

## Japan Glam

SEND TO A FRIEND

What to do when you've already opened the city's sceniest pasta and pizza house? (Four of them, that is.)

Try tuning Japanese.

Vittorio Assaf and Fabio Granato, the Italians behind the Serafina empire, have enlisted some of New York's boldest restaurant names for their latest endeavor, Geisha. Chef Eric Ripert did the menu; Michael Vernon, his former sous-chef at Le Bernardin, is in the kitchen. David Rockwell converted two floors of a townhouse into a multiroom jewel box. The swank bar and sushi room on the ground floor and the two upstairs dining rooms are decorated in whites, browns, and oranges, with details like origami birds, mother-of-pearl inlay, and glass panels.

The food -- obviously Asian -- has signature French touches. Standouts include black tiger shrimp dumplings, miso consomme with fresh New Zealand cockles, Asian pear salad with peekytoe crab, and halibut in a ginger-beet vinaigrette. The sushi -- spicy hamachi roll, tuna truffle roll -- is as dazzling as it is innovative. The clientele? Strictly English-as-a-second-language and the never-got-over-junior-year-in-Paris set who aspire to be just like them.

Come dressed to kill or you'll be upstaged ... by the very banquette you're perched upon.

*Geisha, 33 East 61st Street, between Madison and Park Avenues (212-813-1112).*

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