

# Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Hosts**

**Patrick Totah and Andy Mirabell**

[Restaurant Deal Making EXPOSED!](#) with Patrick and Andy

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

Welcome to *Restaurant Deal Making EXPOSED!*, the only show that equips you with everything you need to know about restaurant transactions. In this show, we tell you all about how to make the sale or purchase of your restaurant not just possible, but successful. Now, here are your hosts, ex-restaurateurs, and seasoned brokers, Patrick Totah and Andy Mirabell.

Andy: Alright, welcome back everyone to another episode of Restaurant Deal Making Exposed. I am Andy. I'm here with Patrick. Today, we're getting the inside scoop on the 2026 Outside Lands in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco with Food Director and Curator, Tanya Kollar. Who remembers episode 34, "Lining Up for Food with Tanya Kollar?" Because I do, and I'm sure Patrick does. Patrick even called out episode 34 on our recent "Best Of" episodes as one of his most liked episodes. I'm probably in the dog house for not doing so.

Well, today we have Tanya back to dish out the scoop on Outside Lands Music and Art Festival, held annually in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park that attracts 225,000 attendees over one weekend. It has nearly 100 amazing and exciting local restaurants, chefs, and emerging concepts, too. As a brief reminder, she is one of very few humans who curate and coordinate amazing food lineups and creative culinary experiences across the country and abroad.

So, Tanya, welcome back. We're so excited to have you. I'm super excited. This is like one of those episodes I feel like we're kind of goofing off because it's just fun and games. We're talking about, we're talking about things we love: food, drink, and everything else.

Tanya: Thank you guys, so much for having me back. Yeah, obviously, all of our favorite things to talk about. Food, music, drinks, all the delicious things.

Patrick: Andy, you always goof off, so this is nothing new for you.

Andy: I know. Usually, we're talking with lawyers and attorneys and accountants and stuff. This is way more fun.

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

Patrick: Yeah. So, Tanya, I mean, you already have a dream job, but I hear you got some kind of a promotion or you are getting some kind of a promotion this year around?

Tanya: Yes. Yeah, actually. So I've been with Outside Lands since 2009, and I became the food curator for Outside Lands in 2017. And this year, I have become the Food Program Director for Outside Lands. So I'm still curating the food lineup, but now I'm doing a lot more with the operational side of things. As you can imagine, with 100 restaurants out there in Golden Gate Park, there are a lot of operational bits and pieces to put together: refrigeration, propane, all of the tenting, doing the layout, things like that.

So I'm kind of just having a larger role doing those types of things and being able to paint the bigger picture, as well as being the liaison for the restaurants and helping them all fine-tune their operations and set them up for success. So pretty exciting.

Andy: Yeah, by your past job description in episode 34, it does seem like you're about a dozen humans wrapped into one.

Tanya: I do what I can, but it's really cool to be, playing a bigger part in like setting the scene for the restaurants. You know, I'm always their biggest advocate and really have their backs and want to make sure that the scene is set properly for them to come in and do their thing. You know, we always say, we want to get you set up with everything that you need. So once you get there, you can just execute your menu, showcase your brand, and, you know, just put yourself out there.

Patrick: Yeah, yeah. I mean, gosh, if I would have known a long time ago that this could be a job, like, you know, when you're in high school and they're thinking about the things that you can do, I would be like, I want to do that.

Tanya: Yeah, I didn't know it was a job either. I came into the workforce working in restaurants and hospitality, and didn't realize this was a thing. And once I did, I latched on and never let go.

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

Patrick: Good for you. So, when was the reveal for the food lineup at the festival this year?

Tanya: Yeah, so May 12th was the food lineup announcement. Very exciting. It's just our opportunity to really get all of our participating restaurant partners a ton of exposure. We have like a big press release that goes out, social media push. We supply the restaurants with some assets so they can promote their involvement.

And, you know, while the restaurants definitely do this to make some money, they also do this for the exposure and the promotion that comes with getting their brand in front of the Outside Lands audience. As Andy mentioned, we have a lot of people that come to Golden Gate Park, and we have a lot of fans that are following Outside Lands on their socials and on the website. So it's just our opportunity to really just shout from the mountain tops, "Hey, these are the awesome 100 restaurants we're working with this year."

