

BJs RESTAURANTS INC
Form S-3
January 07, 2010
Table of Contents

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on January 7, 2010

Registration No.

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER
THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933

BJ s RESTAURANTS, INC.

(Exact name of Registrant as specified in its charter)

7755 Center Avenue, Suite 300
Huntington Beach, California 92647

Edgar Filing: BJs RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

(714) 500-2400

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of Registrant's principal executive offices)

California
(State or Other Jurisdiction of
Incorporation or Organization)

33-0485615
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification Number)

GREGORY S. LEVIN

Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Secretary

BJ's Restaurants, Inc.

7755 Center Avenue, Suite 300

Huntington Beach, California 92647

(714) 500-2400

(Name and address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

Copy to:

Robert M. Steinberg, Esq.

Jeffer, Mangels, Butler & Marmaro LLP

1900 Avenue of the Stars, 7th Floor

Los Angeles, California 90067

(310) 203-8080

Fax: (310) 203-0567

Approximate Date of Commencement of Proposed Sale to the Public: From time to time after this Registration Statement becomes effective.

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box:

Edgar Filing: BJs RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box:

If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to general Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer or a smaller reporting company. See definition of accelerated filer, large accelerated filer and smaller reporting company in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/>	Accelerated filer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Non-accelerated filer <input type="checkbox"/>	Smaller reporting company <input type="checkbox"/>

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of each class of securities to be registered(1)	Amount to be registered	Proposed maximum offering price per share	Proposed maximum aggregate offering price(2)	Amount of registration fee(3)
Primary Offering:				
Senior Debt Securities; Subordinated Debt Securities; Common Stock, no par value per share(4); Preferred Stock, no par value per share(4); Depositary Shares(4); Warrants(4); and Units(4)	(5)	(5)	(5)	(5)
Total for Primary Offering			\$75,000,000	\$5,347.50(6)
Secondary Offering:				
Common Stock, no par value per share	3,801,730	\$18.735	\$71,225,411	\$5,078.37(7)
Total:			\$146,225,411	\$10,425.87

- (1) With respect to the primary offering, there are being registered under this registration statement such indeterminate number of shares of common stock and preferred stock, such indeterminate principal amount of debt securities, which may be senior or subordinated, of the registrant and such indeterminate number of warrants, depositary shares, and units of the registrant, all at indeterminate prices, as shall have an aggregate initial offering price not to exceed the amount referenced below. Any securities registered under this registration statement may be sold separately or as units with other securities registered under this registration statement.

Edgar Filing: BJs RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

- (2) With respect to the primary offering, the proposed maximum per unit and aggregate offering prices per class of security will be determined from time to time by the registrant in connection with the issuance by the registrant of the securities registered under this registration statement.
- (3) Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act of 1933.
- (4) Also includes such indeterminate number of shares of preferred stock, depository shares, common stock, warrants, and units as may be issued upon conversion of, or in exchange for, or upon exercise of, convertible or exchangeable securities as may be offered pursuant to any prospectus or prospectus supplement filed with this registration statement.
- (5) Not required to be included in accordance with General Instruction II(D) of Form S-3.
- (6) Estimated solely for the purpose of computing the registration fee pursuant to Rule 457(o) under the Securities Act and exclusive of accrued interest, distributions and dividends, if any. In no event will the aggregate initial offering price of all securities issued in the primary offering from time to time pursuant to this Registration Statement exceed \$75,000,000. If any debt securities are issued at an original issue discount, then the offering price shall be in such greater principal amount as shall result in an aggregate initial offering price of up to \$75,000,000, less the dollar amount of any securities previously issued hereunder.

Edgar Filing: BJs RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

- (7) Estimated solely for the purpose of calculating the registration fee in accordance with Rule 457(c) under the Securities Act, using the average of the high and low prices of the registrant's common stock as reported on the NASDAQ Global Select Market on December 30, 2009.

The Registrant hereby amends this Registration Statement on such date or dates as may be necessary to delay its effective date until the Registrant shall file a further amendment which specifically states that this Registration Statement shall thereafter become effective in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 or until this Registration Statement shall become effective on such date as the Commission, acting pursuant to said Section 8(a), may determine.

Table of Contents

The information in this prospectus is not complete and may be changed. We may not sell these securities until the registration statement filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission is effective. This prospectus is not an offer to sell these securities, and we are not soliciting offers to buy these securities, in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION, DATED JANUARY 7, 2010

PROSPECTUS

BJ S RESTAURANTS, INC.

\$75,000,000

Common Stock

Preferred Stock

Depositary Shares

Debt Securities

Warrants

Units

We may offer and sell, from time to time, in one or more offerings, together or separately, in one or more series or classes, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus. The aggregate initial offering price of the securities that we offer will not exceed \$75,000,000. We may offer and sell these securities to or through one or more underwriters, dealers and agents, or directly, on a continuous or delayed basis.

This prospectus describes some of the general terms that may apply to these securities and the general manner in which they may be offered. The specific terms of any securities to be offered, and the specific manner in which they may be offered, will be described in one or more supplements to this prospectus. This prospectus may not be used to sell any of the securities unless it is accompanied by a prospectus supplement. Before investing, you should carefully read this prospectus and any related prospectus supplement.

This prospectus also relates to the offer and sale, from time to time, of up to 3,801,730 shares of our common stock by the selling shareholders listed elsewhere in this prospectus. The shares of our common stock offered by the selling shareholders consist of 3,801,730 shares previously acquired by the selling shareholders from the Company in private sale transactions. We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of our common stock offered by the selling shareholders.

The securities may be sold by us or the selling shareholders through public transactions executed through one or more broker-dealers at prevailing market prices or in private transactions directly with purchasers or at privately negotiated prices. For a description of the plan of distribution of the securities see Plan of Distribution beginning on page 37 of this prospectus.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol: BJRI.

Investing in our securities involves risks. You should carefully read and consider the risk factors included in this prospectus, in our periodic reports, in any prospectus supplements relating to specific offerings of securities and in other documents that we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission. See Risk Factors

beginning on page 3 of this prospectus.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is January 7, 2010

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>About This Prospectus</u>	iii
<u>Certain Definitions</u>	iii
<u>Our Company</u>	1
<u>Risk Factors</u>	3
<u>Cautionary Statement Concerning Forward Looking Statements</u>	17
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	18
<u>Ratio of Earnings To Fixed Charges</u>	18
<u>Description of Securities We May Offer</u>	19
<u>Description of Capital Stock</u>	19
<u>Description of Depositary Shares</u>	21
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	23
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	32
<u>Description of Units</u>	33
<u>Important Provisions of California Law and Our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws</u>	34
<u>Book-Entry Procedures And Settlement</u>	35
<u>Selling Shareholders</u>	35
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	37
<u>Certain Legal Matters</u>	41
<u>Experts</u>	41
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	41
<u>Incorporation By Reference of Information Filed With The SEC</u>	42

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we have filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or the SEC, utilizing a shelf registration process. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may issue and sell. Each time we issue and sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may add, update or change information in this prospectus. If there is any inconsistency between the information in this prospectus and the prospectus supplement, you should rely solely on the information in the prospectus supplement.

This prospectus also may be used by the selling shareholders identified in this prospectus to sell shares of common stock for their own accounts. We are registering the shares of common stock held by the selling shareholders to fulfill our contractual obligations under a registration rights agreement with the selling shareholders. We have agreed to bear the expenses of the registration of the shares of common stock held by the selling shareholders under federal and state securities laws. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of any shares of common stock offered under this prospectus by the selling shareholders.

You should read both this prospectus and the prospectus supplement applicable to any offering, together with the additional information described under the heading **Incorporation by Reference of Information Filed With the SEC** below.

We have filed or incorporated by reference exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part. You should read the exhibits carefully for provisions that may be important to you. See **Where You Can Find More Information** below.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized any other person to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We will not make an offer to sell our securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus, as well as information we previously filed with the SEC and have incorporated by reference, is accurate as of the date on the front cover of this prospectus only. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date.

CERTAIN DEFINITIONS

References in this prospectus to **we**, **us** and **our** refer to BJs Restaurants, Inc. In this prospectus, we refer to the common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares, debt securities, warrants, and units being offered collectively as **securities**.

Table of Contents

OUR COMPANY

About BJs Restaurants, Inc.

BJs Restaurants, Inc. owns and operates 92 restaurants as of December 29, 2009, located in California, Texas, Arizona, Colorado, Oregon, Nevada, Florida, Ohio, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Indiana, Louisiana and Washington. Each of our restaurants is operated either as a BJs Restaurant & Brewery[®] which includes a brewery within the restaurant, a BJs Restaurant & Brewhouse[®] which receives the beer it sells from one of our breweries or an approved third-party craft brewer of our proprietary recipe beers (contract brewer), or a BJs Pizza & Grill which is a smaller format, full service restaurant with a more limited menu than our other restaurants. Our menu features our BJs[®] award-winning, signature deep-dish pizza, our own handcrafted beers as well as a wide selection of appetizers, entrees, pastas, sandwiches, specialty salads and desserts including our unique Pizookie[®] dessert. Several of our BJs Restaurant & Brewery restaurants feature in-house brewing facilities where BJs proprietary handcrafted beers are produced for many of our restaurants.

The first BJs restaurant was opened in 1978 in Orange County, California and centered on bringing the unique flavor of deep-dish pizza to California. The Company acquired the original BJs restaurants in 1995 from the original owners. Our initial public offering of common stock occurred in 1996. Over the years we expanded the BJs concept from its beginnings as a small pizzeria to a full service, high energy casual dining restaurant with over 100 menu items, including appetizers, specialty salads, soups, pastas, sandwiches, entrees and desserts. In 1996, we introduced our own handcrafted beers through our first BJs Restaurant & Brewery in Brea, California. Since that time, we have opened additional BJs Restaurants & Breweries where our handcrafted beers are manufactured and we have also partnered with high quality contract brewers to manufacture our beer for sale in many of our restaurants. The differentiated, high-quality, handcrafted beers have added a unique dimension to the BJs concept which further distinguishes BJs from many other restaurant concepts and compliments our signature pizza and many of our other menu items. Over the years, our renowned beers have earned 25 medals at the Great American Beer Festival, including two Gold medals in 2008 and a silver medal in 2009.

The casual dining segment of the restaurant industry is a large, highly fragmented segment with estimated annual sales of approximately \$87 billion during 2008, a decrease of approximately 2% compared to 2007. According to industry analysts and observers, the annual rate of sales growth for the segment has been gradually decreasing since 2004 as a result of some shift of share to more innovative quick-service and fast casual restaurant concepts and other food-away-from-home retailers, as well as a leveling off of certain favorable demographic trends (the number of two wage-earner households, etc.). We believe that, in addition to these factors, the segment has suffered from low levels of innovation and a general reduction in the overall quality and differentiation of many of the larger, more mature casual dining chains that collectively operate several thousand commoditized restaurants. We believe that the BJs restaurant concept offers consumers a higher quality, more contemporary and approachable casual-plus dining experience with higher energy and relevance for about the same amount of money.

Accordingly, our primary business objective is to continue our national expansion program and capture additional market share in the segment over time by consistently delivering the BJs dining experience at the BJs Gold Standard of Operational Excellence (i.e., by providing a genuine commitment to passionately connect with every guest, on every visit, through flawless and relentless execution of every detail during every shift). We believe that by delivering upon this commitment to our guests, we should have the best opportunity to generate significant repeat business and capture additional market share in the varied menu or grill and bar segment of casual dining. To achieve these objectives, we plan to focus primarily on the development of additional BJs Restaurant & Brewhouse format restaurants in new and existing markets in a carefully controlled manner.

Table of Contents

Our signature menu offering is our deep-dish pizza, which has been highly acclaimed since it was originally developed in 1978. Approximately 17% of our total restaurant sales in 2008 consisted of deep-dish pizza. Our unique version of deep-dish pizza is unusually light, with a crispy, flavorful, bakery-type crust, which we believe has a broader appeal than many other versions of deep-dish pizza. Our pizza is topped with high-quality meats, fresh vegetables and a blend of five cheeses. In the past, BJ's pizza has been awarded "best pizza" honors by restaurant critics and public opinion polls in Orange County, California, where the BJ's concept originated.

In addition to our deep-dish pizza, we have a broad menu with approximately 100 items featuring appetizers, specialty salads, soups, pastas, sandwiches, entrees and desserts. Examples of our other menu offerings include Santa Fe Spring Rolls, BBQ Chicken Chopped Salad, Blackened New York Steak, Cajun Pasta, Halibut Fish Tacos, Balsamic Glazed Chicken and our famous BJ's Pizooki® dessert. All of our menu items are prepared to order using high-quality ingredients. This broad menu is an important factor in our differentiation from the other casual dining competitors. Our extensive menu and moderate pricing allow BJ's to appeal to a variety of guests and dining occasions, including everyday lunch and dinner, special occasions, and late night business.

Our large, flexible kitchens allow us to adapt to changing consumer tastes and trends. Generally, we evaluate our menu offerings and prices twice a year, and we may add, delete or modify certain menu offerings. All prospective menu offerings are initially evaluated by our internal menu development team and then tested in selected restaurants before any company-wide roll-out to our restaurant locations.

All of our restaurants feature our award-winning, handcrafted beers, which we believe not only differentiate us from many other restaurant concepts, but enhance our desire to provide quality and uniqueness to our guests in everything we do. Approximately 11% of our total restaurant sales in 2008 consisted of our proprietary handcrafted beers. Generally, we offer seven standard beers along with a rotating selection of seasonal handcrafted specialty beers. We also offer guest domestic and imported craft beers on our draft beer taps, as well as a wide selection of bottled Belgian beers. During 2008, the majority of our beers were produced at our in-house breweries located in our BJ's Restaurant & Brewery locations, and then distributed to our other locations in a hub and spoke fashion. We also have contract brewing arrangements with qualified, third-party craft brewers to produce our handcrafted beers under our proprietary recipes. During 2008, our in-house breweries produced approximately 33,000 barrels of beer, and contract brewers produced approximately 13,000 barrels of beer for distribution to our restaurants. A barrel of beer is approximately equivalent to two retail kegs of beer. Going forward, we intend to gradually shift the majority of our beer production to contract brewers. We also offer a selection of popular wines and spirits for sale in our restaurants. Alcoholic beverages, including our handcrafted beers, represented approximately 22% of our total restaurant sales in 2008.

Our principal executive offices are located at 7755 Center Avenue, Suite 300, Huntington Beach, California 92647, and our telephone number is (714) 500-2400. Our website is www.bjsrestaurants.com. The information found on our website and on websites linked to it are not incorporated into or a part of this prospectus.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

An investment in our securities involves a high degree of risk. Investors should carefully consider the risks described below before making an investment decision. Our business, financial condition or results of operations could be materially and adversely affected by any of these risks. The trading price or value of our securities could decline due to any of these risks, and investors may lose all or part of your investment.

Continued deterioration in general economic conditions affect consumer spending and may adversely affect our revenues, operating results and liquidity.

Our country is currently experiencing weak general economic conditions that we believe will continue at least through 2010. The ongoing impacts of the housing crisis, high unemployment and financial market weakness may further exacerbate current economic conditions. As such, our restaurant guests may become more apprehensive about the economy and reduce their level of discretionary spending. A decrease in spending due to lower consumer discretionary income or consumer confidence in the economy could impact the frequency with which our guests choose to dine out or the amount they spend on meals while dining out, thereby decreasing our revenues and negatively affecting our operating results.

Fewer guest visits could result in lower sales for our restaurants and cause a de-leveraging of our operating profit margins. Moreover, our restaurants are primarily located near high activity areas such as regional malls, lifestyle centers, big box shopping centers and entertainment centers. We depend in large part on a high volume of visitors to these centers to attract guests to our restaurants. A decline in development or in visitors to these centers near our restaurants could negatively affect our sales. As a result, decreased cash flow generated from our established restaurants may adversely affect our ability to fund our expansion plans and therefore result in a deceleration of the number and timing of restaurant openings. There can be no assurances that government responses to the disruptions in the financial markets will restore consumer confidence, stabilize the markets or increase liquidity and the availability of credit. We believe there is also a risk that if the current negative economic conditions persist for a long period of time and become more pervasive, consumers might make long-lasting changes to their discretionary spending behavior, including dining out less frequently on a more permanent basis.

