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**EL POLLO LOCO NAMES ITS TOP COOK
AT 17TH ANNUAL GRILLING CHALLENGE**

First Time Competitor German Veletzuy of Sylmar, California Wins Top Honors

COSTA MESA, Calif. (June 28, 2011) – Bringing a sizzling finish to months of regional competitions, El Pollo Loco awarded German Veletzuy from Sylmar, CA, the esteemed title of Top Grill Master at its 17th Annual Grill Master Challenge held June 16, 2011 in Los Angeles, CA.

The event paid tribute to the grilling expertise that put El Pollo Loco on the map more than 30 years ago and brought together the top six finalists representing more than 1,200 cooks across the 400-unit chain. Veletzuy and the remaining five finalists fired up the grills in hopes of winning the coveted title of Top Grill Master for El Pollo Loco, along with cash and prizes. More than \$10,000 in cash was awarded to the top cooks and the support teams that helped place them in the finals.

As a first time competitor in El Pollo Loco's Annual Grill Master Challenge, Veletzuy wowed the judges with his perfectly grilled pollo-- beautifully crisp and golden on the outside and moist and flavorful on the inside. He has three years of grilling expertise at the El Pollo Loco restaurant where he works in Pacoima, California. Veletzuy was awarded a cash prize of \$2,500, a trophy, a competition jacket, a personalized grilling fork and the prestige of being named El Pollo Loco's 2011 Grand Grill Master.

Second place went to last year's winner, Demetrio Jurado of Los Angeles, CA, and third place went to Misrael Martinez of Lancaster, CA. Runners-up included Isabel Chavez of Sylmar, CA; Armando Lopez of Bakersfield, CA; and Felicitas Ruiz of Las Vegas, NV.

"We are very proud of the remarkable skill demonstrated by all six finalists who competed in this year's Grill Master Challenge," said Steve Sather, president and CEO

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of El Pollo Loco, Inc. “Grilling perfect chicken is truly an art that has fueled El Pollo Loco’s growth and sets us apart from other quick-serve concepts. The Grill Master Challenge gives us the opportunity to honor the best of the best at El Pollo Loco – the talented cooks like German who delight our guests each and every day with expertly prepared, delicious citrus-marinated, flame-grilled chicken they won’t find anywhere else.”

A panel of grilling connoisseurs from across the company, along with the stars of Bravo’s Flipping Out, Jeff Lewis, Jenni Pulos and Zoila Chavez, judged the final six on their technique in several areas, including preparing, cooking, cutting and presenting the chicken to the judges. Appearance and flavor were evaluated using El Pollo Loco’s standards of excellence.

El Pollo Loco’s Grill Master Challenge is an annual event that celebrates the company’s flame-grilling expertise, a legacy that began well over 30 years ago in the small town of Guasave on Mexico’s Pacific Coast. The first American El Pollo Loco opened on Alvarado Street in Los Angeles, CA in 1980.

Today, El Pollo Loco operates more than 400 restaurants (a combination of company and franchise-owned locations) in nine states-- California, Arizona, Nevada, Texas, Oregon, Utah, Illinois, Georgia, and Connecticut. For more information about El Pollo Loco, visit the company’s website at www.elpolloloco.com.

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