

**Pepper Lunch Sizzles into Utah with Grand Opening**

**of State’s First Restaurant in Salt Lake City Area**

*Free Signature Beef Pepper Rice*

*for the First 50 Guests During Grand Opening Weekend*

**February 27, 2025** - Los Angeles - [Pepper Lunch](https://www.pepperlunchrestaurants.com/franchisevip), the Japanese-born experiential fast-casual concept unlike any other, with more than 530 locations in 17 countries, today announced the grand opening of its first location in the state of Utah. The restaurant will open March 6 in Riverton at 13299 S. Teal Ridge Way in the food pavilion near Cinemark and the playground area. Hours of operation are Monday – Thursday 11 a.m. – 9 p.m., Friday – Saturday 11 a.m. – 10 p.m., and Sunday Noon – 6 p.m.

To celebrate the grand opening, the first 50 guests in line on March 6, 7 and 8 will get a FREE Beef Pepper Rice, one of the dishes which has made Pepper Lunch famous across the globe. Beef Pepper Rice combines tender beef with fragrant rice, flavorful pepper spread and cracked pepper on a sizzling plate to create the ultimate comfort food. Additionally, anyone who dines on those days will also receive a bounce-back offer for a BOGO beef pepper rice dish to use during their next visit.

The first Utah location for Pepper Lunch is owned by Gemba Ventures LLC, operated by local residents Charles and Catherine Johnson. Charles’ career spans multiple start-up restaurants, with more than 20 years dedicated to operating and growing PF Chang’s from their very first restaurant in various operations roles. Catherine’s career journey expands the breadth of the restaurant and hotel industry, and she was instrumental in the opening of St. Regis – Deer Valley in Park City Utah, operating Jean George Grill and ultimately transitioning into the catering side of the business.

In addition to Pepper Rice offerings, the menu features savory Sizzling Curry Rice, as well as Teriyaki options. The restaurant also offers a variety of pasta dishes, including Aglio Olio Teppan Pasta, featuring light oil and chili flakes; and Cream Teppan Pasta, with mushrooms and cream sauce over pasta.

This restaurant will feature streamlined tech to simplify operations and elevate the guest experience, including all-kiosk ordering supported by a hospitality host, and optimized table tracking to ensure guests receive their meal as promptly as possible.

“Pepper Lunch is an exciting and flavorful addition to the Salt Lake City dining scene, offering unique, delicious, and truly unforgettable taste experiences,” said Charles, co-owner and operator of the Pepper Lunch Riverton location.

The Riverton restaurant is one of 15 locations Pepper Lunch which will open in 2025, with a flagship Southern California restaurant opening a few weeks ago, the first Florida location in Pinellas Park last month, and an Arizona State University location coming soon as well. Pepper Lunch expects to end 2025 with more than 20 open restaurants in North America, with plans to double its store opening pace each of the next few years.

"Opening our first Utah restaurant marks a significant milestone in our journey over the past 24 months," said Troy Hooper, CEO of Pepper Lunch North America. "With a fresh restaurant design, an upgraded menu, innovative technology enhancing the guest experience, and a strong team of experienced franchisees, we are set for an exciting and transformative year for Pepper Lunch in 2025."

Established in 1994, Pepper Lunch is one of Japan’s largest homegrown franchise restaurant brands with over 530 locations in 17 countries. Renowned for quality food served in a unique and innovative way for dining in or delivery, and with guests being able to get in, dine, and be on their way in 20 minutes for under $20, the beloved Japanese-based brand seeks experienced franchise partners to expand its proven business model and cutting-edge customer offerings across the United States.

**About Pepper Lunch**

The original fast casual Japanese D-I-Y teppan restaurant, Pepper Lunch was founded in 1994 by one of Japan’s most famous chefs and entrepreneurs who wanted to introduce affordable premium steaks with quality ingredients served on a sizzling iron plate. Deliciously irresistible, Pepper Lunch proudly offers quality, tasty, and affordable meals sourced from the finest ingredients paired with an unforgettable experience.

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