



A BUSINESS THAT NEVER LOSES ITS COOL

A Fresh Take on the Frozen Dessert Experience



A Refreshingly Unique Franchise Opportunity

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Introduction

Rita's legacy started during the summer of 1984, when Philadelphia firefighter Bob Tumolo began selling homemade Italian Ice right from his front porch. His fresh Italian Ice, made from his mom's secret Italian family recipe, turned into something truly special.

What started as a small neighborhood shop quickly became a tradition for families all over the Philadelphia area. Parents made special trips, kids counted down the days until the "First Day of Spring" Celebration, and *Rita's* became a staple in the community.

Today, with **over 600 locations across 30+ states**, that tradition is still alive and well. But *Rita's* success isn't just about nostalgia. It's built on a proven, scalable business model that has allowed franchisees to build thriving businesses for over four decades. The same things that made *Rita's* special in 1984, high-quality products, happy guests, and a fun, welcoming environment, are what make it an exciting business opportunity today.

With low overhead, high margins, and multiple revenue streams, *Rita's* offers franchisees a scalable franchise model in a category with strong consumer demand year after year. Whether it's a walk-up shop, a drive-thru, or catering at community events, franchisees have the flexibility to reach customers where they are and maximize their investment.

For entrepreneurs looking for a business that's both financially rewarding and built to last, Rita's is the perfect opportunity.



Industry Overview

Frozen Dessert Market Overview

- The U.S. frozen dessert industry serves a market of more than \$37 billion annually.¹
- Demand for frozen desserts continues to climb across the U.S. and is projected to drive market growth at an annual rate of 10.6% through 2033.²
- Frozen desserts are a must-have for Americans nationwide, with 76% of U.S. adults reporting having a sweet tooth and seeking frozen desserts and dessert drinks.³

Consumer Behavior & Demand Drivers

- Frozen desserts enjoy universal appeal across every generation, 97% of Americans say they love ice cream and other frozen treats.⁴
- Guests are drawn to variety, with new frozen dessert flavors and formats growing at about a 5% annual rate.⁵
- Frozen treats are a regular habit, as 73% of consumers enjoy them weekly and two in three reach for them in the evening.⁶

Franchise Appeal Within the Industry

- Food and beverage franchises make up 36% of all U.S. franchise establishments.⁷
- Quick-service brands, including dessert and snack-focused concepts, continue to drive franchise growth.⁸

Why Guests Choose Brands Like *Rita's*

- Customers often come back to brands they recognize and enjoy, like *Rita's*, with more than 40 years of history.⁹
- Today's frozen dessert menus are increasingly driven by variety, choice, and customization to keep guests engaged and coming back, aligning with *Rita's* focus on customer choice and menu of 80 Italian Ice flavors, and Custard pairings.¹⁰



*Source Links

1. "U.S. Frozen Dessert Market Size" [SkyQuest, 2025](#)
2. "U.S. Frozen Desserts Market," [Grand View Research, 2026](#)
3. "Straws Over Spoons," [StudyFinds, 2022](#)
4. "Ice Cream & Frozen Novelty Trends Survey," [International Dairy Foods Association \(IDFA\), 2024](#)
5. "Global Frozen Desserts and Ice Cream Trends," [Innova Market Insights, 2024](#)
6. "Ice Cream Sales & Trends," [International Dairy Foods Association \(IDFA\), 2024](#)
7. "Food & Beverage Franchises Industry Spotlight," [International Franchise Association \(IFA\), 2024](#)
8. "Quick Service Restaurants Market Report," [Mordor Intelligence, 2026](#)
9. "Chain Loyalty Trends in Restaurants," [Business Insider, 2025](#)
10. "Frozen Desserts Trends, Innovations and Flavors," [Food & Hospitality Asia, 2026](#)



A Franchise Opportunity

Why Guests Choose *Rita's*

For many, visiting *Rita's* isn't just about getting a frozen treat, it's about creating a memory. Whether it's a family celebrating the last day of school, a couple stopping by after a summer stroll, or a group of kids riding their bikes to their favorite neighborhood spot, *Rita's* is part of life's little moments.

What makes *Rita's* stand out is the unique combination of bold, refreshing Italian Ice and rich, creamy Frozen Custard, made fresh daily. Unlike traditional ice cream shops, where flavors can be predictable, *Rita's* offers an experience filled with color, flavor, and variety, featuring options like Italian Ice bursting with real fruit. Every visit brings a new choice, a new mix-in, and a new favorite flavor to discover.

