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By RICH CALDER

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There are now three pricey pizza joints on one Brooklyn block — and not a single slice to be had.

Coal-oven legend Patsy Grimaldi ends his retirement today to start flipping thin-crust pies at his former storefront on Old Fulton Street in DUMBO where he helped launch the brick-oven pizza craze.

"I'm excited to be back," the 81-year-old pizzaiolo told the Post yesterday. "I should've never left."

The opening of his new joint Juliana's, named after Patsy's late mother, sets up a pizza-lovers paradise along a tourist-laden strip near the Brooklyn Bridge.



Patsy Grimaldi shows he's still got it as he tosses dough for a fresh pie. Paul Martinka

Down the block, his successor, Frank Ciolli — who bought the

Grimaldi's name in 1998 — operates his world-famous coal-oven joint at a new location that he was forced to move into last year following a rent dispute. And around the corner on Water Street is another high-end pizzeria, Ignazio's, which makes pies with a gas-fired brick oven All three sell whole pies only — no slices.

In a strange twist, Grimaldi is unable to use either his first or last name in the new venture, since he sold his surname and lost the right to use the Patsy's name.

Juliana's will feature a higher-end menu than what Grimaldi's Pizzeria previously featured in the same storefront space at 19 Old Fulton Street, including specialty pizzas, appetizers and deserts. Brooklyn Ice Cream Factory is providing a new flavor, "raspberry chocolate chunk," that'll be sold exclusively at Juliana's.

And unlike cash-only Grimaldi's Pizzeria, the new pizzeria will accept credit cards. It plans to also field take-out orders over the phone from customers seeking to avoid long lines.

The new pizzeria seats 65 customers, serves beers and wine, and features a 1950s era jukebox filled with Frank Sinatra songs.

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Juliana's tonight is having a soft opening for friends and family of the Grimaldis. It will open to the public tomorrow.

Patsy says he'll be "monitoring the kitchen and working the lines" like the old days. His wife, Carol, will manage the eatery.

Store hours are noon to 11 pm. A traditional pie without toppings runs \$16 to \$19 while calzones are \$17 to \$19.

Grimaldi hoped to open in March but he first had to gut-reno-vate most of the storefront he took over from Ciolli. And he had to deal with a still-pending lawsuit by Ciolli challenging the pizza legend's return.

"I'm looking to make pizza in peace," Patsy Grimaldi said. "I'm not looking for any trouble [with Ciolli]."

Ciolli said there's more than enough famished tourists visiting the area for all three pizzerias to prosper.

"The lawsuit isn't about competition, it's about Patsy violating my goodwill [by re-opening at his original location]," he said.

Grimaldi says Ciolli's suit is baseless because the non-compete clause that he signed when selling Ciolli the business in 1998 expired three years ago.

Ciolli was forced to relocate to a larger space at 1 Front St. after racking up more than \$60,000 in back rent at the Old Fulton Street site and being evicted by its landlord, Mark Waxman.

The move opened the door to Grimaldi's return, but Ciolli was able to get city approval to install another coal-fired brick oven at his new site.

The city rarely issues new permits on such ovens because of environmental concerns, making existing ones virtual gold mines.

Patsy Grimaldi worked at his uncle Patsy Lancieri's famous East Harlem pizzeria as a boy, then opened his own place, Patsy's, in DUMBO in 1990.

But he had to change the name to Grimaldi's in 1995 when he was sued after his uncle died and his aunt sold the Patsy's name.

Over the years, Grimaldi's became a favorite in the shadow of the Brooklyn Bridge overpass, often attracting hour-long lines of tourists and locals alike and celebrity patrons from Frank Sinatra to Lady Gaga.

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