



A&W Backgrounder

Changing the Face of Quick-Service Restaurants

The first A&W drive-in restaurant opened more than 60 years ago and was an instant hit, rapidly expanding to over 200 drive-in restaurants across Canada by 1960. A&W continues to adapt to changing times and is constantly innovating to remain relevant with its guests.

- 1956** The **first A&W drive-in opens** in Winnipeg. The concept takes off, thriving in the cars-and-music culture of the late '50s and '60s.
- 1960s** A&W expands to **more than 200 drive-ins** by the end of the decade.
- 1970s** A&W embarks on a new strategy to leverage the rapid growth of retail shopping centres, becoming the leader in **food court restaurant** service.
- 1980s** Focusing on its recognized taste and food quality strengths, A&W accelerates **expansion with freestanding restaurants in Western Canada**.
- 1990s** A&W conducts a **major overhaul** of its menu, operating systems and design and commences an aggressive expansion program
- 2000s** A&W initiates **freestanding expansion plans in Ontario and Quebec**, offering, for the first time, franchises as a multi-unit offering.
- 2010s** A&W unveils a brand new concept—the **Urban restaurant**—as well as a brand new high-visibility freestanding restaurant design. A&W also **overhauls its menu**.
- 2013** A&W launches its **Beef Guarantee**—the first innovation in its **Ingredients Guarantee**, a journey to source simple, great-tasting ingredients, farmed with care—becoming the first national burger chain to serve beef raised without the use of hormones or steroids.
- 2014** A&W launches its **Egg and Chicken Guarantees**, once again becoming the first national burger chain to serve eggs from hens fed a diet without animal by-products and chicken raised without the use of antibiotics. A&W also opens its 200th restaurant in Ontario, in the heart of downtown Toronto.
- 2015** A&W launches its **Organic Coffee Guarantee**, introducing certified organic and Fairtrade[†] coffee brewed by Van Houtte[‡].
- 2016** A&W introduces its **Urban Franchise Associate program**; a brand new low-equity franchise model designed specifically for energetic young entrepreneurs. A&W also introduces its **Bacon Guarantee**, becoming the first national burger restaurant to serve bacon from pork raised without the use of antibiotics and is the first national restaurant to serve **French's^{††} Tomato Ketchup and Yellow Mustard**—made without preservatives or artificial flavours and colours, and contain 100% Canadian tomatoes and 100% Canadian mustard seeds—as a part of its Ingredients Guarantee.
- 2017** A&W **opens the first Urban Franchise Associate Restaurant** in Toronto (winter 2017) and announces major growth plans to **award more than 200 franchises by the end of 2020**.