

events & information

‘Viking’ dining gets makeover at The Imperial

Aug. 1 is known by some as Viking Day in Japan, where the word refers to buffet dining rather than Scandinavian pirates. The history of the term dates back to the 1950s, when the then-general manager of the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo ordered chef Nobuo



The restaurant’s offerings will expand to about 50 items from 40 by adding the cuisines of Japan and China. IMPERIAL HOTEL, TOKYO

Murakami, who had been training in Paris, to master smorgasbord dining.

After Murakami returned to Japan, he contributed to the launch of the first buffet restaurant in the country, The Imperial Viking, which debuted on Aug. 1, 1958. The name was inspired by an iconic scene of a band of pirates vigorously eating food on a table in a film called “Viking,” which was showing in Japan at the time.

Following a 2004 renovation that saw the restaurant renamed to The Imperial Viking Sal (Latin for salt), this venerable dining establishment is once again being remodeled ahead of its 65th anniversary in August, when it will reopen with additional fare and flair.

The interior will be refurbished with luxurious, authentic fabrics and furniture inspired by Viking ships from the ninth century, while a service area expansion will provide three areas dedicated to hot and cold dishes and desserts.

The new fare will include seasonal Japanese dishes, such as tempura, and Chinese



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dishes, including Peking duck and dim sum, to accompany its selection of French cuisine. This will bring the total number of dishes at The Imperial Viking Sal to about 50 from 40.

Although closed through July to complete its renovations, The Imperial Viking Sal will reopen for dinner service on Aug. 1.

For more information, visit <https://www.imperialhotel.co.jp/e/tokyo/restaurant/sal/>