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Time For Sushi



Above: The 12-piece omakase teaser is a sample of Hidden Fish's daily tasting menu (above right) for the 50-minute sitting.

AT ABOUT 5:20 P.M. one recent Wednesday, chef Steven Pfan sliced five precise portions of golden-eye snapper from a pristine filet, arranged them on warm sushi rice with tads of wasabi and lemon zest, dusted each with a whisper of pink Himalayan salt, and, bringing to mind Julia Child building brown sugar crusts on pots of crème brûlée, blow-torched each to crisp the salt (right). He then presented the mouthfuls to the five top-dine-ro patrons who booked the evening's first 90-minute shift at the new **Hidden Fish** omakase restaurant on Convoy Street. The snapper was the fourth in

the epic 18-course "Premium" sushi dinner, which costs \$90 per person (plus beverages, tax and tip) and is intended to artistically engage the eye and palate, if not necessarily to fill you up. Omakase could be expressed as "chef's choice," and a second chef stood behind the counter to create 12 courses for the eight guests who reserved the night's first 50-minute, \$50 "Omakase Teaser." The idea behind this restaurant co-owned by executive sushi chef John "Kappa" Hong, is to enchant through the medium of fish, and while the concept of apportioning the restaurant's 13 seats between



groups of five and eight enjoying meals of different price and duration is unusual locally, it works. Staffers blithely serve drinks—dry sake in Champagne flutes!—and direct new arrivals to the lounge until their seats are ready. Book in advance and look forward to items like seared albacore with

garlic paste and radish ponzu; amberjack with sea salt and a truffle (top); and horse-mackerel with freshly grated ginger, scallions and ponzu. The meal's pace is relaxed (90 minutes is plenty of time) and if you want, you can stay on after to stuff yourself with classy à la carte sushi.

MARTIN MANN (THIS PAGE)