



## **Blaze Pizza Announces Nationwide Expansion Plans**

*New Fast-Casual Pizza Concept Now Registered To Franchise In 32 States*

September 6, 2012. Pasadena, CA – Blaze Fast-Fire'd Pizza, a pioneer in the assembly-line artisan pizza category, announced that it has begun to accept franchise applications in key markets across the US. The company plans to build a footprint of stores across California and select US cities through a combination of both company-owned and franchise locations.

Blaze Pizza's first location, a 2,600 sq. ft., 90 seat space in Irvine, CA, opened last month to enthusiastic reviews and is experiencing long lines at both lunch and dinner. The company's second restaurant, a 2,800 sq. ft., 100-seat flagship location in Pasadena, CA, is set to open in the city's vibrant Theater District next month. Plans for a third location on LA's Westside are also underway.

A creation of Elise and Rick Wetzel (founder of Wetzel's Pretzels), and featuring the talents of Executive Chef Bradford Kent (owner of LA's top rated Olio Pizzeria and Café), Blaze Pizza is backed by a number of well-known investors including Maria Shriver, movie producer John Davis and Boston Red Sox co-owner Tom Werner.

Initial western markets now available for franchising including Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Portland, Phoenix, Salt Lake City and Denver. In addition, the company is now accepting applications for multi-unit franchise candidates in New York, Boston, Chicago, Miami, Orlando, Houston and Dallas. "We've received a tremendous amount of interest in the concept and are pleased to be able to now move forward strategically with franchise expansion," said company president Elise Wetzel. "Our plan is to selectively identify those franchise candidates who we are confident can execute successfully in this category, and work together to develop Blaze into a national brand."

The company is primarily focusing on centers that service both lunch/daytime traffic (office workers, hospitals, lifestyle, & transportation) and dinner/nighttime traffic (residential and entertainment), and prefers to have co-tenancy with similar contemporary fast-casual brands (i.e. Chipotle®, Five Guys®, Panera Bread®). Ideal restaurant size is 1,800 to 2,800 square feet. A smaller footprint design is also available for mall food courts.

### How it works

Blaze Pizza uses a "co-created", assembly line format (similar to Chipotle Mexican Grill®), that lets guests customize one of the menu's signature pizzas or create one of their own, choosing from a wide selection of fresh, artisanal toppings -- most included for no extra charge. The generously sized personal pizzas are then sent to a blazing hot open-hearth oven, the centerpiece of the eatery, where dedicated pizzasmiths ensure that the thin-crust pies are "fast-fire'd" in a scant 120 seconds. Blaze Pizza makes its own dough from scratch using a recipe which requires a 24-hour fermentation period to produce its signature light-as-air, crisp crust. Blaze's menu uses fresh ingredients ranging from inventive to classic and accommodates certain dietary needs, with a gluten-free dough and vegan cheese option.

### About Us

Headquartered in Pasadena, CA, Blaze Pizza is a pioneer in the new fast-casual pizza category, serving artisanal, "co-created" pizzas at freakishly fast speeds, all at a very affordable price. To learn more, please visit [www.Blaze-pizza.com](http://www.Blaze-pizza.com) or [www.facebook.com/BlazePizza](http://www.facebook.com/BlazePizza).

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