

**18°C**  
 A few clouds  
[Detailed Forecast](#)

**You can. Keep it beautiful.** **DISCOVER OUTDOOR POWER** **More saving. More doing.**

# THE VANCOUVER SUN

Division of Canwest Publishing Inc.



SEARCH

Quick links: [ShopLocal](#), [Obituaries](#), [Horoscope](#), [Lotteries](#)

Home News Opinion Business Sports Entertainment **Life** Health Technology Travel Jobs Cars Homes

[Fashion & Beauty](#) | [Food](#) | [WestCoast Life](#) | [Parenting](#) | [Relationships](#) | [Diversions - Comics & Games](#) | [In the Garden](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Green Living](#)

## Restaurant review: Shuraku Sake Bar and Bistro, where survival is sweet

BY MIA STAINSBY MAY 27, 2009 BE THE FIRST TO POST A COMMENT

[STORY](#) [PHOTOS \( 1 \)](#)



Chef Masahiro Omori of Shuraku Sake Bar and Bistro.  
Photograph by: Handout, Files

### Shuraku Sake Bar and Bistro

833 Granville St., 604-687-6622. [www.shuraku.net](http://www.shuraku.net). Open for lunch and dinner 7 days a week.

VANCOUVER - "I feel like Survivorman," my partner said. I rolled my eyes.

My brave he-man had just eaten a fried prawn head. We'd ordered some spot prawn nigiri at Shuraku Sake Bar and Bistro. They arrived achingly fresh with the heads sitting neatly beside the nigiri. "We can fry them for you," our server said. "Okay," we trilled.

Upon their return, I lost my trill, nibbling only the tickle-me tentacles. My partner dug in, though. Not quite Survivorman-like, he took mouse-sized

#### STORY TOOLS

- E-mail this Article
- Print this Article
- Comments (0)
- Share this Article

Font: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)

#### RELATED STORIES FROM AROUND THE WEB

##### Make It Easy: Ribeyes with mashed potatoes and wasabi butter

Reno Gazette-Journal, Nevada  
Tuesday, June 30, 2009

##### It's getting serious: Kelly Brook and Danny Cipriani visit estate agents as they prepare to take the next step

Daily Mail, UK  
Tuesday, June 30, 2009

##### Skypoint's new Rawbar restaurant has food to recall commuters to downtown Tampa after hours

CreativeLoafing.com  
Tuesday, June 30, 2009

#### RELATED TOPICS

- [Iori Kataoka](#)
- [Asian Food and Cooking](#)
- [Culture and Lifestyle](#)



[Educators No. 1 Online Graduate School Program](#)



[Scholarships available for parents going back to school](#)



[As population ages business opportunities multiply](#)

Provided by: [ARAlifestyle.com](#)

#### MOST POPULAR NEWS

[MOST READ](#) [E-MAILED](#) [COMMENTED](#)

- [Michael Jackson not biological father of his children; body to go on public display Friday: Reports](#)
- [Latest Abbotsford shooting has ' earmarks of a targeted hit'](#)
- [Jon and Kate Plus 8 divorce: Jumping the shark or just getting started?](#)
- [Abbotsford woman 'sickened' by Vancouver Island rugby players' antics aboard bus](#)
- [UN gang leader moved to Illinois jail for posing 'a risk' to SeaTac prison](#)
- [Ex-Chilliwack student gets \\$1.37 million for field-hockey injury](#)

[more >>](#)

#### BREAKING NEWS ALERTS

bites and stopped at the accusing little black eyeballs. (For those out of the loop, Survivorman is a TV show where this guy is dumped in the wilderness and films himself surviving without food or shelter or tools for seven days in each episode.)

Be it the 25 premium sakes by the glass, the twinklingly fresh sushi, the stand-out tempura or the lure of fried spot prawn heads, you're in for a unique dining experience at Shuraku.

You might think it's an izakaya, the plot in many of the newer Japanese restaurants. Although Vancouver izakayas have migrated upward from the beer-plus-eats version in Japan, Shuraku is much too polished to count as one. It does offer small plates and sharing plates, but it also offers sushi and sashimi, not common in izakayas. Instead of beer, or wine, they really make a big deal of sake, a tribute to owner Iori Kataoka's grandfather, who was a sake maker. (The "shu" in Shuraku means sake.)

Kataoka also owns Zest restaurant at Dunbar and 16th, a really polished Japanese restaurant which I recommend. She bought out Kitto, which she operated in this same spot for 10 years. Shuraku is its transformation.

