

Pranksters target Japan's sushi restaurants

6th February 2023



Creative Commons 2.0
via Bill Hails on flickr.com

Pranksters in Japan are posing potential health and reputational problems for the country's famed conveyor-belt sushi restaurants. This week, several diners have posted prank videos on social media. The pranks include people

licking bottles of soy sauce and chopsticks, and licking their fingers and then touching the sushi on the revolving belt. These actions have shocked people in Japan. The actions have been dubbed "sushi-tero," or "sushi terrorism". The incidents have caused the share prices of a leading sushi chain to plummet. Many restaurants have sprung into action and taken measures to combat the pranksters. These include installing security cameras and providing disinfected eating utensils.

Japan's "kaitenzushi" restaurants are ubiquitous in Japan. They offer good quality, inexpensive sushi in an informal, casual environment. They are usually spotlessly clean. Some industry analysts are saying sushi terrorism poses a threat to the future operations of the eateries. One egregious video clip has been viewed 40 million times and has sparked copycat clips. The chain targeted by the prankster is filing a civil lawsuit against him and is claiming compensation for damages. The Guardian newspaper reported that there is a lot of outrage on social media from Japanese people, who believe the pranksters are showing "contempt for the country's high standards of hygiene".

Sources: [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com) / [mainichi.jp](https://www.mainichi.jp) / [japantimes.co.jp](https://www.japantimes.co.jp)

Writing

Conveyor-belt restaurants are better than restaurants with table service. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

prankster / health issues / reputation / diners / soy sauce / share prices / utensils / restaurants / analysts / terrorism / video clip / lawsuit / compensation / hygiene

True / False

- 1) Pranksters in Japan have harmed the reputation of sushi restaurants. T / F
- 2) Diners posted videos of themselves licking ketchup and mayonnaise. T / F
- 3) The share prices of a sushi chain nosedived because of the videos. T / F
- 4) Restaurants are requiring diners to bring their own eating utensils. T / F
- 5) Japan's "kaitenzushi" restaurants are very expensive. T / F
- 6) A video posted by a prankster has been viewed 40 million times. T / F
- 7) A sushi chain is suing a prankster for damages. T / F
- 8) A newspaper reports there is little anger among Japanese people. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. posing | a. equipment |
| 2. reputation | b. tricks |
| 3. pranks | c. cleanliness |
| 4. plummet | d. everywhere |
| 5. utensils | e. occurrences |
| 6. ubiquitous | f. presenting |
| 7. egregious | g. anger |
| 8. incidents | h. nosedive |
| 9. outrage | i. image |
| 10. hygiene | j. shocking |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think of sushi?
- b) How often do you go to sushi restaurants?
- c) What do you think of social media pranks?
- d) What do you think of the idea of conveyor-belt restaurants?
- e) What do you think of the term 'sushi terrorism'?
- f) What makes a good sushi restaurant?
- g) Should all restaurants have security cameras?
- h) What advice do you have for the sushi restaurants?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Pranksters in Japan are posing | a. lawsuit |
| 2. harming the | b. into action |
| 3. The actions have been dubbed | c. utensils |
| 4. restaurants have sprung | d. analysts |
| 5. disinfected eating | e. "sushi-tero" |
| 6. restaurants are ubiquitous | f. standards of hygiene |
| 7. Some industry | g. potential health issues |
| 8. filing a civil | h. for damages |
| 9. claiming compensation | i. reputation of |
| 10. the country's high | j. in Japan |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Do you prefer formal or informal restaurants?
- What do you do when a restaurant isn't spotlessly clean?
- How much compensation should the prankster pay the restaurant?
- What kinds of videos do you watch on social media?
- What are the best sushi toppings?
- Do you worry about hygiene standards in restaurants?
- What questions would you like to ask the sushi restaurants?

Spelling

- posing tptiaone| health issues
- harming the otiauterpn
- the sushi on the eognlrvi belt
- The actions have been ddbueb "sushi-tero"
- prices of a leading sushi chain to mutmlep
- disinfected eating leunisst
- restaurants are uquuisobt in Japan
- the future operations of the eetsiaer
- One iusgeoegr video clip
- claiming pnnosimoacet for damages
- pranksters are showing onptctem
- high standards of eighney

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. b	4. h	5. a
6. d	7. j	8. e	9. g	10. c

Role Play

Role A – Tuna

You think tuna is the best sushi topping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their toppings. Also, tell the others which is the least tasty of these (and why): avocado, seaweed or wagyu beef.

Role B – Avocado

You think avocado is the best sushi topping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their toppings. Also, tell the others which is the least tasty of these (and why): tuna, seaweed or wagyu beef.

Role C – Seaweed

You think seaweed is the best sushi topping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their toppings. Also, tell the others which is the least tasty of these (and why): avocado, tuna or wagyu beef.

Role D – Wagyu Beef

You think wagyu beef is the best sushi topping. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their toppings. Also, tell the others which is the least tasty of these (and why): avocado, seaweed or tuna.

Speaking – Sushi Toppings

Rank these with your partner. Put the best sushi toppings at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| • Tuna | • Eggplant |
| • Avocado | • Natto |
| • Omelet | • Seaweed |
| • Hamburger | • Wagyu beef |

Answers – True False

1 T	2 F	3 T	4 F	5 F	6 T	7 T	8 F
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.