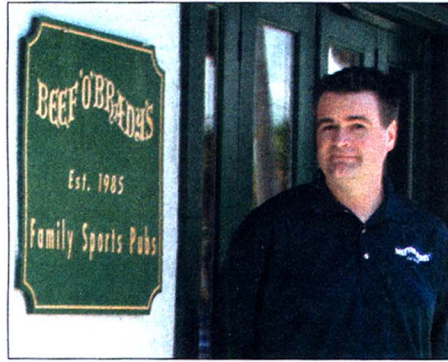


Florida-based restaurant chain Beef 'O' Brady's coming to Surprise

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PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BEEF 'O' BRADY'S

James Walker, chief development officer of Beef 'O' Brady's, says entering the Valley market makes sense for the restaurant chain.

BY LYNN DUCEY

Phoenix Business Journal

Arizona's first Beef 'O' Brady's restaurant is expected to open in Surprise by the end of the year.

The Tampa, Fla.-based restaurant chain is known for its family-friendly sports environment, chicken wings and burgers.

"We currently have five locations in Texas and have three more under development," said James Walker, the company's chief development officer. "From a West Coast standpoint, we hope not only to have the Surprise location open, we are also looking at Southern California markets this year."

West Valley resident Chris France is the Surprise franchise operator. He worked for a stucco manufacturer before deciding to go into the restaurant business. He's still scouting locations, but said he hopes to open the restaurant this winter.

The restaurants typically occupy space at retail centers, Walker said. They are between 3,600 and 4,200 square feet and feature a large bar area, numerous flat-screen TVs tuned to sports programming, and walls decorated with sports memorabilia.

Each restaurant employs between 30 and 40 full- and part-time workers.

"We've always been a value-based concept. From that standpoint, coming in and offering a family-friendly environment for people to watch sports and enjoy a great meal and realize our value makes a lot of sense in a market like Phoenix," Walker said.

BEEF 'O' BRADY'S

WHAT: Casual, sports-focused, family-oriented restaurants

MENU: Burgers, wings, beer and wine

CEO: Chris Elliott

HQ: Tampa, Fla.

RESTAURANTS: 213 in 20 states

WEB: www.beefobradys.com or www.beefobradysfranchise.com



Steve Chucri, president and CEO of the Arizona Restaurant Association, said the Valley always has attracted up-and-coming food concepts.

"Restaurants look to Arizona as a test market," he said. "Some of it is that they view us as a meltingpot. You find a lot of people in Arizona that have come from other states. And for a restaurant concept, that provides a great variety in customer tastes and preferences."

France said he's excited to get to work on his restaurant.

"I grew up in Glendale, and we are a very sports-oriented family," he said. "I really like their concept of reaching that market. I have a daughter, and she's really excited because she's going to work there, too."

France declined to say how much he's investing in the business, but Walker said an initial franchise investment starts at \$200,000.

For now, France plans to operate just one location in Surprise, but Walker said Beef 'O' Brady's hopes to open additional restaurants in metro Phoenix as the market warrants.

ARIZONA RESTAURANTS

2009 RESTAURANTS: 8,489*

2011 SALES: \$9.6 billion**

2011 JOBS: 261,900**

2011 PORTION OF TOTAL STATE EMPLOYMENT: 11 percent**

* Most recent total available
** Estimated

Source: Arizona Restaurant Association

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Chucri