



NEWS RELEASE

Chili's® Announces the Grand Opening of Chili's Scranton Branch

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The grill & bar's newest location is destined to become a Lackawanna County hotspot featuring throwbacks to iconic 2000s TV moments and the return of the legendary menu item, the Awesome Blossom®

DALLAS, March 26, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Nearly 20 years after cementing a spot in pop culture history thanks to a beloved group of employees at a fictitious Pennsylvania paper company, **Chili's® Grill & Bar** is opening its doors to the Chili's "Scranton Branch" on April 7. The brand-new, permanent restaurant will pay homage to some of Chili's most notable on-screen moments, with throwback nods and decor, in addition to being the only Chili's location to include the fan-favorite Awesome Blossom® on menus.

"For decades, Chili's has inserted itself in culture – introducing the now-famous Baby Back Ribs jingle, and most recently unleashing Triple Dipper cheese pulls on TikTok," said George Felix, Chili's Chief Marketing Officer. "But we've also seen the brand come to life on screen through the years, and that includes being tied to Scranton despite never having a location there. That changes this year with our newest restaurant. A moment this big was way more than a pop-up could pay off, so we created Chili's Scranton Branch to feel like a familiar home to fans complete with the perfect throwback menu item in the Awesome Blossom, and we can't wait for them to join us."

Scranton super fans will see this isn't a normal Chili's restaurant the moment they walk in the door and spot a giant Chili's Scranton Branch chalk art mural created by the original Chili's artist from the early 2000s. Other throwback elements include vintage artwork, Chili's iconic tile tables, and a perfectly recreated business lunch booth photo opp to snap the perfect 2005 frame.

To kick off the celebration, Chili's invited a few famous "locals" to introduce Chili's Scranton Branch to the world in multiple ads that will run online and on social media. One, in the style of a classic local TV commercial, features Melora Hardin, Andy Buckley and Amy Pietz and offers a glimpse at the location's unique décor, culminating with Hardin being serenaded to Chili's unmistakable Baby Back Ribs jingle in the Awesome Blossom-laden booth that happens to be a perfect time capsule of 2005.

Now available exclusively at Chili's Scranton Branch, the beloved Awesome Blossom is a deep-fried onion cut into a blossom shape with easy to pull petals and Chili's Buffalo Ranch dipping sauce. Removed from menus in 2008, it's now back and what better representative could there be than Scranton's poker champion and local band drummer, Brian Baumgartner. Baumgartner spotlights the impeccably named appetizer that fans can buy to their heart's content as long as they're at Chili's Scranton Branch, of course.

"Seeing Chili's Scranton Branch was like stepping into a time machine, especially if that time machine could also spit out the greatest appetizer of all time, the Awesome Blossom," Baumgartner said. "Scranton is a city I'm very protective of, and working with Chili's to open this location was a natural fit. The Chili's team pulled out all the stops in creating this restaurant, and I'll be stopping in for an Awesome Blossom every time I come visit."

Joining Baumgartner in the Electric City was a known casual Friday and Solitaire enthusiast, Kate Flannery, who took on the role of promoting the Scranton Marg, the \$5 party in a glass that will be offered nationwide one day only on April 7 to celebrate the grand opening of Chili's Scranton Branch. Flannery goes on camera in a quest to make sure she's never without a Scranton Marg.

"I'm the daughter of a bar owner and I've had enough margaritas through the years that I'm getting picky about them, and the Scranton Marg is a really good one," Flannery said. "For fans who come to Scranton, Chili's Scranton Branch has everything you need in one place, and for those who can't make it on opening day, find the \$5 Scranton Marg wherever your closest Chili's is."

The Scranton Marg won't be the only way fans can join the fun. Chili's Scranton Branch merch goes live starting April 7 with a pair of t-shirts to celebrate the opening. One will be available through a social media giveaway and both will be available to all at welcometochilis.com.

To learn more about Chili's Scranton Branch, please visit chilis.com/scrantonbranch.

About Chili's® Grill & Bar

Hi, welcome to Chili's! We are a leader in the casual dining industry and the flagship brand of Dallas-based Brinker International, Inc. (NYSE: EAT). We are known for our Big Mouth Burgers®, Chicken Crispers®, full-on sizzling fajitas, and hand-shaken margaritas. We take our food seriously – but not ourselves – because dining out should feel like a

celebration even if there is nothing to celebrate. Our passion is making everyone feel special, and every day, our ChiliHeads make it their job to spread #ChilisLove across almost 1,600 restaurants in 29 countries and 2 territories. And Chili's cares. We host local Give Back Events to support kids, education, and hunger and have raised more than \$110 million benefiting St. Jude Children's Research Hospital through generous guest donations. Find more information about us at chilis.com, follow us on **X** or **Instagram**, like us on **Facebook**, or join us on **TikTok**.

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