



Twenty Years. One Ethos.

o ya enters its 20th year as the flagship of newly launched Umami Riot Experience and unveils a new summer tasting progression that pulls forward the foundational invention of o ya, global omakase as a platform for creativity, and that opens the first chapter of a year of anniversary programming.

BOSTON, MA. On the eve of its 20th year, o ya, the Boston omakase that The New York Times named the #1 New Restaurant in America when it opened in 2008, today enters its most consequential chapter. When Chef Tim Cushman and Nancy Cushman opened o ya, omakase in America was understood as a single tradition delivered with reverence. o ya proposed something different: omakase as a platform for invention, where Japanese discipline becomes the foundation for global creativity, and where every bite is the result of layering, riffing, and composition. Twenty years later, that proposition is the engine driving o ya into its third decade.

The new summer progression carries that proposition forward, bringing original o ya signatures into dialogue with new compositions and supplemental courses that signal the direction of the restaurant's third decade. The announcement arrives alongside the public launch of Umami Riot Experience, the parent hospitality group built around o ya with President Pajo Bruich and Chief Marketing Officer Angela Wise, with a portfolio that includes Hojoko, Bianca Woodfire Kitchen & Bar, gogo ya, Ms. Clucks Deluxe, and the forthcoming Charles Tavern.

“ Music has always been my reference for how a meal should move. Not just the order of the courses, but the way a single bite can be layered like a chord, the way a flavor can riff on a tradition the way a musician riffs on a melody. Music is an endless platform. So is omakase, if you let it be.” Chef Tim Cushman

OMAKASE AS A PLATFORM FOR INVENTION

The o ya menu is composed like a setlist, a sequence of twenty to twenty-five singular bites built with rhythm, contrast, and crescendo. Inside that architecture, music is also the language for what happens within a single bite. A torched seafood, a fermented sauce, a citrus pop, an herb note, and a finishing oil layered like a chord, dosed with the precision Japanese technique demands. Tradition becomes a melody to riff on, not a script to follow. The summer 2026 progression brings the foundational invention of o ya forward and builds on a deeper interplay between Japanese discipline and global pantry. The year ahead will also include several chef collaboration dinners with award-winning peers from the Michelin and James Beard communities, alongside select chefs from Japan whose work has shaped Tim's point of view over the past two decades. The full program will be announced on a rolling basis throughout 2026.

SIGNATURES SINCE DAY ONE

A small set of dishes has remained on the o ya menu since the day the restaurant opened. They are the bites that taught a generation of guests how to read a Tim Cushman menu.

- Kumamoto Oyster. The opening note. Clean, saline, lightly sweet. A 100% Kumamoto strain from Taylor Shellfish, dressed with ponzu soaked watermelon pearls kissed with dashi smoke to infuse a subtle smokey sweetness, cucumber mignonette for brightness, and ponzu for lift. In Japanese dining there is the concept of cleansing and resetting, like oshibori before a meal. This bite does the same for the palate. It quiets the room. The progression starts here.
- Hamachi with torched banana pepper. Bright, fatty, lightly smoky. The first power chord. Banana peppers were difficult to source in Boston in the early days of o ya, so Nancy's mother sourced and shipped them weekly from Chicago. Torched over the fish, the pepper releases heat and aromatics, balancing smoke and fat in a single, controlled expression. If the oyster is the introduction, this is the moment the momentum builds.

A NEW SUMMER PROGRESSION

- Scallop Cigar. Nori brushed in tempura and fried crisp, filled with local dayboat scallop blanched in salted dashi and brunoised, marinated in white soy, yuzu, and wasabi, finished with chive emulsion and caviar. An o ya translation of the crispy nori sushi taco at sister concept gogo ya, refined into a single, composed bite. Two restaurants in one portfolio, in dialogue.
- Age Shinjo. Tempura squash blossom stuffed with a farce of shrimp and amberjack, garnished with lemon and onion flower, served with fresh ginger and mentsuyu poured tableside.
- Shima Aji with Aguachile Sunomono. Striped jack dressed in aguachile sunomono with gari gelée, green apple sakura, shiso, and cucumber flowers. Mexican aguachile and Japanese sunomono layered into a single dressing, the fish itself unaltered, the foundation Japanese.
- Ora King Toro. Cured in koji and kosho, scored diagonally, finished with buttermilk vinaigrette, pickled ramp, ramp oil, a negi nest of fried leek, smoked trout roe, micro chive, and shiso flower. Served kissed with smoke.
- Kakigori. Shaved ice with rhubarb sorbet, strawberry cream, rhubarb jelly, and shiso granita. The closing act, delivered with the precision of a finishing course.
- Available to add to any tasting, the supplemental program features small expressions of indulgence that have become guest favorites in their own right, like the Fingerling Potato Chip Nigiri and A5 Kushiya, Aragawa style.
- Vegetarian, pescatarian, and vegan progressions are composed with the same architecture and ingredient commitment as the standard tasting. o ya operates Tuesday through Saturday at 9 East Street in Boston's Leather District. Reservations are released on a rolling monthly basis on Tock. Twenty years in, the platform continues to extend.



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About o ya

o ya is a visionary omakase restaurant in Boston, founded by Tim and Nancy Cushman in 2007. Where most American omakase tasting menus honor a single tradition, o ya treats omakase as a global platform for invention, Japanese discipline as the foundation, global pantry as the vocabulary, and music as the connective tissue. The experience is composed as a twenty-course progression: each bite complete in itself, each a movement in a larger sequence of rhythm, contrast, and crescendo. Acclaimed as the #1 New Restaurant in America by The New York Times in 2008 and recognized with multiple James Beard Foundation nominations. o ya is the flagship of the Umami Riot Experience portfolio.

About Umami Riot Experience

Umami Riot Experience is a chef-driven hospitality portfolio built around the work of Tim and Nancy Cushman. Led by President Pajo Bruich and Chief Marketing Officer Angela Wise, with the Cushmans as creative anchors, the group operates concepts that includes o ya as the flagship, alongside other award-winning concepts Hojojo Japanese Tavern, Bianca Woodfire Kitchen & Bar, Ms. Clucks Deluxe Asian Chicken, gogo ya and the forthcoming Charles Tavern.