

ASIA PALACE RESTAURANT:

A Place Transformed

By Cayo N. Marschner

For the past several years, many of us locals, including Saint Mary's staffers and students, have known this restaurant first as Shangrila, then as Fan's Chinese restaurant.

On May 2, after a month of remodeling, new owners Allan Lin and his wife, Jie Wang, have transformed the space into a warm, handsome interior with a marble sushi bar as the focal point. The walls are a pleasing combination of subtle burnt orange and burgundy decorated with understated pieces of modern art. There are four banquettes alongside and the tables of highly lacquered wood are complemented by black straight backed chairs. Soft jazz was playing in the background the night we ate there.

It was surprisingly busy for a weeknight, and my husband, Fred, was very pleased that his beer was served in a chilled glass. Being a wine connoisseur he noted that Asia Palace had an excellent wine list, very unusual for a smaller neighborhood Chinese restaurant.

There is a separate menu for the sushi selections and we began with very fresh California roll. We enjoyed their version of the standard sweet and sour chicken - made with fresh pineapple with sauce lighter than the thick goop often found. That was when we learned that Allan prepares all the sauces. The brown rice was surprisingly light and fluffy. The timing of the cooking of the lemongrass chicken was perfect, the morsels tender but we found the flavor lackluster or perhaps just too subtle for our palates. The best dish was the very flavorful al dente sautéed green beans and julienne beef - sensational! The complimentary fresh orange, traditionally segmented, was the perfect ending.

"We envisioned Asia Palace as a restaurant that features the harmony of Japanese and Chinese cuisines," explained Jie Wang. "Japanese food is healthful and very good to eat in warm weather. Chinese food tastes good, especially in cold weather, but it is too oily so we are offering more healthful versions of familiar dishes."

Allan, who is originally from Shanghai, lived in Japan for five years where he worked in the restaurant business. In addition to managing Asia Palace, he enjoys serving his customers and ensuring they are satisfied. He works with another Chinese chef and a Japanese sushi chef. Jie Wang comes in occasionally to help when she is not taking care of their three month old.

Lamorinda welcomes Allan Lin, Jie Wang and Asia Palace Restaurant!



From the Sushi Bar: Flying Dragon Roll. Inside: Tempura Shrimp & Crab Meat, Outside: Toppe w/white Tuna



Sushi Chef Xu Shi Sam

ASIA PALACE RESTAURANT WITH SUSHI BAR:

1460 B Moraga Road, Moraga Center

Telephone 925-376-0809

Open Monday thru Friday:

Lunch 11:00-2:30; Dinner 4:00 - 9:00

Saturday: 12:00 - 9:00; Sunday Dinner: 4:00 - 9:00

✂

Summer Special Shrimp Cocktail

\$3.95 Must present coupon!

*through September in Petar's lounge or patio only. Not good with any other coupons, discounts or promotional offers.

Petar's Restaurant
is located in the heart of Lafayette at 32 Lafayette Circle.

Petar's is open for lunch Monday through Saturday from 11:30 to 4:00 and open for dinner nightly.

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