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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2018

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Mayor Emanuel Interviews Food Critic Steve Dolinsky about Pizza on “Chicago Stories”

On this week's episode of [Chicago Stories](#), Mayor Emanuel sat down with Chicago food critic Steve Dolinsky to talk about his epic journey to over 100 different pizza spots across the Chicago-area, sharing his biggest discoveries, best-kept secrets, and everything else along the way.

As Steve learned, what makes Chicago the nation's pizza capital isn't the deep dish we're famous for—delicious as it is—but the sheer variety of styles our city has to offer.

On any given night, Chicagoans can order up no less than 10 different styles of pizza, from Thin, to Chicago Tavern-Style, Deep-Dish, Stuffed, Neapolitan, Artisan, By-The-Slice New York-Style, along with Detroit, Sicilian, and Roman styles. (By comparison, New York City itself only offers five.)

As Steve told Mayor Emanuel, the reason is rooted in the same elements that drive Chicago's vaunted dining scene.

“We've embraced all these styles of pie because Chicago loves experimentation, we like to try things, and it's much more affordable to do things in Chicago,” Steve told Mayor Emanuel. “We also love to eat.”

Steve's pizza tour began as a matter of principal. “I was annoyed with another listicle online saying these are the seven hottest pizza places in Chicago,” Steve said, “and no one had actually vetted it, and gone out and eaten it.”

So Steve did just that, methodically trying 185 pizzas before settling on 101 of his favorite slices, all of which he put into his new book “Pizza City, USA.”

Aside from the abundance of Chicago's styles, among Steve's many discoveries was the difference between “stuffed” and “deep-dish,” and—perhaps biggest of all—that true Chicago-style pizza is in fact the thin, crispy, small-squared, “Tavern-Style” found in countless neighborhood bars across the city.

“I know that deep and stuffed are from here, but this is the pie that people in Chicago eat on a daily basis,” Steve said.

Be sure to listen to the full episode as Steve tells Mayor Emanuel about his favorite spots, weirdest toppings, throws some well-researched shade on New York's pizza scene, as well as shares how his career of loving food began.

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