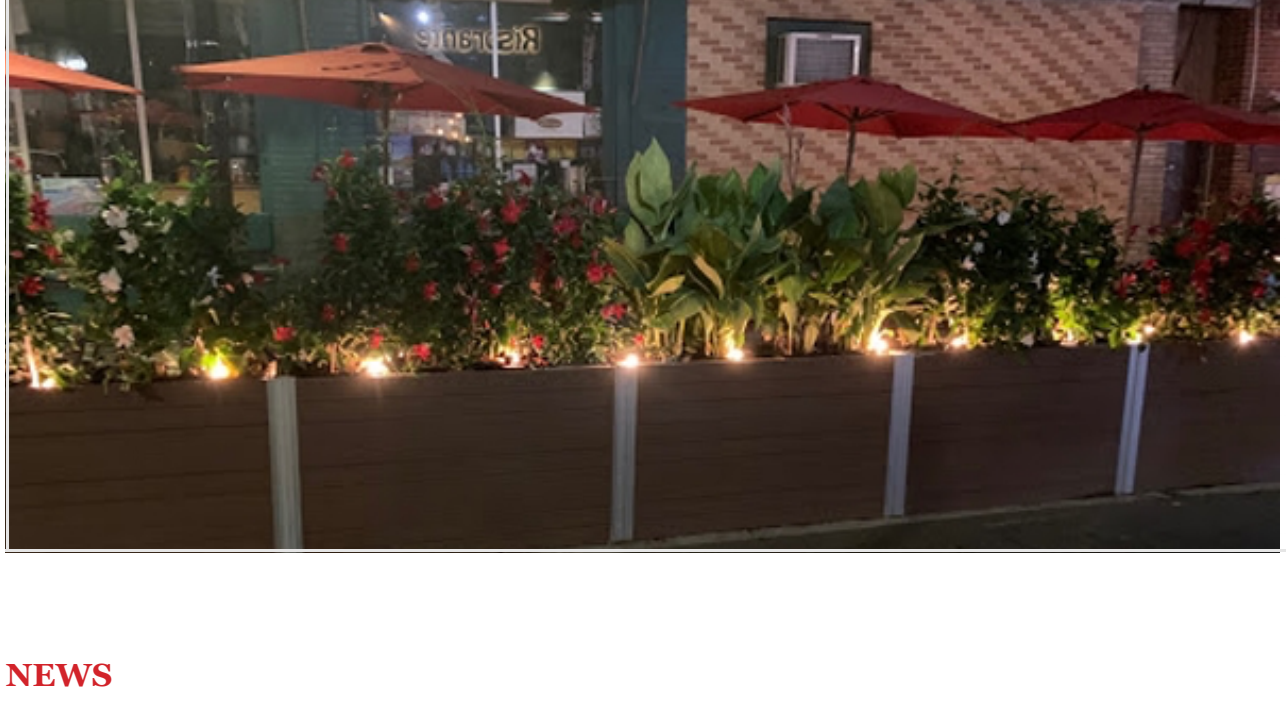




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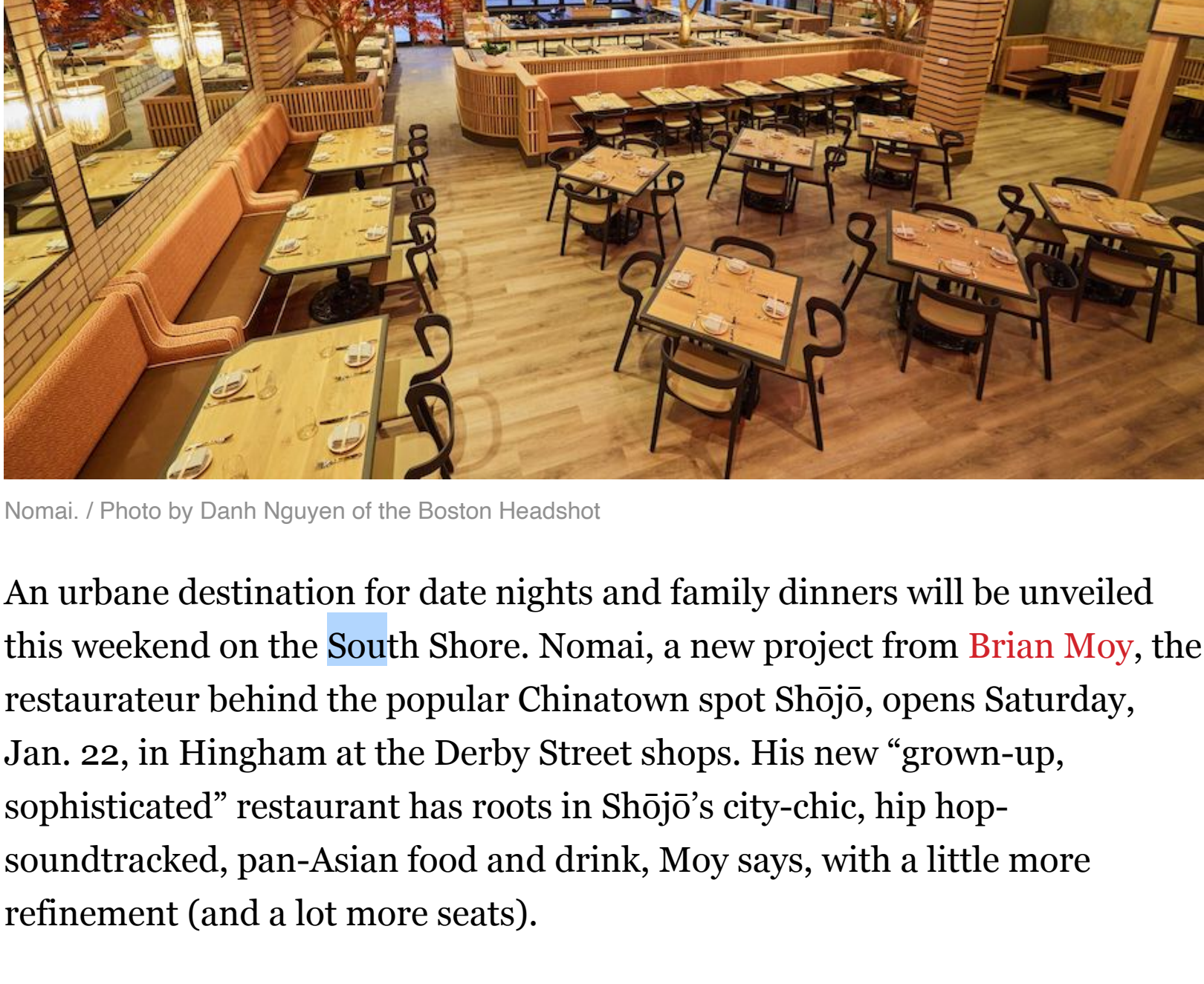
## First Look: Nomai, a New Restaurant from Boston's Shojo Team, Opens in Hingham

It's a sophisticated New American spot with Asian twists, plus an award-winning master of mai tai cocktails.

by **JACQUELINE CAIN** • 1/21/2022, 4:13 p.m.

