



Atsuki Kuroda

Caveman – Tokyo, JAPAN

Early 2020 saw the launch of the new K5 development in Tokyo. Located in a former twenties bank in Nihonbashi, across from the Tokyo Stock Exchange, is a boutique hotel (K5), a bar (Brooklyn Brewery – the first beyond New York), a coffee shop (Switch Coffee), a cocktail bar (Ao) and a new restaurant called Caveman. Japanese chef Atsuki Kuroda – who, along with chef Shohei Yasuda and sommelier Kentaro Emoto, is part of the founding team – shares his inspirations and lessons learned.

Q. Have you always wanted to be at the helm of a restaurant?

A. 'Yes. From the very beginning when I joined the industry, I planned to open my own restaurant by the year 2020.'

Q. What tip would you give to a young restaurateur just starting out?

A. 'That a crisis is also a turning point.'

Q. What's a big mistake you've made – and what did you learn from it?

A. 'Working as a chef is tough. I was always quite confident in my physical strength, but I didn't know how to deal when I was mentally exhausted. Now, maintaining



my physical and mental health is a big deal to me.'

Q. How do you find your focus?

A. 'I listen to techno music. It puts me in a good mood and gives me the motivation to focus more.'

Q. What do you do to switch off from work?

A. 'Not looking at my phone... and swimming.'

Q. What are some hidden-gem restaurants in your neighbourhood?

A. 'Human Nature, a newly opened natural wine bar near my restaurant. And Bistro La Pioche, the best spot to enjoy natural wine and food.'

Q. Where does your inspiration come from?

A. 'From my childhood – the land in Tanba in Hyōgo that my grandparents lived on.'

Q. If you could start a business in another industry, what would it be?

A. 'I'd open a sauna *sen*to (public bath). It's been my dream since I was a kid.'



Chef Atsuki Kuroda and the Caveman brigade, whose casual fine-diner has won plaudits since its 2020 opening for its food, natural wine list and 'slow culture' ethos.