Additionally, the above factors could impose practical limits on our menu price increases. From time to time, we may announce that we intend to take price increases on selected menu items in order to offset increased operating expenses. Although we have not experienced significant consumer resistance to our past price increases, in light of the current recessionary economy we cannot provide assurance that any future menu price increases will not deter guests from visiting our restaurants, reduce the frequency of their visits or affect their purchasing decisions.

If we do not successfully expand our restaurant operations, our growth rate and results of operations would be adversely affected.

A critical factor in our future success is our ability to expand our restaurant operations successfully, which will depend in large part on our ability to open new restaurants in a profitable manner. We anticipate that our new restaurants will generally take several months or even longer to reach targeted productivity levels due to the inefficiencies typically associated with new restaurants, including lack of initial market and consumer awareness, the need to hire and train sufficient management and restaurant personnel and other factors. We cannot assure you that any restaurant we open will obtain operating results similar to those of our existing restaurants. If we are unable to open and operate new restaurants successfully, our growth rate and our results of operations would be adversely affected. Our expansion plans could also be impacted by the delay or cancellation of potential new sites by developers and landlords, which may become more common during the next couple of years as a result of the current economic environment and tight credit markets.

We intend to open new restaurants in both established and new markets. Opening new restaurants in established markets generally provides some advantages in the form of stronger levels of initial consumer awareness, trial and usage, as well as greater leverage of certain supply chain and field supervision resources. On the other hand, there is a risk that some portion of the sales of existing restaurants in the market may transfer to newly opened restaurants in the market, resulting in lower comparable restaurant sales. While we do not generally select locations for our new restaurants where we believe that a significant sales transfer will likely occur, some unexpected sales transfer may inadvertently occur.

Table of Contents

Some of our new restaurants are planned for new markets where we have little or no operating experience. New markets may have different competitive conditions, consumer tastes and discretionary spending patterns than our existing markets. As a result, new restaurants in those markets may be less successful than restaurants in our existing markets. Consumers in a new market will typically not be familiar with the BJ's brand. We also may find it more difficult to hire, motivate and retain qualified employees in new markets. Restaurants opened in new markets may also have lower average restaurant sales than restaurants opened in our existing markets, and may have higher construction, occupancy or operating costs than restaurants in existing markets. Sales at restaurants opened in new markets may take longer to achieve margins more typical of mature restaurants in existing markets or may never achieve these targeted margins thereby affecting our overall profitability. As we expand into new markets and geographic territories, our operating cost structures may not replicate our experience in existing markets. Because there will initially be fewer restaurants in a given market, our ability to optimally leverage our field supervision, marketing and supply chain resources will be limited for a period of time. Further, our overall new restaurant development and operating costs may increase due to more lengthy geographic distances between restaurants resulting in higher purchasing, preopening, labor, transportation and supervision costs. The performance of restaurants in new markets will often be less predictable. New restaurants may not have similar results as our existing restaurants and may not be as profitable.

Our ability to open new restaurants on schedule in accordance with our projected growth rate may be adversely affected by delays or problems associated with securing suitable restaurant locations and leases and by other factors, some of which are beyond our control and the timing of which is difficult to forecast accurately.

In order to achieve our projected rate of new restaurant growth, we must identify suitable restaurant locations and successfully negotiate and finalize the terms of restaurant leases at a number of these locations. Due in part to the unique nature of each proposed restaurant location, we cannot predict the timing or ultimate success of our site selection process or these lease negotiations. Delays encountered in negotiating, or our inability to finalize to our satisfaction, the terms of a restaurant lease may delay our actual rate of new restaurant growth and cause a significant variance from our projected growth rate. In addition, our scheduled rate of new restaurant openings may be adversely affected by other factors, some of which are beyond our control, including the following:

the availability and cost of suitable restaurant locations for development;

our ability to compete successfully for suitable restaurant locations;

the availability of adequate financing;

the timing of delivery of leased premises from our landlords so we can commence our build-out construction activities;

construction and development costs;

any labor shortages or disputes experienced by our landlords or outside contractors;

any unforeseen engineering or environmental problems with the leased premises;

our ability to hire, train and retain additional management and restaurant personnel;

our ability to secure governmental approvals and permits, including liquor licenses;

Table of Contents

our ability to successfully promote our new restaurants and compete in the markets in which our new restaurants are located;

weather conditions or natural disasters; and

general economic conditions.

Access to sources of capital and our ability to raise capital in the future may be limited, which could adversely affect our business.

Our ability to continue to successfully grow our business depends, in part, on the availability of adequate capital to finance the development of additional new restaurants and other growth-related expenses. Changes in our operating plans, acceleration of our expansion plans, lower than anticipated revenues, unanticipated and/or uncontrollable events in the capital or credit markets that impact our liquidity, lower than anticipated tenant improvement allowances offered by landlords, increased expenses or other events may cause us to seek additional debt or equity financing on an accelerated basis in the event our cash flow from operations is insufficient. Financing may not be available on acceptable terms, or at all, and our failure to raise capital when needed could adversely affect our growth and other plans as well as our financial condition. Additional equity financing, if available, may be dilutive to the holders of our common stock. Debt financing, if available, may involve significant cash payment obligations, covenants and financial ratios that restrict our ability to operate and grow our business, and would cause us to incur additional interest expense and financing costs. In addition, continued disruptions in the global credit and equity markets, including unanticipated and/or uncontrollable events in the capital or credit markets, may have an adverse effect on our liquidity and our ability to raise additional capital if and when required.

Continued deterioration in general economic conditions could have a material adverse impact on our landlords or on businesses neighboring our locations, which could adversely affect our business.

Continued deterioration in general economic conditions could result in our landlords being unable to obtain financing or remain in good standing under their existing financing arrangements which could result in their failure to satisfy obligations to us under leases. Any such failure could adversely impact our operations. In addition, our restaurants are generally located in retail developments with nationally recognized co-tenants, which help increase overall guest traffic into those retail developments. If these developments experience high vacancy rates, we could experience decreases in guest traffic. As a result, our results of operations could be adversely affected.

Any failure of our existing or new restaurants to achieve expected results could have a negative impact on our consolidated sales and financial results, including a potential impairment of the long-lived assets of certain restaurants.

As of December 29, 2009, 38 of our 82 restaurants were opened within the last three fiscal years. The results achieved by these newer restaurants may not be indicative of longer term performance or the potential market acceptance of restaurants in other locations. There can be no assurance that any new restaurant that we open will have similar operating results to those of prior restaurants. Our newer restaurants typically take several months to reach targeted levels of productivity due to inefficiencies typically associated with new restaurants. Accordingly, incremental sales from newly-opened restaurants generally do not make a significant contribution to our total operating profits in their initial months of operation. Any failure of our existing or new restaurants to perform as expected could have a significant negative impact on our results of operations, and we may be required to record related asset impairment charges.

Our growth may strain our infrastructure and resources, which could slow our development of new restaurants and adversely affect our ability to manage our existing restaurants.

We plan to continue the pace of new restaurant openings and currently expect to open 10 to 11 new restaurants during 2010. This expansion and our future growth will increase demands on our management team, restaurant management systems and

Table of Contents

resources, financial controls and information systems. These increased demands may adversely affect our ability to open new restaurants and to manage our existing restaurants. If we fail to continue to improve our infrastructure or to manage other factors necessary for us to meet our expansion objectives, our growth rate and operating results could be adversely affected.

Our decision to reduce openings or accelerate the pace of openings may positively or adversely affect our comparative financial performance.

In 2009 we decided to open 10 new restaurants compared to 15 new restaurants in 2008. As a result of our decision to reduce the number of restaurant openings in 2009, our comparable opening costs will be lower and the affect on our comparative financial performance will be favorable over the next few quarters and for 2009 in the aggregate. Conversely, if the rate at which we develop and open new restaurants is increased to higher levels in the future, the resulting increase in opening costs will have an unfavorable affect on our comparative financial performance.

Our trends in average restaurant sales or our trends in comparable restaurant sales are not indicative of future trends or future operating results.

Our average restaurant sales and comparable restaurant sales may not continue to increase at the rates achieved over the past several years and may even decline, particularly due to the current economic downturn. Our ability to operate new restaurants profitably and increase average restaurant sales and comparable restaurant sales will depend on many factors, some of which are beyond our control, including:

our ability to execute our business strategy effectively;

our menu pricing strategy;

initial sales performance by new restaurants;

the timing of new restaurant openings and related expenses;

changing demographics, consumer tastes or discretionary spending;

our ability to develop restaurants in geographic locations that do not compete with or otherwise adversely affect the sales of our existing restaurants;

overall brand awareness in new markets or existing markets where we may develop new restaurants;

levels of competition in one or more of our markets; and

general economic conditions, credit markets and consumer confidence.

Adverse changes in our average restaurant revenues and comparable restaurant sales could have an adverse affect on our common stock or increase the volatility of the price of our common stock.

We have experienced significant increases in the costs for certain food, labor energy and supply items in the past, and we may be unable to successfully and sufficiently raise menu prices to offset rising costs and expenses.

Edgar Filing: BJ's RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

In the past, we have experienced dramatic increases in prices of certain commodities necessary for our restaurant and brewery operations, including increased costs for food, commodities, minimum wage, employee benefits, insurance arrangements, construction, energy and other costs. To manage this risk in part, we attempt to enter into fixed price purchase commitments, with terms typically up to one year, for many of our commodity requirements. However, it may not be possible for us to enter into as many

Table of Contents

fixed price contracts for the entire year for many of our food commodity requirements due to the recent volatility in the worldwide markets for such commodities. Additionally, we utilize menu price increases to help offset the increased cost of our commodities. However, there is no guarantee that our menu price increases will be accepted by our guests. If our costs do not stabilize, our results of operations will be adversely affected if we are unable to increase our menu prices to offset such increased costs.

Our future operating results may fluctuate significantly due to our relatively small number of existing restaurants and the expenses required to open new restaurants.

As of December 29, 2009, we operated 92 restaurants, 15 of which opened during 2008 and 10 of which opened during 2009. The capital resources required to develop each new restaurant are significant. We estimate that the gross cash outlay to open a new BJ's restaurant on leased ground, excluding any tenant allowance for which we may or may not obtain depending on each new restaurant project, currently ranges from \$4.0 million to \$5.5 million, inclusive of preopening expenses (which average approximately \$500,000 to \$550,000, including preopening rent). Actual costs may vary significantly depending upon a variety of factors, including the site, type of restaurant (brewery compared to brewhouse) and conditions in the local real estate and employment markets. The combination of our relatively small number of existing restaurants, the significant investment associated with each new restaurant and the average restaurant revenues of our new restaurants may cause our results of operations to fluctuate significantly. Moreover, poor operating results at any one restaurant or a delay or cancellation in the planned opening of a restaurant could adversely affect our entire business, making the investment risks related to any one location much greater than those associated with many other restaurants.

Our inability to renew existing leases on favorable terms may adversely affect our results of operations.

As of December 29, 2009 88 of our 92 restaurants are located on leased premises and are subject to varying lease-specific arrangements. For example, some of the leases require base rent, subject to regional cost-of-living increases, and other leases include base rent with specified periodic increases. Other leases are subject to renewal at fair market value, which could involve substantial increases. Additionally, many leases require contingent rent based on a percentage of gross sales. In addition, certain of our leases will expire without an automatic renewal or option to renew. As of December 29, 2009, we have three leases that will expire in Fiscal 2010 of which two have options to extend. While we currently expect to renew substantially all of our expiring leases, no guarantee can be given that such leases will be renewed or, if renewed, that rents will not increase substantially.

The success of our restaurants depends in large part on their leased locations. As demographic and economic patterns change, current leased locations may or may not continue to be attractive or profitable. Possible declines in trade areas where our restaurants are located or adverse economic conditions in surrounding areas could result in reduced revenues in those locations. In addition, desirable leased locations for new restaurant openings or for the relocation of existing restaurants may not be available at an acceptable cost when we identify a particular opportunity for a new restaurant or relocation.

The current economic downturn may also adversely impact our operations if our suppliers are not able to continue to do business with us or are forced to alter the terms on which they do business with us.

Some of our suppliers have been adversely impacted by tightening of the credit markets, decreased economic activity, fluctuations in commodity prices and other consequences of the economic downturn. Some vendors have sought to change the terms on which they do business with us in order to lessen the impact of the economic downturn on their business. If we are forced to find alternative vendors for key services, whether due to demands from the vendor or the vendor's bankruptcy or ceasing operations, that could be a distraction to us and adversely impact our business. For example, the economic environment has forced some food suppliers to seek financing in order to stabilize their businesses, and some suppliers have ceased operations completely. Additional suppliers may encounter difficulties in sustaining their business, and if any of our major suppliers or a large number of other suppliers suspend or cease operations, we may have difficulty keeping our restaurants fully supplied with the commodity and supplies that we require. If we were forced to suspend serving one or more of our menu items, that could have a significant adverse impact on our restaurant traffic and public perceptions of us, which would be harmful to our operations.

Table of Contents

A significant number of our restaurants are concentrated in California and other Western states, which make us particularly sensitive to economic, regulatory, weather and other conditions in those states.

As of December 29, 2009, 49 of our 92 restaurants were located in the state of California. Additionally, another 15 of our restaurants were located in other Western states (i.e., Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, Oregon and Washington). In recent years, all of these states have been more negatively impacted by the housing downturn and the overall economic slowdown than most other geographic areas. As a result, we have recently seen a more substantial decline in our aggregate guest traffic at our restaurants in these states. If our restaurants in California are adversely affected by changes in California's economic or regulatory environment, such as changes to California's minimum wage rates, mandatory healthcare proposals, unemployment levels or housing environment, our consolidated sales, financial condition and results of operations may be further impacted. Additionally, we believe that California is subject to a greater risk for earthquakes, fires, water shortages and other natural and man-made disasters than most other states.

We are dependent upon consumer trends and upon high levels of consumer traffic at the sites where our restaurants are located, and any adverse change in such consumer trends or traffic levels could adversely affect our business, revenues and results of operations.

Due to the nature of the restaurant industry, we are dependent upon consumer trends with respect to the public's tastes, eating habits, public perception toward alcohol consumption and discretionary spending priorities, all of which can shift rapidly. We also are dependent upon high consumer traffic rates at the sites surrounding our restaurants, which are primarily located in high-activity areas such as urban, retail, mixed-use and lifestyle centers, to attract guests to our restaurants. In general, such consumer trends and visit frequencies are significantly affected by many factors, including: national, regional or local economic conditions, changes in area demographics, public perception and attitudes, increases in regional competition, food, liquor and labor costs, traffic and shopping patterns, weather, natural disasters, interest rates, co-tenancies in these urban, retail and mixed use lifestyle centers and the availability and relative cost of gasoline. Our success will depend, in part, on our ability to anticipate and respond to such changing consumer preferences, tastes, eating and purchasing habits, as well as other factors affecting the restaurant industry, including new market entrants and demographic changes. Any adverse change in any of the above factors and our inability to respond to such changes could cause our restaurant volumes to decline and adversely affect our business, revenues and results of operations.

Our success depends on our ability to compete effectively in the restaurant industry.

The restaurant industry is highly competitive. We compete on the basis of the taste, quality and price of food offered, guest service, brand name identification, beer quality and selection, attractiveness of the facilities, restaurant location, atmosphere and overall dining experience. Our competitors include a large and diverse group of restaurant chains and individual restaurants that range from independent local operators that have opened restaurants in various markets to well-capitalized national restaurant companies. In addition, we compete with other restaurants and with retail establishments for real estate. Many of our competitors have substantially greater financial, marketing and other resources than we do.

New information or attitudes regarding diet, health and the consumption of alcoholic beverages could result in changes in regulations and consumer consumption habits that could adversely affect our results of operations.

Regulations and consumer eating habits may change as a result of new information or attitudes regarding diet and health. Such changes may include regulations that impact the ingredients and nutritional content of the food and beverages offered by us. For example, the New York City Board of Health has approved restrictions on the use of trans-fats by restaurants. The success of our restaurant operations is dependent, in part, upon our ability to effectively respond to changes in any consumer health regulations and our ability to adapt our menu offerings to trends in food consumption. If consumer health regulations or consumer eating habits change significantly, we may be required to modify or delete certain menu items. To the extent we are unable to respond with appropriate changes to our menu offerings, it could materially affect customer demand and have an adverse impact on our results of operations.