A prawn head or two, incidentally, is not adventurous dining for the Japanese. "The Japanese would not miss it," Kataoka says.

The chef, Masahiro Omori, worked in high-end hotels in Tokyo but also wanted to learn izakaya cooking so after his high-end shifts, he worked in an izakaya. Shuraku blends the two styles. Omori is the one with the black plastic hair band holding back his hair, girlie-style. "It's supposed to be trendy," Kataoka says, sounding like she needs more convincing.

The sushi we tried were top-notch; there are the classics as well as "Innovative Rolls" which I often find go over the top with sauces and extreme size. His are more refined; however, one exception, called Pink Igloo (deep-fried salmon, scallions, radish, sushi rice wrapped in pink soybean paper and sitting on drizzles of cream cheese mayo) was bland in spite of all that was going on. I liked the Renkon Hasami Age (a lightly deep-fried sushi roll with shrimp and lotus root).

The back ribs glazed with Japanese barbecue sauce are positively yummy; the Ban Ban Gee is a tweaked Chinese-style chicken. Cold shredded chicken with sesame sauce is tamped into a puck so dense the server loosens it with a fork for you. The eggplant poppers are cool considering most everything you do with eggplant is limp and wet. These crunch. He inserts chicken and pork into an incision in a piece of eggplant, batters, then deep-fries it to a light crispiness.

Shuraku is easy to miss on Granville Street amid what looks like a psycho public works project. Wear sensible shoes because while Canada Line construction continues, you'll be slip-sliding on gravel.

Sun Restaurant Critic. [mstainsby@vancouversun.com](mailto:mstainsby@vancouversun.com).

*Restaurant visits are conducted anonymously and interviews are done by phone.*

Sign up to receive e-mail alerts on breaking news from The Vancouver Sun.

SUBMIT

[Our Privacy Statement](#)

#### MORE LIFE HEADLINES »



##### Curing cabin fever

We love our cabins. Full of fun, family and friends, they're not always ritzy -but they make for great

memories. Whether your getaway is a cabin, a ...

4 HOURS AGO

[From geyliner to man-scara](#)

[Internet can't replace TLC, study finds](#)

[Save time, save skin with hybrid SPF lotions](#)

Experience Internet powered by light.

Get unbelievably fast connection speeds up to 20 Mbps!\*

>> See how fast you can go

\*Not available in all areas.

Qwest

E-mail this Article Print this Article Share this Article

ADD YOUR COMMENTS

Keep it clean, and stay on the subject or we might delete your comment. If you see inappropriate language, e-mail us. You must have a javascript enabled browser to submit a comment.

Your Name Your Comment

SUBMIT

ADS BY GOOGLE

Vancouver B.C. to Seattle

Ride the train from Vancouver B.C. to Seattle. Schedules and fares. www.AmtrakCascades.com

\*Earn \$82/hr on Twitter\*

Learn How To Make Money w/ Twitter. College Student Earns \$10,000/mo! CityChronical.com/Twitter

Big Gay Kiss at Van Pride

Visit Interactive Male's Big Gay Kiss Booth & Enter to Win 10K! www.BigGayKiss.com

INSIDE THE VANCOUVER SUN



Vancouver artist Dina Goldstein's fractured fairy tales incite an Internet cyberstorm



Bad boy Wes still in the running for the bachelorette's heart



Canucks GM, agent fly to Sweden to meet with Daniel and Henrik Sedin



Vancouver high school student who had 'hit list' released on bail



Canadian software dissidents connect

Home News Opinion Business Sports Entertainment Life Health Technology Travel Jobs Cars Homes

Classifieds

DON'T MISS

- Michael Jackson
Event Guide
Dalai Lama
FREE 3-week trial
Quiz
Newspaper headlines
Money Watch
Olympics
Blogs
Galleries

MOST POPULAR

- Michael Jackson not biological father of his children; body to go on public display Friday: Reports
Latest Abbotsford shooting has 'earmarks of a targeted hit'
Jon and Kate Plus 8 divorce: Jumping the shark or just getting started?

FORMATS

- Sitemap / RSS
Contests
Blogs
Columnists
Photo Galleries
Videos

VANCOUVER SUN

- About Us
Contact Us
Work for Us
Advertise with Us
Subscribe to the Print Edition
Rate Our Delivery Service and WIN
Newspaper in Education

TOOLS

- Search for a Job
Buy/Sell a Car
Real Estate Listings
Place a Classified Ad
E-mail Alerts

SEARCH