Andy: Yeah. People are salivating. I can definitely, definitely feel that. Did you have another question, Patrick?

Patrick: I did. I'm so curious. So this event for restaurants is more than just like making money, right? Like, I mean, it's kind of like a marketing type deal for them to be on a platform like this, I would assume.

Tanya: Yeah, absolutely. I think the demo that's coming to Outside Lands, they love a good time, and they're willing to spend money on a good time. So, you know, this is really the type of folks that our restaurant partners are looking to get their brands in front of. Many of our restaurant partners, I think it's 24 of them this year, have been with the festival for 10-plus years. So they keep coming back year after year and obviously this is, you know, a great thing for them and I think marketing is a huge part of that for sure.

Andy: So cool. Well, we're definitely privileged to have you here talking to us about Outside Lands. We know we're definitely not your biggest media outlet. Maybe I'll say we're your smallest. But so using your valuable time, really, we

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

thank you for that. I want to know, what is so special about this year's lineup and theme?

Tanya: Yeah, so each year, I try to hone in on a theme that revolves around what's been inspiring me when I'm dining out in the Bay Area. Obviously, as a Bay Area resident, I'm dining out all the time. You know, every year I'm kind of looking at, what are people willing to leave the house for and open their wallets for?

And what I noticed this year is that there are these legendary old school restaurants that provide this like nostalgic dining experience. And they are packed right now. So three of the new Outside Lands restaurants, three of the new additions to the Outside Lands food lineup this year, fall in that category. Original Joe's has been open for 89 years, operating continuously. Balboa Cafe, 113 years, believe it or not. And Perry's, 57 years.

And what I think is really special about these places is having been open for generations, people have a sense of comfort when they go there. They know exactly what they're getting. They've got that level of hospitality where you come in and the waiters are in a white button-down and a bow tie, and the service is top-notch. It's friendly, it's approachable, and every single time you go there, the food is at the same quality as it was the last time.

I recently dined at Perry's and had one of the best fish and chips of my life. And there's nothing particularly special about it. It was just darn good. So that's really a theme that I honed in on this year is highlighting this facet of the Bay Area culinary scene, because at the end of the day, the Outside Lands food lineup, I want it to be a full reflection of the landscape of dining in the Bay Area. And I think that these restaurants are a huge, important part of that.

Andy: I want to earmark, you know, you said something, you know, there's always so many things going on in the world, and a lot of stress in the world at times, and there just seems to be a sense of comfort with these places.

Tanya: Yeah, there is a sense of comfort. And you know, trends are fun. It's great. Dining trends, pop-ups. You know, I still love all that kind of stuff. I love

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

being adventurous, but I've been to Original Joe's three times in the past couple months. And if you asked me to go to lunch there right now, I would go with you because I know exactly what I'm going to get. And yeah, there's just this sense of comfort. I use the word approachable. Sometimes dining out at restaurants, especially new higher-end restaurants, can feel a little bit intimidating, but these places, you go in there, and you feel at home, you feel comforted, you feel relaxed. You don't feel like you have to be or do anything other than just enjoy yourself.

Patrick: You don't have to tell me how special Joe's is. I mean, it's a place that I used to go with my dad, and then, you know, over the years, they closed down for a few years, and when they reopened, my wife and I lived in Lake Merced. So it's like literally a quarter mile away from us, and we would go three times a week. And it's just a special place because like you said, it's, you know what you're going to get. They have the service. It's this nostalgic feeling for me because I've gone there throughout my entire life. My question, I guess, is like, was it pretty hard to convince a place like Joe's or these older type of iconic places to come to a place like Outside Lands? Like, is that their customer?

Tanya: It was a little bit of a challenge. I will be honest. You know, I do the curation each year and I, we do accept some of the restaurants that apply for Outside Lands. I think this year we got just over 200 applications, but I also go after restaurants that I think would be a great fit and also that kind of like go with the theme for that year. And yeah, it was a challenge, but I think I was able to... I don't want to use the word "sell them on it" because I never, ever want to try to convince a restaurant to do Outside Lands that isn't already excited about doing it. I, you know, I want them to be all in on it.

