



There are many things that make this particular location stand out, but chief among them is the landmarked building, built between 1912 and 1922, housing the restaurant. Occupying the ground floor and the cellar level of this limestone space—complete with original, massive Doric columns, and soaring 30-foot ceilings—Nobu Downtown is the perfect fusion of old and new, as well as a melding of Japanese and Peruvian aesthetics that mirror such perennial menu favorites as yellowtail sashimi with jalapeño, and crispy rice with spicy tuna.

Upon entering the upstairs space, visitors to the new restaurant (reservations are being accepted starting on April 6) will be immersed in a series of "serene" spaces: the calligraphy-inspired colonnade lounge designed for informal dining, sake sipping, and sushi sampling, for one. A site-specific, ash-wood sculpture by John Houshmand mimicking the swirl of sumi-e ink is suspended above the room, and an eight-foot long digital display composed of LED tiles depicts brushstrokes and cherry blossoms in bloom, highlighting the bronze and glass finishes throughout.



Courtesy Rockwell Group

On the cellar level of the former American Telegraph & Telephone building, Nobu Downtown features a sushi bar, sake room, and more.

Moving downstairs, the elegant chamber dining area ("crafted in a former office cafeteria space," says Rockwell) is a study in light woods and plush banquettes with colored fabrics that evoke flowing kimonos. The 35-seat private dining room featuring hand-cast blue glaze tiles, a 13-seat sushi bar, and an intimate sake room—complete with exquisite, handmade carafes by Canadian artist, Pascale Girardin—rounds out the restaurant's Zen offerings.

While there are many references to the original location, there is a strong focus on new dishes (and creative cocktails) at Nobu Downtown. The Bar & Lounge menu will now include bigeye tuna tataki with eryngii mushrooms and Holland hot peppers; fluke sashimi with ume wasabi; and grilled octopus with choclo salsa, while the dining room menu has added uni oil yaki—a rich sea urchin dish—and grilled omakase preparations from the new griddle.

Cleaner eating will take center stage, too, as monk fruit is used as a replacement for sugar in everything from sushi rice to the soy crème and black sesame cheesecake. Craft cocktails such as the fig-infused, vodka-based “105 Hudson” will pay homage to the restaurant’s roots, while newer additions such as the “Fulton Street Sour”—a piquant mix of bergamot vodka, Amaro Montenegro, pear, honey and lemon—herald a new era.

“Each location, from the first Nobu on Hudson Street to this new Nobu Downtown, is an exploration of Japanese craft influenced by Nobu’s personal history and his inventive, non-traditional cuisine,” says Rockwell. “Using simple, honest, and hand-crafted materials wherever possible, this restaurant is a continuation of the craft story that began more than two decades ago.”