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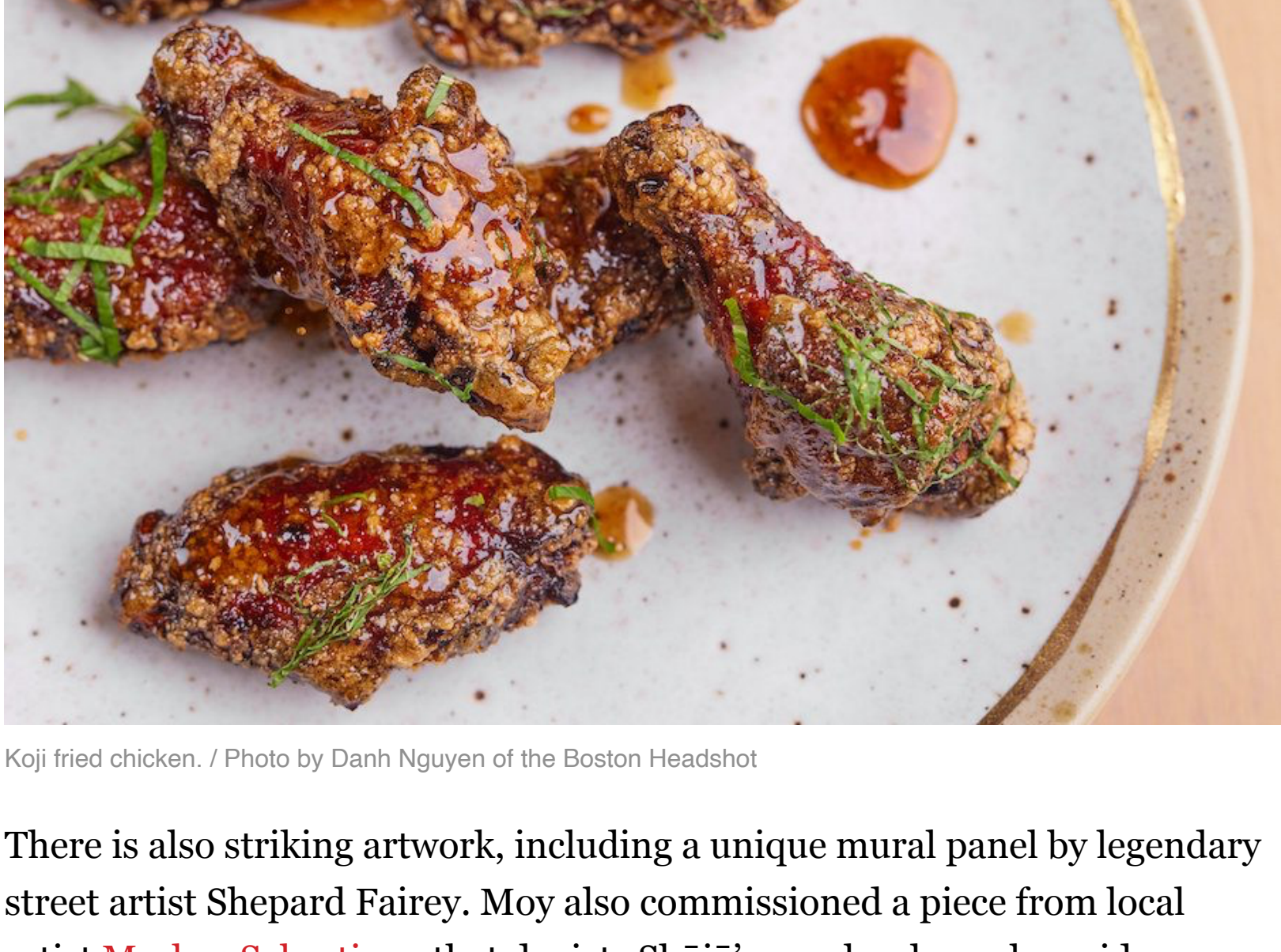
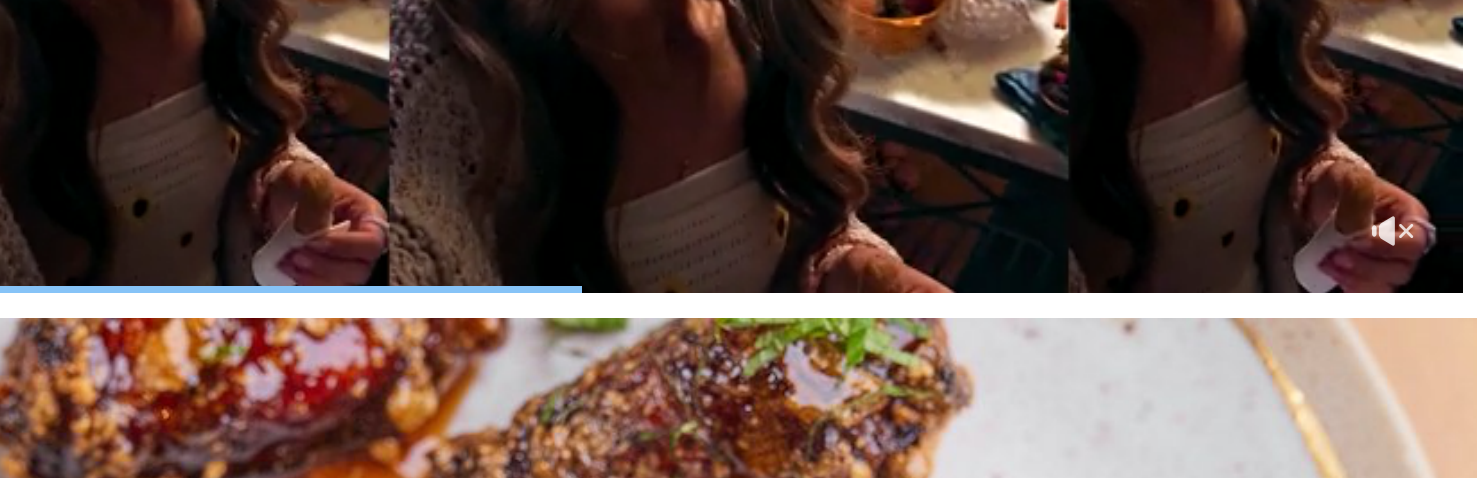
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Nomai. / Photo by Danh Nguyen of the Boston Headshot

An urbane destination for date nights and family dinners will be unveiled this weekend on the South Shore. Nomai, a new project from **Brian Moy**, the restaurateur behind the popular Chinatown spot Shōjō, opens Saturday, Jan. 22, in Hingham at the Derby Street shops. His new "grown-up, sophisticated" restaurant has roots in Shōjō's city-chic, hip hop-soundtracked, pan-Asian food and drink, Moy says, with a little more refinement (and a lot more seats).

