

Japanese if you please



For **Mohamad Zeitoun**, founder and managing partner of **Maki Group**, it is Maki's fine dining experience in a casual ambience with cutting edge cuisine and premium quality ingredients that guarantees an exceptional experience for every customer.

Maki is known for offering a wide choice of original Japanese cuisine including Sushi, Sashimi, Tepanyaki and Teriyaki, as well as some traditional dishes like Sukiyaki and Yosenabe with Fusion Temaki's being its signature dish. Maki has created an extensive array of upscale, authentic à la carte items, to revise the stereotype of Japanese food being limited to sushi.

What is your restaurant's concept?

Our concept revolves around contemporary fusion Japanese cuisine presented in an elegant fine dining atmosphere with tasteful music, tantamount to a unique, modern gastronomic experience. Our culinary mission is to take the basics of Japanese gastronomy and add our international twist to them, thus, coming out with some wonderful, tasty and colorful creations.

How did you decide to start an F&B project in Kuwait?

I have always been passionate about food and cuisine in general and have become an admirer of Japanese cuisine in particular. Thus, I turned something that is a passion and a hobby of mine into my business. It all goes back to the notion that, often, in order to succeed at what you do an essential prerequisite is that you love what you do. Furthermore, I have lived in Kuwait for most of my life, so it was only natural for this concept to be initiated in Kuwait.

What differentiates Maki from the existing Japanese restaurants in Kuwait?

Maki is different than any other "Japanese

cuisine-based" restaurant in the way we develop our menu. We are constantly looking for new ways to present something special and we conduct extensive research before we come out with our dishes. I would say the most remarkable differences are our ingredients, homemade sauces, and thus the overall experience.

What are the challenges in meeting your clientele's needs?

The main challenge we have recently faced is the ban on importation of products and ingredients from Japan consequent to the last tsunami that befell the nation. On the other hand, we have sought and sourced very high quality replacement ingredients from Japanese firms that manufacture and operate outside of Japan.

How do you describe the Japanese F&B market in Kuwait today?

The Japanese F&B market in Kuwait is very competitive and is becoming saturated. However, there are a few restaurants that have separated themselves from the rest of the "pack" in terms of quality and innovation.

What are Maki's future development plans?

Maki's visceral future plan lies in expansion inside and outside the Middle East. It is only a matter of time.

olivermaki.com

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IN BRIEF

Al Hamra Tower

Located in the heart of Kuwait City, Al Hamra Tower is the tallest building in Kuwait at a 412-meter height. The tower includes over 70 floors of office space, a rooftop restaurant, a spa, an integrated theater complex and an 11-story car park. It is also connected to a five-story retail mall, which



totals 23,000 m2. Recognized amongst the highest skyscrapers in the world, Al Hamra is the new landmark, set apart by its innovative design.

alhamra.com.kw

Espressamente illy

The renowned Italian coffee brand Espressamente illy opened in the Al Hamra Mall in May. Acquired by Al Hajery Company, Espressamente illy serves its genuine Italian coffee with a selection of typical Italian food.

espressamenteilly.com.my



Häagen-Dazs Café

Häagen Dazs, the premium ice cream brand owned by Al Hajery Company in Kuwait, opened a new branch in May in Al Hamra Mall. The café offers Häagen-Dazs' extensive range of ice creams, sorbets, sundae cones, ice cream bars and frozen yogurt.

haagen-dazs.com

Magnolia

Magnolia Bakery, renowned for its classic American baked goods and desserts, is scheduled to open in August. Located in Fahad Al Salem Street, Magnolia Bakery will be managed by Acquire Foods, a food & beverage operating company based in Kuwait.

magnoliabakery.com

