

Former UPS Driver Becomes First-Time Business Owner With California Tortilla, Opens Kansas' First Location in Wichita on January 8

Mark Poling is Kicking Off California Tortilla's Presence in Kansas, The First of Up To 5 Locations In The Greater Wichita Area

WICHITA, Kan. ([PRWEB](#)) January 07, 2020 -- Wichita native Mark Poling is becoming a business owner for the first time with California Tortilla, as he prepares to open the brand's first restaurant in the state at 2244 N. Greenwich Road in Wichita, part of the Greenwich Shopping Center. Poling and his wife, Christine, signed an area development agreement with the California-style Mexican restaurant concept to bring at least three and as many as five locations to the greater Wichita area over the next few years.

To commemorate its arrival in the Kansas market, California Tortilla is hosting a Grand Opening celebration on January 8. After the ceremonial ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10:30 a.m., Cal Tort Wichita will be offering \$5 burritos and bowls to all guests until 10 p.m., with the proceeds donated to the Kansas Food Bank. Customers are also encouraged to bring canned goods to the location on Grand Opening day to donate to the food bank.

Poling, a graduate of St. Thomas Aquinas grade school and Kapaun Mount Carmel High School, attended the University of Kansas and Wichita State University before spending 15 years as a UPS driver. When an elbow injury suffered in 2016 left him unable to work for an extended period of time, Poling stepped into a role as a stay-at-home dad, and in spending more time with his children at home, he changed the course of his career.

"I started to realize as I got to be at home with my girls that in working from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. all the time, I was missing all of the important things," said Poling. "It helped change my viewpoint on what mattered most to me and what I wanted to do."

Familiar with the franchise model from growing up in Wichita, home of Pizza Hut, Poling set out in search of an opportunity that would bring his city new flavors and also provided him the opportunity to spend more time with his young children.

"I knew Christine and I had the smarts, we just needed a system to match them and apply them to," said Poling. "I wanted something Wichita didn't already have, so after two to three months of digging around the internet, I found California Tortilla."

Since 1995, California Tortilla has brought a fresh perspective to "California-style" Mexican flavors. The brand's open-concept kitchen gives guests a peek into the daily process of preparing more than 25 small-batch recipes in-house from the freshest ingredients possible. Cal Tort's extensive menu is chef-inspired, pulling inspiration from the global community for both menu staples and rotating options that can't be found anywhere else.

"We wanted to offer something that moms feel like they can feed to their kids, and Cal Tort brought that," said Poling. "It's all about flavor. The fresh ingredients in our recipes, the Wall of Flame—the flavors are endless in what you can create. We can also meet a lot of people's needs under one roof. The options are endless. Guests have the option of curated, chef-driven recipes and the option to build their own thing themselves. You can take the spice out completely, or make it so hot you'll cry, but either way, you'll feel good about what you're eating."

Further, California Tortilla’s chef-driven menu full of fresh and delicious creations is an awesome fit in Wichita because the community’s growing health consciousness nicely aligns with Cal Tort’s commitment to freshness—none of its restaurants even have freezers in the kitchens—and the brand’s robust catering program, from fajita or taco bars to burrito parties.

Healthy, feel-good food is only part of the Poling’s recipe for success with Cal Tort, through. Not only do the Polings plan to partner with a number of charitable organizations including the humane society and local food banks, but are also paying it forward to the place that gave them so much through job creation in the community. Cal Tort is hiring nearly 30 employees at its first location, meaning that by their third restaurant, the Polings could feasibly generate 90 jobs in the community.

“I’m bringing a restaurant to Wichita because I found success here and I want to give that back and facilitate opportunity for others,” Poling said.

With local ties that run this deep, it’s clear Cal Tort has found a home in Kansas.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA TORTILLA:

Since 1995, California Tortilla has brought a fresh perspective to “California-style” Mexican flavors. The fast-casual Mexican restaurant franchise’s signature, made-to-order food is all made in-house from fresh, never-frozen ingredients, ensuring the highest-quality menu offering at all 45 of its locations. For more information, please visit <https://franchise.californiatortilla.com/>.

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