

Ichigo in the Community



# A New Light Shines on Hiroshima

THE KNOT HIROSHIMA's Vision

Feb. 2021







The Atomic Bomb Dome was registered as a World Heritage Site in 1996 as a result of global peace efforts by the people of Hiroshima. The site is preserved via periodic repair work.

### Treasuring the Present Moment, Building a Hotel for Connections

Hiroshima, the first city in the world to be hit by an atomic bomb, leads various peace initiatives as an “International Peace Culture City.” Never forgetting its tragic history, Hiroshima has rebuilt itself as a lively city. Within Hiroshima Prefecture, there are two World Heritage Sites, Miyajima/Itsukushima Shrine and the Atomic Bomb Dome. Tourists from around the world visit the beautiful city surrounded by nature and blessed with the warm Setouchi climate.

The number of inbound tourists grew annually, reaching a record high of 1.85 million in 2019 after growing consecutively for eight years.



Interestingly, Hiroshima is the first city where marketers launch their products in Japan. The people of Hiroshima are passionate but become disinterested easily, perhaps because they treasure the present moment. A city that values LIVE-ING. Musicians say it’s a city where places welcome them to perform at the spur of the moment.

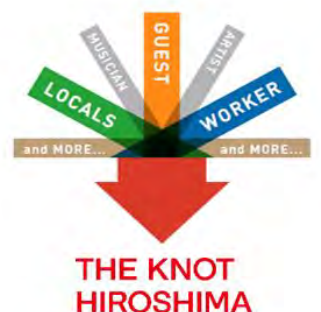
The okonomiyaki cooked right before your eyes may be a reflection of Hiroshima’s pursuit of LIVE-ING.

HIROSHIMA LIVE-ING is the design concept of THE KNOT HIROSHIMA. A place to discover the true Hiroshima, instead of relying on worn-out information. Savor dishes prepared onsite that showcase each ingredient.

A place where you can listen to live music instead of digital music.

A comfortable, yet lively place for small discoveries and big wonders.

Based on the design concept of HIROSHIMA LIVE-ING, THE KNOT HIROSHIMA is designed to be a place where people can meet and connect.





## A Project for Hiroshima by People Who Truly Understand Hiroshima

Located near the Peace Memorial Park on Heiwa Odori, THE KNOT HIROSHIMA fully opened on December 10, 2020 with the launch of MORETHAN, its all-day dining restaurant on the first floor. THE KNOT HIROSHIMA is a joint project between Ichigo, Toa Jisho, and Genba Kanri Systems, and lies on the former location of the headquarters of Toa Jisho, a Hiroshima-based company that grows with the city. Yoshihiro Nishimoto, CEO of Toa Jisho, is excited that a new type of hotel has opened in Hiroshima.



Yoshihiro Nishimoto, CEO of Toa Jisho

"We weren't able to take full advantage of the great location of our three-story headquarter office, so we were looking for other ways to effectively utilize the space. Although we received many proposals, none of them quite fit our needs. That was when we came across Ichigo's proposal via an introduction from Mr. Tokuda, CEO of Genba Kanri Systems, a Hiroshima-based construction company. We didn't want to sell the land because it was full of fond memories, so accepted Ichigo's proposal of a joint hotel project where we remained the landowner."



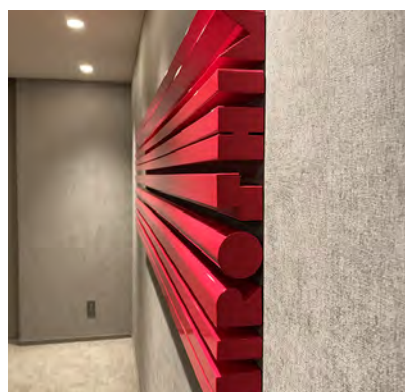
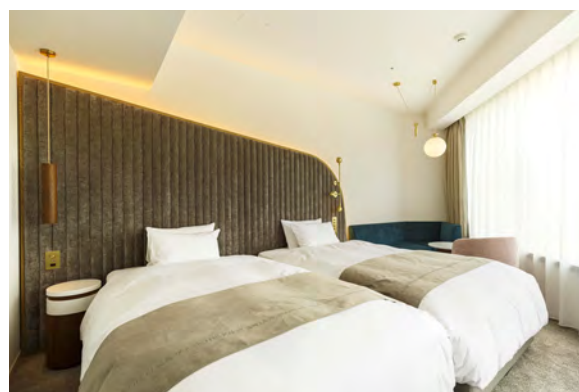
August 6th continues to be a profound moment of reflection. Students attend school during their summer vacation to remember the many lives that were lost and to pray for peace. People give their prayers to those that jumped into the river to escape the fires that burnt throughout the city.

