

Restaurant critic review: Saigon Sushi now open on 14th Avenue

By Diana Foote

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VERO BEACH — For those of you who lamented the closing of Saigon Bistro several months ago, do not despair. The latest incarnation, called Saigon Sushi, opened under the same management in a bright little spot on 14th Avenue in Vero Beach.

The new Asian restaurant still features Vietnamese, Thai and Japanese offerings, but the extensive menu has been streamlined. There are no satay dishes. But there are ample offerings from all three cuisines, and we tried to sample some from each.

For appetizers, we went Vietnamese with Four Company (\$9.95), a delicious combination of steamed rolls, winter (with pork) and summer (with shrimp), crispy spring rolls with chicken, fried chicken dumplings, and rice noodles with peanut and scallions.

The dipping sauces included the clear and sweet Saigon sauce and the viscous plum sauce. The summer roll was especially tasty, with fresh shrimp just peeking through the rice-paper covering.

Even better was the Vietnamese crepe (\$7.95), a crunchy egg batter filled with shrimp, pork, onion, scallion and bean sprouts. Flash frying gives this dish its crackling coating, and the contrast with the velvety ingredients inside makes it a complex and rewarding dish.

While the rainbow sushi roll was reasonable at \$9.95, the pieces of white tuna, salmon, snapper and red tuna covering this California roll were small. Better from the Japanese menu was the chicken teriyaki (\$13.95), large pieces of grilled chicken breast in a light teriyaki sauce with carrots, zucchini and broccoli. It came with a standard miso soup.

The standout entr'ée of the evening was the Thai-inspired Jimmy's Special (\$16.95), a luxurious mix of grilled jumbo shrimp and scallops in green curry over rice noodles mixed with peppers, tomatoes and cucumber. The shrimp and scallops were tender and bathed in a light green curry that infused the rice noodles.

As the pretty yellow and red room began to fill up, we shared a fried banana with vanilla ice cream for dessert, and left for \$93.

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