



# RestaurantChains.net

May 26, 2009

Data reflects change and activity during the most recent four-month period from January 19, 2009 to May 19, 2009

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Over the years they have developed a sound system of integrating four separate revenue centers. Growing

## Restaurantchains.net Alerts Newsletter

[member\_name\_first]:

A weekly newsletter covering public and private restaurant chains featuring under-reported unique facts relating to growth. Pertinent information is gathered, verified and analyzed in-house using proprietary methods created in our research and library departments.

In order to receive specific personnel for companies mentioned along with full profiles, you must be a client. [Pricing for chain data.](#)

*Regarding growth stories listed:*

We publish net unit growth from (each company has their own four-month cycle and companies have varied verification dates, **percentages are not annualized** as a result) one four-month period to the next. This is performed by re-verifying **net growth figures** of approximately 1,000 companies per month. Once our researchers identify the following growth results from our research efforts, we highlight a new round of results each week in our newsletter. Featured growth stories are only a fraction of the growth stories received by clients.

## **Opinion and observations regarding this years NRA show (Re-run from last week).**

Joe Dunbar and I spent all four days at the NRA show (which ended yesterday); we walked all the aisles at least twice. Being completely non-scientific but trying to be observant we came up with the following:

- 1) We estimated that floor traffic was down 35% plus.
- 2) Exhibit space rental seemed to be off around 20-25% upstairs in the North and South sides. We saw huge areas that were never sold and a reasonable amount of companies who pre-paid that didn't bother to show up at all. Downstairs (For as long as I can recall, housed 150 exhibitors plus I believe, mostly late commitment exhibitors) was completely closed. They were now seen on the North side against the wall.
- 3) Monday seemed to be the most brisk day as far as activity with a broad range of floor walkers. Monday is what is typically know as "corporate day," where corporate decision makers, if they're going to come for a limited time, seem to at least pick this day to show up. There was a feeling of promise on that day.
- 4) Elaborate new products were seen mostly in the equipment space. We did see new exhibitors with some nifty ideas. Otherwise innovation seemed lighter than typical. But I have to admit, we couldn't possibly capture all that's there and perhaps we missed some whiz bang ideas.
- 5) We noticed the continuance of software as a service companies and CRM companies throughout the show. There seemed to more than ever.
- 6) We are all in the same boat. If there was a common theme, it's that things are tough for almost everyone. Credit worthiness was a foremost topic on the minds of exhibitors.

strong with 22 units, The Greene Turtle offers franchisees a complete system of training, development and execution.

[Continued...](#)



Genghis grill is growing rapidly. Currently with 31 locations, they are opening stores at a rapid pace. With a successful franchise system in place this company is poised for continued growth.

[Continued...](#)

7) We felt some denial from some exhibitors. There were many companies selling higher-end products in a lower-end environment. If you are a weekly reader of our newsletters and data, you know by now that's where, for the most part, we are.

8) We question any improvement next year regarding turnout from both the exhibitor side and the attendee side, but we hope for better economic times next year.

9) Chicago in its usual luster, did its best to roll out the red carpet for the show but is unable to control the success in attendance of the show.



#### TOP TEN GROWING CONCEPTS

NEW!

May's Top 20 Fastest growing concepts (with between 50 and 100 units),

[See who made the list. Continued...](#)

April's Top 10 list [Continued...](#)

#### GROWING CONCEPTS

**Growing Concepts that have grown by at least 5% (if less than 50 units).**

Indianapolis, IN-based **STEAK N SHAKE** (founded 1934) has increased by 4 units, from 490 to 494 (1% growth). These quick serve burger restaurants are open for breakfast, lunch and dinner hours, with a \$3-\$8 per person check average. Seating is for about 70. Trading areas are AL, AR, FL, GA, IA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MI, MO, MS, NC, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, WI, and WV. Between 10% and 20% of the units are franchised.

North Carolina-based **RUDINO'S PIZZA & GRINDERS** (founded 1995) has increased by 1 unit, from 19 to 20 (5% growth) and entered into MI. The restaurants are family/casual, open for lunch and dinner, with a \$4-\$10 per person check average. Beer and wine are served and seating is for about 80. Catering is available. Stores are licensed and located in the states of MI, NC, TN, TX, and VA.

