



El Pollo Loco® Declares September 9 National Grilled Chicken Day

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The fire-grilled chicken authority champions new holiday with month-long celebration of the much-loved protein

COSTA MESA, Calif., Aug. 26, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [El Pollo Loco](#), the nation's leading fire-grilled chicken chain, is seeking long overdue justice for grilled chicken. After decades of watching the country celebrate chicken of all kinds on their respective days – from wings to fried sandwiches, cordon bleu to cacciatore and everything in between – El Pollo loco took action to get grilled chicken the recognition it deserves.

After a year-long campaign that included a billboard in Times Square, petitions to holiday naming organizations, incredible deals for their Loco Rewards Members and an AI-fueled social contest, El Pollo Loco is proud to announce that National Day Calendar has officially named September 9, National Grilled Chicken Day.

"We couldn't believe that this delicious way to cook and enjoy chicken was being left off the long list of food holidays," said Liz Williams, CEO of El Pollo Loco. "El Pollo Loco has been celebrating fire-grilled chicken daily for the last 50-plus years, now everyone can get Loco and enjoy grilled chicken on September 9."

The new national food holiday celebrates the cooking method that has been central to El Pollo Loco for decades. The brand's signature grilled chicken is marinated in a proprietary recipe of citrus, garlic and spices before being cooked over an open flame, creating the distinctive flavor that has helped define El Pollo Loco since its beginning.

But securing the holiday was only the first step – now the brand is celebrating by giving away free chicken!

Loco Rewards Members can receive a free 2-piece leg and thigh meal with the purchase of any drink at participating El Pollo Loco restaurants on the inaugural National Grilled Chicken Day, September 9*

Guests can download the El Pollo Loco app and [sign up](#) for Loco Rewards ahead of September 9 to unlock the offer and stay connected to exclusive rewards and surprises throughout National Chicken Month (and beyond).

But what's better than free chicken for a day? Free chicken for life!

On September 10, El Pollo Loco is launching the Loco Hall of Flame Music Challenge**, inviting fans to show off their creativity and loco love for that fire-grilled chicken for the chance to win the ultimate prize: Free Chicken for Life.

The brand is partnering with producer and multi-instrumentalist [Kaelin Ellis](#) to create an original eight-bar track inspired by the sounds of El Pollo Loco's famous grills. Once the beat drops, El Pollo Loco is handing the mic to the internet.

Fans can take the track in any direction they choose on TikTok and Instagram. Write a hook, spit a verse, duet, remix, dance, animate a music video or create something completely unexpected. The only rule? Get Loco over the beat.

The Loco Hall of Flame Music Challenge runs September 10 through September 23, with the most creative submission taking home Free Chicken for Life.

For complete challenge details, eligibility requirements and Official Rules, visit elpolloloco.com/hallofflame. Chicken for life is defined as one El Pollo Loco 2-Piece leg and thigh chicken meal per week, per year, for 50 years.

You can't have a Hall of F(l)ame without a few icons...

That's why El Pollo Loco's signature Loco Friday Drops for the month of September will feature some of its most iconic menu items and deals – Tostadas, Pollo Bowls, BOGOs, \$1 deals, and more.

Loco Rewards Members will see these deals in their app each Friday.

Still not a Loco Rewards member? What are you waiting for? [Sign up today!](#)

***Valid 9/9/26 only.** Valid for a free 2pc Leg & Thigh Meal with purchase of an a la carte drink. Not valid on combo purchases. Offer available to valid Loco Rewards members, redeemable through the Loco Rewards account online or in the App by applying the reward at checkout, or in store by scanning the QR code in the Loco Rewards App. Tax and modifications extra. Offer valid for one-time use. Limit one offer per person, per day. Not valid on third-party delivery platforms. Valid at participating locations only via participating channels only. Subject to availability and while supplies last.

May not be combined with any other coupons, promotions or special offers. No cash value. Additional restrictions may apply; void where prohibited.

**No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. Ends 9/23/26. Open to legal U.S. residents of the 50 U.S./D.C., 18+. For rules, eligibility, methods of entry, judging criteria, and prize details: ElPolloLoco.com/HallofFlame Sponsor: El Pollo Loco, Inc.

About El Pollo Loco

El Pollo Loco (Nasdaq: LOCO) is the nation's leading fire-grilled chicken restaurant known for its craveable, flavorful, and better-for-you offerings. Our menu features innovative meals with Mexican flavors all made in our restaurants daily using quality ingredients. At El Pollo Loco, inclusivity is at the heart of our culture. Our community of over 4,000 employees reflects our commitment to creating a workplace where everyone has a seat at our table. Since 1980, El Pollo Loco has successfully expanded its presence, operating more than 500 company-owned and franchise-operated restaurants across ten U.S. states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Louisiana, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, Utah and Washington. The Company has also extended its footprint internationally, with eight licensed restaurant locations in the Philippines. For more information or to place an order, visit the Loco Rewards APP or ElPolloLoco.com. Follow us on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, or X.

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A photo accompanying this announcement is available at <https://www.globenewswire.com/NewsRoom/AttachmentNg/81b40f69-b76d-476e-a24e-5833dc9e0ae7>



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