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5 new restaurants not to forget about

From the Food & Drink staff

The Arizona Republic
Feb. 2, 2005 12:00 AM

Shimogamo: Outstanding sushi, both traditional and imaginative. Best bet: Take a seat at the sushi counter and tell the chef, "Feed me." 2051 W. Warner Road, Chandler. (480) 899-7191.

Sassi: A stunning setting and stunning fare, thanks to chef Wade Moises, who worked for Mario Batali in New York. The appetizers, such as sashimi-thin octopus in a squid-ink vinaigrette, are especially strong. 10455 E. Pinnacle Peak Parkway, Scottsdale. (480) 502-9095.

Zest Spirited Dining: A funky neighborhood spot, with a cool vibe and cool fare. Start with eggplant cheesecake and move on to the killer entree, panko-breaded pork chop. 4117 N. 16th St., Phoenix. (602) 274-7442.

Mezcal: Chef Aaron Miller puts out some of the best entrees in town. If Alaskan ivory king salmon or butterfish Veracruz is on the menu, don't hesitate. 7122 E. Greenway Parkway (Kierland Commons), Phoenix. (480) 556-0770

Tapino Kitchen & Wine Bar: Come for the tapas, a vibrant array of small plates such as pancetta-wrapped dates stuffed with Gorgonzola and piquillo peppers filled with rice and chorizo. Excellent wine list, too. 7000 E. Shea Blvd. (Scottsdale Promenade), Scottsdale. (480) 991-6887.

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