

Ep #34: Lining Up the Best Festival Eats with Food Curator Tanya Kollar



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

Patrick Totah and Andy Mirabell

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

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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 Mirabell: Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of *Restaurant Deal Making EXPOSED!*. I'm Andy. I'm here with Patrick, and today we are lining up for food with food lineup curator, Tanya Kollar. Today, we have a very, very special guest, who I just mentioned. Not only is she one of very few humans who curate and coordinate amazing food lineups and creative culinary experiences across the country and abroad, she's also my partner in life and love. Today, our guest is Tanya Kollar. She definitely gives me some extra street cred in the hospitality world, albeit I started in this game long before her and hired her for a server job when she moved to San Francisco long ago.

Tanya's job title is hard to pin down. Given all the expertise and experience she brings to each role she has with music festivals, culinary experiences, concerts, and more, one of her profiles simply states, bringing exceptional culinary experiences to a festival near you.

Tanya heads the food programs for large and iconic food festivals, such as Outside Lands Music and Art Festival, held annually in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, that attracts nearly 225,000 attendees over one weekend with nearly 100 amazing and exciting local restaurants, chefs, and emerging concepts too. She is the Food and Beverage Director for Lightning in a Bottle in Southern California. She curates the talent and creative experiences for major Super Bowl parties and events. She is the Pizza Operations Manager for David Portnoy's One Bite Pizza Festival, and the list goes on and on.

Her passion for what she does and what she has built is palpable and real. I see it and hear about it in our home daily, or if she is traveling for work, which, as you all might guess, is quite often. So, Tanya, it's with my pride-filled heart that I welcome you to our podcast today. Thank you for joining us.

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Tanya Kollar: Oh, thank you guys so much for having me. I'm so excited to be here.

Patrick Totah: Yeah, thank you for joining us. So, I have to ask right off the bat, what is your favorite episode of the *Restaurant Deal Making EXPOSED!*?

Tanya: Oh my gosh. Okay. So I recently listened to the one with Lauren Saria, and she actually did a profile on me for SF Standard, which was so lovely of her. And I just really enjoyed listening to her talk about her journey to becoming a journalist, and she's as obsessed with food as I am, so it was really, really fun to hear a little bit about her background and learn a little bit more about her. And it was really interesting to hear the questions you guys asked her about how she kind of balances her journalism. Obviously, we all love these restaurant owners, we all love going to restaurants, and you don't want to throw anybody under the bus, but you have to be real. So I thought that was a really unique and interesting angle and just really enjoyed listening to that a couple days ago, actually.

Andy: Well, she passed that test with flying colors, didn't she, Patrick?

Patrick: Gotcha. Yeah, she gotcha. She's listening. Thank you.

Andy: All right, I love it.

Patrick: She's listening to your stunning voice, Andy, don't worry.

Tanya: I am when I miss you, I just listen to your podcast. Okay.

Patrick: So Tanya, when you were, when you were younger, did you say I'm going to grow up and be in this role that you're in? Like, how does one become the role that you are professionally?

Tanya: You know, I actually thought I was going to be a journalist. So I went to school for English, journalism, got out of school, and started writing for a newspaper. Really thought that was going to be my direction. And then just kind of realized it wasn't for me. You know, I moved to San Francisco from

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Connecticut in 2009 and started working for a couple of different restaurants in the Bay Area. One of them being Blowfish Sushi, where Andy hired me to be a server, as he mentioned. And another one of the restaurants I was working for was Andalu, a tapas restaurant in the Mission.

Yeah, it was a great restaurant. I absolutely loved working there, but unfortunately I broke my foot while I was working there, so couldn't continue working there for, I think it was two and a half or three months I had to be out. And by the time I was able to go back to work, they actually had hired someone in my place, but the owner was kind enough to say, hey, we're doing this big music festival, Outside Lands, we're bringing our restaurant there to do our food at the festival and I could really use some help. So I kind of jumped in to help him plan out that food vending operation. So my actual first experience working for a music festival in the food world was running a food booth at Outside Lands.

And unfortunately, the owner had a family emergency, like the week of the event, and had to fly back home to, I think it was Philly. So I was left to run the booth by myself. This is, mind you, my first time at a big music festival like this, trying to figure out how to operate this booth, manage all this staff, manage the product. I really got a crash course on how to run a food vending operation.