Table of Contents

Over the past several years alcoholic beverages have comprised approximately 20% or more of our restaurant sales. The gross profit margin on our sales of alcoholic beverages is generally higher than our gross profit margin on sales of food items. Additionally, approximately 11% of our sales over the last several years have consisted of our craft beers. The alcoholic beverage industry has become the subject of considerable societal and political attention in recent years due to increasing public concern over alcohol-related social problems, including drunk driving, underage drinking and health consequences from the misuse of alcohol, including alcoholism. As an outgrowth of these concerns, the possibility exists that advertising by beer producers could be restricted, that additional cautionary labeling or packaging requirements might be imposed, that further restrictions on the sale of alcohol might be imposed, or that there may be renewed efforts to impose increased excise or other taxes on beer sold in the United States. If beer consumption in general were to come into disfavor among domestic drinkers, or if the domestic beer industry were subjected to significant additional governmental regulations, our sales and profits could be adversely affected.

Negative publicity surrounding our restaurants or the consumption of beef, seafood, poultry/produce, beer or alcoholic beverages generally could adversely affect the reputation and popularity of our restaurants, our revenues and our results of operations.

The good reputation of our restaurants is a key factor to the success of our business. Incidents that occur at any of our restaurants may quickly result in negative publicity for us, which could adversely affect our reputation and popularity with our guests. In addition, negative publicity resulting from poor food quality, illness, injury, food tampering or other health concerns, whether related to one of our restaurants, to the restaurant industry in general, or to the beef, seafood, poultry or produce industries in general (such as negative publicity concerning the accumulation of carcinogens in seafood; e-coli; hepatitis A; avian flu; salmonella; and other food-borne illnesses), or operating problems related to one or more of our restaurants, could adversely affect sales for all of our restaurants and make our brand and menu offerings less appealing to consumers. If our restaurant guests or employees become ill from food-borne illnesses, we could be forced to temporarily close the affected restaurants.

Our brewing operations are subject to certain hazards and liability risks faced by all brewers, such as potential contamination of ingredients or products by bacteria or other external agents that may be wrongfully or accidentally introduced into products or packaging. While we have not experienced any serious contamination problem in our products, the occurrence of such a problem could result in a costly product recall and serious damage to our reputation for product quality, as well as claims for product liability.

Our operations are susceptible to changes in our food and supply costs, which could adversely affect our margins.

Our profitability depends, in part, on our ability to anticipate and react to changes in food and supply costs. Our supply chain department negotiates prices for all of our ingredients and supplies through either contracts (terms of one month up to one year), spot market purchases or commodity pricing formulas. Furthermore, various factors beyond our control, including adverse weather conditions and governmental regulations, could also cause our food and supply costs to increase. We cannot predict whether we will be able to anticipate and react to changing food and supply costs by adjusting our purchasing practices. A failure to do so could adversely affect our operating results or cash flows from operations.

The overall cost environment for food commodities in general has and may continue to be volatile primarily due to domestic and worldwide agricultural, supply/demand and other macroeconomic factors that are outside of our control. Commodity prices for key agricultural commodities such as corn, wheat, and soybeans have been extremely volatile. The availabilities and prices of food commodities are also influenced by increased energy prices, animal-related diseases, natural disasters, increased geo-political tensions, the relationship of the dollar to other currencies, and other issues. Virtually all commodities purchased and used in the restaurant industry meats, grains, oils, dairy products, and energy have varying amounts of inherent price volatility associated with them. While we attempt to manage these factors by offering a diversified menu and by contracting for our key commodities for extended periods of time whenever feasible and possible, there can be no assurance that we will be successful in this respect due to the many factors that are outside of our control.

Table of Contents

If our distributors or suppliers do not provide food and beverages to us in a timely fashion, we may experience short-term supply shortages, increased food and beverage costs and quality control problems.

We currently depend on national and regional food distribution service companies, as well as other food manufacturers and suppliers, to provide food and beverage products to all of our restaurants. We also rely on contract brewers to provide us with beer for many of our restaurants. The operations of our distributors, suppliers and contract brewers are subject to risks including labor disputes, financial liquidity, inclement weather, natural disasters, supply constraints, and general economic and political conditions that could limit their ability to timely provide us with acceptable products. If our distributors, suppliers and contract brewers cease doing business with us, or cannot make a scheduled delivery to us, or are unable to obtain credit in a tightened credit market or experience other issues, we could experience short-term product supply shortages in some or all of our restaurants and could be required to purchase food, beer and beverage products from alternate suppliers at higher prices. We may also be forced to temporarily remove popular items from the menu offering of our restaurants. If alternative suppliers cannot meet our current product specifications, the consistency and quality of our food and beverage offerings, and thus our reputation, guest patronage, revenues and results of operations, could be adversely affected.

With respect to potential liability claims related to our food, beer and beverage products, we believe we have sufficient primary or excess umbrella liability insurance in place. However, this insurance may not continue to be available at a reasonable cost or, if available, may not be adequate to cover all claims. We generally seek contractual indemnification and insurance coverage from our key suppliers of food, beer and beverages, but this indemnification or insurance coverage is limited, as a practical matter, by the creditworthiness of the indemnifying party and the insured limits of any insurance provided by suppliers.

Pursuant to various laws and regulations, the majority of our proprietary beer must be distributed to our restaurants through independent wholesale beer distributors, whether we produce the beer or it is produced by contract brewers. Although we currently have arrangements with a sufficient number of beer distributors in all markets where we operate restaurants, our continued national expansion will require us to enter into agreements with additional beer distributors. No assurance can be given that we will be able to maintain or secure additional beer distributors on terms favorable to us. Changes in control or ownership of the participants in our current beer distribution network could lead to less willingness on the part of certain distributors to carry our proprietary beer. Our beer distribution agreements are generally terminable by the distributor on short notice. While these beer distribution agreements contain provisions regarding our enforcement and termination rights, some state laws prohibit us from readily exercising these contractual rights. Our ability to maintain our existing beer distribution agreements may be adversely affected by the fact that many of our distributors are reliant on one of the major beer producers for a large percentage of their revenue and, therefore, they may be influenced by such producers. If our existing beer distribution agreements are terminated, we may not be able to enter into new distribution agreements on substantially similar terms, which may result in an increase in the delivered cost of beer to our restaurants.

Failure to protect our trademarks, service marks, trade secrets or other intellectual property could adversely affect our business.

Our business prospects depend in part on our ability to develop favorable consumer recognition of our brands, including the BJs Restaurants name in particular. Although BJs is a federally registered trademark, there are other retailers and restaurants using the name BJs in some form or fashion throughout the United States, and our trademarks, service marks, trade dress, trade secrets or other intellectual property could be imitated or appropriated in ways that we cannot prevent. Alternatively, third parties may attempt to cause us to change our trademarks, service marks or trade dress or not operate in a certain geographic region or regions if our names are deemed confusingly similar to their prior trademarks, service marks or trade dress. We may also encounter claims from prior users of similar intellectual property in areas where we operate or intend to conduct operations. This could harm our image, brand or competitive position and cause us to incur significant penalties and costs. In addition, we rely on trade secrets, proprietary know-how, concepts and recipes. Our methods of protecting this information may not be adequate. Moreover, we may face claims of

Table of Contents

misappropriation or infringement of third parties' rights that could interfere with our use of this information. Defending these claims may be costly and, if unsuccessful, may prevent us from continuing to use this proprietary information in the future and may result in a judgment or monetary damages. We do not maintain confidentiality and non-competition agreements with all of our employees or suppliers. Moreover, even with respect to the confidentiality and non-competition agreements we have, we cannot assure you that those agreements will not be breached, that they will provide meaningful protection or that adequate remedies will be available in the event of an unauthorized use or disclosure of our proprietary information. If competitors independently develop or otherwise obtain access to our trade secrets, proprietary know-how or recipes, the appeal of our restaurants could be reduced and our business could be harmed.

Federal, state and local beer, liquor and food service regulations may have a significant adverse impact on our operations.

We are required to operate in compliance with federal laws and regulations relating to alcoholic beverages administered by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau of the U.S. Department of Treasury, as well as the laws and licensing requirements for alcoholic beverages of states and municipalities where our restaurants are or will be located. In addition, each restaurant must obtain a food service license from local authorities. Failure to comply with federal, state or local regulations could cause our licenses to be revoked and force us to cease the brewing or sale of alcoholic beverages, or both, at our restaurants or the serving of food. Additionally, state liquor laws may prevent or impede the expansion of our restaurants into certain markets. The liquor laws of certain states prevent us from selling at wholesale the beer brewed at our restaurants. Any difficulties, delays or failures in obtaining such licenses, permits or approvals could delay or prevent the opening of a restaurant in a particular area or increase the costs associated therewith. In addition, in certain states, including states where we have existing restaurants or where we plan to open a restaurant, the number of liquor licenses available is limited, and licenses are traded on the open market. Liquor, beer and wine sales comprise a significant portion of our revenues. If we are unable to maintain our existing licenses, our guest patronage, revenues and results of operations could be adversely affected. Or, if we choose to open a restaurant in those states where the number of licenses available is limited, the cost of a new license could be significant.

Brewery operations require various federal, state, and local licenses, permits and approvals. Our restaurants and on-site breweries operate pursuant to exceptions to the tied house laws, which created the three tier system of liquor distribution. These tied house laws were adopted by all of the states after the repeal of prohibition and, generally, prohibit brewers from holding retail licenses and prohibit vertical integration in ownership and control among the three tiers. Brewery restaurants and brewpubs operate under exceptions to these general prohibitions. Over the last 25 years, nearly all of the states have adopted laws and regulations permitting brewery restaurants and brewpubs; however, the privileges and restrictions for brewpubs and brewery restaurants vary from state to state. Generally, our brewery restaurants are licensed as retailers with limited privileges to brew beer on the restaurant premises, and we do not have the same privileges as a microbrewery. Other restrictions imposed by law may prevent us from operating both brewery restaurants and non-brewery restaurants in some states. We are at risk that a state's regulations concerning brewery restaurants or the interpretation of these regulations may change. Because of the many and various state and federal licensing and permitting requirements, there is a risk that one or more regulatory agencies could determine that we have not complied with applicable licensing or permitting regulations or have not maintained the approvals necessary for us to conduct business within its jurisdiction. Any such change may adversely impact our current model of brewing beer or supplying beer, or both, to our restaurants in that state, and could also cause us to lose the licenses, permits and registrations necessary to conduct our restaurant operations. We apply for our liquor and brewing licenses with the advice of outside legal and licensing consultants. Even after the issuance of these licenses, our operations could be subject to differing interpretations of the tied house laws and the requirements of the three tier system of liquor distribution in any jurisdiction that we conduct business.

The manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages is a highly regulated and taxed business. Our operations are subject to more restrictive regulations and increased taxation by federal, state, and local governmental entities than are those of non-alcohol related beverage businesses. Federal, state, and local laws and regulations govern the production and distribution of beer, including permitting, licensing, trade practices, labeling, advertising, marketing, distributor relationships, and related matters. Federal, state, and

Table of Contents

local governmental entities also levy various taxes, license fees, and other similar charges and may require bonds to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Failure to comply with applicable federal, state, or local laws and regulations could result in higher taxes, penalties, fees, and suspension or revocation of permits, licenses or approvals. There can be no assurance that other or more restrictive laws, regulations or higher taxes will not be enacted in the future.

Our increasing dependence on contract brewers could have an adverse effect on our operations if they cease to supply us with our proprietary beer.

Our proprietary handcrafted beer is a key factor in the success of our business. Each year, our brewery operations department forecasts our annual beer requirements based on our current restaurant requirements and expansion plans and determines our brewery production. Additionally, in certain states we are either legally required or choose to arrange for third party contractors (i.e., contract brewers) to brew our beer using our proprietary recipes. During 2010, we expect to utilize three to four contract brewers to produce over half of the proprietary beer requirements for our restaurants. The remainder will be produced by our in-house brewery operations. We intend to gradually increase the percentage of beer produced by contract brewers over time, based on demonstrated qualitative and economic advantages of doing so. However, there are risks associated with increasing our dependence on contract brewers. If our contract brewers cease doing business with us, or cannot make a scheduled delivery to us because of a supply chain or production disruption or other issues, or if we cannot otherwise satisfy our internal brewing requirements, we could experience short-term supply shortages in some or all of our restaurants which may result in a loss of revenue. Additionally, if these contract brewers cease doing business with us we could be required to purchase or brew our own beer at higher costs to us until we are able to secure an alternative supply source. If our contract brewers fail to adhere to our proprietary recipe and brewing specifications, the consistency and quality of beer offerings, and thus our reputation, guest patronage, revenues and results of operations, could be adversely affected.

From time to time, we or our contract brewers may also experience shortages of kegs necessary to distribute our draft beer. We distribute our draft beer in kegs that are owned by us as well as leased from third-party vendors. We are also responsible for providing kegs to the contract brewers that produce our proprietary beers.

Other government laws and regulations affecting the operation of our restaurants, particularly those that apply to the acquisition and maintenance of our brewing and retail liquor licenses, could increase our operating costs and restrict our growth.

Our development and construction of additional restaurants must comply with applicable zoning, land use and environmental regulations. More stringent and varied requirements of local government bodies with respect to zoning, land use and environmental factors could delay construction of new restaurants and add to their cost in the future. In addition, difficulties or failure in obtaining the required licenses and approvals could delay, or result in our decision to cancel, the opening of new restaurants.

In addition, various federal and state labor laws govern our relationship with our employees and affect our operating costs. These laws include minimum wage requirements, overtime pay, meal and rest breaks, unemployment tax rates, workers' compensation rates, citizenship requirements and other employment taxes. Changes to these aforementioned laws or other employment laws or regulations, could adversely affect our operating results and thus restrict our growth, including additional government-imposed increases in minimum wages, overtime pay, paid leaves of absence, mandated health benefits, increased tax reporting and tax payment requirements for employees who receive gratuities, a reduction in the number of states that allow tips to be credited toward minimum wage requirements and increased employee litigation, including claims relating to the Fair Labor Standards Act.

In addition, some states in which we operate have adopted immigration employment protection laws. Even if we operate our restaurants in strict compliance with BCIS and state requirements, some of our employees may not meet federal citizenship or residency requirements, which could lead to a disruption in our work force. Various proposals that would require employers to provide health insurance for all of their employees are considered from time to time in Congress and various states and municipalities. The imposition of any requirement that we provide health insurance benefits to employees that are more extensive

Table of Contents

than the health insurance benefits we currently provide could have an adverse effect on our results of operations and financial position, as well as the restaurant industry in general. Our suppliers may also be affected by higher minimum wage and benefit standards, which could result in higher costs for goods and services supplied to us.

Additionally, some states, counties and cities have enacted menu labeling laws and there is current discussion regarding a national menu labeling law. These laws require us to provide certain nutritional information to our guests. Non-compliance with these laws could result in the imposition of fines or the closure of restaurants. These menu labeling laws could also result in changing consumer preferences which may adversely affect our results of operations and financial position. We may not be able to adequately adapt our menu offerings to keep pace with developments in current consumer preferences related to nutrition, which may adversely impact our sales.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in public accommodations and employment. Although our restaurants are designed to be accessible to the disabled, we could be required to make modifications to our restaurants to provide service to, or make reasonable accommodations for, disabled persons. Non-compliance with this law and related laws enacted at the state or local level could result in the imposition of fines or an award of damages to private litigants.

Limitations in our insurance coverage or rising insurance costs could adversely affect our business or financial condition in certain circumstances.

We purchase comprehensive insurance coverage, including workers compensation, general liability, directors and officers liability, employment practices, fire and extended coverage and property insurance with coverage levels that we consider appropriate, based on the advice of our outside insurance and risk management advisors. However, such insurance is subject to limitations, including deductibles, exclusions and maximum liabilities covered. The cost of workers compensation insurance, general liability insurance and directors and officers liability insurance fluctuates based on market conditions and availability as well as our historical trends. Moreover, there are certain types of losses that may be uninsurable or not economically insurable. Such hazards may include earthquake, hurricane and flood losses and certain employee practices. If such a loss should occur, we would, to the extent that we were not covered for such loss by insurance, suffer a loss of the capital invested, as well as anticipated profits and cash flow from such damaged or destroyed properties. Punitive damage awards are generally not covered by insurance; thus, any awards of punitive damages as to which we may be liable could adversely affect our ability to continue to conduct our business, to expand our operations or to develop additional restaurants. There is no assurance that any insurance coverage we maintain will be adequate, that we can continue to obtain and maintain such insurance at all or that the premium costs will not rise to an extent that they adversely affect us or our ability to economically obtain or maintain such insurance. We self-insure a substantial portion of our workers compensation and general liability costs and unfavorable changes in trends could have a negative impact on our profitability. Additionally, health insurance costs in general have risen significantly over the past few years and are expected to continue to increase. These increases, as well as potential federal and state legislation requirements for employers to provide health insurance to employees, could have a negative impact on our profitability if we are not able to offset the effect of such increases with plan modifications and cost control measures, or by continuing to improve our operating efficiencies.

