



Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza is 'Going Clean' as it Expands Beyond 100 Locations

Leading Fast-Casual Pizza Chain Leveraging Its Size To "Raise The Bar" In Ingredient Sourcing

December 10, 2015 – Los Angeles, Calif. – Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza, the nation's largest and fastest growing build-your-own pizza chain, today announced that it has passed the "century" mark, with 103 restaurants now open and 87 additional sites currently in development. The fast-casual artisanal pizza brand, known for its chef-driven recipes and casually hip restaurants, also announced that it has successfully leveraged its growing size and category leadership to "raise the bar" in its ingredient sourcing, advancing its commitment to serve food that is free of artificial colors, flavors, preservatives and fillers.

With the recent removal of nitrites from its pepperoni, salame, ham and bacon, Blaze Pizza's 'journey to clean' is nearly complete. In the first part of 2016, the company plans to upgrade a short list of remaining items – olives, garlic, salad dressings and blood orange lemonade – in a move to ensure that all ingredients for its pizzas and salads are additive-free. The company will continue to serve fountain sodas and use marshmallows in its signature S'More Pies.

"We know our guests prefer fresh, less processed ingredients and scratch cooking. Here at Blaze, we agree that food without additives is an intelligent choice," said Bradford Kent, Executive Chef of Blaze Pizza. "As we've grown, we've been able to work directly with our suppliers to carefully source ingredients to our exacting specifications. We're thrilled to now be able to 'change the game' with our clean ingredient strategy."

Blaze Pizza's commitment to 'Intelligent Choices for Pizzas, People & the Planet' is driven by its belief that guests deserve a better way to enjoy fast food. The company maintains a "keep it simple" philosophy that shuns rapid-fire new product introductions and limited time offers, and instead focuses on carefully sourcing high-quality ingredients, making its dough from scratch and cooking its fast-fire'd pizzas to order, to the delight of its food-centric fan base.

"Fast-food companies -- as they've grown in size -- have historically shifted to more processed, lower-cost ingredients. At Blaze, it's the exact opposite. Each restaurant we open increases our leverage in sourcing less processed, higher quality ingredients. It's how we've been able to nix the nitrates and remove artificial additives," said Jim Mizes, president and COO of Blaze Pizza. "It's a strategy we're fully committed to. As I like to tell our guests: You keep eating our pizza. We'll keep raising the bar."

About Blaze Pizza

Blaze Pizza is a modern day “pizza joint”, serving up artisanal pizzas that are both fast and affordable. By taking pizza back to its roots – making dough in-house, carefully sourcing ingredients, and cooking by fire – the innovative fast-casual concept has quickly become one of the hottest restaurant businesses in the country, with fans lining up each day for their custom-built pizzas, freshly made salads, blood orange lemonade and s’more pies. Each restaurant features an interactive open-kitchen format that allows guests to customize one of the menu’s signature pizzas or create their own, choosing from a wide selection of fresh, high-quality ingredients – all for about \$8. The generously-sized personal pizzas are then sent to a blazing hot open-flame oven – the centerpiece of the restaurant – where dedicated pizzasmiths ensure the thin-crust pies are fast-fire’d and ready to eat in just 180 seconds. Restaurants make fresh dough from scratch using a proprietary recipe developed by Executive Chef Bradford Kent (the “Pizza Whisperer”), which requires a 24-hour fermentation period to produce his signature light-as-air, crisp crust. For pizza fans with specific dietary needs, Blaze Pizza offers gluten-free dough and vegan cheese.

The first Blaze Pizza restaurant opened in Irvine, CA on August 6, 2012. The following year, the company grew to 10 locations and began expanding beyond California. In just over three years, the company has grown to 104 locations in 26 states, including the major metropolitan areas of Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Dallas, Las Vegas, Miami and Washington, D.C

Now ranked as the overall #2 brand in the Fast Casual Top 100, Blaze Pizza is building momentum and developing a cult-like following as it expands across the country. Founded by Elise and Rick Wetzel (co-founder of Wetzel’s Pretzels), the concept is backed by investors including LeBron James, Maria Shriver, Boston Red Sox co-owner Tom Werner and movie producer John Davis. For more information, please visit blazepizza.com and facebook.com/blazepizza or [click here to view a company video](#).

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