Nomai, a name which nods to the crimson Japanese maple tree, spans 130 seats inside with a 20-seat, U-shaped bar. Against a minimalist backdrop of industrial plastered walls and white oak framing, design elements really pop in the space, which was designed by Boston-based Sousa Design Architects —from the red-upholstered seating to the four, 18-foot-tall nomai trees rising up inside the dining room. A 50-seat patio will debut this spring, fitted with a heating and cooling system and accordion-glass windows that can fully enclose it.



Koji fried chicken. / Photo by Danh Nguyen of the Boston Headshot

There is also striking artwork, including a unique mural panel by legendary street artist Shepard Fairey. Moy also commissioned a piece from local artist **Markus Sabastiano** that depicts Shōjō's multi-generational Chinatown story as well as the Hingham community.

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Elements of Chinatown and coastal Hingham are also evident in the food, which Moy describes as "Asian New American." Check out the opening menu below, developed by culinary director Jason Hua, Moy, and executive chef Bradley Yard. It features a wide range of raw bar offerings, snacks, and appetizers, including tuna spring rolls with daikon and sprouts; wagyu beef tataki with shaved mushrooms, white soy, and watercress; and homemade tofu with black truffle. Among the entrée-style portions are steamed sea bass with crispy rice and bok choy; and Grandma Hua's handmade carrot noodles with beef Bourguignon.

