

# Bringing fancy foods to Framingham and beyond

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By Nancy Olesin/DAILY NEWS STAFFGHS Posted Aug 06, 2008 @ 12:41 AM

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FRAMINGHAM —

## Turning Japanese

After watching Hayao Miyazaki's 1995 anime film "Whisper of the Heart" with my daughter recently, I couldn't stop thinking about that wonderful sticky rice they serve at Japanese restaurants.

So after a late night of work on a Monday, I made a beeline for a new-ish Japanese restaurant in Northborough that I'd been wanting to try for some time.

Opened about a year ago, Mikaku, at 290 West Main St., is a gentile haven offering sophisticated Japanese cuisine. Set back in a new shopping plaza, you might miss this little gem if you drive too fast.

Scallop and Shrimp Teriyaki (\$23) was a perfectly pan-seared dream, glazed with a delicate and not-too-sweet sauce. With six large shrimp and three good-size scallops, it all came sizzling on a platter with carrots, broccoli, onions, baby corn, water chestnut and pea pods. But first came a lovely, comforting miso soup with tiny pieces of silky tofu, and a crisp salad with miso-ginger dressing that was fresh and cleansing.

The service was quick and pleasant, as it should be with just two other tables occupied when I arrived at 8:30 p.m. Soft jazz played in the background, and the decor was subtle and refined, a calming mix of dark and light with cherry wood tables and window treatments made to look like rice paper screens. All was spotlessly clean on my visit.

Across the room, a table full of women ordered sushi and seemed to be very happy with their orders. Next time, if I am dining with my daughter or a friend, I'll try a sushi platter (starting at \$23.50) or try one of their appetizers. Soft Shell Crab with Ponzu Sauce (\$9) sounds like a crispy delight to me. Also on the menu are several dishes featuring Kobe beef.

Since I was driving, I drank just tea, no alcohol, so another time I'd like to try one of Mikaku's special sake cocktails like the Ginger Snap (\$5.50) with sake, fresh ginger, ginger ale and pineapple juice. Or, I might try the Central Coast Chardonnay from Firestone (\$8/\$24), a Santa Ynez Valley, Calif., winery where I once had a very pleasant and memorable visit.

I wish I'd tried this place sooner. I'll definitely be eating at Mikaku again soon.

*Mikaku, 290 West Main St., Northborough. Call 508-393-5553.*

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