

RALEIGH, N.C. — This week, [SONO](#) proudly announces Hyun-Woo Kim as Executive Chef and James Yang as General Manager — an inspiring and highly trained duo to reinvigorate one of the Triangle's most essential Asian restaurants.

SONO opened in 2008 to rave reviews and paved the way for authentic and inventive Japanese cuisine in downtown Raleigh. Now owned by Clean Plate Restaurants, SONO has recruited the area's leading sushi chef to oversee their culinary program — both the sushi bar and the kitchen.

"After working alongside him at AN, we knew Chef Hyun-Woo Kim was THE chef to breathe new life into SONO," explained General Manager James Yang, who joined SONO in 2016 after 7 years as General Manager at AN. Yang is responsible for SONO's elevated service and attention to detail as well as for its new and thoughtful beverage program. "We're building upon SONO's reputation for delivering the highest quality and most accessible Japanese dining experience in the Triangle," explained Yang, who joins veteran Manager Mitsuyo Nishio at SONO.

Chef Kim, who has spent three months refining SONO's culinary experience, built a dedicated following among sushi connoisseurs during his term at the now closed AN under the leadership of JBF Semifinalist Chef Steven Greene, and prior, at Hayashi-Ya where he was Executive Chef, as well as at Hayashi, Mura and Asuka. Chef Kim's new menu at SONO reflects his birthplace in Seoul, South Korea, and consequently, his extensive training in Japanese, Korean, and Thai cuisines over the past few decades.

Chef Kim's cuisine is guided by authenticity, finesse, and ultimately, the freshest product available. At SONO, sushi is the prominent feature — both traditional and creative rolls, as well as nigiri and sashimi. Kim's philosophy is guided by a head-to-tail approach to seafood, thus he sources only sushi grade fish from notable international purveyors and brings in specialty items weekly — everything from live scallops, abalone and geoduck to Japanese Uni and BlueFin Tuna (toro, chu toro and o toro). SONO's most adventurous dining path at lunch and dinner is in one of the 7 seats at the sushi bar for the sushi-focused Omakase — an 8-course chef tasting menu prepared *a-la-minute* by Kim and his team. It is the ultimate way to experience SONO and its most exceptional fish and shellfish, alongside wine, sake and beer pairings.

While sushi is the star, SONO presents a comprehensive Asian menu at both lunch and dinner. SONO's popular Bento Box is available during lunch service from the kitchen or sushi bar. And the lunch menu includes house-made pan fried dumplings, Harumaki, spicy Poke and much more. In the evenings, guests may choose the unique opportunity to explore both meat and fish in raw and cooked presentations with the Grand Tasting. Chef Kim's Korean childhood influences his authentic and deeply flavorful rendition of Korean Fried Chicken — double fried and made with 15 spices — while his training in Japanese kitchens over two decades informs his Ramen menu. Five variations featuring two house-made broths — a 16-hour milky pork broth, or Tonkotsu, and a pork, chicken, katsuo broth or Shoyu. Soups, salads, Mills Family Farm Ribeye and tableside Iskhuyaki BBQ round out the extensive dinner menu.

To complement Kim's sophisticated Japanese cuisine, James Yang — one of the few sake certified sommeliers in the area — has created one of the regions' largest sake programs with 30 by the bottle. He has also expanded the wine list from 6 to 90 wines, with 15 by the glass, now offers a strong local beer list, including beers from Brewery Bhavana, Ponysaurus, Crank Arm and Bond Brothers on draft, a significant Asian beer selection, and an Asian inspired cocktail list made from fresh juices.

SONO, located at 319 Fayetteville Street in downtown Raleigh, recently revised its lunch and dinner offerings and has an interior renovation underway. It is open weekdays for lunch from 11am to 2pm and dinner nightly from 5pm until 10pm (and until 11pm Friday and Saturday). With Chef Hyun-Woo and General Manager James Yang on board, SONO is poised to be a leader in the Triangle's dining scene in its second decade in downtown Raleigh.

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