

Restaurant Business

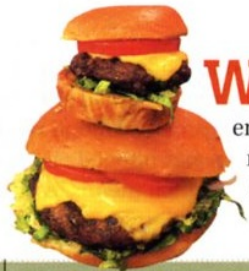
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STREET SMARTS FOR THE ENTREPRENEUR

trends

NEW BURGERS ON THE BLOCK

These joints take things to a new level



WATCH OUT MCDONALD'S AND Burger King—America's never-ending burger passion is making room for smaller, more original concepts. The emerging players highlighted here still offer the

iconic beef patty enveloped in a bun, but they ratchet up the burger-eating experience with impressive ingredients, innovative toppings, hip ambiance and alcoholic beverages for those who have grown out of milkshakes.

THE JOINT	WHAT'S COOKING	WHAT'S ON TOP	WHAT YOU'LL SEE THERE
<p>New York Burger New York City; 2 units STARTING PRICE: \$6.75 for regular; \$2.75 for mini</p>	<p>Niman Ranch natural beef burgers with choice of fresh toppings. "We go out of our way to serve top quality in a quick-serve environment," says co-owner Madeline Poley.</p>	<p>Free homemade dipping sauces include maple-Dijon, chili pepper ketchup and chipotle honey.</p>	<p>Fresh-baked brioche buns enclose the burgers. Five signatures debuted as mini-burgers to "fit the tapas trend," Poley notes.</p>
<p>The Counter Culver City, California; 8 units STARTING PRICE: \$7.95 for no frills</p>	<p>Customization is the name of the game; patrons build their own (B.Y.O.B) all-natural burgers in one of two sizes from a base of beef, turkey, veggie or chicken.</p>	<p>Free toppings range from grilled pineapple to roasted corn and black bean salsa and peanut sauce.</p>	<p>Mix-and-match choices allow for 312,120 variations on the burger theme.</p>
<p>Burger Lounge San Diego, California; 2 units STARTING PRICE: \$6.95 for all burgers</p>	<p>Grass-fed beef sits between whole wheat-white buns baked everyday from a recipe developed in house.</p>	<p>Housemade 1000 Island dressing is the signature condiment, but customers can opt for ketchup.</p>	<p>"We worked to make Burger Lounge a hip hangout, a place where you actually want to linger," says co-owner Mike Gilligan. Wine and beer are available.</p>
<p>Flippin' Burgers Newton, Massachusetts; 1 unit STARTING PRICE: \$4.95</p>	<p>Hand-formed Nebraska Angus beef patties come with a side of fries and house dressing—a mayo-based sauce. Burgers take 12 to 15 minutes to cook after ordering.</p>	<p>Caramelized roasted garlic, roasted red peppers, hummus, guacamole and a fried egg join the usual lineup of cheese, bacon and onions as topping choices.</p>	<p>The walls are covered with one owner's art and music fills the space.</p>
<p>Oneburger Coral Gables, Florida; 1 unit STARTING PRICE: \$4.95</p>	<p>Over 30 burgers, from Kobe Beef to Frita Cubana. "We took classic recipes and applied them to 'the art of the burger,'" says founder Daniel Guiteras.</p>	<p>Topping combos include creamy goat cheese, crispy onion and roasted red peppers and brie cheese, black forest ham and caramelized green apple.</p>	<p>Yuca fries join sweet potato and regular fries as a side. A vending machine dispenses "gashapon"—funky Japanese toys—for kids and grownups.</p> <p>—PATRICIA COBE</p>