

# Mr. An Buys his Landmark Building on Oracle



TUCSON, ARIZONA – Mr. An’s Restaurants all started in Tucson, Arizona. This business was started by Mr. An, and is still run by him and his family to this day.

Mr. An recently purchased the building they’ve occupied since 2000 at 6091 N Oracle Rd in Tucson for \$2 million (\$234 PSF) in a seller carry back transaction from Robert Gugino.

The 8,551-square-foot building was sub-leased to Benihana for awhile until Mr. An moved back in 2010.

*“We believe in giving back to the community that has given so much to us, and have annual charitable events to help others in need, as well as discounts for the students, military, and first responders that make up a such a large and important part of our customers,” said An. “We are also big fans of all our local sports teams (BEAR DOWN!) and love having them over whenever we can.”*

An opened his first restaurant in 1983 after a disappointing trip to one of Tucson’s few Asian eateries. Everything that night was bad – the food, the service, the cleanliness. An thought he could do better. Never mind that he didn’t have any experience running a restaurant, or even working in a restaurant. He bought Little Sicily Restaurant on South Craycroft Road near Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and expanded the building to three times its original size. The new restaurant, Great Wall China, thrived. Buoyed by its success, An decided to roll the dice with a second dining spot.

In 1991, he opened Sakura, the restaurant that made him famous. The eastside eatery boasted multiple teppanyaki tables and capitalized on America's fascination with Japanese cuisine. It also benefited from some high-profile diners.

In town for spring training, the Arizona Diamondbacks made Sakura their post-game hangout. "Shoot, I think I ate there every night for spring training," Luis Gonzalez says. "We were kind of inseparable. People made fun of us because I said, 'Yeah, he's my dad.'"

It became fashionable to eat at Sakura and before long the walls were covered with photos of An posing with various athletes and movie stars. An says his favorite celebrities to dine at Sakura were two-sport phenomenon Bo Jackson, actress Kim Basinger, Suns owner Jerry Colangelo and White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf.

Sakura's success led to a second Sakura at 6091 North Oracle Road in 2000, as well as three Phoenix restaurants, which he has since sold.

The Ans sold The Great Wall China, to open Sakura at 6534 E. Tanque Verde Road in 1991 and then sold it in 2008. 2010 – 2014 – Opens An Del Sol, An Express, and FrozAn in Casino Del Sol. The restaurants were then sold to the casino in 2014.

To learn more, see **RED Comp #8900**.