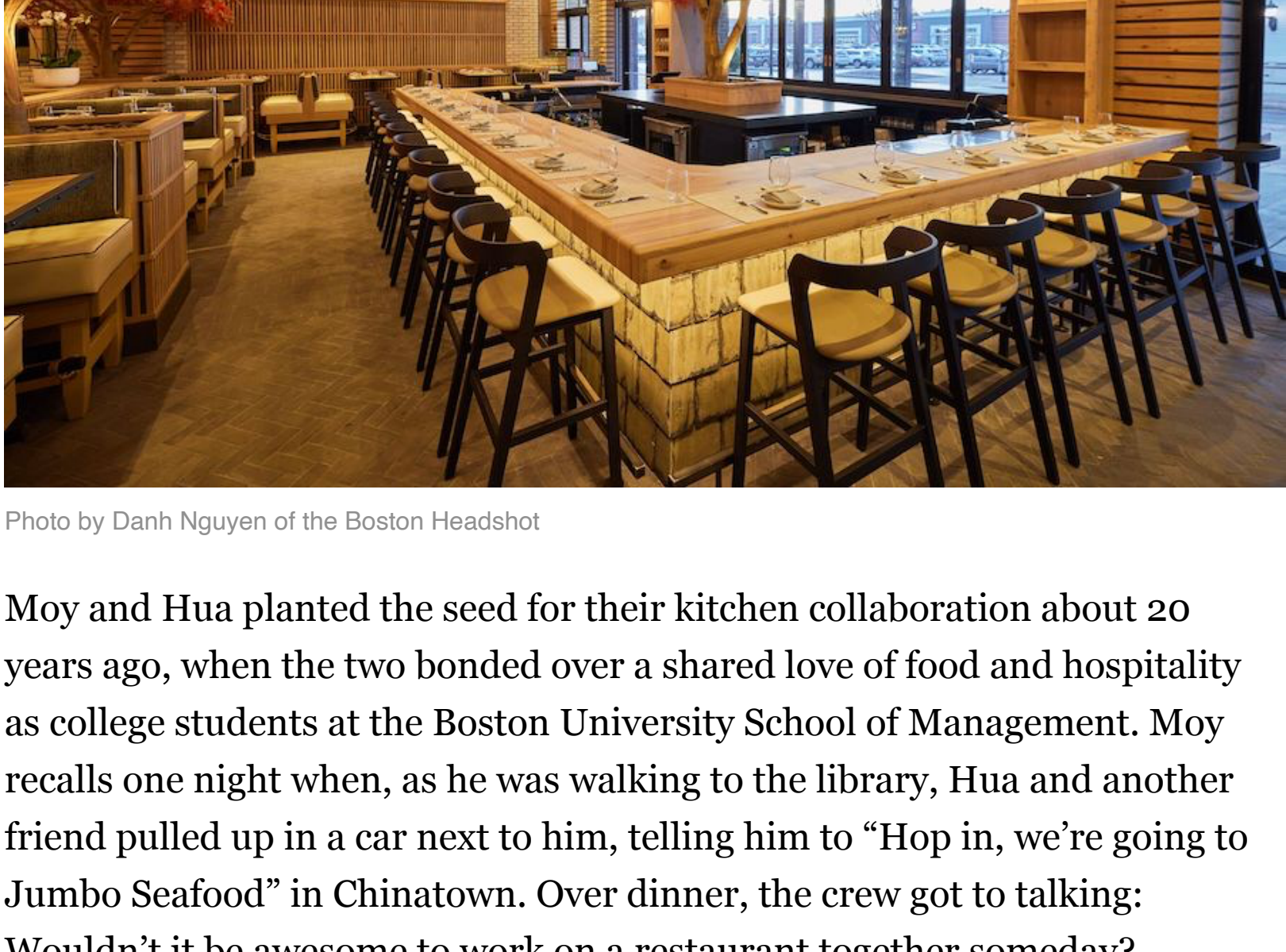


Photo by Danh Nguyen of the Boston Headshot

Moy and Hua planted the seed for their kitchen collaboration about 20 years ago, when the two bonded over a shared love of food and hospitality as college students at the Boston University School of Management. Moy recalls one night when, as he was walking to the library, Hua and another friend pulled up in a car next to him, telling him to "Hop in, we're going to Jumbo Seafood" in Chinatown. Over dinner, the crew got to talking; Wouldn't it be awesome to work on a restaurant together someday?

That day has finally come—and in the interim, Hua has built up an impressive resume in the restaurant world. After BU, he went on to work for Boston's award-winning chef Ken Oringer, helping to develop the original concept for the Back Bay's now-legendary Uni. He later attended the Culinary Institute of America in New York City, joined Michelin-starred chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's family of restaurants, and worked in Europe for a while. In 2011, Hua returned to New York to open The Dutch as chef and managing partner; it wound up *New York Times* critic Sam Sifton's pick for the city's best new restaurant that year.



Photo by Danh Nguyen of the Boston Headshot

That all bodes very well for Boston-area diners. Hua helped Moy fine-tune the Nomai concept, and will return to Hingham seasonally to help with menu changes. Yard, meanwhile, is executing the vision in the kitchen nightly.

On the beverage side, Nomai echoes Shōjō's famously spirited program. For one thing, it has a buzzy bar director in Justin Park, who comes to Nomai by way of Honolulu's highly regarded Bar Leather Apron. Park has won multiple mai tai competitions, so naturally he has a version on the menu here, as well. You'll find a number of riffs on classic cocktails, in fact, as well as wholly original creations with tropical and Asian influences. Among them: the Matcha Maker with Makers Mark Bourbon, crème de menthe, and matcha tea powder; and the Winters Strawberry in Japan, a teatup full of Japanese vodka, shochu, strawberry cordial, and bergamot.

