

Serving professional chefs for over 40 years, AUI has prospered through many changes, meeting challenges with vigor and an uncompromising commitment to quality products and services. From the days as a one-man show to the 140-strong force of today, AUI has partnered with top companies from around the world to bring classic and innovative tools to today's industry trendsetters.

AUI employs corporate R&D pastry chefs and seasoned professionals whose experience provide ideas and assistance to those in the field. The sales force, the hub and point of contact for customers, are resources themselves as many are chefs by profession. They are anchored by an excellent customer service team, providing solutions that make the most of a chef's time and creative talent without sacrificing the demand for taste, craftsmanship, and quality.

### **TIMELINE**

#### **1968**

As food director of the Watergate Terrace Restaurant in Washington, DC, Swiss-born chef *Albert Uster* begins a search for confectionery products not available in the United States. Finding them in his native Switzerland, he forms a partnership with some of the finest manufacturers of semi-finished products and begins to import Swiss couvertures, fruit gels and fondants into the United States.

#### **1968-1980**

By word of mouth, the quality of products gains recognition in the industry, building a reputation among pastry chefs across the country. The company is noted as a chocolate and confectionery specialist in the luxury hotel and restaurant business.

#### **1980**

The company is registered as Albert Uster Imports, Inc. and relocates its corporate

headquarters to Gaithersburg, MD, minutes from the nation's capital. The Maryland hub serves cities and towns across the east coast, while three additional warehouses in Kansas City, San Francisco, and Honolulu serve the midwest, west coast and Hawaii. Product selection includes high quality ingredients, semi-finished, and finished confectionery products to serve professional pastry chefs.

### 1980-1998

AUI forms partnerships with additional Swiss manufacturers, including *Bombasei*, which expands the company's decoration line with a comprehensive range of cutting edge designs. Importing finished and semi-finished ingredients from

*Läderach*

adds chocolate shells, truffles, pralines and boxed chocolates to the mix.

*Hug*

, known for its world-class tartlet shells, greatly expands the company's business. Among other exclusive brands are

*Vanini, Bio Familia, Fassbind, Olo Marzipan, Hochdorf*

and

*Thermohaus*

.

### 1998

Albert Uster becomes Chairman of the board of directors, passing day-to-day leadership direction to *Philipp Braun*. As CEO, Braun brings a new perspective, integrating his expertise as a food scientist into the organization. He develops a plan for expansion, building on the company's excellent reputation by focusing first on products, then services, brand awareness and becoming the innovation leader by introducing over 100 new products each year.

### 2000

The company overhauls its product line, partnering with additional companies who share its innovative vision. Under a new management team, dedication and hard work breed *Des Alpes*, a line of 13 premium couvertures plus four additional brands.

*Frutta Prima*

brings all facets of fruit, from compounds, purees, dessert sauces and extracts to bake-able marmalades, under one flagship brand.

*Zurimix*

mousses provide ease of use and versatility for the budget conscious and understaffed. Adding décor and fillings to desserts is easier with

*Confiseur d'Or*

and

*Arte Piatto*

, providing nut pastes, chocolate shavings and other sprinkle-like decorations.

### 2001

Albert Uster Switzerland is founded, enabling chefs to attain high quality ingredients and products worldwide.

### 2002

Sugar artists are introduced to an alternative to sugar, *Venuance* pearls and crystals. The *Pastry Ideale*

brand provides staple products to assist chefs in the creation of masterpieces.

### 2003

*IcEscape* launches AUI into the frozen dessert and breakfast pastry business, bringing solutions to time-strapped pastry chefs refusing to compromise on quality. Four additional frozen food warehouses act as point of departure for a selection of tarts, cakes, petit entremets, petit fours, croissants, and danishes for prompt delivery nationwide.

### 2004

AUI answers industry demand for consolidated gourmet food buying. It extends its hand to executive chefs, bringing premium quality savory items to top restaurant and hotel kitchens across the country. Among the offerings are black and white truffles, charcuterie, caviar, salmon and foie gras, culminating under the brand name *Savoir Fare*. Partnering with European manufacturers equally committed to the company's vision of quality, the brand fills a void felt by chefs searching for gourmet savory products.

### 2005

Nationwide launch of *IcEscape*.

### 2006

AUI becomes HAACP certified and holds a preferred importer status.

### 2007

Introducing the long expected *Orchid* chocolate, couvertures and glazes of a premium value. Also launching this year are the groundbreaking, 15 minute solutions for room amenities and/or praline presentations - the Arte *Piatto Amenity Gallery*.

### 2008

AUI celebrates 40 years in business with a launch of over 380 new products! AUI opens a new distribution center in Hollywood, FL. AUI is also both excited and honored to have announced that Jeanne Weaver Ruesch assumed the role of Chairwoman in the aftermath of the tragic death of Albert Uster, Founder of Albert Uster Imports. Mr. Uster was the unfortunate victim of a glider plane crash in the Swiss Alps on July 25, 2008.

AUI partners with Y. Hata & Co., Limited's specialty division, Hans Weiler Foods (Y. Hata) in Hawaii, a premier Hawaiian foodservice distributor since 1903 in exclusive distribution of AUI's product in Hawaii.

### 2009

AUI continues to meet customer needs with premium quality brands such as Orchid Chocolate, HUG Tartlets and Zurimix Mousses Mixes. Orchid Chocolate celebrates its biennial anniversary.

To view press kit, please click [here](#).

For more information on AUI products and services, please click [here](#).