

Tokyo Dining: One of Walt Disney World's Best Kept Secrets?

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

It's not often that I can say this, but on our most recent trip to Walt Disney World, we came across a real hidden gem that we hadn't discovered before. No doubt, like many of you, we're Disney veterans, with plenty of trips to the Orlando parks under our belts. Therefore, when we try something completely new, having seen and done most things, it's a real treat for us.

I think I've lost count of how many times I've promised myself that we'd try the second restaurant in the Japan pavilion at Epcot. However, for so many trips now, it's been easier to return to our old favourite that we fell in love with many years ago, Teppan Edo. This time, I was determined to fit both restaurants in, and to finally give Tokyo Dining a go. The closest we'd got to it was passing by it on our many visits to Teppan Edo, and it looked like a lovely place, especially after the rehab it underwent a couple of years ago.

□ The immediate impression you get of is that it has a very clean, and simple design, which is part of its appeal. As you enter, the show kitchen, where they prepare a lot of the sushi offered on the menu immediately draws your eye, as does the big screen to the left of where they're working. This showcases the beauty of Japan, with a number of different images displaying as you enjoy your meal. Having previously been to the country, we loved seeing those images and trying to fathom out exactly where they had been taken. Sadly, and this was the only disappointment of the night, there's no list of the images, which we felt was an oversight on Disney's part.

□ We're used to superb service whenever we dine at Teppan Edo, and that's what we also experienced during our time in Japan, so we had high expectations here as well. Thankfully, Tokyo Dining not only met them, but exceeded them, with a very attentive server, who constantly checked on us, and whether we had everything we needed. She really couldn't do enough for us.

I wasn't overly hungry, so decided that I'd make do with an entree, but my husband opted for an appetiser, getting the Wafu ribs, sake, soy and ginger braised pork ribs. There was high praise indeed for these, when I was told that they were some of the best he'd ever had! Other options on the main menu when we dined there included assorted tempura, and miso soup.

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□ I say the main menu, as sadly I didn't find the other menu on our table, until well after we'd ordered. I will confess that I was busy looking at the main menu, thinking to myself "I thought this place was renowned for its sushi", but wondering where it was. Well, the answer was it was on the sushi menu, logically enough. Running to a number of pages, offerings include nigiri, sashimi, inside out rolls, maki, and even decorated sushi! Had I seen this menu, I would certainly have sampled some of the options on offer as an appetiser.

□ But perhaps it was just as well I didn't.... The main menu kindly had photos of the various options, but in all honesty, the dishes didn't look that big. When our selections arrived, my first thought was "that will never fill me up", but you've heard the old adage of not judging things on appearance? Never was it more true! Neither of us were able to finish off what we had ordered.

□ I went for one of the Gozen dishes, which came with a variety of items, including miso soup, somen salad, sunomono (essentially a vinegar dish, usually either vegetables or seafood), and steamed white rice, along with your order. Mine was for the Ginza, which was a tempura and sushi combination, so it literally came with a little bit of everything, and it was a full meal on its own. Not only was it great value for money, but it was also superbly cooked, and every mouthful was a complete delight.

□ My husband opted for the Bento box, offering a similar section of Japanese tasting dishes, with miso soup and steamed rice. He went for the Fuji, including the chef's selection of sliced sirloin, sashimi, California roll, tempura shrimp and vegetables. Again, he found the dish to be a satisfying meal, and both of us were staggered by how much they had presented to us for the price we paid.

□ There was literally nothing we could fault at Tokyo Dining, it really was a delightful meal, which ticked just about every box, including atmosphere, service, value for money, and excellent quality food. We both came away promising ourselves that, having waited so long to sample this place for the first time, we would certainly be returning time and time again. This restaurant is a real little gem, and definitely one worth time in your vacation, particularly if you enjoy Japanese food.

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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