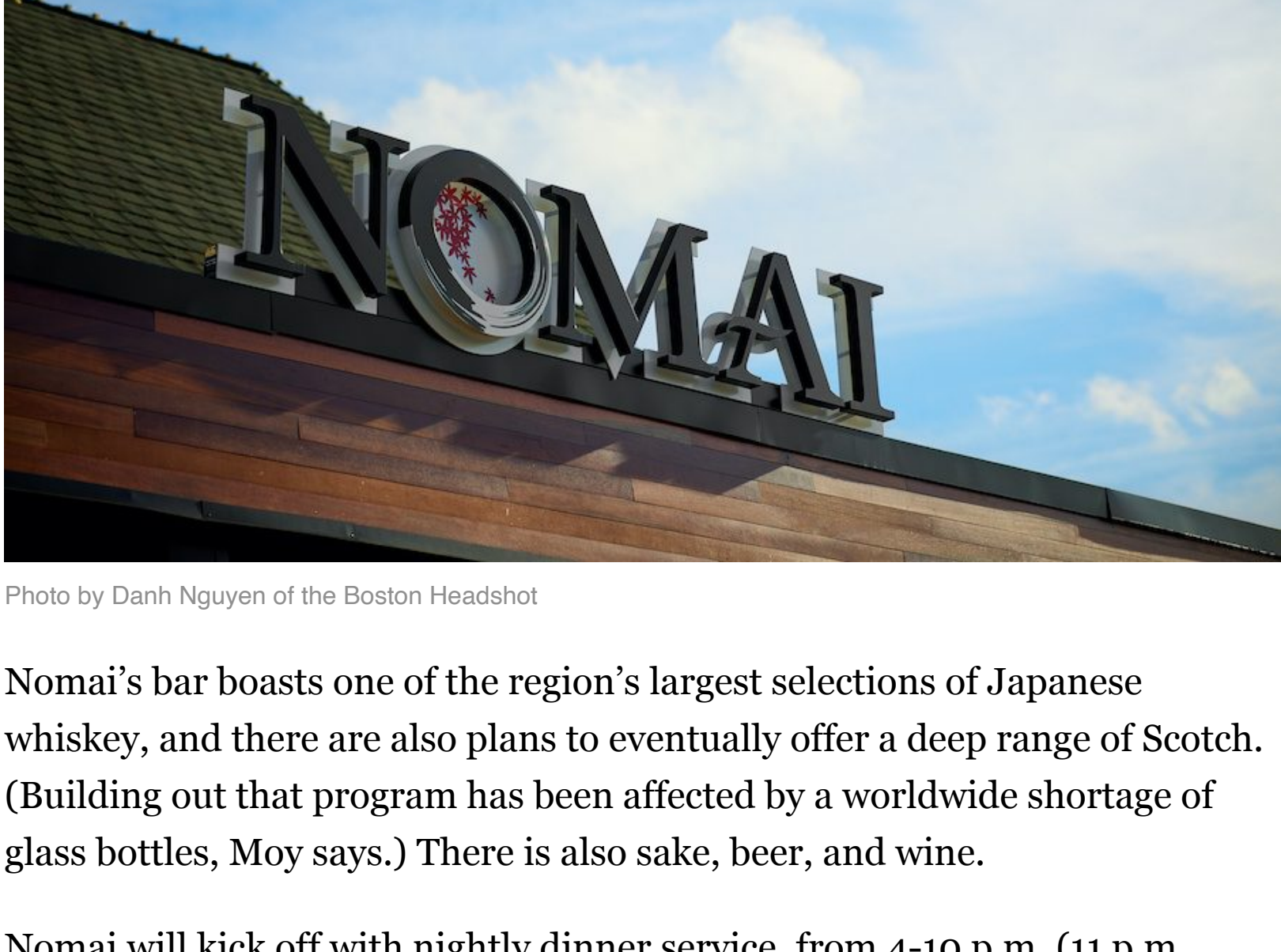


Photo by Danh Nguyen of the Boston Headshot

Nomai's bar boasts one of the region's largest selections of Japanese whiskey, and there are also plans to eventually offer a deep range of Scotch. (Building out that program has been affected by a worldwide shortage of glass bottles, Moy says.) There is also sake, beer, and wine.

Nomai will kick off with nightly dinner service, from 4-10 p.m. (11 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays). Lunch and brunch will begin in the months ahead as the restaurant is able to staff up.

