



[Sports Foodie](#)

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SPECTRA IS ROLLING OUT THIS DISH TO ALL VENUES NATIONWIDE AFTER FOOD BATTLE ROYALE

Each major concessionaire has locations across the country highlighting that specific region's cuisine at their respective venues. The problem, they rarely combine and share inspiration. The Philadelphia-based concessionaire, Spectra by Comcast Spectacor attempted to solve that problem. They brought all their chefs together in Chicago for a food battle royale. The winner, fans everywhere.

The competition was simple - the best dish would be shared at venues across the U.S. for everyone to enjoy. This was one event as part of Spectra's first Culinary Innovation Summit. The company brought its culinary leadership together to discuss the latest trends, techniques, and concepts while also building relationships with attending culinary, packaging and equipment sponsor.

"We held the summit to demonstrate Spectra's commitment to driving culinary innovation," said Scott Swiger, Spectra's Vice President of Culinary Excellence. "At the Summit, our top innovators and influencers were able to try new products, learn about trends in the marketplace from leading researchers and developers, explore new products/flavors, and collaborate to utilize all of that knowledge to create signature experiences to offer our guests."

As part of the Summit, chefs drew straws to determine the teams for the competition which were tasked with creating two breakthrough concepts and recipes per team. Teams had one hour to plan and consult with the product experts and food purveyors on-site followed by 90 minutes of open kitchen time to perfect their dishes.

After chopping, stirring, and sautéing their way through the competition, the chefs presented their dishes to a panel of judges before the winner was announced. Though there was only one winning team from the Culinary Innovation Challenge, Spectra wants to incorporate these new dishes into future menus at Spectra-managed properties.

Eleven All-Star Spectra by Comcast Spectacor chefs competing at a Culinary Innovative Challenge presented Pretzel Crusted Philly Cheesesteak Croquets as the winning menu item selected by a panel of five judges. In total, eight new game-changing food offerings were created for Spectra to add to the menus at its stadiums, arenas, convention centers, and catering properties across North America, beginning as early as this fall.

The winning team included Chefs Mark Borowski, a Philadelphia native, who is executive chef at Jungle Island in Miami, FL; and Travis Wilson who works as executive chef at Blue Wahoos Stadium in his hometown of Pensacola, FL. It was the first time these chefs collaborated together.

The Pretzel Crusted Philly Cheesesteak Croquettes are baseball-sized Philly Cheesesteak Croquets rolled in ground soft pretzel and fried to golden brown and served with a warm beer cheese dipping sauce. Culinary Challenge judges raved as the dish hit all criteria; taste, presentation, and applicability to Spectra's marketplace.

Coming in second place was the Flatiron Steak Churasco paired with a Pineapple Mojito, also created by the same winning team. The dish is a flatbread cone filled with Low Country Slaw, Chipotle Vinaigrette, Beef skewers and topped with chimichurri popcorn.

“The Pretzel Crusted Philly Cheesesteak Croquette is the perfect new addition as it can be served at ballparks and arenas, and can be tweaked as a bite-size appetizers on catering menus at special events,” said Spectra’s Scott Swiger, Vice President, Culinary Excellence. “Our chefs from across the country collaborated and created several delicious items that we look forward to adding to our Spectra menus across all of our platforms.”

The other six dishes created during the Culinary Innovative Challenge include:

North African Fire Roasted Chicken Flatbread Tacos

The North African Fire Roasted Chicken Flatbread Tacos incorporate international spices with hummus, roasted tomatoes, pickled kohlrabi with chilies and cilantro.

Beer Infused Beef Short Rib Sandwich

A grown-up grilled cheese loaded with beer infused beef short rib served on a pretzel bun with Lemon Myrtle Aioli, Smoked Cheddar Cheese, and Charred Red Wine Onions.

Citrus Pork Empanadas with Tropical Super-Slaw

Pork Empanadas stuffed with a generous filling of pork shoulder, mashed butternut squash, brie, diced pineapple and orange juice served with a Tropical Super-Slaw. The slaw features watermelon radish coconut rum vinaigrette and a citrus ginger tomato coulis that brings out the citrus flavor profiles of the pork empanadas but can also be served alone as a vegetarian option.

Vegetarian Muffalatta

The Vegetarian Muffalatta is served on a grilled flatbread rubbed with Pepperberry Kale Pesto and filled with Butternut Squash, Watermelon Radish, Brussel Sprout Petals, Avocado, Oven roasted tomatoes, grilled artichokes, and red onion all tossed with a Sabal Olek Harissa Yogurt.

Turkey “Sustain-a-Burger”

Handmade ground turkey patty blended with quinoa, oyster mushrooms, soy sauce, ginger and spices made for a healthier and more sustainable choice than a beef burger. The burger is topped with a tomato ginger chutney and served on a pretzel bun with a side of Flash Fried Brussel Sprout Petals seasoned with Lemon Myrtle. The team dubbed the name ‘sustain-a-burger’ because it was inspired by market place movement towards healthier environmentally friendly beef burger alternatives. The side of crispy Brussel petals are a savory snack on its own and are gluten-free.

Pepperberry-dusted Fries

Perfectly crispy fries dusted with Australian Pepperberry for an elevated flavor are served with roasted tomato ketchup and rosemary lemon dipping sauces.