Andy: Vastly different than running a day-to-day restaurant, correct?

Tanya: Yeah, absolutely. You really have to think of everything because, think about it, you're in the middle of a field. You can't just run to the store. So I met Ari Finegold, who was the food curator at that time. He and I just really hit it off, and once I saw what his role looked like, it just immediately appealed to me. I started working with him, and then, eventually, when he left the festival in 2017, Outside Lands, I ended up taking his spot, and kind of the other job started coming from there. And once someone knows that's your specialty, that's how I was able to get other gigs like Lightning in a Bottle, Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, etc.

Patrick: Wow. So, breaking your leg was a silver lining to push you into this area.

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Tanya: Yeah, you never know what's going, how the course of your life is going to change drastically in just a second. Really grateful for that experience and that trajectory, and it was one of those moments where journalism didn't really click with me, and as soon as I started doing this, I absolutely loved it. I'm a huge foodie. I love working with restaurant owners, understanding their concepts, understanding their menus, talking shop with them. It's my favorite and I'm so grateful to be doing this.

Andy: And knowing you as I do, Tanya, writing copy is still very high on your list of loves for these menus and other things.

Tanya: That's true. That's true. Yeah, I think that probably other folks in my position, they curate the food and they don't have anything to do with the marketing, but I love writing marketing copy, particularly for Outside Lands, and the marketing team has been so kind to let me jump in on that stuff because I know the program better than anybody and it's just fun for me to play around with the words.

Patrick: So, what exactly is your professional title in your role in a nutshell?

Tanya: So my professional title for Outside Lands in particular is Food Curator. That's my biggest event. I also for Lightning in a Bottle, I'm the Food and Beverage Program Manager. So for Lightning in a Bottle, I oversee the ice program, the bar program, food program. So I oversee multiple things at that event, and then Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, Food Curator; Seven Stars Festival, that's a new one for me. I'm the Food Curator for that festival. And then one by Pizza Festival, as Andy mentioned, I'm like the Pizza Operations Manager.

Andy: That title for the pizza festival doesn't do justice of how integral you are in bringing that festival to life. That's a really amazing the role, and I want to pat you on the back for that one, for you and your partner have really like elevated that thing and made it big. It's amazing.

Tanya: Oh, thank you so much. Yeah, it's a challenge. I think we have 52 ovens this year that we have coordinated. So it's a big, big event. We provide all of the

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equipment for all the pizzerias at that event, so they can basically just come in and make the best pizza possible. So it really varies from event to event what the role title is and what the role looks like.

And one thing I'll say about Food Curator is that's only really a small, small portion of the job for Outside Lands. I, as Andy knows, spend many, many, many hours on the phone with the restaurateurs talking them through operations and helping them plan everything out. I always say, I don't just say, "Okay, you're in, good luck," and then just send them on their way. It's a lot of work to, you know, follow them along their planning process and make sure that they are set up for success. I want them to have a really good weekend.

Andy: How do food lineups differ from event to event? I think a lot of people think of concessions and a pretty small variety of food and offerings, but given knowing you and seeing all of what you've done at these different events, it's so varied and it's specific to each event, of course, but how would you how would you describe the differences from event to event?

Tanya: Yeah, you know, I think just like with a restaurant, where you're opening up a restaurant, you're figuring out the concept and like, what's the demographic you're going for? Are you in a college town area? Are you in a really high-class area? So you are always thinking about who your customer is going to be, and it's the same thing with music festivals. So for Outside Lands, San Francisco is a huge foodie city. We're geared towards definitely more elevated festival cuisine. You're still going to see the favorites. You're still going to see hot dogs, but they have caviar on them. You're you're it's it's just an elevated version of normal festival food, is how I would describe Outside Lands.

And then, you know, for a festival like Lightning in a Bottle, we definitely have a more health-conscious demographic. They want to see some vegan cuisine. They want to see elixirs, things like that. So, you know, thinking about what they're looking for.

And then Hardly Strictly Bluegrass, we pull a ton of people from all over the Bay Area. It's a free festival. So we've just got such a wide-ranging demographic. So

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I like to have a lot of variety at that event. I like to have a little bit of upscale stuff. I like to have a little bit of the classic festival food. So it's really just thinking about who's coming to eat this food, what do they want to eat, and how are we going to deliver that to them?

