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Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza & Levy Family Partners Opening First Three Chicago Locations

Los Angeles Based Fast-Casual Artisanal Pizza Chain Plans 15 Chicago Area Restaurants

October 29, 2013 – Los Angeles, Calif. – Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza, the innovative fast-casual artisanal pizza chain, today announced that it will soon be entering the Chicago market with three new locations. Born and raised in California, Blaze Pizza has begun to expand beyond its Los Angeles base, and is preparing now to bring its freakishly fast and extremely affordable artisanal pizzas to the Chicago area. “It’s a light, crispy custom-built pizza that sells for less than eight bucks – and it only takes a couple of minutes to cook,” said Steve Florsheim, managing partner of Levy Family Partners. “We’ve seen the popularity of this concept in Los Angeles and think that Chicago will flip for this too.”

Blaze Pizza is being developed in the Chicago area by Levy Family Partners under a 15-store franchise development agreement. Levy Family Partners was established by entrepreneur Larry Levy, founder and chairman of Levy Restaurants, as the holding company for his family’s investments in restaurants, hotels, real estate and other ventures. The first three Chicago area restaurants are located at 953 W. Belmont Avenue (between Sheffield and Clark), 555 W. Madison Street (near Presidential Towers) and 227 E. Ontario Street (between Lake Shore and Michigan Avenue). The Belmont restaurant is scheduled to open in December, and the other two are scheduled for early 2014.

Blaze Pizza uses an interactive assembly line format that allows guests to create their own custom artisanal pizzas at lightning fast speed – each for less than \$8.00. Every Blaze Pizza restaurant makes its own dough from scratch using a recipe that requires a 24-hour fermentation period to produce its signature light-as-air, crisp crust. Guests watch as each perfectly proofed dough ball is pressed into a generous 11-inch crust. Next, they travel down the service line to “co-create” a signature pizza or design one of their own -- choosing from over

40 fresh-made sauces, hand-selected veggies and a variety of artisanal meats and cheeses. Pizzas are “fast-fire’d” in a blazing-hot oven and ready in a scant 180 seconds. Blaze Pizza’s menu also features signature salads, fresh lemonades, craft beer & wine and house-made S’more Pies. For pizza fans with specific dietary needs, Blaze Pizza offers gluten-free dough and vegan cheese. The prototypical store is 2,400 square feet with seating for about 60 guests.

“We were inspired to create a fast-casual pizza concept that offers exceptional quality at freakishly fast speed,” said Jim Mizes, President & COO of Blaze Pizza. “If you think about it, there really hasn’t been a good way to enjoy a quality pizza without the wait. Now there is. We believe this will be a game-changer.”

About Blaze Pizza

A creation of Elise and Rick Wetzel (founder of Wetzel's Pretzels), the concept is backed by investors including Maria Shriver, movie producer John Davis and Boston Red Sox co-owner Tom Werner, and includes the talents of highly acclaimed Executive Chef Bradford Kent, owner of Los Angeles' top -rated Olio Pizzeria & Café. The company, which has been featured by CNBC, The Wall Street Journal, Forbes and Good Morning America Live, was founded in Los Angeles and is now expanding nationwide. For more information, please visit www.blazepizza.com or www.facebook.com/blazepizza.