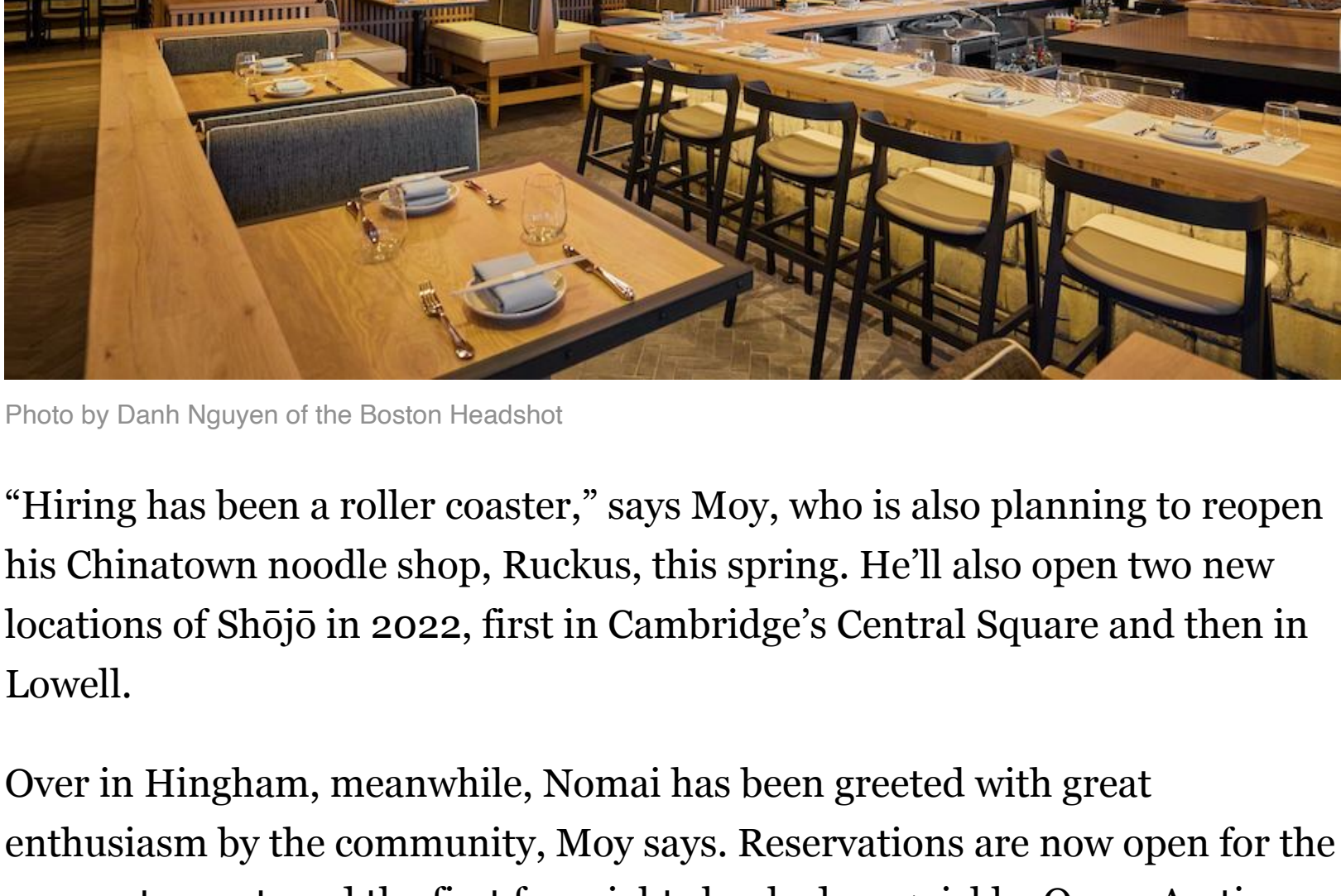