Andy: So in the example of a really unique or high-end event, I mean, can you share what you just did in June in Napa? Because that would be like the creme de la creme sort of lineup, right? As far as the style of food.

Tanya: Yes. Oh, yes. Yeah, absolutely. So in June in Napa, I coordinated the food and beverage program for it's called it was called A Weekend in Napa with Andrea Bocelli. A really huge undertaking. The theme was Italian sophistication. So we brought in Michelin-starred chefs, local Napa Valley Michelin-starred chefs, Philip Tessier was one of them. He came in to do this dinner, like a beautiful sit-down dinner. And Rogelio Garcia was the other one. So it was really a beautiful experience. We had, we did have concessions there in addition to the sit-down dinners, and it was really elevated, beautiful concessions food. I'm super proud of what we put together for that.

Andy: So hot dogs and French fries to Michelin Star chefs. We love that. You do the full gamut.

Tanya: That's right.

Patrick: When you are, when you hired on a chef to do these events, are you working closely with them to help them curate their menus because you have more experience with that? And I would assume, that a chef, just because they're a successful brick-and-mortar operator, might not be great at like an outdoor festival. So, how do you work with both of those?.

Tanya: Yeah, absolutely. So, I do work very closely with the chefs on their menus, and try to my strategy is typically to try to direct them towards representing their brand with like an elevated version of festival food. So how are they going to take their concept and their brand, maybe take a dish that they do in their restaurant and how are we transitioning it into a festival food, right?

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That's definitely something I work very closely with each of the chefs on and the responses vary. I've definitely had some chefs that they want to serve what they want to serve, and that's fine. Menu is always up to them, but I try to direct them towards items that I know will sell.

You know, you can offer really incredible cuisine at a music festival, but some things just don't sell, and after having done this with Outside Lands for 16 years, I feel a pretty good, I'm a pretty good judge of menu items and whether or not they'll sell.

So that's definitely a huge, huge part of the conversation. And then, as you mentioned, you know, they're not used to doing this thing in the middle of a field. They're used to doing it in the restaurant where they're comfortable. So as we talk about menu, we're also talking about equipment. What equipment do you need to actually execute this menu, and do you feel comfortable operating that type of equipment? Fryers, flat tops, ovens, what are we going to use to create these items?

And not only that, one thing that chefs don't think about often in advance is hot holding. You know, in your restaurant, you're probably not doing a whole lot of hot holding and you want to serve everything fresh, of course, but the nature of a music festival with the ebb and the flow of the crowd, you have to think about hot holding, not only from a guest experience perspective, they want to get hot food quickly, but from a health department and sanitation perspective. You have to keep your food at temperature as it's waiting to be served.

Andy: Well said. And another thing that I hear a theme in your conversations is also approachability in the menu. If your menu doesn't read to translate to the widest demographic, things just may not sell like you intended them to, right?

Tanya: Yes, absolutely. I do the menu header copy for Outside Lands and for other events where we do, you know, we actually provide the headers, the big banners that go above the booths. And I'm very particular about the language that's used on the banner.

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I'll give you an example. Kajiken is one of our restaurants, new restaurants at Outside Lands this year. They are a concept straight out of Japan, and they do Abura Soba. It's dry soba, soupless ramen, it's called sometimes, or sorry, not dry soba, dry ramen or soupless ramen. And they really wanted their header to say "Abura Soba Noodles." And I talked them through, you know, the typical attendee coming to the festival, they may not know what that is, and if they don't, they'll walk right by it.

So I talked them into doing "Japanese Noodles" on the header, and then on their menu board that lists out the pricing, it will say Abura Soba, and by that time someone will understand, oh, these are Japanese noodles. Okay, cool, I'm interested, I'm in. So how do we make that their menu item, as esoteric as it might be, sound accessible on the header so we catch someone's eye and get them interested in learning more.

Patrick: Wow, that's very interesting.

Andy: It may be hard to summarize this, Tanya, but can you let our listeners know some of the main points of pre-planning for food vending and large events like this? What are some of the things that you do in the months and weeks prior to leading up to make sure that when the gates open, it's go time?

