

"Iron Chef" Sued for Allegedly Cheating Business Partner

[caption id="attachment_112136" align="alignnone" width="800"]



Chef Masaharu Morimoto. Photo courtest of Philly Eater. [/caption]

Summary: Iron Chef Masaharu Morimoto is being sued by a business partner who says he's owed a percentage of Morimoto Las Vegas' profits.

"Iron Chef" Masaharu Morimoto's business dealings have left a bad taste in his partner's mouth. According to a lawsuit filed on Tuesday, the celebrity chef reneged on a "handshake deal," and now his fellow restaurateur wants him to pay up.

According to the *New York Daily News*, Rowen Seibel helped Morimoto break into Las Vegas's competitive restaurant community in exchange for an "introduction fee." However, Seibel said that Morimoto never served up any payment.

"Without a proper introduction from an insider like Seibel, who maintained a strong presence and reputation within the community, Morimoto, even with his "Iron Chef" title and television-celebrity status, faced insurmountable difficulties penetrating the Las Vegas culinary scene," Seibel's complaint said.

Seibel, 35, is a convicted tax evader and former business partner of Gordon Ramsay, according to the publication, and he met the Iron Chef in 2005. He is the owner of the LLC, Rogun, which filed the suit.

In October 2016, Morimoto opened a restaurant inside of the MGM Grand. Two months later, Seibel was sentenced to a month in jail for hiding \$1 million from the IRS in Swiss banks and a Panamanian shell company. Seibel said that Morimoto tried to use his conviction to get out of paying the money he owed.

The lawsuit filed in Manhattan added that Morimoto did not want to be associated with Seibel because he worried he would lose his liquor license.

"Thus, such reason for refusing to honor the Letter Agreement is simply another deceptive device to circumvent Seibel's years of substantial efforts in working with MLV and Morimoto in introducing and strategizing the Restaurant on the Las Vegas strip, which since opening has resulted in sustained income to MLV and Morimoto, none of which has been paid to Rogun as MLV and Morimoto had agreed to do," the suit said.

Seibel said that Morimoto owes 20% of the first million he made at his restaurant, Morimoto Las Vegas. He also owes 25% of profits made above a million each year plus interest, according to *New York Daily News*.

Morimoto is a Japanese chef who rose to prominence thanks to his starring in the Food Network's *Iron Chef* and its spinoff *Iron Chef America*. He specializes in Japanese and American fusion, and he has several Morimoto restaurants in locations such as New York City and Philadelphia.

Representatives for Morimoto could not be reached by *New York Daily News*.

- [Husband Chokes Celebrity Chef Wife](#)
- [Chef Dishes Out Revenge after Firing](#)
- [Chef Murders and Cooks Girlfriend](#)

Source: *New York Daily News*

What do you think of the lawsuit filed against Morimoto? Let us know in the comments below.