

THE MERZ APOTHECARY TIMELINE



1875

Swiss-born pharmacist Peter Merz founded Merz Apothecary on North Lincoln Avenue in Chicago in the largely German neighborhood called Lakeview.

26-year old, Indian-born pharmacist, Abdul Qaiyum, was disenchanted with pharmacy and was considering a career change. He reluctantly visited Merz Apothecary as a favor to a family friend one month before Ralph Merz was going to permanently close the business in the absence of a buyer. Abdul fell in love with the business and agreed to buy it on the spot. He went home to deliver the news to his wife, Rita, who was pregnant with their first son, Anthony.

1903

Peter's son, Lee Merz, joined the business, becoming the 2nd generation pharmacy owner in the Merz family.

1935

Lee's three sons, Earl, Ralph and Melvyn Merz, join the business as pharmacists. Eventually Ralph and Melvyn became the 3rd generation owners. Ralph continued at Merz until he was ready to retire in the early 1970's.

1972



1982

As the business outgrew the Lakeview store, Abdul and Rita moved Merz Apothecary to its current location at 4716 N Lincoln Ave in Lincoln Square, a vibrant neighborhood with European ambience. They hired an Austrian architect and woodworker to create an apothecary as it would look in Vienna in the late 1800's.

Anthony (aka TQ) and his brother Jeffrey (aka JQ) record their first episode of SmallflowerTV where they review products and try to share a little of the Merz Apothecary experience with viewers around the world.

2000

As Smallflower begins to flourish, Anthony joins the business as a partner, becoming the 5th generation owner of Merz Apothecary. In the same year Merz publishes the first Smallflower catalog.

Austrian-born pharmacist and former US World Cup goalie Michael Winter joined the Merz Apothecary team. Abdul, realizing they had a good relationship, made Michael a partner in the business.

2008



For all episodes, visit: SMALLFLOWER.TV

2003

After 128 years of business, the Merz team expands the business with a second store, Merz Downtown, on the main floor of the historic Marshall Field's department store on State Street.

1998

Three years after graduating from Williams College and working at a successful internet startup, Abdul's oldest son, Anthony Qaiyum, launched Smallflower.com, the e-commerce division of Merz Apothecary.

Fun Fact: Smallflower was chosen as the name of the website because too many people had difficulty spelling "apothecary."

1990



2010

United Airlines' Hemi-spheres Magazine names Merz Apothecary "One of the World's 12 Best Boutiques"!

Merz Downtown moves to its current location of 17 E Monroe St, at the main entrance of The Palmer House, the oldest continuously running hotel in the nation.



2011



Merz Apothecary and Smallflower launch The Great Shave, a celebration of the wet shaving community, featuring expert demonstrations, vendors from around the world, and fine food, wine and spirits.

2014

As the Merz stores and Smallflower continue to grow, 2014 will be a year of expansion, with a new adjoining storefront in the works in Lincoln Square, plus some new product launches. Stay tuned!



Merz partners Michael Winter, Abdul Qaiyum, and Anthony Qaiyum.



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