

**Charlottetown, PEI, April 25, 2019**

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## **PEI's first authentic Japanese restaurant set to open in downtown Charlottetown**

Charlottetown's dining scene will get a big boost this coming month with the official launch of the Island's first authentic Japanese restaurant. Hojo's Japanese Cuisine, located at 119 Kent St., will open its doors to the public on May 1 and is inviting Islanders and visitors to experience traditional Japanese cuisine prepared from scratch by three highly-skilled Japanese chefs.

"I love Japanese food, but there was no authentic Japanese restaurant here in PEI," said Yuichi Hojo, owner of Hojo's Japanese Cuisine. The retired investment banker turned restaurateur first visited PEI on holiday in 2015. Having spent most of his life in Tokyo, Hojo quickly fell in love with the Island life and fresh air. He and his wife decided to immigrate to PEI and returned as new residents in March 2018.

Upon arriving in PEI, Hojo began working on a restaurant concept and menu that met his criteria for an authentic Japanese dining experience.

"The restaurant will serve traditional foods like sushi and sashimi with PEI tuna when it's in season, including Toro and other fish varieties. We will also have a noodle machine in the dining room, where our ramen chef will prepare fresh noodles," said Hojo.

In addition to quality ingredients and imported equipment, Hojo recruited three experienced Japanese chefs with mastery in traditional Japanese cuisine. The team will be led by award-winning head chef Masashi Katsuki, who has over 20 years of experience working in kitchens across Japan. He will be joined by deputy head chef and ramen specialist, Yoshihisa Takashima, and senior chef, Eisuke Koyama. All three chefs are passionate about using the freshest and best ingredients and creating an exceptional food experience.

"We also want to provide exceptional hospitality, also known as *omotenashi*," said Hojo. Restaurant patrons will be invited to use a self-ordering iPad system or call their server by pressing a button to ensure prompt service. Hojo's Restaurant will also have a no tipping policy, preferring to take full responsibility for properly paying its staff as is the Japanese custom.

"We are very excited to introduce Japanese cuisine to the Island restaurant scene. We hope Islanders and visitors will enjoy the food and experience at Hojo's Japanese Cuisine and become regulars at our restaurant," said Hojo, who is looking forward to his new role as a restaurateur in his new Canadian home.

Hojo's Japanese Cuisine will open on May 1, 2019. Its operating hours will be Tuesday - Saturday from 11:30am to 2pm and 5pm to 9pm and Sunday from 5pm to 9pm. Reservations are recommended but not required. For more information visit [www.hojosjapanese.com](http://www.hojosjapanese.com)

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Media Contact:

Yuichi Hojo

[yuichi@hojosjapanese.com](mailto:yuichi@hojosjapanese.com)

902-394-2055