Labor shortages or increases in labor costs could slow our growth or adversely affect our business.

Our success depends in part on our ability to attract, motivate and retain a sufficient number of qualified employees, including restaurant managers and kitchen managers, necessary to continue our operations and keep pace with our growth. If we are unable to recruit and retain a sufficient number of qualified restaurant managers, our business and our growth could be adversely affected. Competition for qualified restaurant managers and other restaurant employees remain intense and could require us to pay higher wages and benefits, which would result in higher labor costs. In addition, we have a substantial number of hourly employees who are paid the federal or state minimum wage and who rely on tips for a significant portion of their income. Government-mandated increases in minimum wages or decreases in tip credits would increase our labor costs. We may be unable to increase our prices in order to pass these increased labor costs on to our guests, in which case our profitability would be adversely affected.

Table of Contents

Litigation could have a material adverse effect on our business.

Our business is subject to the risk of litigation by employees, consumers, suppliers, shareholders or others through private actions, class actions, administrative proceedings, regulatory actions or other litigation. The outcome of litigation, particularly class action lawsuits and regulatory actions, is difficult to assess or quantify. Plaintiffs in these types of lawsuits may seek recovery of very large or indeterminate amounts, and the magnitude of the potential loss relating to such lawsuits may remain unknown for substantial periods of time. In addition, we are subject to state dram shop laws and regulations, which generally provide that a person injured by an intoxicated person may seek to recover damages from an establishment that wrongfully served alcoholic beverages to the intoxicated person. Recent litigation against restaurant chains has resulted in significant judgments, including punitive damages, under such dram shop statutes. While we carry liquor liability coverage as part of our existing comprehensive general liability insurance, we may still be subject to a judgment in excess of our insurance coverage, and we may not be able to obtain or continue to maintain such insurance coverage at reasonable costs, if at all. Regardless of whether any claims against us are valid or whether we are liable, we may be adversely affected by publicity resulting from such claims. We also are subject to claims and disputes from landlords under our leases, which could lead to litigation or a threatened or actual lease termination. Litigation of any nature may be expensive to defend and may divert money and management's attention from our operations and adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations.

The occurrence or threat of extraordinary events, including terrorist attacks, could cause consumer spending to decline, which would adversely affect our sales and results of operations.

The occurrence or threat of extraordinary events, including future terrorist attacks and military and governmental responses and the prospect of future wars, may result in negative changes to economic conditions. Additionally, decreases in consumer discretionary spending could impact the frequency with which our guests choose to dine out or the amount they spend on meals while dining out, thereby adversely affecting our sales and results of operations. A decrease in consumer discretionary spending could also adversely affect our ability to achieve the benefit of planned menu price increases to help preserve our operating margins.

Natural disasters could unfavorably affect our operations.

The occurrence of natural disasters, such as hurricanes or earthquakes, particularly in California where our centralized operating systems and home office administrative personnel are located, could unfavorably affect our operations and financial performance. Such events could result in physical damage to one or more of our restaurants; the temporary or permanent closure of one or more of our restaurants or home office; the temporary lack of an adequate work force in an affected geographical trade area; the temporary or long-term disruption in the supply of food, beverages, beer and other products to our restaurants; the temporary disruption of electric, water, sewer and waste disposal services necessary for our restaurants to operate; and/or, the temporary reduction in the availability of certain products in our restaurants.

Future changes in financial accounting standards may cause adverse unexpected operating results and affect our reported results of operations.

A change in accounting standards can have a significant effect on our reported results and may affect our reporting of transactions before the change is effective. New pronouncements and varying interpretations of pronouncements have occurred and may occur in the future. Changes to existing accounting rules or the questioning of current accounting practices may adversely affect our reported financial results. Additionally, our assumptions, estimates and judgments related to complex accounting matters could significantly affect our financial results. Generally accepted accounting principles and related accounting pronouncements, implementation guidelines and interpretations with regard to a wide range of matters that are relevant to our business, including but not limited to, revenue recognition, fair value of investments, impairment of long-lived assets, leases and related economic transactions, self-insurance, income taxes, property and equipment, unclaimed property laws and litigation, and stock-based

Table of Contents

compensation are highly complex and involve many subjective assumptions, estimates and judgments by us. Changes in these rules or their interpretation or changes in underlying assumptions, estimates or judgments by us could significantly change our reported or expected financial performance.

The market price of our common stock could be subject to significant fluctuations. Among the factors that could affect our stock price are:

actual or anticipated variations in comparable restaurant sales or operating results, whether in our operations or in those of our competitors;

changes in financial estimates by research analysts;

actual or anticipated changes in economic, political or market conditions, such as recessions or international currency fluctuations;

changes in the consumer spending environment;

changes in the market valuations of other restaurant companies;

announcements by us or our competitors of significant acquisitions, strategic partnerships, divestitures, joint ventures or other strategic initiatives;

a loss of a key member of management; and

changes in the costs or availabilities of key inputs to our operations.

In addition, we cannot assure you that an active trading market for our common stock will continue which could affect our stock price and the liquidity of any investment in our common stock.

The stock markets in general have experienced substantial volatility that has often been unrelated to the operating performance of individual companies. These broad market fluctuations may adversely affect the trading price of our common stock.

In the past, following periods of volatility in the market price of a company's securities, shareholders have often instituted class action securities litigation against those companies. Such litigation, if instituted, could result in substantial costs and a diversion of management attention and resources, which would significantly harm our profitability and reputation.

Failure to establish, maintain and apply adequate internal control over our financial reporting could affect our reported results of operations.

We are subject to the ongoing internal control provisions of Section 404 of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. These provisions provide for the identification of material weaknesses in internal control over financial reporting, which is a process to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting for external purposes in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States. Because of its inherent limitations, internal control over financial reporting is not intended to provide absolute assurance that a misstatement of our financial statements would be prevented or detected. Should we identify a material weakness in internal controls, there can be no assurance that we will be able to remediate any future material weaknesses that may be identified in a timely manner or maintain all of the controls necessary to remain in compliance. Any failure to maintain an effective system of internal controls over financial reporting could limit our ability to report our financial results accurately and timely or to detect and prevent fraud.

We are heavily dependent on information technology and any material failure of that technology could impair our ability to efficiently operate our business.

Table of Contents

We rely heavily on electronic information systems in all aspects of our operations, including (but not limited to) point-of-sale transaction processing in our restaurants; efficient operation of our restaurant kitchens; management of our inventories and overall supply chain; collection of cash; payment of payroll and other obligations; and various other processes and procedures. Our ability to efficiently manage our business depends significantly on the reliability and capacity of our in-house information systems and those technology services and systems that we contract for from third parties. Our electronic information systems, including our back-up systems, are subject to damage or interruption from power outages, computer and telecommunications failures, computer viruses, internal or external security breaches, catastrophic events such as fires, earthquakes, tornadoes and hurricanes, and/or errors by our employees. The failure of any of these systems to operate effectively, any problems with their maintenance, any issues with upgrades or transitions to replacement systems, or any breaches in data security could cause material interruptions to our operations. While we have invested and continue to invest in technology security initiatives and disaster recovery plans, these measures cannot fully insulate us from technology disruption that could result in adverse effects on operations and profits. Significant capital investments might be required to remediate any problems, infringements, misappropriations or other third party claims.

We may incur costs resulting from security risks we face in connection with our electronic processing and transmission of confidential customer information.

We accept electronic payment cards from our guests for payment in our restaurants. During 2008, approximately 70% of our sales were attributable to credit/debit card transactions, and credit/debit card usage could continue to increase. A number of restaurant operators and retailers have experienced actual or potential security breaches in which credit and debit card information may have been stolen. While we have taken reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of security breaches in this respect, we may in the future become subject to claims for purportedly fraudulent transactions arising out of the actual or alleged theft of credit or debit card information, and we may also be subject to lawsuits or other proceedings in the future relating to these types of incidents. Proceedings related to theft of credit or debit card information may be brought by payment card providers, banks and credit unions that issue cards, cardholders (either individually or as part of a class action lawsuit) and federal and state regulators. Any such proceedings could distract our management from running our business and cause us to incur significant unplanned losses and expenses. Consumer perception of our brand could also be negatively affected by these events, which could further adversely affect our results and prospects. Additionally, privacy and information security laws and regulations change over time, and compliance with those changes may result in cost increases due to necessary systems changes and the development of new administrative processes.

Our federal, state and local tax returns may, from time to time, be selected for audit by the taxing authorities, which may result in tax assessments or penalties that could have a material adverse impact on our results of operations and financial position.

We are subject to federal, state and local taxes. Significant judgment is required in determining the provision for income taxes. Although we believe our tax estimates are reasonable, if the IRS or other taxing authority disagrees with the positions we have taken on our tax returns, we could have additional tax liability, including interest and penalties. If material, payment of such additional amounts, upon final adjudication of any disputes, could have a material impact on our results of operations and financial position.

An increase in beer excise taxes could adversely affect our financial results.

The federal government and all of the states levy excise taxes on beer and hard cider. For brewers producing no more than 2.0 million barrels of malt beverages per calendar year, the federal excise tax is \$7.00 per barrel on the first 60,000 barrels of malt beverages removed for consumption or sale during a calendar year, and \$18.00 per barrel for each barrel in excess of 60,000. For brewers producing more than 2.0 million barrels of malt beverages for domestic consumption in a calendar year, the federal excise tax is \$18.00 per barrel for all barrels produced. Our contract brewing arrangements generally call for all such excise taxes to be reimbursed by us. Most of our contract brewers produce more than 60,000 barrels of malt beverages annually. However, we believe the increased excise tax is more than offset by other production economies of scale. Our annual internal beer production volumes have not exceeded the 60,000 barrel threshold and are not expected to do so in the future. Individual states also impose excise taxes on alcoholic beverages in varying amounts, which have also been subject to change. In addition, if federal or state excise taxes are increased, we may need to increase our selling price for beer to maintain our present profit margins, which may or may not be accepted by our restaurants guests.

Table of Contents

**CAUTIONARY STATEMENT CONCERNING
FORWARD LOOKING STATEMENTS**

Certain matters discussed in this prospectus may constitute forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act) and as such, may involve risks and uncertainties. These forward-looking statements relate to, among other things, expectations of the environment in which we operate and projections of future performance. Our actual results, performance or achievements may differ significantly from the results, performance or achievements expected or implied in such forward-looking statements.

You can identify these statements by forward-looking words such as may, will, expect, intend, anticipate, believe, estimate, continue, and similar words. You should read statements that contain these words carefully because they discuss our future expectations, make projections of our future results of operations or financial condition, or state other forward-looking information. We believe that it is important to communicate our future expectations to our investors. However, there may be events in the future that we are not able to accurately predict or control. The factors listed in the section captioned Risk Factors in this prospectus as well as any cautionary language in this prospectus, provide examples of risks, uncertainties and events that may cause our actual results to differ materially from the expectations we described in our forward-looking statements.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

Except as may be set forth in a particular prospectus supplement, we will use the net proceeds from sales of securities sold by us for general corporate purposes, which may include funding capital expenditures, pursuing growth initiatives, whether through acquisitions, joint ventures or otherwise, repaying or refinancing indebtedness or other obligations, and financing working capital. Pending the application of the net proceeds, we expect to invest the net proceeds in short-term marketable securities or reduce our short-term indebtedness. We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of any shares of common stock offered under this prospectus by the selling shareholders.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES

The following table sets forth our ratio of earnings to fixed charges for the nine months ended September 29, 2009, and for each of the last five fiscal years. For purposes of calculating the ratio of earnings to fixed charges, earnings represent income from continuing operations before income taxes plus fixed charges and amortization of capitalized interest, less interest capitalized. Fixed charges are the sum of total interest expense, including amortization of debt discount and issuance costs, interest capitalized and one-third of rent expense, which represents our estimate of the interest component of rent expense.

	Nine Months		Fiscal Year Ended			
	Ended	December 30,	January 1,	January 2,	January 3,	January 2,
	September 29,	2008	2008	2007	2006	2005
	2009					
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	4.0	3.2	4.0	4.7	4.8	3.7

As of the date of this offering, we have no preferred stock outstanding.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES WE MAY OFFER

This prospectus contains summary descriptions of our common stock, preferred stock, depositary shares, debt securities, warrants, and units that we and the selling shareholders may offer from time to time. As further described in this prospectus, these summary descriptions are not meant to be complete descriptions of each security. The particular terms of any security will be described in the accompanying prospectus supplement and other offering material. The accompanying prospectus supplement may add, update or change the terms and conditions of the securities as described in this prospectus.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

We and the selling stockholders may issue and sell shares of our common stock from time to time. The following summary description of our common stock and preferred stock does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the California General Corporation Law and our articles of incorporation and bylaws, copies of which have been filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) and [Important Provisions of California Law and Our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws](#) .

The particular terms of any series of preferred stock we offer will be described in the related prospectus supplement. You should read that description, together with the more detailed provisions of our articles of incorporation and the certificate of determination relating to the particular series of preferred stock, for provisions that may be important to you. The certificate of determination relating to the particular series of preferred stock will be filed as an exhibit to a document incorporated by reference into the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part.

General

Under our articles of incorporation, the total number of shares of all classes of stock that we have authority to issue is 65,000,000, of which 60,000,000 are shares of common stock, no par value, and 5,000,000 are shares of preferred stock, no par value. As of December 29, 2009, 26,774,191 shares of common stock were issued and outstanding and no shares of preferred stock were issued and outstanding.

Common Stock

Subject to any preferential or other rights of any outstanding series of preferred stock that may be designated by our Board of Directors, the holders of shares of common stock are entitled to receive such dividends as may be declared from time to time by our Board of Directors from funds available therefor. All decisions regarding the declaration and payment of dividends will be at the discretion of our Board of Directors and will be evaluated from time to time in light of our financial condition, earnings, growth prospects, funding requirements, applicable law and other factors our Board of Directors deems relevant.

The holders of shares of common stock are entitled to one vote for each share on all matters voted on by shareholders, and possess all voting power, except as otherwise required by law or provided in any resolution adopted by our Board of Directors with respect to any series of our preferred stock. Provided a quorum has been properly established in accordance with our bylaws, the holders of a plurality of shares of common stock voting for the election of our Directors can elect all of the Directors, if they choose to do so, subject to any rights of the holders of preferred stock to elect Directors. Shareholders are entitled to cumulate their votes in the election of directors (i.e., they are entitled to the number of votes determined by multiplying the number of shares held by them times the number of directors to be elected) and may cast all of their votes so determined for one person, or spread their votes among two or more persons as they see fit.

Subject to the rights of any outstanding series of preferred stock and except as otherwise required by law or pursuant to the listing standards of the exchange on which our securities are listed, in all matters other than the election of directors, a merger, consolidation or sale of all or substantially all of our assets, or an amendment of our bylaws or certain provisions of our articles of incorporation, the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of shares of common stock present in person or represented by proxy at a meeting of shareholders and entitled to vote on the subject matter is required for approval, provided a quorum is established.

Table of Contents

Pursuant to the California General Corporation Law, the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of the shares of our outstanding capital stock entitled to vote on a merger, consolidation or sale of all or substantially all of our assets is required for approval of such events. For more information regarding the voting rights of our capital stock, see [Important Provisions of California Law and Our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws](#) below.

When we issue shares of our common stock, for and in receipt of consideration approved by our Board of Directors, the shares will be fully paid and nonassessable, which means that the full purchase price of the shares will have been paid and holders of the shares will not be assessed any additional monies for the shares. Neither our articles of incorporation nor our bylaws contains any restrictions on the transfer of our common stock. However, there may be restrictions imposed by applicable securities laws on any transfer of shares of our common stock. Holders of our common stock have no redemption rights, conversion rights or preemptive rights to purchase or subscribe for our securities. There are no redemption provisions or sinking fund provisions applicable to our common stock.

