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California: Happy Pi Day! Best ways to celebrate 3.14

By Mary Forgiione, Los Angeles Times Daily Deal and Travel Blogger

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Friday is Pi Day -- the Greek letter that represents the mathematical number 3.14159 (etc.)-- a thoroughly American invention with more happening than you might think.

The day may not merit a stop at the mall for a gift (unless you're buying something for someone who just got admitted to MIT, which sends out its college admission decisions on 3.14), but plenty of places in California are celebrating with pi worship, science puzzles, races and, of course, slices of pie (for the mathematically challenged or those who don't want to sit around calculating the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter).

Closer to home, the [Blaze Pizza](#) chain declares that math rules and will be selling pizzas for \$3.14 in Culver City, Irvine, Isla Vista, Carlsbad, Pasadena and other California locations.

Farther afield, the geek chic Exploratorium in San Francisco opens its doors for free Friday for a procession to the museum's Pi Shrine, discussion of pi, pizza pie dough tossing and pie eating. The museum lays claim to having started the mathematical holiday 26 years ago and will hold special pi-related events between 1 and 3:30.

Bring on the brain teasing. "Avoid the congested airports and typical math holiday madness, and join us instead for Ask a Scientist's Pi Day Puzzle Party — a boisterous math and logic puzzle competition." That's what it says on the organization's website, which also advises competitors to bring pencils, scratch paper and non-scientific calculators.

The free event is at the SoMa StrEat Food Park, 428 11th St., San Francisco.

Also in San Francisco, homemade pie maker Mission Pie at 2901 Mission St. offers a slice of apple huckleberry, pear blueberry or any of their sweet or savory pies for \$3.14 each.

Ditto for Chile Pies, which will serve up lemon buttermilk pie for \$3.14 at both locations: 314 (really?) Church St. in the Mission District and 601 Baker St.

Other events around the West include the Tahoe Mountain Milers in Carson City, Nev., which sponsors a free 3.14-mile Pi Day Fun Run on Friday night. The winning pie goes to the person who finishes closest to 30 minutes, 14 seconds. Everyone else get a slice of pizza pie.

By the way, it's also Albert Einstein's birthday, though the date in his native Germany may have been expressed as 14.3.1879.

Next year's Pi Day promises to be a real blowout when the date turns 3.14.15 -- extending pi's infinite numbers by two digits.

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