



LEFTY'S NATIONAL EXPANSION BOOSTED BY HOUSTON TEXANS NFL STAR DESHAUN WATSON

PARTNERS BERRY AND MALLAD ENVISION EXPLOSIVE GROWTH FOR THE EMERGING FAST-CASUAL DINING BRAND

Southfield, Michigan, August 24th, 2020

Detroit-based entrepreneurial phenom Sam Berry and renowned multi-brand franchisor Allie T. Mallad announced today that the company is joining forces in an exclusive strategic partnership with NFL star and Houston Texan Quarterback Deshaun Watson to accelerate the national expansion of the Lefty's Famous Cheesesteaks Hoagies & Grill franchise. "We are absolutely thrilled to be partnered with Deshaun and his enthusiastic commitment to becoming our brand ambassador in Houston, as well as nationally, as we accelerate our franchising efforts," exclaimed Berry.

"When we set our sights on the Houston market, it was very flattering that a superstar like Deshaun Watson recognized the potential of our brand. Deshaun's extraordinary and devout commitment to paying-it-forward as one of the NFL's most prominent stars was a major reason why we felt this would be a strong partnership as we deepen our own relationships with local communities across America", said Berry.

The Lefty's franchising journey and vision of opening 1000+ fast-casual store locations in the next 7 years all started with Founder Sam Berry, who got his start in the foodservice industry at the age of 12 while working for his father and uncle at the family's restaurant in Michigan.

By 2009, Berry was already thinking big. While he was a fast-learning apprentice as a franchisee, the experience left him wanting more. "As a franchisee, I immediately knew I wanted more. I wanted to be a bigger part of the decision-making process," said Berry. Inspired by his early experience all while overcoming a difficult cancer-surviving battle at the same time as running his business, Berry built a

fast-casual operation focused on high quality sandwiches. Given his own left-handedness, Berry dubbed it Lefty's Famous Cheesesteaks Hoagies & Grill. The first location opened its doors in Livonia, Michigan, in 2010, and during the start-up years, Berry conquered the temptation to quit at every fork in the road.

Since then, Lefty's Cheesesteaks has quickly gained a foothold, and in the last 24 months has been on a massive expansion campaign in Southeast Michigan dominating the Detroit market. Lefty's now boasts 19 locations in Michigan, and has locations soon to open in Southern California, Texas, Nevada and Florida. Led by both Berry and Mallad, Lefty's growth has actually been spurred by new dining trends that have emerged during the pandemic.

According to Berry and Mallad, the key to Lefty's success is simple: Lefty's serves high-quality food in a niche without many players. While there are plenty of fast-casual operations that serve pizza, burgers, burritos and sandwiches, there just isn't much competition for cheesesteak dollars. Lefty's isn't relying on the lack of competition alone, as the chain highly commits to freshness. Every morning, team members gather at the restaurant to cook corned beef, grill steak and onions, slice deli meat, hand patty burgers, and hand roll its corned beef egg rolls.

According to Berry, the simple and popular menu approach has definite benefits. First, it makes for a more financially successful model. Second, Lefty's offers relatively few menu items which allows the model to keep the quality of those offerings very high.

In addition, the chain's sales performance combined with the inherent appeal of the fast-casual restaurant industry, should help it draw plenty of attention from potential franchise partners, states Mallad. In fact, he expects a "gold rush" on the brand over the next several months.

With this approach, the chain expects to continue to grow rapidly. After opening 5 new stores in early 2020, it now expects to reach 35 to 40 locations by the end of this year. Lefty's leaders then expect the company to grow to 75 locations by the end of 2021 and 150 by the end of 2022. This level of growth, Mallad says, will make Lefty's more than a success. It will make it a darling for the restaurant industry going forward. "We are going to be the face of the new norm," says Mallad. "COVID-19 has helped us increase the possibility of attracting franchisees from all over the country because of our incredible sales as a carry-out or drive-through fast-casual concept."

With Deshaun Watson as the brand ambassador face of the franchise and as Berry and Mallad say, "now leading the offense", Lefty's is sure to march down the field across America and exceed growth expectations as new franchises open everywhere.

For franchise development inquiries, please contact Carlos Guzman at 954-559-2117.

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