

The Bar Method Story

1940s Lotte Berk, a German dancer who fled the Nazis in the late 1930s and came to London, injures her back dancing and gets the idea to combine her ballet bar dance conditioning routine with her rehabilitative therapy.

1959 The first Lotte Berk Method Studio opens in West End, London, England.

1971 Lydia Bach, an American student of Lotte Berk, buys the rights to the Lotte Berk name and opens the first U.S. Lotte Berk Method studio in New York City, NY.

1981 Burr Leonard, the founder and creator of The Bar Method, takes her first Lotte Berk Method class in NYC with her sister Mimi.

1991 Burr and her then husband Carl Diehl traveled to London to meet with Lotte Berk and were inspired to buy a license to own and operate Lotte Berk Method studios in Connecticut. Burr spent the year training at the Lotte Berk Studio in NYC.

1992 Burr and Carl open their first Lotte Berk Method Studio in Greenwich, CT.

1992-1999 Burr and Carl open three more Lotte Berk studios in New Canaan, Darien, and Westport, CT. During this time, Burr notices that some of her clients knees, backs, and shoulders are not responding well and enlists a physical therapist to re-work the exercises to make them safer and more effective.

2000 Burr and Carl end their 10-year license agreement with Lotte Berk and incorporate The Bar Method.

2001 Burr and Carl open their first Bar Method studio in the Marina neighborhood of San Francisco, CA.

2003 Carl, Burr, and Burr's sister, Mimi Leonard Fleischman, open the second Bar Method location in Los Angeles, CA in partnership with Mimi's husband Mark Fleischman. The first Bar Method licensees open a studio in San Mateo, CA. Bar Method locations now total 3.

2004-2007 Four studios open in Greenbrae, CA; West Hollywood, CA; Walnut Creek, CA; Rye Brook, NY. Bar Method locations now total 7.

2008 Burr and Carl incorporate The Bar Method Franchising Company. Nine more studios open in New Jersey, California and Illinois. Bar Method locations now total 16.

2009 Burr and Carl incorporate The Bar Method Media Company and produce the 'Change Your Body' and 'Accelerated Workout' DVD's are produced. Seven more studios open in California, New Jersey, Colorado, Washington and Illinois. Bar Method locations now total 23.

2010 Twelve more Bar Method studios open, four in new states Texas, Oregon, Missouri and Florida. The first international location opens in Vancouver, BC, Canada. The Bar Method Media Company publishes three new DVD's ('Beginner's Workout', 'Dancer's Body', 'Pregnancy Workout'). Bar Method locations now total 35.

2011 Eighteen new studios open. The Bar Method headquarters opens its corporate offices in San Francisco, CA. Bar Method Media Company publishes 'Super Sculpting' and 'Super Sculpting II' DVDs. Bar Method locations now total 53.

2012 Fourteen new studios open. Co-founder Carl Diehl retires. Investment firm, Mainsail Partners, purchases 40% of The Bar Method and Burr Leonard becomes CEO and President. Bar Method locations now total 72.