



HALEKULANI OKINAWA WELCOMES ACCLAIMED CHEF KEN SAKAMOTO

Esteemed Kyoto Chef of MICHELIN-Starred cenci Joins the Resort's Culinary Team in November 2025

Okinawa, Japan – May 22, 2025 – [Halekulani Okinawa](#), the only Double Five-Star luxury resort in Okinawa, today announces the appointment of Ken Sakamoto as Consulting Chef of its innovative fine dining restaurant SHIROUX, effective November 1, 2025. Born and raised in Kyoto, Chef Sakamoto is the owner and head chef of cenci, a MICHELIN One-Star Italian restaurant celebrated for its inventive use of local ingredients.

Since opening in 2014, cenci continues to earn widespread recognition, including placement on Asia's 50 Best Restaurants list from 2022-2024. The restaurant has also maintained a One-Star MICHELIN rating for four consecutive years (2022-2025). Celebrated for its creative use of local ingredients, cenci showcases Chef Sakamoto's dedication to highlighting regional flavors through refined Italian cuisine.

Chef Sakamoto discovered his passion for cooking while studying abroad during university. He began his culinary training in Kyoto at the esteemed Trattoria Il Pappalardo and later served as head chef at Il Ghiottone for nine years before founding cenci.

Current Consulting Chef Hiroyasu Kawate expressed his full support for the appointment, calling Chef Sakamoto a "worthy successor" and confident that his leadership will elevate SHIROUX to new heights of culinary excellence.

"I am deeply honored to be named Consulting Chef of Halekulani Okinawa's SHIROUX. I look forward to incorporating Okinawa's rich local ingredients and cultural heritage to create innovative and captivating dishes," shared Chef Sakamoto. "Both Kyoto and Okinawa have unique culinary traditions that celebrate local produce, and I am truly excited to collaborate with the SHIROUX culinary team to offer guests new and exceptional dining experiences."

Guests will continue to savor Chef Kawate's creative French cuisine through October 31, 2025. With Chef Sakamoto joining the team, Halekulani Okinawa strengthens its commitment to culinary excellence and advances SHIROUX as one of Okinawa's premier dining destinations. For more information on the resort and its culinary program, visit: www.okinawa.halekulani.com/en.

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About Halekulani Okinawa

Halekulani Okinawa, the second hotel from the leading Hawaiian resort of the same name, is a Forbes Travel Guide Double Five-Star beach resort and spa located in Onna Village on the main island of Okinawa. Featuring a variety of accommodations built to emphasize the geographic features of its surroundings, the luxury property sits on 32 acres of lush land within the Okinawa Kaigan Quasi-National Park and faces approximately one mile of coastline. Halekulani Okinawa is home to a diverse array of facilities including eight restaurants and a bar. In addition, the property features the award-winning SpaHalekulani, a fitness center, a luxury boutique, over 2,550 ft² of meeting and convention space and five swimming pools, one of which is adorned with nearly 1.5 million mosaic tiles in the shape of Halekulani's signature Cattleya orchid. Halekulani Okinawa is the third property in Japan to join *The Leading Hotels of the World*, an exclusive collection of the world's most extraordinary luxury establishments. For further information, please visit www.okinawa.halekulani.com.

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