

eat + drink + party

eat + drink + party

eat + drink + party

112

eat + drink + party

eat + drink + party

eat + drink + party

Sake it to Me

MF Sushi makes a triumphant return to the A in Inman Park.

By Katie Parham Kordtsmeier

Photography by Heidi Goldhauser



Apple has the iPhone—nearly every year, there's a new update to the groundbreaking original, keeping users on their toes, always hungry for more. Atlanta has **MF Sushi**—the sensational Japanese restaurant, run by ferociously proud brothers Chris and Alex Kinjo, who have opened and closed five restaurants between Atlanta and Houston in as many years. This summer, MF 6.0 was released. Cue the fireworks.

"We're back, the same, only better, and we're here to stay," avows Alex, who recently opened MF Sushi in Inman Quarter while Chris simultaneously reopened in Houston. Can we expect the same sushi that made *AJC* critic John Kessler drop to his knees, kiss the asphalt and shout, "Thank God, a real sushi bar at last!"? After a visit to the new space, the answer is yes. Though many things have changed. For starters, the original MF was once the only sushi game in town. Unconcerned with the trendy fusion approach to sushi, deep-fried, flamboyant rolls drowning in mayo and cream cheese were swapped for otoro tuna, horse mackerel and sea urchin, all flown in daily from Japan.

Pull up a chair at the sushi bar for MF's artful cuts, rice and sea urchin, right and more.

But today, Atlanta has a handful of "real sushi bars," namely Tomo, Sushi House Hayakawa and Umi (the latter two are run by chefs hailing from MF). But that doesn't mean MF isn't just as welcome as it was a dozen years ago. Our local sushi culture is operating at levels that wouldn't be out of place in Tokyo, and Atlantans are richer for every single spot raising the bar. And, trust us, the new MF just upped the ante. Alex again personally oversaw every design detail, from the custom artwork created by the man himself to the mesmerizing Verpan chandeliers and the warm woods bedecked



Sashimi platter featuring otoro, kampachi, Japanese golden eye red snapper, Madai, Japanese snapper and grouper



Co-owner Alex Kinjo oversees the sleek design of Inman Quarter's new MF bar.

with silk floral fabrics. Yojiro Ishibashi has taken the reigns as executive chef, and the best way to experience MF remains ordering the omakase menu (chef's choice) at the sushi bar.

Expect authentic dishes you won't find anywhere else, like sweet, citrus-laced mozuku salad of black seaweed, whipped with raw egg yolk and fresh wasabi; and flash-fried Japanese river crab with yuzu that gets its addictive popcorn-like crunch from the shell that's left on. The artfully assembled sashimi of live scallop, hamachi and kinmedai is so fresh and expertly cut, I wish I could have watched the chef slice and dice with what I can only assume



Nigiri platter featuring the Hamachi special and A5 wagyu beef



Avocado bar with spicy tuna topped with truffle mousse and caviar

to be a surgeon-like precision. Alas the sushi bar sits too low to see the show I've come to love, but the nigiri makes up for it—the elegant drape of buttery fish, hand-painted with a glossy blend of soy and mirin is a work of art. Don't miss the exceptional A5 wagyu nigiri, torched ever so slightly and adorned with Dijon, fiery Serrano and truffled soy.

So what else can we expect from MF 6.0? During my visit, the restaurant's liquor license had just come in, and I'm told there will be 100-plus sakes and many a martini on offer from its full bar, plus a 30-seat patio with its own menu, as well as valet parking. Yep, MF is back, and Atlanta is surely better for it.

MF Sushi
299 N. Highland Ave. NE
678.575.7890
mfsushiusa.com
@mfsushiusa

JEZE