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Review: Sushi Ii in Newport Beach feels like a private sanctum

Critic Brad A. Johnson says Sushi Ii is the swankiest sushi restaurant ever to open in Orange County, and while indoor dining is currently paused, stellar takeout is available.



Chef/owner Susumu Ii at Sushi Ii in Newport Beach (Photo by Brad A. Johnson, Orange County Register/SCNG)

By **BRAD JOHNSON** | Orange County Register

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“I need to take your temperature if you don’t mind. It’s touchless,” says the manager at the entrance to Sushi Ii as she gingerly points a handheld device at my forehead.

“And if you would please...” she says, not finishing her sentence but instead motioning toward the sanitizer station adjacent to the door.

Sushi Ii is a glamorous new restaurant in Newport Beach that opened just before the pandemic hit, and then abruptly had to close. And then reopened. And then had to close again when the state paused indoor dining a second time. Like most restaurants stuck in this uncomfortable limbo, they are momentarily focused solely on takeout. But in that brief window in June when indoor dining was allowed, I scored a reservation. And can say unequivocally that I have yet to find another restaurant in Orange County—indoor or out—that makes me feel more confident about its [COVID-19 prevention protocols](#) than Sushi Ii. The temperature check, the hand sanitizer, the distancing, the digital menu via QR code, the compassion and seriousness... It doesn’t lessen the glamor. It only amplifies it.

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