Tanya: Yeah, absolutely. Permitting is a big one. Just like with restaurants, you've got to have your permits in place. I work closely with the county health and fire departments for every event that I do to ensure that we are abiding by their guidelines. We all of the all of the vendors have filled out the proper paperwork. Permitting is a big one. I mean, if there's one thing that can absolutely ruin your event, it's if you don't have the right permits or if you don't pass your inspections, right? Just like with a restaurant.

And then collecting operational needs from all of the restaurant partners. So, because we are in a field, we need to understand their power needs, we need to understand their water needs, we need to understand their refrigeration needs. So getting the restaurant partners to a point where they understand what they need and working with them directly on that is a big part of what I do.

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For an event like Lightning in a Bottle or Seven Stars Festival, these are traveling festival vendors for the most part, so they know what they need, but for Outside Lands, I really need to work closely with the restaurants to help them understand what they need because they may not know how to get there.

And then also menu planning. I just finished the massive project of going through every single menu for Outside Lands. So like 95 plus menus that I look at and I compare their pricing and give individualized feedback on pricing to all, every single Outside Lands restaurant partner, so they understand where they stand. You know, if somebody's pricing a rice bowl at \$15 and someone else is pricing it at \$25, we've got to have a conversation there where they understand there's quite a range, and we need to maybe meet in the middle, or maybe it's playing with their portions. So we talk a lot about portion size. Like, people don't want a huge meal oftentimes. So how can we reduce that portion size, get the price point a little more budget-friendly.

So it's a lot of, it's just a lot of conversations with these folks to try to get them to a point where I feel like they're ready to just do their thing. You know, once we get to the festival, they're, I won't say on their own, but it's up to them to utilize all of the, you know, advice and all of the conversations we've had to just execute.

Patrick: Yeah. Wow. Can you share with us some of maybe your bigger challenges that you've had, you know, trying to get the doors open, any specific examples of some major challenges?

Tanya: You know, I've been very lucky for the most part that I haven't experienced huge challenges actually getting gates open. I will say that one thing I can think of is, you know, weather. Obviously, out in a park. Yeah, we at Lightning in a Bottle, I think it was 2019, we had to hold up the gates because it was just too muddy for people to be driving into the campgrounds. So that was a challenge. Nothing you can do. Bonnaroo just got canceled a couple weeks ago. My good friend runs the food program at Bonnaroo, heartbreaking for those food vendors to get out there. Luckily, their insurance allowed them to make the vendors whole, so that all worked out. But weather is a huge one.

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And another one is point of sale. So Billfold is a point of sale company that we use at some of my events and they are they're really excellent. They do the tap to pay on wristbands, but the first year that we used them at Lightning in a Bottle, there was an issue with their system, and we had a lull where we actually weren't able to make transactions for the first couple hours of the event. It was some sort of a Wi-Fi issue. I'm not sure exactly what happened there. But you know, when you're out in the middle of a field, especially somewhere as remote as the Lightning in a Bottle location in Bakersfield, you know, this is something you wouldn't think about in a restaurant, like your point of sale, your stuff just works, you know, your credit card processing just works.

Andy: You're hardwired.

Patrick: Yeah, yeah.

Tanya: Yeah, so sometimes, of course, sometimes things go down, but the possibility of something like that going down when you're in the middle of a field with Starlink Wi-Fi is definitely a larger concern.

Andy: This is totally an offshoot, but I was at a baseball game with my dad for my brother's birthday, and he's just grumbling that he can't use cash at the cash registers. And this is kind of a post-pandemic thing, that, are we pretty much cashless at nearly 100% of events and venues now?

Tanya: In my experience, yes. Yeah, that's pretty much the direction it's gone. I actually think back to Outside Lands many years ago and kind of can't believe that we allowed vendors to accept cash. The settlement process now is very straightforward. We pull reports, we calculate fees, we pay them out.

Andy: Patrick, you remember, you know, \$5 for the tip jar and \$5 for the cash register back in our, you know, twenties, trying to bartend, and you're watching over your bartenders going, wait a minute, wasn't that transaction just \$20? You know what I mean? So it is very hard to manage, right? It is very hard to manage.

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Patrick: Well, in some ways it's easier to manage now because no one has, yeah, yeah, yeah. So it's very interesting, but a cashless society is among us for sure.

