

Uno Signs Largest International Deal to Date to Develop 20 New Restaurants Throughout the Middle East  
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Uno Chicago Grill has entered into an agreement with Sofra LLC, the master licensee for Uno(R) in the Middle East, to open 20 new locations in nine countries, including Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Egypt, Kuwait, Jordan, Oman, and Bahrain.

Sofra, headed by Major General Abdul Aziz Al Bannai, former head of security for Dubai, currently has Uno franchises in Dubai, which set records for unit sales, and Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Mr. Al Bannai is a successful businessman who is a prolific entrepreneur and restaurateur. He was the founder and developer of Axiom Telecommunications Company, Dubai, a distributor and retailer of wireless products in the Middle East.

Continuing its commitment to guest service and satisfaction, Uno's lead chef and concept team have made menu and restaurant design changes to reflect the cultural and taste preferences of diners in each area. For example, several of the new restaurants will have separate entrances for men and women, and pork dishes have been removed from the menu.

The restaurant openings will take place over the next 10 years, with one of the first openings to take place at the Dubai Mall, soon be the world's largest mall.

Uno Chicago Grill has other international franchise agreements in Korea and Honduras for development of 8 restaurants. In the United States, franchises are also expanding with franchisees signing deals to open 30 restaurants over the next five years in Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, California, and Virginia. This growth comes as restaurant industry research firm Technomic recently tracked a nationwide slowdown in chain restaurant growth among some of the country's leading chains.

'We want to bring Uno quality and commitment to guest satisfaction to our restaurants around the world,' says CEO Frank W. Guidara. 'Our continued worldwide growth shows that we are providing our guests excellent value and exceptional service wherever they find the name Uno.'

Based in Boston, Uno Restaurant Holdings Corporation includes more than 200 company-owned and franchised full-service units located in 29 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, South Korea, the United Arab Emirates, Honduras, and Saudi Arabia.

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