

Sushi Evolution [PR]

'Sushi'; long a part of Japanese food culture, has become a common word around the globe. With the evolution of fresh food preservation, sushi can be eaten in many countries. Currently in Japan, however, the way we eat sushi is changing.

Anywhere in the world, Japanese people can be proud of the uniquely Japanese food, sushi. Healthy and chic, sushi has become a popular delicacy worldwide. If one is to speak generally of sushi, unadorned slices of fresh raw fish and the like are placed atop vinegared rice and made in the palm of one's hand. This is the typical sushi (*Nigiri sushi*), but there are also alternative varieties such as roll sushi (*Maki sushi*), hand-rolled sushi or sushi cone (*Temaki Sushi*), and so on.

As to the origins of sushi, it appears that the current sushi style arose during the Edo period (1603-1867) and during the Meiji period (1868-1912) ice-making technology advanced to a reputable standard. With advances in coastal fishing hauling methods and distribution of fresh produce, improving the environment in which the fresh fish were handled, sushi became available to the general populace. After which, following the Second World War, street stands were abolished for reasons of hygiene, and the sushi store settled into the category of high-class restaurant.



The rotary sushi, which is becoming an increasingly popular way of eating sushi in modern Japan.

Amongst these, in *Osaka* 1958, inspired by the beer production conveyor belt, and designed for the purpose of serving a large number of customers efficiently and at low cost, 'Rotary sushi (*Kaiten sushi*)' was born. Rotary sushi is a system whereby fresh sushi, served on small plates atop an installed conveyor belt, revolves before the customers' settings. Customers can choose the


sushi that appeals to them, eating only what they choose, and, as the prices are pre-arranged according to the colour of the plate, the bill can be precalculated. At this kind of semi-self-service sushi bar, considering that customers can eat immediately, one could even go so far as to call it the ultimate fast food.



Eating sushi in luxury at the counter

In comparison to existing sushi shops' inclination toward designing restaurants with a high-class atmosphere, the booming rotary sushi bar, which affords ease to the customer and caters to the requirements of large numbers of customers, in recent times has struggled to maintain branch stores. As a result, in some stores new technology has been introduced. That is, the attachment of IC tags to the plates, in order to make merchandise control possible. The IC tags allow the staff to monitor all the plates, and therefore after a fixed rotation time has been exceeded, sushi is discarded, making it possible to ensure the customer always receives fresh merchandise, and also avoiding wastefulness to a large degree at the storefront.

The popularisation of the rotary sushi bar has given many people the opportunity to become familiar with sushi. However, sushi restaurants that hold stocks of raw ingredients that are prepared upon order, maintain a deep-rooted popularity among customers. The varieties of ingredients for sushi are arranged in a display case before the counter, and the order is prepared before the customer by the sushi chef, fresh on demand.

The traditional sushi restaurant allows customers to choose what they want to eat from display cases, whilst still being a shop that fulfils personal culinary requirements, whereas the rotary sushi bar enables customers to select from a dynamic procession. Currently in Japan, one can match any budget, time, place and occasion, with the enjoyment of one of the two sushi-serving styles. 

Photos and Information:

Jaws Restaurant Group www.jawssushi.com.au