



NEWS RELEASE

Taco Cabana® Announces the Appointment of Roberto “Pepe” Lopez as New VP of Culinary Design

8/23/2018

SAN ANTONIO, TX (August 23, 2018) – Taco Cabana announces the appointment of Roberto “Pepe” Lopez as Vice President of Culinary Design. As part of the leadership team, Lopez will focus on working closely with the TC operations, marketing and training departments to further enhance and develop Taco Cabana’s authentic Mexican-inspired menu and service model, including all future limited-time only menu items. His hire and relevant career experience in and out of the Mexican food category serve as the perfect complement to TC’s strategic brand renewal journey, which launched in late 2017 to enhance food quality and increase menu variety.

“Chef Pepe couldn’t have joined our TC team at a better time,” said Chuck Locke, President of Taco Cabana. “This year has been all about re-establishing Taco Cabana’s food excellence and bringing fresh flavors, innovation and perspective to our menu. Adding Pepe’s passion for food, creativity and expertise to the mix will be a huge asset in achieving the next level of quality and service.”

Lopez is a 40-year veteran in the corporate and independent restaurant industry, serving as Vice President of Research and Development (R&D) for various major restaurants across the nation. With a lifelong passion and expertise in menu ideation and enhancement, Lopez’s career has been largely focused on providing restaurants with revamped innovative menus that enhance food quality and serve as a pipeline for limited-time offer products. His previous experience includes culinary positions at Flagship Food Group, Baja Fresh of Fresh Enterprises, and Real Mex brands Acapulco, Chevys Fresh Mex, Las Brisas, Keystone Grill, El Torito and El Torito Grill. Lopez also helped design and execute the menu for the first El Torito in Japan, one of the top pioneering Mexican restaurants in that country.

In addition to his specialization in menu strategy and recipe ideation, Lopez has experience on the manufacturing and development side, and has created retail products for Costco, Sam’s Club, Ralph’s and Trader Joe’s.

About Taco Cabana

Taco Cabana, a subsidiary of Fiesta Restaurant Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: FRGI), was founded in 1978 and is celebrating its 40 th Anniversary in 2018. The brand specializes in Mexican-inspired food including fajitas, quesadillas, flautas, enchiladas, burritos, tacos, flour tortillas and a selection of made-from-scratch salsas and sauces. Restaurants feature open-display cooking, a selection of beer and tequila margaritas, patio dining and drive-thru windows. As of Jan. 1, 2018, Taco Cabana operates nearly 170 company-owned and franchised restaurants in Texas and New Mexico. For more info, visit www.tacocabana.com .

About Fiesta Restaurant Group, Inc.

Fiesta Restaurant Group, Inc., owns, operates and franchises Pollo Tropical and Taco Cabana ® restaurant brands. The brands specialize in the operation of fast casual/quick service restaurants that offer distinct and unique flavors with broad appeal at a compelling value. The brands feature fresh-made cooking, drive-thru service and catering. For more information about Fiesta Restaurant Group, Inc., visit www.frgi.com .

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