That excitement keeps guests coming back. In fact, research shows that 81% of guests plan to return within three months,¹ a loyalty that many dessert brands struggle to achieve. Whether it's a first-time visit or a long-standing family tradition, *Rita's* is a brand that guests don't just enjoy, they connect with it.

And when a brand has that kind of built-in emotional loyalty, it creates a huge opportunity for franchisees.

1. Marketing Workshop Report - *Rita's* Awareness Trial and Usage Study 2023



How Franchisees Get Guests

Scalability & Growth Beyond the Shop

Rita's business model is designed for multi-unit and mobile expansion.

Once a location is established, franchisees can scale their revenue streams with:

- **Digital Ordering & Delivery:** Capture more sales through online and third-party platforms.
- **Catering & Fundraising:** Build brand loyalty with schools and businesses.
- **Carts & Mobile Trucks:** Serve guests at parties / gatherings, fairs, sports games, and events.



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What Sets Rita's Apart



Two Base Products, Endless Possibilities

Italian Ice and Frozen Custard form the foundation of a wide menu, including our Signature Gelati, offering variety without adding complexity.

Proprietary Delivery Platform

With a first-party app developed in-house and offered since 2020, *Rita's* supports direct ordering and delivery through a branded platform built for convenience, reach and allowing us to communicate directly with guests.

Expanded Third-Party Access

By working with the three leading delivery services, *Rita's* helps franchisees reach more guests, meet off-premise demand, and stay accessible across more occasions.

A Cost Profile That Stays Lean

Rita's simplicity allows the approximate **Cost of Goods Sold to be ~18%**, supported by a streamlined offering that limits complexity and helps control product expense.¹

Drive-Thru Sales Advantage

Rita's Locations with drive-thrus **generate approximately 39% higher total sales**, giving franchisees another format option built for added convenience and stronger volume.¹

Built for Families and Communities

Rita's shops are places where families gather, milestones are celebrated, and everyday moments feel a little brighter, helping each location feel at home in its neighborhood.

1. See Item 19 in *Rita's* Franchise Disclosure Document dated 1/30/2026 for details.

The *Rita's* Difference



No Direct Competition in the Frozen Dessert Market

Unlike ice cream shops that compete with grocery stores, convenience stores, and corner markets, *Rita's* offers something truly different.

- Italian Ice & Frozen Custard offer a unique, refreshing alternative to ice cream, made fresh daily.
- Guests can't find our flavors and textures at the grocery store.
- Guests keep coming back for more with 80+ rotating flavors that create a sense of discovery and excitement with every visit.

More Than a Shop—A Scalable Business Model

Rita's franchisees aren't limited to in-store sales. The business is built to grow beyond the four walls of the shop.

- **Multi-Unit Growth** – Many franchisees expand quickly due to the simple operations and strong brand demand.
- **Catering & Fundraising** – Schools, businesses, and community events drive additional sales.
- **Delivery & Digital Sales** – Meet customers where they are with online ordering and third-party delivery.
- **Mobile Trucks** – Take *Rita's* to fairs, festivals, and sporting events.

Seasonal or Year-Round Flexibility

Franchisees can tailor operations to their market.

- Seasonal model (March–October) maximizes sales while keeping winter overhead low.
- When a seasonal *Rita's* reopens for business at the beginning of the season, it is a community celebration. “First Day of Spring” captures national attention with features on media outlets, like Fox & Friends.
- Year-round operations work when you have a Drive-thru and in warm-weather, high-traffic markets.

Proven Training & Support

With 40+ years of experience, *Rita's* provides comprehensive franchisee support from day one.

- **Cool University** – Hands-on training covering operations, customer service, and marketing.
- **Local Marketing Support** – Proven strategies to drive traffic, from grand openings to community outreach.
- **Ongoing Coaching & Business Development** – Continuous support to help franchisees grow and succeed.



How We Help *Rita's* Owners Grow

Rita's approaches franchise support as a hands-on process, guiding owners through each stage of ownership with clear systems, practical training, and access to experienced teams.

Training & Onboarding

Franchise owners are introduced to *Rita's* operations through a structured training path designed to prepare them for day-to-day shop management and opening with confidence.

- Operations and management training at *Rita's* headquarters ("Cool University")
- In-shop and on-site follow-up training
- Grand opening preparation and launch support

Real Estate & Site Guidance

Rita's works closely with franchise owners early in the process to help identify locations that align with the brand, the market, and local community needs.

- Market and site evaluation support
- Guidance on shop type and layout / design
- Coordination throughout the approval process



Design & Build-Out Support

From layout to finishes, *Rita's* provides direction throughout the design and construction process to help owners bring the shop experience to life while staying aligned with brand standards.

