

America's Dog & Burger Wants to Open Five Locations in Milwaukee Area

Hot Dog Chain Targeting Third Ward, East Side and the Suburbs

(By Corrinne Hess | May 12, 2017)

Chicago brothers George and Manolis Alpogianis are planning to bring the **America's Dog & Burger** chain they started 21 years ago on Navy Pier to the Milwaukee area.

With an aggressive expansion plan that includes increasing their restaurant count from four to 30 over the next few years, Manolis Alpogianis believes Milwaukee is a perfect market for the America's Dog brand.



"Milwaukee is a great area for food and night life," Alpogianis said. "The people are sophisticated and really appreciate food. We've thought about expanding to southern Wisconsin for a long time."

The brothers would like to open five stores in the Milwaukee area. They are targeting the Historic Third Ward and East Side neighborhoods and the suburban shopping areas.

They are looking for one or two franchisees to operate the 1,600 to 2,000-square-foot five restaurants.

Alpogianis hopes to have at least one of the Milwaukee restaurants in the works within a year, with the rest up and running in the next two to three years.

America's Dog & Burger was started by the Alpogianis brothers after they returned from a cross country road trip and realized every city has its own way of making a hot dog.

The restaurants offer several types of hot dogs – including a Milwaukee dog, which is a Guinness beer brat, sauerkraut, caramelized onions, horseradish mustard seed, cheddar cheese served on a pretzel roll – and hamburgers.

There are currently four Chicagoland locations and the brothers have signed two letters of intent for two more locations in the Chicago suburbs.

“Our goal is three leases this year and then five to six more in 2018, which will all be in Chicago,” Alpogianis said. “We’re also getting aggressive with finding franchisees in southern Wisconsin and northwest Indiana.”

America’s Dog & Burger will enter the Milwaukee market at a time when the city’s hot dog and burger options are expanding.

In July, Wisconsin got its **first Portillo’s Hot Dogs** in Brookfield. A second location opened last month in Greenfield.

On Thursday, New York-based burger, fry and shake restaurant chain Shake Shack **officially announced** that it will open its first restaurant in Wisconsin in the Historic Third Ward

Alpogianis said that competition does not give him pause.

“Portillo’s is outstanding and inspirational, but we have classic Chicago hot dogs and they are different,” Alpogianis said. “If anything, this gives us reassurance that people in Milwaukee likes this type of food.”