

# Big Boy Restaurants

by  
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Big Boy was started as Bob's Pantry in 1936 by Bob Wian in Glendale, California. The restaurant became known as "Bob's, Home of the Big Boy Hamburger" then as Bob's Big Boy. It became a local chain under that name and nationally under the Big Boy name, franchised by Robert C. Wian Enterprises. Marriott Corporation bought Big Boy in 1967. One of the larger franchise operators, Elias Brothers, purchased the chain from Marriott in 1987, moved the headquarters of the company to Warren, Michigan, and operated it until bankruptcy was declared in 2000. Following the bankruptcy, the chain was sold to investor Robert Liggett, Jr., who took over as Chairman, renamed the company Big Boy Restaurants International and maintained the headquarters in Warren. The company is the operator or franchisor for 101 Big Boy restaurants in the United States. Big Boy Restaurants International also licenses 279 Big Boy restaurants operating in Japan.

Immediately after Liggett's purchase, Big Boy Restaurants International—then known as Liggett Restaurant Enterprises—negotiated an agreement with the other large franchise operator, Frisch's Restaurants. The Big Boy trademarks in Kentucky, Indiana, and most of Ohio and Tennessee transferred to Frisch's ownership; all other





Frisch's territories transferred to Liggett. Thus Frisch's is no longer a franchisee, but Big Boy Restaurants International and Frisch's are now co-registrants of the Big Boy name and trademark. Frisch's operates or franchises 121 Big Boy restaurants in the United States. [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big\\_Boy\\_Restaurants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Boy_Restaurants)]

Now let's get to the good stuff...the covers! Well, with all those restaurants, there should be a good selection of covers. As it turns out, there are about 500 listed as of last July. Mike Samuels, DC, maintains the listing, and, as far as I know, Mike has the biggest collection—375, also as of last July.

Since the BIG BOY name was franchised out to different chains, not surprisingly the resulting covers, although they have the BIG BOY logo, display a variety sources—Shoney's, Elias's, etc. I haven't seen any 30-strikes, 40-strikes, boxes, etc., just 20-strikes, but I certainly haven't seen all those which are listed. It's definitely a popular small category, and there's a lot of nostalgia associated with the logo.



Roster of named franchisees