

MISS AMERICA  
MISS OKLAHOMA,  
JENNIFER BERRY,  
TAKES THE  
CROWN.  
A13



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T.R. NORTH BOYS  
WIN SIXTH  
STRAIGHT COUNTY  
SWIMMING TITLE.  
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A GANNETT NEWSPAPER

# Dining

## YUMI

*the flavors of Asian- and Eastern-inspired cuisine*

sweep approach and touches on just about every Eastern cuisine. If you know your stuff, you'll spot riffs from Malaysia, Thailand, China, Korea, Japan and some of the dots on a world map that make up Indonesia. There isn't a trendy Asian ingredient that's not used (tamarind, lemongrass, yuzu, seaweed) and yet there are lots of nods to culinary reverberation from other lands (truffle oil, sweet potato, saffron). When the delivery trucks stop at Yumi, I figure they're unloading a zillion tiny boxes instead of humongous crates of onions and tomatoes.

Some of my food-savvy friends have wrinkled their noses at Yumi, but I found its cunning ways charming. I enjoyed plucking a dish or two from all the various columns and categories on the menu that, despite its range, strikes me as well-edited. I enjoyed the openness of the space that, at first, struck me as cold and too stark then warmed up as it filled up and rumbled with a

pled with a hot-sweet wasabi-soy glaze. It was the back-and-forth that I enjoyed, the yin-yang of flavors. I almost wrinkled my nose at the special roll our polite, accommodating server highly recommended: The juxtaposition of lobster salad with spicy tuna sounded unnecessarily risky. But with refreshing cucumber running interference and the lovely scent of *miso* permeating the shellfish, this roll held my interest. Purist sushi is my preference, but there's room for a chef's fancy in my repertoire.

I did satisfy my purist needs with a trio of utterly pristine sashimi that maybe wasn't masterfully sliced, but definitely displayed dignity. Toro, deeply buttery, and bluefin belly, darn near as luxurious, were super-fresh, but the winner on the plate were the darling sweet shrimp, their name offering the ideal description.

**A procession of flavors**

earthy cilantro and tart pineapple. It's a dandy dish.

I also thought the duck-stuffed spring roll not only worked but trounced the gummy-filling competition — especially after the slightly sour tamarind dipping sauce is factored into the equation. One of my favorite things to eat in all the world is anything wrapped in lettuce-leaf cups; I adore the cool crunchiness of the lettuce against the warm softness of the cooked stuff piled inside. Here, the stuff piled inside is stir-fried chicken dotted with pine nuts and laced with hoisin. It's one of Yumi's less-intense dishes, yet it's a good one to plug in to a varied mix of small plates.

Should you be looking for a larger plate and one big flavor as opposed to a smorgasbord of Asian choices, consider the pork *katsu*. Here, it's crusted in pillowy panko crumbs and served with crisp, taut vinegar reduction and a truly terrific salad of green apple, celery root and endive that complements the pork beautifully. It's a dish

### YUMI

1120 Ocean Ave.,  
Sea Bright  
(732) 212-0881

**ATMOSPHERE:** Open, airy dining space set back in the storefront space that's made atmospheric by exposed brick, banquettes, hanging banners and sponge-painted walls. BYOB. Dress is chic casual.

**SERVICE:** Polite, accommodating, informed.

**BEST DISHES:** Shuenn ro lobster-spicy tuna special toro, bluefin belly, sweet shrimp sashimi, Yumi seaweed salad, white tuna ceviche, duck spring roll, chicken in lettuce cups, pork katsu.

**PRICE RANGE:** Warm small plates: \$5 to \$12. Cold small plates: \$9 to \$18. Salads and soups: \$5 to \$13. Signature rolls: \$9 to \$15. Sushi and sashimi: \$4.50 to \$8. Vegetarian and hand rolls: \$4 to \$4.50. Large plates: \$17 to \$25. Dinner for two, not including and tip, averages about \$85 to \$95.

**CREDIT CARDS:** AE, MC, D.

**HOURS:** Lunch: Mondays through Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dinner: Sundays through Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays from 5 to 11 p.m.

**RESERVATIONS:** Accepted. **WHEELCHAIR ACCESS:** Available on street level.

**NONSMOKING SECTION:** Restaurant is smoke-free.