



Dae Gee Korean BBQ Signs Franchise Deal in South Dakota

Dae Gee Korean BBQ – a hybrid fast casual and full-service Korean barbecue concept progressively blending Korean food tradition with American culture – announced today the execution of its first franchise agreement in South Dakota for a single unit in Sioux Falls.

The agreement has been signed with local entrepreneur Johnny Phung, who currently owns two Envy Nail Salons in the area. Though a lease has yet to be signed, Phung expects to open his Dae Gee restaurant early next year on the Eastside of town.

"I was searching for an emerging franchise concept to join, and Dae Gee's dynamic food and exceptional dining experience jumped out at me," says Phung. "With a complexity of different flavors and cuisine largely comprised of proteins, vegetables, grains and assorted spices, Korean food is a great choice for the health-conscious and clean-eating consumer. And the trend shows no signs of slowing down anytime soon. I'm eager to bring a different flavor, variety and overall dining experience to Sioux Falls."



Founded in 2012, Dae Gee's rise in popularity began in 2015, when the chain was featured on restaurateur Guy Fieri's long-running food reality television series, "Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives." Fieri said of Dae Gee, "This isn't just any Korean restaurant. This one's off the hook!" The moment solidified Dae Gee's place in the restaurant industry and validated founder Joseph Kim's desire to expand Korean cuisine.

Today, Dae Gee, meaning "pig" in Korean, exposes customers to an interactive experience that allows them to cook their own meat on grill tops at their tables when they dine. Customers have the option to choose from a variety of traditional Korean meats like Galbee (Beef Short Ribs), Sam Gyeob Sal (Sliced Pork Belly) and Dak Bulgogi (Chicken), which are marinated in DAE GEE's secret marinade. Each choice meat, as well as fish and vegetarian options, can be enjoyed in a bowl, hot stone pot, or tucked inside lettuce and eaten as a wrap. Entrees can be piled high with your choice of side or mixings, including rice, fresh slaw, spicy sauce and a variety of nine side dishes, such as kimchee, broccoli, radish and fish cakes.

"Dae Gee lights up your senses and enriches the full human experience," adds Phung. "From generations of recipes passed down, Dae Gee leaves its customers well fed with culture, humor, and top quality home recipe style Korean food."

"We're thrilled to welcome Johnny to the Dae Gee family and look forward to opening our first South Dakota restaurant," said Kim. "We're excited to expand into this new market and are dedicated to Dae Gee's success and future growth in the region."

The local expansion announcement comes at a time when Dae Gee is aggressively looking to expand its footprint with new franchisees across the United States. With five corporate-owned restaurants already serving throngs of customers throughout Colorado's Front Range, Dae Gee expects to open as many as 5-10 new restaurants over the next 12 months and at least that many each year thereafter.

Earlier this year, Dae Gee signed its first-ever franchise agreement for the development of two restaurants in Amarillo, Texas.

Including a franchise fee of \$45,000, the total investment to open a Dae Gee restaurant ranges from \$679,375 to \$954,125. Each restaurant typically occupies approximately 1,500-2,000 square feet of real estate and employs as many as 10 people.