Marketing & Local Outreach

Rita's provides franchise owners with tools and guidance to support local visibility, guest engagement, and community connection.

- Brand-led promotions and seasonal campaigns
- Local marketing resources and toolkits
- Grand opening and ongoing promotional guidance

Ongoing Operational Support

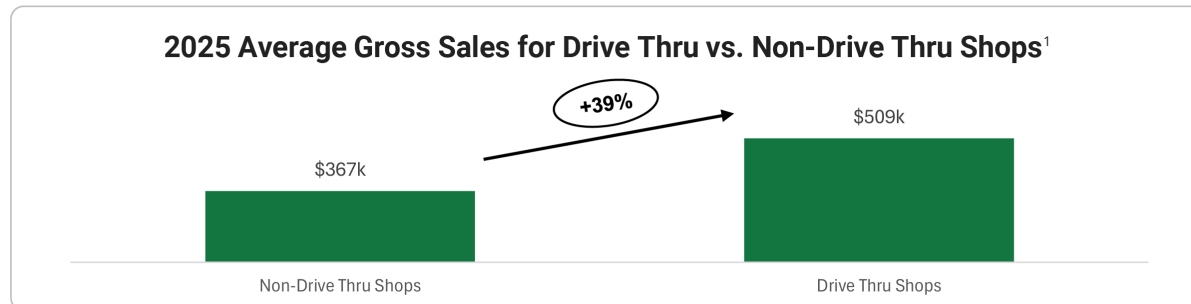
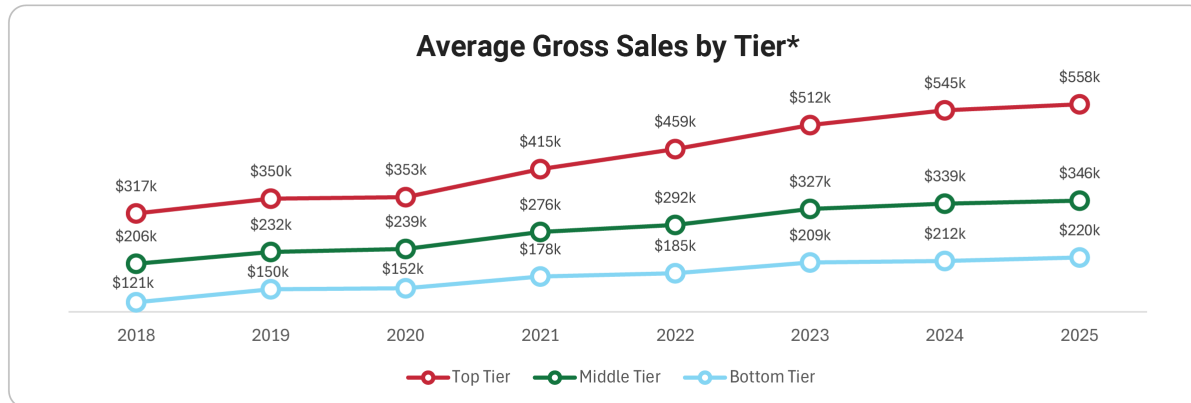
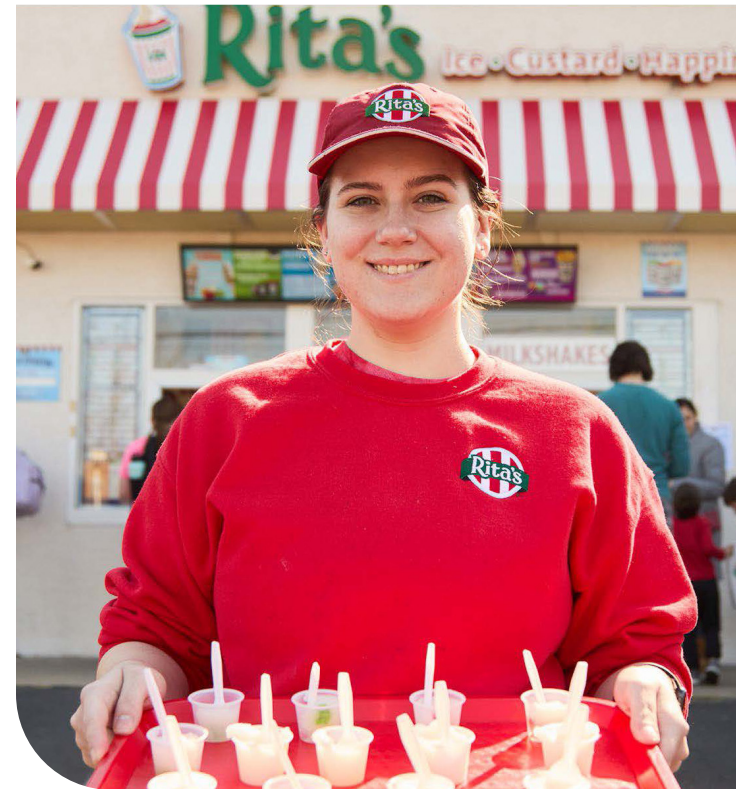
Support continues beyond opening day through dedicated resources focused on daily operations, planning, and long-term ownership. Franchise owners are paired with a Franchise Consultant and have access to ongoing coaching, marketing guidance, and brand updates as the system evolves.