But I will say I did kind of have to frame it for them in a certain way to say, "Listen, you guys have been around for a long time." All of them are very busy right now, but I've noticed in going into these spots that it's not just, like the clientele ranges in age all across the board. You know, I was having an espresso martini, or they call it an espresso-tini, excuse me, at Balboa Cafe recently. And sitting next to me are a couple of twenty-somethings that are

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

getting ready for a night out. But then of course, I've also got the families over here. There was an older couple that was like clearly on a date.

So I just think that with them having a crowd that just spans multiple generations, why not target the Outside Lands demo and get their brand in front of kids maybe that are not aware of their brand? But once they see it at the festival, once they come in and actually experience that dining experience and really get it, I mean, I think that sells itself.

Andy: Let's be honest, Outside Lands is not just kids. There is, we have a very fun and age diversity within that festival when I go there, and I'm one of them.

Tanya: That's absolutely true. I think that you're absolutely right in that. But I think putting their brand in front of the Outside Lands audience is a great thing for them and for them, you know, staying current, staying cool. I mean, cool points are a thing. You know, so.

Patrick: Did you have to help them kind of like figure out, like, how to like do their menu and what would like be a good item to have or a few items to have? Like, did you have to coach them on that?

Tanya: Yeah, absolutely. So I do this with all of our restaurant partners, and it's a matter of looking at the dishes on their existing brick-and-mortar menu and working with them to figure out what will perform well at the festival. Currently in the Bay Area is freaking out about chicken Caesar salad wraps. And for Outside Lands, it makes complete sense, and all three of these restaurants have fantastic Caesar salads. So that was an obvious choice, something really handheld, can make for a light meal, but it's still really satisfying.

You know, Perry's is going to do their burger, they're well known for their burger. Original Joe's is doing a prime rib dip. So it's really just looking at the menus that they serve in their restaurant and figuring out what will perform well at the festival. I'm super excited that Balboa Cafe is going to be serving their espresso-tinis on tap from their booth alongside their food, which is something that we're so excited about. It's the only booth at the festival where you can get food and a cocktail from the same spot. So pretty cool.

[Restaurant Deal Making EXPOSED!](#) with Patrick and Andy

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

Patrick: I think my client, A-Ruby's Tacos started that chicken Caesar wrap craze. I don't know.

Tanya: They did. Yeah, they're most well-known for it, and the people say they have the best one in the city. So.

Patrick: Are they going to be at Outside Lands?

Tanya: They're not going to be at Outside Lands this year, but I'm definitely interested in bringing them in the future because they're doing great things with their wraps and their tacos.

Patrick: Yeah, that place is pretty cool.

Andy: Tanya, how do we, you know, we're talking a lot about what the trend and the nostalgia and of these institutional restaurants this year. How are you balancing that with kind of your, you know, there is an underlying tone each year that you bring new and exciting trends and themes into the festival? And how do you keep on brand with who you bring in and balancing it with these institutional restaurants?

Tanya: Yeah, absolutely. So there are 15 new restaurants joining the Outside Lands food lineup. And, you know, as I said, I really wanted to hone in on this theme of highlighting these nostalgic, iconic institutions. At the same time, I want to keep things interesting and also build on our long-standing history at Outside Lands of highlighting all of the global cuisines that are available in the Bay Area. This year, I'm really excited to be adding four new types of cuisines to the food lineup that we've never had before: Panamanian cuisine, Puerto Rican, Nigerian cuisine, and then also Ethiopian.

So it's really cool to be able to highlight all these different types of cuisines and while you can get your chicken Caesar salad wrap and you can get your burger, you're also going to be able to get like an Ethiopian burrito, you know, or we've, Jaji is a new addition to the Outside Lands food lineup this year. They're an Afghan restaurant doing lavash wraps and they're actually doing a collaboration

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

menu with Tallboy, which is an Oakland bar. Andy, I know you love very much. I love very much.

Andy: One of the best, one of the best bar stops I've had in years. It's fantastic. Yeah. Tallboy, calling them out. Yeah. Andy gave me like a whole like, you know, like last week he was like, you know, super excited about it. Yeah.