That river flows nearby THE KNOT HIROSHIMA.

"Ichigo said they wanted to respect and honor Hiroshima's history in building the hotel. I could tell how special Hiroshima was to Ichigo when their CEO and Executive Vice President spoke fondly of their days working as new hires in Hiroshima. It made me happy that people who truly understood Hiroshima wanted to build something for Hiroshima."

The city that had once been turned into ruins rebuilt itself on the back of economic and technological growth. On May 27, 2016, President Barack Obama gave a speech from the Peace Memorial Park, propelling Hiroshima into the international spotlight.

Three years later, the Pope visited from the Vatican. Despite garnering international attention, however, Hiroshima lacked the infrastructure to accommodate inbound tourism. As a Hiroshima native, Nishimoto is happy that a new hotel was built within a five-minute walk to sights such as the Peace Memorial Park and the Atomic Bomb Dome.



"My heart soared at the sight of the completed hotel, with artwork displayed throughout the hotel and the careful attention to details. Like the annual local flower festival in May that attracts a lot of visitors, I hope the hotel becomes a place where lots of people meet and get together."





MORETHAN, the all-day dining restaurant on the first floor

## Becoming an Essential Part of the City

The front desk of THE KNOT HIROSHIMA is located on the top floor, where there is also a Japanese sake bar. The lively ambience of MORETHAN, the all-day dining restaurant on the first floor, makes you forget you're at a hotel. MORETHAN is an essential part of the hotel's pursuit of LIVE-ING.

Manager Junpei Fukagawa and Project Coordinator Yutaro Suzuki led the development of MORETHAN. Both born and raised in Tokyo, the duo had previously only visited Hiroshima as tourists, but recently moved to Hiroshima for this project.



MORETHAN Manager Junpei Fukagawa (right)  
Project Coordinator Yutaro Suzuki (left)

Fukagawa and Suzuki agree that Hiroshima is a warm city. "Hiroshima is a place where you can be yourself. If you're too guarded or formal, people will see you as an outsider from Tokyo. Unlike other building owners, Ichigo listened to us and trusted us to do our job. We were able to fully carry out our vision for the restaurant here in Hiroshima."

Fukagawa says he wants MORETHAN to be an essential part of the city.

"Have dinner at MORETHAN and then enjoy the night view at the rooftop bar. In the daytime, enjoy the outdoor breeze at the terrace with some beer. We are hoping that people will find ways to enjoy the hotel dining experience, day or night."

"Unless we can get the people of Hiroshima to love the restaurant, we can't expect hotel guests to love it too. We have conveyed what is important to us here, and are excited to see Hiroshima's reaction to it," says Suzuki.

The duo says they want the hotel to be a casual, less formal place that is welcoming to passersby that are interested in the hotel. They hope to create a unique atmosphere that is unlike any other hotel, while offering guests an unforgettable experience that only hotels can deliver.





## Delivering Local Fresh Fruit

Ukita Seika, part of a group of companies famous for a local bento called “Musashi,” delivers fresh local produce to Kei, THE KNOT HIROSHIMA’s rooftop Japanese sake bar, and MORETHAN.

Satsuki Ishida, or “Sacchan,” is in charge of procuring fruits at Ukita Seika, and is the only woman in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions participating in wholesale market auctions. She has been participating in the auctions for over 20 years, and is affectionately known as Sacchan by the people at the market.

Her warm demeanor and smiles brighten up a predominately male environment.



Satsuki Ikeda, Ukita Seika

“I joined Ukita Seika as a truck driver, and never thought I would be participating in the auctions. I really enjoy my job at the market, and am grateful to my boss for appointing me back then.”

Hiroshima produces different kinds of fruits all year round, including different grape varieties, and most notably, the Hiroshima lemon. Available throughout the year, the lemons have become quite popular.

With a bright smile, Ishida says “I can say with confidence that I love my job more than anyone working in a market in Japan. I will continue working as long as Ukita Seika is in Hiroshima and I am living in Hiroshima.”