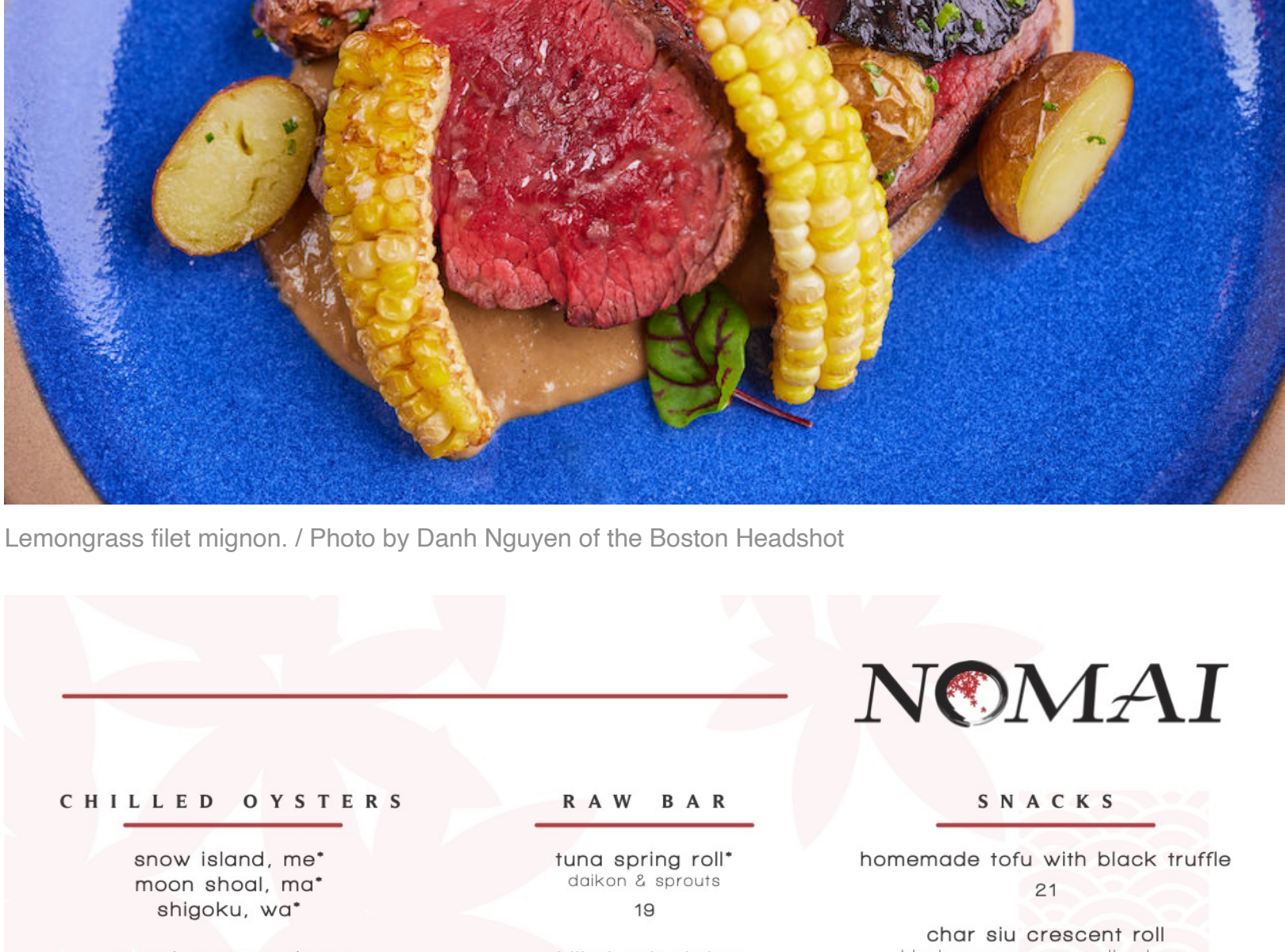


