



JAPAN ROCKS

A casual Japanese bar-with-food in Sydney's CBD pays tribute to music's grunge movement with a festival of flavour guaranteed to raise the roof

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FROM TOP Kid Kyoto is a shrine to the lighter side of '90s grunge, and the wobbly pork belly with its lemon kick.

SURE it's not everyone's cup of tea but '90s grunge, ignited by Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, spoke for a generation of rebellious spotty sprats who needed an outlet. And although it's a restaurant, the city's latest izakaya eatery, Kid Kyoto, embodies the essence of grunge's enthusiasm, too.

Backed by Sam Prince Hospitality Group (Zambrero, Mejico, Indu), Kid Kyoto takes influence from Japan's underground izakayas (places to drink and eat). Switching the entrance from Bridge Street to Bridge Lane adds to the hole-in-the-wall ideal and reveals the hidden architectural joys of Sydney.

The threshold itself, with a neon 'come as you are' nod to Nirvana, is a riff on Kyoto's Fushimi Inari Shrine - where a multitude of vermilion torii gates arch over a path four kilometres long. At Kid Kyoto they're fluorescent teal, and in only a few metres you're inside a shrine to the lighter side of '90s grunge.

It's not as dark and dingy as one might anticipate and, as far as izakayas go, Kid Kyoto is a kind of unplugged version. It's izakaya lite. In fact, far from the dive bar watering holes of Tokyo and Kyoto, it's more casual restaurant than arm bender with bites.

The real show here is chef Seb Gee's food. Carrots are sous vide, given karaage (battered and fried) treatment and served with a punchy orange kosho (citrus chilli paste), while wobbly pork belly yakitori gets a kick out of a squeeze of lemon, quandong and karashi.

Pickled watermelon and roasted wakame kosho bring the noise to kingfish ceviche, while a confounding pea wasabi sauce underpins king (saiko) salmon that could have been smoked a little less. But walnut miso adds a wonderful, sweet earthiness to wok-smoked mushrooms, then corn dashi and pickled bamboo are bang on with a silky, steamed barramundi. To be honest, one could skip the grunge themes, but what with food like this it'd be hard not demanding an encore. ★
17-19 Bridge Street, Sydney, kidkyoto.com.au



GUCCI COUP

Gucci has made the leap from pret-a-porter to pret-a-manger by enlisting chef Massimo Bottura, from three-Michelin-starred Osteria Francescana, for its new Gucci Osteria in Florence. Think *cacio e pepe* and *haute dogs*.



ON BALANCE

A wellness movement determinedly guides us on diet, stress and energy, but not all books in the genre are equal. *Healthy Hormones* (\$35, Murdoch Books) features 50 beautiful recipes plus tips to balance female hormones.



PRINTS CHARMING

Crack in to Easter early with the stunning new range of rabbits, gift boxes and praline-centered eggs (above) by Koko Black. The new packaging makes the superb treasures almost too good to open. Almost.