



In the lower right corner of the photo above is Yakiniku Toraji. The building with shining white lights that sits atop Grand Central Terminal is the Chrysler Building, one of the most prominent landmarks in Manhattan. It can be seen in the upper left photo. Yakiniku Toraji is only a five-minute walk away. Its floor-to-ceiling windows give passersby a clear view of the restaurant's interior, where people can be seen gathered around open-fire grills, enjoying their meals in a warm, tranquil atmosphere.

## Yakiniku Toraji, located between the United Nations and Grand Central Station, flourishes thanks to the "best beef in New York."

**Only a five-minute walk from Grand Central Station, the restaurant's convenient location makes it highly attractive to customers.**

Yakiniku Toraji is located on East 43rd Street in Midtown Manhattan. Walking east for one block, you reach the United Nations. Walking west, you reach Grand Central Station. Both are less than a five-minute walk away.

Over 5000 people work at the United Nations Headquarters, and Grand Central Station is the hub for commuter trains from surrounding New York and Connecticut suburbs, in addition to Long Island. Large numbers of lawyers, doctors, and business owners live along the coveted north-south stretches of Lexington and Third Avenue. A studio apartment nearby is currently listed at \$600,000.

For those lucky enough to live in Manhattan, the culinary capital of the world, life revolves around good food. Grabbing a taxi after work to meet up with friends at a highly-rated restaurant is the core of daily life here, and the closer you are to Grand Central, the easier it is for friends who commute from the suburbs. Yakiniku Toraji's central location means you can go out to eat, then board a train home in under 10 minutes.

Jesper (30, male), arrived at Yakiniku Toraji at 7 PM on a Saturday night. He said this was his first time at the restaurant, but he came because "a female friend of mine just returned to New York after being away for three years, so four of us got together to celebrate. A popular food blogger who usually writes about street food was really impressed by this restaurant, so that's why I chose it. As the blogger wrote, 'the Wagyu beef is delicious, but what's even better is the location - it's such an easy place to invite friends to gather.' Many of my friends live in the suburbs, so it's really convenient to get to Grand Central without switching trains."

This had always been the intention of Mr. Kim. He spent 10 years riding a bike around Manhattan, scouting out the best location to attract customers.

From April to June, students from SUNY and Columbia gather at the restaurant to celebrate graduations or new jobs. One reason they choose Toraji is probably its location, which makes it

convenient for students living in the suburbs.

The surrounding area isn't teeming with restaurants. You won't find much French or Mexican or fast food. The most common cuisine in the neighborhood is Japanese; aside from sushi, there are also restaurants that specialize in ramen and Japanese soba, in addition to those that are uniquely Japanese-themed like izakaya.

"I was amazed that the area didn't have any Japanese or Korean BBQ. I was positive that this neighborhood, Murray Hill, which is located right between the United Nations Headquarters and Grand Central Station, would have a great demand for high-quality beef and authentic BBQ," said Mr. Kim, explaining why he chose the location.

### Experienced managers, chefs, and servers with proven records of excellence

Finding quality chefs is the most difficult part of overseas expansion. Luckily for Toraji, a Bangladeshi chef who worked at the Toraji location in Japan had since relocated to Manhattan. He was immediately rehired.

"I moved from Tokyo to New York because I wanted to advance my career," said Executive Chef Mohamed Rakib (pictured on the left), smiling. "I always felt like Toraji was a comfortable place to work, and Mr. Kim clearly cared about his employees. That's why I decided to work with him again."

"Mr. Kim always tells us to respect employees," explained Takeshi Hiroi, the energetic 32-year-old manager (pictured at center) of Yakiniku Toraji. "We can't look down on them just because they have a lower position in the company. Every employee here strives for collaborative, equal relationships with coworkers."

Manager Hiroi said that he also found this concept of respect to be extremely helpful when running the Kuala Lumpur location. "Whether it's the Kuala Lumpur restaurant or Yakiniku Toraji here in New York, interpersonal relationships in the workplace are more relaxed. You won't find the strong hierarchies that you see in Japan, so Toraji's corporate culture of respecting every employee works very well," he explained.



Masumi, the floor manager at Yakiniku Toraji, has lived in New York for the past 20 years and has a wide range of experience working at American restaurants. When asked about her own ambitions, she was enthusiastic. "As soon as I walked into this restaurant, I had a gut feeling that it was right for me. Toraji is a great place for ambitious people; we're always striving for excellence. I want to make it the best yakiniku restaurant in the area." Indeed, a high-performing restaurant on the rise, with ambitious people and quality cuisine, is one that will last.

### Why choose our restaurant?



Manuel de Joya (third from left) recently visited Yakiniku Toraji with six of his friends, all of whom practice the Japanese martial art aikido. "I found this place on Open Table," he said. "We all came to New York for the funeral of the aikido master Yoshimitsu Yamada. We decided to meet up at this yakiniku restaurant afterwards to raise our spirits before returning home."