Tanya: Yeah, Tallboy is, they're killing it in the martini bar and just bar game in general. So Jaji is teaming up with them for a collaboration menu. So, you know, in addition to expanding our global cuisine options, I'm also bringing in two collaborations. So Jaji and Tallboy, I know they're going to be doing their dirty martini olive potato chips, which is really cool. The Afghan cuisine, olives, it's a very prominent flavor, really a cool merging of their two concepts. And Wise Sons Deli and Outta Sight Pizza, they're also doing a collaboration menu at Outside Lands this year. They're serving pizza bagels, and then Wise Sons are also doing their pastrami, hot pastrami dip sandwiches.

So the cool thing about collaboration menus is it's one of a kind. You can only get them for these three days at Outside Lands. You can't get them anywhere else and any other time. So they're fleeting, they're exclusive. You can say I had that Wise Sons and Outta Sight pizza bagel. It was killer. It had burrata. You know, people I think will be talking about these collaborations and about these items.

And in thinking about the convergence of music and food at Outside Lands, if you watched any of the Coachella performances, many of the artists at Coachella are bringing out guests to perform with them, and you can say, you know, I saw Billy Eilish and Justin Bieber perform together at Coachella and that'll never happen again. And so it's just kind of playing off of that cool idea that like this is something one of a kind.

Andy: You do such a good job at really staying true to what the Bay Area and San Francisco is about with inclusion and diversity and it's so neat to see how you recreate that each year with whether it's international, female-owned, BIPOC, whatever it may be, you really have these things as central in your

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

themes each year and it we just, I want to say thank you because it really holds true to what the Bay Area is about.

Patrick: Yeah. With these collaborations, do the two people already have like a relationship? And so it's not that hard for them to be working together, or how does that come together?

Tanya: Yeah, exactly. So they're buds. They, you know, they're having fun with these menus. And I think that's kind of cool as well. So I had a call with Wise Sons earlier today, and it's just, they seem excited about it, about being able to work together with their friends and bring, you know, some creativity to their concept. It's pretty fun.

Patrick: Cool. So with all of these different concepts, and I know the having fun with the food and all that stuff, I assume it's also a business. So how do you keep them successful? Yeah.

Tanya: Absolutely. So, you know, working with these restaurant partners to, you know, make sure this is a great thing for them financially is incredibly important to me. So a lot of the things we'll look at, I mean, you got to start with menu, right? So I think that one thing restaurants can shoot themselves in the foot with is having too many items on their menu. The way you make money at these festivals is having food available as soon as someone walks up. And if you've got too many items, you're not going to be able to do that. Your booth's going to be too crowded.

So, you know, these conversations can be delicate with the chefs sometimes. The chefs say, "I want to serve these seven items, and I want to do this to represent my brand." And it's working with them to let them know that, "Hey, at the end of the day, if that's what you'd like to do, that's your choice, but in my professional opinion, if you can narrow this down to four or five items, you're going to have a much, much higher, your throughput is going to be much higher because you're just going to have the space and the ability to do that."

You know, the restaurants that are able to do high volume and get to those target numbers, they've figured out a way to have that food ready when people

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

walk up, but it's also at the right temperature, the quality is there. That's what I really work with them on.

Of course, pricing comes into play. So I, they'll submit their menus with their pricing to me. We'll work on portion size. We'll work on. Sometimes restaurants have this idea that you've got to give a lot of value. And value in their mind is a huge portion. At festivals, people aren't really looking for that. They're in general looking for something that, you know, it's still a great value, but not a huge portion like a sandwich that you have trouble biting into. It's going to be messy, a giant bowl of noodles. It's just not what people are looking for.

So helping them understand how a festival environment is different from their restaurant environment and how to tailor their menu to that new environment is really a key part of working with them to ensure financial success at the event.

Patrick: That's great.

Andy: Well said. Patrick, how do we tie this together here? I mean, I'm curious to know, I think just to say it out loud from Tanya's perspective, who obviously understands, you know, restaurant operations, cost of goods, all the, you know, profit and loss reports and stuff.

How do these legacy restaurants that we talked about in the beginning of this podcast, why have they lasted so long? We've talked about the smiling face, the service, the food, but there's got to be more to it. What do you think, Tanya?

