



Taiko Japanese Steakhouse and Sushi Bar
 2155 Southpark Court, Dubuque, IA
 563-583-9888 / Taiko.UUUQ.Com
HOURS: Lunch, 11 am-2 pm, Dinner, Sun-Thurs: 4:30 pm-10 pm,
 Fri & Sat: 4:30 pm-10:30 pm
ATMOSPHERE: Tableside Entertainment
NOISE LEVEL: Friendly Banter
RECOMMENDATIONS: Shrimp Tempura; Paper Pot Soup; Teppan
 Walleye or Filet Mignon; Sashimi; Sushi Spicy Tuna, Phoenix Roll
LIQUOR SERVICE: Full Bar; Sake Bomb, Sake and Sayonara Cocktail
PRICES: Appetizers: \$4.50 to \$8.95, Entrees: \$11.95 to \$32.95
 Sushi: Rolls, \$4.25 to \$16.95; Platters, \$15.50 to \$21.50
RESERVATIONS: 2 to 100; Recommended on week-ends
PAYMENT OPTIONS: Cash, Check, Debit, All Major Credit Cards.
WHEELCHAIR ACCESS: Front door and Restroom
TAKE OUT: Yes, **DELIVERY:** No, **PARKING:** Large private lot



by rich belmont

Taiko means drum in Japanese. On most nights you will hear the drum beating loudly in celebration of patrons' birthdays. That's because Taiko is a fun place to celebrate special occasions and ordinary dinners with friends. The chef cooks at your table and puts on a great show. He starts with a big flame, then twirls spatulas, jiggles condiments and makes onion volcanoes. At the Sushi Bar the chef prepares the rolls as you watch the exquisite cuts of fish layered in.

Taiko is really two restaurants in one. First it is a Japanese steakhouse. This means it serves steak on a Hibachi; a Japanese word for a charcoal grill or iron hot plate. More precisely the cuisine is Teppanyaki; a style of cooking meaning Teppan (iron plate) Yaki (grilled). The New York strips, rib eyes and filet mignon are Black Angus Choice beef cooked on a hot plate just the way you like them. The flavor is wonderful because lots of butter, garlic, soybean oil, BBQ or teriyaki sauce is mixed in. The accompanying vegetables are stir-fried enhancing not only steaks but also chicken, shrimp and lobster. You can also have your dinner vegetarian. The vegetables are a meal by themselves.

The Sushi Bar is an in-house second restaurant. You can sit there and order Sushi Rolls individually or in combo platters. Or you can enjoy them at the Hibachi if other members of your party are having Teppanyaki.

The combination of Hibachi and Sushi cuisine is seamlessly integrated. The culinary experience is carefully designed to dazzle your taste buds. The ingredient pairing is all carefully thought out by the expert proprietor/ chef.

Eddie Hwang is the owner and executive chef. He came to this country from Shanghai, Taiwan where he was General Manager of an import-export business. He loved working with the ingredients of Asian cuisine. However, Chinese red-tape constantly disrupted his business convincing him to immigrate to the US. Eddie had contacts in Hong Kong and Taiwan who moved here and opened restaurants in Marshfield, WI and Dallas, TX.



With their help Eddie opened his first Chinese restaurant in 1997 in Marshfield. It was called the Café China. Eddie noticed there were several Chinese restaurants. He "saw a need to introduce Midwest American people to different style of Asian food and make them happy." Eddie converted the Café China to a Hibachi called Royal Tokyo. Soon after that he went to Dallas and started Osaka, a well known Hibachi, Sashimi and Sushi buffet and BBQ. Eddie still owns these restaurants and is without question an expert in the preparation of Teppanyaki, Sushi and Sashimi!

Five years ago Eddie and his wife, Rose, discovered Dubuque to be a growing city and a great place to live. They knew it was time for the citizens of Dubuque to experience a Japanese Steakhouse and Sushi Bar.

From the beginning Taiko was developed to serve only the highest quality food prepared by expert chefs. These chefs were trained in Dallas and Minneapolis. The food costs are very high because Eddie insisted on using

Black Angus beef. He still drives to Chicago every couple of weeks to pick up his seafood. It is all sushi-grade and he insists on personally visiting his purveyor to inspect it. All of the salmon, yellow fin tuna, walleye, octopus, crab, lobster, fish roe and other seafood must meet the highest quality standards. Eddie will only accept Ocean Garden shrimp that are 21 to 25 per pound and are labeled Jumbo. He certainly knows what he's looking for. Eddie was trained as an Itamae (Sushi Chef) in Dallas. He only buys the best seafood because he is the one preparing and serving it. While he is in Chicago he also picks up other ingredients like Japanese vinegar and Nori (seaweed).



If you are a Sushi lover you probably have been to Taiko many times. But if you are inexperienced with this delightful cuisine or have friends and family who have not tried it, Taiko is the place to go. You can start slowly with vegetable rolls that contain avocado, asparagus, cucumber or seaweed. Then step up to the California roll made with crab meat, avocado and cucumber with rice on the outside.

Once you have eaten these delectable treats its time to order the house special sushi rolls. These are made with the finest filets of salmon, tuna, shrimp, scallops and lobster. The seaweed used in these rolls is high grade Japanese Nori. Many of these items also include masago (capelin roe; eggs of a small forage fish).

In case you are not familiar with the pleasures of Sushi eating here are a few basic rules:
 1. Sashimi is a slice of raw fish. It is

sometimes served as an appetizer to impress you with the seafood's high quality.

2. Sashimi should be eaten with chop sticks.
3. Sushi is anything made with vinegared rice. It may contain raw or cooked fish or vegetables.
4. Sushi may be eaten with your fingers.
5. Look at the sushi before you eat it. It is an art form and the Itamae (chef) will be pleased!
6. Place sushi in your mouth upside down so the fish is directly against your tongue.
7. Sushi is served with soy sauce (Shoyu), pickled ginger (Beni Shoga) and Wasabi (Japanese Hot Horseradish).
8. Do not eat the ginger with the sushi. Take a bite of it between sushi rolls to cleanse the palate.
9. With sushi it is incorrect to mix soy sauce and wasabi all together. Keep wasabi to one end of the dish and mix it in the soy a little at a time.
10. Only dip the fish part of each roll into the soy sauce, not the rice since it would soak up too much.
11. Sit at the sushi bar and watch your Itamae prepare your dinner. Offer him a sake or beer. Don't tip with cash since Asian food preparers do not handle money.



And finally have a great time! If you are having Teppanyaki start out your evening with hot sake, Japanese beer (Biiru) or perhaps a sake bomb. Cold filtered sake is great with Sushi or you might prefer to sip green tea (Agari). A Sayonara cocktail is a good nightcap. Visit on a weekend when Rosalie Morgan is playing the piano Introduce yourself to your neighbors! It's guaranteed you will learn something you didn't know!