



FOREFRONT

EXPANSION

Pinkberry inks franchise deal for India

LOS ANGELES — Pinkberry has signed a franchise agreement with Mumbai, India-based JSM Corporation Pvt. Ltd., a franchise group that also operates other U.S. brands such as California Pizza Kitchen, Trader Vic's and Hard Rock Cafe in India. The franchise group will open its first Pinkberry in Mumbai later this year.

Pinkberry has been growing aggressively overseas during the past few years, mostly in the Middle East. India marks the 18th country in which it has planted its banner. Pinkberry's first international location opened in Kuwait in 2009. The 180-unit chain saw the opening of some 70 locations in 2011, about half of which were domestic and half international.

Domestic growth for Pinkberry also will continue, according to chief executive Ron

Graves. The chain has units in 19 states, and franchise growth across the United States will focus on both filling existing markets and moving into new cities.

Sandoval brings Kokoriko to US

NEW YORK — Multiconcept chef and operator Richard Sandoval is bringing the 120-unit

Colombia-based fast-casual Kokoriko rotisserie chicken concept to the United States.

Though Kokoriko has one franchised location in south Florida, Sandoval said he

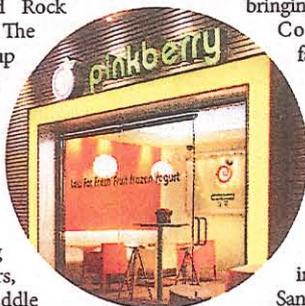
will partner with Kokoriko chief executive Eduardo Robayo to grow the brand further in the United States as a slightly different concept called Kokoriko Natural Rotisserie. The first location opened in Miami late last month.

Sandoval owns the New York-based Richard Sandoval Restaurants, which operates 30

restaurants across the United States and in the Middle East and Mexico, including the La Sandia and Zengo concepts, as well as Tamayo, Pampano and Maya. Most of Sandoval's restaurants are more upscale, but he said the Kokoriko concept fit with his vision of adding more casual restaurants to his portfolio.

The menu at Sandoval's Kokoriko will focus on free-range chicken marinated in either the original recipe or a version developed by Sandoval with a more Peruvian/Mexican bent. The marinade is spiked with achiote, which gives the meat a bright red color.

The menu also will include sides like arepas, or Colombian corn cakes filled with chicken salad or barbecued chicken, as well as tacos, chopped salads, a creamy potato-and-chicken soup called ajiaco and house-made salsas.



ARMANDO AROBIZO/ZUMA PRESS