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Carl's Jr. Brings Iconic, Big and Juicy California-style Burgers to Japan

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Mitsuuroko Group Holdings signs exclusive agreement to develop 150 restaurants throughout Japan

TOKYO--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--Global fast food chain Carl's Jr.[®] today announced that it has entered into an agreement with Mitsuuroko Group Holdings Co., Ltd. to be the exclusive franchise developer to launch its famous, premium-quality burgers in Japan. Under the terms of the agreement, Mitsuuroko will develop 150 Carl's Jr. restaurants in Japan over the next 10 years. Mitsuuroko plans to open the first Carl's Jr. in Tokyo in 2015 with others opening in multiple markets across Japan.

"We are excited to partner with Mitsuuroko to bring our premium menu items, vibrant brand and innovative service to Japan," said Mike Murphy, president of CKE Restaurants Holdings, Inc., parent company of the Carl's Jr. brand. "We have no doubt that with Mitsuuroko's experience and commitment behind us, Carl's Jr. will soon become the ultimate destination for Japanese consumers seeking the most premium burger."

"Japan is the largest burger market in Asia and our brand is well positioned to deliver the quality, taste and innovation that discerning Japanese consumers demand," said Ned Lyerly, CKE president of international. "CKE and Carl's Jr. offer a best in class, proven menu and quality restaurant experience that are sure to succeed in the sophisticated Japanese market. And, we have complete confidence that Mitsuuroko is the right partner at the right time for Carl's Jr."

"We are pleased to bring Carl's Jr. and its premium burgers to the Japanese market," said Mr. Kohei Tajima, the CEO of Mitsuuroko Group Holdings. "Carl's Jr. is famous and successful throughout the world thanks to its business model of offering authentic, premium-quality chargrilled burgers with the convenience and price of fast food. Compared to other burger chains, Carl's Jr. in Japan will offer better quality, better service, better value and better hospitality in a premium Quick Service Restaurant environment. Our emphasis on superior quality is a fundamental pillar to Mitsuuroko's success. Carl's Jr. is the perfect partner for us to bring that quality orientation to the QSR category."

Mitsuuroko Adds to its List of Industry Leading Ventures

Mitsuuroko Group Holdings Co., Ltd. engages in Japan's energy, real estate, health, sports and electricity industries. The agreement with CKE Restaurants and Carl's Jr. marks Mitsuuroko's first venture into the Quick Service Restaurant category.

"Mitsuuroko maintains a leadership position in each of our business sectors. That is why we chose Carl's Jr. as our first step into QSR," said Mr. Tajima. "We are impressed with the core strengths of Carl's Jr. including its youthful brand image, edgy advertising, premium-quality menu and service, and contemporary restaurant designs that feature comfortable, upscale California-themed décor."

Premium-Quality Food Made Fresh-to-Order

Established 73 years ago in Southern California, Carl's Jr. is an industry pioneer in serving premium-quality hamburgers. Throughout the U.S. and 33 other countries and U.S. territories, Carl's Jr. is known for its innovative, premium menu of chargrilled Thickburgers[®] made with 100 percent Black Angus beef, Made from Scratch[™] Biscuits, Hand-Breaded Chicken Tenders[™] and Hand-Scooped Ice Cream Shakes & Malts[™]. Carl's Jr. has a world class quality assurance department that qualifies suppliers, monitors their production and verifies that all products are produced to the company's exacting specifications. Additionally, Carl's Jr. maintains food quality through the proper execution of a proprietary restaurant operating system where products are made fresh when ordered by customers.

About CKE Restaurants Holdings, Inc.

CKE Restaurants Holdings, Inc. ("CKE") is a privately held company headquartered in Carpinteria, Calif. Through its subsidiaries, CKE owns and licenses Carl's Jr.[®] and Hardee's[®] quick-service restaurants. CKE operates Carl's Jr. and Hardee's as one brand under two names acknowledging the regional heritage of both banners. CKE has a total of 3,553 franchised or company-operated restaurants in 42 states and 33 foreign countries and U.S. territories. Known for its one-of-a-kind premium menu items such as 100 percent Black Angus Thickburgers[®], Made from Scratch[™] Biscuits, Hand-Breaded Chicken Tenders[™] and Fresh Baked Buns, as well as an award-winning marketing approach, the Carl's Jr./Hardee's brand continues to deliver substantial and consistent growth in the U.S. and overseas. The Carl's Jr./Hardee's system is now 77 percent franchised, with international restaurants representing 18 percent of the system. For more information about CKE, please visit www.ckr.com or its brand sites at www.carlsjr.com and www.hardees.com.

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Contact:

CKE Restaurants Holdings, Inc.
Kathleen Bush
805-745-7741
kbush@ckr.com

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