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The inside scoop on food in Los Angeles

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This Katsuya has a secret ramen, burger and beer joint upstairs

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(Jenn Harris)



By **Jenn Harris** · **Contact Reporter**

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Unless you've booked a private party at the Katsuya at the Americana at Brand in Glendale, you've probably never ventured up the winding staircase, located just off the main entrance, that leads to the second floor. What used to be primarily a private event space is now the Sbe restaurant group's newest concept: K Ramen. Burger. Beer.

If you walk upstairs now, you'll find a large room outfitted with communal tables, a square ramen bar and a balcony that offers a view of the entire Americana. And on each table, squeeze bottles of Katsuya's signature spicy mayo and ketchup.

"Internally, it's like what if chef Katsuya had a son who went a little rogue and started making ramen and burgers out the back of Katsuya?" said John Kolaski, chief operating officer of Sbe restaurants, the company that owns Katsuya and its many locations worldwide. "It's meant to be more energized. We're calling it a pop-up, really, for us to

test the concept."

That concept has turned out to be one of the most on-trend restaurants in the city. On the menu, three of Los Angeles' current food obsessions: poke, burgers and ramen. (They're just missing toast.)

Poke was an obvious choice for the restaurant — Katsuya is known for its sushi, sashimi and spicy tuna on crispy rice. But the ramen was a little something different. Kolaski says the Glendale location received rave reviews after testing the lobster ramen, which served as the catalyst for the new project.

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The broth is made with a mixture of 15-hour chicken stock, fish stock, lobster butter and a kimchi base. There's also a *shoyu* ramen with chashu chicken, and a black miso ramen with miso chicken and sesame.

Then there's the burger, the first-ever for the Katsuya restaurant family. It's made with two four-ounce beef patties topped with caramelized onion, tomato, American cheese and the Katsuya signature spicy mayo. To go with the burgers, there are tots drizzled with duck fat, or fries or rice.

It should also be noted that the most expensive item on the menu is \$15, making the food far less expensive than the items on the more upscale menu downstairs.

The full bar carries an extensive selection of Japanese beer, including the Kirin frozen beer, and you can also order overflowing shots of sake. Not into beer? There's Yoo-hoo.

And for dessert, pints of Coolhaus ice cream served with a couple spoons to dine-in, or available to take out and eat on the grassy area in the middle of the shopping center.

If the concept is successful, you could see more K Ramen. Burger. Beer. pop-ups in the future.

K Ramen. Burger. Beer. is open 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday to Thursday and 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday to Saturday.

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