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Russo's Restaurants Plans for Big Expansion

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Russo's Restaurants started franchising in the mid-90s, and two years ago, the chain went international. Now, Russo's Restaurants plans to significantly expand its presence, both nationally and internationally. Russo's Restaurants encompasses two concepts: Russo's New York Pizzeria and Russo's Coal-Fired Italian Kitchen.



In 2013, chef Anthony Russo opened three international restaurants and plans for 10 new restaurants in Hawaii, Texas, and internationally throughout the Middle East slated to open in 2014. Most recently a restaurant opened in Dubai.

"The economy was tight, abroad offered a different opportunity," says chef Anthony Russo on his decision to go abroad. "They have really embraced the concept."

The unique concept behind Russo's Restaurants is the dedication to being authentic in every way. "A lot of restaurants have lost their touch and have taken short cuts. It's all premade stuff now," says Russo. "We stand behind traditions."

"If you don't make it fresh, don't serve it," my father told me. And that's how we do it," Russo says.

Russo's Restaurants follows a simple method of cooking and the chefs train in the kitchen for six weeks.

Chef Russo attributes a lot of the success to the fresh dishes. He remains involved with the restaurants and food processes.

"I'll get back there and start cooking with them," he says.

Menu innovation is the key to success at Russo's Restaurants. Blending generations of Russo family Italian recipes, chef Russo's handpicked ingredients, and a commitment to research and development, the brands have continued to stay ahead of culinary trends. A prime example is the development of a full line of gluten-free pizzas. Responding to requests for a great-tasting gluten-free pizza from thousands living with celiac disease, chef Russo created six varieties that have received widespread

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acclaim. The pizzas are now sold in more than 2,000 U.S. grocery stores and at each of the 30-plus restaurants in the U.S. and Middle East. Russo's Restaurants have also successfully integrated a healthy seafood menu.

By Kirsten Ballard

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