Signal Hill, CA-based **HOF'S HUT RESTAURANT & BAKERY** (founded 1951) has increased by 1 unit for their Lucille's BBQ concept, from 12 to 13 (8% concept growth). The company also operates 7 Hof's Hut locations. Overall growth was from 19 to 20 (5% company growth). Both concepts are family/casual, with an \$8-\$20 per person check average. Meal periods for Hof's are breakfast, lunch and dinner, serving American cuisine. Lucille's are open for lunch and dinner, serving bbq. All restaurants have a full bar. Average seating is for about 250. Lucille's also offers catering and online ordering. Trading areas are AZ, CA, and NV.

**EL FENIX RESTAURANT** based in Dallas, TX (founded 1918) has increased by 1 unit, from 15 to 16 (7% growth). These are family/casual Mexican restaurants with full bar and seating for about 200. Catering and banquets are offered. The check average is around \$8-\$20 per person. All locations are in TX.

**BREAD GARDEN** based in Vancouver, BC (founded 1979) has increased by 1 unit, from 11 to 12 (9% growth). These are fast casual bakery cafes with seating for about 70. The per person check average is around \$4-\$10. Locations are open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Catering is offered. All locations are in BC.

**NEW!** See the 1st quarter 2009 expansion and pull-out list by state.

See the results... [Continued...](#)

See prior quarter's results on the home page:

[www.restaurantchains.net](http://www.restaurantchains.net)

#### EMERGING CONCEPTS

**Concepts with 20 units or less who grew by at least 2 units.**

Tulsa, OK-based **BEAUTIFUL BRANDS** has increased by 4 units for their Freshberry Concept (founded 2008), from 1 to 5 (400% growth), entering into the states of AZ, TX and SC. Other units are in OK. These are quick serve frozen yogurt shops, open for lunch and dinner hours. Per person price is about \$3-\$6. Seating is for about 10-15. All locations are franchised. Beautiful brands also operates Camille's Sidewalk Café (71), Coney Beach (1), Crusty Croissant (1), and Greenz (3).



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#### REPEAT GROWERS

**Concepts previously written about in the past 18 months.**

Addison, TX-based **NEIGHBORHOOD VENTURES INC** (founded 1995) has increased by 2 units for Fish City Grill, from 25 to 27 (8% concept growth). The company also operates Half Shells Oyster Bar (1) and Half Shells Seafood Grill (1). Overall company increase was from 27 to 29 (7% company growth). These family/casual seafood restaurants are open for lunch and dinner, with a \$10-\$30 per person check average. Locations have a full bar and seating for about 80-100. Catering is available. More than half of the units are franchised and located in the states of AR, CO, FL, LA, OK, and TX. We featured this concept 3 times in the last 18 months (1/8/08-43% growth, 4/29/08-15% growth, and 12/23/08-13% growth). The Fish City Grill concept also made our Top Ten Fastest Growing Concepts list on as #4 (January '07) and #6 (April '08).

Sharon, PA-based **QUAKER STEAK & LUBE** (founded 1974) has increased by 2 units, from 30 to 32 (7% growth). These are family/casual restaurants serving American cuisine. Meal periods are lunch and dinner, with an \$8-\$20 per person check average. Locations have a full bar and seating for about 350. Catering, banquets and online ordering are available. Trading areas are FL, GA, IA, IN, NC, NY, OH, PA, SC, TN, WI, and WV, with new openings planned in VA and ON later this year. More than 90% of units are franchised. We featured this concept on 5/13/08 (12% growth) and on 1/27/09 (11% growth).

Mclean, VA-based **VAPIANO** (founded 2002) has increased by 6 units, from 40 to 46 (15% growth) and entered into TX. These fast casual Italian restaurants are open for lunch and dinner, with a \$10-\$30 per person check average. Units have a full bar and seating for about 150. About 80% of the locations are franchised. Trading areas are DC, FL, TX, and VA, with most locations in Europe. We featured this concept on 8/19/08 (12% growth) and on 1/27/09 (5% growth). The company also ranked at #8 on our October 2008 Top Ten Fastest Growing Concepts list.

