

I'm Chef Tej Kandel, and my journey into the kitchen began long before I ever stepped into a professional one. I grew up in Chitwan, Nepal, where life was not always easy. From a young age, I understood the meaning of hardship – whether it was helping my family, facing limited opportunities, or learning to stay strong through challenges. Those early struggles shaped my character, teaching me resilience, discipline, and the value of hard work.

My passion for cooking developed as I travelled and worked in different countries from an early age, including India and the middle east countries. Each place taught me something new – different spices, techniques, and ways of understanding food. It was through these experiences that I truly began to master my craft, especially in Nepalese and Indian cuisine, where tradition and flavour go hand in hand.



I moved to the UK in 2009, it wasn't easy starting in the new place. Step by step, I learned over the years— from prepping ingredients to understanding the rhythm of a professional kitchen. I took every opportunity to grow, build my skills from scratch and earning my place through dedication and persistence. Over the years, those struggles became my strength. They taught me patience, humility, and the importance of consistency. Today, as the head chef at Gurkha Bar & Restaurant, I bring that same mindset into my kitchen every day. I specialise in authentic Nepalese curries, focusing on rich, traditional flavours while maintaining high standards in both taste and presentation. For me, cooking is not just about food – it's about people. I take pride in leading my team with respect and calmness, creating an environment where everyone can grow. I also believe that great hospitality is just as important as great cooking. I always make time for our guests, ensuring they feel welcomed, valued, and at home.

Everything I've been through – every struggle, every lesson – has made me the chef and the person I am today. And that journey continues to inspire me to deliver the very best, every single day.