Tanya: Absolutely.

Andy: Tanya, you mentioned that Outside Lands is still your largest undertaking and curation. The event is pretty unique because of the elevated food concept mixed with great music and art, and other things to see. What makes the food lineup very unique at Outside Lands in previous years or this year, for example?

Tanya: You know, just in general, Outside Lands is very unique because we only work with local Bay Area restaurants and food vendors. So, you know, when I'm looking through applications and trying to select the new restaurants each year, I mean, I go through a ton of applications, and some of them are in Southern California, some are even out of state, and those are just an automatic no. We want to keep this event really focused on the Bay Area culinary world. We want to involve the local community and the local businesses and keep it very, very local for this event.

That, I think, in and of itself makes Outside Lands food lineup very, very unique. Just the fact that we're working with these restaurants, some of whom have never done an off-site event other than maybe some catering. It's unique, it has challenges, it's much, much more difficult than doing an event that is primarily working with vendors that, you know, travel festival to festival. It's totally, totally different. And obviously, the cuisine is reflective of that. We've got a huge variety diversity of cuisine. We've got everything from Nepalese food to Taiwanese to Creole, to I've even got a vendor doing Eritrean cuisine this year. I mean, we've got it's across the board like a crazy variety of food. So it's not just chicken tenders and pizza and burgers, although we do have great chicken tenders and pizza.

Andy: And similarly, you were on the news yesterday in San Jose, weren't you, in the Bay Area, on NBC, right?

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Tanya: Yes.

Andy: You threw out a pretty interesting statistic yesterday that caught my ear. Do you recall what that was?

Tanya: Yes. Yes. So 85% of the restaurants at Outside Lands are BIPOC or female-owned. So it's an incredibly diverse restaurant lineup, and we are very proud of that. And honestly, it's just reflective of the Bay Area. The food and the restaurants in the Bay area are so diverse, the owners are so diverse, and so we're just really proud and happy to be representing that and reflecting that on that Outside Lands food lineup.

Patrick: Tanya, I want to give a shout-out. I went to a Nigerian restaurant over the last weekend in Oakland. It's called Ruth's Buka. I don't know if you've heard of them.

Tanya: No, I haven't.

Patrick: You should check them out. Like, most of the Bay Area, in my experience of growing up here, has been Ethiopian food as far as like from the continent of Africa, but this was my first time eating West African food, and I would highly recommend it. You should look into it.

Tanya: Oh, great. Okay, I absolutely will. Thank you. I just wrote it down. Always love a new restaurant recommendation.

Patrick: Yeah, it's totally like, you know, fast casual, but the food was pretty good. I really enjoyed it. Yeah.

Tanya: Tanya, can you share maybe one of your underlying themes from a previous year, and then just really dive into what you're doing this year at Outside Lands in 2025?

Andy: Yeah, absolutely. So, you know, each year I try to kind of think of a theme or a direction I'd like to go in terms of the curation for the new restaurant partners that will be added to the food lineup. Typically, we invite back the

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restaurant partners from the year prior, and we have a pretty high return rate, like anywhere between 85 and 90% return rate. So I only have a couple of spots to play with each year to replace those who have left the lineup, and have to be very intentional about who's being added to this lineup. So having a theme really helps me to hone in on what's important to me at the moment.

And you know, in the past, one of the themes I focused on was Latin American cuisine and just kind of like exploring the breadth of Latin American cuisine and Colombian and Peruvian and Oaxacan and, you know, trying to hone in on the differences and the similarities between all those types of cuisine. So that was a really fun theme to work with.

And this year, I'm super excited about my theme. I'm really focusing in on pop-ups this year, pop-up restaurants, particularly pop-up restaurants serving fusion cuisine. I just think that pop-up restaurants are where some of the most exciting cuisine is coming from right now. If you think about it, these chefs are not bound by the typical constraints of a restaurant, where you have to stick with the menu, you have to stick with the concept, be on brand. They can really do whatever they want. And that creative freedom has allowed them to think outside the box and just come up with some really unique and delicious food.

Andy: Very quotable. We love what you said there.

