

Renoir at the Sofitel has a successful relaunch; Moishes thrives; and sushi talk

MtlRestoRap

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It was only a few years ago that I first experienced Renoir, the signature French restaurant of the renowned Sofitel Montreal Golden Mile. I got to meet Executive Chef Olivier Perret and immediately became a fan of his magic in the kitchen.

Renoir recently underwent an extensive upgrade, so I was naturally excited to see the reimagined space and sample the updated menu. The restaurant welcomes guests for breakfast, lunch, and dinner seven days a week, inviting them to rediscover the art of exquisite French cuisine. It can now seat 80 people inside. The dining room and bar area are now separated and there are also 80 more seats on the beautiful and seasonal outdoor terrace.

General Manager Marc Pichot, a native of France who arrived here on the scene 10 years ago, told me that the restaurant was closed for 10 months as part of the hotel's major renovation project. "We opened in 2002, so it was time to modernize," he said.

We started off our dinner with some cocktails before turning to the appetizers. And at Renoir you can always count on something different. That was definitely the case with the Canadian lobster and sturgeon caviar, with sea water jelly, cucumbers and tangy cream for me and the Canadian pike quenelle and lobster bisque. For the main course my dining partner thoroughly enjoyed Quebec rack of lamb, two perfectly prepared pieces, with potato millefeuille, black olive and black truffle. I opted for the roasted duck breast, confied leg and seared foie gras from Ferme Goulu. It came with carrots, pistachios, spiced jus and raspberry. For dessert we had the Frasier, a traditional French cake consisting of a sponge cake soaked in kirsch, filled with mouseline cream and strawberries (hence its name) as well as a decadent pistachio and cream.

Renoir is located at the Sofitel Hotel at 1155 Sherbrooke St West. Log on to www.restaurant-renoir.com or call 514-788-3038. Valet parking is available.

The new Moishes is thriving

It has been just over two years since Moishes Steakhouse was reincarnated at Victoria Square. I have been back a couple of times, most recently on a warm summer evening and the place is thriving.

Many people keep saying that this is not the old Moishes, referring to the fabled St. Laurent. The Grandio Group, which also owns Le Cage Brasserie Sportive, Gibbys, Chez Lionel and a host of other dining



The refurbished dining room at Renoir



Chef Tam Ngo (second from the right) with the team at Kiku Monkland

establishments, purchased Moishes towards the end of 2018. They shut down and sold the upper floor St. Laurent Blvd. facility when the pandemic started. The menu at the "new" Moishes is quite different from the original. Yes, they first bring you coleslaw, pickles and warm rolls with butter to the table, but no potato varenikes pickled salmon or chopped liver like the original. We loved the seafood platter (a dozen very large premium East Coast oysters, two jumbo shrimp cocktails and lobster tail), some beef tartare, the ultra-crispy fried onions and the 32 ounce porterhouse with fully loaded Monte Carlo potato, a decadent, indulgent twist on the classic baked potato. It's a little bit baked, a little bit mashed and a whole lot more. For dessert, we had two decadent pieces of millefeuille.

Moishes is located at 1001 Rue du Square-Victoria. Opening hours are: Mon to Wed; 11:30 am to 10:30 pm (last reservation at 10 pm); Thurs and Fri; 11:30 am to 11 pm (last reservation at 10:30 pm); and Sat; 2 pm to 11 pm (last reservation at 10:30 pm) and Sun from 2 pm to 10:30 pm (last reservation at 10:00 pm). There is valet parking for \$23, provided by an external company. To reserve, call 514-405-2046 or e-mail moishesmونتreal@moishes.ca. You can also log on to www.moishes.ca to reserve and to view the complete menu, including the gourmet lunch specials.

Popular Chef Michael Godin helms the cuisine at Ryu Griffintown.

Chef Michael Godin has landed at Ryu Griffintown. He had a loyal following at the former Ryu Westmount, which closed nearly two years ago. Let's also not forget Chef Satochi at Ryu Peel Street. Chef Michael brings unmatched precision and mastery in sashimi and nigiri. His return to the family signals a new chapter for the Griffintown experience, says Chief Operating Officer Jason Lamarre. He honed his skills in culinary school at Lasalle College. After doing an internship with celebrity Chef Antonio Park, he ended up getting hired and spent some seven years working under one of the top sushi chefs in the world. After a few other stops, he heard about the planned opening of RYU Westmount in 2018 and reached out to Lamarre. He was hired and the rest is history.

Griffintown is a spacious and attractive facility that can seat 65 diners inside and 30 more on a gorgeous seasonal patio overlooking a condo outdoor pool. In the case of Ryu, which also operates a Pierre Elliott Trudeau Airport counter, each venue is different. This was my first time at Griffintown. We started off with some drinks and then enjoyed the lobster dumplings, Wagyu tacos, the baked crab handroll, the toro tartare nakaochi, miso black cod, six sashimi, six nigiri and



The Moishes porterhouse steak

one futomaki. For dessert we shared the decadent chocolate fudge cake with ice cream. Ryu Griffintown is located at 388 Richmond Street. It is open Wed to Sun from 6pm - 10pm and Fri to Sat from 6 pm - 11 pm. You can call 514-446-1954 or log on to <http://www.ryusushi.ca>.

Kiku Monkland under new ownership

Thy "Liem" Tran and Thinh Pham, better known simply as "Sushman," have sold the popular sushi restaurant they established on Monkland Avenue in NDG 22 years ago. Originally known as Mikado and partnering with Kimio Nguyen from Mikado Laurier, they assumed complete ownership in 2021 and renamed the establishment Kiku. Sushman has stayed on for a transition period, but new owner Chef Tam Ngo wishes to advise the loyal clientele that all of the other familiar sushi chefs, kitchen staff and servers will remain on board.

While favorites such as the sushi pizza, salmon tartare, Ebi Gyoza, chicken and salmon teriyaki and rolls like the Happy, Relax, NDG, Paradise and Hampstead will remain on the menu, Chef Ngo promises pleasant surprises to come when ordering. The restaurant has 50 seats, a sushi bar for six and a seasonal terrace for 12. The take-out and delivery menu features the same local and seasonal products as the restaurant selections. Orders can be made in person, over the phone or online. The restaurant will maintain its successful catering service for receptions, weddings, office parties and other occasions. They can provide a partial service to complement another caterer's menu, or a sushi bar service.

Present-day hours of operation are 5 pm to 9 pm Sun, Tues, Wed and Thurs; and 5 pm to 10 pm Fri and Sat. Kiku is located at 5515 Monkland Avenue, corner of Girouard. For more information go to www.kiku-montreal.com or call 514-369-3659.

Follow Mike Cohen's dining adventures at www.MtlRestoRap.com and Instagram @Mikecohencsl. Mike can be reached at info@mikecohen.ca.