



Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza Announces Midwest Expansion

Former Panera Bread Franchisee to Open Six Blaze Pizza Locations Across Wisconsin

February 7, 2013 – Pasadena, Calif. – Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza, a leader in the fast-casual build-your-own pizza category, today announced that Walch Hospitality Group, LLC, led by John Walch, has signed an agreement to develop six franchise stores in Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin. The new Wisconsin stores are part of a development plan to build a concentration of Blaze Pizza restaurants in the Midwest that will include the neighboring states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. The first Wisconsin location is scheduled to open in Milwaukee this summer in a location that has not yet been announced.

“The stores in Wisconsin will be a tent-pole in our expansion throughout the Midwest,” said Elise Wetzel, President of Blaze Pizza. “We’ve had strong interest from franchise candidates in this part of the country and are currently working to identify the best development partners for the brand.”

As President of Walch Hospitality Group, LLC, Mr. Walch brings over 22 years of restaurant experience to the venture. Most recently John served as the President and Operating Partner of Carlon Company, an operator of 25 Panera Bread franchise stores in Wisconsin and Illinois that were acquired by the franchisor in 2011. Walch Hospitality Group is the third area developer in Blaze Pizza’s growing franchise network. Blaze Pizza is on track to have 20 area developers under contract by the end of 2013.

Blaze Pizza uses an assembly line format (similar to Chipotle Mexican Grill®) to create artisan pizzas at lightning fast speed – all for only \$6.85. Each 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 assembly line to “co-create” a signature pizza or design one of their own -- with over 40 artisanal toppings to choose from. Pizzas are “fast-fire’d” in a blazing-hot oven and ready in a scant 120 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.

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. Blaze Pizza's seasoned executive team brings QSR experience from numerous concepts including Buffalo Wild Wings, Chipotle Mexican Grill, Panda Express, McDonalds, and Carl's Jr. The company, which Forbes.com named a "*Hot New Restaurant Chain from an Established Brand*," is registered to sell franchises in 36 states including California, New York, Illinois, Florida, Texas, Virginia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Texas and Colorado. Blaze Pizza operates company stores in Pasadena and Irvine, CA. To learn more, please visit www.blazepizza.com or www.facebook.com/blazepizza.

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