



Celebrities including, from left, Alicia Silverstone, Stephen Fry, and Sienna Miller, have appealed to the restaurant chain Nobu to stop serving bluefin tuna because it is endangered. REX FEATURES



Celebrity diners say no to Nobu

► Restaurant's refusal to take endangered fish off menu condemned

By Martin Hickman
CONSUMER AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

PROTESTING actors, pop stars, models and socialites have started a celebrity backlash against the A-list's favourite restaurant Nobu for selling an endangered fish.

Sienna Miller, Charlize Theron, Jemima Khan, Sting and his film producer wife Trudie Styler are among 31 signatories of a letter to the Japanese chef Nobu Matsuhisa appealing for him to remove bluefin tuna from his global restaurant empire so that they can "dine with a clear conscience".

The model Elle Macpherson and the actors Alicia Silverstone and Woody Harrelson are also supporting the protest, which follows news that Nobu refuses to stop serving bluefin – a fish on the brink of extinction in the Mediterranean. Instead, as *The Independent* reported last week, its two restaurants in London are advising diners to ask for an alternative.

"As customers and fans of Nobu we strongly feel that bluefin tuna must be completely removed from your menu due its perilous position as an extremely endangered animal," wrote the signatories, who also include the model Laura Bailey, the environmentalist Zac Goldsmith and television presenter Donna Air.

"Nobu is a restaurant we all love, a world leader in sushi with a fantastic reputation and enormous influence. If Nobu took a definitive stand on this issue it could make a critical difference. Continuing to serve bluefin leaves Nobu both vulnerable to public criticism and lagging behind Moshi Moshi, Gordon Ramsay, Jamie Oliver and others."

"The celebrities hint at a boycott: "We very much hope that you value our comments as customers and therefore that you will seriously consider our request; allowing us all to dine with a clear conscience." Stephen Fry, the actor and writer, said: "It is astounding

Bluefin tuna – with a guilt trip thrown in



How 'The Independent' reported the story on 27 May

lunacy to serve up endangered species for sushi. There's no justification for peddling extinction, yet that is exactly what Nobu is doing in restaurants around the world."

Kate Goldsmith, the Rothschild heiress, gathered support for the letter after she and her husband Ben Goldsmith watched a preview of a film about overfishing, *The End of the Line*.

The letter attracted the support of the casino heir Damian Aspinall and Vanisha Bhatia, the daughter of the billionaire steel magnate Lalshmi Mittal.

Mrs Goldsmith has not yet received a reply from Nobu.

In a statement, the 24-restaurant chain said: "Nobu Restaurants takes the issue of bluefin tuna and its environmentally threatened status very seriously and always has done."

"The consumption of this fish is a cultural institution in Japan and there is still an enormous demand for this delicacy at all our restaurants." It added that Greenpeace had asked for its bluefin dishes to be identified and was considering offering farmed Australian tuna as an alternative.

Charles Clover, author of the book *The End of the Line* who has campaigned against Nobu's sale of bluefin, said: "Nobu has made a fortune by sucking up to celebrities, and if celebrities turn their back on him because he's selling endangered species, more fool him."

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