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Sushi's raw power: Once rare on the South Shore, the fish are now jumping

By Jessica Van Sack

Photo by Gary Higgins

Not so long ago, the only reason to buy raw fish on the South Shore was to put it in a frying pan or on a hook. Now it's the hottest thing in dining. Sushi restaurants, sushi bars and sushi menus are sprouting around the area. Most supermarkets offer a selection of the Japanese delicacies.



In Canton, Takara recently opened on Washington Street. Walter Chan, owner of Mr. Chan's and Mozarella's, opened Ichiro's Sushi in East Milton Square this year. Asian C, the long-awaited successor to Red Sauce, opened in Hingham over the summer. Quincy has two new sushi restaurants, Sushi Time in the Quincy Fair Mall and Beni Cafe on Hancock Street in North Quincy.

Beni Cafe is restaurateur Jimmy Liang's latest venture. "People in Quincy like sushi," said Liang, who at 28 owns four restaurants.



Kathy Fitzgerald of Dorchester began eating sushi eight months ago and is a proponent of healthy eating. She was munching on California rolls at Sushi Time last week. "I love it. It's good for you. When I discovered that Quincy Center had all this delicious Asian food, I said this is where I want to live. I think Quincy Center is beating downtown (Boston) by a mile now."

Liang said his customers order real sushi, not the veggie versions that often serve as an introduction to raw fish.

At Beni, Liang said, the concept is quick and casual. The menu isn't high on frills, like Liang's upscale ventures. It offers combination plates for \$6 and under. Liang said his goal was to cater to a clientele that might not be able to afford the \$12-a-plate sushi rolls at fancier establishments.

Rick Fosa, 48, and daughter Nicole Fosa, 20, both of Weymouth, stopped at Beni last week. "We're big advocates of sushi," Rick Fosa said. "We pretty much do everything (on the menu). You can't compare anything to the flavor of raw fish. It's just healthier." Like father, like daughter. "It's different from anything else you eat," she said.



Having sold his original Fuji restaurant in Wollaston, Liang owns Fuji 1546 and recently acquired the nearby Crown Royal Bakery, in addition to a bakery in Chinatown. He runs the businesses with a partner, Peter Tse, 28, of Quincy.

Dwayne Law, 40, who owns Sushi Time in Boston's Downtown Crossing, agreed that sushi is spreading on the South Shore. That's why he chose Quincy Center for his second location.

Law, 40, has lived in Quincy for 15 years. He said he knew the food-court style setup in the Quincy Fair Mall might pose a challenge because it lacks storefront visibility, and he hopes to eventually find a location for a full-scale restaurant.

Sushi Time's chef, Steve Goh, said a lot of customers are surprised that the food court inside Quincy Fair Mall has a sushi bar.

Law said, "So far it's a little slow, but I'm not concerned. Sushi is becoming more popular."