



Local fast-food eatery stakes its reputation on fresh supplies

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When foodies think of Kansas City, their thoughts tend to go immediately to barbecue.

They aren't bad thoughts.

But by focusing on pulled pork or tri-tip, they're missing some of the finest smash burgers, fries, and onion rings in the west at Paul's Drive In.



As Charles Kuralt, the late CBS journalist used to say, "you can find your way across this country using burger joints the way a navigator uses the stars."

But Paul's Drive In is different than most.



When Paul Rhoades bought Ron Stein's Dog-N-Suds in the early '60s, it was common for dives and diners to serve pizza, hot dogs, hamburgers, and grilled-cheese sandwiches by the bushel. When Paul converted the carport into a dining room and added a drive-thru, folks knew Paul's was destined to remain in the community.

Paul's was sold multiple times in the late '70s and again in the late '80s. When Scott Shepherd and

partners purchased the restaurant in September 2021, Scott knew he wanted to maintain a family-owned atmosphere, so he brought in his brother-in-law Mark Fulbright to manage day-to-

day operations as general manager. In October 2022, his sister, Amanda Fulbright, bought out one of the original investors and enabled Paul's to be a majority-owned family business.

The family has never looked back. They have kept the food mostly the same as it has been since the 1960s, but they have improved it some.

Scott and Amanda know that their commitment to only using fresh beef for Paul's hamburgers is what sets the flavor apart. The never-frozen quality keeps patrons coming back and staying loyal to Paul's burgers over its competitors.

They point to their most popular and longest-standing item on the menu, the signature Big Boy Smash Burger with its accompanying Big Boy sauce, as proof.



Coupled with an order of their crispy, luscious onion rings, the brother and sister know they have a winning formula that has folks returning time and again. Staying a moment with the onion rings, which have an almost cult-like following, it should be known the restaurant's supplier raised prices this year on onions so astronomically that Paul's Drive In almost had to discontinue them. Almost.

"With the price increase and a change in their delivery policies, it made it impossible for us to continue doing business with them," said Amanda Fulbright. "We switched to another supplier temporarily while we taste tested tons of different rings from different vendors looking for one most like the one we have carried since the '60s. We are pleased to say we have the iconic rings back and our customers are ecstatic."



The original-tasting food is not to say the restaurant has stood still. The family has modernized including moving to a digital point-of-sale system. They plan to remodel the restrooms and make other improvements to the dining room soon.

One item they're not changing is the iconic sign out front.

It stands as a reminder of the good ol' days and food that is as delicious now as it was then.

This article was presented and sponsored by Paul's Drive-In. Visit paulsdriveinkc.com to view their menu and hours.

A promotional banner for Paul's Drive-In. On the left, two circular award logos from the 2023 Kansas City Favorites contest are displayed: "Best Burger" and "Best Lunch Spot". The main text reads "COME HUNGRY. LEAVE WANTING TO BE HUNGRY AGAIN." with a red "VIEW MENU" button below it. The Paul's Drive-In logo is on the right, next to a photo of a burger and onion rings. At the bottom, contact information is provided: phone number 816-761-5700, address 10424 Blue Ridge Blvd, Kansas City, and website paulsdriveinkc.com.

 Paul's Drive-In

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