

## Yo! Sushi

The British restaurant chain, *Yo! Sushi*, which sells Japanese food, continues to grow and diversify. How far can ideas and products from other countries sell successfully in overseas markets?

1 Have you ever had 'sushi'? Which of the following answers is closest to yours? Compare with a partner.

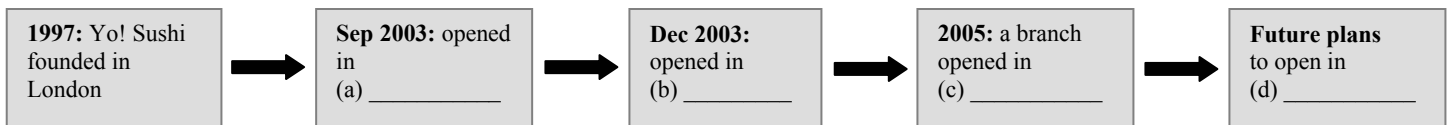
**A** "Yes – many times. I love Japanese food"

**B** "No – I don't think I'd like raw fish"

**C** "Once, but I didn't really like it"

**D** "No, but I'd like to try it"

2 Study the timeline. Complete the missing countries by scanning paragraph three of the article.



### Sushi sales soar

*Yo! Sushi* is Britain's biggest chain of restaurants specialising in sushi. It currently has 25 outlets in its home market and is planning to open more. The company also has overseas ambitions. *Yo! Sushi* uses the Japanese style conveyor belt method of delivering sushi to customers. The idea of 'bringing sushi to everyone' was an instant success.

Sushi itself is growing more popular. According to one trade paper, the number of Japanese restaurants in the US has doubled in the last ten years, and now stands at around 9,000. Japanese cuisine is popular in California and New York and demand in China is expected to grow.

*Yo! Sushi* was founded in 1997 in London. In 2003, the company opened a restaurant in Athens (September) and then one in Dubai (December). Two years later it arrived in

Paris. The chain has plans to take the concept to Spain, the USA and other areas in the Middle East such as Saudi Arabia. The company also plans to diversify, and aims to set up a capsule-based hotel chain called Yotel!

Why is sushi becoming so popular? One reason could be the surge of interest in healthy food. However, purists would argue that the sushi served in Japan is different to that served abroad. In Japan, sushi is a delicacy. Is the sushi sold abroad 'authentic'? Just how much do consumer tastes vary from country to country? One question for entrepreneurs is how much a company has to change or modify its product in order to cater for different markets. Another is a question of fashion: maybe sushi is just a passing trend overseas. However, many believe that sushi is here to stay.

3 Read the whole article. What do you learn about the company *Yo! Sushi*?

4 Replace the vowels in the words below. Create sentences about your own company with the words.

(a) ch _ n	(b) c _ nc pt	(c) tr _ nd	(d) _ tl ts	(e) br _ nch	(f) h _ m _ m rk t
(g) s t _ p	(h) c t r _ f r	(i) f _ nd d	(j) d m nd _ n	(k) d v _ rs fy	(l) m d f

5 Discuss the following questions / discussion points in small groups. Be ready to report your ideas to the class.

- How popular are Japanese / ethnic restaurants in your country?
- List three things which your country imports and three things it exports.
- Choose a new idea / product you have seen in another country, which could be imported successfully into your country. Be ready to justify your choice. Would it be necessary to modify the concept to do well?