In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, each share of common stock would be entitled to share ratably in all of our assets that are legally available for distribution after payment of or adequate provision for all of our known debts and other liabilities and subject to any preferential rights of holders of preferred stock, if any preferred stock is outstanding at such time.

The rights, preferences and privileges of the holders of our common stock are subject to, and may be adversely affected by, the rights of the holders of any series of preferred stock that we may designate and issue in the future.

Certain Anti-Takeover Provisions of California Law, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

For a description of certain anti-takeover provisions under California law or in our articles of incorporation or bylaws, see [Important Provisions of California Law and Our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws](#) below.

Preferred Stock

Our Board of Directors is authorized without further shareholder approval (except as may be required by applicable law or the regulations promulgated on any exchange on which our securities are listed) to provide for the issuance of shares of preferred stock, in one or more series, and to fix for each such series such voting powers, designations, preferences and relative, participating, optional and other special rights, and such qualifications, limitations, or restrictions, as are stated in the resolution adopted by our Board of Directors providing for the issuance of such series and as are permitted by the California General Corporation Law. The terms and rights of any such series may include:

the designation of the series;

the number of shares of the series, which number the Board of Directors may thereafter, except where otherwise provided in the applicable certificate of determination, increase or decrease, but not below the number of shares thereof then outstanding;

whether dividends, if any, will be cumulative or noncumulative, and, in the case of shares of any series having cumulative dividend rights, the date or dates or method of determining the date or dates from which dividends on the shares of such series shall be cumulative;

the rate of any dividends or method of determining such dividends payable to the holders of the shares of such series, any conditions upon which such dividends will be paid and the date or dates or the method for determining the date or dates upon which such dividends will be payable;

the redemption rights and prices, if any, for shares of the series;

Table of Contents

the terms and amounts of any sinking fund provided for the purchase or redemption of shares of the series;

the amounts payable on and the preferences, if any, of shares of the series in the event of our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution, or winding up;

whether the shares of the series will be convertible or exchangeable into shares of any other class or series, or any other security, of us or any other entity, and, if so, the specification of such other class or series or such other security, the conversion or exchange price or prices or rate or rates, any adjustments thereof, the date or dates as of which such shares will be convertible or exchangeable and all other terms and conditions upon which such conversion or exchange may be made;

restrictions on the issuance of shares of the same series or of any other class or series;

the voting rights, if any, of the holders of the shares of the series; and

any other relative rights, preferences, and limitations of such series.

Should our Board of Directors elect to exercise this authority, the rights and privileges of holders of shares of common stock could become subject to the rights and privileges of any such series of preferred stock.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our shares of common stock is Computer Share Investor Services, 350 Indiana Street, suite 800, Golden, Colorado, 80401.

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITARY SHARES

This section describes some of the general terms and provisions applicable to the depositary shares and depositary receipts that we may issue from time to time, other than pricing and related terms. We will describe the specific terms of a series of depositary shares and the deposit agreement in the applicable prospectus supplement. The following description and any description of the depositary shares in the applicable prospectus supplement may not be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the terms and provisions of the applicable deposit agreement, which we will file with the SEC in connection with an issuance of depositary shares and depositary receipts. You should read the description included in the applicable prospectus supplement, together with the more detailed provisions of the applicable deposit agreement, for provisions that may be important to you.

We may issue depositary shares evidenced by depositary receipts representing interests in shares of a particular series of preferred stock. We will deposit the preferred stock of a series which is the subject of depositary shares with a depositary, which will hold that preferred stock for the benefit of the holders of the depositary shares, in accordance with a deposit agreement between the depositary and us. The holders of depositary shares will be entitled to all the rights and preferences of the preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate, including dividend, voting, conversion, redemption and liquidation rights, to the extent of their interests in that preferred stock.

While the deposit agreement relating to a particular series of preferred stock may have provisions applicable solely to that series of preferred stock, unless otherwise stated in the applicable prospectus supplement, all deposit agreements relating to preferred stock we issue will include the following provisions:

Dividends and Other Distributions

Each time we pay a cash dividend or make any other type of cash distribution with regard to preferred stock of a series, the depositary will distribute to the holder of record of each depositary share relating to that series of preferred stock an amount equal to the dividend or other distribution per depositary share that the depositary receives. If there is a distribution of property other than

Table of Contents

cash, the depositary either will distribute the property to the holders of depositary shares in proportion to the depositary shares held by each of them, or the depositary will, if we approve, sell the property and distribute the net proceeds to the holders of the depositary shares in proportion to the depositary shares held by them.

Withdrawal of Preferred Stock

A holder of depositary shares will be entitled to receive, upon surrender of depositary receipts representing depositary shares, the number of whole or fractional shares of the applicable series of preferred stock, and any money or other property, to which the depositary shares relate.

Redemption of Depositary Shares

Whenever we redeem shares of preferred stock held by a depositary, the depositary will be required to redeem, on the same redemption date, depositary shares constituting, in total, the number of shares of preferred stock held by the depositary that we redeem, subject to the depositary's receiving the redemption price of those shares of preferred stock. If fewer than all the depositary shares relating to a series are to be redeemed, the depositary shares to be redeemed will be selected by lot or by another method we determine to be equitable.

Voting

Any time we send a notice of meeting or other materials relating to a meeting to the holders of a series of preferred stock to which depositary shares relate, we will provide the depositary with sufficient copies of those materials so they can be sent to all holders of record of the applicable depositary shares. The depositary will send those materials to the holders of record of the depositary shares on the record date for the meeting. The depositary will solicit voting instructions from holders of depositary shares and will vote or not vote the preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate in accordance with those instructions.

Liquidation Preference

Upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the holder of each depositary share will be entitled to what the holder of the depositary share would have received if the holder had owned the number of shares (or fraction of a share) of preferred stock which is represented by the depositary share.

Conversion

If shares of a series of preferred stock are convertible into common stock or other of our securities or property, holders of depositary shares relating to that series of preferred stock will, if they surrender depositary receipts representing depositary shares and appropriate instructions to convert them, receive the shares of common stock or other securities or property into which the number of shares (or fractions of shares) of preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate could at the time be converted.

Amendment and Termination of a Deposit Agreement

We and the depositary may amend a deposit agreement and the form of depositary receipt, except that an amendment which materially and adversely affects the rights of holders of depositary shares, or would be materially and adversely inconsistent with the rights granted to the holders of the preferred stock to which they relate, must be approved by holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding depositary shares. No amendment will impair the right of a holder of depositary shares to surrender the depositary receipts evidencing those depositary shares and receive the preferred stock to which they relate, except as required to comply with law. We may terminate a deposit agreement with the consent of holders of a majority of the depositary shares to which it relates. Upon termination of a deposit agreement, the depositary will make the whole or fractional shares of preferred stock to which the depositary shares issued under the deposit agreement relate available to the holders of those depositary shares. A deposit agreement will automatically terminate if:

all outstanding depositary shares to which it relates have been redeemed;

Table of Contents

each share of preferred stock has been converted into or exchanged for common stock; or

the depositary has made a final distribution to the holders of the depositary shares issued under the deposit agreement upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up.

Miscellaneous

There may be provisions: (a) requiring the depositary to forward to holders of record of depositary shares any reports or communications from us which the depositary receives with respect to the preferred stock to which the depositary shares relate; (b) regarding compensation of the depositary; (c) regarding resignation of the depositary; (d) limiting our liability and the liability of the depositary under the deposit agreement (usually to failure to act in good faith, gross negligence or willful misconduct); and (e) indemnifying the depositary against certain possible liabilities.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following summary of selected provisions of the indentures does not purport to be complete and is subject to, and qualified in its entirety by reference to, the provisions of the indenture that will be filed with the SEC in connection with an offering of our debt securities. Moreover, the terms of any series of debt securities offered by us may differ from the general description of terms presented below. Each of the senior indenture and subordinated indenture has been filed as an exhibit to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part and has been qualified or will be qualified as an indenture under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, or the Trust Indenture Act. The particular terms of any debt securities we offer will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement, along with any applicable modifications of or additions to the general terms of the debt securities described below and in the indentures. You should read that description and the description set forth below, together with the more detailed provisions of the applicable indenture, including the defined terms, which we will file with the SEC in connection with the offering, for provisions that may be important to you. You should also consider applicable provisions of the Trust Indenture Act.

We may from time to time issue and sell debt securities. These debt securities are described below and will be senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities and any senior or subordinated debt securities that may be part of a unit, all of which are called debt securities. The senior debt securities and subordinated debt securities will be issued under one or more separate indentures between us and the indenture trustee named in the applicable prospectus supplement. Senior debt securities will be issued under a senior indenture and subordinated debt securities will be issued under a subordinated indenture, and in some cases pursuant to a supplemental indenture thereto. Together, the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture are called the indentures, and the senior indenture trustee and the subordinated indenture trustee are called the indenture trustees.

General

The debt securities will be our direct obligations. The indentures do not significantly limit our operations. In particular, they do not:

limit the amount of debt securities that we can issue under the indentures;

limit the number of series of debt securities that we can issue from time to time;

restrict us from reopening a previous issue of debt securities to issue additional debt securities of that series;

limit or otherwise restrict the total amount of debt that we or our subsidiaries may incur or the amount of other securities that we may issue;

Table of Contents

require us or an acquiror to repurchase debt securities in the event of a change in control ; or

contain any covenant or other provision that is specifically intended to afford any holder of the debt securities any protection in the event of highly leveraged transactions or similar transactions involving us or our subsidiaries.

The senior debt securities will rank senior to our subordinated debt securities.

Terms

Any series of debt securities offered by us will include specific terms, including some or all of the following:

the title, series, form and type of the offered debt securities;

the aggregate principal amount of the offered debt securities and any limit upon the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities of such title or series;

the date or dates (including the maturity date) or method, if any, for determining such dates, on which the principal of the offered debt securities will be payable (and any provisions relating to extending or shortening the date on which the principal of the offered debt securities is payable);

the interest rate, or method, if any, for determining the interest rate, the date or dates from which interest will accrue, or method, if any, for determining such dates, the interest payment dates, if any, on which interest will be payable, and whether and under what circumstances additional amounts on the offered debt securities will be payable; the manner in which payments with respect to the offered debt securities will be made; and the place or places where principal or, premium, if any, interest and additional amount, if any, will be payable;

whether the offered debt securities are redeemable at our option, and if so, the periods, prices, and other terms regarding such optional redemption;

whether we are obligated to redeem or repurchase the offered debt securities pursuant to any sinking fund or at the option of any holder thereof, and if so, the periods, prices and other terms regarding such repurchase or redemption;

the currency for payment of principal, premium, interest and any additional amount with respect to the offered debt securities, whether the principal, premium, if any, interest or additional amounts, if any, with respect to the offered debt securities are to be payable, at our election or any holder's election, in a currency other than that in which the offered debt securities are denominated, the period in which that election may be made and the time and manner of determining the applicable exchange rate;

whether the amount of payments of principal of, premium, if any, interest on, or additional amounts, if any, with respect to the offered debt securities may be determined by reference to an index, formula or other method, and if so, the terms and conditions and the manner in which such amounts will be determined and paid or payable;

whether the offered debt securities will be convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock or other securities, and if so, the initial conversion or exchange price and the periods and terms of the conversion or exchange; and

Table of Contents

any other terms not inconsistent with the provisions of the indentures filed as exhibits to the accompanying prospectus supplements.

Form of the Debt Securities

The indentures provide that we may issue senior and subordinated debt securities in registered form, in bearer form or in both registered and bearer form. Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, each series of senior and subordinated debt securities will be issued in registered form, without coupons. Holders of registered form securities are listed on the applicable indenture trustee's register for the applicable debt securities.

Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will issue senior and subordinated debt securities in denominations of \$1,000 or any integral multiple of \$1,000, and we will issue senior and subordinated debt securities in bearer form in denominations of \$5,000 or any integral multiple of \$5,000. There will be no service charge for any registration of transfer, exchange, redemption or conversion of senior or subordinated debt securities, but we or the applicable indenture trustee may require the holder to pay any tax or other governmental charge that may be imposed in connection with any registration of a transfer or exchange of the senior or subordinated debt securities, other than certain exchanges not involving any transfer.

If we issue the debt securities in bearer form, the debt securities will have interest coupons attached. Bearer form securities are payable to whomever physically holds them from time to time. Debt securities in bearer form will not be offered, sold, resold or delivered in connection with their original issuance in the United States or to any United States person other than through offices of certain United States financial institutions located outside the United States. Purchasers of debt securities in bearer form will be subject to certification procedures and may be affected by United States tax law limitations.

Registration, Transfer, Payment and Paying Agent

Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, payments on the debt securities will be made at our office or agency maintained for that purpose. Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the corporate trust office of the indenture trustee in the City of New York will be designated as our sole paying agent for payments with respect to the debt securities of each series. Any transfer of the debt securities will be registrable at the same place. In addition, we may choose to pay interest by check mailed to the address in the security register of the person in whose name the debt security is registered at the close of business on the applicable record date. Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, any interest and any additional amounts with respect to any debt securities which is payable, but not punctually paid or duly provided for, may be paid to the holders as of a special record date fixed by the applicable indenture trustee or in any other lawful manner.

Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, payments of principal, premium, if any, and interest on debt securities in bearer form will be made at the office outside the United States specified in the applicable prospectus supplement and as we may designate from time to time. Payment can also be made by check or by transfer to an account maintained by the payee with a bank located outside the United States. Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, payment on debt securities in bearer form will be made only if the holder surrenders the coupon relating to the interest payment date. We will not make any payments on any debt security in bearer form at any office or agency in the United States, by check mailed to any address in the United States or by transfer to any account maintained with a bank located in the United States.

Global Debt Securities

Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement for a series of debt securities, each series of debt securities will be issued in global form, which means that we will deposit with the depositary identified in the applicable prospectus supplement (or its custodian) one or more certificates representing the entire series, as described below under Book-Entry Procedures and Settlement. Global debt securities may be issued in either temporary or permanent form.

Table of Contents

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe any limitations and restrictions relating to a series of global senior or subordinated debt securities.

Covenants

The following covenants will apply to us with respect to the debt securities of each series unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement:

Except as described in this prospectus under "Description of Debt Securities - Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets," we must do or cause to be done all things necessary to preserve and keep in full force and effect our existence, rights and franchises. However, we are not required to preserve any right or franchise if we determine that its preservation is no longer desirable in the conduct of our business and that its loss is not disadvantageous in any material respect to the holders of the debt securities.

We are required to pay or discharge or cause to be paid or discharged (a) all taxes, assessments and governmental charges levied or imposed upon us or any subsidiary or upon our income, profits or property or the income, profits or property of any subsidiary and (b) all lawful claims for labor, materials and supplies which, if unpaid, might by law become a lien upon our property or the property of any subsidiary. We must pay these taxes and other claims before they become delinquent. However, we are not required to pay or discharge or cause to be paid or discharged any tax, assessment, charge or claim whose amount, applicability or validity is being contested in good faith by appropriate proceedings.

Additional covenants described in the applicable prospectus supplement may apply to us with respect to a particular series of debt securities.

Subordination of Subordinated Debt Securities

Contractual provisions in the subordinated debt indenture may prohibit us from making payments on the subordinated debt securities, which are subordinate and junior in right of payment to the extent and in the manner stated in the subordinated debt indenture, to all of our senior debt, as defined in the subordinated debt indenture, as it may be supplemented from time to time, including all debt securities we have issued and will issue under the senior debt indenture.

The subordinated debt indenture defines "senior debt" as the principal of and premium, if any, and interest on all indebtedness of us, other than the subordinated debt securities, whether outstanding on the date of the indenture or thereafter created, incurred or assumed, which is (a) for money borrowed, (b) evidenced by a note or similar instrument given in connection with the acquisition of any businesses, properties or assets of any kind or (c) obligations of us as lessee under leases required to be capitalized on the balance sheet of the lessee under generally accepted accounting principles or leases of property or assets made as part of any sale and lease-back transaction to which we are a party. For the purpose of this definition, "interest" includes interest accruing on or after the filing of any petition in bankruptcy or for reorganization relating to us to the extent that the claim for post-petition interest is allowed in the proceeding. Also for the purpose of this definition, "indebtedness of us" includes indebtedness of others guaranteed by us and amendments, renewals, extensions, modifications and refundings of any indebtedness or obligation of the kinds described in the first sentence of this paragraph, but does not include any indebtedness or obligation if the instrument creating or evidencing the indebtedness or obligation, or under which the indebtedness or obligation is outstanding, provides that the indebtedness or obligation is not superior in right of payment to the subordinated debt securities.

