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RESTAURANTS

## How One Of North Carolina's Favorite Burger Spots Got Its Start In A Gas Station

By [Nick Pisano](#)

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Island Burgers & Bites / Facebook

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moved on to bigger and better accommodations, this tasty restaurant first launched inside a gas station, a venue not typically known for high-quality eats. However, the proprietors have proven that's not always the case, especially when the food is this unique and delicious!

The spot's origins date back to 2012, when brothers Kanwar and Ajay Singh purchased an Island Kwik Mart and Sunoco gas station in Carolina Beach, a coastal North Carolina town about 15 miles south of Wilmington. Despite the two having no experience in the restaurant industry, Ajay proposed adding a small eatery in 2017.

Since the start, Island Burgers & Bites has kept it simple, with a menu that sticks to basics like its namesake burgers, cheesesteaks, hot dogs (though not your everyday **gas station hot dogs**), basic sandwiches, and sides. Nevertheless, the 200-square-foot kitchen rapidly earned a following of hungry locals, something that the brothers chalk up to fresh, high-end ingredients and a focus on consistent cooking methods (perhaps including some of these **tips for making perfect burgers**) that produce reliably great results.

## Critical acclaim and a new location

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With this much buzz, others outside the Carolina Beach community quickly began to take notice of Island Burgers & Bites. In 2024, Yelp named it the fifth-best restaurant in all of North Carolina, in part resulting from its impressive 4.7-star rating. Multiple [reviews on the platform](#) described the burger as one of the best they'd ever had, while others called the place a "hidden gem" or marveled at the unassuming location.

Although it may always be associated with its grab-and-go beginnings, years of success helped the brothers move into a standalone location in May 2025. Early signs appear to show the move is a success, with Island Burgers & Bites posting social media photos of lines out the door and down the street shortly after opening. Demand was so high that the restaurant was even forced to close early after running out of food.

For burger lovers in the Carolinas, there's no doubt it's worth a trip to check out these local favorites. Although it no longer qualifies for the list of [best gas station food in every state](#), there's no doubt Island Burgers & Bites is more evidence that you can't always judge a book by its cover — or a restaurant by its location.

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