designed with hibachi on one side and sushi on the other, but there are no restrictions where one sits and all food is served on both sides. The staff is young, highly energized, well-versed in the menu, extremely friendly and helpful, and they're all named Jon. I'm kidding—sort of. Jon, our waiter for the evening, guided us through each dish with the precision of a surgeon. Keep in mind that all of us at the table were very experienced Japanese-cuisine eaters, and that our inquiries were designed to test the staff. He knew everything that needed to be known and explained it in a way that was easy to understand. The bus-person was John (I told you so), and he knew when to clear the table and when to leave well enough alone. He was assisted by Brandon (every rule has an exception) who was equally well-trained. Patric, the manager, greeted us only after we were seated and had our drinks served, thus allowing us to settle in and not feel “pounced” upon. Why do I mention all of this? Well, if the details are properly attended to, so, likely, will the bigger picture be proper and professional. It's almost always true and it is certainly true of this thoroughly enjoyable and special addition to Coconut Creek's list of superior restaurants.

For us, the gourmands of the food world, reviewing a restaurant with two specialties is a veritable feast. We dined on sushi, cooked fish and hibachi delicacies. We sampled soft-shelled crab, edamame, age tofu, sunomono and green mussels as appetizers and then went on to devour tuna, salmon, eel, ikura (big fish eggs), crab, white tuna and octopus sushi, plus salmon skin rolls and hand rolls and a rainbow roll. Then we went on to the steak hibachi and shrimp hibachi and the whole snapper. Our dessert consisted of fried bananas with ice cream and whipped cream. The food was mellowed by sake during and plum wine following the meals.

I am told that the owners are planning several more of these great restaurants and while, too often, the model weakens in direct proportion to the number of units, somehow, with this formula and this leadership team I feel confident that the next and the next and the next eatery will do just as splendidly.

I always love to hear about your experiences, so let me know...or better yet, I'll see you there.



Saito's at Coconut Creek  
Promenade Mall

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