The subordinated debt indenture provides that, unless all principal of and any premium or interest on the senior debt has been paid in full, no payment or other distribution may be made in respect of any subordinated debt securities in the following circumstances:

in the event of any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization or other similar proceeding involving us or our assets;

Table of Contents

in the event of any liquidation, dissolution or other winding up of us, whether voluntary or involuntary and whether or not involving insolvency or bankruptcy;

in the event of any assignment for the benefit of creditors or any other marshalling of assets and liabilities of us;

if any subordinated debt securities of ours have been declared due and payable before their stated maturity; or

(a) in the event and during the continuation of any default in the payment of principal, premium or interest on any senior debt beyond any applicable grace period or if any event of default with respect to any senior debt of ours has occurred and is continuing, permitting the holders of that senior debt of ours or an indenture trustee to accelerate the maturity of that senior debt, unless the event of default has been cured or waived or ceased to exist and any related acceleration has been rescinded, or (b) if any judicial proceeding is pending with respect to a payment default or an event of default described in (a).

If the indenture trustee under the subordinated debt indenture or any holders of the subordinated debt securities receive any payment or distribution that they know is prohibited under the subordination provisions, then the applicable indenture trustee or the holders will have to repay that money to the holders of the senior debt.

Even if the subordination provisions prevent us from making any payment when due on the subordinated debt securities of any series, we will be in default on our obligations under that series if we do not make the payment when due. This means that the indenture trustee under the subordinated debt indenture and the holders of that series can take action against us, but they will not receive any money until the claims of the holders of senior debt have been fully satisfied.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

Each indenture generally permits a consolidation or merger between us and another corporation and the conveyance, transfer or lease by us of all or substantially all of our property or assets, in each case without the consent of the holders of any outstanding debt securities. However, unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, each indenture requires that:

the successor or purchaser is a corporation organized under the laws of the United States of America, any state thereof or the District of Columbia and expressly assumes our obligations on the debt securities under the applicable indenture;

immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no event which, after notice or lapse of time, would become an event of default, will have occurred and be continuing pursuant to the applicable indenture; and

either we or the successor person has delivered to the applicable indenture trustee an officer's certificate and an opinion of counsel stating the consolidation, merger, transfer or lease, as applicable, complied with these provisions and all conditions precedent of the applicable indenture.

The successor shall be substituted for us as if it had been an original party to the indentures and the debt securities. Thereafter, the successor may exercise our rights and powers under the indentures and the debt securities and, except in the case of a lease, we will be released from all of our obligations and covenants under those documents.

Table of Contents

Exchange of Debt Securities

Registered debt securities may be exchanged for an equal aggregate principal amount of registered debt securities of the same series containing identical terms and provisions in authorized denominations requested by the holders upon surrender of the registered debt securities at an office or agency that we maintain for that purpose and upon fulfillment of all other requirements set forth in the indentures.

Conversion and Exchangeability

The holders of debt securities that are convertible into or exchangeable for our common stock or other securities will be entitled to convert or exchange the debt securities under some circumstances. The terms of any conversion or exchange right will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms will include provisions as to whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option, and may include provisions pursuant to which the number of shares of our common stock or other securities to be received by the holders of the debt securities would be subject to adjustment.

Events of Default

Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement for any series of debt securities, events of default with respect to any series of debt securities are:

failure to pay the interest or any additional amounts payable on any debt security of such series when due and continuance of that default for 30 days;

failure to pay the principal of or any premium on any debt security of such series when due and payable;

failure to deposit any sinking fund payment when and as due by the terms of any debt security of such series;

failure to perform or the breach of any covenant or warranty in the applicable indenture or the debt securities (other than a covenant or warranty included solely for the benefit of a series of debt securities other than such series) that continues for 60 days after we are given written notice by the applicable indenture trustee or we and the applicable indenture trustee are given written notice by the holders of at least 25% of the outstanding debt securities of such series; or

certain events involving our bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization.

If an event of default with respect to debt securities of any series occurs and is continuing, the applicable indenture trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series, by notice in writing to us, and to the applicable indenture trustee if notice is given by such holders, may declare the unpaid principal of, premium, if any, and accrued interest, if any, on that series to be due and payable immediately. The indenture trustee may withhold notice to the holders of debt securities of any default or event of default, except a default or event of default relating to the payment of principal or interest, if it determines that withholding such notice is in the holders' interest.

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of an affected series may waive any default or event of default with respect to such series and its consequences, except a continuing default or events of default in the payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest on the debt securities of such series. Any such waiver shall cure such default or event of default.

Table of Contents

Subject to the terms of the indentures, if an event of default under an indenture shall occur and be continuing, the applicable indenture trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under such indenture at the request or direction of any of the holders of the applicable series of debt securities, unless such holders have offered the applicable indenture trustee reasonable indemnity. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the applicable indenture trustee, or exercising any trust or power conferred on the applicable indenture trustee, with respect to the debt securities of that series, subject to certain limitations specified in the applicable indenture.

A holder of the debt securities of any series will only have the right to institute a proceeding under the indentures or to appoint a receiver or trustee, or to seek other remedies if:

the holder has given written notice to the applicable indenture trustee of a continuing event of default with respect to that series;

the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made written request, and such holders have offered reasonable indemnity to the applicable indenture trustee to institute such proceedings as trustee; and

the applicable indenture trustee does not institute such proceeding, and does not receive from the holders of a majority in the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series other conflicting directions within 60 days after such notice, request and offer.

These limitations do not apply to a suit instituted by a holder of debt securities if we default in the payment of the principal, premium, if any, or interest on, the debt securities.

We will periodically file statements with the applicable indenture trustee regarding our compliance with certain of the covenants in the indentures.

Waivers of Certain Covenants and Past Defaults

The holders of at least 25% of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding senior and subordinated debt securities of each series may, on behalf of all holders of that series, waive our compliance with certain restrictive provisions of the applicable indenture. They also may waive any past default with respect to that series under the applicable indenture, except (a) a default in the payment of principal, premium or interest or any additional amounts or (b) a default in the performance of certain covenants which cannot be modified without the consent of all of the holders of the applicable series. Amendments to the Indentures

Supplemental Indentures with Consent of Holders

Unless we indicate otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, we and the applicable trustee may modify or amend an indenture, with the consent of the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of each series of the senior or subordinated debt securities affected by the modification or amendment. However, no modification or amendment may, without the consent of each holder affected by the modification or amendment:

change the due date of the principal of, or any premium or installment of interest on, or any additional amounts with respect to any debt security;

reduce the principal amount of, or the rate of interest on, or any additional amounts or premium, if any, payable with respect to any debt security, or, except as otherwise permitted, change an obligation to pay additional amounts with respect to any debt security, or adversely affect the right of repayment at the option of any holder, if any;

Table of Contents

change the place of payment, the currency in which the principal of, premium, if any, or interest on, or any additional amounts with respect to any debt security is payable or impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any such payment on or after the due date thereof (or, in the case of redemption, on or after the redemption date or, in the case of repayment at the option of the holder, on or after the date for repayment);

reduce the percentage in principal amount of outstanding debt securities of any series the consent of whose holders is required for any supplemental indenture, or the consent of whose holders is required for any waiver (of compliance with certain provisions of the applicable indenture or certain defaults thereunder and their consequences) under the applicable indenture or reduce requirements for quorum or voting;

modify any of the provisions in the applicable indenture provisions described above under **Waivers of Certain Covenants and Past Defaults** and in this section **Amendments to the Indentures Supplemental Indentures with Consent of Holders**, except to increase any percentage in principal amount of outstanding debt securities of any series the consent of whose holders is required for a supplemental indenture or waiver, or to provide that certain other provisions of the applicable indenture cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holders of each outstanding debt security affected thereby;

adversely affect the right of any holder to convert any convertible debt securities; or

in the case of the subordinated indenture, modify the subordination provisions in a manner adverse to the holders of the subordinated debt securities.

Supplemental Indentures without Consent of Holders

Except as otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, we and the applicable indenture trustee may modify and amend an indenture without the consent of any holder for any of the following purposes:

to evidence the succession of another person to us, and the assumption by the successor of our covenants in the applicable indenture and in the debt securities;

to add to our covenants for the benefit of the holders of all or any series of debt securities or to surrender any right or power conferred upon us in the applicable indenture;

to add or change any provisions of the applicable indenture to provide that bearer debt securities may be registrable as to principal, to change or eliminate restrictions on payments with respect to debt securities, to permit registered securities to be exchanged for bearer securities, to permit bearer securities to be exchanged for bearer securities of other authorized denominations or to permit or facilitate the issuance of securities in uncertificated form, provided any such action does not adversely affect the interests of the holders of any debt securities or related coupons in any material respect;

to establish the form or terms of debt securities of any series and any related coupons;

to evidence and provide for the acceptance of appointment by a successor trustee and to add to or change any provisions of the applicable indenture as necessary to provide for or facilitate the administration of the trusts under the applicable indenture by more than one trustee;

Edgar Filing: BJ's RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

to cure any ambiguity or to correct or supplement any provision in the applicable indenture that may be defective or inconsistent with any other provision of the applicable indenture, or to make any other provisions with respect to matters or questions arising under the applicable indenture which do not adversely affect the interests of the holders of any debt securities or related coupons in any material respect;

Table of Contents

to modify the conditions, limitations and restrictions on the authorized amount, terms or purposes of issue, authentication and delivery of debt securities;

to add additional events of default with respect to all or any series of debt securities;

to supplement any of the provisions of the applicable indenture to the extent necessary to permit or facilitate the defeasance and discharge of any series of debt securities, provided the action does not adversely affect the interests of the holders of any debt securities of that series or related coupons or any other debt securities or related coupons in any material respect;

to secure the debt securities;

to amend or supplement any provision of the applicable indenture or any supplemental indenture, provided that the amendment or supplement does not materially adversely affect the interests of the holders of outstanding debt securities; and

to make certain provisions with respect to conversion rights.

Legal Defeasance and Covenant Defeasance

If the applicable prospectus supplement provides for defeasance, we may at any time elect to defease and will be deemed to have paid and discharged our obligations on the applicable debt securities if:

no event of default has occurred and is continuing, or would occur upon the giving of notice or lapse of time, at the time of the satisfaction and discharge;

either (a) we have irrevocably deposited with the applicable indenture trustee sufficient cash or government securities to pay when due all the principal of, premium, if any, interest on and additional amounts, if any, with respect to the applicable debt securities, through the stated maturity or redemption date of the applicable debt securities (or, in the case of debt securities which have become due and payable, through the date of such deposit), or (b) we have properly fulfilled such other means of satisfaction and discharge as is provided in or pursuant to the applicable indenture for the applicable debt securities;

we have paid all other sums payable under the applicable indenture with respect to the applicable debt securities and any related coupons;

we have delivered to the applicable indenture trustee a certificate of our independent public accountants certifying as to the sufficiency of the amounts deposited by us, and an officers' certificate and opinion of counsel as required by the applicable indenture; and

we have delivered to the applicable indenture trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders will have no material and adverse federal income tax consequences as a result of the deposit or termination.

In the case of a defeasance, the holders of the applicable debt securities of the series will not be entitled to the benefits of the applicable indenture, except for the registration of transfer or exchange and the replacement of stolen, lost or mutilated applicable debt securities and the requirements regarding the maintenance of an office or agency where the applicable debt securities can be surrendered for payment or registration of transfer or exchange and the right of the holders of the applicable debt securities to receive from the deposited funds payment of the principal of, premium, if any, interest, and additional amounts, if any, with respect to the applicable debt securities when due.

Table of Contents

Determining the Outstanding Debt Securities

Unless otherwise provided in or pursuant to the applicable indenture, we will consider the following factors in determining whether the holders of the requisite principal amount of outstanding debt securities have given any request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent or waiver under the applicable indenture or are present at a meeting of holders of debt securities for quorum purposes:

in the case of any debt security that by its terms provides for declaration of a principal amount less than the principal face amount of the debt security to be due and payable upon acceleration, the principal amount that will be deemed outstanding will be the principal amount that would be declared to be due and payable upon a declaration of acceleration thereof at the time of such determination;

in the case of any indexed security, the principal amount that will be deemed outstanding will be the principal face amount of the indexed security at original issuance;

in the case of any debt security denominated in one or more foreign currency units, the principal amount that will be deemed outstanding will be the U.S. dollar equivalent based on the applicable exchange rate or rates at the time of sale; and

any debt securities owned by us or any other obligor upon the debt securities or any of our or such other obligor's affiliates, will be disregarded and deemed not outstanding.

Governing Law

The indentures and the debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York.

Regarding the Indenture Trustees

In the normal course of business, we and our subsidiaries may conduct banking transactions with the indenture trustees, and the indenture trustees may conduct banking transactions with us and our subsidiaries.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

The following is a general description of the terms of the warrants we may issue from time to time. We will describe the specific terms of each series of warrants we issue in the applicable prospectus supplement. The following description and any description of the warrant and related warrant agreement in the applicable prospectus supplement may not be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the terms and provisions of the applicable warrant agreement. A form of the warrant agreement reflecting the particular terms and provisions of a series of offered warrants will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering and incorporated by reference in the registration statement and this prospectus.

We may issue warrants for the purchase of debt securities, preferred stock or common stock. Warrants may be issued independently or together with debt securities, preferred stock or common stock offered by any prospectus supplement and may be attached to or separate from any such offered securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as warrant agent. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

Table of Contents

Each issue of warrants will be the subject of a warrant agreement which will contain the terms of the warrants. Each prospectus supplement with respect to a series of warrants will describe the terms of the warrants offered pursuant to it, including one or more of the following:

the securities which may be purchased by exercising the warrants;

the exercise price of the warrants (which may be wholly or partly payable in cash or wholly or partly payable with other types of consideration);

the period during which the warrants may be exercised; and

any other material terms of the warrants.

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

This section describes some of the general terms and provisions applicable to units we may issue from time to time. We will describe the specific terms of a series of units and the applicable unit agreement in the applicable prospectus supplement. The following description and any description of the units in the applicable prospectus supplement may not be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the terms and provisions of the applicable unit agreement. A form of the unit agreement reflecting the particular terms and provisions of a series of offered units will be filed with the SEC in connection with the offering and incorporated by reference in the registration statement and this prospectus.

We may issue units from time to time in such amounts and in as many distinct series as we determine. We will issue each series of units under a unit agreement to be entered into between us and a unit agent to be designated in the applicable prospectus supplement. When we refer to a series of units, we mean all units issued as part of the same series under the applicable unit agreement.

We may issue units consisting of any combination of two or more securities described in this prospectus or debt or equity securities of third parties, in any combination. Each unit will be issued so that the holder of the unit is also the holder of each security included in the unit. Thus, the holder of a unit will have the rights and obligations of a holder of each included security. The unit agreement under which a unit is issued may provide that the securities included in the unit may not be held or transferred separately, at any time or at any time before a specified date.

The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of the units offered pursuant to it, including one or more of the following:

the designation and terms of the units and of the securities comprising the units, including whether and under what circumstances those securities may be held or transferred separately;

the aggregate number of, and the price at which we will issue, the units;

any provisions for the issuance, payment, settlement, transfer or exchange of the units or of the securities comprising the units;

whether the units will be issued in fully registered or global form;

the name of the unit agent;

Table of Contents

a description of the terms of any unit agreement to be entered into between us and a bank or trust company, as unit agent, governing the units;

if applicable, a discussion of the U.S. federal income tax consequences; and

whether the units will be listed on any securities exchange.

IMPORTANT PROVISIONS OF CALIFORNIA LAW AND OUR ARTICLES OF

INCORPORATION AND BYLAWS

General

Our articles of incorporation, our bylaws and the California General Corporation Law contain certain provisions that could (1) delay or make more difficult some transactions involving an actual or potential change of control of our company, (2) may limit the ability of shareholders to remove current directors or management or approve a transaction that a majority of our shareholders may deem to be in their best interests and, (3) could adversely affect the price of our securities. Set forth below is a description of the provisions contained in our articles of incorporation and bylaws and the California General Corporation Law that could impede or delay an acquisition of control of our company that our Board of Directors has not approved. This description is intended as a summary only and is qualified in its entirety by reference to our articles of incorporation and bylaws, copies of which have been filed as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part, as well as the California General Corporation Law.

