

FLORIDA RESTAURANT & LODGING



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THINKING
INSIDE
THE BUN

*Burger 21's infamous
OMG! Burger*

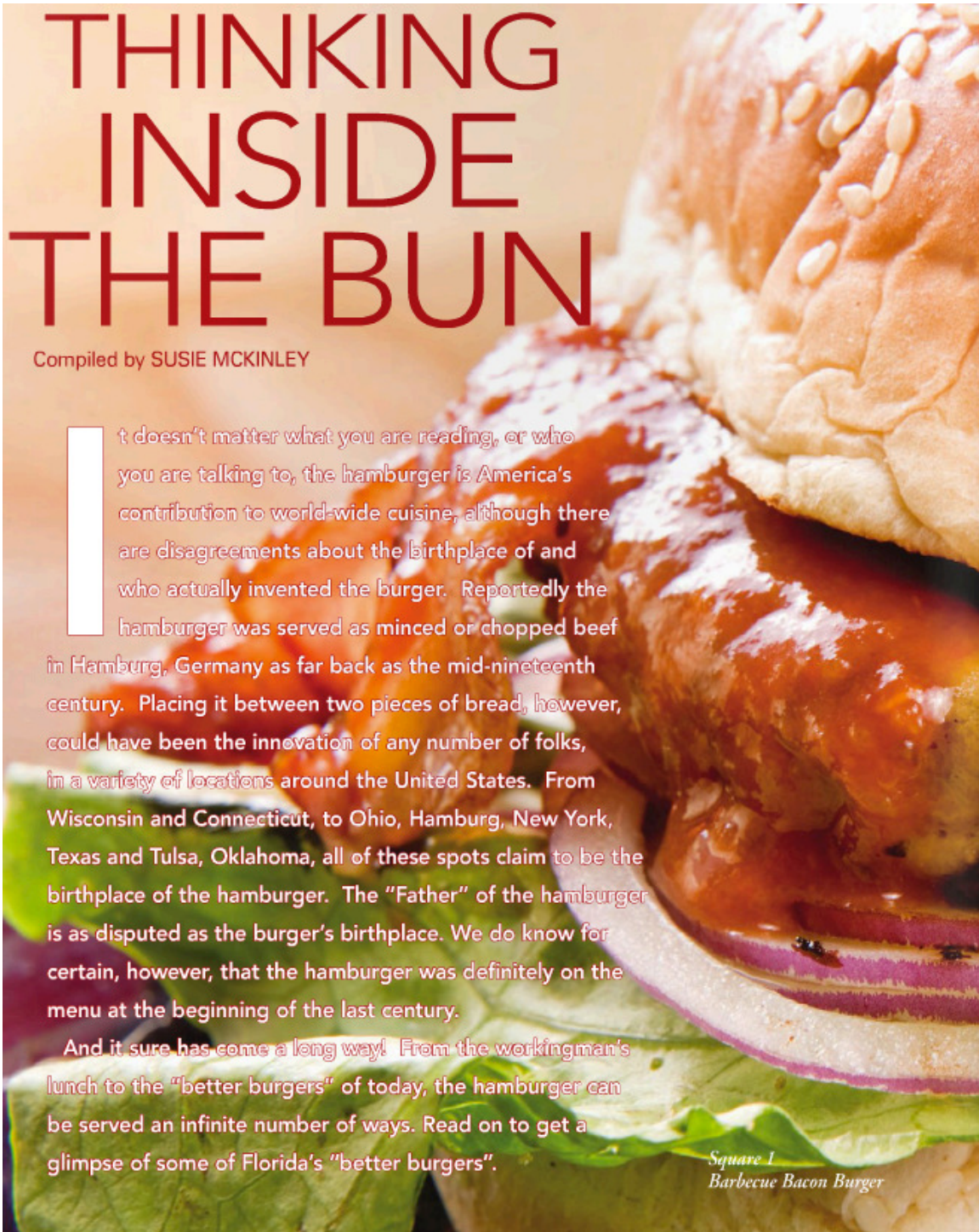
THINKING INSIDE THE BUN

Compiled by SUSIE MCKINLEY

It doesn't matter what you are reading, or who you are talking to, the hamburger is America's contribution to world-wide cuisine, although there are disagreements about the birthplace of and who actually invented the burger. Reportedly the hamburger was served as minced or chopped beef in Hamburg, Germany as far back as the mid-nineteenth century. Placing it between two pieces of bread, however, could have been the innovation of any number of folks, in a variety of locations around the United States. From Wisconsin and Connecticut, to Ohio, Hamburg, New York, Texas and Tulsa, Oklahoma, all of these spots claim to be the birthplace of the hamburger. The "Father" of the hamburger is as disputed as the burger's birthplace. We do know for certain, however, that the hamburger was definitely on the menu at the beginning of the last century.

