

2024 International Pizza Challenge

OFFICIAL Rules and Regulations for the World's Best Cheese Slice, Traditional, Non-Traditional, Neapolitan, and Pan Divisions
(Las Vegas Convention Center - March 19-21, 2024)

Eligibility

The contest is open only to owners, managers, chefs, industry consultants, pizza pop ups, social media influencers, or employees 18 years or older from the restaurant and pizzeria industries. Pizza Today or Pizza Expo employees and their family members, are not eligible, nor are employees or representatives of advertisers, exhibitors, other suppliers to the industry or their affiliates. If a competitor falsely claims any position or title affiliated with the IPC or IPCNE they will be suspended from competing in any IPC for a minimum of 2 years and possibly expelled from any IPC competition permanently.

Past division winners are not eligible to compete in the same division for a period of two years. In addition, past World Champion Pizza Maker of the Year winners will not be allowed to re-enter in any division but can be invited back to compete in the "Best of the Best" competition.

Registration for all five (5) divisions is open online at PizzaExpo.com and will remain open until all available places are taken. Competitors may enter the competition when they register to attend Pizza Expo; or a spot in one of the divisions may be added later to an attendee registration by logging in to the PizzaExpo.com registration system. A valid registration is interpreted as the acceptance by the competitor of all contest rules.

General Rules

- Contestants must provide dough, sauce, cheese, and toppings for three (4-6) pizzas, it's not a bad idea to have extra dough for potential problems. Please note that some products may be provided by our preferred product sponsors and available for use. A dough prep and temporary kitchen area will be available. Entrants will receive an email detailing ovens, storage and other items provided in these areas. Basic kitchen items are available but if you need something specific, we recommend bringing it with you.

- Each contestant will have 30 minutes to assemble and bake his or her pizzas. Contestants will be timed by Pizza Expo staff. In addition, each contestant will be required to clean up his or her assembly space prior or immediately after presenting the pizza for judging. Failure to adhere to time restrictions or to clean up in a presentable fashion will result in an automatic deduction of 5 points on each judge's scorecard.
- Only one entry per contestant will be accepted, with a maximum of five (5) entries per establishment (one per division). Only registered contestants will be allowed in the contest area; no assistants may go into the area. Please note: You must be pre-registered as a Pizza Expo attendee to enter. Entries will not be accepted until registration and contest fees are paid. No on-site entries will be permitted, unless approved by the operations team.
- A maximum of 80 entries will be accepted in the Traditional, Non-Traditional, and Neapolitan divisions; contestants are capped at 50 for Pan division and World's Best Cheese Slice.
- Entries close in any division once it reaches the above-mentioned maximum number of participants.
- Ingredient preparation will be allowed in the designated prep areas prior to your table time to allow immediate building of the pizza as soon as a competitor hits their table.
- Pizzas for all divisions will be scored against themselves using a scale of 1-10 by an expert panel of judges based on crust, sauce, cheese, toppings, bake, overall taste, creativity, and appearance, with an emphasis on the culinary attributes.
- The top five (5) scoring competitors from the Cheese, Traditional, Non-Traditional, Pan, and Neapolitan divisions based on total points will advance to the Finals on Thursday from 8am-11am (7am mandatory meeting) and the winner from each division's finals will advance to the Pizza Maker of the Year competition.

- Regional winners from the Traditional and Non-Traditional divisions will receive a recognition plaque and \$500. Winners of the Traditional and Non-Traditional divisions will receive a trophy and a check for \$7,500. Second and third place will receive \$1,500 and \$1,000 respectively. The winners of the Cheese, Neapolitan and Pan divisions will receive \$4,000. Second and third place will receive \$750 and \$500 respectively for all three divisions. The winner of the Pizza Maker of the Year competition will claim the title of World Champion, a trophy and an additional \$5,000 prize.
- Winners will be expected to provide banking information and taxpayer identification number (W-9/8) at the conclusion of the competition to facilitate the payment. Payment terms will be Net 90 days. Payment of any local, state, or federal taxes are the responsibilities of the winners. There will be no substitutions of prizes as offered except at the discretion of Pizza Expo®. Prizes are non-transferable.
- Decisions by the judges are final in all aspects of this contest.

Special Rules by Division

The World's Best Cheese Slice. Competitors provide the dough, traditional red tomato sauce (only), cheese/cheese blend and spices. **NO par-baking.** Once the pizza enters the oven ONLY a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil (infused or not), grated cheese & dry spices after baking are acceptable; **NO** other drizzles, toppings, cheeses, or work on the pizza is allowed once the pizza enters the oven. Pizzas in this division must range in size from 12"-18". Please note this division is **open to all crust styles.** You may choose the best three (3) slices that will be presented to the judges.

Traditional (American) Division. Competitors provide the dough, cheese/cheese blend and spices. They must use a red sauce. No more than two (2) of the following toppings may be added: Pepperoni, Sausage, Bacon, Ham, Mushrooms, Peppers, Tomatoes, Onions, and Olives. Please note that different varieties of these toppings will constitute only one (1) topping. **NO par-baking.** Once the pizza enters the oven ONLY a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil (infused or not) is acceptable; **NO** other toppings, cheeses, spices &/or finishers can be added once the pizza enters the oven. Pizzas in this division must be traditional round pizzas ranging in size from 12"-18". A competitor's pizza will be disqualified if the judges decide it contains too many toppings or impermissible toppings.

Non-Traditional Division. There are no restrictions on dough, sauce, toppings, or styles.

Neapolitan Division. For the Pizza Napoletana style each competitor must make 1 pizza for the preliminary round and be prepared to make up to 2 more if they advance to the finals and then pizza maker of the year. The products that provide the base for “Pizza Napoletana” include wheat-flour type “00” with the addition of flour type “0” (no meat tenderizer or other dough enhancers will be allowed), natural yeast, water, peeled San Marzano DOP tomatoes and/or fresh cherry tomatoes, marine salt, and extra-virgin olive oil. The dough must be kneaded by hand or with a low-speed mixer. After the rising process, the dough must be formed by hand without the help of a rolling pin or other machine and must weigh between 250-280g and be no more than 3 mm (1/8 in) thick. The pizza must be baked for 45-90 seconds in a 485o C (905o F) pizza oven. There are three official variants:

1. Pizza Napoletana, Marinara which is made with San Marzano DOP tomatoes, fresh garlic, (fresh basil, oregano, sea salt, and extra-virgin olive oil must be added **BEFORE** baking);

2. Pizza Napoletana, Margherita Extra made with pressed, peeled tomatoes or chopped fresh cherry tomatoes, sliced mozzarella di bufala DOP, (fresh basil Sea salt or Peccorino Romano, and extra-virgin olive oil must be added **BEFORE** baking);

3. Pizza Napoletana, Margherita made with San Marzano DOP tomatoes, sliced mozzarella STG, or Fior di Latte Appennino, (fresh basil, Sea salt or Peccorino Romano and extra-virgin olive oil must be added **BEFORE** baking).

Pan Division. Styles that fall into this category include, but are not limited to, the following: Roman, Chicago, Detroit, Grandma, Ohio Valley, Old Forge and Sicilian. There are no restrictions on dough, sauce, or toppings, except that the pizzas must conform to a pan style. The top scoring **Detroit style** pizza will again receive the Shawn Randazzo Memorial Award. Par Baking of Dough will be allowed on-site that will not count against your time. See an IPC team member for timing etc.