Anti-Takeover Provisions

Section 1203 of the California General Corporations Law includes provisions that may have the effect of deterring hostile takeovers or delaying or preventing changes in control or management of our company. First, if an interested person makes an offer to purchase the shares of some or all of our shareholders, we must obtain an affirmative opinion in writing as to the fairness of the offering price prior to completing the transaction. California law considers a person to be an interested person if the person directly or indirectly controls our company, if the person is directly or indirectly controlled by one of our officers or directors, or if the person is an entity in which one of our officers or directors holds a material financial interest. If after receiving an offer from such an interested person we receive a subsequent offer from a neutral third party, then we must notify our shareholders of this offer and afford each of them the opportunity to withdraw their consent to the interested person offer.

Section 1203 and other provisions of California law could make it more difficult for a third party to acquire a majority of our outstanding voting stock, by discouraging a hostile bid, or delaying, preventing or deterring a merger, acquisition or tender offer in which our shareholders could receive a premium for their shares, or effect a proxy contest for control of our company or other changes in our management.

Shareholder Action; Advance Notice Requirements for Shareholder Proposals and Director Nominations

Our bylaws establish an advance notice procedure for shareholder proposals to be brought before an annual meeting of shareholders, including proposed nominations of persons for election to the board of directors. Shareholders at an annual meeting may only consider proposals or nominations specified in the notice of meeting or brought before the meeting by or at the direction of the board of directors or by a shareholder of record on the record date for the meeting, who is entitled to vote at the meeting and who has delivered timely written notice in proper form to our secretary of the shareholder's intention to bring such business before the meeting. These provisions could have the effect of delaying until the next shareholder meeting shareholder actions that are favored by the holders of a majority of our outstanding voting securities.

Table of Contents

Number of Directors; Removal; Filling Vacancies

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws provide that the number of Directors shall be fixed only by resolution of our Board of Directors from time to time. Our certificate of incorporation provides that the Directors may be removed by stockholders only both for cause and by the affirmative vote of at least 80% of the shares entitled to vote.

Our certificate of incorporation and bylaws provide that vacancies on the Board of Directors may be filled only by a majority vote of the remaining Directors or by the sole remaining Director.

Limitations on Liability.

Our articles of incorporation and bylaws also provide that we will indemnify our directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by the California General Corporation Law. The foregoing limitation on liability and indemnification may impede a change of control event to the extent that a hostile acquirer seeks to litigate its contest for control with our directors and officers.

BOOK-ENTRY PROCEDURES AND SETTLEMENT

We can issue the securities covered by this prospectus in definitive form or in the form of one or more global securities. The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the manner in which the securities offered thereby will be issued.

SELLING SHAREHOLDERS

The following table sets forth the number of shares owned by each of the selling shareholders. Except as indicated in Certain Relationships With Selling Shareholders below, none of the selling shareholders has had a material relationship with us during the past three years. No estimate can be given as to the amount of our common stock that will be held by the selling shareholders after the completion of this offering because the selling shareholders may offer all or some of our common stock. There currently are no agreements, arrangements or understandings with respect to the sale of any of our common stock. The shares offered by this prospectus may be offered from time to time by the selling shareholders named below. This prospectus also covers any additional shares of common stock which may become issuable in connection with shares sold by reason of a stock dividend, stock split, recapitalization or other similar transaction effected without us receiving any cash or other value, which results in an increase in the number of our outstanding shares of common stock.

Table of Contents

Name of Selling Shareholder	Number of Shares of Common Stock Beneficially Owned Prior to Offering (1)	Number of Shares of Common Stock Registered for Sale Hereby	Number of Shares of Common Stock Beneficially Owned After Offering (2)	Percentage of Common Stock Beneficially Owned After Offering(1)
The Jacmar Companies(3)	2,264,129	2,264,129	0	
William H. Tilley, as trustee for the William H. Tilley Trust dated January 21, 2003(4)	1,436,401	1,436,401	0	
The William Tilley Family Foundation(4)	76,000	76,000	0	
William H. Tilley, as account holder of William Tilley SEP IRA(4)	15,000	15,000	0	
Jacmar & Jaksick Investment Company(4)	4,000	4,000	0	
TNT Long Beach Partners(4)	4,000	4,000	0	
William H. Tilley, as trustee for Nadine B. Tilley Trust dated January 21, 2003(4)	2,200	2,200	0	

- (1) Applicable percentage ownership is based on 26,774,191 shares of common stock outstanding as of December 29, 2009. Ownership information with respect to the selling shareholders is based on information provided to us by the selling shareholders.
- (2) Assumes that all shares to be offered, as set forth above, are sold pursuant to this offering and that no other shares of common stock are acquired or disposed of by the selling shareholders prior to the termination of this offering. Because the selling shareholders may sell all, some or none of their shares or may acquire or dispose of other shares of common stock, no reliable estimate can be made of the aggregate number of shares that will be sold pursuant to this offering or the number or percentage of shares of common stock that each selling shareholder will own upon completion of this offering.
- (3) James A. Dal Pozzo and William H. Tilley are the President and Chairman, respectively, of The Jacmar Companies and have voting and investment control over the securities that this selling share holder beneficially owns. See Certain Relationships with Selling Shareholders.
- (4) William H. Tilley has have voting and investment control over the securities that this selling share holder beneficially owns. See Certain Relationships with Selling Shareholders

Certain Relationships with Selling Shareholders

James A. Dal Pozzo and William H. Tilley are the President and Chairman, respectively, of The Jacmar Companies. Prior to this offering, The Jacmar Companies and their affiliates (collectively referred to herein as Jacmar) owned approximately 16% of our outstanding common stock. Jacmar, through its specialty wholesale food distributorship, is currently our largest supplier of food, beverage and paper products. In July 2006, after an extensive competitive bidding process, we entered into a three-year agreement with a national foodservice distribution system whose shareholders are prominent regional foodservice distributors, of which Jacmar

Table of Contents

is one. As such, Jacmar services our restaurants in California and Nevada, while other system distributors will service our restaurants in all other states. In July 2009, after another extensive competitive bidding process, we entered into a new three-year agreement providing for the same national foodservice distribution system. We believe Jacmar sells products to us at prices comparable to those offered by unrelated third parties. Jacmar supplied us with \$46.8 million, \$42.9 million and \$27.1 million of food, beverage and paper products for fiscal 2008, 2007 and 2006, respectively, which represent 49.5%, 53.4% and 44.2% of our total costs for these products, respectively. We had trade payables due to Jacmar related to these products of \$2.5 million and \$1.8 million at December 30, 2008 and January 1, 2008, respectively. Our Board of Directors has reviewed the terms of the agreements relating to pricing between Jacmar and us, and believes that the terms are at least as favorable or more favorable than we could obtain from another third party offering comparable goods and services.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

General

We may use this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement to sell our securities from time to time as follows:

directly to purchasers;

through underwriters;

through dealers;

through agents;

through any combination of these methods; or

through any other method permitted by applicable law and described herein or in a prospectus supplement.

Each prospectus supplement relating to an offering of securities will set forth the specific plan of distribution and state the terms of the offering, including:

the method of distribution of the securities offered therein;

the names of any underwriters, dealers, or agents;

the public offering or purchase price of the offered securities and the net proceeds that we will receive from the sale;

any underwriting discounts, commissions or other items constituting underwriters' compensation;

any discounts, commissions, or fees allowed, re-allowed or paid to dealers or agents;

Edgar Filing: BJs RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

any securities exchange on which the offered securities may be listed.

Any initial public offering price and any discounts, commissions, fees or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to underwriters, dealers, or agents may be changed from time to time.

Table of Contents

Distribution Through Underwriters.

We may offer and sell securities from time to time to one or more underwriters who would purchase the securities as principal for resale to the public, either on a firm commitment or best efforts basis. If we sell securities to underwriters, we will execute an underwriting agreement with them at the time of the sale and will name them in the applicable supplement. In connection with these sales, the underwriters may be deemed to have received compensation from us in the form of underwriting discounts and commissions. The underwriters also may receive commissions from purchasers of securities for whom they may act as agent. Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable supplement, the underwriters will not be obligated to purchase the securities unless the conditions set forth in the underwriting agreement are satisfied, and if the underwriters purchase any of the securities, they generally will be required to purchase all of the offered securities. The underwriters may acquire the securities for their own account and may resell the securities from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or varying prices determined at the time of sale. The underwriters may sell the offered securities to or through dealers, and those dealers may receive discounts, concessions, or commissions from the underwriters as well as from the purchasers for whom they may act as agent.

Distribution Through Dealers.

We may offer and sell securities from time to time to one or more dealers who would purchase the securities as principal. The dealers then may resell the offered securities to the public at fixed or varying prices to be determined by those dealers at the time of resale. We will set forth the names of the dealers and the terms of the transaction in the applicable supplement.

Distribution Through Agents.

We may offer and sell securities on a continuous basis through agents that become parties to an underwriting or distribution agreement. We will name any agent involved in the offer and sale, and describe any commissions payable by us in the applicable supplement. Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable supplement, the agent will be acting on a best efforts basis during the appointment period. The agent may make sales in privately negotiated transactions and by any other method permitted by law, including sales deemed to be an at-the-market offering as defined in Rule 415 promulgated under the Securities Act, including sales made directly on the NASDAQ Global Select Market, or sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange.

Direct Sales.

We may sell directly to, and solicit offers from, institutional investors or others who may be deemed to be underwriters, as defined in the Securities Act of 1933, for any resale of the securities. We will describe the terms of any sales of this kind in the applicable supplement.

General Information.

Underwriters, dealers, or agents participating in an offering of securities may be deemed to be underwriters, and any discounts and commissions received by them and any profit realized by them on resale of the offered securities, may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act of 1933.

We may offer to sell securities either at a fixed price or at prices that may vary, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to prevailing market prices, or at negotiated prices. Securities may be sold in connection with a remarketing after their purchase by one or more firms acting as principal for their own accounts or as our agent. In addition, we may issue the securities as a dividend or distribution or in a subscription rights offering to our existing security holders.

In connection with an underwritten offering of the securities, the underwriters may engage in over-allotment, stabilizing transactions and syndicate covering transactions in accordance with Regulation M under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

Table of Contents

Over-allotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which creates a short position for the underwriters. The underwriters may enter bids for, and purchase, securities in the open market in order to stabilize the price of the securities. Syndicate covering transactions involve purchases of the securities in the open market after the distribution has been completed in order to cover short positions. In addition, the underwriting syndicate may reclaim selling concessions allowed to an underwriter or a dealer for distributing the securities in the offering if the syndicate repurchases previously distributed securities in transactions to cover syndicate short positions, in stabilization transactions, or otherwise. These activities may cause the price of the securities to be higher than it would otherwise be. Those activities, if commenced, may be discontinued at any time.

Ordinarily, each issue of securities will be a new issue, and there will be no established trading market for any security other than our common stock, which is listed on the NASDAQ Global Market under the symbol `BJRI`, prior to its original issue date. We may not list any particular series of securities on a securities exchange or quotation system. Any underwriters to whom or agents through whom the offered securities are sold for offering and sale may make a market in the offered securities. However, any underwriters or agents that make a market will not be obligated to do so and may stop doing so at any time without notice. We cannot assure you that there will be a liquid trading market for the offered securities.

We may authorize underwriters, dealers or agents to solicit offers by certain purchasers to purchase the securities from us at the public offering price set forth in the prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts will be subject only to those conditions set forth in the related prospectus supplement, and the related prospectus supplement will set forth any commissions we pay for solicitation of these contracts.

We may offer subscription rights to our existing shareholders to purchase additional shares of our common stock, preferred stock or any combination thereof. For any particular subscription rights, the applicable prospectus supplement will describe the terms of such rights, including the period during which such rights may be exercised, the manner of exercising such rights, the transferability of such rights and the number of shares of common stock or preferred stock that may be purchased in connection with each right and the subscription price for the purchase of such shares. In connection with a rights offering, we may enter into a separate agreement with one or more underwriters or standby purchasers to purchase any shares of our common stock or preferred stock not subscribed for in the rights offering by existing shareholders. We may pay the standby underwriters a commitment fee for the securities they commit to purchase on a standby basis. If we do not enter into a standby underwriting arrangement, we may retain a dealer-manager to manage a subscription rights offering for us.

Under agreements entered into with us, underwriters and agents may be entitled to indemnification by us against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, or to contribution for payments the underwriters or agents may be required to make.

Conflict of Interest.

We may engage underwriters, dealers and agents in connection with the offering of any of the securities described in this prospectus, some of whom may have a conflict of interest, as such term is defined by the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. In the event an underwriter, dealer or agent who is participating in the offering has a conflict of interest, we will describe the nature of the conflict in the applicable prospectus supplement, and, if applicable, the name of the underwriter, dealer or agent who is acting as the qualified independent underwriter and its role and responsibilities in the offering.

The underwriters, dealers and agents that we may use, as well as their affiliates, may engage in financial or other business transactions with, or perform other services for, us and our subsidiaries in the ordinary course of business and may receive a portion of the proceeds from this offering.

Distribution by Selling Shareholders

With respect to the shares of common stock or interests therein held by the selling shareholders named in this prospectus, each selling shareholder of the common stock and any of their pledgees, assignees and successors-in-interest may, from time to time, sell

Table of Contents

any or all of their shares of common stock covered hereby on the NASDAQ Global Select Market or any other stock exchange, market or trading facility on which the shares are traded or in private transactions. These sales may be at fixed or negotiated prices. A selling shareholder may use any one or more of the following methods when selling shares:

ordinary brokerage transactions and transactions in which the broker-dealer solicits purchasers;

block trades in which the broker-dealer will attempt to sell the shares as agent but may position and resell a portion of the block as principal to facilitate the transaction;

purchases by a broker-dealer as principal and resale by the broker-dealer for its account;

an exchange distribution in accordance with the rules of the applicable exchange;

privately negotiated transactions;

settlement of short sales entered into after the effective date of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part;

in transactions through broker-dealers that may agree with the selling shareholders to sell a specified number of such shares at a stipulated price per share;

through the writing or settlement of options or other hedging transactions, whether through an options exchange or otherwise;

a combination of any such methods of sale; or

any other method permitted pursuant to applicable law.

The selling shareholders may also sell shares under Rule 144 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), if available, rather than under this prospectus.

Broker-dealers engaged by the selling shareholders may arrange for other brokers-dealers to participate in sales. Broker-dealers may receive commissions or discounts from the selling shareholders (or, if any broker-dealer acts as agent for the purchaser of shares, from the purchaser) in amounts to be negotiated, but, except as set forth in a supplement to this prospectus, in the case of an agency transaction not in excess of a customary brokerage commission in compliance with FINRA Rule 2440; and in the case of a principal transaction a markup or markdown in compliance with FINRA IM-2440.

In connection with the sale of the common stock or interests therein, the selling shareholders may enter into hedging transactions with broker-dealers or other financial institutions, which may in turn engage in short sales of the common stock in the course of hedging the positions they assume. The selling shareholders may also sell shares of the common stock short and deliver these securities to close out their short positions, or loan or pledge the common stock to broker-dealers that in turn may sell these securities. The selling shareholders may also enter into option or other transactions with broker-dealers or other financial institutions or create one or more derivative securities which require the delivery to such broker-dealer or other financial institution of shares offered by this prospectus, which shares such broker-dealer or other financial institution may resell pursuant to this prospectus (as supplemented or amended to reflect such transaction).

Edgar Filing: BJs RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

The selling shareholders and any broker-dealers or agents that are involved in selling the shares may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act in connection with such sales. In such event, any commissions received by such broker-dealers or agents and any profit on the resale of the shares purchased by them may be deemed to be underwriting

Table of Contents

commissions or discounts under the Securities Act. Each selling shareholder has informed us that it does not have any written or oral agreement or understanding, directly or indirectly, with any person to distribute the common stock. In no event shall any broker-dealer receive fees, commissions and markups which, in the aggregate, would exceed eight percent (8%).

