



**“PIZZA CITY FEST” RETURNS THIS IS SUMMER WITH 40 PIZZERIAS OVER TWO DAYS,  
PLUS EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS WITH SOME OF THE NATION’S GREATEST PIZZA  
MAKERS – AUGUST 26-27**

**Two-day event features 10 styles of pizza, all baked live, at The Salt Shed.**

**Info at [www.pizzacityfest.com](http://www.pizzacityfest.com)**

**CHICAGO (May 8, 2023) –**

Some of Chicago’s greatest pizzerias will gather this summer for a pizza festival unlike any other in the nation. The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Pizza City Fest: Chicago, Presented by Greco & Sons, will take place on the grounds of The Salt Shed, 1357 N. Elston Ave., Aug. 26-27; 12 pm – 5 pm each day.

Curated by Steve Dolinsky, author of “Pizza City USA” and “The Ultimate Chicago Pizza Guide” as well as host/producer of the “Pizza City” podcast and Founder of Pizza City Tours, the event does what no other pizza festival in the city has ever done: ask all of the participating pizzerias to bake the pies fresh, to-order. Using electric ovens, scattered around the Fairgrounds at the Salt Shed – each one representing a different style – two pizza makers will be working on the same oven all day. For example, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, the “Deep-Dish” oven will have George’s from Edgewater, right next to Labriola. Meanwhile, on the “Roman” oven, Bonci will be set up next to Bar Cargo. Other ovens/styles include: Sicilian, Neapolitan, NYC Slice, Detroit, Tavern, Stuffed and Artisan, for a total of 20 pizzerias – all available to anyone with a general admission ticket. GA ticket holders will have access to 10 different slices, cut slightly smaller than normal, so they are able to try everything. GA access begins at 1 pm each day.

Meanwhile, VIP ticket holders will have one hour early access (starting at 12 pm) plus the ability to try up to 14 different slices, while being able to experience the festival in their own lounge, with extra seating and free artisan gelato, plus a swag bag with some pizza-themed goodies.

“We learned a ton from our first year in Chicago,” said Dolinsky. “After implementing several changes to our L.A. festival just two weeks ago, the Chicago event will be greatly improved. We’re thrilled to have 16 on Center (Empty Bottle, Thalia Hall, Longman & Eagle) produce this festival in the city’s most exciting new venue on the Chicago River.”

A completely different lineup of pizzerias is slated for Sunday, August 27th, which means there will be 40 pizzerias featured over the weekend. Tickets can be purchased for single day, two-day and VIP at [pizzacityfest.com](http://pizzacityfest.com), where full lineups will also be listed, **beginning June 1 at 10 am CST.**

Each day, Dolinsky has also curated a star-studded lineup of educational seminars inside the Shed. “The Dough Whisperers” panel on August 26<sup>th</sup> features Brian Spangler (Apizza Scholls, Portland, OR), Dan Richer (Razza Pizza Artigianale, Jersey City) and Rich Labriola (Labriola and Stan’s Donuts). The panel will be moderated by Francisco Migoya, the Chef and co-author of the 3-volume “Modernist Pizza.”

Other panels Saturday include “How to Make Pan Pizza at Home” and later in the day “Third Wave Deep-Dish & Deep Pan” with the owners of George’s Deep Dish, Uncle Jerry’s and Milly’s Pizza in the Pan, moderated by the Chicago Tribune’s Nick Kindelsperger.

On Sunday, the “Women in Pizza” panel features Ann Kim (Lola, Young Joni, Minneapolis) who was featured on “Chef’s Table: Pizza” this year. She’ll be joined by Connie Zotta (Salerno’s) and Cecily Federighi (Eat Free Pizza, Kim’s Uncle). There will also be a class on how to make great pizza at home, led by Robert Garvey (Robert’s Pizza & Dough Co.) and a “Tavern Style Legends” panel featuring the owners of Vito & Nick’s, Home Run Inn and Palermo’s 95<sup>th</sup>.

This year also brings a Collab Lab, featuring unique mash-ups, such as Publican Quality Bread with Four Star Mushrooms; Zeitlin’s Deli with Tempesta Market and Crust Fund Pizza with Manny’s Deli. There will also be pizza-adjacent food items included in the ticket price, like salads and sides, from The Loaf Lounge in Avondale, Lardon in Logan Square and FARE at the From Here On food hall in the Old Post Office. Desserts this year include cookies from Levain and Bittersweet, as well as Italian ice from Zarlengo’s. All food items are included in the ticket price.

Authors will be signing books during the day, plus there will be pizza-related merchandise and artwork for sale. On top of the official festival activities, special dinner collaborations will be taking place over the weekend. The official hotel of Pizza City Fest is The Emily in the West Loop. A special room rate has been set aside for attendees [here](#).

The charitable partners this year include [Slice Out Hunger](#), which supports local pizzerias by buying pizzas, then having them delivered to local pantries or shelters that are able to accept hot food deliveries. In 2022, PCF Chicago donated \$5,000 to their Illinois efforts. This year, an additional charitable partner is [Careers through Culinary Arts Programs](#) (C-CAP), which funds scholarships for high school students to attend culinary programs.

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**ABOUT PIZZA CITY FEST**

In 2017, after the launch of his first book, “Pizza City USA: 101 Reasons Why Chicago is America’s Greatest Pizza Town” (Northwestern University Press), Steve Dolinsky simultaneously launched a weekly tour business, featuring the various styles of pizza offered around Chicago. In 2019, he launched the Pizza City Podcast, a show featuring some of the greatest pizza makers from around the U.S., with new shows dropping every other Friday. During the pandemic, he also wrote his follow-up, “The Ultimate Chicago Pizza Guide: A History of Squares and Slices in the Windy City” (Northwestern Univ. Press).

The latest expansion of the brand is Pizza City Fest, which began in Chicago in the summer of 2022, had a sold-out two-day event in L.A. in April, 2023 and will continue with Pizza City Fest: Chicago, Presented by Greco & Sons in August 2023.

**ABOUT 16 ON CENTER/THE SALT SHED**

Created by 16 on Center, the team behind the Empty Bottle, Thalia Hall, Evanston SPACE, Beauty Bar, and The Promontory, The Salt Shed is a new performance and multi-purpose space with over 1.5 acres of both indoor and outdoor grounds along the riverfront. Multi-faceted and community-driven, the Salt Shed is quickly becoming a center of arts and culture, with live music as its pulse.

16 on Center is also home to a variety of local favorites in the culinary world, including Dusek’s, Good Ambler, Pizza Friendly Pizza, and more, the latter showcasing their undying love for the art of good pizza.