



YP Hotspot: Big in Japan Bar

By: [Notable](#) Posted in: [Bars And Lounges - Nationwide](#) || February 14, 2012, 6:15 am



We've passed by the nondescript red door of [Big in Japan Bar](#) at the corner of Rachel and St. Laurent (right beside Patati Patata, 4175 Boul. St. Laurent) probably dozens of times without ever taking notice of it, never mind even entertaining the idea that there could be a beautiful bar hidden within. This is probably one of the things that makes Big in Japan Bar so notable. It kind of flies under the radar and is easily overlooked, giving it the perfect feel for young professionals. It is easy to pass over, as the only identifier of the bar is two Japanese characters on the graffiti-painted door. Upon opening the door, you're greeted by a dark, stone hallway with a curtain at the end. Finally, beyond the curtain lies a maze of candles surrounding a puzzle piece-shaped bar. It is warm, the music is low and, although having a dynamic clientele, it never feels crowded. The interior was designed by the same people who were behind Pullman Wine Bar, so expect the same sort of vibe.

In addition to the beautiful space, what keeps us coming back is the specialized drink menu. If you like Yamazaki whiskey, this is the place to go. They have pure malt and single malt both aged 12 years. It's the only bar in Montreal (as far as we know) that allows you to buy an entire bottle of whiskey, attach your name to it and save it for the next time you return to the bar – which, believe us, will be sooner than you think. They also have a good Sake collection, which are all light, delicious and crisp. They have authentic Japanese specialties like UmeShu along with a lovely wine and cocktail selection. However, if you're ordering a cocktail, expect a bit of a wait. The wine, sake, UmeShu and whiskey all come fast, though.

Big in Japan Bar is owned by the same guy behind Big in Japan, the Japanese Isakaya (just featured on Anthony Bourdain's *Layover*) located a couple blocks south of its new sister location. Aside from the long cocktail wait, we would strongly recommend Big in Japan Bar for you, colleagues, clients and friends. It is exclusive, hidden and the atmosphere is classy, yet welcoming. One final warning: once you're in, you will lose track of time so don't be surprised if you're there when the big lights turn on.

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