



MADE TO ORDER Two specialties of Montclair's Toro Sushi Bar are the brown rice sushi and raw tuna dumpling appetizer, which is stuffed with tuna-wrapped blue crab meat, avocado and wasabi.

A New Way to Roll

Tucked away behind the Bellevue Theatre, next to Charlie Brown's, sits Toro Sushi Bar, an unusual Japanese restaurant offering healthy, low-carbohydrate versions of time-honored sushi favorites.

Husband and wife team Amy and Andy came to the United States from Tokyo in 1992, first operating Oyama in Mahwah for several years, then Sakae in Ridgewood for six years. They have since sold Sakae, bringing their restaurant know-how to a new location right here in Montclair. They also bring with them the skilled Chef Hayasaka. If there was such a thing as a black-belt sushi chef, surely Hayasaka would be one – he was trained in Tokyo from the age of 18 and has 25 years of experience.

All of the hand rolls and sushi are made to order with the option of choosing white rice or a healthier mixture of black, red and brown rice. The latter choice not only has more texture and flavor, its natural stickiness allows the



TORO SUSHI BAR
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chef to forego the vinegar and sugar mixture commonly required to make white rice hold its shape.

Since opening in March, patrons have already claimed their favorite dishes.

High atop that list sits the tuna dumpling appetizer. It's a raw, rotund masterpiece of tuna-wrapped blue crab meat, crunchy avocado and wasabi inside a raw dumpling.

The owners brought an interior designer from Japan to create a minimalist atmosphere of subtle purples, greens and tans accompanied by hardwood floors in a light, open ambiance. The arrangement allows the customer to focus on the freshness, taste and texture of the fare rather than the atmosphere in which it is presented.

The in-house menu differs slightly from the take out menu. For example, "movie boxes," a choice of four different combinations of chicken, salmon or beef teriyaki, served with combinations of dumplings, hand rolls, sushi or sashimi, are not available for take out. Still, those more inclined to eat in the comfort of their own homes have a wide range of healthy and flavorful choices. ■

— JILL BARTLETT