

Couple loves Baskin-Robbins so much, they own 5 stores

By Ryan Carter, Staff Writer

Posted: 03/06/2010 08:58:21 PM PST



Sharis Amirian with her husband Edwin Amirian at their newly opened Baskin Robbins, located at 60 East Colorado Boulevard in Old Pasadena, after several years of dreaming about it. It's their fifth Baskin Robbins, and their oldest Baskin Robbins which is on South Lake Avenue. (SGVN/Staff Photo by Walt Mancini)

PASADENA - Things are pretty cool these days with Sheris and Edwin Amirian.

That's another way of saying business is sweet.

They've just acquired their fifth Baskin-Robbins location.

This one was a dream come true.

It's in Old Pasadena, where for two or three years they've been hoping to find just the right space and rent to add to their roster of stores - one of which, on South Lake Avenue - is the oldest existing Baskin-Robbins in the U.S. chain.

"We've always loved the area, we were interested in being here, and then the opportunity came," Sharis Amirian said.

Essentially, the timing was right.

The rent and the size of the spot were good, Edwin Amirian said, adding that many potential spaces were a better fit for larger restaurants.

The current state of the commercial real estate market didn't hurt.

Rents are down.

These days, a potential tenant can find something in the area for \$5 to \$8 a square foot, compared to between \$6 and \$12 a few years ago when the market was booming, said Robert Harvey, of Harvey Commercial, a leasing agent in

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the area.

The Amirians are benefitting from the downturn in rents, Harvey said. Ultimately, the Glendale couple thinks they will capitalize on the high volume of foot traffic in the area and the dearth of ice cream shops.

So far, they've done a good job of that in other areas.

And it all started about six years ago with a milk shake. The couple loved them, and kept coming back for them. So when the former gas station owners found about a spot in Glendale, they went for it.

The success there led to buying more locations, including the South Lake store, which company officials said is the oldest existing one - at 65 years old - among the company's 2,700 U.S. stores.

The couple has emerged as stars among franchisees - winning the the company's Franchisee of the Year award for 2008.

"We just love the product and the passion we have for it, and we we work hard every day," Sharis Amirian said.

On April 17, the owners will have a grand opening celebration, complete with entertainment, scoops and more.

It's at 60 E. Colorado Blvd.

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