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Make it at Home: Metro Lafayette's Tuna Poke

By Susie Iventosch



Photos Susie Iventosch

Liao was accompanied that morning by the restaurant's new executive chef, Kirk Bruderer, who is returning to his native Lafayette after working with renowned chefs Paul Bertolli at Oliveto, David Kinch at Saratoga's Sent Sovi and Manresa and Thomas Keller at French Laundry in Yountville and Bouchon in Las Vegas. Bruderer also studied overseas, working at Marc Meneau's L'Esperance in France, and Moush-Moush in Lausanne, Switzerland. "I am happy for the opportunity to bring what I have learned to my home town," Bruderer said.

Though he thoroughly enjoyed his cooking travels, he is glad to be back in his old stomping grounds and able to cook for the hometown crowd. He is making subtle additions to the Metro menu.

Owner Jack Moore says he and Bruderer share similar backgrounds and standards.

"I look forward to working with someone who shares my passion for this business," he said. "I am confident that Kirk's culinary creations will be greatly enjoyed by Metro's patrons."

Menu additions include Wild King Salmon with Du Puy lentils and tarragon beurre blanc, Duck Leg Confit with mushroom-leek risotto and mustard fruits, and Crispy Braised Veal Breast with Swiss chard and parsnips.

But, one menu item the restaurant has served since it opened is the tuna poke.

"After living in Hawaii for a couple of years, with tuna poke available everywhere, I have never tasted one as delicious as Metro Lafayette's," Englehart remarked.

"I order it every time I dine there and even joked to the Metro staff that I'd do dishes for an hour in exchange for the tuna poke recipe! Thank goodness I don't have to since the Lamorinda Weekly did the 'work' for me in acquiring the recipe."

In Hawaii, no gathering would be complete without a serving of poke. Poke literally means "cut piece" or "small piece" in Hawaiian.

Poke (pronounced POH-kay) is the Hawaiian version of the Japanese sashimi, but served with marinade and toasted sesame oil.

"Our tuna is always flown in fresh the night before from either Fiji or Hawaii," Liao pointed out. "We prefer to use yellow fin tuna for this dish."

Diablo Foods carries fresh sushi-grade tuna and it is normally in stock. Right now, it is selling for \$19.99 per pound. Liao recommends using only fresh, sushi-grade, but he is careful to make sure the fish is truly fresh. He recommends being bold and asking the market exactly when the fish was caught, so you know how fresh it is.

He then uses only the very center of the fish tenderloin for his poke, and trims out any blood lines, which are the very dark spots in the meat. He also uses what he can from the front part of the fish, because toward the head the meat has greater fat content and is therefore very tender, while the meat toward the tail is more muscular, and a little tougher.

Unless you are a fisherman and catch your own tuna, or have a deep-sea fishing friend who brings you a whole fish for your birthday, chances are you'll just purchase the tenderloin at the market and be done with it. But, just in case you ever find yourself in possession of a whole tuna, you'll now know which sections work best for sashimi, sushi or tuna poke!

To learn more about tuna poke please visit: http://www.squidoo.com/hawaiian_tuna_poke

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HOURS: Metro is open seven days a week from 11:00am to

11:00pm Monday - Friday and from 9:00am to 11:00pm on weekends. The bar is open until midnight. Lunch is served

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daily from 11:00am-3:30pm. Brunch and lunch are served weekends 9:00am-3:30pm. Dinner service begins at 3:30 daily

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