



FOOD

Meet Grill 'Em All — and its constantly rotating menu of heavy metal burgers

by **Jacob Sisneros**
July 24, 2024



The Cowboy from Hell burger was created by Grill 'Em All for Long Beach Burger Week. Photo by Thomas R. Cordova.

Matt Chernus has gone from lead singer of a Cleveland metal band to head burger chef at Horny Corner, but on that 15-year journey, one thing's stayed the same: his taste for the extreme.

From humble beginnings serving out of a food truck that struggled to surpass 40 mph, Chernus in April upgraded to a metal-themed burger concession stand near Bayshore Beach, where he serves burgers piled high with a medley of far-out ingredients.

“It’s the raddest location because every day you feel like you’re on vacation or like in some ‘80s John Candy movie,” Chernus said.

For Long Beach Burger Week, which runs through Sunday, he brought back a fan favorite from the past.

The \$15 Cowboy from Hell — an ode to the Cowboys from Hell album released by the Texas-based heavy metal band Pantera — comes with pulled barbecue chicken, jalapeño bacon, garlic aioli, cheddar, red onions, lettuce and mosh pit barbecue sauce all piled on top of a beef patty.



Matt Chernus, owner of Grill 'Em All, at his burger shack at Horny Corner in Long Beach, Tuesday, July 23, 2024. Photo by Thomas R. Cordova.

The restaurant's first brick-and-mortar opened in Alhambra in 2013 with the help of \$50,000 in prize money Chernus won from the Food Network's first season of "The Great Food Truck Race." Its location roughly eight miles east of downtown Los Angeles served its last burger on Jan. 21.

Chernus had been making the roughly 26-mile commute from Long Beach, where he has lived for over 10 years, to the Alhambra storefront for the entirety of the time it was open.

His efforts to open a location in Long Beach came to fruition when his real estate agent found out the city was leasing out the concession stand at Bayshore Beach.

He reached an agreement with the city to begin leasing the property in July 2021, but construction delayed the opening until late April this year.



The Cowboy from Hell burger created for Long Beach Burger Week in Long Beach, Tuesday, July 23, 2024. Photo by Thomas R. Cordova.

The eatery's interior includes "Death to False Burgers" in red font on a black wall along with a sign that declares "no mosh pits, crowd surfing, stage diving, wall of death or slam dancing." Behind the register,

Chernus printed out flyers advertising old metal concerts at the Fenders Ballroom — a Downtown Long Beach music club that closed in 1989 — and the Long Beach Arena.

Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Chernus moved to Los Angeles nearly two decades ago with his “stoner metal” band Amps II Eleven. After his music career didn’t pan out, he was working in the restaurant industry when he and his former business partner decided to start a food truck in 2009.

Grill 'Em All now offers fries for \$5-\$11, \$9 craft beer on tap and in tall cans, salads ranging from \$8-\$12, and options for kids including chicken strips, grilled cheese and a hot dog.

But the restaurant is known for its creative burger combinations. The \$16 Behemoth comes with two grilled cheese sandwiches as buns with cheddar, barbecue sauce, bacon, grilled onions, pickle and a patty in between.

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