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Meet the 40 Under 40 class of 2025



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Jeremy Cohn, 38

CEO and co-founder *Moody Tongue Brewing*

Jeremy Cohn graduated from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School and went into investment banking. He was talented and found early success. But it wasn't satisfying.

"Quite frankly," he says, "I hated investment banking."

Meanwhile, his cousin Jared Rouben was establishing a name for himself in the beer industry. One Thanksgiving, after discussions over beers and turkey, Cohn decided to put together a business plan for Rouben — the beginning of what would become Moody Tongue Brewing, the first wholesale brewery and restaurant in the world to earn a Michelin star.

"From the beginning of the business, what Jared said to me was, 'I'm going to do what I do; you have to make it work,' " Cohn says. "My job was to figure out the packaging, the facilities, to figure out the pricing, to make sure that we don't put the company belly-up."

"I feel like I got a lottery ticket with Jeremy," says Rouben. "He is the engine and business backbone of this company."



A few years after that Thanksgiving dinner, the two would open Moody Tongue in 2014 as a production brewery in Pilsen, selling Rouben's beers to local stores and restaurants. The operation quickly outgrew that original facility as demand for the beers increased and food was added to the menu.

The company moved to its current South Loop location in 2019, offering its tasting menu and beer pairings in the dining room and an a la carte menu in the bar. Moody Tongue was first recognized by Michelin in 2021, landing on the scene with a two-star designation, a distinction it held until 2024, when it was awarded a single star.

As Moody Tongue found national recognition for its elevated beer and food pairings, Cohn expanded beer distribution, pushing into 10 states, and opened three out-of-state restaurants — two in New York and one in Florida — all while maintaining the high standards set at the Chicago flagship.

The nature of Moody Tongue's rise — from a Pilsen brewery to Michelin-starred restaurant to adding out-of-state outposts — required a deft business touch. Rouben attributes the rapid growth to his partner's expertise and vision.

"He's always thinking about what's next and then, more importantly, how do we get there," Rouben says. "He's the one mapping all the moves out, and it gives me great comfort knowing that he is steering this ship."

"There's a little bit of the yin and yang in terms of our roles," says Cohn. "Jared is going to create a beautiful product, and it's my job to make sure that we can sell it right now and grow."

By [Brandon Dupré](#)

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