Manasquan, NJ-based **JERSEY MIKE'S GIANT SUBS** (founded 1956) has increased by 11 units, from 371 to 382 (3% growth) and entered into IL. The quick serve sandwich shops are open for lunch and dinner, with a \$2

The quick serve sandwich shops are open for lunch and dinner, with a \$3-\$8 per person check average. Seating is for about 20. Catering and online ordering are available. Trading areas are AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IL, IN, KS, KY, MA, MN, MO, NC, NJ, NV, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, and WV. More than 90% of the stores are franchised. We wrote about this chain on 5/13/08 (2% growth), 9/30/08 (3% growth) and 2/3/09 (5% growth).

**FAMOUS FAMIGLIA** headquartered in White Plains, NY (founded 1986) has increased by 5 units, from 109 to 114 (5% growth) and expanded into CT, MD and WI. These are quick serve pizza restaurants with seating for about 50. The check average is around \$4-\$10. Locations are franchised and are in AK, AZ, CT, DC, FL, GA, HI, IA, KY, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, NJ, NV, NY, OH, PA, RI, TN, TX, VA and WI. We reported on this concept on 5/13/08 (44% growth), 8/26/08 (6% growth) and 1/13/09 (16% growth).

**ALEHOUSE RESTAURANTS** of Jupiter, FL (founded 1988) has increased by 2 units, from 46 to 48 (4% growth). These are family/casual American restaurants with full bar and seating for about 300. The check average is around \$8-\$20 per person. Catering is offered. Locations are in FL, GA, IL, NY and PA. We wrote about this concept on 6/3/08 (10% growth) and on 9/30/08 (5% growth).

**AMATO'S SANDWICH SHOP** based in Portland, ME (founded 1902) has increased by 3 units, from 33 to 36 (9% growth). These are fast casual restaurants with seating for around 40. Beer and wine are served. The per person check average is around \$3-\$8. Catering is offered. Locations are in ME, NH and VT. More than 40% are franchised. We last reported on this concept on 9/30/08 (10% growth).

#### Who likes to count inventory?

Ask any operator, manager or supervisor and they will almost always tell you that the counting of anything is tedious and mostly a drag. The best part of doing inventory is when you have counted the last item and can process the numbers.

There is a company that has a device (picture a palm pilot) you just point at the bottle. The accuracy and speed of the system are second to none. Liquor cost savings of 15-30% are common [Continued...](#)

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#### Historic Chicken Production Slowdown

As stated in the latest issue of the Weekly Commodity Report, chicken production in 2009 as an annual average is forecasted to decline for the first time in 34 years. [Continued...](#)

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**Food Cost Control** Developed to help food cost control wizards improve their craft

What other data do we offer?

As you now know, this newsletter is free. But behind the newsletter is where the real-time data lies. It comes from a dynamically changing directory that contains 16,000 corporate decision makers. 11,000 personal emails in 7300 restaurant concepts. We are the only company on the planet who stays in such close contact with the restaurant chain world.

*Just say NO to dead data.*

To know more including pricing options, [Continued...](#)

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Newsletter Sponsorship, download media kit.

You may have noticed our new design and sponsor sections. In addition, we have created a location on the newsletter for franchisors to advertise their concepts. This newsletter is sent to more than 48,000 foodservice professionals each week. See the breakdown of our newsletter readers and download a media kit. [Continue to download...](#)

Contacts:

Publisher:  
Keith Gellman  
[keith@restaurantchains.net](mailto:keith@restaurantchains.net)

Editorial concerns:  
Maura O'Neill  
[maura@foodservicereport.com](mailto:maura@foodservicereport.com)

Francine Graham  
[francine@foodservicereport.com](mailto:francine@foodservicereport.com)

[RestaurantChains.net](http://RestaurantChains.net)  
One Bridge Street, Suite 44, Irvington, NY 10533 | p: (914) 591- 4297 | f: (914) 591 - 4293  
[info@restaurantchains.net](mailto:info@restaurantchains.net)

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