## Immersing Ourselves in the Hotel’s Branding Activities

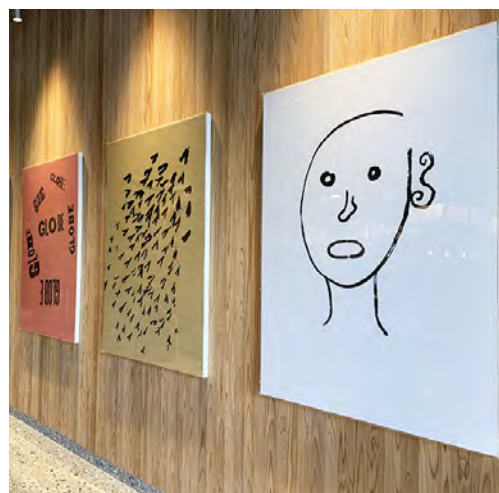
Junya Nakanishi and his wife, Azusa Nishioka, are in charge of social media as part of THE KNOT HIROSHIMA’s branding team. The couple not only has great smiles, but also has extensive branding experience primarily in Hiroshima. Nakanishi’s company, mint, is known for its issue-oriented approach to design. He is from Hiroshima, and also has a tourism business under mint.

A connection unrelated to this hotel project brought the couple and Ichigo together, leading to the couple joining THE KNOT HIROSHIMA’s branding team. It was an unexpected encounter, characteristic of THE KNOT.

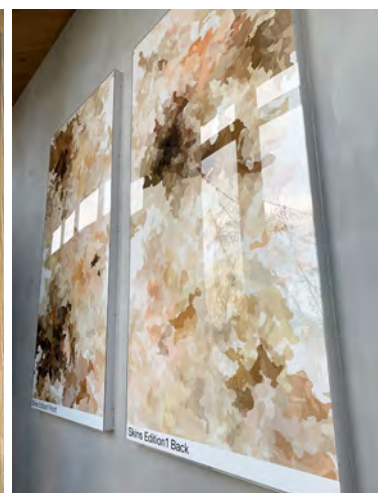


Junya Nakanishi and Azusa Nishioka

It has been nine years since Nishioka moved to Hiroshima, and she describes Hiroshima as one of her favorite cities. “People in Hiroshima are kind. They are somewhat shy, but once you get to know them, you can become very close. It is a city full of passion. The ocean and mountains are within biking distance, and you can visit the many islands in the Setouchi Sea by boat. The top attractions are the city’s atmosphere and the surrounding nature.”



Artwork (Entrance)



Artwork representing the diversity in people’s skin color (14F bar)



The couple felt THE KNOT HIROSHIMA's passion and careful attention to details when they visited the hotel. "We felt a connection to THE KNOT's concept of building relationships and ties with the city. When we develop branding strategies, we also look for clues from the city of Hiroshima itself rather than hotels."

The couple's branding activities include curating the art at the first floor entrance, managing the hotel's social media accounts, and creating magazines to promote the hotel. Building on THE KNOT HIROSHIMA's concept, they have focused their efforts on communicating the hotel's message to locals and visitors.



The seven works of art currently displayed at the entrance make quite the impact.

Hiroshima is a city with many rivers. There are currently six rivers running through Hiroshima, and previously, there were seven. The works represent a strong connection to Hiroshima, and were created based on the seven original rivers and a theme of peace.

"We want to immerse ourselves in our branding activities for THE KNOT HIROSHIMA. There has never been a hotel like THE KNOT HIROSHIMA here, where people visit the hotel for purposes other than staying at the hotel. Although the hotel has a highly designed, refined interior, it's a place where locals can casually stop by. We want to showcase this new environment, and establish the hotel as a place that is loved by locals first, and then as a place for visitors from all over the world to experience everything the city of Hiroshima has to offer."

### **THE KNOT HIROSHIMA's philosophy is "Untitled."**

It will take some time before people can start meeting and gathering again due to the ongoing Covid pandemic. THE KNOT HIROSHIMA becomes complete when people come together and are LIVE-ing.

Like the Flame of Peace in the Peace Memorial Park, THE KNOT HIROSHIMA will continue to shine an everlasting light from Hiroshima.



MORE  
INFORMATION

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<https://hotel-the-knot.jp/hiroshima/>  
<https://youtu.be/ZgXH7xMPpzs>  
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