Tanya: Yeah, I mean, I think there's, it's consistency. They, consistency, it's giving the guest a sense of value. One of the things I noticed at Perry's was that their cocktails were all 14 bucks a pop. How are you not getting two cocktails when it's \$14 each? Things like this that they've discovered over the years are helping get check averages up. They've had some time to work out the kinks. And I think from a financial perspective, you know, that definitely comes down to your ordering, it comes down to your cost of goods, pricing out your menu, and just making sure that everything aligns. So they've, as I said, they've had some

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

time to figure this stuff out. And of course, you know, the cost of goods is rising, and they've had to adapt to that.

I do wonder for some of these restaurants that have been in the same spot for many years if their lease rates play a part in that. And I'm sure they do, but at the end of the day, I think this hospitality focus, focus on consistency, and not reinventing the wheel is how they're staying relevant and how they're keeping the guests coming back over and over.

Patrick: There's nobody else in the world that can sell a chicken parm for \$40. I mean, and Joe's puts it out there, and it's this massive plate of food. Like, you never leave there hungry. You know, when you go to some of these nicer restaurants, sometimes I'm like, joke, I want to get a burger on the way home, but like when you go to Joe's, you don't need a burger on the way home, you know?

Tanya: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Their strategy is different than Perry's, but they've got it down. I got a wrap there recently, and yeah, I think it was \$20, and it was massive, and I ate that thing for two meals. So, yeah, you know, they've really, they've figured it out, and I think that they just know what works.

Patrick: Yeah.

Andy: Well, can I ask a bonus question, Patrick? What do you think?

Patrick: You always do. So...

Andy: Well, I have to. I don't know why I asked permission.

Patrick: Are you asking a question if you can ask a question?

Andy: Yeah, I want your permission, boss. Yes. All right. This is going to put her on the spot. I think we may actually tongue-tie Tanya with this one. But what dish are you most excited for this year at the festival, and how can our listeners find it when they're there?

Tanya: Oh my gosh.

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

Patrick: She has to try everything.

Tanya: Oh God, it's just so tough because I obsessively go through all of the menus every year, and I could probably recite each restaurant's menu, and when I'm going through them, I need to have a pile of snacks next to me to keep me satiated reading all these delicious menu items. Oh man.

You know, I'm really excited about Copra joining the Outside Lands food lineup this year. The chef and owner is a James Beard finalist this year for outstanding restaurateur and he really wanted to stay true to the Copra brand with his menu at the festival this year. And they're going to be serving chicken curry dosas and masala dosas. We've never had dosas at the festival. I think it's a perfect portable dish, and I know that Chef's flavors are going to shine through in that dosa. So if I had to pick one thing that I'm going to probably beeline for when the door's open, it would be those dosas.

Patrick: Amazing. Cool. I would say of the things that you mentioned, I think I might have heard potentially an injera Ethiopian burrito, and if that's the case, I would be curious to see what that tastes like. Yeah.

Tanya: Yeah, so Meski is a new addition to the Outside Lands food lineup this year. So Chef Nelson German, he was on Top Chef, and actually Draymond Green is one of the co-owners of Meski. They do an Ethiopian and Afro-Latin concept, and we're still fine-tuning their menu, but I'm really crossing my fingers that we're going to figure out how they can execute an Ethiopian burrito with injera wrap. I think it's just a perfect portable festival food.

Andy: Well, thank you, Tanya. You are really a wonder of what you, about what you do. You're amazing. So it's always fun having you here. It's always fun to talk about food and festivals, right, Patrick? This is one of our favorites now.

Patrick: I could do this every day. Yeah.

Andy: Will you come back next year?

## Ep #51: Behind the 2026 Outside Lands Food Lineup with Tanya Kollar

Tanya: Of course. Of course. We're going to have to find something different to talk about that's still food and festivals, but you guys work on the angle, and I'll be there.

Andy: Yeah, awesome. Well, thanks so much, Tanya. We appreciate you so very much. And thank you to our listeners for tuning in for another episode of *Restaurant Deal Making EXPOSED!* Until next time, when we have a much more mundane subject like accounting or legal terms. Bye.

Tanya: Thank you, guys, for having me. Thank you.

Thank you all for listening to this week's episode of *Restaurant Deal Making EXPOSED!* If you're considering selling your business and would like a free consultation, reach out to [patrickAndAndy@therestaurantsalesbroker.com](mailto:patrickAndAndy@therestaurantsalesbroker.com) or visit [TheRestaurantSalesBroker.com](http://TheRestaurantSalesBroker.com) to learn more.