Tanya: Yeah, it just kind of clicked one day. You know, Andy and I, you know, went to that Polish pop-up in the Mission, and I love going to pop-ups. It's a really fun way to explore the city's culinary landscape. It's also kind of like a little adventure. You know, it makes you feel like you're in the know. It's got this kind of like exciting vibe where, you know, it's there today and it's gone tomorrow.

So it just kind of exemplifies the spirit of the Bay Area to me of like adventure and exploration. And bringing that to Outside Lands kind of reflects the sense of adventure and exploration that our attendees have when they come to check out new music at the event, right? So you're coming to the festival, you're finding new artists that you love. Maybe you've never heard of these artists before. Maybe they're totally under the radar, and now it's your new favorite artist.

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Same thing with these pop-ups. You really have to be kind of in the know, someone who reads the food news or follows these guys on socials, in order to know where they're going to be popping up. And being able to find them all in Golden Gate Park for one weekend is kind of a really special thing because otherwise you would need to hunt them down, right?

So it all just kind of came together in my head like this is the perfect theme to focus on this year. Not only because it's really cool and exciting for our attendees, but also because this is a great way to inject these, you know, small businesses with a little bit of revenue that could potentially be used to help them open a brick-and-mortar, which, in speaking to these guys, many of them do. They're very excited about opening up a brick-and-mortar in the near future.

And we have a couple of restaurants on the lineup at Outside Lands that have been with us for years that started out as pop-ups. And when they joined Outside Lands, they were pop-ups, and then they went on to open brick and mortars. FOB Kitchen, Sorrel, Abacá. So these guys have very successful...

Andy: Wow, some big names.

Tanya: Yeah, very successful restaurants. And so it's just an exciting thing to be a part of that journey.

Andy: You're doing a good thing there. It's a great theme. I kudos to you on that.

Patrick: So, I have a going back, you talked about the retention rate of some of the chefs that have been going on and on for several years now. And then also like with these pop-ups and how much of doing Outside Lands, for instance, is about exposure and marketing and making you relevant versus like profitability. Like, are these people super successful and they want to keep going because of it being a profitable, you know, scenario, or is it about the exposure and marketing and staying relevant?

Tanya: I think it's definitely a blend of both. You know, I don't have my eyes on the P&Ls of all the restaurants taking part in the event, but I think the retention

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rate speaks for itself. You know, we have some restaurants that have been with us for every single year of the event. Many of them have been with us for 10 plus years. And I think part of that is, you know, maybe your first year you're minimally profitable, and then you kind of figure out the formula.

So just like with a restaurant, you open up the doors, maybe you're, you know, maybe you're in the red for a little while, and then you figure out how to make it work. So these restaurants have come in, they've figured out the formula, they do it year after year. I believe, and once again, I don't have my eyes on the P&Ls. I believe they increase profitability from year to year because they're able to figure out how to make it work.

But in terms of the exposure, we understand as a festival that a big part of the reason for these restaurants wanting to participate in the event is because of the exposure, and we definitely try to maximize that as much as possible. They're on our website, every single restaurant with photos, with menus, with links to their social.

This takes many hours to put together, but it's important to us that we're properly promoting these businesses. I work directly with our PR team to ensure that we're, you know, giving shout-outs as much as possible. We're pitching stories about the food. We want to make sure that this is a really great exposure opportunity for these businesses, whether it's their first year at the event or whether it's their, you know, 12th year at the event, and try to spread that love as much as we can.

Patrick: And I bet you these pop-up concepts have much more experience doing an event like this than your traditional brick-and-mortar chef. So they probably do a pretty good job of coming in there for like this year with all these pop-up chefs, they're probably going to knock it out of the ballpark basically.

Tanya: Yeah, that's kind of a bonus of working with the pop-ups. I mean, for every other reason that I mentioned, of course, I'm so excited to have the pop-ups participate, and I definitely still work with them to walk them through the process, but they really understand what it's like to show up with everything that

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you need and make a thing happen out of nothing, make something out of nothing. You know what I mean? So they that you're you absolutely nailed it right there. They are certainly more in most cases, they're certainly like more adept at putting together a booth at Outside Lands than maybe even a brick-and-mortar.

Andy: I remember showing up for our hand roll station back in the day with Blowfish Sushi, and it was fun, but oh my lord, did we forget certain tools and packaging and this stuff, and there was a strong learning curve, but once we got it down, it was awesome.

