

Ramen Star

By **Annie Guo VanDan**
Photos by **Jason Zhang**



THE SPICY MISO

From the moment you step into Ramen Star, you feel the uniqueness of the restaurant and notice the exceptional detail in every corner. Not only is each dining table custom made by Takayuki Kida of Mercury Studio, each ceramic bowl by Boulder artist Kazu Oba is unlike any other. This is a reflection of how owner and chef Takashi Tamai treats each customer's experience. He customizes every dish and delivers on outstanding care and attention to detail.

Since Tamai has been at the restaurant every day since its opening on April 12, he has literally had his hands on every ramen bowl that has left the kitchen. The noodles, made daily from scratch with a machine imported from Japan, are thrown into a rich, silky broth. Ramen Star currently offers five styles of ramen: miso, spicy

miso, vegetable, miso vegetable, and the signature Ramen Star umami broth. Without giving away his secret recipe, the Ramen Star broth is extra special because it is made from a combination of pork, chicken, fish, and vegetables, unlike most ramen broth which is made of pork (most commonly known as tonkotsu broth). Not to mention, it takes 15 hours to make! As the seasons change, the restaurant will adapt and expand on the menu.

"We don't use any chemical seasonings, preservatives, or MSG for our home made soup. We source locally our healthy, organic, and natural ingredients. We offer world class ramen and a new ramen culture. Our ultimate goal is to share our passion for ramen with you," says Tamai.

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Tamai moved to Denver in 1999 to study business at CU-Denver. His love of cooking brought him back to Tokyo for training on how to perfect his ramen bowl. After a year in Tokyo, he returned to Denver to find the ideal location to open. Located in Sunnyside, Ramen Star is quickly becoming a local favorite for the neighborhood.

After the restaurant closes each night, the staff comes to-

Location
4044 Tejon St, Denver, CO 80211

Tel
303.455.3787

Web
www.ramenstar.net

Open Hours
Monday - Saturday
12pm to 2:30pm | 5pm to 9:30pm

Sunday
12pm to 2:30pm | 5pm to 8:30pm

Closed on Tuesday



From left: Michael Lehl, Takashi Tamai and Isaac Hartman

gether for a family dinner to reflect what went well and what could be done better. General manager Michael Lehl says, "I've worked for many people in the restaurant industry and there is no one like Takashi. His love of noodles is authentic."

Before jumping into your ramen, enjoy one of their most popular appetizers: gyoza, kara-age (fried chicken), takoyaki (diced octopus), or pork buns. The restaurant also carries a unique selection of sake, wine and beer, including the Drunken Whale Sake, a tokubetsu junmai from Kochi, Japan, the island city where Tamai is from. Their Japanese beers include the Yuzu Lager and Kawaba Beer, a craft beer from Gunma, Japan.

If you enjoy spicy dishes, go for the spicy miso ramen, which comes with pork chashu, seasoned ground beef, menma, green onion, beansprouts, corn, dried seaweed nori, and house-made hot paste.

For vegetarians, the shoyu ramen and vegetable miso ramen are both

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great options that come with a potato pierogi; and of course, the signature ramen star bowl is highly recommended.

During our visit, we also enjoyed the poke noodle dishes, which included poke tuna, seaweed and pickled vegetables. And finished the meal with mochi ice cream.



THE RAMEN STAR