We are required to pay certain fees and expenses incurred by us incident to the registration of the shares held by the selling shareholders. In addition, we have agreed to indemnify the selling shareholders against certain losses, claims, damages and liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Because the selling shareholders may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act, they will be subject to the prospectus delivery requirements of the Securities Act including Rule 172 thereunder. The selling shareholders have advised us that there is no underwriter or coordinating broker acting in connection with the proposed sale of the resale shares by the selling shareholders.

We agreed to keep this prospectus effective until the earlier of (i) the date on which the shares may be resold by the selling shareholders without registration and without regard to any volume or manner of sale limitations by reason of Rule 144, without the requirement for us to be in compliance with the current public information requirements under Rule 144 under the Securities Act or any other rule of similar effect or (ii) all of the shares have been sold pursuant to this prospectus or Rule 144 under the Securities Act or any other rule of similar effect. The resale shares will be sold only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers if required under applicable state securities laws. In addition, in certain states, the resale shares of common stock covered hereby may not be sold unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and is complied with.

Under applicable rules and regulations under the Exchange Act, any person engaged in the distribution of the resale shares may not simultaneously engage in market making activities with respect to the common stock for the applicable restricted period, as defined in Regulation M, prior to the commencement of the distribution. In addition, the selling shareholders will be subject to applicable provisions of the Exchange Act and the rules and regulations thereunder, including Regulation M, which may limit the timing of purchases and sales of shares of the common stock by the selling shareholders or any other person. We will make copies of this prospectus available to the selling shareholders and have informed them of the need to deliver a copy of this prospectus to each purchaser at or prior to the time of the sale (including by compliance with Rule 172 under the Securities Act).

CERTAIN LEGAL MATTERS

The validity of securities covered by this prospectus has been passed upon for us by Jeffer, Mangels, Butler & Marmaro LLP. Any underwriters, dealers or agents will be advised by their own legal counsel concerning issues related to the offering of securities pursuant to this prospectus.

EXPERTS

Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, has audited our consolidated financial statements included in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 30, 2008 and the effectiveness of our internal control over financial reporting as of December 30 2008, as set forth in their reports, which are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and elsewhere in the registration statement. Our financial statements are incorporated by reference in reliance on Ernst & Young LLP's reports, given on their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and other periodic reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any such material at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. You can also find our SEC filings on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>.

Table of Contents

Our Internet address is <http://www.bjsrestaurants.com>. We make available free of charge, on or through the SEC Filings section of our website, annual reports on Form 10-K, quarterly reports on Form 10-Q, current reports on Form 8-K and amendments to those reports filed or furnished pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act as soon as reasonably practicable after we electronically file such material with, or furnish it to, the SEC. Also posted on our website, and available in print upon request to our Investor Relations Department, are the charters for our Audit Committee, Compensation Committee and Governance and Nominating Committee, and our Code of Conduct, which governs our Directors, officers and employees. Information on our website is not part of this prospectus.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE OF INFORMATION FILED WITH THE SEC

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference into this prospectus the information we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important business, financial and other information to you by referring you to other documents separately filed with the SEC. All information incorporated by reference is part of this prospectus, unless and until that information is updated and superseded by the information contained in this prospectus or any information incorporated later. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, prior to completion of the offering of the securities described in this prospectus.

We incorporate by reference the documents listed below:

our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 30, 2008;

our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended March 31, 2009, June 30, 2009 and September 30, 2009;

our current reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC since December 30, 2008, except for the portions thereof that are deemed furnished, and not filed, for the purposes of Section 18 of the Exchange Act;

all other reports filed pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Exchange Act since December 30, 2008, except for the portions thereof that are deemed furnished, and not filed, for the purposes of Section 18 of the Exchange Act; and

the description of our common stock contained in our registration statement on Form 8-A, filed on September 24, 1996, including any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description.

We will furnish without charge to you, on written or oral request, a copy of any or all of the documents incorporated by reference, including exhibits to these documents. You should direct any requests for documents to:

BJ's Restaurants, Inc.

7755 Center Avenue, Suite 300

Huntington Beach, CA 92647

Attention: Shareholders Relations

Phone: (714) 500-2400

This prospectus is part of a registration statement we filed with the Commission. You should rely only on the information or representations provided in this prospectus. We have authorized no one to provide you with different information. We are not making an offer of these securities in any state where the offer is not permitted. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of this prospectus.

Table of Contents**PART II****INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS****Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution**

The following table sets forth the estimated costs and expenses, other than the underwriting discounts and commissions, payable by us in connection with the offering of the securities being registered. The selling stockholders will bear none of the following expenses. All of the amounts shown are estimates, except for the registration fee.

Registration Fee Under Securities Act	\$ 10,425.87
Legal Fees	(1)
Accounting Fees and Expenses	(1)
Printing and Mailing Costs	(1)
Miscellaneous Fees and Expenses	(1)
Total	\$ (1)

(1) These fees and expenses depend on the securities offered and the number of issuances and, accordingly, cannot be estimated at this time.

Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers

Pursuant to provisions of the California General Corporation Law, the Articles of Incorporation of the Company, as amended, include a provision which eliminates the personal liability of its directors to the Company and its shareholders for monetary damage to the fullest extent permissible under California law. This limitation has no effect on a director's liability (i) for acts or omissions that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing and culpable violation of law, (ii) for acts or omissions that a director believes to be contrary to the best interests of the Company or its shareholders or that involve the absence of good faith on the part of the director, (iii) for any transaction from which a director derived an improper personal benefit, (iv) for acts or omissions that show a reckless disregard for the director's duty to the Company or its shareholders in circumstances in which the director was aware, or should have been aware, in the ordinary course of performing his or her duties, of a risk of a serious injury to the Company or its shareholders, (v) for acts or omissions that constitute an unexcused pattern of inattention that amounts to an abdication of the director's duty to the Company or its shareholders, (vi) under Section 310 of the California General Corporation Law (concerning contracts or transactions between the Company and a director) or (vii) under Section 316 of the California General Corporation Law (concerning directors' liability for improper dividends, loans and guarantees). The provision does not eliminate or limit the liability of an officer for any act or omission as an officer, notwithstanding that the officer is also a director or that his actions, if negligent or improper, have been ratified by the Board of Directors. Further, the provision has no effect on claims arising under federal or state securities or blue sky laws and does not affect the availability of injunctions and other equitable remedies available to the Company's shareholders for any violation of a director's fiduciary duty to the Company or its shareholders.

The Company's Articles of Incorporation authorize the Company to indemnify its officers, directors and other agents to the fullest extent permitted by California law. The Company's Articles of Incorporation also authorize the Company to indemnify its officers, directors and agents for breach of duty to the corporation and its shareholders through bylaw provisions, agreements or both,

Table of Contents

in excess of the indemnification otherwise provided under California law, subject to certain limitations. The Company has entered into indemnification agreements with certain directors and officers whereby the Company will indemnify each such person (an indemnitee) against certain claims arising out of certain past, present or future acts, omissions or breaches of duty committed by an indemnitee while serving in his employment capacity. Such indemnification does not apply to acts or omissions which are knowingly fraudulent, deliberately dishonest or arise from willful misconduct. Indemnification will only be provided to the extent that the indemnitee has not already received payments in respect of a claim from the Company or from an insurance company. Under certain circumstances, such indemnification (including reimbursement of expenses incurred) will be allowed for liability arising under the Securities Act.

The Company has purchased directors and officers liability insurance policy insuring directors and officers of the Company. The policy insures directors and officers against unindemnified losses arising from certain wrongful acts in their capacities as directors and officers and reimburses us for those losses for which we have lawfully indemnified the directors and officers.

The registration rights agreement between the company and the selling shareholders provides for indemnification by the selling shareholders of us and our officers and directors for certain liabilities arising under the Securities Act.

Item 16. Exhibits

The exhibits filed as a part of this Registration Statement are as follows:

- 1.1 Form of Underwriting Agreement.*
- 3.1 Articles of Incorporation of BJs Restaurants, Inc., as amended. (1)
- 3.2 Bylaws of BJs Restaurants, Inc., as amended (2)
- 4.1 Specimen Common Stock Certificate of BJs Restaurants, Inc. (3)
- 4.2 Stock Purchase Agreement by and between the Company, The Jacmar Companies and William H. Tilley dated February 22, 2001(4)
- 4.3 Senior Indenture.
- 4.4 Subordinated Indenture.
- 4.5 Form of Senior Note.*
- 4.6 Form of Senior Note.*
- 4.7 Form of Certificate of Determination.*
- 4.8 Form of Preferred Stock Certificate.*
- 4.9 Form of Deposit Agreement.*
- 4.10 Form of Unit Agreement.*
- 4.11 Form of Unit Certificate.*
- 4.12 Form of Warrant Agreement.*
- 4.13 Form of Warrant Certificate.*
- 5.1 Opinion of Jeffer, Mangels, Butler & Marmaro LLP regarding the legality of the securities being registered.
- 12.1 Statement regarding Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges.
- 23.1 Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.
- 23.2 Consent of Jeffer, Mangels, Butler & Marmaro LLP (included within Exhibit 5.1).
- 24.1 Power of Attorney (included on the signature page hereto).
- 25.1 Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of the Trustee under the Senior Indenture.**

Edgar Filing: BJs RESTAURANTS INC - Form S-3

25.2 Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of the Trustee under the Subordinated Indenture.**

- (1) Incorporated by reference to (i) Exhibit 3.1 to the Registration Statement on Form SB-2 filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on June 28, 1996, as amended by the Company's Registration Statement on Form SB-2/A filed with the Commission on August 1, 1996 and the Company's Registration Statement on Form SB-2/A filed with the Commission on August 22, 1996 (File No. 3335182-LA) (as amended, the Registration Statement), and (ii) Exhibit 3.3 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended January 2, 2005 filed by the Registrant with the Commission on March 15, 2005.

II-2

Table of Contents

- (2) Incorporated by reference to Exhibits 3.1 to the Form 8-K filed on June 4, 2007.
- (3) Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the Registration Statement.
- (4) Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.12 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2000 filed by the Registrant with the Commission on April 2, 2001.
- * To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a report filed under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and incorporated herein by reference.
- ** Where applicable, to be incorporated by reference to a subsequent filing in accordance with Section 305 (b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended.

Item 17. Undertakings.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

- (a)(1) to file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:
 - (i) to include any prospectus required by Section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act of 1933;

- (ii) to reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of this registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in the registration statement; provided, however, that notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than a 20% change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the Calculation of Registration Fee table in the effective registration statement; and

- (iii) to include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in the registration statement or any material change to such information in the registration statement;

provided, however, that the undertakings set forth in clauses (i) and (ii) above do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those clauses is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15 (d) of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 that are incorporated by reference in this registration statement or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of the registration statement;

- (b) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.
- (c) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.
- (d) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser:
 - If the registrant is relying on Rule 430B:

- (A) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rules 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of the registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in the registration statement; and

Table of Contents

- (B) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of this registration statement or in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statements as of the earlier date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of the registration statement relating to the securities in the registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof. *Provided, however*, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.
- (C) If the registrant is subject to Rule 430C, each prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) as part of a registration statement relating to an offering, other than registration statements relying on Rule 430B or other than prospectuses filed in reliance on Rule 430A shall be deemed to be part of and included in the registration statement as of the date it is first used after effectiveness. *Provided, however*, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into the registration statement or prospectus that is part of the registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such first use, supersede or modify any statement that was made in the registration statement or prospectus that was part of the registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such date of first use.
- (e) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act of 1933 to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:
- (i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;
 - (ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;
 - (iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and
 - (iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.
- (f) That, for the purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each filing of our annual report pursuant to Section 13(a) or 15(d) of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934) that is incorporated by reference in this

Table of Contents

registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof;

- (g) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act of 1933 may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that the opinion of the Securities and Exchange Commission such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) it is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question of whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue;

- (h) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes that:

For purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, the information omitted from the form of prospectus filed as part of this registration statement in reliance upon Rule 430A and contained in a form of prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(1) or (4) or 497(h) under the Securities Act shall be deemed to be part of this registration statement as of the time it was declared effective.

For the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act of 1933, each post-effective amendment that contains a form of prospectus shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial *bona fide* offering thereof.

- (i) The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes to file an application for the purpose of determining the eligibility of the trustee to act under subsection (a) a of Section 310 of the Trust Indenture Act in accordance with the rules and regulations prescribed by the Commission under Section 305(b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act.

Table of Contents**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the Registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all of the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this Registration Statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the State of California, on January 7, 2010.

BJ S RESTAURANTS, INC.

By: /s/ GERALD W. DEITCHLE
 Name: **Gerald W. Deitchle**
 Title: **Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer**

POWER OF ATTORNEY

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this Registration Statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the date indicated. Each person whose signature appears below, hereby makes, constitutes and appoints Gregory S. Levin, and/or Gerald W. Deitchle, or any of them, his true and lawful attorney, with full power to sign for such person and in such person's name and capacity indicated below, and with full power of substitution, any and all amendments, including post-effective amendments, to this Registration Statement, hereby ratifying and confirming such person's signature as it may be signed by said attorney to any and all amendments.

Signature	Title	Date
/s/ GERALD W. DEITCHLE Gerald W. Deitchle	Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer (Principal Executive Officer)	January 7, 2010
/s/ GREGORY S. LEVIN Gregory S. Levin	Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, and Secretary (Principal Financial and Accounting Officer)	January 7, 2010
/s/ PETER A. BASSI Peter A. Bassi	Director	January 7, 2010
/s/ LARRY D. BOUTS Larry D. Bouts	Director	January 7, 2010
/s/ SHANN M. BRASSFIELD Shann M. Brassfield	Director	January 7, 2010
/s/ JAMES A. DAL POZZO James A. Dal Pozzo	Director	January 7, 2010
/s/ JOHN F. GRUNDHOFER John F. Grundhofer	Director	January 7, 2010
/s/ J. ROGER KING J. Roger King	Director	January 7, 2010

J. Roger King

II-6

Table of Contents

INDEX TO EXHIBITS

The exhibits filed as a part of this Registration Statement are as follows:

- 1.1 Form of Underwriting Agreement.*
- 3.1 Articles of Incorporation of BJs Restaurants, Inc., as amended. (1)
- 3.2 Bylaws of BJs Restaurants, Inc., as amended (2)
- 4.1 Specimen Common Stock Certificate of BJs Restaurants, Inc. (3)
- 4.2 Stock Purchase Agreement by and between the Company, The Jacmar Companies and William H. Tilley dated February 22, 2001(4)
- 4.3 Senior Indenture.
- 4.4 Subordinated Indenture.
- 4.5 Form of Senior Note.*
- 4.6 Form of Senior Note.*
- 4.7 Form of Certificate of Determination.*
- 4.8 Form of Preferred Stock Certificate.*
- 4.9 Form of Deposit Agreement.*
- 4.10 Form of Unit Agreement.*
- 4.11 Form of Unit Certificate.*
- 4.12 Form of Warrant Agreement.*
- 4.13 Form of Warrant Certificate.*
- 5.1 Opinion of Jeffer, Mangels, Butler & Marmaro LLP regarding the legality of the securities being registered.
- 12.1 Statement regarding Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges.
- 23.1 Consent of Independent Registered Public Accounting Firm.
- 23.2 Consent of Jeffer, Mangels, Butler & Marmaro LLP (included within Exhibit 5.1).
- 24.1 Power of Attorney (included on the signature page hereto).
- 25.1 Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of the Trustee under the Senior Indenture.**
- 25.2 Form T-1 Statement of Eligibility under the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended, of the Trustee under the Subordinated Indenture.**

- (1) Incorporated by reference to (i) Exhibit 3.1 to the Registration Statement on Form SB-2 filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on June 28, 1996, as amended by the Company's Registration Statement on Form SB-2/A filed with the Commission on August 1, 1996 and the Company's Registration Statement on Form SB-2/A filed with the Commission on August 22, 1996 (File No. 3335182-LA) (as amended, the "Registration Statement"), and (ii) Exhibit 3.3 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended January 2, 2005 filed by the Registrant with the Commission on March 15, 2005.
- (2) Incorporated by reference to Exhibits 3.1 to the Form 8-K filed on June 4, 2007.
- (3) Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the Registration Statement.
- (4) Incorporated by reference to Exhibit 10.12 to the Registrant's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2000 filed by the Registrant with the Commission on April 2, 2001.

* To be filed by amendment or as an exhibit to a report filed under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 and incorporated herein by reference.

** Where applicable, to be incorporated by reference to a subsequent filing in accordance with Section 305 (b)(2) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended.