Tanya: Yep, yep. That's how it goes. You make the mistake once, you're not going to make it again.

Andy: How do we bridge the gap here, Tanya, you know, and Patrick? We have a lot in common in our goals of supporting our clients. And I think it's really important to point out that these existing, but more focusing on these pop-ups and emerging chefs and concepts that at some point they are going to be looking for a brick-and-mortar to, you know, call themselves home and have a flagship location. And I think the way that Tanya supports her clients has some similarities and in sentiment on how Patrick and I support our clients. We really care about them. We really want them to succeed and find the right fit so they have long-term success. So we can scratch each other's back in this sort of in this sort of relationship here.

Patrick: I was thinking maybe uh Andy and I could have a booth at Outside Lands for, you know, some of the pop-up and restaurant owners there that may want to talk to us on the spot.

Andy: There we go.

Tanya: Are you guys trying to get free wristbands to Outside Lands? Is that what's happening right now? I knew it. I knew that's what this was about.

Patrick: Only if it's VIP.

Andy: Yeah.

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Tanya: Right. No, I mean, you know, Andy knows that I speak to restaurants as he does all day long. That's what we both do. And I think you nailed it. I always say, you know, it's great for restaurants to be working with you guys because you speak chef, you speak restaurant. You've been there. You've owned your own restaurants, you've gone through the struggles. It's not just somebody saying, oh, I understand. I really understand what you're going through. No, you do.

And at the beginning of this podcast, I talked about how my very first experience at Outside Lands was running a booth. So when the restaurants are running out of compostable products or when they are, you know, one of their staff members doesn't show up for the cashier shift, I've been there. I've had those things happen while I've been in charge of a booth, and I really do take it to heart and know what they're going through. So I really, really think that's very reflective of what your clients experience working with you guys, and I know how much you care, and I know how expert you all are, and in doing what you do.

You know, Andy and I are always recommending folks to one another. I'm recommending, you know, restaurants that are looking for a brick-and-mortar to go see you guys, even if it's just to get some advice or, you know, talk about what they're looking for and you know, if it's something that's realistic, if it's something that's out there right now, just to even have a conversation.

And Andy is always sending me restaurants that he thinks would be a good fit for one of my events, you know, to or at least for us to go and check out and talk about and, you know, just be a part of our lives.

So I think the specialization of what we both do is definitely what bridges the gap. And not only the specialization, but also the love and care and dedication and passion to what we do really shines through with what you guys do, honestly.

Patrick: Thank you.

Andy: Warm and fuzzy. Warm and fuzzy. We love it. Yeah.

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Tanya: Is anyone shedding a tear yet? No? Okay.

Andy: Close, I've got some goosebumps here. What do you think, Patrick? Any other questions for this amazingly talented, specialized woman?

Patrick: What is the single best thing that you've ever eaten at Outside Lands? One bite.

Tanya: Ooh. I mean, I'm going to, I don't normally like to give like what was my favorite, but one immediately came to mind, so I guess I'm going to have to say it. Daytrip did this like whole hog sandwich. It was like almost like a pulled pork sandwich. I think I cried when I ate it. I definitely fell to my knees, and this is not an exaggeration. Daytrip just reopened in Oakland. I am so excited to go check out their fast casual concept, but that was, I hate to play favorites, but I literally think I shed a tear for how good it was.

Andy: Wow. Her passion is real, people. I, in Japan, and a couple and maybe one or two other experiences, I remember her literally just basically putting the hand up saying, don't talk right now and I watch a tear comes down her face as she eats a really tasty bite. So her passion is real.

Tanya, you're the real deal. I really respect what you do. I think we all do, and it shows in what you put together and how your professional life has grown because you're in demand.

Patrick: Yeah.

Tanya: Oh, thank you so much. It's so kind of you to say that.

Andy: Thank you for joining us very, very much. I know Patrick, you know what? I think your question was the perfect bonus question. That was it. The best bite. We were talking about Outside Lands all day. So, let's wrap it up.

Thank you, Tanya. We really appreciate you. And please everybody, listen next time to our next upcoming episode. We have some more exciting guests coming, and hopefully, you're salivating after this episode. Thank you.

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