

# A Night to REMEMBER

By Beverley S. Grimmer, *Vice Chargée de Presse*

FOR NEARLY FIFTY YEARS, THE JAPANESE RESTAURANT Kyo-ya has been welcoming patrons to Waikiki with its superb Japanese cuisine. Originally built in the tea-house style in 1958, this landmark venue underwent a complete renovation in 1991. After learning that Kyo-ya would close permanently in April 2007, the Honolulu Bailliage ventured there on January 27 for one last opportunity to enjoy the wonderful atmosphere, excellent service, and exquisite cuisine.

In the lower-level reception room, we were graciously greeted by the staff, who served us flutes of chilled Charles Heidsieck Brut Champagne Reserve N.V. and a tempting array of *zensai*—light, seasonal appetizers. Charming hostesses dressed in traditional kimonos—the true fashion of old Japan—attended to our every whim. With each window providing views of tall stands of bamboo, we quickly lost ourselves in this comfortable



1 Chevalier Neal Israel, Johanna Israel, Gary Grimmer and Vice Echanson Hon. Carl Smigielski. 2 Chambellan Provincial Laurence Vogel, Marie-Claire Strasser, Bebe Sumner, Bailli Provincial Robert Lee and Kauai/Oahu Bailli Hon. Bruce Liebert. 3 Colleen Haig, Chevalier David Haig, Vice Chargée de Presse Beverley Grimmer and Gary Grimmer. (Food left) *Misoyaki* butterfish.



cocoon, forgetting that we were in the midst of a busy tourist district.

Following introductions by Bailli Fred Hellekes, we were guided upstairs to a beautifully appointed dining room. Three long tables were resplendent with traditional serving pieces and lovely arrangements of white spider mums and curly willow. Smooth black stones were strewn about, creating the appearance of a charming walkway down the center of each table.

No sooner were we seated than sake was poured and the first course served. True to custom, tremendous attention was given to every detail. Each course was so impeccably presented that we had to convince ourselves that it was the chef's desire that we consume those works of art.

Chef Yoshiaki Watanabe offered a selection of culinary delights that intrigued palates of all range of experience. From the *suimono* (clear soup) to the *tsukemono* (pickled vegetables) to the grilled *misoyaki* butterfish, the incredible visual stimulation kept us engaged in conversation. Other menu standouts included assorted sashimi, baked pork *kakuni*, baked lobster, and New York *wafu* steak.

All too soon, night wrapped around us and the affair came to an end. Bailli Hellekes led us in a standing ovation for the management, Chef Watanabe and his kitchen brigade, and the stellar waitstaff. Kyo-ya may be leaving Waikiki, but the Honolulu Bailliage will always remember an evening that can only be described as sublime. *Sayonara!* ☞