And it sure has come a long way! From the workingman's lunch to the "better burgers" of today, the hamburger can be served an infinite number of ways. Read on to get a glimpse of some of Florida's "better burgers".

*Square 1
Barbecue Bacon Burger*



BURGER 21

■ Interview with **Chef Shane Schaibly**, Corporate Chef for Front Burner Brands (restaurant management company for Burger 21)

Describe your burgers and the concepts behind their creation.

Burger 21 is all about variety and innovation. Our comprehensive and varied menu features 21 chef-inspired burger creations ranging from hand-crafted, freshly ground Certified Angus Beef to chicken, turkey, shrimp and tuna burgers, veggie burgers, made-to-order salads, all-beef hot dogs, hand-breaded chicken tenders and an extensive shake bar including hand-dipped floats, shakes and sundaes, as well as a gluten-free menu.

The details make the difference. Some of Burger 21's recipes include toasted brioche buns, pickled cucumbers, sweet potato fries with toasted marshmallow sauce, applewood-smoked bacon and numerous other premium ingredients and



combinations that elevate Burger 21 into a category of its own.

Additionally, on the 21st of each month, Burger 21 introduces a different featured burger creation and signature shake available for an entire month, like the popular Gyro Lamb Burger and signature Baklava Shake.

Where did the idea come from for Burger 21?

The owners of The Melting Pot Restaurants, Inc. fondue restaurant franchise founded Burger 21 in November 2009, envisioning a fast-casual, "beyond the better burger" concept that featured 21 chef-inspired burgers with appetite appeal from the gourmet to the tradi-

tional burger lover.

Leveraging more than 25 years of franchising experience, the owners, Mark, Bob, Mike and Arlene Johnston, recognized an opportunity to introduce a higher quality product in a rapidly growing foodservice category. The goal was to be different and go beyond the better burger, not to replicate what's already out there.

Your most popular burger?

Burger 21's most popular burger is The Cheesy. It's a fresh Certified Angus Beef burger, which features lettuce, tomato and American, Cheddar or Swiss cheese, on a toasted brioche bun.

What's the best side item to order with this burger?

All of our burgers pair well with our French fries and our sweet potato fries, which are both complemented by a variety of unique signature sauces, such as Toasted Marshmallow, Apple Cider and Thai Ketchup, available on our sauce bar.

Do you recommend pairing any beverages with this burger?

Our burgers pair well with our signature shakes such as Bananas Foster and Strawberry Short Cake or our floats featuring Boylan sodas.

Your favorite burger quote?

The phrase we coined to describe Burger 21: "beyond the better burger." You can tell when you experience a Burger 21 burger that we are just one step ahead.

What's special about your burger?

We have differentiated Burger 21 from other concepts with premium ingredients and a variety of unique recipes. Our chef-inspired burger creations range from hand-crafted, freshly ground Certified Angus Beef to chicken, turkey, shrimp and tuna burgers and veggie burgers.

Offering a diverse menu is key to us providing our customers with a "beyond the better burger" experience that keeps them coming back for more.

Of the established and emerging better burger franchised brands, Burger 21 offers 205 percent more non-beef burgers and 38 percent more beef burger choices. With sales of non-beef menu items representing approximately 69 percent of our

revenues, we clearly appeal to consumers who hunger for variety.

Of the entrees ordered at Burger 21, approximately 40 percent of Burger 21 customers are ordering non-beef alternatives and 60 percent are choosing all-beef burgers, sliders and hot dogs.

With so much variety, Burger 21's offerings appeal to all audiences and ages, particularly to females who often cast the "veto vote" when selecting a restaurant.

What made you go into the burger business?

Burger 21's founders, the owners of The Melting Pot Restaurants, Inc., recognized an opportunity to introduce a higher-quality product in a rapidly-growing foodservice category and fill a void in the burger business.

There are plenty of quick-service burger joints, a number of traditional-style "better burger" establishments and even upscale, full-service burger restaurants. The Burger 21 concept would define its own category – "beyond the better burger" – placing it in a position to grow rapidly across the U.S.

To define this new category, our team created a restaurant that offers quality, premium ingredients, innovative recipes and a varied, comprehensive menu. Essentially, this gives customers a gourmet experience without the gourmet price.

Have you seen any trends in burgers that have popped up recently?

Trends in non-beef burgers have really come to the forefront lately. At Burger 21, we have placed a significant focus on offering variety with plenty of non-beef burgers since day one and it is actually a big part of our business – 40 percent of our guests choose non-beef entrees and we offer 10 different non-beef burgers on our menu every day.

Your favorite burger?

My favorite burger depends on the day of the week, the weather, my mood and any number of other factors!

Lately, I have been on a Spicy Thai Shrimp Burger kick. We also have a new Patty Melt coming out as an LTO at the end of the year and that will certainly be one of my favorites!