

# Mazzio's Slices Up Big Market Share

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**Tulsa, Okla.** — Tulsa-based Mazzio's LLC has signed a franchise partnership with Fransmart, the franchise development company that has opened over 3,000 locations in less than ten years for other restaurant brands in the United States. Fransmart will help develop Mazzio's and Oliveto Italian Bistro locations across the U.S. and in select international markets.

"Mazzio's is a well-established company with successful, long-term franchisee relationships. The timing has never been better to be a tenant looking for locations, so we were happy to be able to add Mazzio's and Oliveto to our portfolio," said Fransmart CEO Dan Rowe. "The concept is universally appealing and their franchise program is exceptionally well-structured to support new unit growth.

"Mazzio's is a seasoned franchisor – they not only franchise restaurants, they are also excellent operators. Fransmart is excited to expand this great concept worldwide."

The Mazzio's concept features award-winning pizzas, made-to-order pastas, sandwiches and fresh specialty salads and appetizers. Founded in 1979, Mazzio's has 172 units in 10 states.

Oliveto Italian Bistro is the newest edition to the Tulsa-based company. The restaurant opened its doors in Tulsa in 2008 and last year and added its first franchisee location in December 2009 in Tyler, TX. The contemporary Italian menu offers wood-fire pizzas, specialty pastas and salads along with an extensive wine list. The neighborhood-style bistro is filled with bold and vibrant colors offering an inviting atmosphere for any occasion.

In 2005, Mazzio's brought on industry veteran Gregory R. Lippert to lead the chain as president and CEO. Lippert has been in the foodservice industry for 25 years. He began his career with Procter and Gamble Co. and has had executive experience and leadership roles with Seven-Up Co. and Fazoli's, Inc. At Mazzio's, he directed the efforts behind Mazzio's Italian Eatery and Zio's Italian Kitchen brands from 1984 to 2003. He helped with the launch of Mazzio's newest fast-casual dining concept, Oliveto Italian Bistro.

"We know that pizza and Italian food is extremely popular with consumers based on the value it offers young adults, families and empty-nesters," said Lippert. "There is so much demand for what Mazzio's and Oliveto represent, and we want to extend the brand to new markets.

"Fransmart was drawn to Mazzio's based on our history as successful restaurant operators and the experience found in our Tulsa Support Office. This new partnership will allow both brands to grow and provide new opportunities for employees and new franchise partners."

Mazzio's Italian Eatery was recognized in Technomic's 2008 annual list of the "Top 45 Pizza Chains by Average Store Sales" and was also ranked 23rd on Pizza Marketing Quarterly Magazine's "Top 200 Pizza Chains in the United States," ranked by units. Additionally, Mazzio's was recently ranked in Chain Leader Magazine's annual "Best Places to Work" report due to its concepts' low general manager turnover rate (16 percent) and its depth of employee benefits. Mazzio's Italian Eatery has consistently won "Best Pizza" awards in its primary markets for many years and retains an industry-leading Customer Loyalty Index for Overall Satisfaction from SMG.

## About Mazzio's Italian Eatery

With 172 locations in 10 states, Tulsa-based Mazzio's Italian Eatery, established in 1961, offers customers fast service, convenience, variety, value and quality. Its extensive menu features a wide variety of pizza, pasta, salad and sandwiches. Open daily for lunch and dinner, Mazzio's is perfect for dine-in, carryout, delivery or catering.

For more information about Mazzio's Italian Eatery, visit [www.mazzios.com](http://www.mazzios.com).

#### **About Oliveto Italian Bistro**

Oliveto Italian Bistro opened in August 2008 as Tulsa's first neighborhood Italian bistro. Tuscan-inspired food, including wood-fire pizzas, pastas and salads, is homemade from artisan ingredients in an atmosphere that is inviting, easy and relaxed. Open daily for lunch and dinner, Oliveto is available for catering and features an extensive wine list that includes 20 bottles under \$25.

For more information about Oliveto Italian Bistro, visit [www.olivetobistro.com](http://www.olivetobistro.com).