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A History of New York's Feuding Pizza Dynasties

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The Original: [Lombardi's](#) 1905

Gennaro Lombardi applies to the city government for the first license to make and sell pizza in this country. His restaurant becomes the training ground for the city's next generation of pizza-makers.

[Totonno's](#) Spun Off From: Lombardi's

1924
Founded by Anthony "Totonno" Pero, former Lombardi's pizza-maker.

1940s-1994
Ownership changes hands three times, all within the family.

1994
Gennaro "Jerry" Pero, Anthony's son and a former owner, dies.

2009
A fire burns the original Coney Island pizzeria. It gets rebuilt and reopens less

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than
a year later and today is the only Tototonno's still open.

Total Pizzerias: 1

John's Pizzeria

Spun Off From: Lombardi's

1929

Opened by John Sasso, who was trained by Lombardi.

1947

Sasso's nephews Augustine and Patrick Vesce take over the business.

1970s-1980s

Ownership changes hands two more times, all within the family.

1984-2008

John's opens up two additional restaurants in Manhattan and one in Jersey City.

Total Pizzerias: 4

Patsy's

Spun Off From: Lombardi's

1933

Pasquale "Patsy" Lancieri, who briefly worked at Lombardi's, opens Patsy's in East Harlem with wife Carmella.

1974

Lancieri passes away.

1991

Carmella sells the East Harlem pizzeria to longtime employees John Brecevich and Frank Brija.

1995

Brecevich and Brija license the Patsy's name to Nick Tsoulos. Six other Patsy's have opened in Manhattan since then.

Total Pizzerias: 7

Grimaldi's

Spun Off From: Patsy's

1941

A teenage Patsy Grimaldi starts making pies at his uncle Patsy Lancieri's restaurant.

1990

Grimaldi opens his own coal-oven pizzeria in Brooklyn at 19 Old Fulton Street and calls it Patsy's.

Mid-1990s

Brija takes Grimaldi to court over name licensing, resulting in Grimaldi's rechristening his pizzeria after his last name.

1998

Grimaldi sells the restaurant to Frank Ciolli but stays on as a sometime consultant. Over time, Ciolli opens 32 out-of-state locations and four New York locations.

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Red Hook Lobster Pound Is Back in Action on March 1

2011

Landlord disputes and rent problems force Ciolli to relocate to One Front Street.

2011

Patsy and Carol Grimaldi decide to open a new pizzeria called Juliana's, named after Patsy's late mother, in the original Fulton Street location, reuniting him with his coal oven.

2012

Ciolli files a lawsuit seeking an injunction against Grimaldi, citing "unfair competition."

Total Pizzerias: 36

See Also: [How Patsy Grimaldi Is Getting His Good Name Back](#)

**This article originally appeared in the October 29, 2012 issue of New York Magazine.*

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By : Julie Ma

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