



CULVER'S HISTORY

While Craig Culver was enjoying a sweet treat at his parents' A&W in 1961, little did he know that he was in the very location that would one day make the Culver's name synonymous with mouth-watering ButterBurgers® and delicious fresh Frozen Custard. Craig, his wife Lea and his parents George and Ruth, converted that old A&W into the very first Culver's in 1984.

Coming from a long line of restaurateurs, Craig's innate understanding of how to keep guests happy derives from working side by side with his parents. It's during this time that Craig learned the core adage "Don't mess with the quality" and the importance of treating each customer as they would treat a guest in their home. This simple combination of quality and service is what propelled the lone burger and custard spot to a nationwide franchise business.

His experience spans a variety of positions in restaurants across the state—from A&W to the Farm Kitchen Resort in Devil's Lake, the Ritz in Sauk City and even McDonald's. It's this grassroots understanding of how important each role is at a restaurant that fostered the Culver's team member mentality of today.

The brand-new restaurant opened its doors on July 18, 1984, serving a Culver vacation favorite—fresh Frozen Custard and ButterBurgers—named for the lightly toasted and buttered bun, just like Craig's mom used to serve. Other family favorites like fish, chicken, soups and salads also populated the menu.

Culver's was so successful in Sauk City, some guests wanted to open additional locations in their hometowns. The franchising arm of Culver's, CFSI, opened in 1987. A few years later the first successful franchise location opened its doors in Baraboo, Wis. Today there are more than 400 Culver's that span states as far west as Arizona and as far east as Ohio, and Culver's plans to continue growing.

CFSI also relocated to a new support center just a few miles from where it all began. The new support center—or home office as we call it—houses ButterBurger University, an intensive 16-week training course for new franchise partners, the Culver's test kitchen and corporate offices that employ more than 100 team members.

Contact

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CULVER'S TIMELINE

- 1984** The first Culver's opens its doors in Sauk City, Wis., serving ButterBurgers® (one of Ruth Culver's specialties) and fresh Frozen Custard.
- 1987** Culver Franchising System, Inc. (CFSI) is founded to help ensure each additional location upholds the high-quality standards of the first and to help support new franchise partners.
- 1990** The first successful franchise opens in nearby Baraboo, Wis.
- 1995** Culver's opens its first restaurant outside of Wisconsin in Buffalo, Minn.
- 1997** Craig and Lea Culver found the Culver's VIP foundation to help college- and technical-school-bound team members fund their educations as well as provide support to community-based nonprofits.
- 1999** CFSI opens new offices and a learning center in downtown Prairie du Sac. The home office houses ButterBurger University, a 16-week training course for new franchise partners.
- 2000** Culver's opens its 100th restaurant in Sioux Falls, S.D.
- 2003** The 200th Culver's opens in Noblesville, Ind.
- 2004** Culver's surpasses the \$1 million donation mark.



- 2005** Fond du Lac, Wis., becomes home to the 300th Culver's.
- 2007** Culver's is named the best burger chain in America for its atmosphere, cleanliness, convenience, food quality, good reputation, menu variety, service and value.
- 2007** Culver's begins the now-annual Day of Giving Traditions, which donates 10 percent of sales from each restaurant in the system to local charities.
- 2009** Culver's celebrates its 25th Anniversary with \$1 deals on menu favorites, daily giveaways and a 10 percent of sales donation to a local charity in Sauk City.
- 2009** The 400th restaurant opens in Escanaba, Mich.