Photo by Danh Nguyen of the Boston Headshot

"Hiring has been a roller coaster," says Moy, who is also planning to reopen his Chinatown noodle shop, Ruckus, this spring. He'll also open two new locations of Shōjō in 2022, first in Cambridge's Central Square and then in Lowell.

Over in Hingham, meanwhile, Nomai has been greeted with great enthusiasm by the community, Moy says. Reservations are now open for the new restaurant, and the first few nights booked up quickly. On an Arctic-cold weekend, welcomes don't get much warmer than that.

94 Derby St. (Derby Street Shops), Hingham, [nomaihingham.com](http://nomaihingham.com).



Lemongrass flat mignon. / Photo by Danh Nguyen of the Boston Headshot

## NOMAI

<b>CHILLED OYSTERS</b> snow island, mai* moon spud, spud* gyoitake, wasi* cucumber-ginger ginger (the wasabi) half dozen on one glass \$14K	<b>RAW BAR</b> tuna spring roll tobiko & shiso chilled gulf shrimp baby, mayo, pickled radish, and white miso 22 sashimi* sashimi* white rice, soy sauce, wasabi, pickled radish 18	<b>SNACKS</b> homemade tofu with black truffle black garlic, miso 21 char sui crescent roll black sesame, miso, scallion 12 orange chicken chicken wings 14
<b>APPETIZERS</b> sea scallop sashimi* scallop, sea scallop, miso 18 farmer's salad kale, half apple, arugula, cranberry sauce 11	chinatown catamarani duck spring, pickled cucumber 16 wagyu beef tataki* shaved mushroom, white soy, watercress 25	
<b>VEGETABLES</b> radishco salad arugula, miso, sesame sunflower seeds, tomato, miso 12 wok spinach cauliflower sesame oil, garlic, chili, soy 16 wood fired sugar snap peas black garlic, miso 12 honey baked squash chestnut, pine pollen, grape 12	<b>NOODLES &amp; RICE</b> Japanese crab ramen beef, egg 22 maine lobster gyoza noodle miso, tomato, garlic & basil 12 pork & squid ink wonton pork, shrimp, tomatoes, carrot, scallion 24 grandma hua's handmade carrot noodle beef bourguignon 28	
<b>FISH</b> steamed sea bass citrus, rice, miso, radish, sea choy 24 wild halibut turnip, sea choy, red cabbage, sesame & chili 24 sea scallop* scallop, miso, black sesame 36	<b>MEAT</b> legg fried chicken ginger green scallion sauce, miso, black sesame, rice 29 lemongrass flat mignon* with black sesame 45 prime bone in ribeye for 2* 116	
<b>DESSERT</b> black sesame ice cream sandwich sesame and 10 dark chocolate orange creme brulee 10 matcha panna cotta 9		

before placing your order, please inform us if a person in your party has a food allergy. \*containing raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have medical conditions.

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