Financial Performance

Where to Find More Information

The financial performance of *Rita's* locations is outlined in Item 19 of our Franchise Disclosure Document (FDD), which provides insights into the revenue of existing shops. The data includes financial results from certain Shops that operated during the most recent full operating seasons, reflecting real-world franchise performance.



1. See Item 19 in *Rita's* Franchise Disclosure Document dated 1/30/2026 for details.



Startup Costs & Investment

Investment: Item 7



Investment Category	Standard (w/o Drive-Thru)		Standard (w/ Drive-Thru)	
	Low	High	Low	High
Leasehold Improvements	\$125,000	\$359,664	\$212,086	\$400,000
Equipment	\$104,744	\$168,257	\$123,500	\$230,000
Signage	\$5,500	\$26,123	\$19,160	\$98,781
Architect & Attorney Fees	\$3,500	\$25,000	\$23,820	\$60,835
Permits & Licenses	\$1,239	\$17,578	\$3,042	\$10,000
Build-out Costs	\$239,983	\$596,622	\$381,608	\$799,616
Franchise Fee ¹	\$15,000	\$35,000	\$15,000	\$35,000
Additional Funds (3 Months)	\$20,000	\$30,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Minimum New Shop Marketing	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,000
Initial Order	\$8,000	\$17,500	\$8,000	\$17,500
Insurance	\$200	\$3,920	\$200	\$3,920
Training	\$50	\$5,000	\$50	\$5,000
Lease Deposit	\$0	\$12,500	\$0	\$12,500
Start-up Costs	\$55,250	\$115,920	\$55,250	\$115,920
Total	\$295,233	\$712,542	\$436,858	\$915,536

Source: Item 7 of 2026 FDD Rita's Franchise Company. Print Date 1.30.2026. Low end of Franchise Fee based on signing a development agreement for 3 units or more.





What Does It Take to Be Part of Rita's?

Franchisee Background

- Prior retail experience is helpful, but not required.
- Owners should have a genuine interest in the *Rita's* brand and guest experience.
- Owners should be prepared to be actively involved in their business, either day to day or through a dedicated manager.
- Comfort leading and supporting a small team
- Strong connection to the local community
- A long-term mindset toward ownership and growth

Ideal Candidate Profiles

- **Owner Operator:** Individuals who enjoy being hands-on, building a team, and creating a welcoming place for guests in their community.
- **Community Focused Entrepreneur:** Local leaders who value relationships, family friendly experiences, and becoming a neighborhood gathering spot.
- **Multi Unit Growth Minded Operator:** Candidates with the capacity and interest to develop multiple *Rita's* locations over time within a defined market who build a team to run day-to-day operations.

Rita's provides a streamlined path to ownership with a relatively low initial investment compared to other QSR brands.

- **Minimum Liquid Capital** – \$150,000
- **Minimum Net Worth** – \$400,000
- **Financing** – Many franchisees finance a portion of their startup costs to keep cash flow available for operations.



Rita's Franchise Process

Each step brings you closer to owning a thriving *Rita's* franchise. We're here to guide you every step of the way!



1. Intro Call

Get to know *Rita's* and discuss your goals

2. Questionnaire

Share your background and additional information

3. FDD Sign

Review key business details and financials

4. Background Check

Ensure financial readiness for ownership

5. *Rita's* Leadership Call

Discuss your potential with our Chief Development Officer

6. FDD / Market Plan Review

Align your vision with our market strategy

7. Meet the Team Day

Meet our CEO & Leadership team, ask questions, experience the *Rita's* Culture

8. Sign Agreement

Finalize your franchise and officially join the *Rita's* team





Rita's Italian Ice & Frozen Custard



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