

NEIGHBORHOOD DEALS (Meals for under \$25 per person)

By Providence Cicero / Special to The Seattle Times

Matsu Sushi19505 44th Avenue W.,
Suite K
Lynnwood
425-771-3368**Hours:** Lunch, 11:30
a.m.-2:30 p.m. Monday-
Friday; dinner, 5-9 p.m.
Monday-Saturday, 4:30-
9 p.m. SundayVisa and MasterCard /
Wine and beer / No
smoking / No obstacles
to access

Lynnwood

Commercial addresses in strip-mall territory are meaningless to me. So, when I give my friend directions to a new sushi bar in Lynnwood, it sounds like this: You know that strip mall across from Fred Meyer? No, not the one where Hooters is, the one behind Dave's Burgers. There's a tacqueria and a teriyaki joint and right next to the Asian grocery is Matsu Sushi.

Once you find it, Matsu Sushi is a pretty island of tranquility amid the cacophony of suburbia that roils around its modest storefront. Normally I would sit at one of the six amply upholstered seats at the sushi bar, where there is plenty of room at this midday hour. But my friend and I want to indulge in girl talk with our sushi, so we slide into a roomy booth instead.

The sweet-faced waitress wears a gentle smile that matches her manner as she sets a pot of tea, two cups and menus in front of us. Lunch entrees such as sukiyaki, donburi, broiled salmon, mackerel or black cod are priced well under \$10, with soup, salad, sunomono and rice included. Combination lunches (\$7.95-\$9.50) pairing sushi, sashimi, teriyaki

CHECK PLEASE

Sushi à la carte: We want an assortment of six kinds of sushi and a roll, but ask the chef to choose whatever he thinks is freshest and best. He presents us with two pieces each of maguro tuna, albacore, halibut, fresh salmon, conch and eel. The raw fish is fresh, firm and wrapped with rice that is acceptable if unremarkable. The eel, grilled and moistened with soy sauce, falls apart delectably in the mouth. The conch is a little rubbery around the edge. The roll resembles a California roll with crab replaced by slightly mushy yellowtail. OK, got a little carried away, it's a huge portion. But every last grain of rice and sliver of ginger is devoured.

or tempura give you the most bang for the buck. Prices jump a few dollars at night when the menu expands to include appetizers and such à la carte specialties as salmon and vegetables cooked in miso.

After 30 years as a chef, Japanese-born Hiroyuki Matsushima real-

RATINGS: (R) - recommended; (NR) - not recommended
Single meal, no alcohol: \$ (under \$10); \$\$ (\$10-\$25)

Itemized bill, meal for two

Sushi à la carte	\$25.00
Tempura lunch	6.95
Potstickers	5.95
Tax (8.6%)	3.26
TOTAL	\$41.16

Tempura: A couple of shrimp, a surimi log, carrot, green bean, eggplant, broccoli and mushroom shrouded in a light, not-too-greasy batter. Accessories include good miso soup, iceberg lettuce under a blanket of creamy soy-laced dressing, and a tiny bowl of pickled cucumber.

Potstickers: Five delicately wrapped dumplings fried to a golden crisp and filled with a tender mince of pork, onion and spices.

ized his dream of opening a restaurant of his own last October. Matsu Sushi is a family affair. Those lovely women waiting tables are Matsushima's daughters, and his wife works there, too. It's a welcome addition to the Lynnwood dining scene.

Next time you're at Fred Meyer, look for it.