

In the tech hub of Bellevue, a new creative Japanese restaurant centered around Yakiniku (Japanese-style BBQ) has opened its doors.



Located just a 15-minute drive east of Seattle across Lake Washington, Bellevue is often referred to as the "Silicon Forest." It is home to the headquarters of tech giants such as Microsoft, Amazon, Expedia, Meta (formerly Facebook), Nintendo, and OpenAI. The restaurant's name, Itadaki, carries a dual meaning: on one hand, it comes from the Japanese phrase "Itadakimasu," said before meals to express gratitude; on the other, it also means "summit" or "peak." Embodying the passion to bring the world's finest Yakiniku to those working at the forefront of cutting-edge technology, Itadaki held its grand opening on October 31, 2024, in a prime location in Bellevue.



"YAKINIKU can be even more delicious"



1 On the left of the image is thick-cut (1 cm) American Wagyu beef tongue, prized for its chewy and crisp texture—quickly rising in popularity. In the center is the restaurant's signature limited-time item, the "Rubik's Cube," offered only in small quantities each day. The cuts vary depending on availability, often including ribeye or strip loin. The cube-shaped cut highlights the most premium section at the core of the meat. These cubes are flown in daily from Miyazaki, Japan, using only the freshest A5-grade Wagyu. With a melt-in-your-mouth texture and exceptional tenderness, customers agree this is "the real Japanese Wagyu." On the right is Misuji (shoulder blade), made with American Wagyu and grilled over an open flame in the Japanese BBQ style. This method imparts a smoky, char-grilled flavor reminiscent of American steakhouse soul food. The carefully crafted side dishes emphasize the natural flavors of each ingredient, and their seasonings are designed to enhance the richness of the Wagyu. Head chef Jack Chen (age 34), with a strong background in food science and international trade, brings rare and hard-to-source Japanese ingredients to the table through his exceptional sourcing skills. **23** On the left is a luxurious bite combining Australian lobster, fresh sea urchin (uni) from Hokkaido, and seared Miyazaki A5 Wagyu. The sweetness of the uni and the richness of the beef create a truly unforgettable taste. Sea urchin lovers are on the rise. **4** Tamagokake Gohan (raw egg over rice) was once a dish many non-Japanese found difficult to accept, but it is gradually gaining popularity. Itadaki uses pasteurized eggs to eliminate odor and ensure a rich but clean flavor, making it a hit with guests. **5** Panida Neiman (31), who visited to celebrate her wedding, said: "This was my first time trying raw egg over rice. I could only experience it here, and I loved it." **67** Three dipping sauces accompany the "Rubik's Cube" beef: from left to right—wasabi, salt kelp, and Japanese ponzu citrus sauce. **8** The signature cocktail "Yuzu Puriflood Bloody Mary" is garnished with cilantro, wasabi, and yuzu—Japanese ingredients that are slowly gaining popularity in the U.S. This Japanese-inspired cocktail highlights the natural umami of its ingredients and is rarely found in the American market. Itadaki's core concept is to let diners fully enjoy the "Japanese vibe" in various ways. **9** The "Duck Breast Salad" is an exclusive dish at Itadaki, featuring a refreshing flavor profile that pairs perfectly with A5 Wagyu. **10** The increasingly popular Kamameshi (iron pot rice) comes in four varieties: vegetable, beef, seafood, and chicken—offering something for everyone. Unlike plain white rice, it delivers a new and exciting rice experience. **11** The carefully selected Inaniwa Udon offers a refined alternative to the more common Sanuki Udon. Its smooth and delicate texture pairs beautifully with a light lemon broth, acting like a refreshing dessert to conclude the Yakiniku meal. **12** To celebrate the retirement of her father Jerry (62), the Tang family gathered for a special meal. Athena (24), currently working at Amazon and living in Seattle, shared: "Choosing this restaurant was the perfect decision!"

